US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

INSTITUTE FOR Sustainable Communities

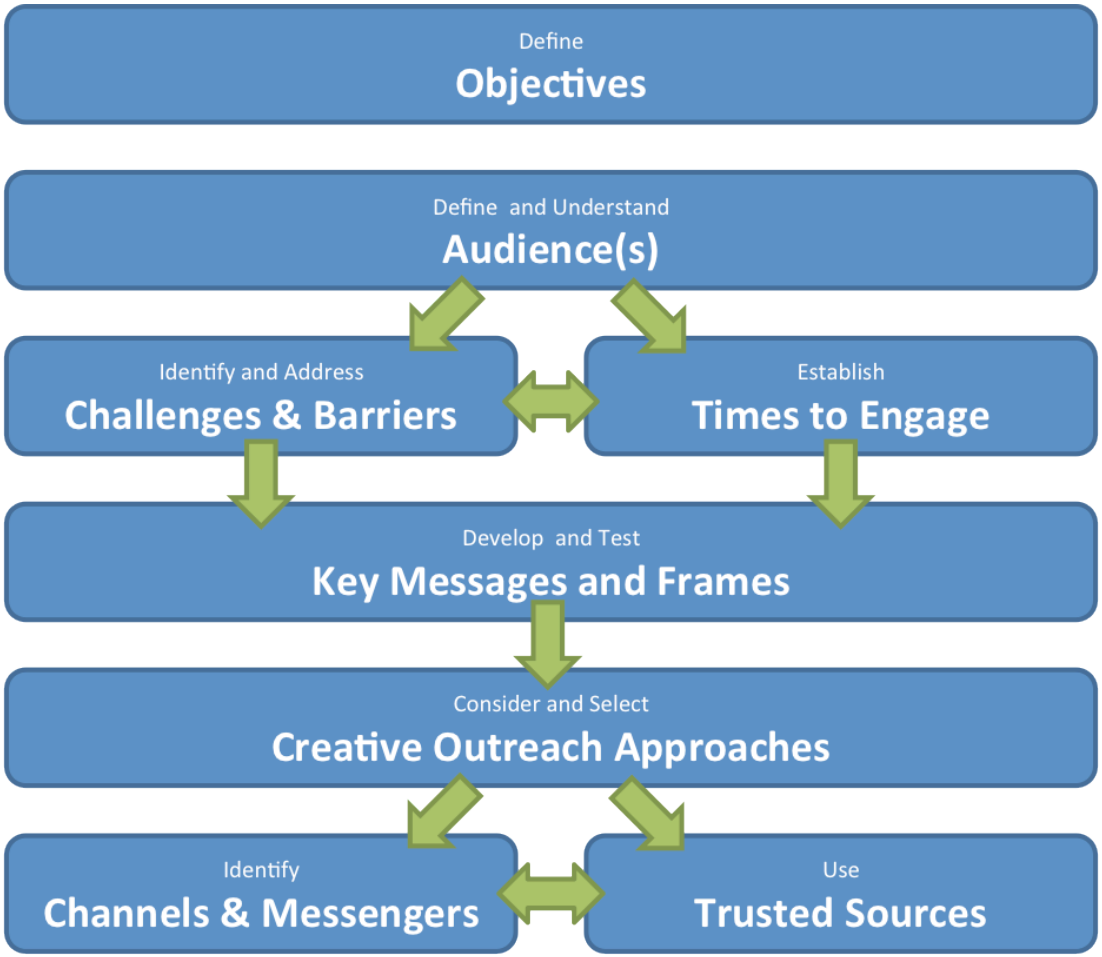
The role of communication in sustaining behavior change

Overview

Liz Schlegel, Communications Manager
Institute for Sustainable Communities

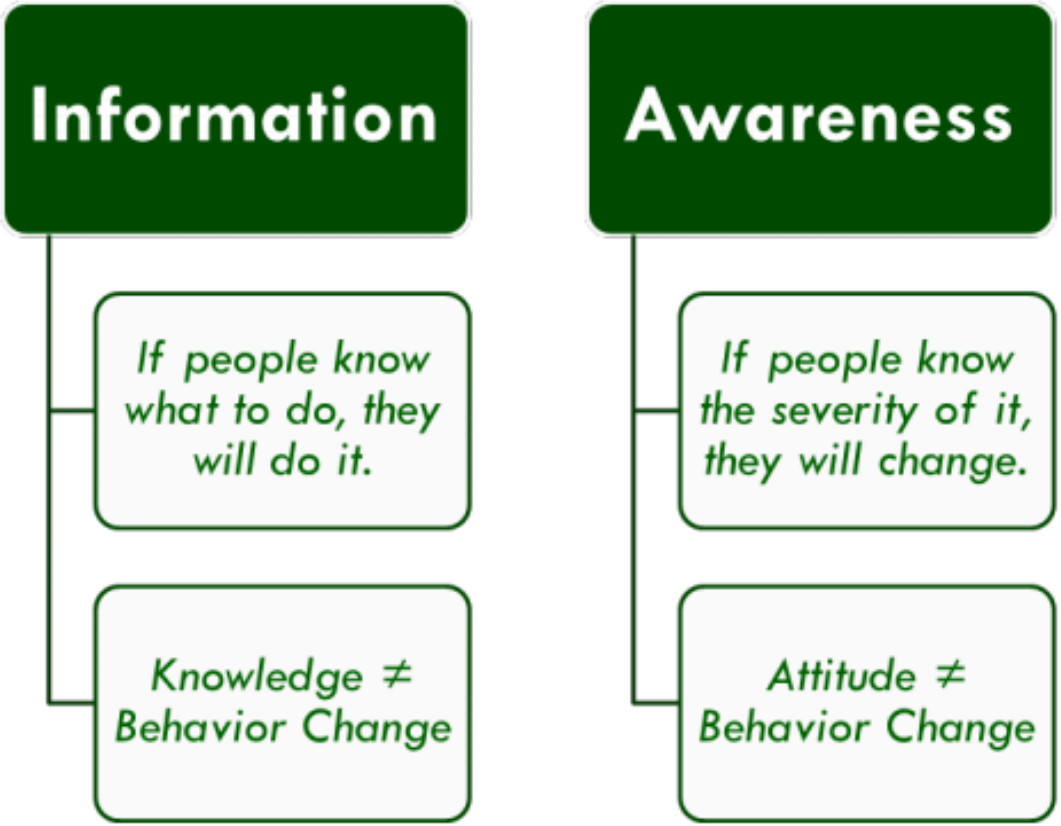
EPA Webinar Series #2 December 11, 2013

Elements of communications framework



Assembling the ingredients

Traditional approaches won't drive change



Source: http://www.vecan.net/wp-content/uploads/CBSM-Overview.pdf

If you want change:

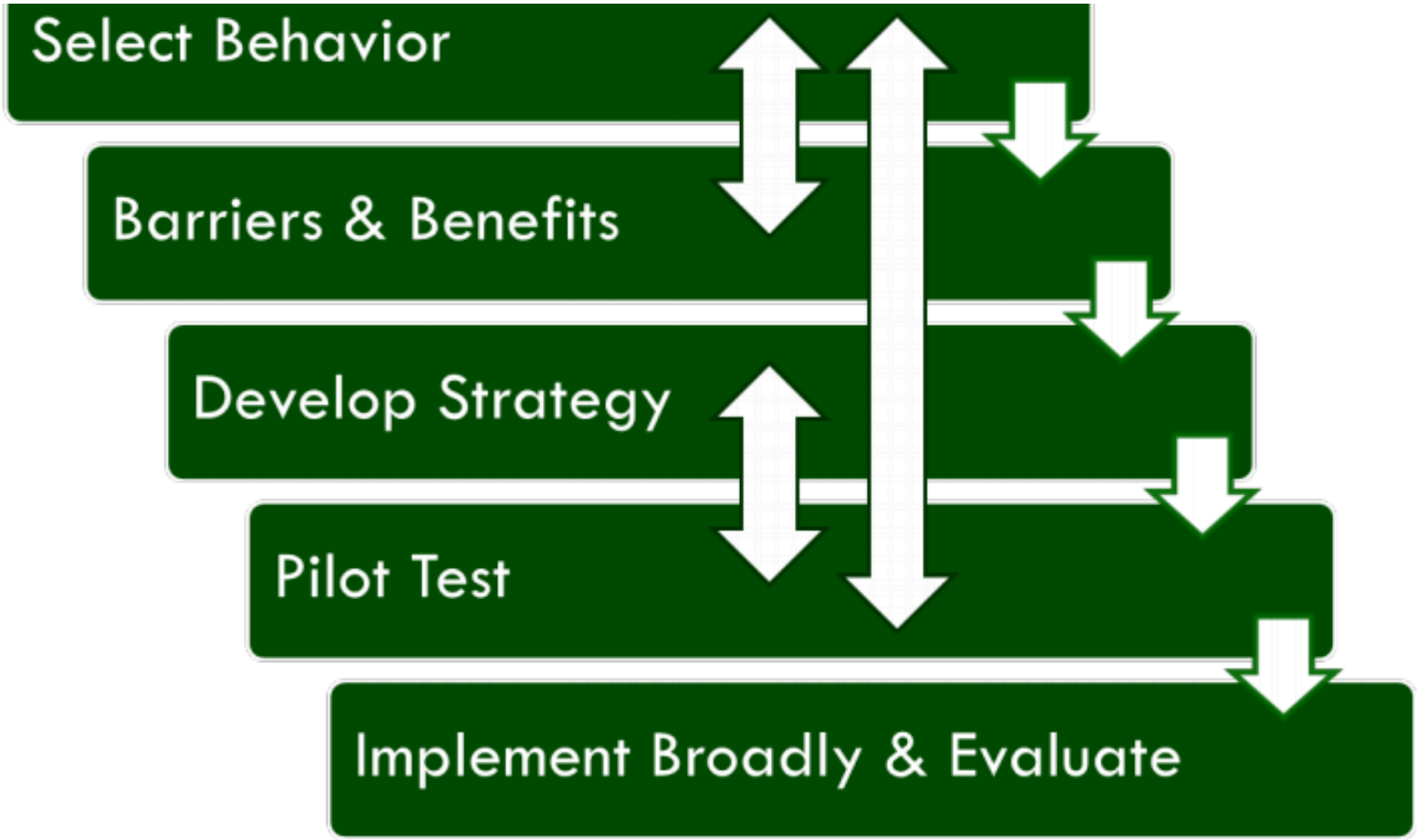
- Understand the barriers
- Identify the influencers
- Connect the dots

Community-based social marketing

Start here, go anywhere (in sustainability!)

http://www.cbsm.com/

Behaviors, barriers & benefits



Source: http://www.vecan.net/wp-content/uploads/CBSM-Overview.pdf

Ask & understand

- What they are doing instead of … (what's the behavior you want to shift?)
  - e.g. driving instead of walking on short trips
- Why do they do it that way? What are the drivers of behavior?
  - Perceived convenience, social norms
- What are the benefits they value?
  - Social connection, walkable neighborhoods

Use behavioral tools

Behavioral Tool Overview

Barrier Id	Social Diffusion	Framing	Social Norms
• Qualitative research to understand and mitigate barriers to taking action	• Influencing the influencers, i.e., thought leaders within business community and organization	• Crafting vivid, motivational messages, tailored to specific decision makers	• Portraying the desired behavior as the "mainstream" behavior

Commitments	Prompts	Feedback	Incentives
• Public pledges made to take certain actions • Can include goal setting	• Messages that remind us to take certain actions at strategic times or locations	• Information on the impacts from changed behaviors • Track progress toward goals	• Financial or social/emotional "rewards" for achieving goals

Source: http://www.vecan.net/wp-content/uploads/CBSM-Overview.pdf

Framing

"Framing is everything. It's important to consider your audience and their fundamental values when communicating. This can often sound like a 'tactic' for engaging with 'the opposition,' but it's much more meaningful and powerful to think the age-old maxim of walking a mile in another person's shoes. At the end of the day, I don't think our deepest wishes and desires for future generations and the planet they will inherit are really all that different – it's simply that we have different paradigms through which we view the world."

– Nathaly Agosto Filion, ISC Program Officer

Values

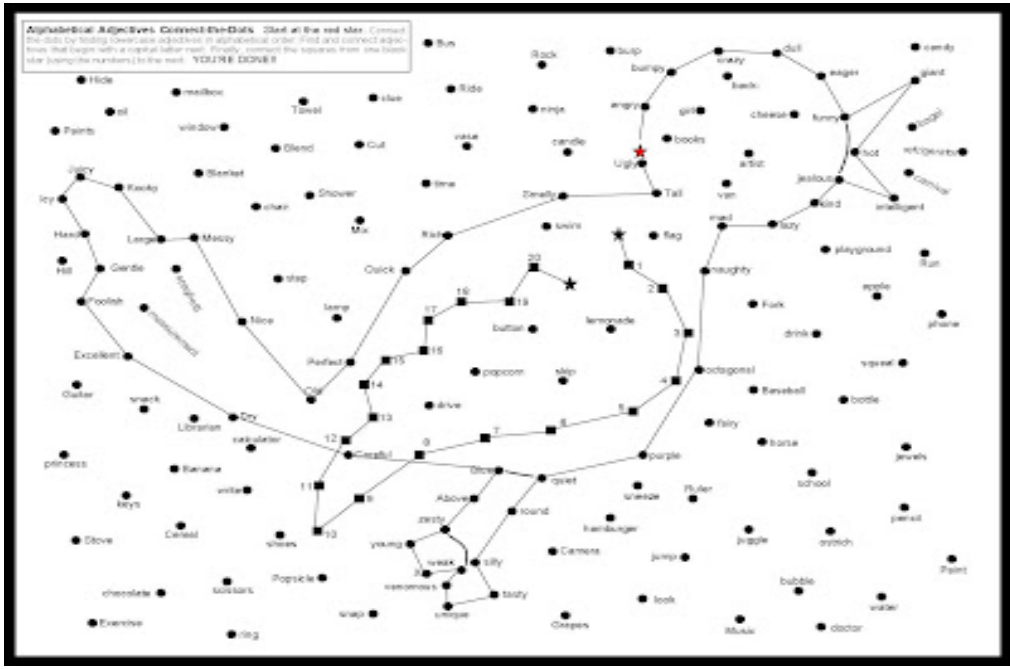
Start where you agree:

- self-reliance
- thrift
- economy
- health
- stewardship
- community

Image: http://www.flickr.com/photos/grongar/4966006644/

Connect the dots

"People either think that they are doing their part by changing light bulbs and stop there – or they feel that taking these steps are meaningless given the scale of the challenge. Making the connections between smaller actions and broader changes is critical as well as emphasizing the need for collective action."

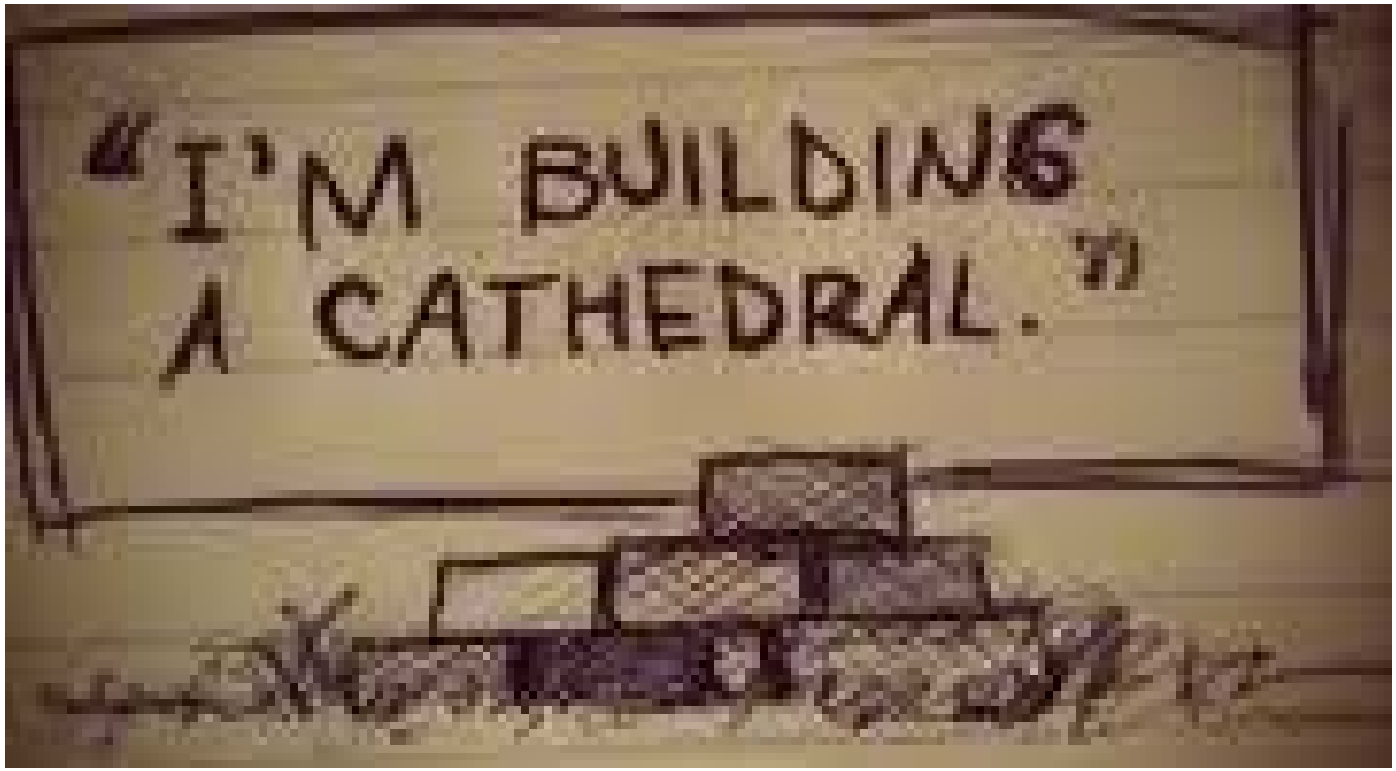


Source: Pike et al, *Climate Communications and Behavior Change: A Guide for Practitioners*

If you want it to last, you have to invest

- Understand challenges & barriers
- Figure out your framing
- Test messages, channels, approaches, messengers
- Build relationships with partners
- Allow enough time and support for your team to fail and try again

How long does it take?



Don’t forget…

- Assessment
- Assumptions
- Tracking results
- Listen & learn
- Seize the day!

Resources

- http://sustainablecommunitiesleadershipacademy.org/resources/

Thank you!

Liz Schlegel, Communications Manager

Institute for Sustainable Communities

Phone: 802-229-2910

Email: lschlegel@iscvt.org

Web: www.iscvt.org

www.facebook.com/SustainableComm