<table>
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<th>Best practices:</th>
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<th>What to do:</th>
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| Avoid jargon or words that have different meanings for the public than for scientists. | • “driver…”  
• “computer models…”  
• “…this creates a positive feedback effect.” | • “powerful influence…”  
• “computer simulations…”  
• “…this creates a vicious circle.” |
| Keep things simple and relevant to the audience at hand. | “Due to the after-effects of ice sheets levering up areas of the east coast 20,000 years ago, portions of the east coast are experiencing land subsidence that will exacerbate other sea-level rise.” | “Parts of the east coast are especially vulnerable to flooding because of a combination of global sea-level rise and local land sinking.” |
| Avoid lecturing. | “Today I will discuss my research on tornadoes and how this affects…” | “I want to start by asking you how tornadoes have affected you and this community.” |
| Don’t use vague generalizations. | “Global warming is projected to have many negative effects on the whole world—and this region.” | “Global warming is projected to change the whole character of our state. For example:  
• In 50 years our summers are likely to feel more like summer in [the deep South].  
• The solid freeze that we expect on Lake Superior is no longer predictable…  
• The last frost of the season will be three weeks earlier, meaning X pests will thrive…” |
| Give examples that mean something to people’s own lives. | “Drought in our area means that soil moisture levels will be altered by [X amount].” | “Drought in our area is projected to intensify, putting more pressure on our already stressed water resources, and increasing the threats of wildfires; last year alone, wildfires destroyed X homes and cost Y dollars…” |
| When using numbers or measurements, use social math to provide scale. | • “There are 50,000 gallons of diesel fuel at the abandoned base camp.”  
• Sea-level rise of X inches.  
• X money saved [or lost]. | • “There is enough diesel fuel at the base camp for a car to circle the globe 80 times.”  
• That’s a loss of [X area of beachfront.]  
• This amount could send a child to college.” |
| Emphasize the value of science. | “I study coronal mass ejections and other space weather.” | “The research that I (and others) do on conditions on the sun helps predict and prepare for major power-grid outages and disconnects with our weather and GPS satellites.” |
| Provide context | “I study the Pine Island Glacier.” | “I study the Pine Island Glacier, the fastest melting glacier in Antarctica, responsible for about a quarter of Antarctica’s ice loss thus far.” |
| End on a positive note, with how science can be part of a solution. | “This is a serious issue, and we have to act now to avert catastrophe.” | “[My scientific discipline] give us an opportunity to overcome these challenges and develop innovative solutions that can improve our quality of life [e.g. better water or land use, building designs, health and safety measures, emergency planning, etc.]” |