AbstractID: 7994 Title: Learning a Foreign Language: Scientists and Media Relations

It seems that each scientific specialty has its own language. Talk to a computer person and you're not sure whether you need to just reboot the system or toss it out completely. Talk to a medical doctor and you're not sure if you *really* have to exercise or if you can get over it with a pill. So, a physicist and the public? Is it no wonder there is a communication gap when, as scientists, we even find it hard to communicate with and understand other science-types?

What are some basic tips we can use to be better communicators – with other scientists and the public? There are tips that can be offered:

- Using common analogies (e.g. alpha = linebacker, beta = running back, gamma = wide receiver)
- Emphasizing that radiation is beneficial
- Listening and asking questions (e.g. Why do you think that?)
- Using of language that is not trying to convince, but is instead to simply inform
- Not getting into physics 101
- Keeping it short unless additional questions are asked
- Never lying or going "off the record"
- Being professional
- Using visuals whenever possible
- Using whole numbers

A lot, though, falls into experience. This talk will cover some of the listed tips and also discuss lessons learned.