

Media Relations

What was that again?

Kelly Classic

Media Relations

- It's simple.
 - Understand the question.
 - Be honest.
 - Be professional.
 - State the answer in easily understood terms.

Hmmm...

**But most of us “physics types”
are INTJs*!**

If that is true, why should you care?

Ask yourself this question:

**What sometimes aggravates you about
“antirad” people, articles, etc.?**

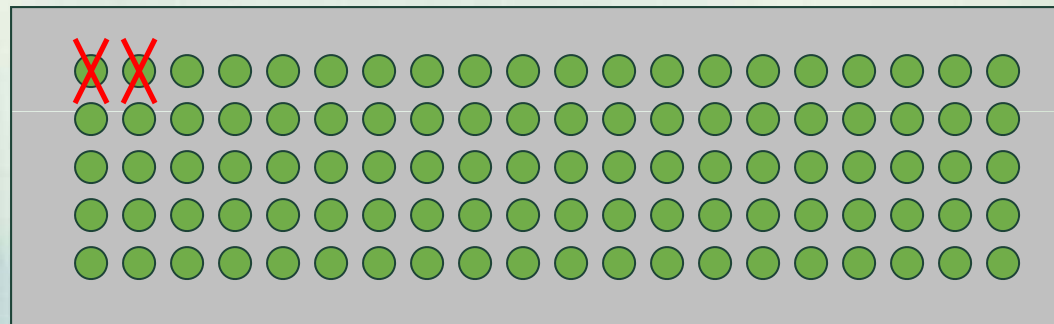
They know the tricks and use them to their advantage.

They are years ahead of us.

“It is not what you say or how you look that will be remembered, it is how you made the person feel.”

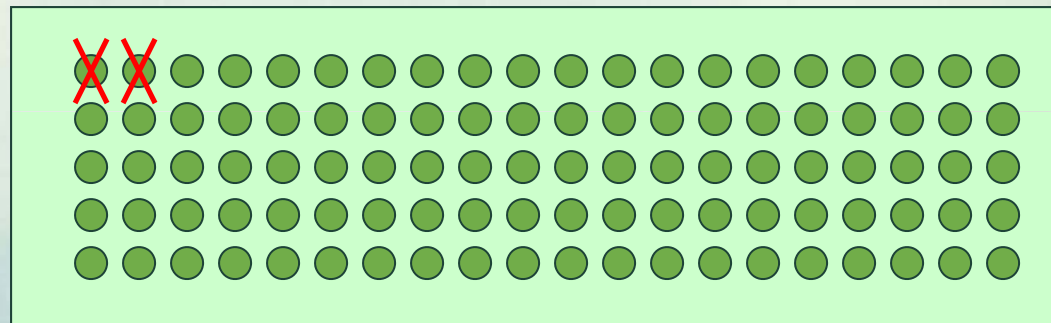
Maya Angelou

How does this make you feel?



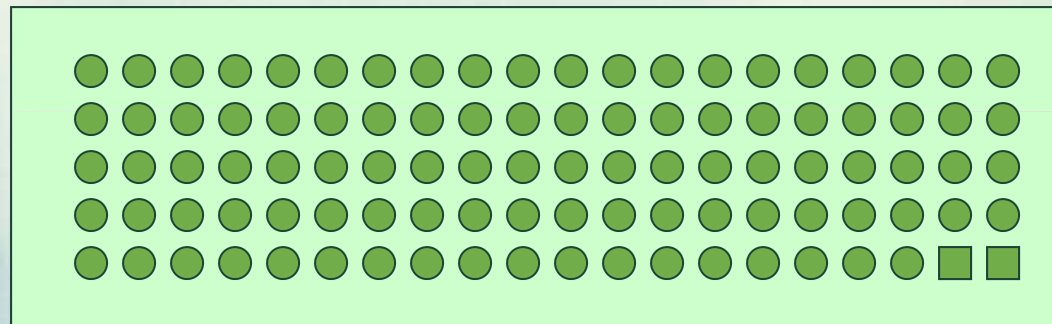
People are going to die!

How does this make you feel?



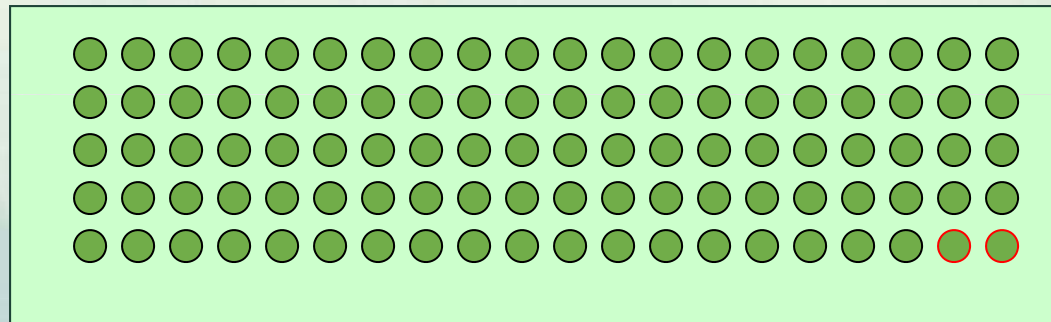
Two people out of one hundred will die.

How does this make you feel?



**Ninety-eight of one hundred
people will not be affected.**

How does this make you feel?



Nearly everyone will be okay.

Form

- It's the form of your statement, not its content.¹
 - Available evidence does not indicate that saccharin is useful in weight control.
 - Scientific evidence does not permit assessment of the role that saccharin plays in weight control.

¹Breyer S. Breaking the vicious circle: Toward effective risk regulation. Cambridge: Harvard University Press; 1995

Using Graphics

- What do you want to convey?
 - Be afraid of this.
 - This is safe.
 - This will kill you.
 - This is beneficial.

Using Graphics

- Choose warm colors and serif font to convey safe, secure.
- Choose cool colors and bold font to convey harsh conditions.
- Include a reference point.
- Do not depict “death” by x-ing out a face or stick figure.

Without a reference point, studies show that graphics made information clearer but did not affect perceived risk.

Use of Numbers

- The smaller the better if trying to depict something as safe.
- Fractions are not well understood (e.g., 0.01 in 10,000).
- Statements with numbers are understood by more people: one in a million (1 in 1,000,000).

Use of Numbers

- When asked which was worse

624 in 10,000

or

10 in 100

most people picked 624 in 10,000.

Why? People are more familiar and comfortable with the numbers 10 and 100. The numbers 624 and 10,000 are not common.

Lessons Learned

- ADD is routine.
 - You have only moments.
 - Rapid response is the order of the day.
 - Public interest.

Lessons Learned

- Is precision out the door?
 - Present quick hits.
 - No science? Reference-able is best.
 - Don't being exact.
 - Precision can hurt you.

Lessons Learned

- Do you speak Japanese?
 - Media speak is like a foreign language.
 - Can science types communicate?

Final Thoughts

- Learning curve
 - Find out what members of the media want when they contact you.
 - Learn how to communicate with them for understanding.
 - Learn how to get their attention.

Questions or Comments?
Email: media@hps.org