

Six Tips: Communicating in an Era of Skepticism

Six ways to shift the narrative away from reactive defense and toward a proactive stance that protects the integrity of public discourse, elevates science, and builds trust.

SHOW HOW SCIENCE WORKS

Give concrete examples of science solving problems, who it helps, and why.

Don't rely on appeals to authority: "follow the science" or "experts agree"

MAKE SCIENCE VISIBLE

Point to science that shapes life in positive ways: clean water, safer food, and disease reduction.

Don't speak in vague abstractions: "public health is invisible"

USE PLAIN, INVITING LANGUAGE

Make it easy for everyone to understand.

Don't use default jargon: "this cohort reduced risks"

START WITH THE BASICS

Back up a bit to orient on the scientific process used, then add context before introducing data.

Don't assume people start where you do: "they just need the data"

SHOW YOUR WORK

Explain how you know what you know, and how it serves the public.

Don't assume credentials create trust: "I graduated with these degrees and I'm the expert"

ACKNOWLEDGE UNCERTAINTY AND QUESTIONS

Respond with openness and ask questions (what makes you uncertain?).

Don't ignore uncertainty: "this is the fact"

See the full guidance at:

Source: Sweetland, J. (2026). [Disrupting Deception: 5 Ways to Elevate Evidence and Trustworthy Voices](#).
FrameWorks Institute.

