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Session Aim

- Understand the importance of communication
- To consider what we mean by a customer
- To consider the different ways in which forecasts can be presented to the customer

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Module Objectives

- List the range of different customers we may encounter
- Discuss the particular requirements customers may have in terms of how we communicate a forecast
- Recognise the difference between forecast and guidance and understand when either might be required by different customers
- Recognise the strengths and weaknesses of different methods of disseminating a forecast
- Discuss good communication practices

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Time for an exercise...



What (or who) is a customer?

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Proposed Customer Groups

	Internal	External
Informed	Internal Informed	External Informed
Uninformed	Internal Uninformed	External Uninformed

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A question...



What are the requirements of each of the groups?

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A question...



Is there a difference between a forecast and guidance?

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Forecast vs. Guidance

Which of the following do you think are going to be the most different between a forecast and guidance?

- Purpose
- Users
- Format
- Content
- Platform

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Time for an exercise...



What are the factors we have to consider when communicating the forecast?

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Time for an exercise...



Through what different modes/means can a forecast be transmitted?

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A list of possible options...

- Face to face briefings – to a small group or to a larger group
- Telephone enquiries
- Teleconferences – with or without video capability
- Television Broadcasting
- Online – computers (websites), mobile telephones (apps)
- Word documents
- Maps and graphics
- Newspapers
- Blogs
- Social Media

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Time for an exercise...



What are the advantages and disadvantages of each type of communication method?

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Effective Telephone Skills



- Communication skills.
(Listening and speaking)
- Technical knowledge.
- Problem solving skills.

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Why bother?

- Effective use builds positive and long-lasting relationships with customers/partners.



- Ineffective interaction = possible adverse impact on response to severe weather.
- Negative impact for future telephone briefings and relationship.

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Face to Face Communication



Relies on

- Body language/appearance.
- How you sound.
- What you say.

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Verbal Communication



Relies on

- Rate of speech.
- Voice tone or attitude.
- Word choice.

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Rate of Speech



- “Normal” speaking rates vary enormously.
- Too slow/fast?
 - “Could you repeat that?”
 - Some information gets lost.
- A faster/slower rate = better communication.
- Can it be maintained?

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What you say...

WE NEED SOME NEW JARGON,
THE PUBLIC ARE STARTING TO
UNDERSTAND WHAT WE'RE
TALKING ABOUT!



- Avoid jargon.
- Be concise.
- Speak with certainty.
- Speak clearly then pause briefly.
(Allows questions/clarification).
- Use “active”, not passive, voice.
(“I will” not “I’ll try”).

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Time for an exercise...

Look at the examples you have been given. What type of customer do you think they are for?



Are they examples of a forecast or guidance?

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The Six Cs

Clear Conversational

Concise Complete

Current Correct

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1. Use plain or normal language

What does that mean?

Conversational language

- Avoid slang
- Avoid jargon
- Avoid text speak

Pick words that are simple and clear

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2. Superfluous words

Feedback from the public on a website forecast:

'Outbreaks of rain are expected for a time around the dawn period.' [Why not just 'around dawn'?](#)

Fine and dry

- If it is fine it will be dry by implication
- It could still be cloudy, sunny, etc.

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3. Use a logical sequence

Rain will spread east across the UK tomorrow after a dry and frosty night.

Rain will spread across Wales this afternoon.

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3. Use a logical sequence

Use the 3 Ws

When

Where

What

Do not jump back and forth in time



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4. Use the information triangle

Emphasise the main feature of the day's weather

- The reader may only remember one fact

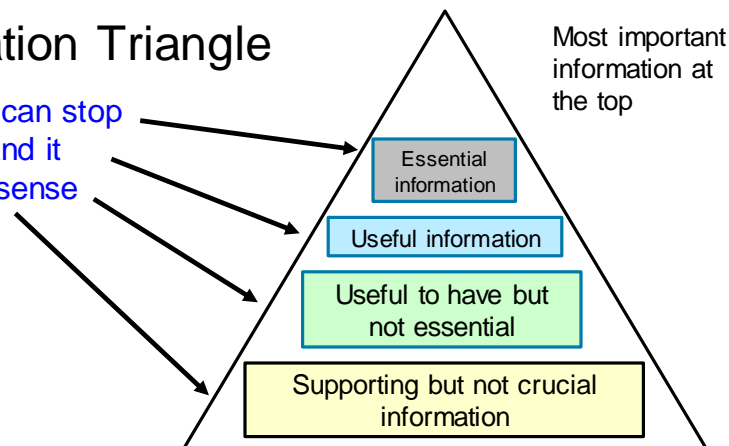
“A few showers ...”

- Put these into the body of the script and not first
- Many places will be dry!

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Information Triangle

The reader can stop
anywhere and it
still makes sense



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5. Use sign-posting



Be careful with your geographical signposting

Use of terms such as the 'far north', 'northwestern parts', 'far northwest', the 'southeast' in UK forecasts

e.g. is northwestern parts northwest England, northwest Scotland?

Try to be more specific

e.g. far north probably means northern Scotland and the southeast probably means southeast England

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6. Develop your weather vocabulary

Phrases that people use in everyday conversation about the weather

Use terminology that relates to the viewer or listener

e.g. Feeling much warmer than of late in the sunshine

Do not overuse words or phrases

Be aware of:

Your favourite phrases

Your phrase of the day

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7. Try not to make judgements

“Good sunny spells” or a “horrible wet day”
will depend on the customer

Be aware that such statements can offend or annoy

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8. Temporal or spatial variation?

Spatial and temporal variations are easily confused
e.g. ‘patchy’, ‘scattered’ or ‘widespread’

Most people experience the weather in one place

Differences occurring in time
e.g. ‘It will rain on and off throughout the day’

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Conclusions

- Don't underestimate the power of good communication
- There is no point in producing a forecast which is 100% accurate but this is not communicated well or clearly to your customer, whoever they might be
- Ask for feedback from customers, whoever they are, to constantly refine and improve communication
- Don't forget to listen!