

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

The role of communication in sustaining behavior change

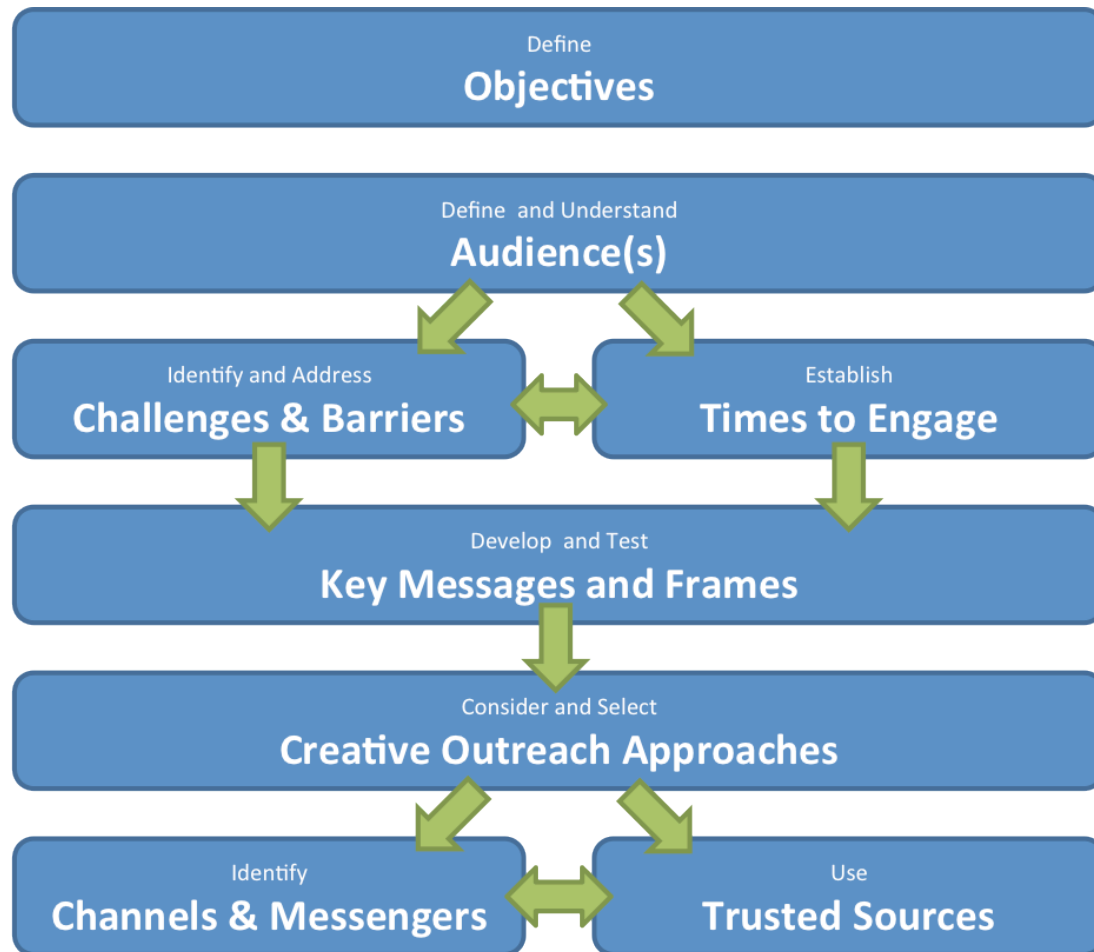
Overview

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Institute for Sustainable Communities

EPA Webinar Series #2

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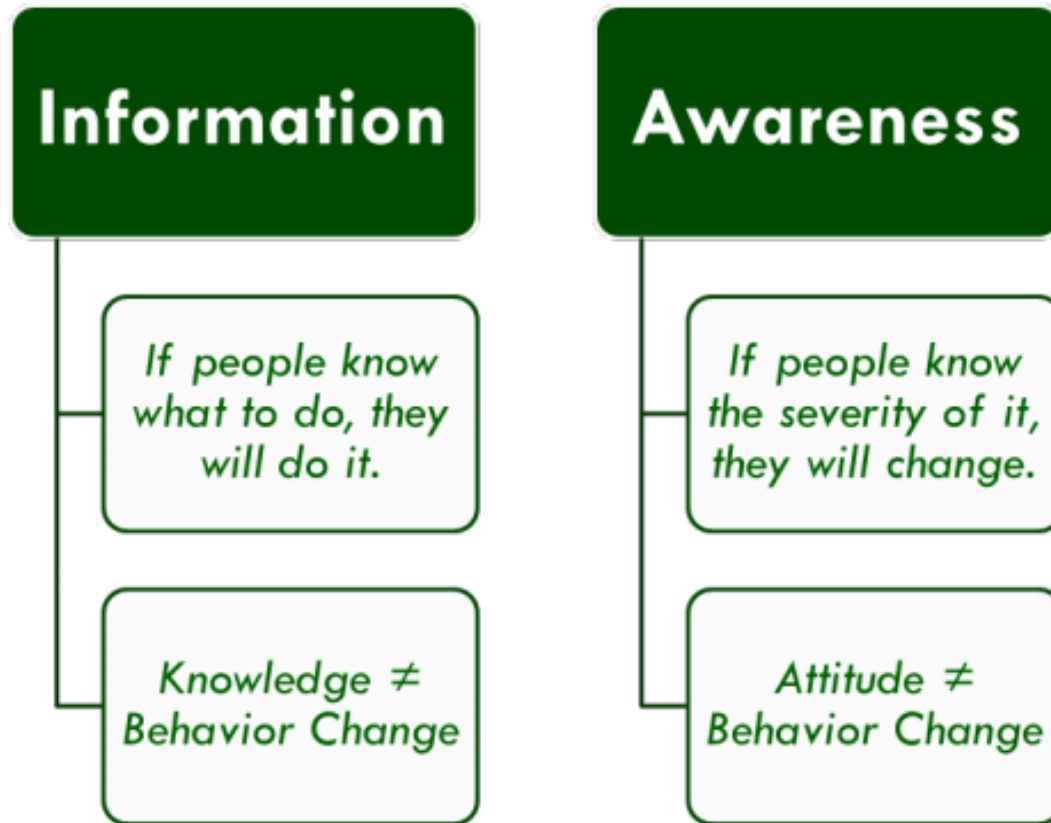
Elements of communications framework



Assembling the ingredients



Traditional approaches won't drive change



If you want change:

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



Conan

Community-based social marketing

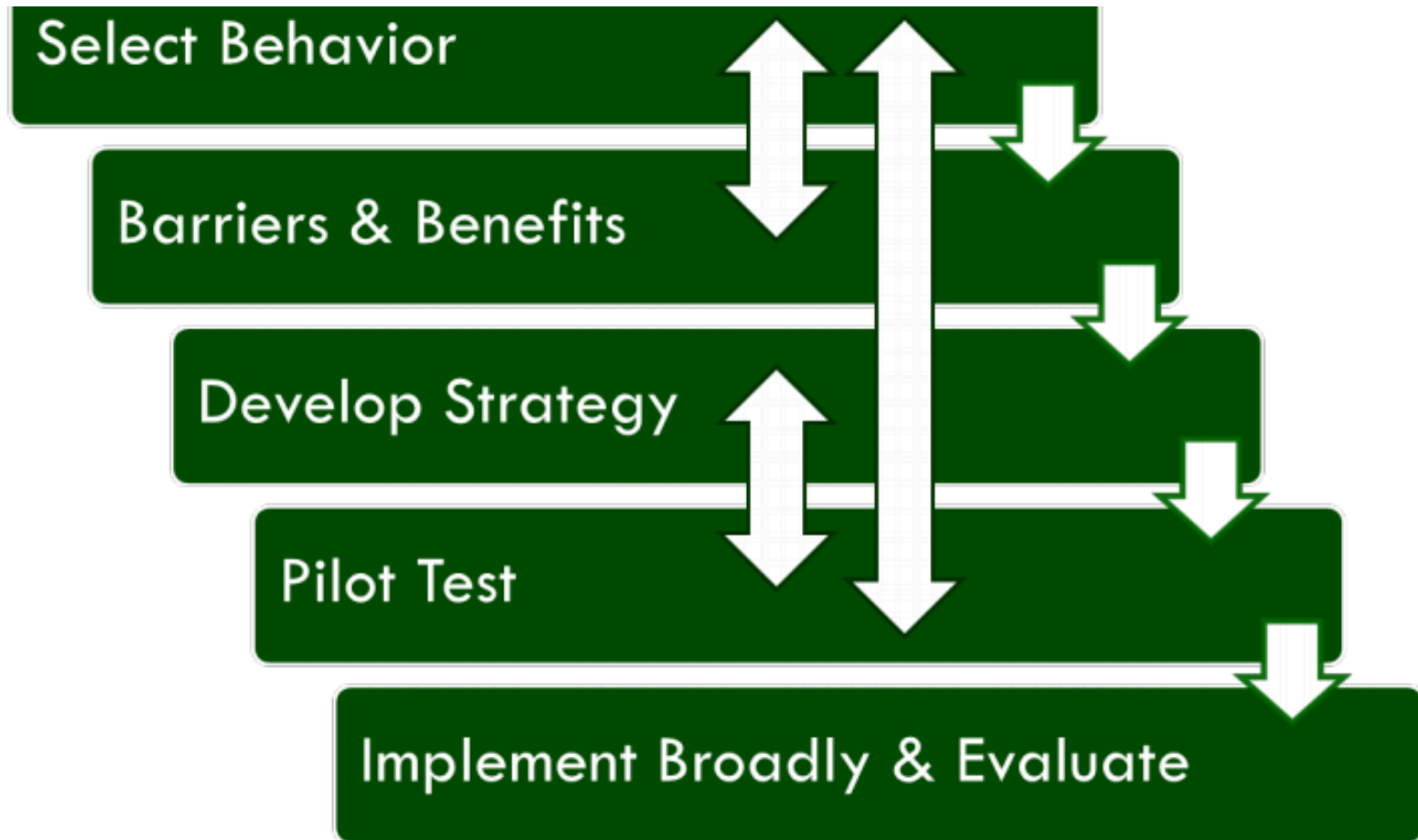
Start here, go anywhere (in sustainability!)

The screenshot shows the homepage of the 'Fostering Sustainable Behavior' website. The header features a green background with a leaf and water droplets, and the site's logo. A navigation bar includes links for HOME, BOOK, ARTICLES, CASES, STRATEGIES, FORUMS, MY ACCOUNT, TRAINING, and CONTACT. The main content area is divided into several sections:

- Site Resources:** A text block explaining the site's purpose and resources, including a table of contents for the book 'Fostering Sustainable Behavior'.
- Category Grid:** A grid of five categories, each with an icon and a table of content counts:
 - Agriculture & Conservation:** Articles (0), Cases (6), Strategies (0), Forums (148).
 - Energy:** A list of sub-topics including Energy Efficient Appliances, Equipment, Lighting, Homes, Buildings, Business, Green Energy, Low Flow Showerheads, Programmable Thermostats, and Solar Power.
 - Transportation:** Articles (0), Cases (9), Strategies (0), Forums (182).
 - Waste & Pollution:** Articles (0), Cases (46), Strategies (0), Forums (419).
 - Water:** Articles (0), Cases (11), Strategies (0), Forums (213).
- Welcome, Liz:** A sidebar section with links to My Account (Logout), My Forum Signature & Profile, My Threads, My Comments, My Email Notifications, and My Bookmarks.
- Search the Site:** A search bar with a submit button.
- Training & Services:** A section featuring a photo of a woman and text about receiving short or long-term assistance with programs through consultations.

A **Note** at the bottom of the category grid states: 'Place your cursor over the above icons to reveal which behaviors have been assigned to each category. Clicking on a behavior will display all of the content on this site related to that behavior. Enjoy!'

Behaviors, barriers & benefits



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 <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Qualitative research to understand and mitigate barriers to taking action	Social Diffusion <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Influencing the influencers, i.e., thought leaders within business community and organization	Framing <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Crafting vivid, motivational messages, tailored to specific decision makers	Social Norms <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Portraying the desired behavior as the “mainstream” behavior
Commitments <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Public pledges made to take certain actions• Can include goal setting	Prompts <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Messages that remind us to take certain actions at strategic times or locations	Feedback <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Information on the impacts from changed behaviors• Track progress toward goals	Incentives <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Financial or social/emotional “rewards” for achieving goals

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:

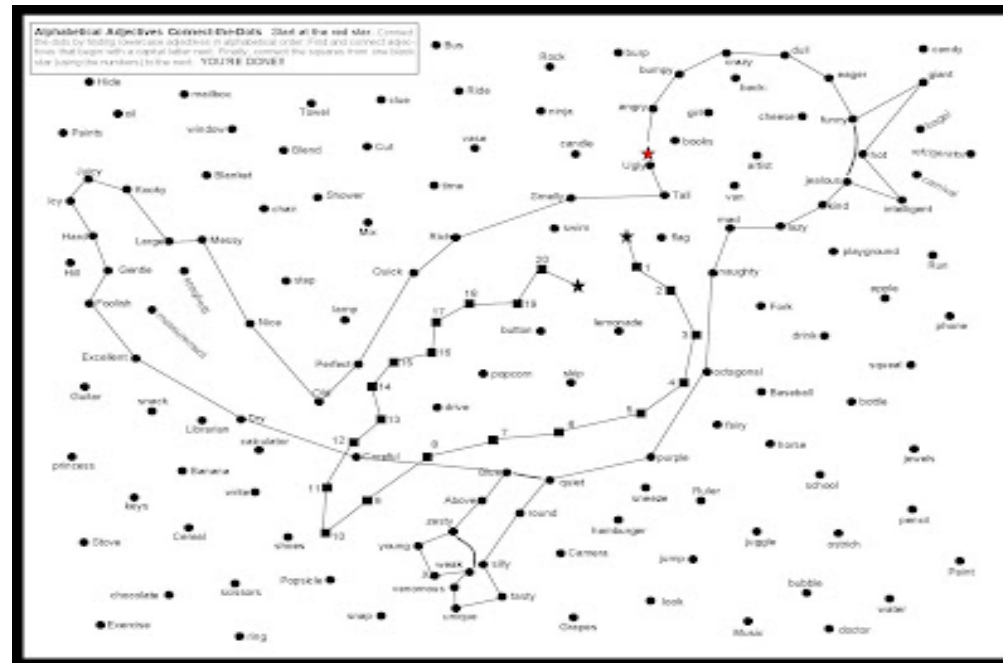
- self-reliance
- thrift
- economy
- health
- stewardship
- community



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.”

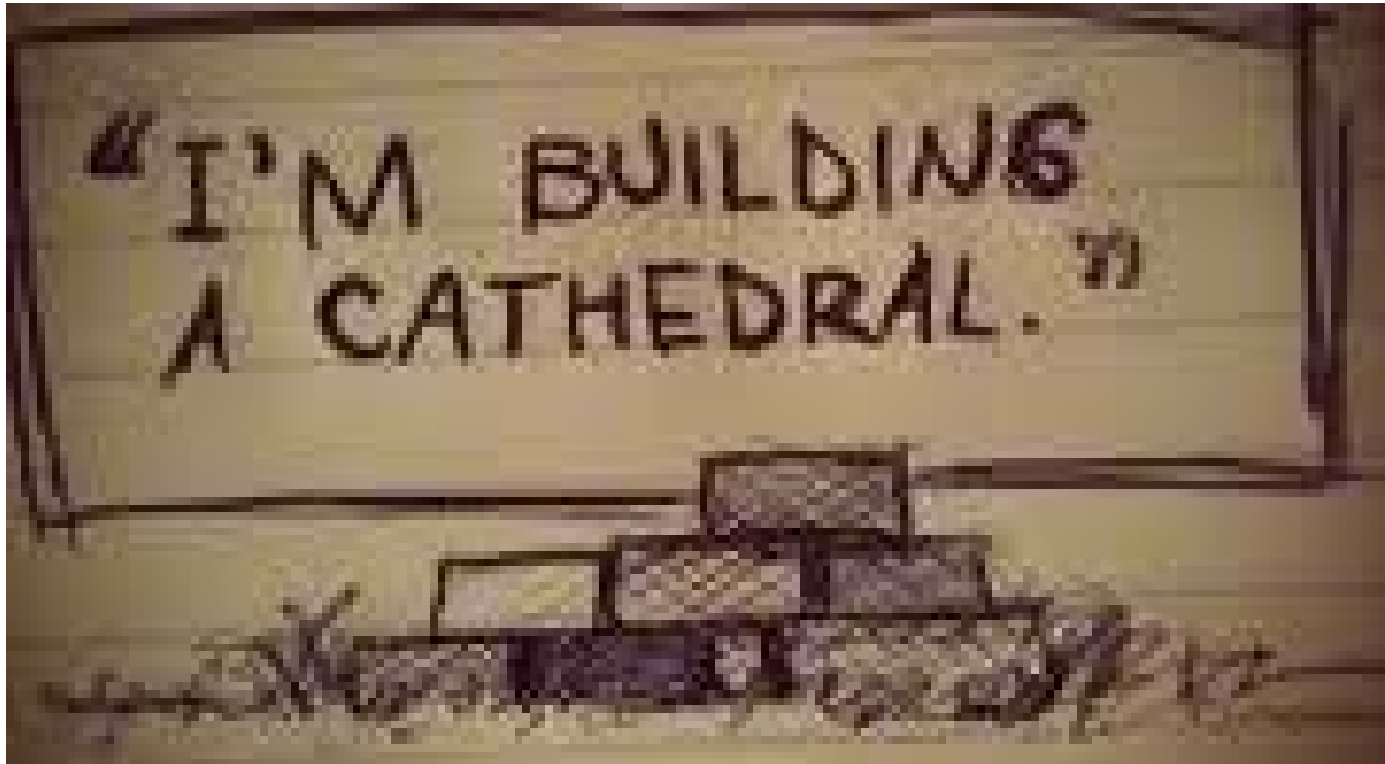


Source: Pike et al, *Climate Communications and Behavior Change: A Guide for Practitioners*

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!

A graphic featuring a light brown wooden texture background. The text "DON'T FORGET TO BE AWESOME." is displayed in a bold, sans-serif font. The words "DON'T", "FORGET", and "TO BE" are in a grey, distressed font. The word "AWESOME." is in a multi-colored, distressed font, with each letter having a different color (yellow, orange, green, red, pink, blue, green).

DON'T
FORGET
TO BE
AWESOME.

Resources

- <http://sustainablecommunitiesleadershipacademy.org/resources/>

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what's possible

Sustainable Communities Leadership Academy

Advancing local solutions

Home Solutions Approach Workshops Resources About Us

SOLUTIONS

- 1 Sustainable Communities & Economies**
- 2 Low Carbon Transportation**
- 3 Building Energy Retrofits**
- 4 Climate Adaptation & Resilience**
- 5 Leadership for Sustainability**

Our Approach

We build the capacity of communities to advance, accelerate and scale-up local solutions to the global challenges of climate protection and sustainable development, by designing and delivering exceptional peer-learning and training workshops; developing and providing efficient access to high-caliber information on the most promising practices and best available resources; and providing on-going, direct technical and strategic assistance to communities. [Learn More »](#)

Sustainable Communities Leadership Academy participants come from **300** communities across the globe.

Thank you!

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