CHAPTER 1

Public Policy Making

Key Concepts

- Politics
- Values
- Pluralism
- Information

This guide to communication is informed by the idea of public policy making as a democratic process of acting on values to address problems affecting society. This chapter frames the process from the perspective of communication. Other ways to think about public policy making are found in suggested readings at the end of this chapter.

Policy is an effort to order reality for a purpose (Stewart, 2009, p. 32). In public policy making, the effort involves defining public problems, deciding to act, and constructing and administering interventions. All of this happens in a political context of pluralism. The framework for decision is governmental. Decision often demands compromise and reflects institutional constraints. Effective action is practical and adaptive. Communication is integral.

Two illustrations show the process, first in administration and then in budget legislation.

Illustration 1: Milk Labeling

On October 24, 2007, Pennsylvania announced a new standard of food safety aimed to prevent "mislabeling" of food products,

especially "misleading" labels. That's *public policy*, a standing decision by government. An administrative agency, the state's department of agriculture, targeted dairy food as the problem. Specifically, milk produced or sold in Pennsylvania could not be labeled "hormone-free." Labels could not say that milk came from cows not treated with "artificial growth hormone" or with "rBGH" or "rBST," common acronyms for recombinant bovine somatotropin growth hormone.

Politics influenced the decision. Arguably, the agency's decision to target milk labeling favored one set of stakeholders, the maker of rBST and dairy farmers who use it. Those interests had long argued that milk labels stating "no artificial growth hormone" or using similar language harmed sales of their products by implying that milk from cows treated with rBST is unsafe. They cited Federal Drug Administration (FDA) approval for rBST use and scientific evidence of its safety. The state agriculture secretary agreed.

The agency's decision was immediately controversial in Pennsylvania and elsewhere. News and reaction spread through newspapers, telephone, e-mail, blogs, and chat outlets. Dairy farmers who did not use rBST and who wanted to say so on milk labels rapidly organized to oppose the ban. Advocates for sustainable agriculture joined these farmers in support. They countered that the science on rBST's safety is inconclusive, that farmers have a right to inform consumers about their product, and that consumers have the right to make informed choices. Plans for litigation against the state were announced. In parallel opposition, farmers who did use rBST organized to react with other advocacy groups in support of the ban. Conflicting *values* or ideas of public good drove the discourse.

In mid-November, Pennsylvania's governor postponed the ban and then canceled it. On January 17, 2008, the governor, along with the secretary of agriculture, announced two policy changes: a revised standard for dairy product labeling and new procedures for oversight of labeling claims. Under rule revisions, labels are permitted to claim that milk came from cows not treated with rBST, along with a disclaimer regarding its potential for health risk. Dairy food processors are required to verify label claims by having dairy farmers sign affidavits regarding production methods. That's *pluralistic, practical policy making* in institutional democracy.

This snapshot captures the basics. For a more comprehensive view, read the participants' own communications. They reveal dimensions of debate, and they illustrate a typical mix of policy writing styles. Extracts selected from key participants' statements are presented here. To read the full text of these and related communications, go to the source cited. The following extracts start with the state's initial announcement and follow the story as it developed.

Government Chooses a Problem

Memorandum

To: Agriculture and Food Labeling Stakeholders

From: Secretary Dennis C. Wolff

Subject: Product Label Review Update

Date: October 23, 2007

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture (PDA) is increasingly being made aware of concerns from consumers, farmers, and public policy makers regarding mislabeled food products. These include concerns as to whether label claims are accurate and verifiable, and whether label claims are misleading.

For example, concerns have been raised that some labels are misleading consumers by promoting what is *not* in the product. . . . I recently called upon help from a group of dietitians, consumer advocates, and food industry representatives on current issues relating to food labeling by establishing the Food Labeling Advisory Committee. . . . While widespread food labeling concerns existed, the Committee recommendation is to begin by addressing dairy labeling improprieties. This is a logical starting point, in that PDA has current legal responsibility to review certain milk and dairy product labels before they are used in commerce.

Local and National Media Disseminate the News and Opinion

"Milk-Labeling and Marketing Integrity"

By Hon. Dennis C. Wolff, Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture, *Lancaster Farming*, November 3, 2007

Consumers rely upon the labeling of a product when deciding what to buy for their families. Recently, concern has risen over the way milk products are labeled and the Department of Agriculture has taken action to help consumers make informed decisions about what to buy and to feed their families.

Some labels mislead by promoting what is not in the product, a practice called absence labeling. This marketing strategy is confusing and implies a safe versus not safe product.

. . .

I take issue with the fact that companies use false food labeling tactics to gain a market advantage. . . . Ultimately, we are seeking a solution to the labeling issue that will benefit those who produce Pennsylvania's food and those who consume it.

"Consumers Won't Know What They're Missing"

By Andrew Martin, *The Feed*, NYTimes.com, November 11, 2007, http://www.nytimes.com/2007/11/11/business/11feed.html?_r=2& oref=slogin&oref=slogin/.

The Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture has decided that consumers are too dim to make their own shopping decisions. Agriculture officials in Ohio are contemplating a similar decision. . . .

Dairy Farmers React to Oppose the Ban

Opinion by Todd Rutter, dairy farmer, president of Rutter's Dairy in York, Pennsylvania. *Harrisburg Patriot News*, November 9, 2007. Quoted in Sherry Bunting, "Milk Label Issue Comes to a Boil in Pennsylvania," *Farmshine*, November 16, 2007; reprinted in Consumer Attitudes about Biotechnology, Science & Education, rbST Public Discussion, Penn State Dairy and Animal Science Blogs, Terry Etherton Blog on Biotechnology. http://blogs.das.psu.edu/tetherton/2007/11/17/milk-label-issue-comes-to-a-boil-in-pennsylvania/

. . . The state's untenable position has only emboldened Rutter's in this regard, prompting us to plan a series of very public activities designed to educate the community and our customers about artificial growth hormones and our strong stance against their use in our milk production, not to mention our right to say so on our labels.

In the next couple of weeks, we will be running full-page newspaper ads, handing out more than 100,000 information cards through Rutter's Farm Stores, posting content at http://www.rutters.com, and, on Nov. 13, hand-delivering letters to every member of the Pennsylvania General Assembly. Of course, we're also pursuing all legal avenues available to us to protect our right to provide consumer information.

Dairy Farmers React to Support the Ban

Opinion by Daniel Brandt, dairy farmer, Annville, Pennsylvania; PA Holstein Association State Director; Lebanon County Farm Bureau Director, November 17, 2007 at 12:16 pm. Filed under Consumer Attitudes about Biotechnology, Science & Education, rbST Public Discussion, Penn State Dairy and Animal Science Blogs, Terry Etherton Blog on Biotechnology.http://blogs.das.psu.edu/tetherton/2007/11/17/rutter-hormone-stutter/

In Todd Rutter's little rant in the November 9th *Harrisburg Patriot News*, it is shameful that he had no scientific documents to back up his claims. . . . He does nothing to promote milk for what it is and the unprecedented benefits of drinking milk. . . .

Advocates Opposing the Ban Reframe the Debate

"Time to Do the Right Thing with Food Labeling"

E-mail action alert, November 11, 2007, by Brian Snyder, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, http://pasafarming.org; Leslie Zuck, Executive Director, Pennsylvania Certified Organic, http://www.paorganic.org; Timothy LaSalle, CEO, The Rodale Institute, http://www.rodaleinstitute.org

On its face, the recent decision by the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture to conduct a crackdown on what it considers to be false or misleading claims on dairy product labels may seem to be in everyone's best interest. . . . The essential question to ask is "What's really in everyone's best interest over the long term?" . . . The whole labeling controversy itself is only a sideshow to the real issues involved here, which have more to do with ethics and the industry-perceived need for the use of performance enhancing drugs in livestock production. . . . The use of artificial growth hormones (rBST or rBGH) is certainly not the only example of such drugs being used on farms today. In fact, the majority of antibiotics sold in America are actually used in

livestock production as growth promoting agents, not as treatment for disease in humans or animals as many uninformed, potentially confused consumers might assume.

. . . By all means, it makes perfect sense to employ the "precautionary principle" when research on any aspect of food production is not conclusive—in doing so, the countries of Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Japan and all 25 members of the European Union have already banned the use of rBST/rBHG in the production of milk.

So what's so wrong if an individual farmer or group of them working together wishes to advertise, even on a label, the choice made not to use such drugs at all, or at least not unless clinically indicated? While we are so busy debating when and how it is proper to put an absence claim on food labels, when do we get to consider the value of being completely forthcoming with consumers and letting them make informed choices?

Expert Comments

"rBST Certified Milk: A Story of Smoke and Mirrors"

By Terry Etherton, Distinguished Professor of Animal Nutrition and Head of the Department of Dairy and Animal Science, The Pennsylvania State University, October 3, 2006 at 4:23 pm. Filed under Agricultural Biotechnology, The Food System, rbST Public Discussion Penn State Dairy and Animal Science Blogs, Terry Etherton Blog on Biotechnology. http://blogs.das.psu.edu/tetherton/2006/10/03/rbst-certified-free-milk-a-story-of-smoke-and-mirrors/

The *Boston Globe* ran a story on Sept. 25th on the decision by H. P. Hood and Dean Foods to switch New England milk processing plants to "rbST-free" milk. In this story, a spokesperson for Dean Foods said, "Even though conventional milk is completely safe and . . . recombinant bovine somatotropin (rbST) is completely safe, some people don't feel comfortable with it" . . . There's little doubt that consumers who have no understanding are easily gulled by such labels. . . . "If the future of our industry is based on marketing tactics that try to sway consumers with 'good milk' versus 'bad milk' messages, we are all in trouble," Kevin Holloway, President of Monsanto Dairy, told a group of dairy producers at a September 13th meeting in Washington D.C. . . .

The reality I have observed is that it is easy to scare the public in a 30-second media message. It is impossible to give them a sound scientific understanding about the benefits of biotechnology in the barnyard in 30 seconds. . . . One can ask, who wins? Junk science by a knockout.

. . .

Government Revises the Policy

"Governor Rendell says Consumers Can Have Greater Confidence in Milk Labels"

Office of the Governor, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Press Release, November 17, 2007

Governor Edward G. Rendell today announced that labels informing customers the milk they intend to buy is produced without rBST . . . can continue to be used . . . under new guidelines for accountability. "The public has a right to complete information about how the milk they buy is produced," said Governor Rendell.

Government Promulgates a New Ruling

William Chirdon, Bureau Director, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Food Safety and Laboratory Services.

Dear Fluid Milk Permit Holder . . . PDA has received a great deal of input on the standards set forth [in October 2007]. . . . Enclosed please find a new document titled 'Revised Standards and Procedure for the Approval of Proposed Labeling of Fluid Milk' dated January 17, 2008. . . . Please review this document carefully and govern yourself accordingly. . . .

From the revised standard:

"7. Label Representations.

(A) No labeling may be false or misleading. . . .

i. In no instance shall any label state or imply that milk from cows not treated with recombinant bovine somatotropin (rBST, rbST, RBST, or rbst) differs in composition from milk products made with milk from treated cows. . . .

ii. No labeling may contain references such as 'No Hormones, Hormone Free, . . .'

iii. References such as 'No rBST,' 'rBST Free,' 'Free of rBST,' 'No added rBST' may be considered misleading labeling based upon the entirety of the particular label under review. By way of

guidance, a label containing such references may be approved if such references are part of language defined in paragraph 7(B) as a 'Claim,' and is accompanied as set forth in paragraph 7(B) by a 'Disclaimer.' An example of such a Claim and Disclaimer would be 'No rBST was used on cows producing this milk. No significant difference has been shown between milk derived from rBST-treated and non-rBST-treated cows.' In such cases, the reference 'No rBST,' or the other references listed above, may be accentuated by different type style or size but not more than twice the size of the other Milk Labeling Standards 2.0.1.17.08 language in the Claim and Disclaimer. . . .

(B) Permitted Claims. The following claims are permitted:

(i) RBST (referenced to FDA February 10, 1994 Guidance on the Voluntary Labeling of Milk. . . .)

1. 'From cows not treated with rBST. No significant difference has been found between milk derived from rBST-treated and non-rBST treated cows' or a substantial equivalent. Hereinafter, the first sentence shall be referred to as the 'Claim' and the second sentence shall be referred to as the 'Disclaimer. . . .'"

. . .

(Standards 2.0.1.17.08. http://www.portal.state.pa.us/portal/server.pt/gateway/PTARGS_0_2_24476_10297_0_43/AgWebsite/Files/Publications/milk_labeling_standards_new.pdf/.)

Advocates Opposing the Ban Reflect on the Outcome

"A Day for Celebration and Humility"

By Brian Snyder, Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture. E-mail, January 1, 2008

This is truly a cause for celebration for all of us, especially those who responded to our alerts by sending letters and emails or making phone calls to Governor Rendell's office and the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture. . . . This is also a day for reflection and humility. There were many farmers on both sides of this issue right from the start, and the damage done to the agricultural community in Pennsylvania will take some time to heal. . . . Yesterday's announcement preserved the right of farmers

to communicate with eaters about the way food is being produced in a straightforward way. If you think about it, this is just about as fundamental as it gets.

News Media Reports Ongoing Advocacy Supporting the Ban

"Fighting on a Battlefield the Size of a Postage Stamp"

By Andrew Martin, *The Feed*, NYTimes.com, March 9, 2009. http://www.nytimes.com/2008/03/09/business/09feed.html

A new advocacy group closely tied to Monsanto has started a counteroffensive to stop the proliferation of milk that comes from cows that aren't treated with synthetic bovine growth hormone. The group, called American Farmers for the Advancement and Conservation of Technology, or Afact, says it is a grass-roots organization that came together to defend members' right to use recombinant bovine somatotropin, also known as rBST or rBGH. . . .

National News Media Reports Continuing Debate

"'Hormone-free' milk spurs labeling debate"

Christian Science Monitor, April 21, 2008. http://www.csmonitor.com/Environment/2008/0421/p13s01-sten.html

Ohio, Missouri, Kansas, Indiana, and Michigan all have pending legislation or rule changes that would limit labeling claims about hormones. . . . Some say Monsanto is behind attempts to remove mentions of hormones. "Clearly what's going on is Monsanto is trying to get states to thwart the market from working," says Michael Hansen, senior scientist for Consumers Union. . . . But Monsanto contends that milk from cows treated with [its rBST product called] Posilac is safe. . . . Monsanto has unsuccessfully petitioned the Federal Trade Commission for a rule change about what it says is deceptive labeling. Other legal action taken by the company and lobbying by farm bureaus to block such labeling has largely failed. Legal precedent appears to uphold the free-speech interest of dairies and the consumer's right to know. . . . As other new agricultural technology reaches the market, labeling debates appear likely to increase, industry analysts say. For example, milk made from cloned animals and

their offspring, approved January 15, 2008 by the FDA, has already prompted one labeling bill in California . . . "This [milk labeling] issue will not go away," says the Consumer Union's Mr. Hansen.

What This Illustration Shows. Common features of policy making are shown here. For example, typical complexity is shown in defining the problem. At least five policy problems with associated issues are conceivable: (1) agricultural biotechnology with issues of impacts on people, animals, and ecosystems; (2) food safety with issues of consumer protection; (3) labeling with issues of free speech; (4) trade with issues of marketing and advertising; and (5) ethics with issues of conflicting values. These conceptions of the problem are not mutually exclusive. That's typical, too. Problems usually are blends.

Pluralism of several kinds—constituencies, values, interests, positions, roles—is shown. Dairy farmers are geographically distributed, operationally diverse, and politically mixed. Consumers here are an undifferentiated mass. Agencies serve many masters. The product manufacturer is ambiguously good or bad. Advocates articulate opposed interests and values. News media disseminate multiple versions of the problem. Again, that's typical.

Solutions are selective. In this example, several alternatives were considered. The state could accept the status quo without further action or it could intervene, perhaps with limitations. To accept the status quo, Pennsylvania could follow federal FDA guidelines that allow rBST use in milk production and do not call for labeling. Instead, the state chose to regulate labeling, first to ban a specific practice and then later to allow it with limitations.

In the governmental framework all three branches—legislative, executive, and judicial—make public policy. This illustration shows administrative policy making that involves federal and state government. The federal agency acted to the limit of its authority to monitor food safety, whereas the state agency went on to act within its authority to monitor product labeling.

Debate about the use of scientific evidence in policy making emerged in the process. On the subject of rBST use, U.S., Canadian, and European Union policies differ. The United States permits its use and the other governments do not. The variation is attributable partly to different interpretations of evidence and partly to national differences in regulatory agencies' power.

Communication technology's impact on public process is evident here. Far exceeding print media's impact on opinion in rural communities, the Internet's capacity to rapidly distribute information by e-mail, online news, blogs, chat, and other media altered and accelerated Pennsylvania's process. Elsewhere, in other states, the network of information helped to organize interest groups across boundaries as more state governments took up the problem. Continuing access to online news archives kept the unofficial public record open and the issues alive as the problem moved beyond Pennsylvania.

Policy making is not always as topical or as visible as in the milk-labeling illustration. Important policy work goes quietly on every day in government. Budgeting is a good example. Communications move a budget cycle along. To illustrate, state budget development is described next, shown from the viewpoint of the communications director for the state senate's budget committee chairman.

Illustration 2: Budgeting

The annual state budgeting process occurs over six months with preset deadlines or milestones. In January, the governor proposes a budget for the coming year that represents the administration's priorities and politics. The legislative committees respond in March (for the house) and in May (for the senate) with recommendations based on their priorities and politics. Effectively, three budget proposals—the governor's, the house's, and the senate's—must culminate in a single adopted budget by July 1, the mandated start of the state's new fiscal year.

In early January, the state governor holds a press conference to announce the release of his proposed budget for the coming year. Immediately after the governor's press conference, the chairs of the state's house of representatives and senate budget committees comment publicly on the governor's proposed budget in other press conferences, newspaper interviews, and radio and television talk show appearances. The communications director for the senate budget chair tracks public response to the governor's budget and to the senate chair's comments on it.

At the same time, work begins on the senate and house budget recommendations. In the senate, the current chair of the ways and means committee brings his staff (an administrative assistant and the communications director) to a meeting with staff for the permanent committee. Present are the ways and means chief of staff, chief legal counsel, and chief budget analyst. The chair has authority, as a member of the majority political party, to set the senate's current budget policy. The permanent committee staff has responsibility for developing, with the help of the chair's staff, the senate's recommendations for budgeting according to current priorities.

In the first meeting in January, the chair and the combined staffs review budget history (what's carried over from last year and what's new this year), the state of the economy (current and projected conditions), and the politics of individual budget items (item is nice to have but can be sacrificed if necessary, item is nonnegotiable, we expect a fight on the item, or we go to the mat with the item). They compile a rough list of potential priorities for the coming year's budget. Because he will draft text for the senate recommendations, the communications director starts taking notes.

After the first meeting, the committee staff fans out in January and February to consult with federal and state fiscal experts, as well as with experts on specific issues in state agencies, government watchdog groups, and advocacy groups. They get more projections for the economy, and they seek external corroboration for their rough list of budget priorities. The communications director goes along to all these consultations.

Next, the committee staff solicits budget requests internally from senate members, state departments, and state agencies. Staffers meet with the members, departments, and agencies about their requests. They begin an initial breakdown of line items to include in the senate recommendations. The communications director stays in touch with the staff. In parallel, he maintains daily or weekly contact with editors and reporters of major news media. He develops relationships and educates the press. They, in turn, keep him up to date on budget-relevant news. He maintains good contact both internally and externally because he has dual responsibilities to anticipate debate about the senate's recommendations and to present them in a way that will promote their acceptance by government officials and the public.

A second working meeting is held. The chair and combined staffs intensely debate priorities and preliminarily decide on key priorities. Later in March, when the house budget proposal is released, the combined staffs analyze it, compare it with the governor's proposal, and compare it with their own developing proposal. The communications director participates in the meetings and continues to track press and public responses to the governor's proposal and to the house recommendations. Most important, he translates the key priorities (decided at the second working meeting) into key messages, simple statements that identify a key issue, and the senate's proposed way of using tax dollars to address the issue. He gets the chair's and committee senior staff's commitment to emphasize the key messages at every communication opportunity. Whenever they speak or write, they agree that the key messages will be appropriately included.

Throughout March and April, the senate budget committee staff finalizes its recommendations and interacts with the governor's and house committee's staffs. The communications director's attention increasingly turns to his primary responsibility of drafting the document that will both present senate recommendations and publicize them; he must also prepare for debate in the legislature and for negotiation with the governor's office during the budget approval process.

In March, he writes preliminary drafts of the chairman's introduction and the executive summary for the document. (He knows that when the lengthy and detailed document is released, many people, including the press, will read only the chair's introduction and the executive summary.) He emphasizes the key messages in both. He writes (or edits senior staff's) descriptions of major budget categories (health care, education, housing, and so forth). From his notes taken in budget working meetings, he develops arguments to support proposed dollar figures for existing line items and new initiatives in each category.

Also in March, he plans a comprehensive internal and external presentation strategy to be carried out in June. Along with internal distribution to the governor, the legislature, and government departments and agencies, the senate's recommendations will be publicized through an external news media and public events campaign conducted before, during, and after formal release of the recommendations document.

In April and early May, he revises the document based on committee staffers' review of his preliminary drafts and edits of their drafts. He coordinates with news media and advocacy groups regarding a public relations campaign to accompany release of the senate recommendations. By mid-May, the finished 600-page document presenting the recommendations is delivered to the printer. He fields inquiries by the press and the public about the soon-to-be-released recommendations, and he focuses on writing, editing, and revising press releases, other public announcements, and the chairman's comments for the senate budget release press conference.

In late May, the senate recommendations are released, distributed, and announced. Simultaneously, the planned public relations campaign is conducted. Throughout June, while the senate and house debate the budget and the governor responds to their debates, events all around the state (preplanned jointly by the communications director and advocacy groups) direct public attention to senate priorities and funding proposals during "health-care week" or "education week" or "citizenship assistance week." Meanwhile, back in the senate, the communications director puts out daily press releases, follows up phone contacts by the press or the public, and prepares comments for the chair's use in responding to unexpected developments, politically significant news, or budget controversies.

What This Illustration Shows. The problem here is the need to finance state government operations and public services in the coming year. The process is the annual budgeting cycle. The major actors are three elected officials (the governor and the chairs of the state senate and house of representatives budget committees). Five appointed professional staffs (those of the governor, the two chairs, and the two committees) advise and assist the elected officials. Other players are experts inside and outside state government with knowledge on specific topics, policy analysts who will advise authorities on ways to approach the problem, and advocates representing special civic, commercial, or political interests in the solution. The resulting policy is a set of priorities and related recommendations for spending.

In this example, you can see policy making in a flow of actions on a timeline to conduct a process. In budgeting, basic institutional actions are to define priorities in relation to current conditions and goals; to review previous goals; to take reasoned positions on needs, argue for them, and negotiate with others who reason differently; to propose specific objectives and spending levels; to deliberate alternative proposals and decide; and to inform and invite public participation. The flow of activity in this particular process is typical of institutional policy making.

Typical integration of communication and action is shown here, too. Communication products formalize conceptions and enable further action. For example, what most people call "the budget" is not the policy itself; rather, it is an intentionally persuasive document (composed by the communications director, in this instance) that argues for objectives based on the priorities and that proposes funding allocations to accomplish them. It is the last of many documents that move the process along. At earlier stages, working discussions are materialized in draft documents. Circulation of the drafts for comment, editing, and revision facilitates negotiation about priorities. The final budget document serves both general public discourse (persuasive expression of priorities and objectives) and institutional discourse (dollar amounts) about governmental spending in the coming year.

Practical communications in this illustration deserve comment, too. From a communicator's viewpoint, budgeting, although orderly as a policy cycle, is quite messy as a real process. The illustration shows the typical density of information, number of writing demands, need to balance competing interests, need to coordinate actors, and even the juggling of schedules that characterize a policy process and create the working conditions for communicators.

Summary and Preview

Public policy making is shown here as lived experience. Two illustrations exemplify what policy actors do and how they do it. Basic components of their working world, a problem, a definition of the problem, a process, and a policy, are shown to be contingent, not predetermined or arbitrary.

Most important for this guide's purpose, the examples show that the origin as well as the outcome of policy making is information. Communication is the means of creating, presenting, and receiving information. Need description and problem definition are information, as are label claims or disclaimers and budget item justifications. Actors in the process use language to create and deliver information needed to achieve policy purposes, not always successfully, but necessarily.

Next, Chapter 2 explains how communication functions in policy making and offers a disciplined approach to practices of writing and speaking in the process.

Reference

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Further Reading

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CHAPTER 2

Communicating

Key Concepts

- Context
- Process
- Strategy
- Standards

Policy communication requires both know-how and skills. To develop know-how or conceptual and contextual awareness, this chapter describes communication to do policy work from four viewpoints. Each brings out a different dimension or emphasizes a different variable in the activity. A cultural view characterizes the policy work context. An experience view shows what happens when readers read and writers write. A process view traces the transformation of thought into written product. A methodology constructs a framework for producing needed documents (or talks). Subsequent chapters invite you to apply these viewpoints strategically to specific practical communications.

Viewpoint 1: Cultural Context

Who generates public policy information? Actors in the policymaking process do. Actors are participants. Actors create and use information in accordance with their roles in the process. As the term is used here, a role is a function or job with specific responsibility in the process.

Interests motivate actors and influence their role performance. Interests are stakes or concerns, which might be organized (collectively

held, ready for action) or unorganized (individually held, latent). For example, a trade association or an advocacy group has organized interest, whereas a dispersed, affected population has unorganized interest. Typically, organized interests acting as groups are most influential. However, individuals acting alone can be influential, too.

For all actors, roles and interests might relate in complex ways, and lines between them can be unclear. Some ambiguity is normal, as when an elected officeholder represents constituency interests in seeking a particular committee assignment or in proposing legislation. But other ambiguity might be unethical, as when an officeholder communicates false or misleading information. Ethics guidelines and enforcement procedures, internal and external to government, protect the policymaking process. Even better protection comes from consciously ethical actors who aim to do no harm (Svara, 2007).

Typical actors in public policy processes include:

- providers of goods, services, or activities related to the problem;
- consumers of goods or services (if organized);
- experts with specialized knowledge;
- advocates and lobbyists representing specific interests;
- advocates representing the public interest; and
- officials with power to decide and authority to intervene.

For example, in making policy for highway safety, the following actors would be involved:

- Automotive and insurance industries as providers of goods, services, or activities;
- Organizations of automobile drivers as consumers;
- Specialists in automobile design or analysts of the economics of transportation as experts;
- Lobbyists for law-enforcement associations as representatives of specific interests;
- Advocates for accident victims as representatives of the public interest; and
- Members of Congress, cabinet secretaries, or state governors as authorities with power.

Whether they write or speak themselves or authorize others to do it for them, policy actors generate information in relation to their role. Credibility, or the perceived reliability of information, is judged partly on the information source's role in the process. In the auto safety example, automotive industries credibly generate technical information on safety features of vehicles. Similarly, insurance industries credibly generate information on the economic consequences of accidents. Consumer groups credibly provide accounts of experience in using automotive products and credibly identify problematic conditions. Specialists in automobile design or materials credibly report results of research on ways to make cars safer. Expert policy analysts might credibly offer advice on policy options, such as regulation of manufacturers versus education of consumers. Advocates and lobbyists might credibly provide germane information about interested or affected groups, propose policy, and argue for or against policy based on group interests. Elected and appointed officials credibly generate the policy instruments, for instance, to reallocate funds, create a new program, or provide more oversight for existing programs.

To suggest the range of practical policy communications, a listing that sorts actors by role and associated communication practices is provided next.

Professionals Inside Government

Within government, career or consulting professionals generate most of the working information of a policy process. They communicate in roles as, for example, legislative aides to members of a legislature, experts on the staffs of legislative committees, legal counsels to legislative committees and agencies, executive agency administrators, policy analysts, and technical specialists attached to many offices. To carry out their responsibilities, they might use any of the following document types:

- one-page fact sheets (summaries limited to one page);
- memos (more developed summaries of varying length);
- position papers or white papers (extensive reportage or analysis including evidence);
- legislative concept proposals (outlines of model or idea or strategy for policy, without details);

- legislative histories (reports of government action or inaction, based on government records);
- committee reports (synthesis of committee decision and history of action on a topic);
- speeches (to be delivered by elected or appointed officials); and
- testimonies (to be delivered by executives or professionals).

For some inside professionals, communication is the entire job. The communications director in the state budgeting illustration (Chapter 1) is an example. A communications director is a generalist who:

- writes and produces internal documents of many kinds;
- writes external public announcements of many kinds; and
- produces kits of information for news media to use.

Other professional communicators in government are specialists. They include:

- speechwriters who draft talks for officials to deliver;
- legislation writers who draft bills for deliberation and formulate laws for codification;
- debate reporters who produce stenographic transcripts and the published records of deliberation and debate; and
- webmasters who maintain government websites.

Professionals Outside Government

Significant amounts of information used in policy making come from outside government. Experts of many kinds in universities, industries, policy institutes or think tanks, nonprofit organizations, and businesses contribute to white papers and reports of many kinds and also testify as witnesses in governmental hearings. Because they are not constrained as government employees are from engaging in public debate, they may write opinion in print or online publications. The expert's blog in the milk-labeling illustration in Chapter 1 exemplifies this practice. In addition, professionals and managers in publicly regulated industries and businesses might provide needed information.

For some outside professionals, communication for public policy purposes is the main focus of their job. Lobbyists are an example.

They are experts in a subject and are employed by organizations to ensure that policy makers have information about the subject that is germane to the interests of the employing organizations and to ensure that policy makers are exposed to the full range of arguments on a given issue. Lobbyists might brief legislators and their staffs or they might draft legislation for consideration. Policy analysts are a different example. They may be either inside or outside government. They are experts in using quantitative and qualitative methods to examine problems and options for solving problems. Analysts might advise policy makers on the choice of policy instruments or interpret research results to aid the formulation of policy (Appendix B).

Active Citizens

Ordinary people in daily life inform and influence public policy making when they:

- write or e-mail officials;
- provide formal written remarks on their experience relevant to a problem or a policy in response to a call for comment;
- testify about effects of a problem or a policy on their life or their livelihood;
- conduct letter-writing campaigns, create e-mail lists, and use phone trees;
- form a coalition to cooperate in solving a problem;
- create a mechanism, such as a lawsuit or a boycott, to force response by institutional authorities; or
- lobby as a representative of civic organizations, trade associations, professional associations, communities of interest, or constituencies.

The milk-labeling illustration in Chapter 1 exhibits citizen participation in several of these ways.

In the culture of public policy work, communication is not sufficient, but it is necessary. What does communication do? The following are its key functions.

1. Communication produces useful information. Useful information in a public policy process has four major characteristics: it

is relevant, it serves action, it has consequences, and it is publicly accessible.

(i) Is relevant: Every phase of a policy process—to frame a problem, to analyze issues, to argue approaches, to decide on intervention—demands information. Only relevant information helps, however. In deciding whether to provide information, always ask (re-ask, if necessary) and answer these questions: To what does this relate? To whom does it matter?

(ii) Serves action: In policy work, information makes things happen. In deciding whether and how to inform in a policy process, always ask and answer these questions: How does this help? What or whom does it help? What or whom do I want to help?

(iii) Has consequences: A problem, intervention, and implementation affect other concerns in many contexts. Information's effects can be wide ranging. Although you cannot foresee all consequences, you should try. In deciding whether and how to inform in a policy process, always ask and answer these questions: What is likely to happen as a result of this information? What impacts might this information have?

(iv) Is publicly accessible: Policy makers are answerable to the people who give them authority. Therefore, information used in public processes must be publicly available. Officially, it is recorded and preserved by government as an authoritative public record. Unofficially, news media of all kinds and people in everyday social interactions distribute information as well. In deciding whether and how to inform a policy process, always ask and answer this question: How will this information be made public?

2. Communication makes information intelligible. Intelligible here means understandable and applicable in context. Defined narrowly, context means a particular policy cycle, or, broadly, government and its political environment. Intelligibility occurs when expectations are activated and met. For meaningful communication to occur, information presenters and recipients must have similar expectations.

What expectations? The most basic is interaction, or give and take between people. Presenters expect to give information. Recipients expect to get information. That reciprocity is fundamental to human communication for any purpose.

Other expectations influence communication's effectiveness. Genre or communication type is powerfully influential. Some say that effective communication begins with making the right genre choice. That is the selection of an appropriate communication type (or skillful use of a prescribed type) fitted to the presenter's purpose, the recipient's purpose, and the relevant policy process.

Other powerful influences on effectiveness are utility and credibility. In public policy work, communication must be useful. What matters most is not how much you know. Rather, what matters most is how much your readers or listeners know after taking in what you say and whether they trust your information.

Finally, policy communication is expected to be efficient. Information products must be coherent, concise, and to the point. Efficient communication is universally appreciated in policy making because working conditions demand it. Public policy work is information overloaded. Especially in government and nonprofit organizations, time is scarce, schedules are nearly impossible, and attention is always fragmented. Rarely does anybody have patience for disorganized, wordy documents or talks without obvious and relevant purpose and authority.

In summary, the cultural view shows us that information functions best in a policy context when it meets expectations. That is, it succeeds when it can be comprehended quickly, recognized as relevant, trusted as accurate, traced to authoritative sources, and used with confidence by its intended readers.

Viewpoint 2: Experience

How do expectations function in readers' and writers' minds? A second viewpoint looks at communication as intellectual experience. Here's a quick sketch of what recipients experience. The sketch represents a recipient reading a policy document. It could also represent listening to an oral summation.

Recipients hunt and gather. As they attend to a communication, their attention is dynamic. They make numerous quick, tacit decisions about the information and its presenter—its subject (explicit or implicit), for whom it's intended, who is presenting it, what motivates it, what its point is, and, most importantly, whether it matters. In

other words, recipients don't just consume a communication; rather, they form a perception of it as they attend to it. This perception is the basis of the recipient's understanding of the communication's meaning, what they think and feel it is saying. (The familiar remark "What you are telling me is . . ." refers to this perception.) Moreover, recipients evaluate the perceived information and its source. For instance, as they hunt for structural cues in the text's layout, they judge the presenter to be competent in the subject and caring about the recipient's time and interest or not. If they have a choice, they choose whether it's worth their time to continue reading (or listening). If they continue, they choose how they will proceed. Typical strategies are to skim all, to dip in and out, or to read selectively, perhaps only the summary. Recipients' criteria for selection are functional, based on relevance.

Now, here is a sketch of the other side of the experience. This sketch shows you, the presenter.

There is a demand for information. You are responding to the demand alone or in a team of people. You (or you and the team) will present the information in a communication. These are your possible working conditions: You might choose the way you will communicate, or you might use a prescribed way. You might have ready access to relevant information or not. The recipients might be known to you or not entirely. The recipients' uses for the information might be known to you or not entirely. Your intentions or purpose for providing information or what you want your contribution to achieve might be clear to you or not entirely. You are aware of (or your team agrees on) the perspective you will take or not entirely. Similarly, you are sure of your position on the topic (and your team agrees with you) or not entirely. You have limited time. You (or you and the team) must decide how to plan and produce the information product in the time available. You know that your product might be the only means by which recipients will get needed information and know what you think. You know that the product must be designed to fit recipients' needs and circumstances, although you can't be sure what that will be for all recipients.

These sketches depict experience as it might occur in any setting of policy work. Whether the presenter is a policy student writing to an instructor or a policy professional writing to a legislator, similar

uncertainties might be present. The same intellectual activity is required. What goes into that activity?

A third viewpoint on policy communication brings out the relationship between a writer's thinking process and its manifestation in a written product.

Viewpoint 3: Process and Product

Process means change. Change transforms a state of existence into a different state. When understanding occurs, a presenter's information changes to become the recipient's information. Functionally, thinking in one mind must also occur in other minds. An information product such as a written document is the instrument of transformation. How? A document functions when its form or genre and its intentionally constructed features and content prompt a comprehending response. In Table 2.1, elements of thinking are associated with product features. Recipients hunt for these elements in the features of a document.

Table 2.1 Elements of a presenter's thinking manifest in product features

Element	Product Feature
Knowledge	Content specific to the domain and selected for relevance
Perspective	Characterization of content from a viewpoint
Position	Statement of message with disclosure of reasoning
Adaptation	Content made relevant to the context
Documentation	Genre, form, style appropriate to the demand

To round out this process-and-product view of communication, consider the policy communicator's need for control under hectic working conditions. A system for conceiving and producing communications is advisable. Most important is a goal. Communicators who know what they want to achieve can better assess and resolve any constraints on achieving it. They can make wiser choices of strategy and tactics. Looking forward in this guide, in the "how to" section of each chapter you will find a suggested goal, objective, strategy, and tactics (sequenced tasks) for a particular communication type.

Here, next, you will find a general approach to managing any policy communication.

In earlier times, public policy thinkers employed self-questioning to discover relevant information and valid arguments. It is still a good methodology. So, this overview's fourth viewpoint on policy communication reduces the required intellectual activity to a comprehensive set of questions. The questions are distilled from the experience of many practitioners who generously contributed to this outline. (If you are experienced, you should add your own tried-and-true questions to the outline.) These questions constitute a methodical approach to writing or speaking that is fitted to the policymaking process and to the culture of policy communication. They translate the culture into questions you should routinely ask when you initiate a communication. At the end of the questions are two checklists of expected qualities that public policy documents or talks should exhibit. The checklists are intended for your use in assessing the functionality and quality of a policy communication you have produced.

Now, you should only read the outline and checklists for perspective and for familiarity. Later, when you have an actual need to communicate, you should use the method to plan before you write. Use the checklists after you write. Make a habit of using both.

If you have had mainly classroom writing experience, you may be surprised by the method's questions. They represent policy workplace writing conditions. For orientation to workplace writing, see any professional communication textbook.

Ask and answer the method's questions to plan and produce a communication. They prompt you to consider all the usual aspects of a writing situation and to take note of significant particulars that might affect your work. Your answers to the questions are your guide to writing or planning the needed product.

Practice this questioning methodically (even if tediously at first) until it becomes routine. At first, jotting down your answers and keeping your notes nearby as you write will be helpful. Later, when you habitually use this method, you will comfortably adapt it to particular or unusual demands. A word of caution: even if you skip some questions, do not omit whole steps in the method. All the steps are needed to cover the basics. Omitting a step in the preparation wastes time when you are writing or causes other trouble later.

If you are writing for someone else or if you are producing a document with many contributors, as state budgeting illustrates in Chapter 1, remember to consult with others as needed to answer the questions.

Viewpoint 4: General Method of Communicating in a Policy Process

Step 1: Prepare
First, ask questions about the policy process.

Policy

- To what policy action (underway or anticipated) does this communication relate?
- Does a policy already exist?

Problem

- What conditions are problematic?
- What problem do these conditions present?
- How do I define the problem?
- How do others define the problem?
- What narrative does my definition suggest?
- How do I frame or characterize the problem? What is it like, metaphorically?
- What stories, frames, or metaphors are apparent in other definitions of the problem?

Actors

- Who are the actors?
- What are their roles?
- What are their interests?
- Who else has a significant role or interest in the process?

Politics

- What are the major disagreements or conflicts?
- What are the major agreements or common interests?
- Which actors are most likely to influence the process or the outcome?

Step 2: Plan
Second, ask questions about the communication.

Purpose

- Why is this communication needed?
- What do I want to accomplish?

Message

- What story do I want to tell?
- What is my message?
- How does my message differ from that of others on the topic?
- What argument will I make to support my message?
- How does my argument relate to that of others on the topic?

Role

- What is my role in this process?
- What is my interest in the outcome?

Authority

- Whose name will be on the document(s): Mine? Another's? An organization's?
- For whom does the communication speak?

Reception

- Who is (are) the named recipient(s)?
- Who will use the information?
- How do I want the information to be used?
- Will the document(s) be forwarded? Circulated? To whom? Summarized? By whom?

Response

- What will recipients know after reading the document(s)? What will users of its information do?
- What is likely to happen as a consequence of this communication?

Setting and Situation

- What is the occasion? What is the time frame for communicating?
- Where, when, and how will this communication be presented?
- Where, when, and how will it be received? Used?

Form and Medium

- Is there a prescribed form or do I choose?
- What is the appropriate medium for presentation and delivery? A written document? A telephone call? E-mail?

Contents

- What information will support the message?
- Where will a succinct statement of the message be placed?
- How should the contents be arranged to support the message?
- How will the document's design make information easy to find?

Tone and Appearance

- How do I want this communication to sound? What attitude do I want to convey?
- How do I want the document(s) to look? Is a style or layout prescribed, or do I choose how to present the contents?

Document Management

- Who will draft the document? Will there be collaborators?
- Who will review the draft? Who will revise it?

Step 3: Produce
Based on your preparation and planning, write the document. Do it in three separate passes: draft first, review second, and revise third. Do not mix the tasks. Separating those tasks allows you to manage your time and handle distractions while you write and to communicate better in the end.

The tasks are outlined here. Use this outline to stay on track if you're working alone or under pressure or if you're producing a short document. If you're collaborating or team-writing, or if you're

creating a multidocument product (such as the budget described in Chapter 1), adapt the task outline to your circumstances.

Draft

- Produce a complete working draft in accordance with your preparation and plan (your answers to the questions listed earlier).

Review

- Compare the draft to the plan and highlight any differences.
- Get additional review of the draft by others, if advisable.
- Refer to the checklists (shown next here) to assess the draft's effectiveness and quality and to highlight needs for revision.

Revise

- Make the changes called for by review.

Two Checklists

Features of Effectiveness. A public policy communication is most likely to be useful if it addresses a specific audience about a specific problem, has a purpose related to a specific policy action, represents authority accurately, uses the appropriate form, and is designed for use.

- ☐ Addresses a specific audience about a specific problem: In policy work, time is scarce. Specifying a communication's audience or intended recipient(s) and the subject or problem saves thinking time for both writer and reader (or speaker and listener). The information's relevance for the recipient should be made clear.
- ☐ Has a purpose related to a specific policy action: Policy cycles have several phases. Multiple actions and cycles are underway simultaneously. Timing matters. Agendas change. Stuff happens. Therefore, explicitly stating a communication's purpose and relevance to the recipient makes it more likely to get timely attention.
- ☐ Represents authority accurately: Policy communications do more than present information; they also represent a type of participation and power. For a policy communication to be taken seriously, to have influence, and to influence rightly, the communicator's role and status—a citizen with an opinion, an expert with an opinion, a spokesperson for a nongovernmental organization, a government official—must be accurately represented.
- ☐ Uses appropriate form: Settings of policy work have their own conventions for communicating. Use the document type, style, and tone of presentation that are expected for the purpose and that accommodate working conditions in the setting of its reception.
- ☐ Is designed for use: People's attention is easily distracted in settings of policy work. Dense, disorganized text will not be read or heard. For people to comprehend under conditions of time pressure and information overload, contents must be easy to find and to use. Written documents should chunk information, use subheadings, and organize details in bulleted lists or paragraphs or graphics. Spoken texts should cue listeners' attention with similar devices.

Measures of Excellence. No two communications are exactly alike, but every public policy communication should try to meet criteria for clarity, correctness, conciseness, and credibility.

- ☐ Clarity: The communication has a single message that intended recipients can find quickly, understand easily, recognize as relevant, and use.
- ☐ Correctness: The communication's information is accurate.
- ☐ Conciseness: The communication presents only necessary information in the fewest words possible, with aids for comprehension.
- ☐ Credibility: A communication's information can be trusted, traced, and used with confidence.

Example

For practice, apply this overview to an actual policy communication. Keep the four viewpoints in mind as you read a professional writing sample, a report by the Congressional Research Service. Because of

space limitations, the full report is not shown. The complete summary is shown. At the summary's end, you will find access information for the full report.

The Federal Food Safety System: A Primer

Renee Johnson
Specialist in Agriculture Policy
January 11, 2011
Congressional Research Service
7–5700
www.crs.gov
RS22600
CRS Report for Congress
Prepared for Members and Committees of Congress

Summary

Numerous federal, state, and local agencies share responsibilities for regulating the safety of the U.S. food supply. Federal responsibility for food safety rests primarily with the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA). FDA, an agency of the Department of Health and Human Services, is responsible for ensuring the safety of all domestic and imported food products (except for most meats and poultry). FDA also has oversight of all seafood, fish, and shellfish products. USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS) regulates most meat and poultry and some egg products. State and local food safety authorities collaborate with federal agencies for inspection and other food safety functions, and they regulate retail food establishments.

The combined efforts of the food industry and government regulatory agencies often are credited with making the U.S. food supply among the safest in the world. However, critics view this system as lacking the organization, regulatory tools, and resources to adequately combat foodborne illness—as evidenced by a series of widely publicized food safety problems, including concerns about adulterated food and food ingredient imports, and illnesses linked to various types of fresh product, to peanut products, and to some meat and poultry products. Some critics also note that the organizational complexity of the U.S. food safety system as well as trends in U.S. food markets—for example, increasing imports as a share of U.S. food consumptions, increasing consumption of fresh often unprocessed foods—pose ongoing challenges to ensuring food safety.

The 111th Congress passed comprehensive food safety legislation in December 2010 (FDA Food Safety Modernization Act, P.L. 111-353). Although numerous agencies share responsibility for regulating food safety, this newly enacted legislation focused on foods regulated by FDA and amended FDA's existing structure and authorities, in particular the Federal Food, Drug, and Cosmetic Act (FFDCA, 21 U.S.C. §§ 301 *et seq.*). This newly enacted law is the largest expansion of FDA's food safety authorities since the 1930s; it does not directly address meat and poultry products under the jurisdiction of USDA. The 112th Congress will likely provide oversight and scrutiny over how the law is implemented, including FDA's coordination with other federal agencies such as USDA and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

In addition, some in Congress have long claimed that once FDA's food safety laws were amended and updated, it would be expected that Congress would next turn to amending laws and regulations governing USDA's meat and poultry products. Food safety incidents and concerns regarding USDA-regulated meat and poultry products are similarly well documented. A series of bills were introduced and debated in the previous few Congresses. These bills may be re-introduced and debated in the 112th Congress.

(The full report can be found at opencrs.com/document/RS22600/.)

What This Example Shows. This report summary manifests the transformation of process into product. Knowledge, perspective, position, adaptation, and documentation are effectively represented.

The first paragraph identifies the subject, food supply safety policy. The policy actors, federal agencies and their state counterparts, are recognized. In broad strokes, the writer demonstrates knowledge of the domain.

The second paragraph recognizes another actor, the private-sector food industry, before summarizing the consensus viewpoint that federal government and the industry have together achieved a safe U.S. food supply. Complication of this consensus view immediately follows. Cueing the reader with a "however," the writer introduces a disagreement that challenges the consensus. Critics point to a problem, foodborne illness, that has exposed gaps in protection of the food supply. The consensus and the critical viewpoints differ. The author's own perspective is neutral, as that of an informed observer rather than a partisan.

The third paragraph opens with a sentence introducing the primary actor, who is also the report's intended recipient, the U.S. Congress. This legislative actor makes policy that agency actors will administer and industry actors will implement. With the primary actor ("who cares?") in focus, attention shifts to that actor's concerns ("so what?"). Again, in broad strokes, the author describes the previous 111th Congress's legislative solution to the problem of foodborne illness. Possible next steps by the 112th Congress are previewed. The preview is tailored to the policy cycle and timely for the legislators' purposes, agenda setting and problem recognition, at the start of a new session. This fitting of the report to recipients' particular purposes at a particular time shows adaptation.

Other features of the documentation adapt to recipients' fragmented attention and to their need for confidence in the report's accuracy:

- An advance summary tells readers what the report offers.
- In that summary, four short sections (each a paragraph long) begin with a sentence telling the reader that paragraph's main point, followed by subsequent sentences that consistently fill in the point.
- After first use, domain-specific vocabulary is immediately explained.
- At the summary's end, citations enable readers to trace the writer's sources.

Another way to recognize adaptation in this summary is to look at the story it tells. Policy communications tell a story. Look for the storyline in the CRS report sample.

The sample tells a story of agenda setting and problem recognition. As the story opens, government characters are poised to act further on a new law. The characters are legislators, bureaucrats, producers of goods, providers of services, consumers, and subject-matter experts. There are no heroes or villains, only ordinary characters performing their relative roles in a system of governance. A problem has emerged to reveal flaws in the system. Characters have previously devised a solution to the problem. Will that solution work as intended? Is it sufficient to solve the problem? To learn the answers, stay tuned.

This story helps to move the reader's attention along. It is compactly told in four sequenced paragraphs. The first paragraph, or prologue, sets the scene and introduces the lead actor. The second paragraph introduces supporting actors and the complication, a problem the readers care about and for which the solution is not obvious. The third paragraph examines the current situation. The fourth paragraph sets the stage for continued action.

Summary and Preview

Multiple actors in varied roles communicate to do policy work. Distilled into a general method for practical writing and speaking, their working knowledge of the process and communication's role can instruct you. This method keeps you on track, enables you to produce under pressure, to behave ethically, and to be accountable.

It is hard to get communication right. The know-how summarized in this chapter gives you a broad foundation. Refer to it often as you take up specific communication tasks. Problem definition, perhaps the most consequential task of policy communication, is described in Chapter 3.

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Further Reading

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