

# ***Start Spreading the News!***

**How MSQC members can  
create & amplify effective  
communications**



# Who are we?

- Members of Michigan Medicine's Department of Communication
  - **Shantell Kirkendoll** – Surgery, Transplant, Ophthalmology, Infectious Diseases
  - **Kara Gavin** – Institute for Healthcare Policy & Innovation, research in primary care & mental health
- Trained in journalism & medical/science writing
- Writing, media relations, social media & more



# A new era of communication



- News media's gatekeeper role is eroding
- Proliferation of news & info sources
- Everyone's a publisher



# An age of information

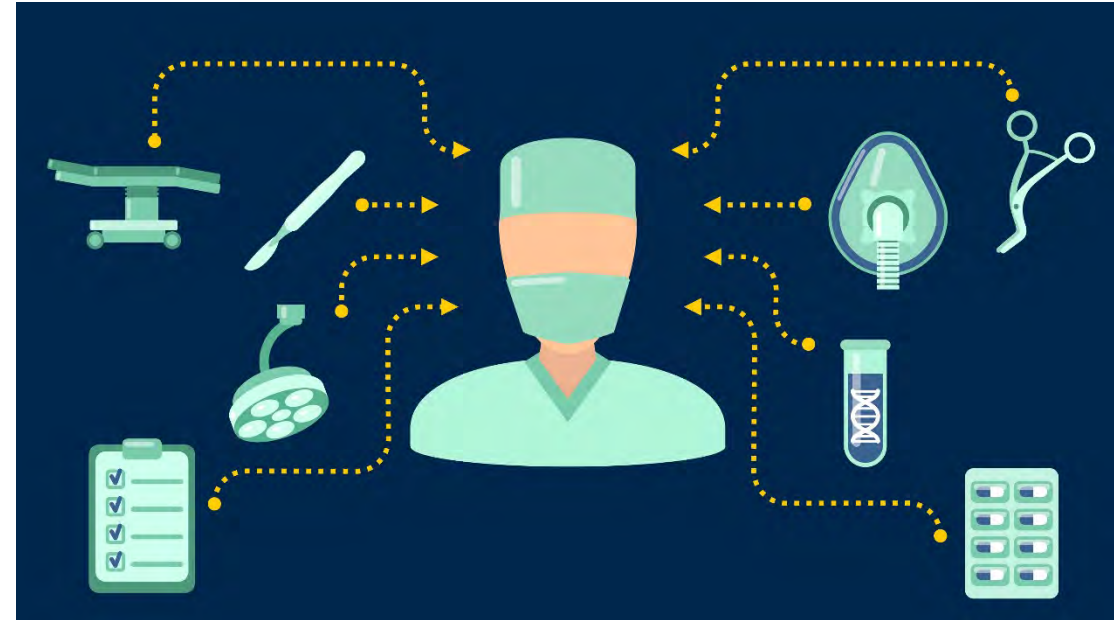


- Institutions & individuals create & share directly
- People connect to information through social media & search
- Trusted brands & voices carry more weight
- Visuals & videos are vital
- Rapid response expected



# What this means for MSQC members

- Your institution's communicators are looking for stories to share
- U-M produces communications you can adapt & share
- You can harness communication principles & tools within your team
- Your voice can be heard on social media – but use it wisely!

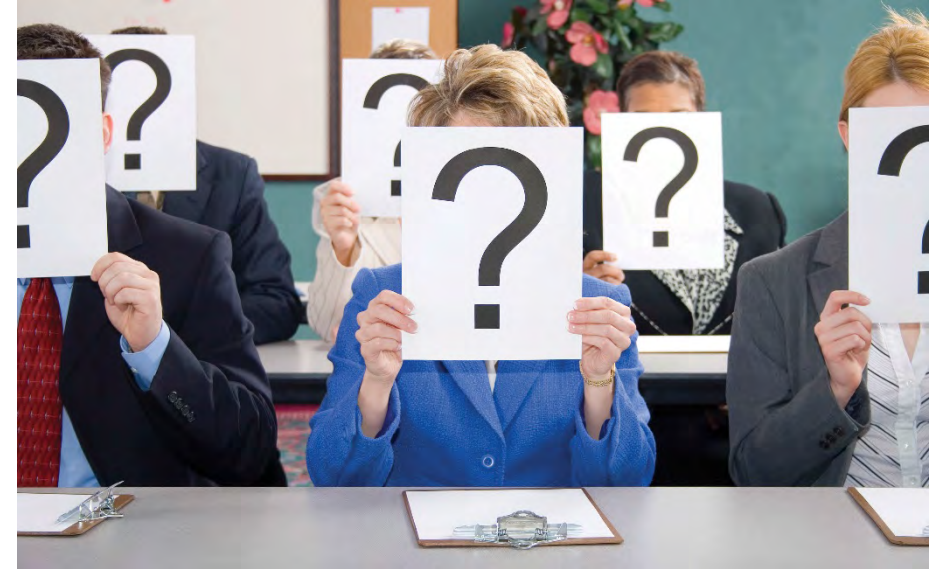


# Key Communication Concepts



# Who's Your Audience?

- What are they looking for?
- What do they know about the topic?
- Why should they care?
- How & when do they get information?
- How much time do they have?
- How can you make them care – or act?
- Do they know jargon, acronyms, abbreviations?



# 6 key principles

Logical  
organization

“You” and  
other  
pronouns

Active voice

Common,  
everyday  
words

Short  
sentences,  
short  
paragraphs

Easy-to-read  
design  
features







# Organize to serve the audience

- How do they EXPECT the information to be presented?
- What questions might they have? Use them!
- Turn paragraphs into tables & bulleted lists
- Provide useful headings



# Rules of thumb

- Average sentence length:

**20 words**

- Maximum sentence length:

**40 words**

- One subject per sentence,  
one topic per paragraph, introduced at the start



# *Use common words*

## **YES!**

**Use**

**Help**

**Method**

**Needs**

**Limits**

## **NO!**

**Utilize**

**Facilitate**

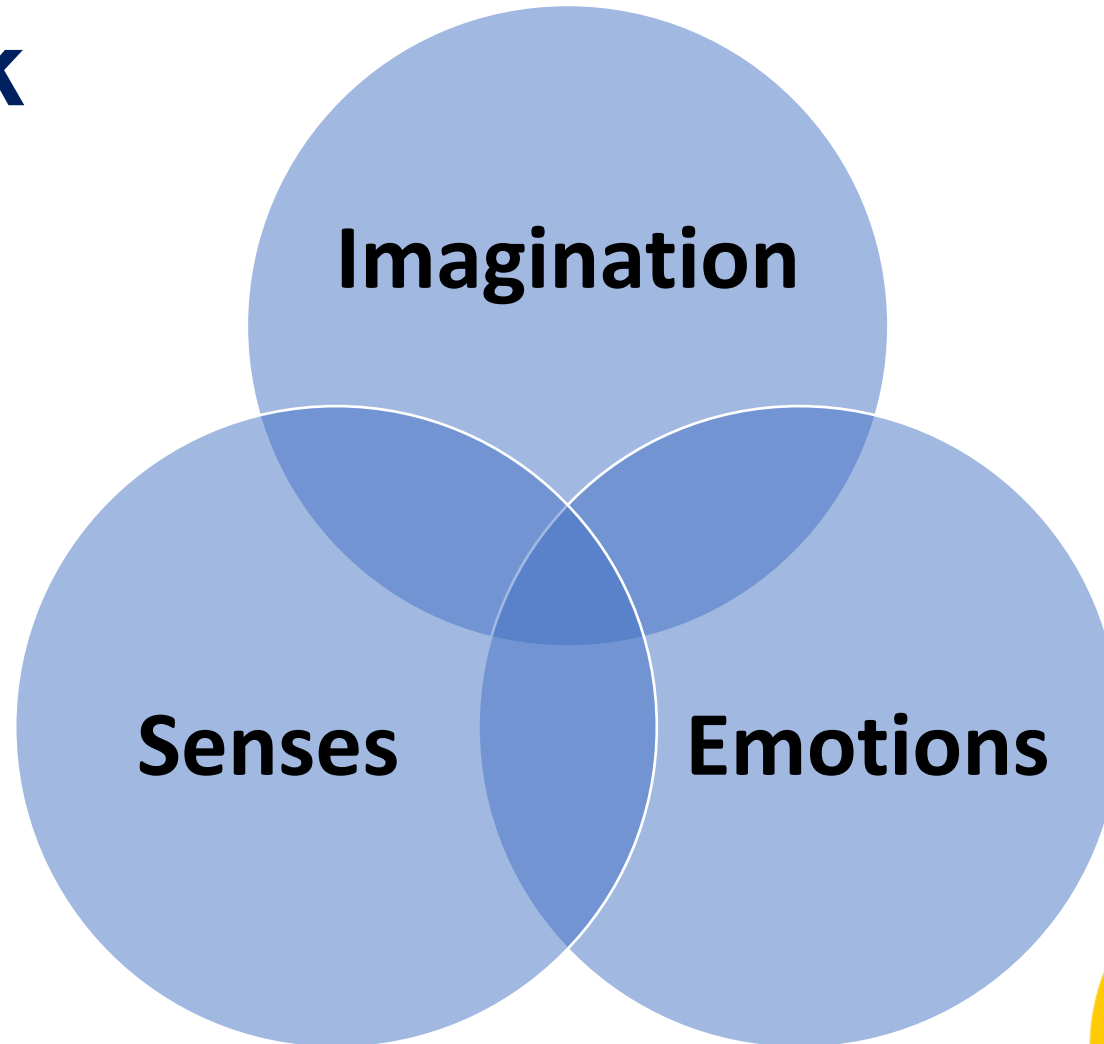
**Methodology**

**Necessitates**

**Parameters**



**Bring your work  
ALIVE by  
engaging the  
audience's...**



# Traditional News Media



# Media reporting of medicine & health

- Shares findings, achievements, warnings
- Changes health behavior
- Influences public support
- BUT – is declining in quantity as news business model changes



# What makes a reporter tick?

- **Most serve a general audience**
  - Little scientific knowledge
  - Need to know implications for ordinary people
- **Most are on tight deadlines**
- **Most have little space/time to tell the story**
- **ALL value their independence**
  - You probably won't see the questions or their story ahead of time





# Tips for media interactions

- **Prepare three key points**
- Have supporting statistics & context ready
- Use layperson's terms & conversational tone
- Respect deadlines
- Understand the news outlet
- Assess reporter's level of understanding
- Respect their independence



# Engage with your institution's communicators

- **Start early – get to know them now**
- Show them why sharing an MSQC milestone can enhance the institution's reputation with patients & local leaders
- Highlight team members, action, visuals
- Get a patient's consent to tell their story
- If you're in a media market with other MSQC hospitals, team up, don't compete





# Squeeze that lemon!

- Work with your institution, MSQC & U-M to get the most out of each piece of content
- Praise your team up and down
- Share multiple times, in multiple ways



# Using Social Media as a Healthcare Professional



# Why do it?

- Connect within your field & beyond
- Raise the visibility of your work
- Share & discover new findings, observations, opinions, timely information
- Get the most out of conferences & events



# Every professional's online essentials



- A robust, updated professional web profile
- Know your PR person & when you should contact us
- Basic LinkedIn profile
- Google yourself/set up a Google alert for your name





# Take it to the next level



- Claim a Twitter handle, write a brief bio & link to your profile
- Share links & posts on LinkedIn
- Join Doximity & share/comment
- Write a “plain English” web blurb on your professional focus
- Post/tweet about professional milestones & MSQC news



# “Laying low” on social media

- Start by “**lurking**” – follow individuals, institutions, organizations, news media
- Monitor Twitter traffic at **conferences**
- **Subscribe** to lists of Twitter users compiled by others in your field
- Join LinkedIn groups for professional societies





# Engage more fully

- **Share links** to your own work & work of others
- Share praise & photos of individuals, teams
- Use LinkedIn's "Write an Article" feature
- **Post slide sets** on your site or SlideShare
- Take part in tweet chats, online campaigns, virtual journal clubs, etc.
- On your *personal* social media, educate friends by sharing news/observations



# What could happen?



- **Connect** with others
- **Spread** knowledge
- **Amplify** your impact
- **Keep up** with new ideas & opportunities
- **Lend your voice**
- **Get more** from your work



# Be careful of...



- Connecting with **patients** on social platforms
- Being too **political/personal** – but DO cite published research
- **Making light** of serious situations/topics
- Engaging in debates/advocacy without knowing the **mechanics** of the platform you're on



# We challenge you...



- Venture into communications – with help from your institutional communicator & MSQC
- Learn from others
- See it as part of your career
- Build your online presence so it doesn't get built for you!



**Kara's handouts on social media, news media, etc.**

<https://www.slideshare.net/KaraGavin>

**Joyce Lee, M.D.'s presentations on social media:**

<http://www.slideshare.net/joycee/presentations>

**IHPI members who tweet – follow them & learn!**

<http://michmed.org/e0Zgg>

