

Risk Communication Options¹

► **Option 1:**

Scientific assessments of risk provide the most objective answers to risk problems. Our company is dedicated to developing accurate evaluations of the costs and benefits involved in risk-related decisions. After thoroughly analyzing all relevant data, we will present the numerical results to members of the community so that they can make rational decisions for their town.

► **Option 2:**

Scientific assessments of risk provide objective answers to risk problems. Our company is dedicated to developing accurate evaluations of the costs and benefits involved in risk-related decisions. The results of our analyses are often very complex. It is our responsibility to put the data that we collect into a form that the community can easily understand. If community members understand the significance of such data, they will be able to make rational decisions about how to manage risk.

► **Option 3:**

Lay people do not regularly use scientific assessments to make decisions about risks. It is our responsibility to help the community make better decisions about how to manage risks. We can accomplish this goal by showing how the community has accepted similar risks in the past. Once the community members realize this earlier acceptance, they will understand that the risk that our company may impose on the community is very small.

► **Option 4:**

It is our responsibility to help the community make better decisions about how to manage risks. We can accomplish this goal by showing our audience that any risk our company may impose on the community is small compared to the benefits that our company provides. The risk posed by our company is almost negligible, whereas our company provides many jobs and large tax revenues to the town. In addition, we can offer community members compensation for the risks that they accept. If we are sincere in the offer that we make to the public, community members will see that it is in their interest to keep our company in their town.

► **Option 5:**

We will have a difficult time convincing the town to support our company because the community does not trust our company to manage risks. To survive in this town, we will need to show that we are dedicated to protecting the community from the risks our company may impose on it. We can accomplish this goal by taking responsibility for our actions, illustrating how we're managing risks to the community, and engaging members of the community in a dialogue about what their concerns are. In short, we will have to make the community a partner in our company's risk management activities.

¹Not listed in any particular order

Source: Fischhoff, Baruch. "Risk Perception and Communication Unplugged: Twenty Years of Process," *Risk Analysis* 15, no. 2(1995):137-45.