

Approaching Audiences/Joint Problem Solving

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Training Resource



Tools to Introduce Themes
Tools for Discussion, Reflection
and Learning: Quick Tools
Tools for Discussion, Reflection
and Learning: Deep Dives

Research Insights



Making Sense of Science
Evaluating & Promoting Science
Communication Quality Online
Barriers to & Opportunities for
Reaching Audiences

Competence Framework



Picture of the World
Professional Norms & Roles
Working Knowledge

Required Prior Knowledge



Knowledge about science communication
audiences and related difficulties to engage
specific segments of society could be an
advantage.

Description

In recent years, much attention has been paid to the question of how science communication can reach out to different audiences in an effective and responsible way. There are different segments of these audiences such as young people or those disinterested in science, who are often the focus of science communication but are difficult to approach. Against this backdrop, RETHINK talked to different science communicators to find out which audiences they want to address and what challenges they face when doing so inside and outside of the context of the digital media environment. These descriptions are summarised as short case studies (Appendix E).

Students can both learn from these cases and 'help' the communicators to reach out to their audiences of focus by using an approach called joint problem solving: students work in pairs or small groups using one or more of the case studies. Their first task is to detect the problems and barriers that actors face when approaching specific audiences online and offline. They can also note which further information would be required for a concise problem definition. Moreover, students rank the problems with regard to their importance for reaching the science communicators' objectives. Students can then decide on up to three problems that they will aim to solve. In the next step, students discuss potential ways as well as required resources to tackle the identified problems. These solutions can be linked to an individual and/or organisation. Again, the ideas can be sorted by priority. To present their work, students should explain both problems and solutions in a comprehensible way. The plenary can be invited to act as a critical friend, evaluating the suggested solutions and hinting at open questions.

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Learning Objectives

- Reflecting on science communication audiences and challenges to address specific segments of society
- Analysing science communication practices
- Developing skills for joint problem solving and constructive critique

Technical Requirements and Preparation

- Case studies in print or digital form
- Flipcharts or online equivalent
- Optional: Sticky notes to rank problems/solution

Resources

A file containing seven case studies can be found in the navigator folder under the file name CaseStudies.pdf

Sample Schedule

10 minutes	Introduction
5–10 minutes	Reading of case studies
20 minutes	Joint analysis of problems, identification of missing information, ranking of problems
30 minutes	Joint development of ideas for problem solving at individual/organisational level and needed resources, ranking of ideas
20–30 minutes	Presentation of results and discussion
15–20 minutes	Wrap-up and conclusion