

Tips for defending against misinformation

Combatting misinformation

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- Understand that others might not have the same life experiences or values. They may not be able to agree and understand immediately.
- Recognize the motive for misinformation and use it to inform your reconciliation strategy.
- Take advantage of teachable moments.
- Defend vigorously against malicious disinformation, BUT look for opportunities to help the perpetrator save face whenever possible.
- Tailor the message to the audience.
- Be timely.
- Be transparent.
- Engage frequent adversaries. Share your dilemma with those who disagree.
- Manage your reputation as a credible source of information; work to gain trust if needed.
- Be sensitive to patterns of miscommunication and work toward correcting misunderstanding.
- Remember, communication isn't just what comes out of your mouth or what you write. It's also what comes back at you.

The curse of knowledge is a cognitive bias that occurs when an individual, communicating with other individuals, unknowingly assumes that the others have the background to understand.

—Jane Kennedy (1995)

