### Risk Communication Templates*  
Use these templates to create effective messages in high concern, high stress situations  

**CCO TEMPLATE**  
Use when asked a question with high-emotion  
**Steps:**  
- Compassion  
- Conviction  
- Optimism  
**Example:** (1) “I am very sorry to hear about…..; (2) I believe that…; (3) In the future, I believe that….”  

**“WHAT IF?” TEMPLATE**  
Use when asked a “what if, what might happen” question  
**Steps:**  
- Repeat the question (without negatives)  
- Bridge to “what is”  
- State what you know factually  
**Example:** (1) “You’ve asked me what might happen if…; (2) I believe there is value to talk about what is, what we know now; (3) And what we know is….”  

**GUARANTEE TEMPLATE**  
Use when asked to guarantee an event or outcome  
**Steps:**  
- Indicate that the question is about the future  
- Indicate that the Past/Present predict the future  
- Bridge to known facts, processes or actions  
**Example:** (1) “You’ve asked me to guarantee that…; (2) I believe that…; (3) In the future, I believe that….”  

**3X PROBING TEMPLATE**  
Use when confronted with a criticism, objective, or allegation, or challenge  
**Steps:**  
- Ask at least three non-judgmental questions before replying  
- Bridge to three positive, constructive, or solution oriented messages  
**Example:** “Can you tell me more? Can you help me to better understand what you said?”  

**IDK (I DON’T KNOW) TEMPLATE**  
Use when you don't know, can't answer, or aren't best source  
**Steps:**  
- Repeat the question (without negatives)  
- Say “I wish I could answer”; or “My ability to answer is limited;” or “I don’t know” (less preferred)  
- Say why you can’t answer  
- Give a follow up with a deadline  
- Bridge to what you can say  
**Example:** (1) “I wish I could answer…; (2) I wish I could answer…; (3) We’re still looking into it. (4) I expect to be able to tell you more by…; (5) What I can tell you is…”  

**FALSE ALLEGATION TEMPLATE**  
Use when responding to a hostile question, false allegation, or criticism  
**Steps:**  
- Repeat/paraphrase the question without repeating the negative; repeat instead the opposite; the underlying value, or use more neutral language  
- Indicate that the issue is important  
- Indicate what you have done, are doing, or will do to address the issue  
**Example:** (1) “You’ve raised a serious question about “x”…; (2) “x” is important to me…; (3) We have done the following to address “x”…  

**BRIDGING TEMPLATES**  
Use when you want to return to your key points or redirect the communication  
**Steps:**  
1. “And what’s most important to know is…”  
2. “However, that is the most important to look at is…”  
3. “However, the real issue here is…”  
4. “And what this all means is…”  
5. “And what’s most important to remember is…”  
6. “With this in mind, if we look at the bigger picture…”  
7. “With this in mind, if we take a look back…”  
8. “If we look at a broader perspective,…”  
9. “If we look at the big picture…”  
10. “Let me put all this in perspective by saying…”  
11. “What all this information tells me is…”  
12. “Before we continue, let me take a step back and repeat that…”  
13. “Before we continue, let me emphasize that…”  
14. “This is an important point because…”  
15. “What this all boils down to is…”  
16. “The heart of the matter is…”  

**BRIDGING TEMPLATES (cont.)**  
17. “What matters most in this situation is…”  
18. “And as I said before,….”  
19. “And if we take a closer look, we would see…”  
20. “Let me just add to this that…”  
21. “I think it would be more correct to say…”  
22. “Let me point out again that…”  
23. “Let me emphasize again…”  
24. “In this context, it is essential that I note…”  
25. “Another thing to remember is…”  
26. “Before we leave the subject, let me add that…”  
27. “And that reminds me…”  
28. “And the one thing that is important to remember is…”  
29. “What I’ve said comes down to this…”  
30. “Here’s the real issue…”  
31. “While…is important, it is also important to remember…”  
32. “It’s true that…but it is also true that…”  
33. “What is key here is…”  

*Source: Dr. Vincent T. Covello, Center for Risk Communication, Copyright 2004*  

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**RULE OF 3 TEMPLATE**  
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question  
**Recommendation:** Provide no more than three messages, ideas, or points at a time  
**Example:** (1) “You can do” “x” (2) or “y” but I recommend (3) “z”  

**27/9/3 TEMPLATE**  
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question  
**Recommendation:** Be brief and concise in your responses: no more than 27 words, 9 seconds, and 3 messages  

**PRIMACY/RECENTY TEMPLATE**  
Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question  
**Recommendation:** Provide the most important items or points first and last  

**1N=3P (1 NEGATIVE EQUALS 3 POSITIVES) TEMPLATE**  
Use when breaking bad news or stating a negative  
**Recommendation:** Balance the negative message with at least three positive, constructive, or solution oriented messages