



Conclusion: The Big Question

By Eddie Bertola, founder of Bertola Advisory Services

This probably isn't the first time you've seen best practices, read guides, reviewed checklists or attended training. It probably won't be the last time either. In fact, you may have been on this cycle for years.

You've had the opportunity to review this resource, which is filled with the latest expectations, tips and areas to focus on to increase the chance of success and to reduce the chance of failure.

You now know how common it is to feel reluctant or simply afraid to push the send button because of potential negative consequences from technical or human errors. You know some of the most common errors and ways to avoid them. Some of them may seem simple to avoid, but in an emergency situation, it's often the easy things that get overlooked and quickly become a problem. You also reviewed the mindset shift you may need to make to help you shape every success and mistake as an opportunity to learn and improve the process.

You were asked to look at the way you create messages. You were introduced to Dr. Jeanette Sutton and her groundbreaking research, including the five key components of effective messages. If you haven't already thought about the type and quality of alerts your organization sends, please set aside time to do so now.

You're encouraged to constantly improve with the training and continuing education resources provided here. The worst thing you can do is think you know everything in this field. There will always be room for training and education. Whether in a formal classroom setting or through the practical experience of an emergency, you must take advantage of every opportunity to get better. What separates the good from the great is often the ability to take advantage of the failures and mistakes and leverage positive change.

If you are anything like me, you realize how important this research is and if applied correctly, how much more effective we can be.

Which brings me to the big question.

It's simply this...What are your next steps?

If you read this information without deciding on what steps you can take to apply what you've learned, you're missing an important opportunity. Your next steps aren't predetermined, and they aren't a one-size-fits-all. They're unique to you and your situation.

The next steps you need to take may be different from others, but perfect for you. What may appear as a small step for some, may be a large leap for you. Strive to be the best you can be and keep the student mindset. As you work to incrementally increase your competence in the process and technology of emergency alerting, your personal confidence will increase, your stakeholder's confidence in your abilities will increase and, most importantly, you will be ready to answer the call to help save lives.

About the Authors



Eddie Bertola is the founder of Bertola Advisory Services and a subject matter expert in mass notification strategies, emergency messaging, missing person alerts and engagement with the public during emergencies. He consults with FEMA/IPAWS, federal, state, local, territorial and tribal leaders, and private sector companies. He is a Reserve Pea Ridge Arkansas Police Officer, a member of the Arkansas Troop L Child Abduction Response Team and the FBI Task Force for Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking. He worked for the California Highway Patrol for 15 years, concluding in the Counterterrorism and Threat Awareness Section as the lead statewide instructor for emergency messaging, the AMBER Alert and other missing person alerting.



Peter Gaynor is the Vice President, Resiliency and Disaster Recovery at Hill International. His experience includes serving as FEMA Administrator, the acting Secretary for Department of Homeland Security and Director for both state and local emergency management agencies. He oversaw FEMA's first ever operational response to a nationwide pandemic. He has more than 14 years of experience in emergency management and served for 26 years in the U.S. Marine Corps.

About OnSolve CodeRED

OnSolve® CodeRED is the leading provider of public alerting and residential safety technology that enables state and local government agencies to protect their community, responders and employees. CodeRED was designed by public safety officials and sends billions of alerts annually, helping agencies deliver emergency alerts quickly and reliably to save lives.

Trusted since 1998, more than 10,000 government agencies use CodeRED to provide real-time information to communities and keep them informed and safe. CodeRED is a trusted IPAWS provider and the alerting engine behind AMBER Alerts with the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), helping aid in the alert, search and recovery process for more than 90,000 missing or abducted children and adult cases.

Learn more at onsolve.com/codered.

