

YOU SAY...THEY THINK (PUBLIC HEALTH INFORMATICS)

Strategic framing is about choosing communications cues that activate productive ways of thinking. The graphic below illustrates how statements that sound reasonable to an informatician (“You Say”) may call up listeners’ unproductive, but dominant, habits of thought (“They Think”) and suggests framing strategies that can make your messages more effective.

Informaticians

Public

You Say...	They Think...	Triggered in their Minds...	What Helps?
<p>Informatics is important because it turns data into actionable knowledge.</p>	<p>Yes, thank goodness for computer programming. Where would we be without software and databases?</p>	<p>Informatics = tools without technicians Informatics is about data (not about how people use data)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the metaphor <i>Information Translation</i> to make informaticians visible as members of a field of practice who mediate other professionals' use of data and ability to work together across sectors. • Use the metaphor <i>Knowledge Architects</i> to define informatics as a social science and to explain how informaticians design data systems according to careful analysis of local contexts and users' needs.
<p>We need to fix aging technologies so we can communicate and share data and information across sectors and platforms.</p>	<p>Good luck! I've been in public health for three decades, and that's a problem that isn't going away anytime soon.</p>	<p>Fatalism</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the value <i>Ingenuity</i> to prime people to think about solutions and to foster optimism that longstanding problems can be fixed. • Use the metaphor <i>Knowledge Architects</i> to illustrate the ways in which informatics uses science to redesign existing systems to make them work better.
<p>Intelligently designed systems can be built to interface with each other effectively, but careful study is necessary to make sure users' needs are accounted for thoroughly in order to minimize problems with the interpretation and usability of the integrated data.</p>	<p>If Google can manipulate data from my email and social media accounts to send me targeted ads from third parties, I don't see why it's so difficult to share information across agencies.</p>	<p>"Black box" of systems integration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use the value <i>Responsible Management</i> to orient listeners to the need to create systems carefully in order to protect confidential data and ensure quality. • Use the metaphor <i>Data Logistics</i> to explain that informatics is about designing systems that ensure the fast and accurate packaging and transmission of information and developing standards to improve interoperability.
<p>Informatics is transforming the public health field.</p>	<p>Infor-what-is-it?</p>	<p>Lack of terminology</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use <i>explanation</i> to offer concrete, explicit definitions of informatics and what informaticians do, how they do it, and why it matters. • Introduce terms like "informatician" and "informaticians" in order to reinforce informatics as a scientific field practiced by trained professionals, but couple use of these terms with explanations of what members of the field do. • Use the metaphors <i>Information Translation</i> or <i>Knowledge Architects</i> to illustrate the role of informaticians in the broader field of public health. • Use concrete <i>examples</i> (such as flu severity or Ebola risk assessment) to explain informatics by showing how it can be applied to a specific public health issue.