

Communication Skills

EIAO Training



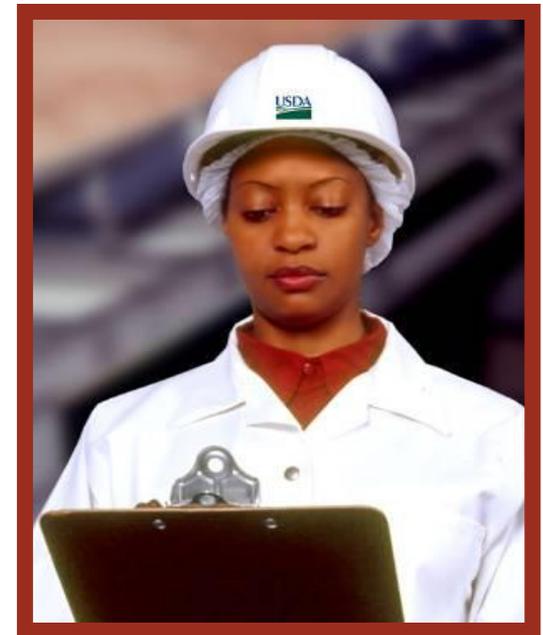
Objectives

Upon completion of this module, you will be able to:

- List the parties that are involved in communication during an FSA.
- Practice conducting an entrance meeting and exit meeting using role play.

Be a model Food Safety Professional

- Maintain open communication
- Be fair, firm, professional and courteous
- Work cooperatively
- Display personal integrity
- Be committed to excellence
- Show respect for others

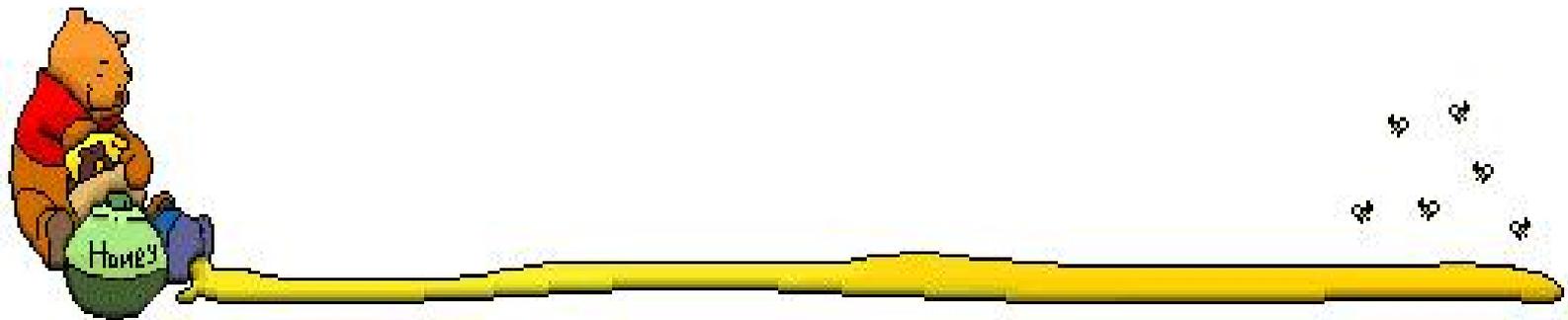


Food Safety Professional

- Dresses for success!
 - The EIAO should always dress professionally and appropriately
 - Wear professional clothing to entrance and exit meetings
 - Follow plant protocols when in plant

Communication Skills

- How you conduct yourself will play a key role in the success of your assignment



How do you see yourself?

- I feel guilty every day when I go to work about imposing government regulations on the poor helpless plant.....



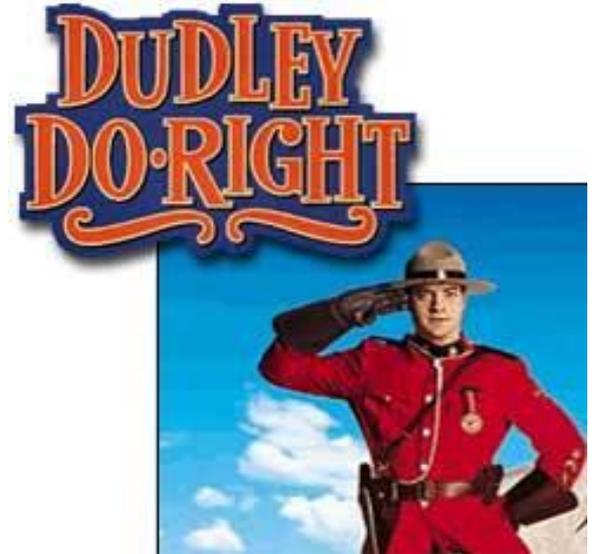
How do you see yourself?

I have a badge!



How do you see yourself?

- I am a government regulator protecting consumers from food that will make them sick.
- I am proud of what I do!



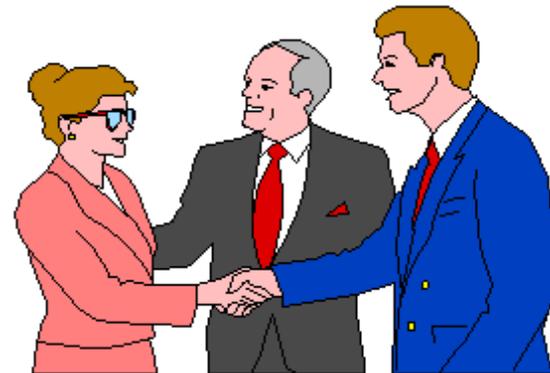
On going Communication

- You need to work cooperatively with the in-plant inspection team and with plant officials in order to effectively carry out your duties



On going Communication

- Communication should be occurring at every point in the process



Pre-FSA Preparation with IPP

- Provide FLS and IIC 1-2 weeks advance notification of the establishment visit
- Conduct teleconference with FLS and IPP team to discuss upcoming FSA
 - Gain info on establishment's operating practices prior to entrance meeting with establishment

E-mail verses Phone Call?

What should be done first?

- Talk by phone with IPP assigned to the establishment
 - If you cannot reach them by phone, then send an e-mail asking them when it is a good time to call and talk



Why?

- Phone call is more personal.
- Communication with team members starts when you break the ice.
 - Remember that IPP often get e-mails with instructions and information and may overlook the entrance meeting notification!
 - It is important to communicate with IPP and work with them to set up a time to have the initial discussion about the establishment and the up coming FSA

Pre-Entrance Meeting with IIC

- The EIAO should hold pre-entrance meeting with in-plant inspection team to discuss plant conditions whenever possible



On going Communication

- The EIAO should be engaged in on-going communication with the in-plant inspection team throughout the course of the assessment



Entrance Meeting

- Attended by EIAO, establishment officials, In-plant team and FLS, if possible
- Entrance Meeting agenda topics
 - Introduce yourself, provide business card, and thank them for taking the time to meet with you.
 - What FSA is, how scope was determined using PHRE and how it differs from IPP daily verification activities
 - EIAOs work schedule during the FSA
 - EIAO may make observations (all shifts and preop)
 - How to access the production floor and any special procedures

Entrance Meeting

- Entrance Meeting agenda topics
 - Where will the EIAO will conduct his or her work?
 - EIAOs will communicate with IPP and establishment management about findings
 - Identify when and whom the EIAO should contact with questions
 - Discuss possible FSA outcomes (No action, NRs, NOIE, VPs, NOS)
 - If there is noncompliance, NRs may be given immediately or at the exit meeting

Entrance Meeting

- Entrance Meeting agenda topics
 - Describe the statutory authority to make copies, if needed
 - There will be an exit meeting at the end of the FSA with establishment officials and IPP
 - The establishment will be given a draft copy of the FSA at the exit conference, and a final copy will also be provided by the DCS/DO.
 - The EIAO provides their contact information.

Role Play

Entrance Meeting

- Need Volunteers to “act out”
 - EIAO
 - FLS
 - IIP- CSI, PHV
 - Plant management



Ongoing Communication

- The EIAO is expected to communicate with the plant throughout the assessment to provide the plant with due process
- The EIAO should describe in clear terms to the plant management the non-compliances and weaknesses that are identified as the assessment progresses

Ongoing Communication

Important!

- The Agency expects, and will hold the EIAO accountable for, communicating with the in-plant inspection team and plant management about findings as the assessment is progressing

Ongoing Communication

- Be willing to share information
- Show the establishment the FSA tools
- Explain how this information may affect the appearance of their level of risk
- Explain that absence of data gathered could appear that controls are not in place

Ongoing Communication

- Explain that it is in the best interest of establishment to share information with FSIS and to maintain current information



Ongoing Communication

- Some of the information you ask for is not regulatory
 - Explain why the Agency is requesting this information
 - Example : Food Defense Plans

Ongoing Communication

- During the assessment process, EIAO should provide frequent updates to the DDM as well as remain in communication with the IIC and FLS
- Inform them of findings and any recommendations being made
- DDM may indicate a need for additional information, or may provide additional resources

Ongoing Communication

- EIAOs will promptly notify the establishment of noncompliances but do not predict possible FSA outcomes.
- All noncompliances will be documented in the FSA and on a Noncompliance Record or enforcement letter.

Ongoing Communication

- EIAO, IPP, and FLS work collaboratively to ensure all noncompliances are made known to the establishment.
- If the outcome is NRs issued, EIAO will contact the DDM, SEIAO
- After concurrence EIAO contacts FLS and works with IIC and IPP to ensure NRs written and issued to establishment management at the exit meeting.

Ongoing Communication

- The EIAO should hold a pre-exit meeting with the in-plant inspection team to discuss findings prior to the exit meeting when possible



Exit Meeting

- Thank establishment for their cooperation
- Describe basis of findings and recommendations
- Provide any enforcement action documents
- Review FSA and provide draft copy
- Answer any questions
- Provide business card with contact information
- Provide SBREFA outreach information

Exit Meeting – Practical Pointers

- Remain in charge of the exit meeting
- Choose your words wisely
 - Vulnerability or noncompliance
- There should be no surprises
- Make sure you cited the correct regulation
- Be able to verbalize what is expected of the establishment
- General organization suggestion

Role Play

Exit Meeting

- Need Volunteers to “act out”
 - EIAO
 - FLS
 - IIP- CSI, PHV
 - Plant management



Written Communication

- Your written report should explain:
 - Why is this important?
 - What is the impact on Food Safety?
- Your written report should emphasize:
 - The significance or level of severity of the issues.

Written Communication

- Is it clear?
- Has your complete thought made it to the page?
- Will the reader understand it?
- Does the significance of the impact on food safety stand out?

Written Communication

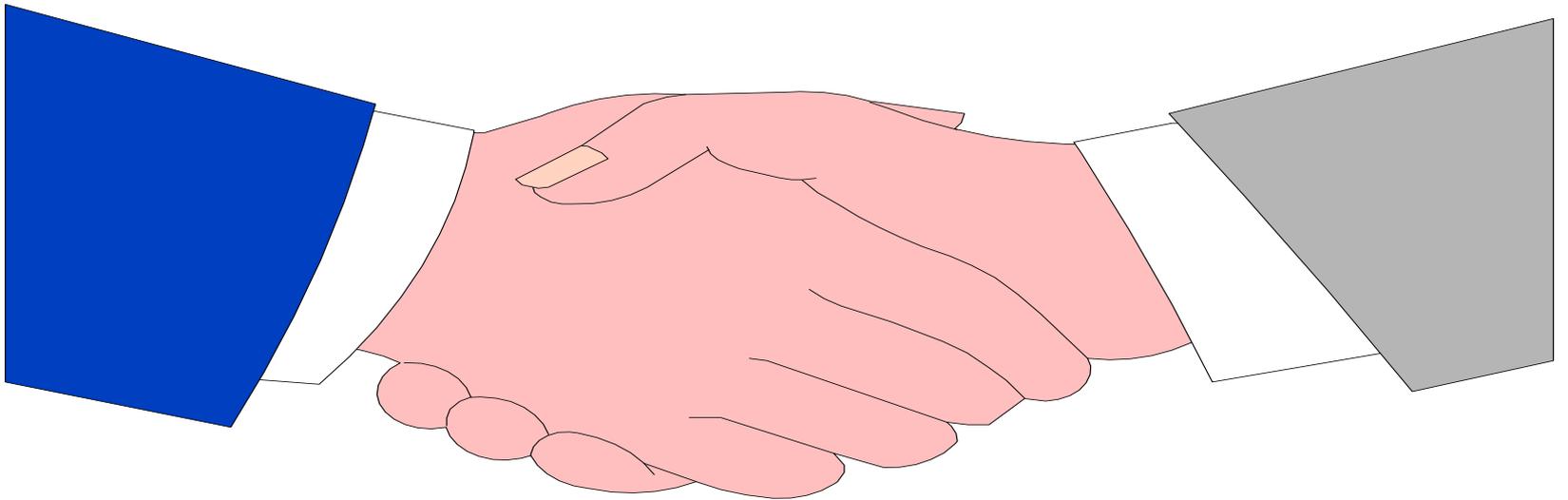
- Keep in mind that your report may be read by individuals who do not work for our agency, and may not have a food safety background.
- Your report should be written for this reader!

Written Communication

- We will discuss details of analysis writing in later presentations
- This was a general overview to stress the importance of written and oral communication

Communication Skills

- Develop your communication skills!



Communication Skills Resources

- Crucial Conversations: Tools for talking when stakes are high
 - K Patterson, J Grenny, R McMillan, and A Switzler.
- The Art of Persuasive Communication
 - Richard Storey
- Getting Your Way Every Day- Mastering the Lost Art of Pure Persuasion
 - Alan Axelrod
- Power Phrases; Speak Strong
 - Meryl Runyon
- Life Scripts: What to say to get what you want in life's toughest situations
 - SM Pollan and M Levine

Questions?

