



# OSH Communication and Risk

In view of the report:  
Priorities for occupational safety and health research in Europe: 2013-2020

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# Lineout

- On me
- NIOH Norway – a traditionalist
- Communication
- Risk
- Risk Communication and OSH
- EU-OSHAs report and communication
- Challenges
- Back to risk and communication



# On me

42 years, married, 2 children

## Background – life:

Blue collar, Narvik Norway,

Sibling No. 3/3 (= less IQ according to research from NIOH)

Knew what I wanted to do at the age of 12 (= still smart)



## Background – studies:

Marketing, Sociology (work and cultural), Media and Communication,  
Management, Geography, Philosophy, Strategy, Administration

## Background – work:

Postal services, Geography, Sport, Art, Classical music, Training,  
Construction, Defense, Education, Dotcom, Mobile gaming, Radio,  
Events, Film, Health

# NIOH Norway (STAMI)



Publically funded but not bound

An objective partner for all parties in the Norwegian worklife

The Norwegian authorities main institution and advisor for research upon work environment and occupational health

Scientific and strategic advisor for the Labour and Petroleum Inspectorate Authorities

A sectoral institute

Budget: approx. 13 mill €

Approx 122 man-labour years



# NIOH on media and PR

Communication at NIOH shall contribute to:

People having, as far as possible, a safe, meaningful and health-bringing working life

Reduce work related sickness absence

Provide a possibility to prolongue their working life

Enhance the participation in the working life



# NIOH on media and PR

Both inbound and outbound; both old and new media

By the employees at NIOH – each and one in particular

By the power of their knowledge, their role and their responsibility

By their research-projects and the findings therein

By the institutes role in society



# Communication

## WHY?

- To stand out
- To be unique
- To perform better
- To create
- To educate
- To deliver
- To succeed better
- To teach others
- To make deliveries
- To be visible

## But really WHY?

- To learn
- To engage
- To take part
- To share
- To perform together
- To be -
- Not just to exist

## How?

- Disruptive
- Sizeable
- Shareable
- Disintegrated
- Mashable
- Engagement driven
- Not one-way-delivery
- Start-stories
- Direct
- For the many
- For the few
- By the many





# Scientific communication

Paper...

But, digitally accessible to ease my own work

Static

Peer-review

Controlled access

For the few – for the educated

Citation-focus

The whole project

In a way – follow the leader (of your field), but be brave and ingenious

End-story – do not tell about it before published; then, to the ones that understand

Science take on communication:

”Yes, we see that we need people like you..., but we do not like it and we will not bend!





# Prevention

Most often:

- Social campaigning

- Quest to change behaviour

- Politically decided

- 'sign of the time' aka what's in the wind/what's modern now

Every now and then:

- Involvement in activities

Almost all the time:

- Little – to no – scientific studies performed on impact, effect and or change

- Little significant background on activities chosen

- Little follow-up after the campaign

More and more:

- Using different tools to reach and to have an impact (ex OIRA)

- Setting up interventions to see what has impact and not

- Directed towards user-needs

# Risk

a situation involving exposure to danger

Oxford Dictionary



“You’re gonna need a bigger boat”





# Risk Communication

Risk Communication most often comes to life when a crisis occurs

Therefore it is of vital importance to remember that:

Risk Communication is counter intuitive!

- One cannot wait until all information is on hand
- One cannot necessarily show that one is in control
- The situation is on-going and needs to be handled

Source:

Jana Telfer, National Center for Environmental Health, CDC, Risk Communication Specialist  
American Authorities' advisor to Japan during the Fukushima crisis



# Risk Communication

Good Risk Communication therefore involves:

- Be human  
convey feelings; caring and empathy
- Acknowledge uncertainty  
it's bad – it can get worse
- Share information as it comes in  
we know, we don't know, we do this to close gap

Source:

Jana Telfer, National Center for Environmental Health, CDC, Risk Communication Specialist  
American Authorities' advisor to Japan during the Fukushima crisis



# Risk

“Risk communication, and OSH communication in general, are closely related to the transfer and dissemination of research results.”

Priorities for OSH research in Europe 2013-2020



# On Risk in our setting

- Risk assessment - Scientific / Based in science
- Risk management - Policy and/or study/review of consequences
- Risk communication - Risk perception – risk communication





# On Risk in our setting

## Individual level

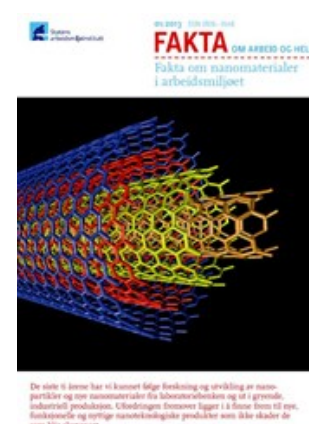
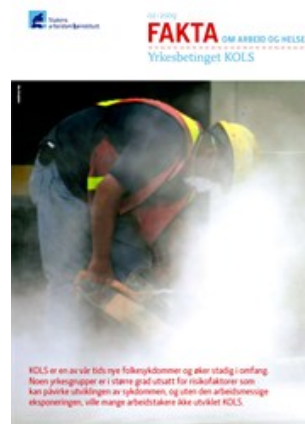
- when the worker knocks on your door

## Group level

- clusters of illness, special events and follow up

## Population level

- is factor x in work potentially harmful for health; what does science know?



# Risk Communication

Risk Communication is more or less a regular communication process in, most often, a regular situation;

Every so often, it involves regular communication in a non regular situation

A two-way interactive communication process which provides the necessary information;

In order for the involved to be able to make decisions regarding their own health and safety

It is integrated in the risk-analysis process and most functional when performed systematically

<http://www.who.int/foodsafety/micro/riskcommunication/en/>



# Priorities for occupational safety and health research in Europe: 2013-2020



# Communication

Risk communication is – in general – related to scientific findings

Communication is a key component of effective risk management

It empowers non-expert and includes stakeholders

The communication focus is oriented on change of behaviour

-

The report states a need for strengthened research on risk communication



# Priorities

The identification of stakeholders and target groups

To characterise of the stakeholders and target groups

To assess the effectiveness of different communication channels

To adapt these channels to the OSH-audiences



# Priorities

Assessing new technologies

Identifying underlying mechanisms and influences

Investigating how these are determinants of behaviour

Further development of methodologies of evaluation

Development of risk communication strategies suitable for uncertainty

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Leading us back to the stated need for strengthened research on risk communication; with an addition of effect and impact



# Challenges



# What happens in the world of OSH + science

Interactive tools are being more and more used -  
([www.stami.no\\_noa](http://www.stami.no_noa))

Interactivity eats it's way into peer-review -  
(<http://www.rsc.org/AboutUs/News/PressReleases/2013/Altmetric-partnership-article-level-metrics.asp>)

Science goes mobile;NIOSH merges science and media convergence -  
(<http://www.synlab.gatech.edu/project.php?id=66>)

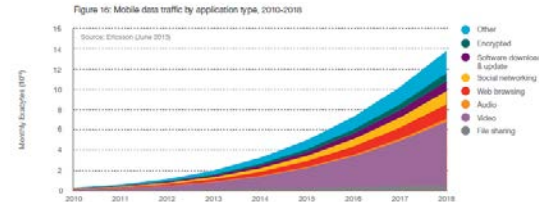
Social media is positioning within the researchers world, changing action and providing a platform for personalized inbound media within science as well -  
(<http://www.researchgate.net/>)







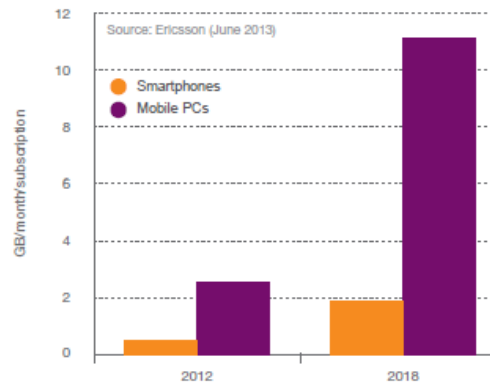
#peer-review #science  
Becomes open and shared



#video #sharing #stories  
Content changes – stories change

#storytelling #science #emotions  
Becomes engaging and shared

Figure 12: Smartphone and mobile PC traffic per month and active subscriptions, 2012 and 2018



#smartphone #onthemove #shiftofuse  
We must adjust to other media-types



# What does this mean to us?

**EASY:** the set-up is changing  
the storytelling is changing  
the target-groups are changing  
technology is continuously changing  
science-performing is changing

**HARD:** it imposes changes on how we think science and dissemination  
it imposes changes on how we are being perceived  
it imposes changes on our culture and way of being  
it imposes changes on our visibility  
it imposes changes on how we perceive ourselves and what we do



# Challenges

New Media does not change science -

- it changes the perception of science and its findings
- it changes the possibilities to perform science
- it changes the dissemination and importance of science
- it challenges the scientists on other arenas but science
- it provides possibilities for enhanced transparency and openness
- it provides possibilities for more accountability and trust
- it must change culture; our scientific culture on dissemination



# Back to Risk and OSH communication

It is all about strategic leadership and strategic communication

Integrated use of channels

Strategically decided and used

Risk assessment needs to be performed more regularly

Not just on end-findings,

but on the stories that carries our findings

We need to add surveillance into the equation

Big data

OSH Surveillance data and indicators

Eurofund-statistics

We need to add social media content and engagement into the equation

What is the talk on?

Can we spot the next area of communicative action by use of #



# Risk Communication - tools

## **Center for Risk Communication**

Information dealing with the development and use of advanced communication methods.

<http://www.centerforriskcommunication.com>

## **Health Risk Communication Bibliography**

National Library of Medicine bibliography listing for Health Risk Communication.

[http://www.nlm.nih.gov/archive/20061214/pubs/cbm/health\\_risk\\_communication.html](http://www.nlm.nih.gov/archive/20061214/pubs/cbm/health_risk_communication.html)

## **CDC Risk and Crisis Communication Tools**

Crisis and Emergency Risk Communication (CERC); Preparedness and Response.

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/cerc/>



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