

Tailoring your key messages

We need clear, factual science communication to help ensure people are informed to make good decisions for themselves and their loved ones.

Information platforms are overflowing with content – factual and sensationalist – getting people’s attention and keeping it is getting increasingly difficult.

As a researcher, you are the expert on your field of study, however you are competing with misinformation, clickbait and cute cat videos for screen and brain space.

You can improve your chances of grabbing the overstimulated attention of your audience by understanding your audience, the 15 second elevator pitch and using different content formats – as well as understanding your **key message**.

Your **key message** is the main piece of information you want your audience to understand and retain.

It is your **headline** and often the only thing what will be remembered, regardless of the subsequent information and messages your communication contains.

Our study helps reduce the risk of injury to SES volunteers by measuring the minimum physical fitness needed to complete tasks safely and effectively during training and operations.

Key messages should be:

- **Concise:** One main message, with up to three supporting messages that provide additional information. Each statement only 1-3 sentences long or under 30 seconds when spoken.
- **Strategic:** Define, differentiate and align with benefits/value proposition.
- **Relevant:** Balance what you need to communicate with what your audience needs to know.
- **Compelling:** Meaningful information designed to stimulate action.
- **Simple:** Easy-to-understand language; minimal [jargon](#) and acronyms.
- **Memorable:** Easy to recall and repeat; avoid run-on sentences.
- **Relatable:** Active rather than passive voice; no advertising slogans.
- **Tailored:** Adaptable to different target audiences, with flexible language and depth of information.

For more information or advice, visit www.naturalhazards.com.au or contact Natural Hazards Research Australia’s communications team:

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