



AUSTIN
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BUSINESS GROUP
— ON HEALTH —



Agenda

- Announcements & Introductions
- Presentation
- Questions & Answers
- Closing Remarks



Announcements

- Thanks for joining our first virtual ABGOH Meeting
- Mute/Unmute yourself (Alt+A)
- Use the chat box for questions

Moderators for today's meeting include:



Claire Hahn – ABGOH Chair



Mary Faria – MHFC Chair



Today's Speaker



Keri Stephens, Ph.D.

Associate Professor &
Distinguished Teaching
Professor, Moody College
of Communication

University of Texas

Communication & Crisis: Changing Work as we Know It



The University of Texas at Austin
Communication Studies
Moody College of Communication

Keri K. Stephens, Ph.D.
Organizational Communication
& Technology
Distinguished Teaching Professor
The University of Texas at Austin





COVID-19

**Organizations have to
communicate with
employees differently**



We might be all in this together, but right now many of us are working alone.



And we get email messages from leaders and managers in our companies...



Agenda

- 5 Best Practices for communicating crisis information to employees
 - Note – this Pandemic is different & my teams are studying this right now
- 5 Tips for supporting remote work





Preview: 5 Best Crisis Communication Practices

- Honesty, candor & openness
- Communicate with compassion, concern, & empathy
- Provide messages that help people believe they know what to do.
- Watch overloading people with messages
- Partner with credible sources (tricky, but important)

Compiled from the work of W. T. Coombs, M. W. Seeger, & K. K. Stephens



Preview: 5 Tips to Support Remote Work

- Talk openly about expectations and emerging norms with entire workgroups
- Find ways to NOT be “Always On”
- Be proactive & creative offering resources to help
- Limit the need to multitask & multicommmunicate
- Provide support for being on camera & limit the time



Best Practice #1: Honest & Open

- Timely & useful information
- People want to see you being transparent
- Include uncertainty in messages

The situation is evolving, but this is what we know now.

Compiled from the work of W. T. Coombs & M. W. Seeger





Best Practices #2 & #3

Compassion yet Directive

- Communicate with compassion, concern, & empathy
- Provide messages that help people believe they know what to do.
 - Recommend specific actions that have both real and apparent utility to reduce harm
 - Offer a range of activities



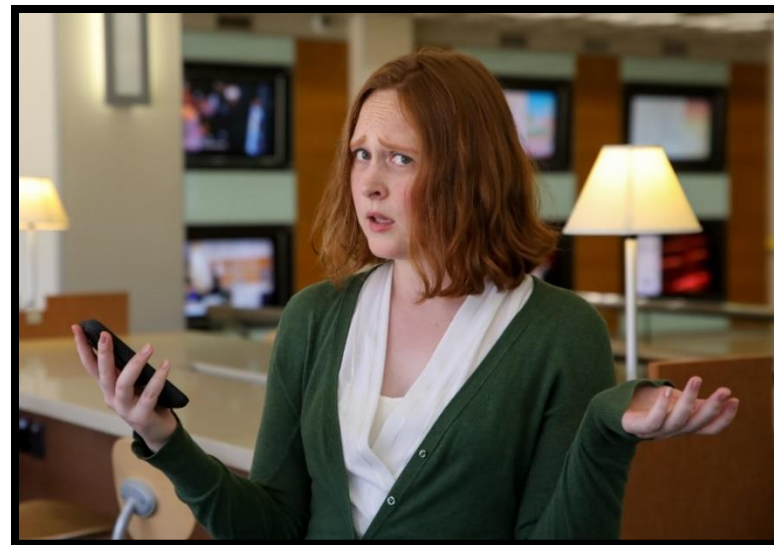
Compiled from the work of M. W. Seeger



Best Practice #4: Watch Overload

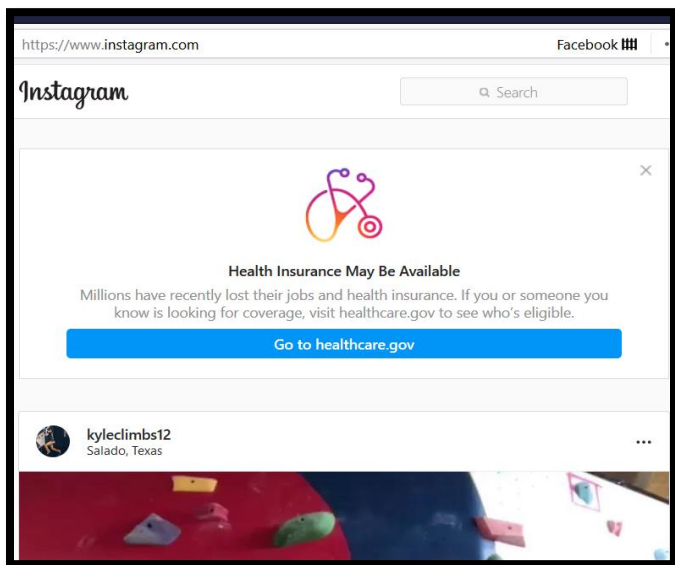
- Watch overloading people with messages
 - Provide links for those interested to get more information

“If I didn’t have technology, when I went home I could sit in peace instead of always being available.” a 20-year old college student





Best Practice #5: Partner with Credible Sources



- Note what social media platforms have done
- CDC is a common partner (or link provided)
- Combat misinformation
- Help you stay up to date with changing information
- Tricky – mask situation & CDC



5 Tips to Support Remote Work

- Talk openly about expectations and emerging norms with entire workgroups
- Find ways to NOT be “Always On”
- Be proactive & creative offering resources to help
- Limit the need to multitask & multicommmunic
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Tip #1: Be a Bold Like a Longhorn!

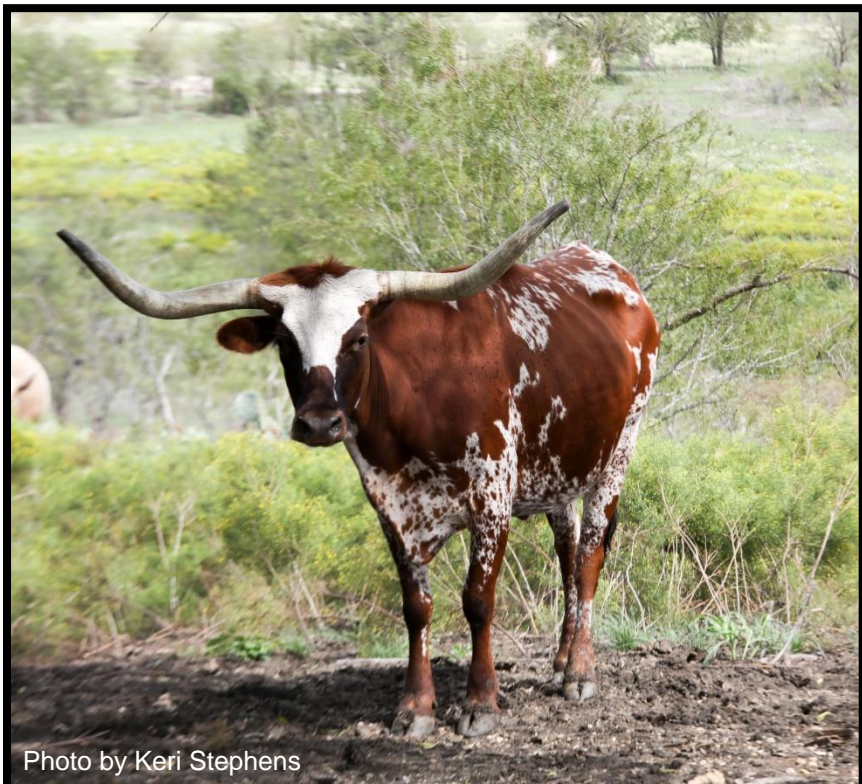


Photo by Keri Stephens

Be willing to talk about expectations and emerging norms around remote work.

Compiled from the work of K. K. Stephens



Tip #2 Always On

- *Don't expect constantly availability*
- *Happy Hours??*
- *Out of the Office*
- *Work in the middle of life is not easy!*

Compiled from the work of K. K. Stephens





Tip #3: Resources to Help



- Be proactive (provide because many people are afraid to ask)
 - Cell phone bills, Internet (digital divide issues), Sharing computers, Printers
- Be creative
 - All-day meeting? Deliver lunch
- Think of small things (that can be delivered...)
- Wellness resources
 - Don't be discouraged, just keep offering



Tip #4 Limit Multitasking & Multicommunicating

- Juggling all these new ways to communicate is hard!
 - People of all ages struggle
 - Takes more cognitive energy
 - People make more mistakes
- Long online video meetings... people are checking email & multicommunicating
 - Keep online time shorter

There is a reason I still up early in the morning to do uninterrupted work. I study this stuff!

Compiled from the work of K. K. Stephens

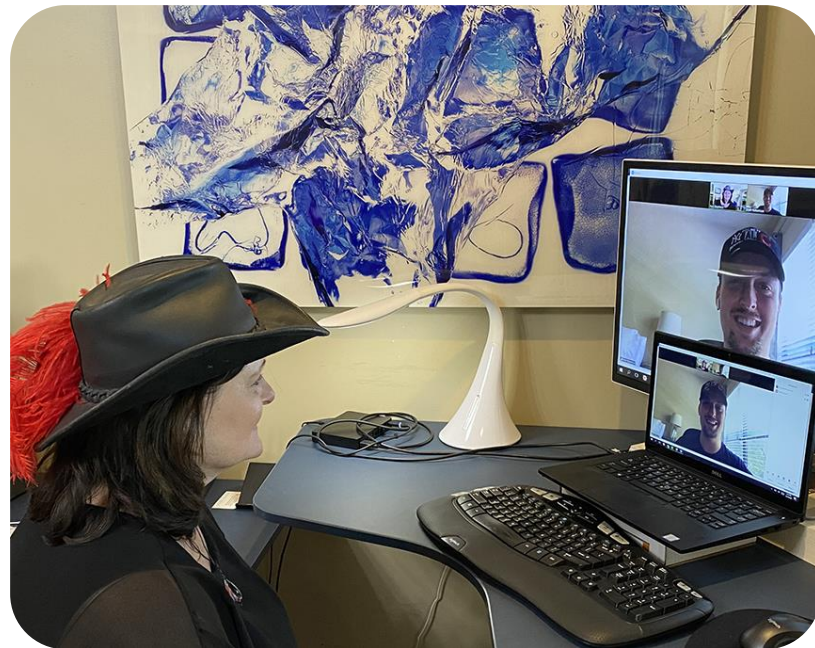
Did you notice?
This slide is
overloading!





Tip #5 On Camera

Provide support for being on camera (or simply turn off sometimes)



Compiled from the work of K. K. Stephens & a host of other popular press and academic sources



How will you communicate returning to an office?

Just things to consider, no solutions yet.

- Decisions that employees make could affect the perception others have of them.
 - Lack of child care, need to care for others
- Could make health conditions no longer hidden (HR & Legal considerations)
- Wearing a mask and the perceptions





Recap: 5 Best Crisis Communication Practices

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- Communicate with compassion, concern, & empathy
- Provide messages that help people believe they know what to do.
- Watch overloading people with messages
- Partner with credible sources (tricky, but important)

Compiled from the work of W. T. Coombs, M. W. Seeger, & K. K. Stephens



Recap: 5 Tips to Support Remote Work

- Talk openly about expectations and emerging norms with entire workgroups
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Compiled from the work of K. K. Stephens & other popular press and academic sources



Use the chat to share
the most helpful thing
you learned today.



Thank you!



Keri K. Stephens @keristephens

Organizational Communication
& Technology

The University of Texas at Austin
keristephens@austin.utexas.edu
email if interested in participating in
the ongoing study



Questions & Answers

- Please remain muted
- Use the chat box to send us your questions
- We will begin with questions we received during the presentation





Announcements

- Thank you to our speaker, Dr. Stephens!
- 2020 Employer Commitment Forms can be found at www.mhfcaustin.org
- Presentation will be uploaded to the MHFC website
- Next meeting will be August 14, 2020



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