Communicating with the Public

DATE AND TIME
Monday, 22 February 2010 / 3:30PM-5PM

SPEAKER(S)
Jeff Cummings
Interpretive Naturalist
IN DNR Div. of State Parks and Reservoirs—Fort Harrison State Park
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SESSION DESCRIPTION
Working in parks and recreation often means interacting directly with the public and in many different roles and settings. This session will identify key competencies that staff need at all levels of an agency, from part-time to full-time, field personnel to executives, for effective public communication skills. Help your agency reap the benefits of having employees with focused communication skills.

This session was a quick run down of public speaking 101, complete with an on-the-spot mini-speech from everyone attending. Jeff Cummings covered a broad spectrum of public speaking topics but hit the high points and trouble spots for people. He discussed when, how, and what we communicate, as well as when communication works and when it fails. Also included were some handy tips for speaking in public. Everyone got to stand up individually and give a quick introduction of themselves. The group as a whole got some constructive criticism on how improve their communication skills too.

SESSION LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Describe varying techniques used in the different agency settings that improve communication with the public; including informal contact, agency image and formal communication opportunities.
- Distinguish between excellent and poor communication approaches that agency staff can choose and how to measure performance and implement training to improve overall communication.
Communicating With the Public

2010 Great Lakes Park Training Institute
Pokagon State Park
Potawatomi Inn, Angola, Indiana
February 22, 2010

What Do You Need to Know?

- Organize a talk
- Introduce yourself
- Use projection media
- Use non-projected visual aides
- Work with Social Network Media

When Do We Communicate?

- When providing customer service
- When working with our staff(s)
- When talking, typing, mowing, sweeping, cleaning, burning, cutting, driving, painting, plumbing, moving

How do we communicate?

Where do we Communicate?

What do we Communicate?

- Rules and policies
- Mission statements
- Interpretive stories
  - Locations
- Public Services
- Corporate Culture
When Communication Works

• Operations proceed smoothly
• Customers are less frustrated
• Mistakes are avoided
• Costs reduced, efficiency improves
• Examples?

When Communication Fails

• Agency effectiveness suffers
• Agency efficiency suffers
• Agency credibility declines
• Examples?

Why Does Communication Fail?

Listener Fatigue Caused From:
1. Weak Physical/Contact Vitality
2. Uninteresting Manner
3. Poor Voice Vitality
4. No Understanding of Customer

What Do You Need to Know?

How to Organize a Talk
1. Done in Advance
2. Use Some Type of Outline
3. Be Thematic
4. Dry-Run Dry-Run Dry-Run

How to Introduce Yourself

• Who Are You?
• What Are You Going to Talk About?
• How Long Will You Talk?
• No Notes!

What Do You Need to Know?

How to Organize a Talk

• Pass out Program Planning Page/ILP
• Start on Time; End on Time
• Dry-run, Dry-run, Dry-run
**Exercise**

Stand and Introduce Yourself

- Who Are You?
- Where is Your Home?
- What do You Do?
- Why Are you Here?

**Tips for Public Speaking**

1. Start on time-end on time
2. Watch for distracting mannerisms
   - Fillers
   - Mouth noises

**What do you Need to Know?**

**Tips for Public Speaking**

1. Start on time-end on time
2. Watch for distracting mannerisms
3. Watch for poor speech vitality
   - Fillers
   - Mouth noises

**What Do You Need to Know?**

**How to Use Projection Media**

- Electronic/"Power Point" Presentations
- May Include Video Clips & Sound
- Can Use Movement & Color
- Easy to Create & Edit

**Tips for Projection Media**

1. Make SURE it all works IN ADVANCE
2. Be SURE to have BACKUP copies
3. Make sure everything is compatible
4. Arrive early for set up

**What do you Need to Know?**

**Tips for Projection Media**

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**What Do You Need to Know?**

**Tips for Projection Media**

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**What do you Need to Know?**

**How to use Non-Projected Media**

1. Flip Charts
2. Flyers & Brochures
3. Inanimate Objects
4. Live Objects
What do you Need to Know?

**Tips for using Non-Projected Media**

- Props NOT Distractions
- Props AID in Instruction
- Large Enough to See
- Tips with Flip Charts

What do you Need to Know?

**Tips for using Flip Charts**

1. Use as an AID in communication
2. Use as part of your outline
3. Tabs and Notes on the Flip Chart Pages

What do you Need to Know?

**Working with Social Network Media**

- New Form of Communication that includes
  - Email
  - Printed Media
  - Video Clips, Movies & Sound
  - Includes FaceBook/Twitter/My Space sites

What do you Need to Know?

**Working with Social Network Media**

- Not well known 5 years ago
- Not necessarily dating or porno sites
- A common source for direct info with an agency
- Used by all ages

What do you need to Know?

**Tips for working with Social Networking Media**

1. Be dedicated, keep it updated!
2. Provide a contact phone #/Email addy
3. Keep info general & lite
4. No Drama w/content or administration

**Questions?**