

How Can Climate Change Be Effectively Communicated to Convince People to Take Action?

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The question is whether climate change is a real and evident part of our world, with human beings playing a crucial role in its effects. The main question today is how climate change can be effectively communicated to convince people to take action. Two main strategies are used today: the fear factor, which makes your audience scared for the future, and the hope tactic, which installs a sense of hope for the future.

Both strategies have proven effective in convincing people that climate change is a real thing, but both fail at influencing people to take action. To effectively communicate climate change, one needs to use both strategies of fear and hope to relate to the audience and create a real sense of fear with the hope of a solution to overcome that fear.

In case of the need to plan for climate change, there are calls for anticipating slow but quick disasters, thus being the management factor of fear. Conversely, despair and fear tend to discourage shared public services. There seem to be climatic adaptation plans with a careful balance between the future good and ill effects, meaning that environmental conservation is underway and the effects shall be disastrous and optimistic. The optimistic is one with viewpoints that there can be a need to rebuild the environment, hence fostering our lives in the future.

Climate change, with its dire “coming day’s” forecasts and the unstoppable frequency of crumbling effects, the [rising seas](#), and many other adverse effects, holds a challenge for planners. This calls for properly managing fear and hopes in styles best suited to fostering actions with no dismissive attitude towards real climatic change issues. On the daily news, the focus is at least a subject on the changing climate, mostly calling the public to hold onto one goal: climate conservation. This news is accompanied by new projections that are, at most times, more significant than the past ones. However, despair is one of the logical responses to such situations tending to encourage actions geared towards a long-term objective and encouraging short-term individual interests.

Hope and despair are intertwined (evolutionary), thus operating as part and parcel of a complicated system hailing from human actions. According to psychologists, fear and hope arise from the perceptions built in our minds about whether a specific goal will be reached or will collapse. In an article on the website Psychology Today, this author says “Nothing makes us more uncomfortable than fear. Moreover, we have so many: fear of pain, disease, injury, failure, not being accepted, missing an opportunity, and being scammed to name a few. Fear invokes the flight or fight syndrome, and our first reaction is always to flee back to our comfort zone. If we do not know the way back, we

will likely follow whoever shows us a path” (Robert Evans Wilson Jr, The Most Powerful Motivator, Psychology Today) (Wilson, 2009). An adaptive challenge posed to avoiding loss is linked with anxiety and fearful emotions whereas the hurdles of accruing a resource are linked to the emotions of enthusiasm and desires. It is thus in the midst of taking action in these where hope and fear emerge.

Evoking fear with the intent of accruing a motivating result has been shown by various studies to accrue positive results only under a set condition. If acts of reducing the feared results are not identified or even seen to be inadequate in mitigating the adversity of the feared results, then there emerges desperation. In such scenarios, fear may not lead to anything positive but only yield withdrawal or fatalism. Looking at the emotional grounding, we see that humans have protective instincts that make us vulnerable to fearing the loss that might be incurred. The primary concern for self-protectiveness is an emergent one than any hopes for our future endeavors. Regarding integrating fear in communicating climatic changes, there is an appeal in the context of communicating the risks if you do not adhere to environmental conservation strategies. This can be termed as risk communication and thus can elicit various analytical and emotional responses, with fear often equated to making the public get concerned, distressed, and many other risks as feelings within themselves. This statement is true since many people have not acquired education and thus do not understand the risks associated with disregarding our environment. The effects of destroying the environment should not be instant but slow with considerable effects on nature.

Thus, environmentalists are supposed to use fear messages in public speaking, social media, and other forums to steer the message of adverse effects that will befall us after destroying our environment. Despite the presence of educated people in society, this lot also, in some instances, plays dumb and ignores the messages on environmental conservation. This is one hindrance to using fear since the educated mass has information at hand on ways of surviving the consequences of harboring a bad climate, with some even planning on installing their houses with oxygen preparation for such incidents. This enlightened but ignorant lot can instill fear through the inclusion of the government in conserving the environment by implementing strict laws against those who are against it by handing out punitive measures to them. Examples of such punishment are jailing those found contravening environmental laws, such as hunting down wild animals, logging the trees for sale or personal use, and channeling the river streams for their use. In such a move, there shall be fear instilled even in the arrogant in the society.

On the other side, hope is one aspect that can raise an individual who had earlier despaired in all their dealings and had a chance to forge their mission. In regards to climate, there are times when the media displays the need to conserve our environment for future generations. This insinuates a second chance though the disaster has already begun. Examples of the impact of climate change are the Sahara Desert which was not desert a millennium back, but currently, it extends daily with a kilometre distance. This is a saddening situation since the extension means living things shall be affected in the extension process. Despite the presence of such adverse, Egypt is still forging on with restoration steps, such as using the Nile River to cultivate and dig boreholes, and in case of rains, the dams are ready to capture water for the coming days. This is the real definition of hope, insinuating

that it does not allow despair despite the harsh conditions. One of the keywords in using hope to communicate climate change is action competence, which refers to an individual's capability to critically choose and conduct possible acts that are with the intent of solving societal issues, and it is done democratically.

In regards to instilling hope in the public on climate change, a problem-oriented approach would be to educate the public on the current scenario of the environment and come up with solutions to change it from adverse to best. This step calls for consensus among the public whereby people can, through vocation seminars, be trained on conserving their environments, such as by having trash cans to keep the household's wastes and activities like planting trees to ensure circulation of clean air and for soil fertility purposes. Hope is only restored to the public if the words used in communication are soft; thus, people can accommodate any idea with the intention of conserving their environment. People are more likely to adopt any action in case it does not look as injurious either on emotional or physical status. A case where a state's President Calls for regional tree planting activities once a month and trees with other hampers are handed to the public will be comfortably accommodated rather than one where he is forcing people into planting trees or failing, resulting in jailing. There can be organizations creating incentives for communities and countries to fight climate change. In this article on their website, the author outlines how this organization creates incentives to stop deforestation as said, "With market incentives developing nations could earn as much income from protecting their forests as they currently do through destroying them" (The Nature Conservancy, Creating Incentives To Stop Deforestation) (The Nature Conservancy, n.d.). Self-efficacy is another criterion that can relay hope to the public on climate change, whereby the public can be enlightened on how well they can execute the action courses required to deal with prospective issues. Here, there can be some adaptive plans with various climate change stakeholders (community, government, companies) with the intent of steering hope into society regarding climate change. An example best illustrating this adaptive strategy is one hailing from the Wisconsin Climate Adaptation Plan, whereby in 2007, an initiative named WICCI was jointly formed between Wisconsin's University and the Natural Department's resources. Though adopted by the state's legislation, it was on a bottom-up basis grounded on the idea of voluntary experts in various fields covering various sectors, including agriculture, wildlife, and water resources (Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts, n.d.).

Conclusively, climate change is awful, significant, and unpredictable in case of its timing and impacts on the world in general. Fortunately, hope and fear can both reduce climate change impacts resulting in a better environment for the coming generations. Successful issue framing is integral to negotiations made on hope and fear linked with changes in climate. Fear and hope can be positively used to communicate climate change if they are only used in the right strategies without any overemphasizing. From the above findings, communicating climate change should start with a positive vision for the coming days, thus calling for everyone to play a role in steering climate change.

Work Cited:

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