

Successful Strategies for Message & Communications *Delaware Estuary Environmental Summit*

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Objectives of the Session

- Discuss tools for reaching key stakeholders and changing policy and practice
 - Developing a message and sticking to it
 - Making the most of the media
 - Utilizing social marketing techniques

What Do We Mean By “Message”?

A simple, central idea that
drives communications strategy,
and is underscored through
supporting messages

What Is/Is Not a Message?

- Logo: 
- Tagline: “Just Do It”
- NIKE’s message: We bring inspiration and innovation to every athlete* in the world
 - * “If you have a body, you are an athlete”

Why Does Message Matter?

- Provides all constituents with a framework for understanding and considering your efforts
- Provides your staff, supporters, and volunteers with a framework for talking about your efforts
- Provides discipline and focus for all supporting communications – written materials, brochures, advocacy efforts, web site, etc.

Lesson One:

Understand How Messages Are Received

People will:

- Believe what they want to believe
- Follow their dominant attitudes/stereotype
- Respond to emotional connotations
- Yield to repetition
- Respond to the prestige of the messenger
- Conform to fellow listeners
- Try to be rational despite emotional responses

Lesson Two:

Rely on Research

- What do our audiences know?
- What do they think or believe?
- What motivates them?

Whenever possible, rely on real research, not “mother-in-law” research

Lesson Two:

Public Attitudes toward the Environment

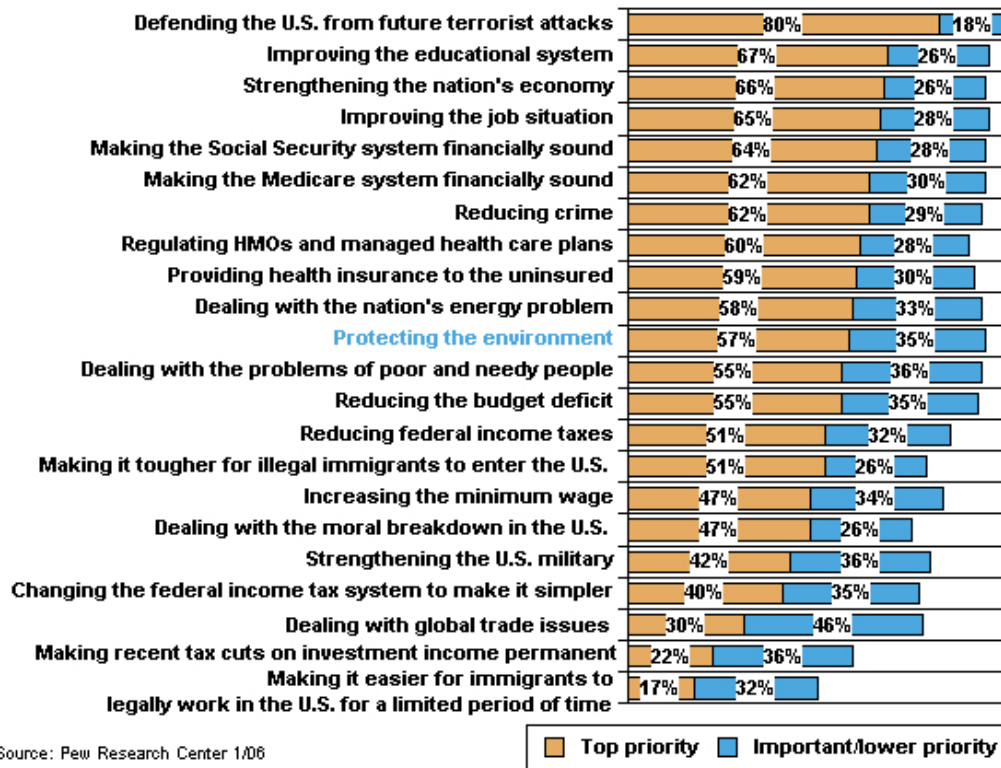
- Pop Quiz: In terms of importance, where does **the environment** rank vs. other current affairs?
 - a) Terrorism
 - b) Immigration
 - c) Health Care
 - d) Social Security and Medicare
 - e) Moral Issues
 - f) Education

Lesson Two:

Public Attitudes toward the Environment

Nearly six in 10 Americans say protecting the environment should be a top priority for Congress in 2006, but other issues rank higher

As I read from a list of priorities for the President and Congress this year, tell me if you think the item that I read should be a top priority, important but lower priority, not too important or should it not be done?



Lesson Two:

Public Attitudes toward the Environment

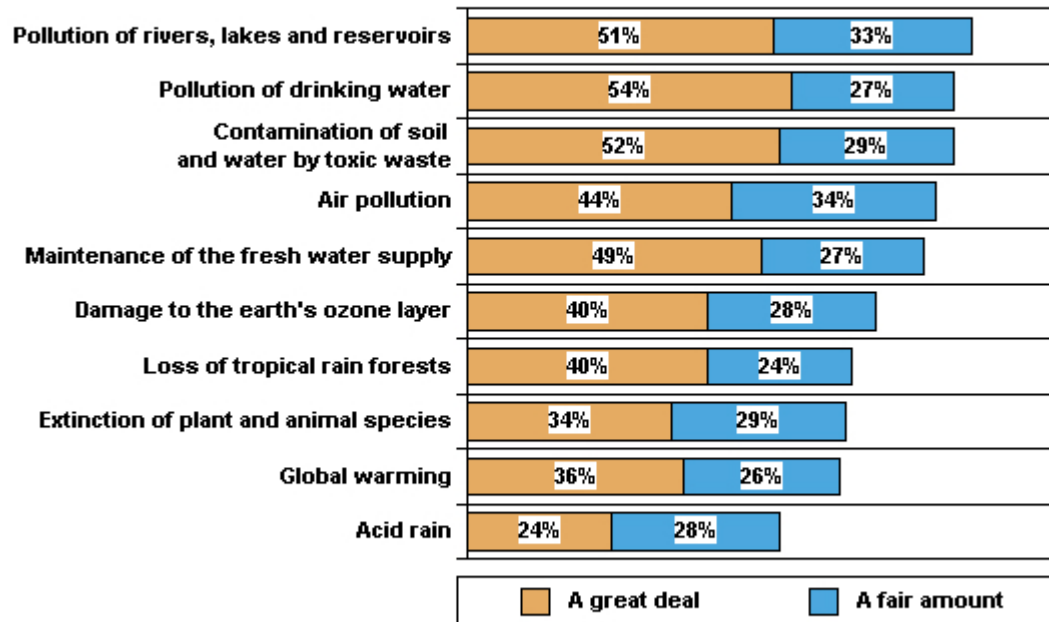
- Pop Quiz: When it comes to the environment, which of these problems are Americans most concerned about?
 - a. Air Pollution
 - b. Water Pollution
 - c. Global Warming
 - d. Loss of Tropical Rain Forests
 - e. Extinction

Lesson Two:

Public Attitudes toward the Environment

On environmental issues, Americans say they worry most about water pollution

I'm going to read you a list of environmental problems. As I read each one, please tell me if you personally worry about this problem a great deal, a fair amount, only a little or not at all?



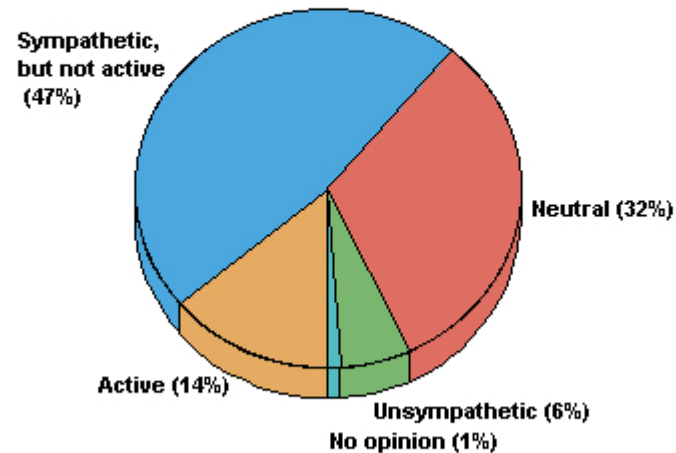
Source: Gallup 3/06

Lesson Two:

Public Attitudes toward the Environment

Roughly half of Americans say they are sympathetic to the environmental movement

Thinking specifically about the environmental movement, do you think of yourself as an active participant in the environmental movement, sympathetic toward the movement but not active, neutral, or unsympathetic toward the environmental movement?



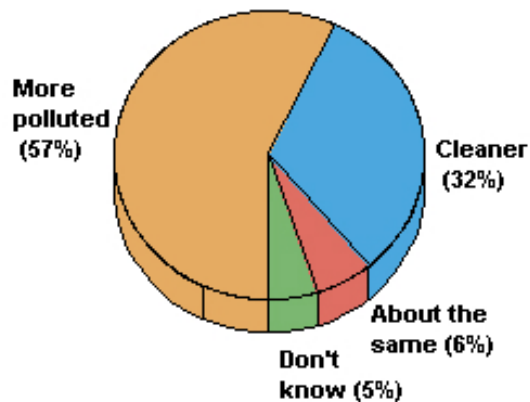
Source: Gallup 3/03

Lesson Two:

Public Attitudes toward the Environment

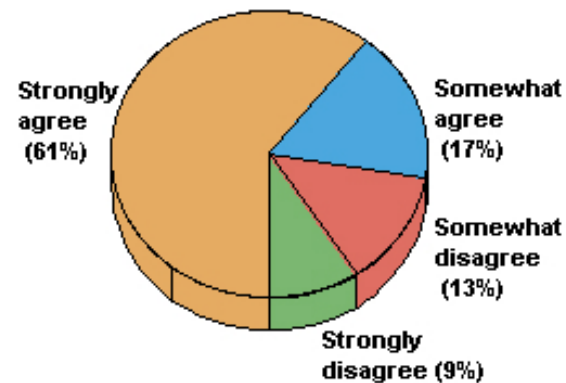
More than half of Americans say pollution will get worse, and most say any amount of health risk from pollution should not be tolerated

One hundred years from now, do you believe the air and water in this country will be cleaner or more polluted than it is now?



Source: PSRA / Newsweek 2/98

Please tell me whether you agree or disagree: When it comes to environmental pollution, any amount of potential health risk should not be tolerated.



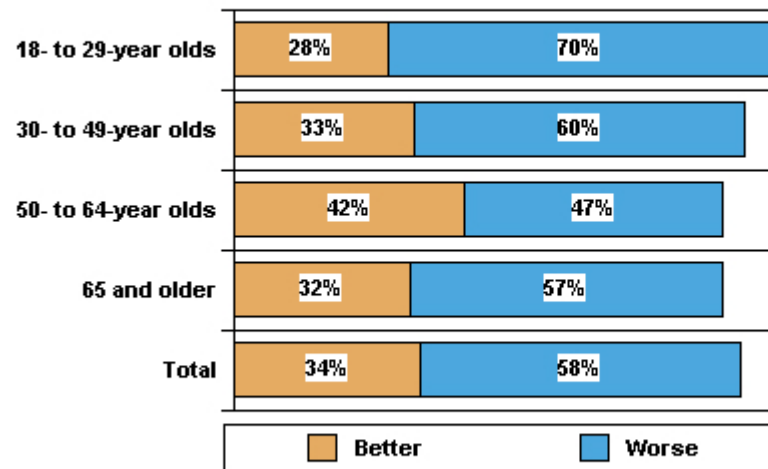
Source: Wirthlin Worldwide 10/99

Lesson Two:

Public Attitudes toward the Environment

Younger Americans are more likely to be pessimistic about the environment

Right now, do you think the quality of the environment in the country as a whole is getting better or getting worse?



Source: Gallup 3/04

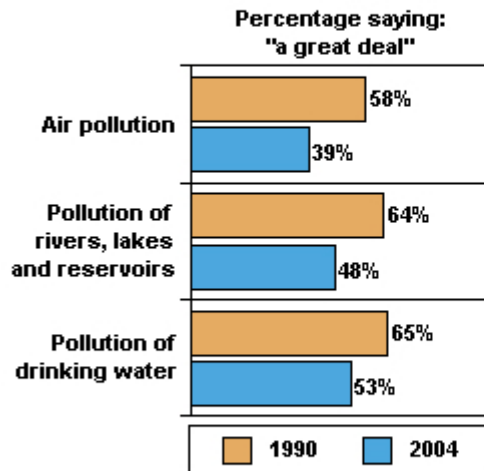
Lesson Two:

Public Attitudes toward the Environment

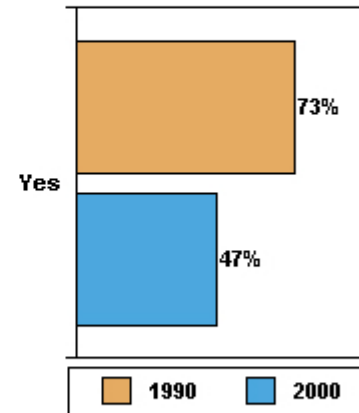
Public concern about pollution and identification with environmentalism have declined over time

Please tell me if you personally worry about each of the following environmental problems a great deal, a fair amount, only a little, or not at all.

Do you consider yourself to be an environmentalist, or not?



Source: Gallup / CNN / USA Today 3/04



Source: Gallup / CNN / USA Today 4/90, 4/00

Lesson Three:

Develop Messages That Cut Through the Clutter

- Be concise
- Be clear
- Be emotionally persuasive
- Be relevant
- “Pack a punch”

Colorful metaphors, comparisons, stories,
memorable facts or statistics, and first person testimony
all amplify your message.

Lesson Three:

Develop Messages That Cut Through the Clutter

- Jargon
 - “Specifically, the act states that all persons who ‘..operate an animal feeding operation in excess of eight animal units’ or ‘..apply nutrients to lands in excess of 10 acres or waters as components of a commercial venture or lands that he or she owns, leases, or otherwise controls’ or ‘..advise or consult with persons required by this chapter to be certified by the DNMC’ shall be certified by the DNMC or shall use a certified person or firm to manage nutrients.”
Nonpoint Source Program Annual Report, Delaware Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control, 1999.
- English
 - “Commercial farmers who have livestock and/or use fertilizers, and their consultants, must be certified by the Department of Natural Resources & Environmental Control.”

What Gets Through?

- EXTREMES
- “To waste, to destroy our natural resources, to skin and exhaust the land instead of using it so as to increase its usefulness, will result in undermining in the days of our children the very prosperity which we ought by right to hand down to them amplified and developed.”

Theodore Roosevelt, Seventh Annual Message, December 3, 1907.

What Gets Through?

- SUPERLATIVES
- “The conservationist’s most important task, if we are to save the earth, is to educate.”

Peter Scott, founder chairman of the World Wildlife Federation, quoted in the Sunday Telegraph, November 6, 1986.

What Gets Through?

- CONTRASTS AND COMPARISONS
- “I have never believed we had to choose between either a clean and safe environment or a growing economy. Protecting the health and safety of all Americans doesn’t have to come at the expense of our economy’s bottom line. And creating thriving companies and new jobs doesn’t have to come at the expense of the air we breathe, the water we drink, the food we eat, or the natural landscape in which we live. We can, and indeed must, have both.”

Bill Clinton, Between Hope and History, 1996.

What Gets Through?

- “While the farmer holds the title to the land, actually, it belongs to all the people because civilization itself rests upon the soil.”

Thomas Jefferson (1743-1826)

What Gets Through?

- THE RULE OF THREES (or in this case, four...)
- “...EPA’s remediation plan is a critical first step in reducing threats to public health, reviving local economies, reopening recreational opportunities and reinvigorating cultural ties along the river.”

Hillary Rodham Clinton in a Letter to former EPA Administrator Christine Todd Whitman April 6, 2001.

Lesson Four:

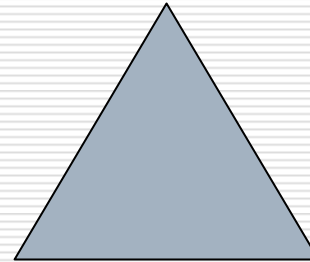
Don't Let Mud Puddles Become Sand Traps!

- Use facts and details to support your message, but don't let facts and details overwhelm your message
- When in doubt, choose anecdote over analysis
 - Member of Congress at parity hearing: “Don't throw a bunch of numbers at me: tell me stories!!”
- Don't get stuck in neutral... or in reverse. Recognize legitimate objections and move on.

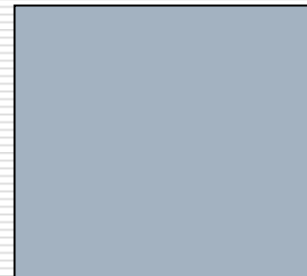
Lesson Five:

Organize Central Messages and Supporting Messages

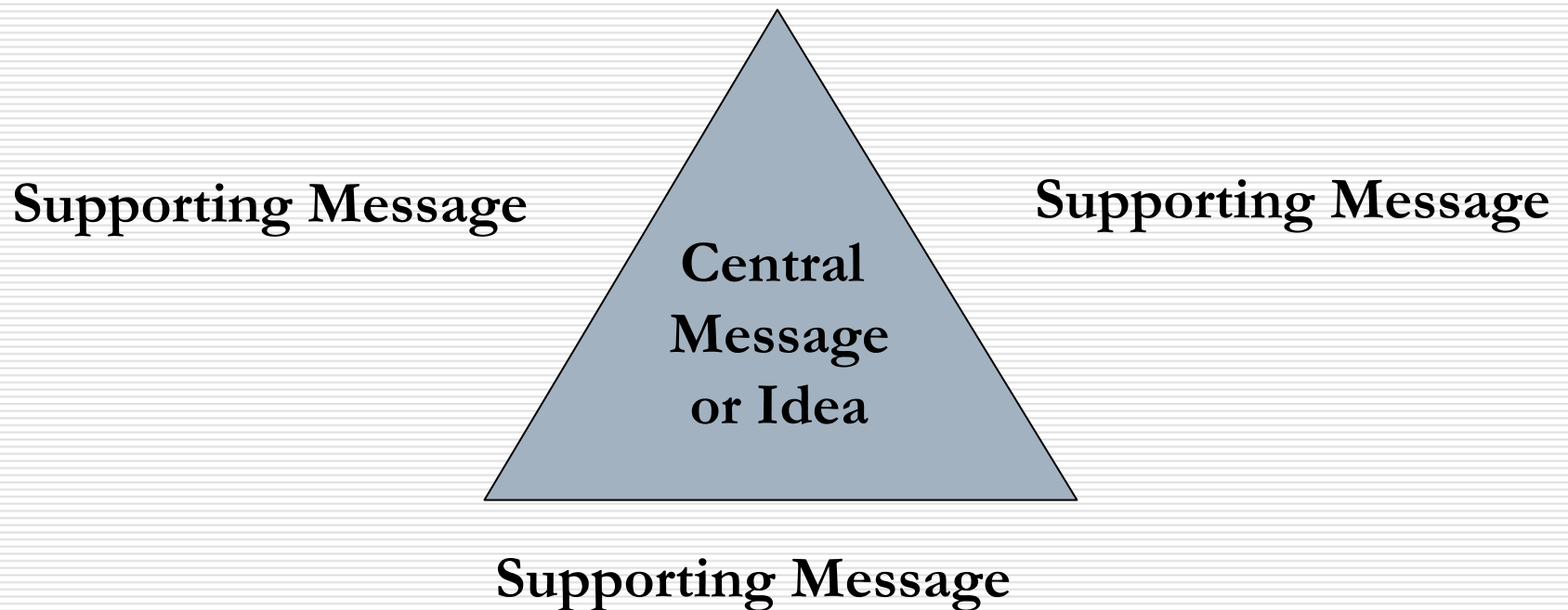
Message Triangles



Message Squares



Developing Message Triangles



Lesson Six:

Tailor Your Strategy to Your Challenge

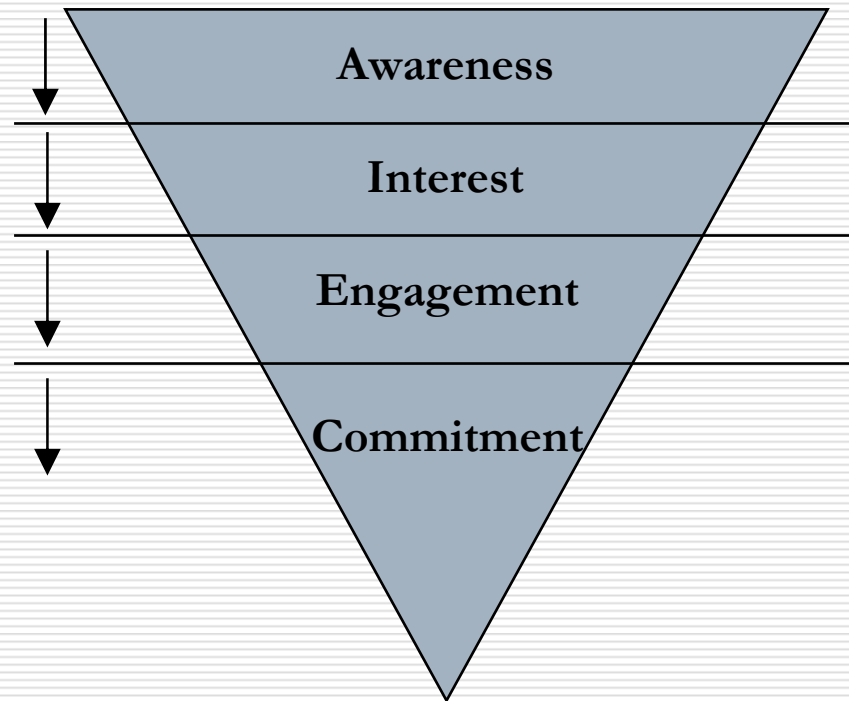
	Positive	Negative
True		
False		

Lesson Six:

Tailor Your Strategy to Your Challenge

	Positive	Negative
True	Affirm and amplify	Recast or explain
False	“Let sleeping dogs lie”	Change impression

Lesson Seven: *Know Where Your Audience Is Starting, and Where You Want Them to Head*



The Rules of Successful Messaging: Recap

1. Understand how messages are received
2. Rely on research
3. Develop messages that cut through the clutter
4. Don't let mud puddles become sand traps
5. Organize central and supporting messages
6. Tailor your strategy to your challenge
7. Know where your audience is starting, and where you want them to head

Questions?

Making the Most of the Media:

“Earning” Wide Distribution of the Message

- Understand their world
 - Who are they?
 - What do they want?
- Know how to get the message across
 - Questions are opportunities for message
- Have a plan
 - Schedule potential opportunities

The Modern Newsroom:

Business Interest vs. Public Interest

- Corporatization
 - Bottom line focus = smaller, younger news staff
- Consolidation
 - Fewer competitors to keep outlets honest
- Commercialization
 - News is increasingly a vehicle to sell something

The Modern Newsroom:

What It Means for the Messenger

- Lack of sophistication and nuance
- Fewer specialty reporters (environment, investigative)
- Less sense of public service duty
- Less content - thinner newspapers, more wire stories

- Your job: Keep the message simple. Package it with the reporter's needs in mind.

Finding a Hook:

Eight Components of a Newsworthy Story

1. Conflict
2. Change
3. Timeliness
4. Impact
5. Prominence
6. Proximity
7. The Unusual
8. Currency

Case Study:

Friday's Headlines

- Wilmington News Journal
 - Former Mayor Bill McLaughlin Honored (timeliness, prominence, proximity)
 - MADD Offices Ransacked, Rep. Atkins Tips Police To Suspect (conflict, timeliness, prominence, proximity, the unusual, currency)
 - Delaware Gains Fewer Jobs; Increase Of 6,700 In 2006 Is 700 Below Previous Year, State Reports (change, timeliness, impact, proximity, currency)
 - Naming Streets Is Serious Fun; Residents Make Up Monikers That Are Hokey But Homey (change, timeliness, impact, proximity, the unusual)

Case Study:

Friday's Headlines

- Philadelphia Inquirer
 - New Pa. House Members Get Free Cars (conflict, change, timeliness, impact, prominence, proximity, currency)
 - Test Rigging Found At Brimm School By Camden Probe (conflict, timeliness, impact, proximity)
 - McGreevey's Ex-wife Is Silent No More (timeliness, prominence, proximity, the unusual)
 - Consumer Reports Retreats On Car Seats; 9 of 12 Failed The Magazine's Safety Tests (conflict, timeliness, impact, the unusual, currency)

Case Study:

Friday's Headlines

- New York Times
 - Archdiocese to Shut 21 N.Y. Parishes (change, timeliness, impact, proximity)
 - Governors Appeal for Antiterrorism Aid (conflict, timeliness, impact, prominence, currency)
 - Expert Ties Ex-Player's Suicide to Brain Damage (timeliness, prominence, the unusual)
 - The Claim: Morning Sickness Is a Sign of a Healthy Pregnancy (conflict, timeliness, impact, the unusual)

Getting Ready for the Interview:

Boosting the Odds of Getting Your Story Out

- Control (the triangle tug-of-war)
 - Message, demeanor, presentation, language
- Practice
 - Make the most of the opportunity
 - Only way to calm nerves (without a prescription)
- Do your homework
 - Who is interviewing you and why?
 - Who else are they interviewing? (It's OK to ask!)

Bringing It Back to the Triangle:

Blocking and Bridging

- “Blocking”
 - Deftly avoiding an unwelcome or unproductive question
- “Bridging”
 - Taking the discussion from unfriendly to friendly territory with a smooth transition
- Only “block” a question completely when there is good reason to do so
- There’s almost no reason for “no comment” or “I can’t answer that”

Bringing It Back to the Triangle:

Some Classic Lures and Traps

- Irrelevance
 - A question that has no bearing on your agenda, perhaps not even on your area of expertise or the stated focus of the interview
- Speculation
 - The reporter asks you to predict the future or address a hypothetical situation
- Loaded Preface
 - The question begins with a premise that is negative or incorrect
- A or B Dilemma
 - The reporter asks you to choose between two or more options or scenarios
- Absent Party Ploy
 - The reporter attempts to create controversy by getting you to lock horns with an adversary

Planting a Positive Message

- Scan the calendar for opportunities
 - Press conferences, awards ceremonies, speeches, groundbreakings
- Prepare press release templates
- Email, fax, and follow up with a call
 - If they're not going to run it, politely ask them why

Mitigating Negative Stories

- Be ultra-vigilant about sticking to a well-crafted message
 - Inconsistencies add days to bad stories
- Disclose bad news first – on your terms
 - Frame all information in your terms when possible
- Fill the void and “feed the beast”
 - Find creative ways to offer new information in the context of your message until the story is no longer current or relevant.

Questions?

How message supports marketing programs

- Message is the core underpinnings of what you want to convey
- The marketing program is the build-out that conveys the message in a way that resonates with the target audience

Develop the creative approach

tips from the management angle – not the talent

- Go back to target audiences and personas
- Figure in any house style considerations
 - Logo
 - Style guidelines
- Know the rules, but break them where it makes sense

Build a creative team

- Evaluate in-house capacity
- Partner with a creative vendor who can understand your target audience
 - But know that even outsourcing a program costs time and commitment from your in-house team
- Develop a project plan with clear milestones
 - Be aware of external calendars affecting/enhancing your launch
- Trust, and if you don't trust, look elsewhere

Enable the creative team

- Make strong needs or preferences known up-front
 - “The Governor detests animation.”
 - “It’s got to have the logo somewhere on every page.”
 - “In New York, we believe humor works better than scare tactics.”
- But then ... direct *outcomes*, rather than *process*
 - More: “We want people to understand that smoking kills.”
 - Less: “Blue is my favorite color, and add more on the left.”

As budget permits, test concepts

- Test message and initial concept, rather than fully fleshed out creative
- Possible test mechanisms
 - Focus or “conversation” groups
 - Online surveys

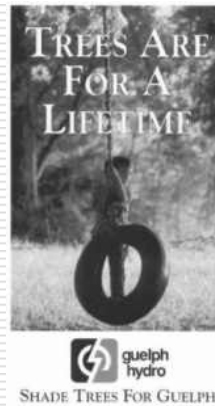
Select the right channels

- Sample questions to ask
 - Do 20 year olds read email?
 - Who's standing at the bus shelters?
 - Do 65 year olds read email?
 - Who's reading in the health care provider waiting room?
 - When are people thinking about lawn care?

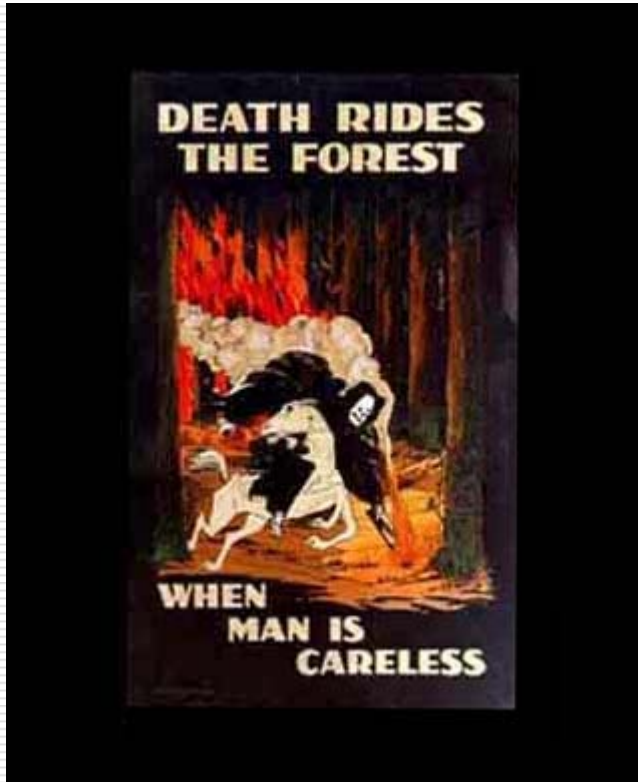
Measure, analyze, update

- Measure
 - Telephone attitude/awareness screening
 - Earned media
- Iterate
 - Refine campaign with feedback received

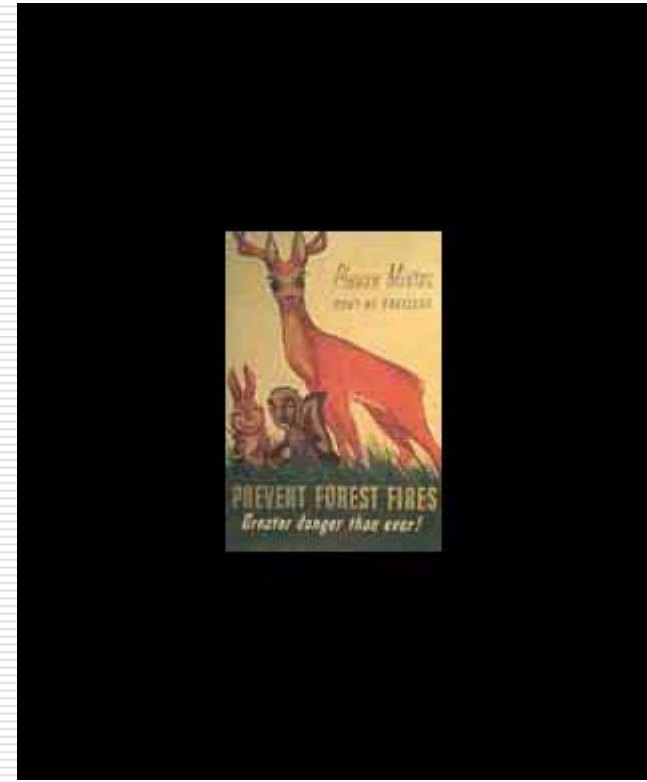
What is “social marketing”?



It's not brand-new



1940

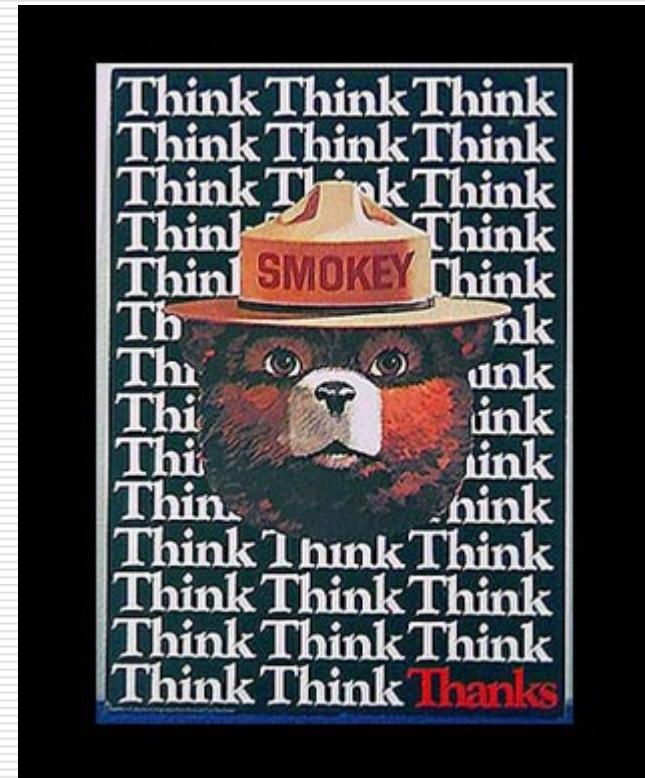


1944

And it sure helps to “put a face” on a message



1944



1982

Even (especially) when that face changes over time



2001



2001

Good social marketing endures

- Question asked of 22-yr old colleague: Who is Smokey the Bear?
- Answer: “Only You Can Prevent Forest Fires”

The “Crying Indian”



Principles of social marketing

- What's the difference between social and traditional marketing?
- Go back to the definition
 - Primarily the end, not the means
 - Language and inflection

How to bake a marketing program

- Marketing program strategy brief
 - Define the audiences
 - Identify the likely channels for reaching these audiences
 - Agree on the measurable goals and outcomes for each audience – what defines success?

Formal birth in 1970s

Philip Kotler, considered to be the academic father of social marketing, also recognized that the same marketing principles used to sell products could be used to “sell” ideas, attitudes and behaviors. He and Alan R. Andreasen defined social marketing as “differing from other areas of marketing only with respect to the objectives of the marketer and his or her organization. **Social marketing seeks to influence social behaviors not to benefit the marketer, but to benefit the target audience and the general society.**”

Source: Healthy Monday – A Social Framework to Enhance Health Promotion Efforts and Facilitate Sustainable Health Behavior Change, by Audrey Cross, PhD, JD, MPH, Patricia Peretz, BA, Miguel Muñoz-LaBoy, DrPH, Ian Lapp, PhD, Donna Shelley, MD, MPH, Allan Rosenfield, MD

Defining the audiences

- Who are they?
- How might they encounter your message, and how does it fit into the context of other messages they receive?
- How might these audiences interact with your message?
- What messengers most influence them?
- What mediums most influence them?

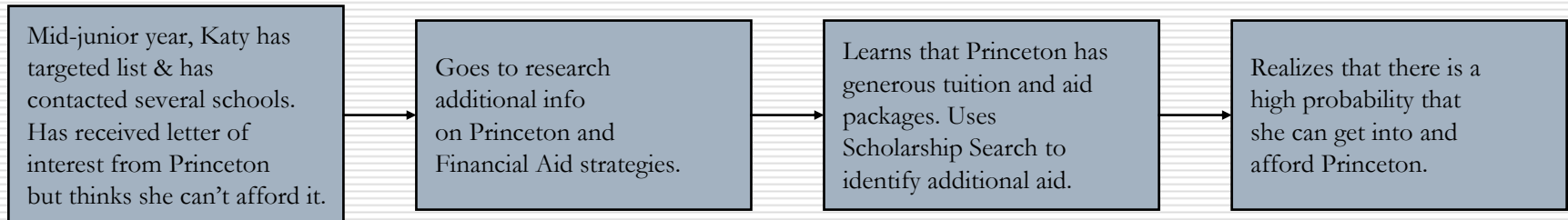
Persona: Less advantaged, high achieving kid

Katy Fitzgerald, 17 years old

- Household income: \$40,000
- Junior attending public high school in Racine, WI



Scenario



• Needs

- “Financial Aid for Dummies” offering complete, basic information
- A list of schools with good aid and work study options
- A sense of how many schools she has to apply to, since applications are expensive

• Characteristics

- Highly motivated in seeking information
- Interested in exploring schools in Northeast

• Challenges

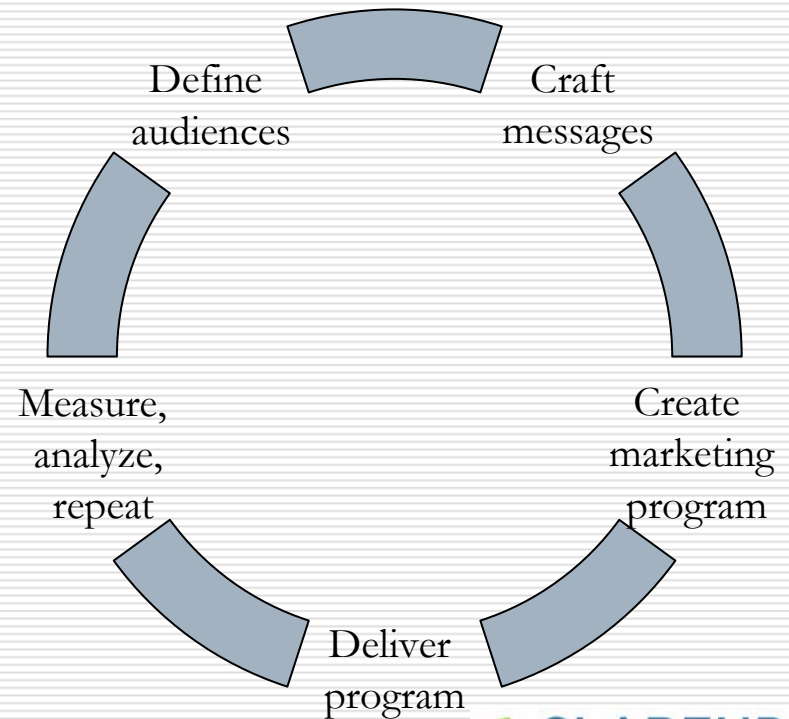
- Parents can't provide insight into the process
- Few college counseling resources

Creating and refining the message

- Now that you know who the audiences are, think about the social marketing message you want to deliver

Tools and techniques

- One toolset
 - Building Motivation Over Time
 - Feedback
 - Financial Incentives and Disincentives
 - Norm Appeals
 - Obtaining a Commitment
 - Overcoming Specific Barriers
 - Prompts
 - Vivid, Personalized Communication



Source: <http://www.toolsofchange.com/English/firstsplit.asp>

Social marketing practitioners

- Health is #1, and many approaches
 - Environment
 - Domestic violence
 - Traffic safety
 - Alcohol/tobacco
 - HIV/AIDS

Challenges for social marketing today

- Credibility, credibility, credibility
- Up against the best for mindshare
- American Journal of Public Health, December 2006
 - Exposure to tobacco company youth-targeted smoking prevention advertising generally had no beneficial outcomes for youths. Exposure to tobacco company parent-targeted advertising may have harmful effects on youth, especially among youths in grades 10 and 12.



Prompting parody

Philip Morris: 'Please Talk To Your Cooler Children About Cigarettes'

December 6, 2006 |

NEW YORK—Philip Morris, the largest manufacturer of tobacco products in the United States, released the first in a series of television commercials yesterday urging parents to take the time to educate their hipper, better looking, and more rebellious children about the dangers of smoking. "If your child is idolized by other kids, always gets the girls, and has no patience or respect for authority figures, please talk to him immediately about cigarettes," said the ad's narrator over a montage of Hollywood stars apparently smoking after intercourse. "Parents need to keep an eye on their charismatic and persuasive children, who are at the highest risk of smoking at an earlier age, when it's most respected by their peers." According to Philip Morris' new print-ad campaign running in *Maxim* and *Sports Illustrated*, it is unnecessary for parents to discuss the dangers of cigarettes with lame children who like board games, science, and their parents.



Bibliography

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<http://www.cancer.gov/pinkbook>
- Healthy Monday
<http://209.85.165.104/search?q=cache:kCZRrzWjLpQJ:healthymonday.org/pdfs/white-paper.pdf>
- Tools of change
<http://www.toolsofchange.com/English/firstsplit.asp>
- Berkeley Haas Social Marketing to Youth
<http://www.haas.berkeley.edu/yeah/documents/YouthSocialMarketingGuide.pdf>
- Serious Games
<http://www.seriousgames.org/index2.html>
- Web 2.0 and nonprofits
<http://npstechbestpractices.pbwiki.com/Tools%20of%20Web%20%20>
- MySpace and nonprofits
http://beth.typepad.com/beths_blog/2006/12/myspace_and_non.html

Questions?
