

PERIODIC TABLE FOR HIGH CONCERN COMMUNICATION

Use these templates for high concern, risk, crisis, and change management situations

Basic Templates

Key Templates

Advanced Templates

R3 (Rule of 3)

Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question.

Recommendation: Provide no more than three messages, ideas, or points at a time.

IDK (I Don't Know)

Use when you don't know, can't answer, or aren't the best source.

Steps:

- Repeat the question (without negatives)
- Say "My ability to answer is limited by...;" or "I don't know"
- Say why you can't answer
- Provide a follow up with a deadline
- Bridge to what you can say

CCO

(Compassion, Conviction, Optimism)

Use when asked a question with high emotion.

Steps:

- Compassion (Caring, Empathy, Listening)
- Conviction
- Optimism

Example: (1) "I am very sorry to hear about...;" (2) "I'm confident that...;" (3) "In the future, I believe that..."

ALE

(Authority, Logic, Emotion)

Use to encourage appropriate attitudes, beliefs, or behaviors.

- **(A)uthority Message:** Appeal to authority—those perceived as high in credibility
- **(L)ogic Message:** Appeal to logic (if x, then y).
- **(E)motion Message:** Appeal to an emotion (anger, fear, joy, empathy, surprise, grief, hope, etc).

KDG

(Know, Do, Go)

Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

- **(K)now Message:** Share what is most important for people to know.
- **(D)o Message:** Share what is most important for people to do.
- **(G)o Message:** Share where people should go for credible information.

P/R (Primacy/Recency)

Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question.

Recommendation: Provide the most important items or points first and last.

FA (False Allegation)

Use when responding to a hostile question, false allegation, or criticism.

Steps:

- Repeat/paraphrase question without repeating the negative; repeat underlying value or concern, or use more neutral language
- Indicate the issue is important
- Indicate what you have done, are doing, or will do to address the issue

27/9/3

(27 Words, 9 Seconds, 3 Messages)

Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question.

Recommendation: Be brief and concise in your first response; no more than 27 words, 9 seconds, 3 messages.

TBC

(Trust, Benefit, Control)

Use when responding to questions or concerns indicating high perceived risks or outrage.

- **(T)rust Message:** Listening to messages communicating listening, caring, or transparency.
- **(B)enefit Message:** Messages communicating benefits to the individual, org, or society.
- **(C)ontrol Message:** Messages that give people things to do or give them a sense of control.

KDD

(Know, Do, Do)

Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

- **(K)now Message:** Share what is most important for people to know.
- **(D)o Message:** Share what you are doing to address the concern.
- **(D)o Message:** Share what people can do to address the concern.

G/WI (Guarantee/What If)

Used when asked a "what if" question or to guarantee an event or outcome.

Steps:

- Indicate that the question is about the future
- Indicate that the past and the present help predict the future
- Bridge to "what is": known facts, processes or actions

AGL-4

(Average Grade Level Minus Four)

Use when responding to any high stress or emotionally charged question.

Steps:

Provide information at four or more grade levels below the average grade level of the audience.

IN=3P

(One Negative Equals Three Positives)

Use when breaking bad news or stating a negative.

Recommendation:

Balance one bad news or negative message with at least three or more positive, constructive, or solution-oriented messages.

CAP

(Caring, Action, Perspective)

Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

- **(C)aring Message:** Communicates listening, caring, empathy, and compassion.
- **(A)ction Message:** Actions you are taking to address the concern.
- **(P)erspective Message:** Helps put the concern in perspective.

VCD

(Voice, Choice, Do)

Use to give upset people a greater sense of control.

- **(V)oice Message:** Messages communicating listening, dialogue, or participation.
- **(C)hoice Message:** Messages communicating options, alternatives, or available choices.
- **(D)o Message:** Messages that give people things to do, increase feelings of hope, etc.

AAF

(Acknowledge, Action, Follow-up)

Steps:

- **(A)cknowledge Uncertainty:** Identify knowledge gaps and challenges
- **(A)ction:** State actions you have taken, are taking or will take to address the issue
- **(F)ollow-up:** Provide information on where people can obtain timely and credible information

Y/N

(Yes/No Template)

Use when asked a yes/no question that cannot be answered yes or no.

Steps:

- Indicate you have been asked yes/no question
- Indicate it would be difficult to answer the question yes or no
- Indicate why it would be difficult to answer the question yes or no
- Respond to the underlying concern

KDK

(Know/Don't Know)

Use when there is high uncertainty.

Steps:

- State what you know
- State what you don't know
- State what you are doing to achieve greater certainty or knowledge

C/S

(Caring/Sharing)

Use when responding to a question or statement containing incorrect information.

- **(C)aring Message:** State what you and the person holding incorrect information have in common.
- **(S)haring Message (1):** Invite person holding incorrect information to share their information w/ you.
- **(S)haring Message (2):** Share the correct information again.

Reference



Dr. Vincent Covelto, Director
www.centerforriskcommunication.com



Maga Design, Visual Strategists
www.magadesign.com