Sustainability 101: how to frame it, change it and steer it
Overview

How to frame it (messaging)
– Dr Cameron Brick, Dept of Psychology

How to change it (nudging)
– Emma Garnett, PhD candidate, Dept of Zoology

How to steer it (leading)
– Lucy Bruzzone & Paul Begley, Institute for Sustainability Leadership
“Leadership is not a position or a title, it is action and example”
Contact Information

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Environmental Messaging

Cameron Brick, PhD
Intuitive Interventions

“We just need to:”

1. Educate people with facts
2. Make them accept cultural values (e.g., love Mother Earth)

That will work . . . right?

Do facts change attitudes and behaviours?

1. Smoking
2. Saving for retirement
3. Resolving cultural wars: Brexit, NHS, tax policy

(Stern, 2000; Gifford, 2014; Steg et al., 2014)
Effective communications

1. What problems are worth tackling?
   • Local/global, salient v. impactful

2. What is the specific goal?
   • Awareness isn’t enough: Inform, persuade, nudge outcomes often diverge

3. How will you evaluate success?
Identity Signalling

- We are motivated to feel good about ourselves and our groups
  (social identity; Hogg, 2006; Taylor & Brown, 1988)

- Visible behaviours signal identity and reputation
  (Berger & Heath, 2008)

- Pro-environmental behaviours have social meanings
Perceptions of Environmentalists

- “Threat to society”
  - (Hoffarth & Hodson, 2016)

- “Activists”
  - (Bashir, Lockwood, Chasteen, Nadolny & Noyes, 2013)

Militant  Aggressive

Eccentric  Unconventional
“I started my vegetarianism for health reasons, then it became a moral choice, and now it’s just to annoy people.”
Moral Foundations Theory

[Graph showing how relevant to moral judgment various moral foundations are across different political ideologies (Haidt & Graham, 2007)]
34 items, *Strongly disagree – Strongly agree*

1. The natural environment is being *harmed* by humans.  
   - HARM
2. It is our duty to *protect* the earth.  
   - AUTHORITY
3. Pollution is *gross*.  
   - PURITY

See dictionary at www.moralfoundations.org
What groups are we signalling?

Problem: Current interventions may backfire in non-environmentalists

Messages may feel convincing to designer, but be off-putting to others
Do your bit to help out

Not a concrete action; unlikely to change energy use

Tree appeals to environmentalists, maybe not others

Source unknown; might not be trusted
Effective persuasive communications

**USEFUL**

- Use transitions
- Use THEIR goals and identities
- Norms are powerful
- Provide a concrete action

**TRUSTWORTHY**

- Balanced
  
  Present potential harms AND benefits even-handedly.

- Accurate
  
  Give links and references to deeper information. Be upfront about uncertainty.

- Transparent
  
  Provide source
Thank you!
Questions and feedback welcome
Sustainability 101: how to change it

Emma Garnett – PhD Candidate, Zoology

*How do we get people to eat more plants and fewer animal products?*

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Thursday 22nd February 2018
Sustainability: running uphill?

“It’s not easy being green.”
—Kermit the Frog
Nudging: making sustainable choices easy
COM-B(behaviour)

- **Capability**
  - Physical  e.g. physically able to
  - Psychological  e.g. being informed, education

- **Opportunity**
  - Physical  e.g. nudging (defaults, availability, position)
  - Social  e.g. social norms

- **Motivation**
  - Automatic  e.g., cravings, withdrawal
  - Reflective  e.g., identity, convictions
Persuade one person, change many

• Who are the policy makers in your college or institution?
  • Catering managers, bursars, porters
  • Engaging with them – potential to bring about greater change
• Eg central heating
  • Persuade college members individually to turn the heating down, or…
  • Agree with college housekeeping to lower the threshold for the central heating to come on by 1 or 2 degrees and insulate the buildings
Default options: opt-ins, opt-outs and fossil fuels

• Pension automatic enrollment: since 2012 every employer must put staff in a pension scheme and contribute towards it
  • Estimated extra 4.4 million UK workers saving for their pension
  • Is the sustainable option the default option?
• UK university pension scheme (USS): the company they have most money in is Royal Dutch Shell
  • Automatically enrolled into a Pension Scheme investing in fossil fuels
Availability

• Are there enough sustainable options?
• Particularly relevant for food

Cambridge college cafeterias

More vegetarian options

More vegetarian sales
Position and placement

- Can people easily access the sustainable option?
- E.g. recycling
  - Capability: do your college members know what they can and can’t recycle?
  - Opportunity: Are the recycling bins as easy to access as the rubbish bins?
Timing: Policy windows and social opportunities

- Increased awareness of an issue, “something must be done”
- E.g., Blue Planet II and Plastic pollution
  - Theresa May “vows to eliminate plastic waste by 2042”
- Good window to campaign for less plastic and more recycling
Motivations

• “Better for the environment” does not motivate everyone

• Who are you trying to change and what issues do they care about?

  • Reducing heating and energy use: save money
  • Eating more plants: health, animal welfare, tastes delicious
  • Driving less and switching to electric vehicles: less air pollution, better respiratory health
Leading change for sustainable outcomes

Lucy Bruzzone & Paul Begley
Why change?

• The world is in the midst of a Fourth Industrial Revolution

• Pressing social and environmental challenges

• The role of education in remaining relevant

Illustration by Andrzej Krauze
Where are we going?

*If you don’t know where you’re going, any road will get you there*

Cheshire Cat, Alice in Wonderland
Who are you trying to change?
Your role in driving and influencing change

Expert

Facilitator

Activist

Catalyst

Adapted from Visser (2008)

Who can you influence?

- Global future
- Your community
- Your peers
- You
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