WE NEED A BIAS FOR ACTION.

DOES LISTENING COUNT?

THAT’S NOT ACTION.

SO... YOU DON’T WANT ME TO LISTEN TO YOU?

I DIDN’T THINK THIS ALL THE WAY THROUGH.

TAP ME ON THE SHOULDER WHEN YOU’RE DONE.
Primary benefits of stakeholder involvement:
(a) establishing credibility,  
(b) anticipating controversy,  
(c) ensuring transparency and accountability,  
(d) improving relevance, and  
(e) enhancing quality.

Stakeholder Engagement Trends

Trend 1: Connectivity and Hyper Transparency
Trend 2: Individual Empowerment
Trend 3: Work Automation
Trend 4: Climate Change and Water Resources
Trend 5: Program Delivery Oversight

“Old Fashioned” Listening

- Interviews, focus groups, surveys
- Provide deeper insights into benefits and obstacles
- Provide ideas
- Provide stories
- Fosters buy-in and collaboration
Paperwork Reduction Act (PRA)

Surveys of 10 or more people require prior Office of Management and Budget (OMB) approval:

- Applies to federal agencies
- Requires an OMB application and Federal Register notice
- Generally takes 6+ months to gain approval
PRA Compliant Listening

1. A focus group with under 10 participants
2. Interviews with groups <10
3. Feedback gathered at conferences or events
4. Involving stakeholders in product development (Agile)
5. Stakeholder Advisory Groups
6. Automated monitoring tools, data analytics
Automated “Listening”

- Google Analytics, Web Trends or other web monitoring
- Social media monitoring
- Media/social media monitoring tools
- Usage stats from online databases
- eMail marketing data
1. PLAN
From mission, set goals. Define target stakeholders and potential partners. Develop messages, strategy and work plan.

2. CREATE

3. IMPLEMENT
Distribute eNews, submit abstracts, present at conferences, conduct webinar, support/leverage partner outreach efforts.

4. MEASURE
Compare results from baseline (web stats, emails subscribes, click-throughs, media/social media) to track trends and measure outreach performance.
EPA Water Security Example

- Interviews with four groups:
  1. Drinking/Waste Water National Associations
  2. Large Utilities
  3. Medium Utilities
  4. Small Utilities

- Seeking insights into:
  1. How best to communicate
  2. Status of water/waste water disaster preparedness
  3. Best practices and challenges/obstacles
  4. Use of EPA information/tools and “wish-list” for future
Insights from Traditional Listening

- **Large**: Well-prepared
- **Medium**: High-medium are well-prepared. Low-medium face capacity/resource constraints
- **Small**: Difficult to reach. Significant capacity/resource constraints.
- **eMail** is the preferred method to receive EPA communication.
- **Tool feedback**: Security concerns
EPA’s “Listening Dashboard”

Datasets include:

- Google Analytics
- Constant Contact
- Conference Data
- Webinar Data
- FEMA Declarations
- Meltwater (media monitoring)
Insights from the Data Analytics

- High percentage of mobile users
- Gaps in outreach to high risk areas
- Timely and targeted emails get better results
- Outreach efforts are working

*Test messages and prove value to leadership*
Action Strategy

- Recruit Large/Medium utilities for best practices, as peer-to-peer “Ambassadors”
- **Focus on Small utilities**: go to them, cultivate partners
- Use email—but make it tailored and timely
- No USBs, limit tools w/data upload requirements
- CEUs for Webinars
Northern CA Floods

Actions:
- Sent email with link to EPA resources to only affected utilities

Results:
- Increase in new visitors from affected area
- Uptick in downloads for both the Flood Resilience Guide and the Flyer
Flood Resilience Guide

FLOOD RESILIENCE
A Basic Guide for Water and Wastewater Utilities

Select a menu option below.
First time users should start with the Overview.

Overview  Approach  Mitigation Options  Pilot Project
**Flood Resilience Guide**

**Approach to Flood Resilience**

1. **STEP 1:** Understand the Threat of Flooding
   - Flooding depends on various factors including rainfall, topography, river-flow, drainage and tidal-surge. The threat of flooding is based on the likelihood that such a flooding event will occur. Learn how the Berwick Water Department (BWD) evaluated their threat of flooding from the video. Also, the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) is a resource to help you. FEMA produces maps of a "100-year flood" (a flood event that has a one percent chance of occurring in a given year) and a more catastrophic "300-year flood" (a flood event that has a two tenths of a percent chance of occurring in a given year). Click on the Step 1 worksheet icon below so that you can document the flooding threat and obtain FEMA Flood Maps.

2. **STEP 2:** Identify Vulnerable Assets & Determine Consequences

3. **STEP 3:** Identify & Evaluate Mitigation Measures

4. **STEP 4:** Develop Plan to Implement Mitigation Measures
Key Take-aways

1. Overall mission/goal(s) drives stakeholder engagement.
2. You cannot control but you can influence the conversation.
3. Your outreach budget should be \( \geq 50\% \) listening
4. For best results, use both old fashion listening and data analytics
5. Extend your limited budget with win-win partnerships
6. Use “listening” tools and data analytics to stay abreast of 24x7 issues and monitor/measure outreach performance.
Questions?

Nushat Thomas  
Lead Environmental Protection Specialist  
EPA OW/OGWDW/WSD  
(202) 564-4674  
Thomas.Nushat@epa.gov  
www.epa.gov/waterresilience

Janice Roper-Graham  
President  
Outreach Process Partners  
(888) OPP-0101, x701  
Janice@opp-llc.com  
www.opp-llc.com  
@StratComGal