

CLASS NOTES

Season 2, Episode 2 - Nutrients & Nuance: The Complicated Science Behind Effective Water Communications

Featured Guest: Dr. Sadie Hundemer, Assistant Professor, UF/IFAS
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Key Takeaways

- Florida's water challenges are deeply human, and so an accurate understanding of human behavior and effective communications are critical to addressing them.
- Different groups have different mental models and assign different meanings to words. Understanding how they think can aid in effectively communicating with them.
- Understanding of the water system varies greatly across the general public and specialists. When the public doesn't necessarily know everything, they rely on trusted sources to help form their opinions.
- Honest brokers provide the expert information needed to make value-based decisions, without imposing their own values on the decision maker.

Additional Resources

- AskIFAS Series :
<https://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/experts/shundemer>
- Ethics of Expertise:
<https://aec.ifas.ufl.edu/ethics-of-expertise/>
- Dr. Hundemer's Faculty Directory Page:
<https://aec.ifas.ufl.edu/directory/faculty/sadie-hundemer>

Discussion Questions

- What are the characteristics of an honest broker? Why are honest brokers important?
- Who do you think are "experts" when it comes to water issues? Who are your trusted sources? Why do you think this is?
- What are some words related to water challenges that may have different meanings or connotations for different target audiences? How do you think that the meaning of each of these words differs and why?
- When communicating on an issue that impacts multiple interest groups, how can you shape your communications effectively to address their needs?
- Exercise: Consider and draw a representation of your own mental model surrounding your public water system.

Compare with a partner, what similarities or difference do you see? Why do you think your perceptions differ or are the same?

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