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Simplifying Communication in Emergency Management

There is quite a bit of literature focused on communication in Emergency Management but nearly all of it is focused on how to better communicate with the public. While ensuring the public is informed following an incident is extremely important, Emergency Management professionals must communicate beyond this stakeholder group. The sheer complexity of the incidents Emergency Management teams are responsible for requires resources and collaboration across numerous organizations with vastly different expertise. The research that exists regarding interorganizational communication in Emergency Management is largely about different types of technology that enable communication across organizations including social media. This is where the research falls short of what practitioners regularly identify as an area of opportunity.

After-action reports commonly call for different organizations to communicate better, more efficiently, and more effectively both following incidents and following exercises. While communicating seems like a simple concept that each of us do every day, there are simple mechanisms that individuals within Emergency Management organizations can utilize to

communicate more clearly and ensure that the messages they send are received as they were meant to be.

This poster showcase will invite attendees to think about how to trim down the complexity of the way they speak by remembering how technical the work they do is to avoid jargon, avoid acronyms, and using values rather than descriptors when possible. These are communication techniques that can help not only in the heat of a response but should be objectives practiced during blue sky days as well.

Presentation Theme: Bridging the divide between communication research and techniques to simplify speech in order to improve message reception to help Emergency Management professionals communicate with other organizations more effectively.

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