

Guidelines for Developing a Message for the Public

First, consider:

Your target audience

Relationship to event

Demographics (age,
language, culture, etc.)

Level of outrage

Purpose of message

To give facts/update

Rally to action

Clarify event status

Address rumors

Satisfy media requests

Method of delivery

Print media release

Web release

Spokesperson (TV)

Radio

Other

1) Express empathy (if appropriate): _____

2) Clarifying facts/Call for Action:

Who _____

What _____

Where _____

When _____

Why _____

How _____

3) What we don't know: _____

4) Process to get answers: _____

5) Statement of commitment: _____

6) For more information: _____

7) Next scheduled update: _____

Check the message for the following:

Positive action steps

Clarity (understanding)

Avoids speculation

Honest/open tone

Avoids judgment

Avoids jargon

Simple words, short sentences

Avoids humor