

Institute for Water Resources
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Realm of Risk Communication

Module 1 – RC for FRM course

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PLANNING SMART
BUILDING STRONG®



Presentation Outline

- Risk in USACE
- What is RC?
 - ▶ Outcomes / Why
 - ▶ Contexts of RC
 - ▶ Challenges
 - ▶ Wide skills needed...Transdisciplinary
- Risk Perception – speaking to audience’s interpretation of risk

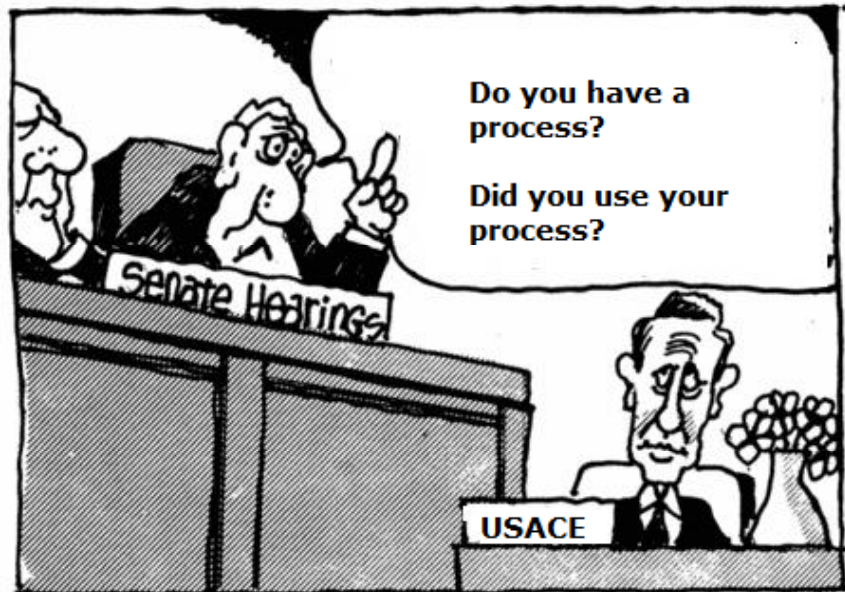


The Point

Risk



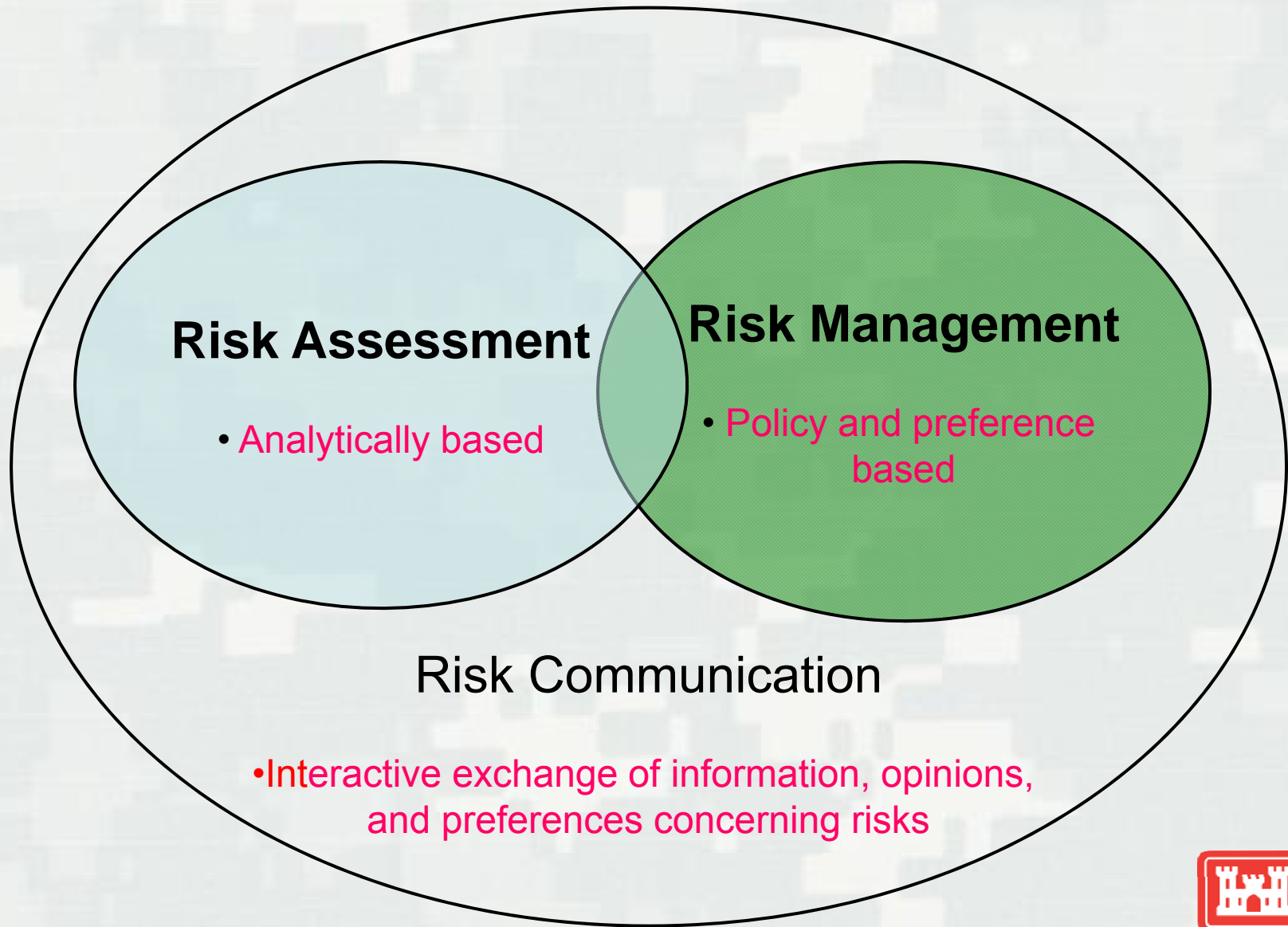
Managing Risk



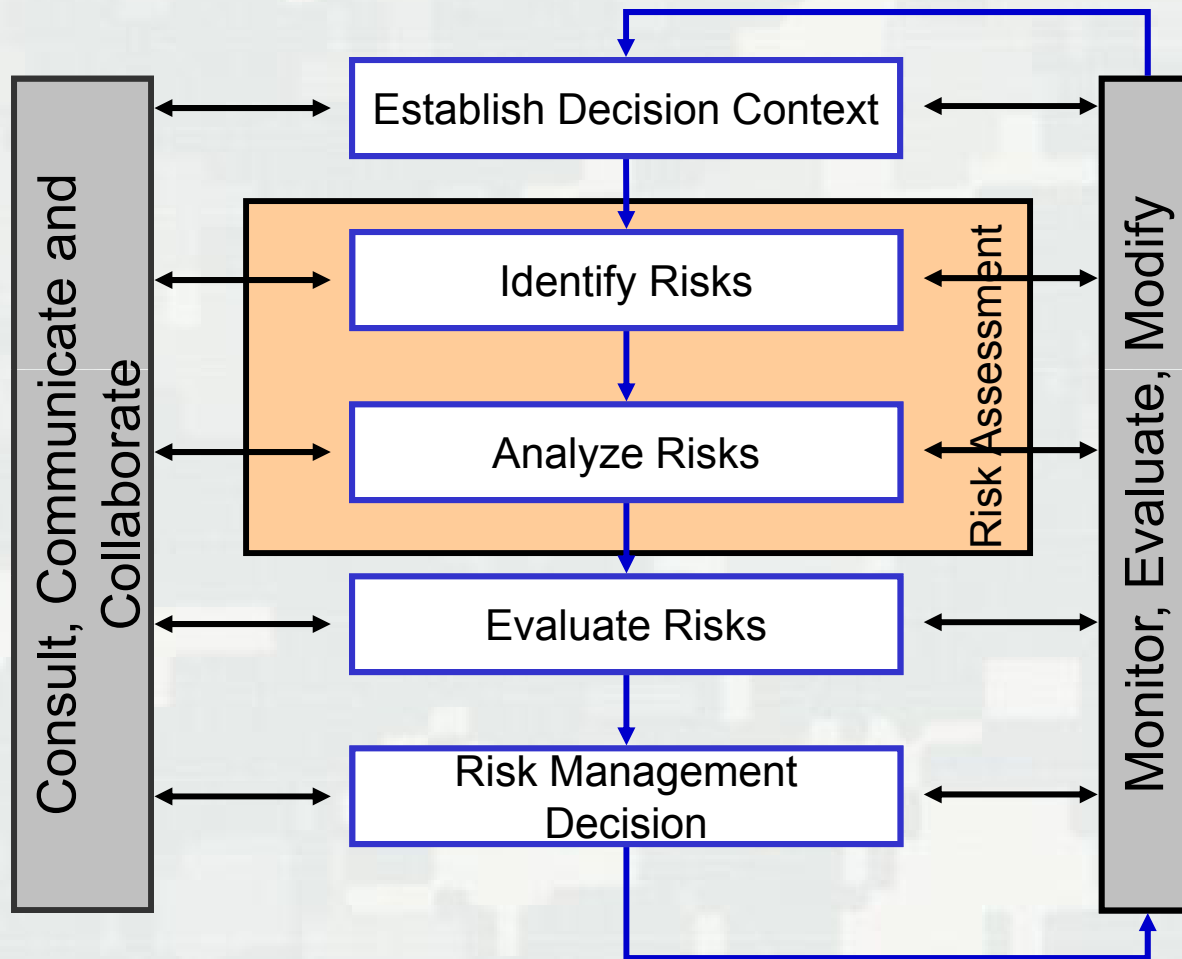
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Risk = *Probability* x *Consequences*

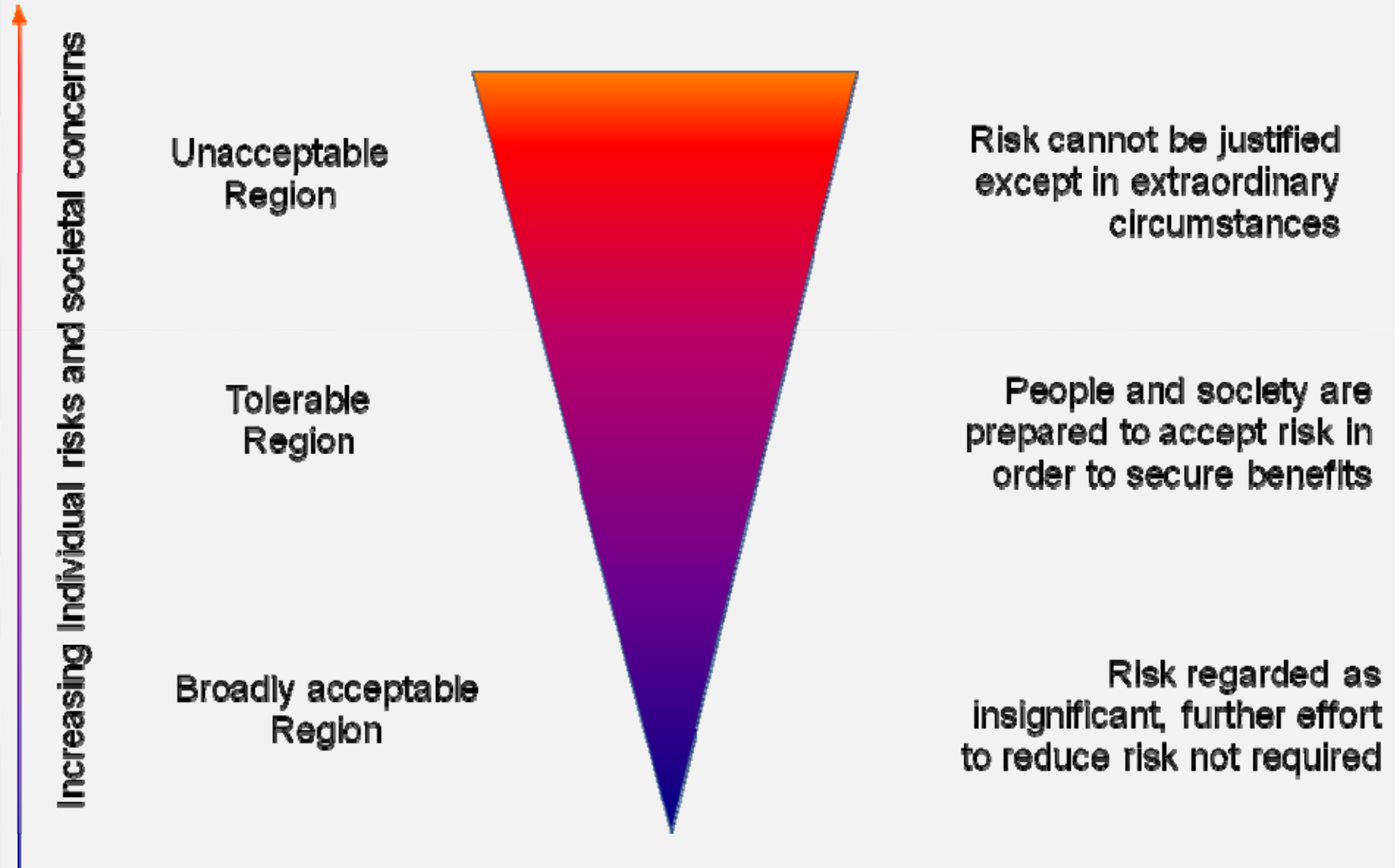




Risk Management



Tolerable Risk



TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE!

True or False?

- Risk is a measurable and quantifiable characteristic of a thing or event.
- Communities can reach consensus on Tolerable Risk easily.
- Risk Communication helps foster informed decision-making related to risk
- Risk Communication is not needed when risk is low.
- The purpose of Risk Communication is to inform groups of their level of risk.



Risk Communication Defined

An open, two-way exchange of information and opinion about risk leading to better understanding and better risk management decisions.



Risk Communication ...

- Is multi-directional communication among communicators, publics and stakeholders
- Includes activities before, during and after an event
- Considers human perceptions of risk
- Is an integral part of an emergency response plan
- Empowers people to make their own informed decisions



Risk Communication is Not...

- Spin
- Public relations
- Damage control
- Crisis management
- How to write a press release
- How to give a media interview
- Always intended to make people “feel better” or reduce their fear



Risk Communication is ... Trans-Disciplinary

- Environmental Sciences
- Social Psychology
- Philosophy
- Political Science
- Communication
- Engineering
- Economics
- Public Health
- Natural Sciences

Risk Communication is ...
a Shared Responsibility



Risk Communication is ... a Skill

- One communicator “misfiring” can affect the organization’s mission....And we are *all* communicators.
- It requires being *open, honest, genuine* and *sincere*, and applying (verbal and non-verbal) communication skills in a variety of situations.
- It requires an ongoing commitment to *practice* and *preparation* before interacting with publics.



Risk Communication

- Why are we communicating?
- Who is our audience?
- What do our audiences want to know?
- What do we want to get across?
- How will we communicate?
- How will we listen?
- How will we respond?

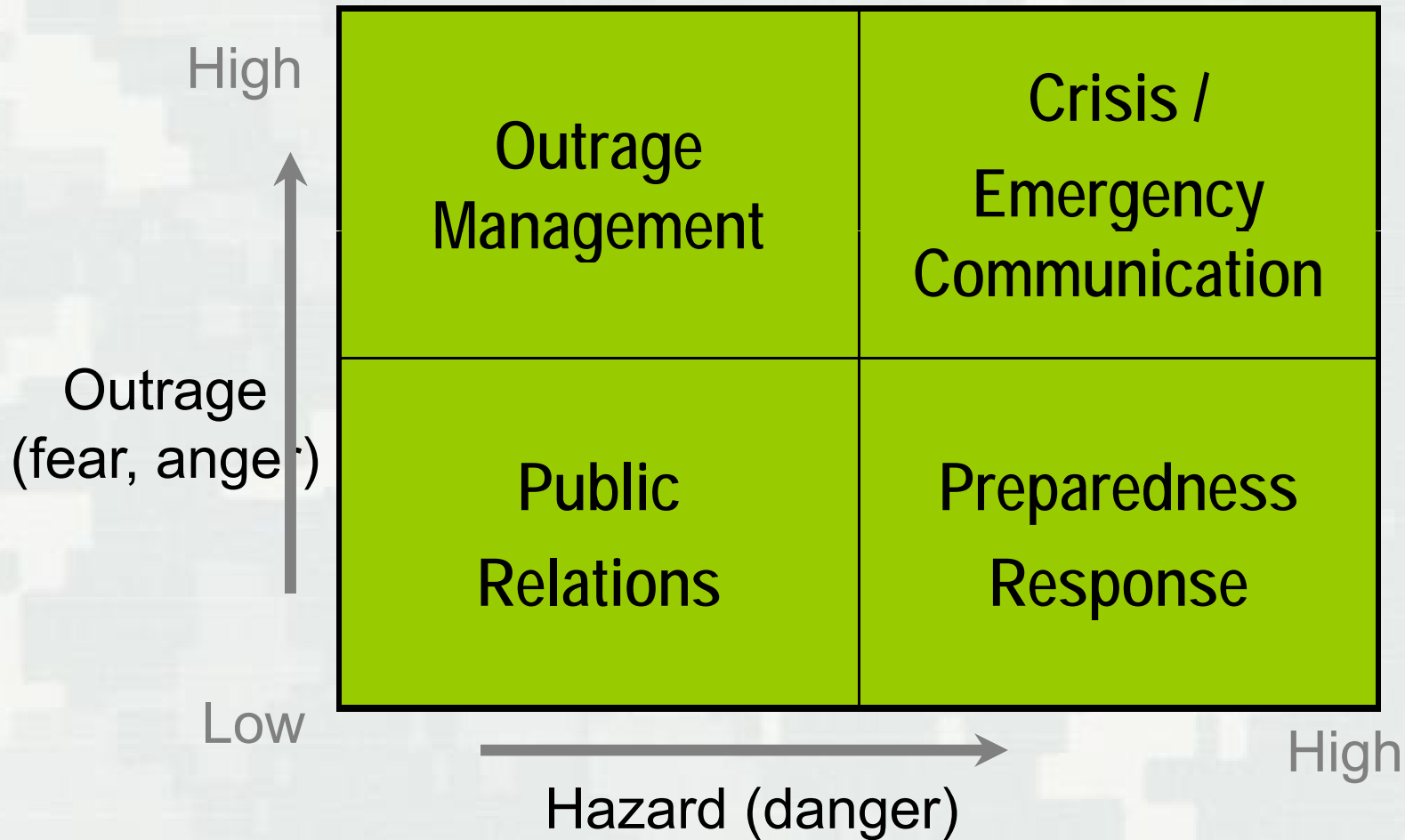


Risk Communication Outcomes

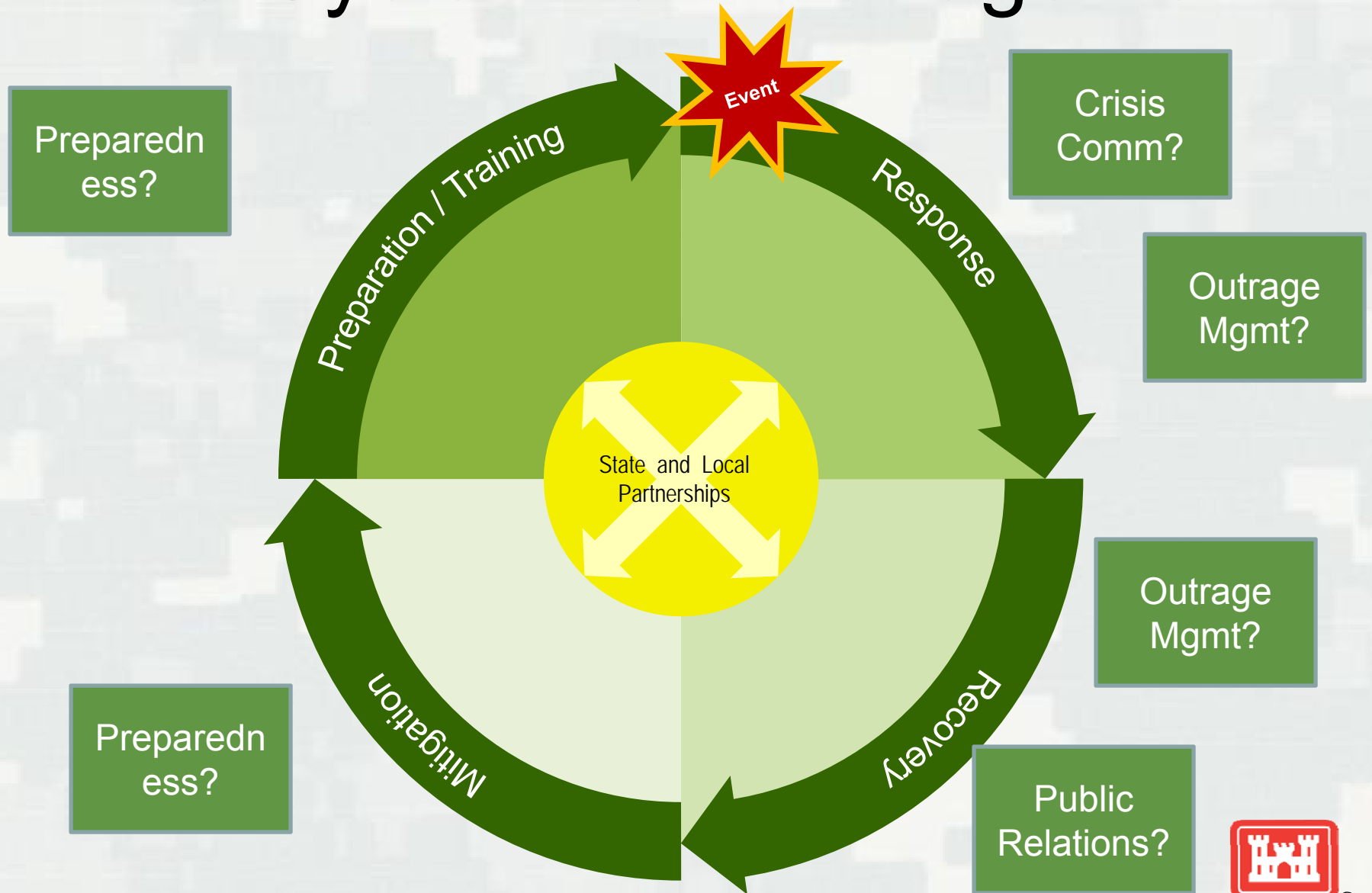
- Reduce damages
 - ▶ Decrease illness, injury & deaths
 - ▶ Reduce property and economic losses
- Support response planning
 - ▶ Build support for response plan
 - ▶ Assist in executing response plan
- Inform decision-making
 - ▶ Foster informed decision-making concerning risk
 - ▶ Keep decision-makers well informed
- Prevent misallocation & wasting of resources
- Counter or correct rumors



Risk Communication Contexts



Life-Cycle Risk Management



Tailoring Risk Communication for the Context

During a Crisis	Preparedness / Recovery
<i>Reduce Outrage</i>	<i>Inform on Potential Crisis</i>
<i>Inform about Current Crisis & Response</i>	<i>Understand Community Priorities & Preferences</i>
<i>Motivate individual actions</i>	<i>Motivate Individual action</i>
<i>Mostly 1-way</i>	<i>2-way</i>