

# Public Policy

## Communication in digital age

Feb, 15 2026

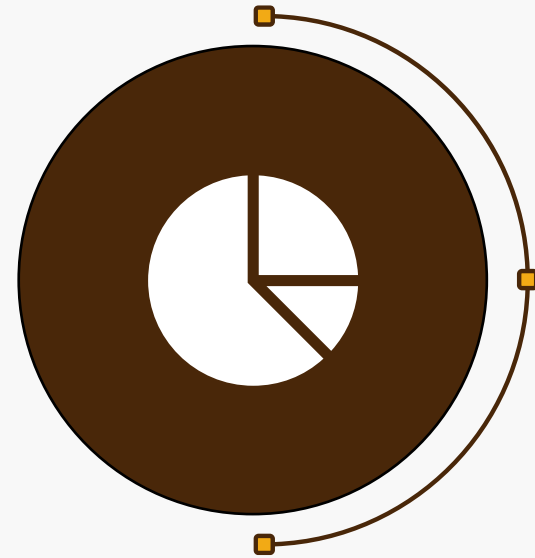




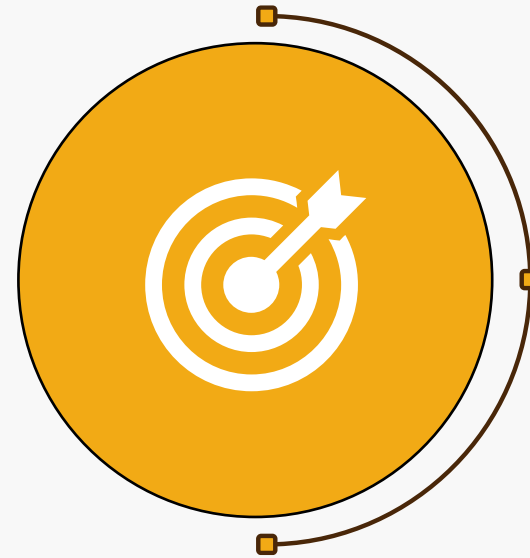
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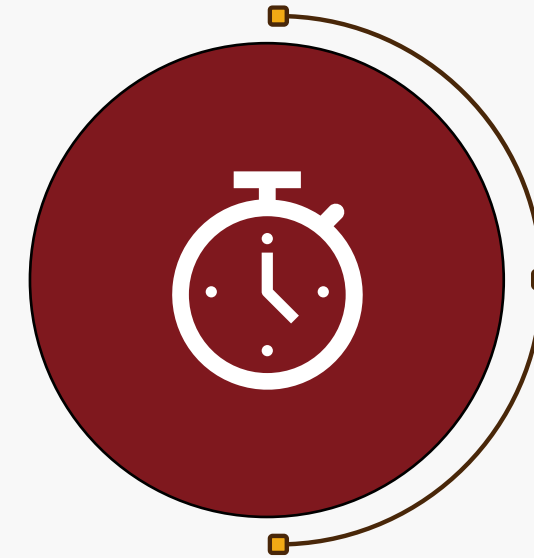
# AGENDA




**Public Policy**  
**S-M-C-R Model**



**CRISIS**  
**COMMUNICATION**



**DIGITAL**  
**FOOTPRINT**



**What is Public Policy?**





# Public Policy



Public policy shapes the decisions of government officials and agencies, and it affects society, the economy, and politics.

<https://jgu.edu.in/blog/2023/12/30/what-is-public-policy/>





# Public Policy



Public policy is a product of the political system, and public policy impacts the lives of its citizens in some way. For example, what the government does or does not do affects the quality of life of its citizens, whether it improves or worsens it. Another thing that needs to be clearly understood is that public policy does not affect all citizens equally. On the other hand, **some public policies may benefit some groups of people, while others may suffer losses**, such as land expropriation policy. But in some cases, the majority of people will benefit widely. For example, the government's public health policy aims to ensure that citizens receive equal and comprehensive public health services.





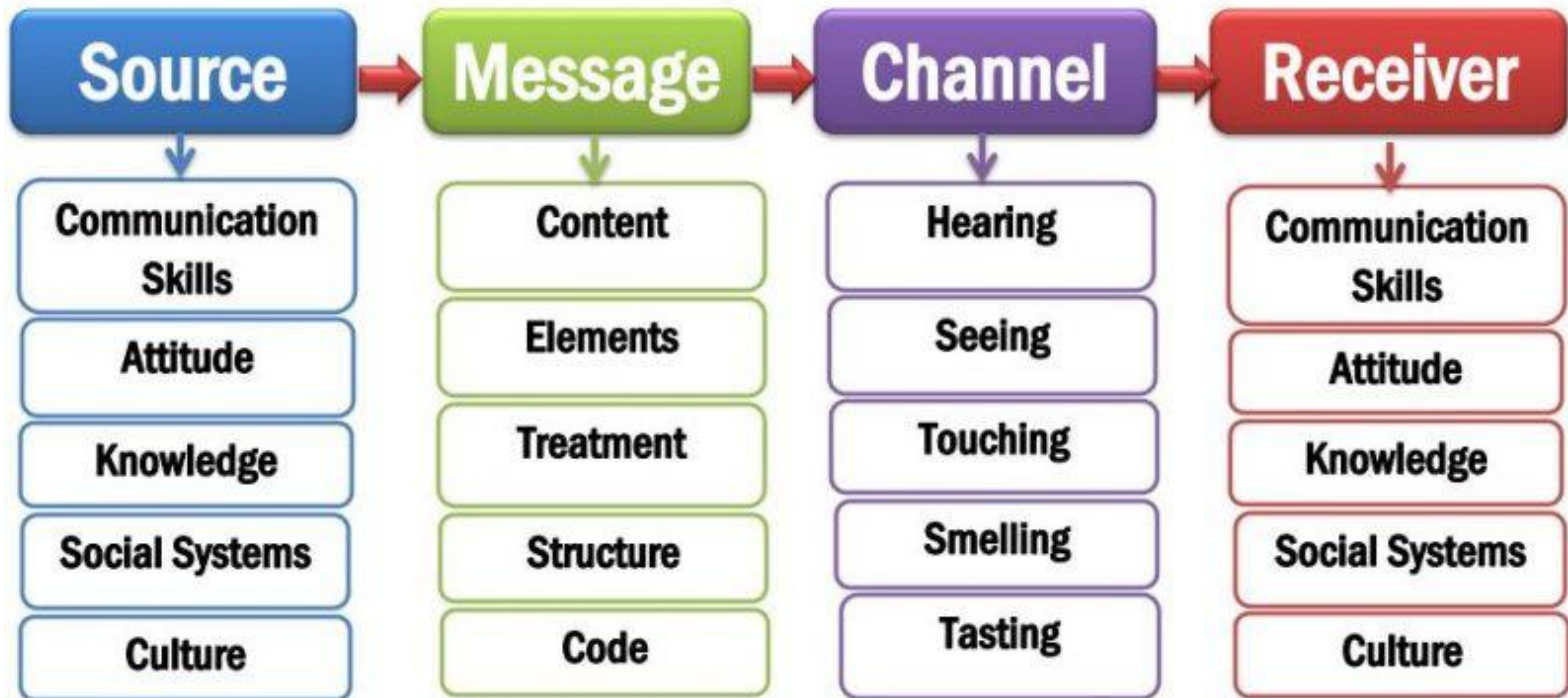
# Public Policy



Public policy is therefore an important tool in government administration. This is expressed in the form of guidelines, activities, or actions that the government uses to deliver public services in various forms, such as education, public health, and social welfare. In addition, many public policies affect people's lives, these include policies that focus on fair income distribution, security policies, transportation and communication policies, environmental policies, tourism promotion policies, national defense policies, and foreign policies, among others.



## Berlo's SMCR Model of Communication







# **The Concept Crisis**

Crisis: an inherently abnormal, unstable and complex situation that represents a threat to the strategic objectives, reputation or existence of an organization.





# The Concept Crisis

An organizational crisis can be defined as a significant threat to organizational operations or reputations that can have negative consequences for stakeholders and/or the organization if not handled properly

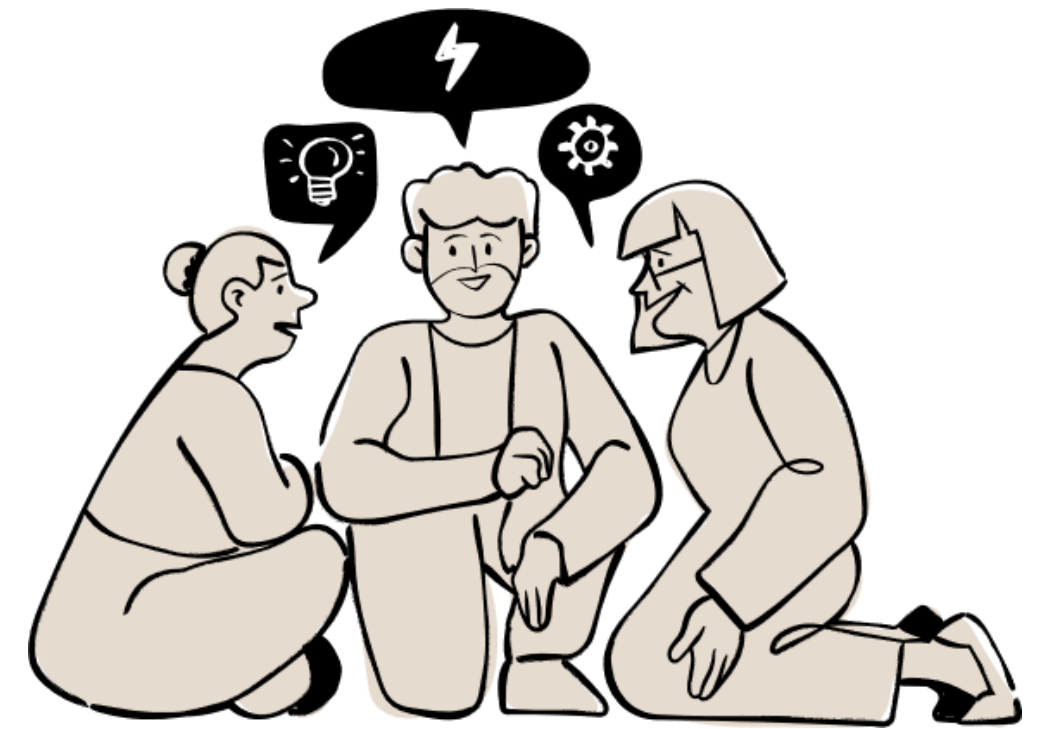
(COOMBS,2015).



# → The Concept Crisis

Crisis not only affects the smooth operation of any organization  
it also poses danger to its brand name.

COOMBS (2007)





# What common assumptions are made about crisis behavior?

- **In a crisis or emergency**, policy makers and communicators need to make some assumptions about how people will behave, to inform emergency management practices and the crisis response.
- Another common assumption in emergency situations, and one **that is often propelled and exacerbated by the media.**



Behavioral responses will vary depending on the specific type of crisis situation, but will normally be determined by a fundamental driver of **behavior - essential needs.**



“panic”

“mass panic”

“panic” during a crisis situation



Essential needs that people will seek  
to meet during a crisis





## Essential needs

- Shelter ● Security ● Hydration ● Food
  - Warmt ● Light ● Hygiene ● Health
  - Information
- Receiving assistance ● Contact ● Giving assistance
  - Safety from hazards ● Money
  - Entertainment



# How to anticipate public behaviors in a crisis?



1

*Identify the public's essential needs*

2

*Identify the barriers to meeting those needs*

3

*Identify the behaviors the public might engage in to meet those needs*

4

*Identify potential consequences of these behaviors, and plan how to mitigate negative consequences*

# Crisis Communication

.....is the strategic, rapid, and transparent dissemination of information by an organization during unexpected, negative events to protect its reputation, stakeholders, and operations.



# Key Elements of an Effective Crisis Communication Strategy

Speed and Accuracy

Transparency and Honesty

Preparedness (Crisis Plan)

Targeted Messaging

Consistent Communication

**Single Message**



# Crisis Communication

Effective crisis communication involves proactive planning, using a trained spokesperson, and providing consistent, honest messaging across channels to maintain trust and mitigate damage.



**Trust** in government and authorities has a significant impact on whether individuals will listen to government communications and follow advice.





# How can we maintain trust in a crisis?



- During a crisis situation, it is particularly important to maintain trust between authorities and the public to ensure that people continue to trust official information sources and follow guidance and rules.
- **Trust is easily lost in a crisis**, as information changes rapidly and government communication and activity will be under extra scrutiny.
- Communications should aim to maintain public trust throughout crisis situations, and is central to rebuilding it when it is lost.



**If people do not trust governments** to tell the truth and act in the best interest of the public, then they will be less likely to perceive government information about risks as credible. They might also lack confidence in government advice about protective behaviors.

This might reduce audience willingness to act and respond appropriately in crises.





# Crisis Communication and Effective Crisis Management



Communication is a key component to organizational success in dealing with crisis situations or events. In an organization, communication is the bond that binds all the actions and operations, internally and externally. Therefore, communication is critical to the effective performance of any enterprise.

(UONCP, 2014).



# → Crisis Communication

Communication is crucial during a crisis. If you are not prepared for the different crisis scenario that may affect your organization [prepare for different crises] and how to communicate during them, the organization will likely incur more damage to the business. In the absence of adequate internal and external communications





# → How should we communicate in a crisis?

## How to communicate

- Communicate consistently and frequently
- Use trusted sources and messengers
- Set expectations that information may change quickly as more is known



# → How should we communicate in a crisis?

## What to communicate

- Tell the public what is known.
- Tell the public what is not known, emphasizing the uncertainty.
- Tell the public what actions the government is taking, and why (this may include actions to mitigate the crisis, and actions to reduce uncertainty).
- Tell the public what they should do, and why.
- Tell the public when to expect more information.





**Example:** Enhancing crisis communications through use of the Krebs method

A message about flooding without the Krebs method:

“There is currently serious flooding in the region, and we know that some households are without power. We don’t yet know the cause of the issue and can’t answer questions about how long power is likely to be out, so please wait for further information.”



**Example:** Enhancing crisis communications through use of the Krebs method



A message about flooding that applies the Krebs method:

“There is currently serious flooding in the region, and we know that at least 1000 households do not currently have access to power.

We don't yet know when power will be returned, but it is expected to be more than 24 hours from now, and possibly up to 5 days.

Authorities are in the area now, working with energy companies to identify the issue and implement a plan to get the power back on as soon as possible. Until then, please stay indoors and do not attempt to cross flood water. Call the phone number below if you need urgent help. This information will be updated at 8.00pm as we find out more about the damage caused.”





# How can communications discourage non-compliance with guidance and regulations?

**Engage** with the target group, take steps to understand their position, and demonstrate appreciation of their opinions and perspectives. Showing sensitivity to the circumstances of non-compliant groups helps foster a sense of trust and constructive dialogue.

**Explain** Gently highlight the rationale behind the guidance and regulations, to help people understand the logic behind rules and why their compliance matters (both for them personally and for broader society). Set out the risks posed by non-compliance, avoiding confrontational language that may alienate the target group.





# How can communications discourage non-compliance with guidance and regulations?

**Encourage** people to act in line with the rules, appealing to their social instincts, focusing on encouraging compliant behaviors, rather than challenging deeply-held beliefs. Be consistent and firm

**Enforce** If communications approaches fail, then the appropriate authorities will enforce rules using powers set out in the relevant guidance or regulations.



# Public Relations Tools

Exclusives



Press conferences



Press releases



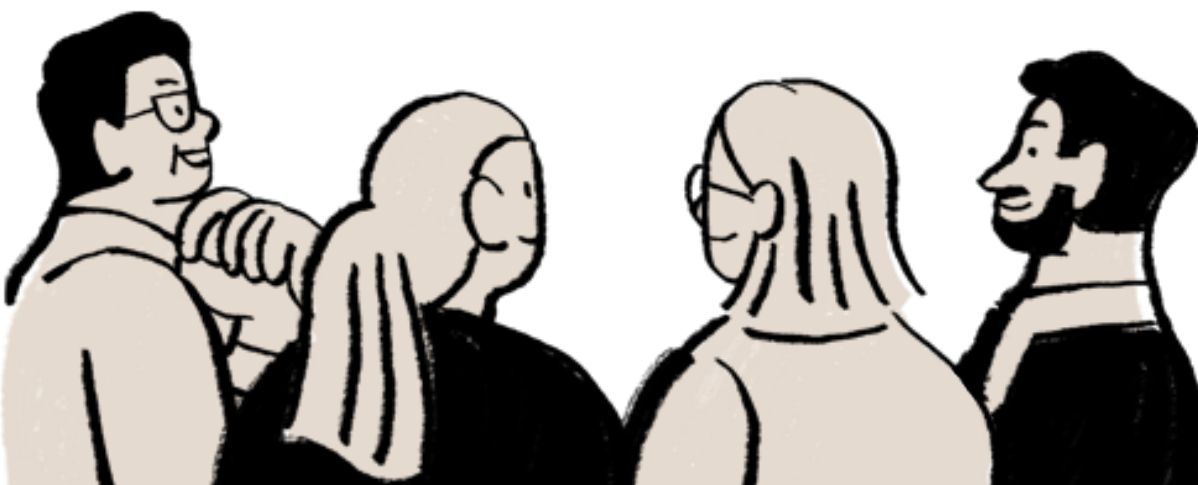
Interviews



Community involvement



The internet





**How can we maintain trust in a crisis?**



# → How can we maintain trust in a crisis?

In order to build and maintain trust, governments should act with **competence, integrity, and benevolence**, and should use communications to demonstrate to the public how it is doing so.





# How can we maintain trust in a crisis?



To demonstrate competence, governments should:

- Show that decisions have been made on the basis of sound evidence and be transparent about uncertainties
- Set out a goal and a realistic plan to achieve it
- Show that citizen needs and perspectives have been considered.



# **How can we maintain trust in a crisis?**

**To demonstrate integrity, governments should:**

- Show how decisions were made, and the reasons behind them
- Be open about failures and unknowns
- Show how they have acted consistently with their values and promises.



# How can we maintain trust in a crisis?

To demonstrate benevolence, governments should:

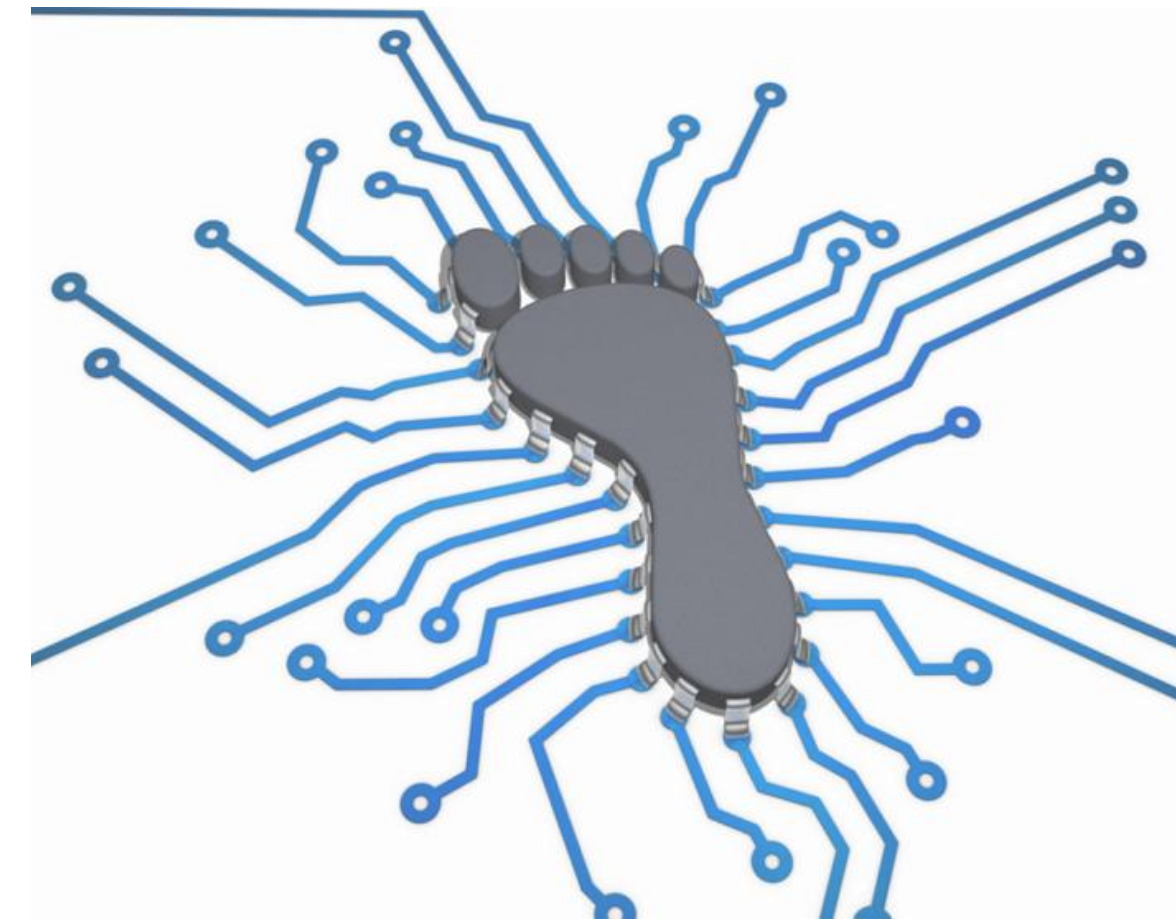
- Show what it is doing to help and protect citizens
- Demonstrate that it acts fairly and compassionately



# Digital Footprint

Today we carry more computing power on our smartphones than was available in these early models. ....computers have evolved from their humble beginnings to the machines of today that surf the Internet, play games and stream multimedia in addition to crunching numbers.”

<https://drlisastrohman.com/your-digital-footprint/>



# Digital Footprint

Your Digital Footprint – Directly related to your digital reputation is your digital footprint. Your digital footprint is a trail of data you create while using the Internet. **It can include the websites you visit, emails you send, online games you play, online videos you share and information you submit to various online services.**

**Your digital footprint is permanent**

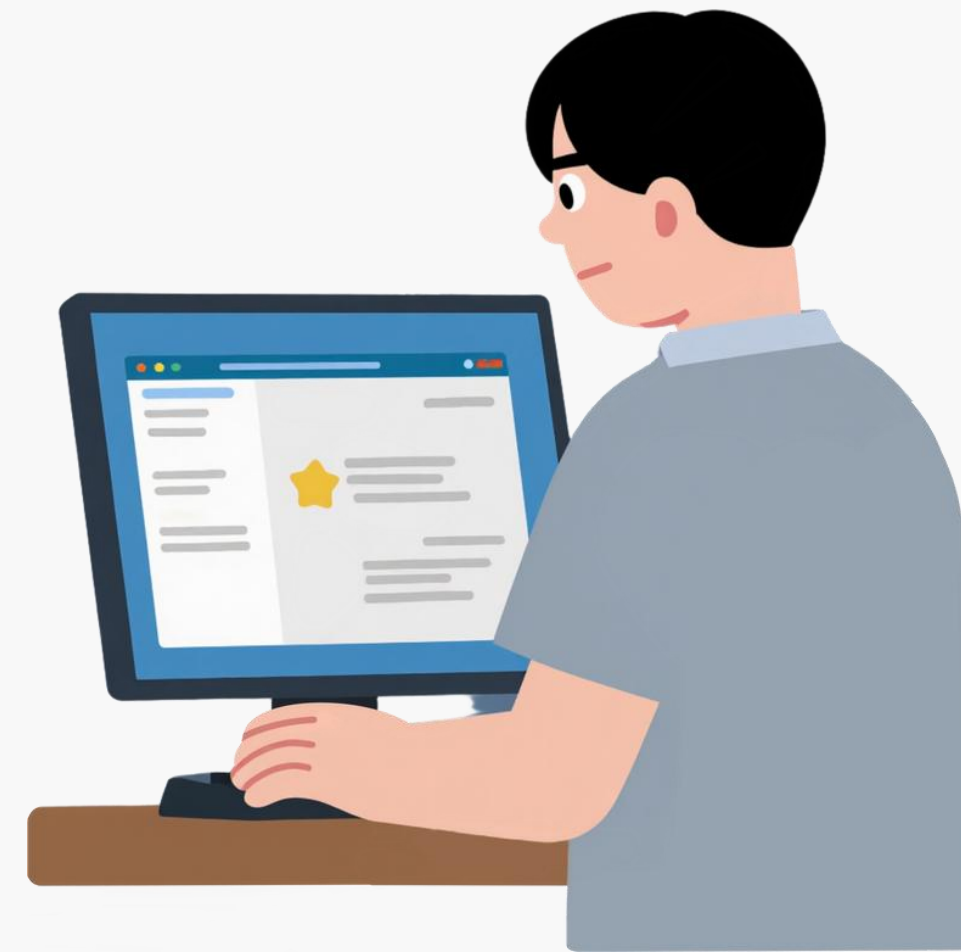
<https://drlisastrohman.com/your-digital-footprint/>



# Digital Footprint

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You are **what you share**



# Digital Footprint

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**Every like, post, share, comment, search and online purchase leave a trace**



# Active digital footprint



Social Media Posts



Online forum entries



Comments



Share Media Files



Locations data

# Passive digital footprint



Device Information



IP address



Browsing history

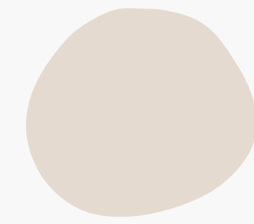


Social Security Number



Medical Records

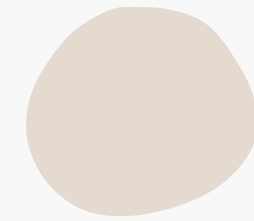
# Who use your Digital Footprint



***Businesses***



***Employers***



***Schools***



***Stakeholders***



***Individuals***

**THANK YOU**

