Disinformation: Spot It! Stop It!
Key Learnings

- If the message elicits strong emotions – either positive or negative, be suspicious.

- If the message provides an easy answer to a complex question, be suspicious.

- Validate the facts even if the message is from a friend of a friend.

- Use trust-worthy websites to check for known disinformation circulating on social media.

    - If a fact-checking website is trustworthy, it will report on misleading information created by both the Left and the Right. For example,

        - APNews.com/ap-fact-check
        - FactCheck.org
        - PoltiFact.com
        - Snopes.com

    - Collect your own list of trusted sources. Using several is always best.

- Verify the source of the information

    - Expand the FROM in an email to find the email address of the sender.

    - Use Google's 3-Dot Shortcut as a quick start to verify a website. If it's an unknown organization, but not obviously fraudulent, go to their website and check for

        - Signs of bias in their About Us
        - Information about their policies, mission, etc.
        - Verify physical address using mapping application
        - Check for commercial motive: selling product

    - Determine the original (primary) source

        - If there is no primary source available, generally you can discount the information. Without the source you cannot assess their motivation.

        - If there is a primary source, consider the motivation.

            - Political agenda
            - Prank or need for attention
            - Profit

    - Pick up the phone

- Triangulate: Look for other views both opposing and supporting

    - Expert Opinions

        - Scientific studies will discuss both the pros and cons of any conclusion.
        - Red Flag words: Proven. It's true.
        - Researcher vs. Practitioner. Beware of practitioners trying to sell you a cure.

    - Be aware that multiple secondary sources reporting the information from the same primary source, only count once.

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OF THE VILLAGES/TRI-COUNTY