



International Association
for Public Participation

Booz | Allen | Hamilton

Ritz Carlton, Tyson's Corner
1700 Tysons Boulevard
McLean, VA 22102

NEW DATES!

June 9 - 10, 2009
Course will run 8:30 - 4:30 pm

Cost

\$995.00 USD - IAP2 Members
\$1,200.00 USD - Non members

To Register

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Risk Communication and Outrage Management: when stakeholders are more upset than endangered

Presenter: Peter Sandman



If you make a list of environmental health risks in order of how many people they kill each year, then list them again in order of how alarming they are to the general public, the two lists will be very different. Risk managers in industry and government often deduce from this that public perception of risk is ignorant or irrational. But a better way to see the problem is that the public defines "risk" more broadly than the risk assessment profession. It helps to stipulate new definitions. Call the death rate "hazard"; call everything else that the public considers part of risk, collectively, "outrage." Risk, properly conceived, includes both hazard and outrage.

Among the components of outrage are: voluntary/coerced; familiar/exotic; not memorable/memorable; controlled by the individual/controlled by others; fair/unfair; and imposed by institutions that are trustworthy/untrustworthy. Risks that are high in these factors are high risks, even if they are not especially hazardous. To decrease public concern about small hazards, therefore, risk managers must take steps to avoid exacerbating outrage, and must find ways to diminish it instead.

The seminar will focus especially on six key strategies for managing outrage: stake out the middle, not the extreme; acknowledge prior misbehavior; acknowledge current problems; give others credit for achievements; share control or be accountable; and bring unacknowledged concerns to the surface. All six are demonstrably effective in managing stakeholder outrage. But they are difficult to implement because they run counter to most organizations' culture, their self-esteem, and their own outrage.

Peter M. Sandman is one of the preeminent risk communication speakers and consultants in the United States. Creator of the "Risk = Hazard + Outrage" formula for risk communication, his unique and effective approach to managing risk controversies has made him much in demand for other sorts of reputation management as well. Dr. Sandman has helped his clients through a wide range of public controversies that threatened corporate or government reputation — from oil spills to labor-management battles; from E. coli contamination to the siting of hazardous waste facilities. In the terms first popularized by Dr. Sandman, these are situations where the "hazard" is low, the "outrage" is high, and the core task is outrage management. Sandman also works on the other side of risk issues, helping activists arouse concern about serious hazards, and helping companies persuade employees to take safety rules seriously. Here the task is precaution advocacy in a high-hazard, low-outrage situation. Finally, Dr. Sandman works on crisis communication — terrorist attacks and epidemics, for example — where hazard and outrage are both high and the goal is to help people bear their emotions and take appropriate actions.

For more information on Dr. Sandman, please visit www.psandman.com



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