Overview:

Communicating with Purpose – Communicating for Change

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Are We Getting Through?

Photo: www.motherrr.com
Are We Making a Difference?

Said is not heard;
Heard is not understood;
Understood is not agreed;
Agreed is not implemented.

(unknown Dutch source)
Beyond “Getting the Right Message Out”

From one-way information delivery to dialogue.

From knowing to active engagement and behavior change.

Image from: Environment (2004), Making Climate Hot
Communicating — Really

To communicate —
(from the same Latin root as the word *communion*)

>> to impart, to share, to make common

“Communities are groups of people communicating…”

Bill McDonough

Photo: www.dydelray.com
Key Challenges & Needs

- **Key Issues**: Climate change, energy, sustainability
- **Making it real**: Tangible translation, connecting the abstract notion to everyday activities
- **Right messaging**: Developing and prioritizing effective, simple messages
- **Reaching the influentials**: Identifying and building champions
- **Being impactful**: Communicating to make a difference with a limited budget
- **Dealing with political backlash**: Trying to work in the shadow of Agenda 21, climate polarization
Connecting Talk to Walk

Source: Adapted from Webb (2008)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Engagement</th>
<th>Description with examples</th>
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</table>
| Cognitive          | Focus of engagement is internal, in one's mind  
• Thinking about climate change  
• Seeking information and learning/teaching about the issue  
• Grappling with the complexities of climate change (solutions) |
| Emotional          | Focus of engagement is mostly internal, in one's psyche, but may be shared with others  
• Allowing emotional responses (e.g. fear, anxiety, concern, grief, anger, guilt, passion, disappointment, despair, empathy) to surface  
• Consciously or unconsciously coping with the emotional impacts of climate change |
| Behavioral         | Focus of engagement is mostly on actions  
• Making periodic or permanent changes in energy consumption in one's home  
• Shifting travel and transportation-related behavior  
• Shifting food and eating habits  
• Reducing material consumption |
| Professional       | Focus of engagement are climate-related decisions in one's business, work  
• Making periodic or permanent changes in energy consumption in one's work place  
• Developing and implementing strategic plans to guard against negative impacts of climate change (or policy)  
• Developing and implementing strategic plans to take advantage of business opportunities arising from climate change (or policy) (in mitigation and adaptation) |
| Social             | Focus of engagement is with known others, peers, or a social reference group  
• Communicating with others about climate change  
• Enacting solutions together with others, supporting each other  
• Making one’s publicly visible behavior help shape new social norms |
### Engaging How?

Need to Set Clear Goals (cont.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Engagement</th>
<th>Description with examples</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Moral/spiritual</td>
<td>Focus of engagement is driven by the transcendent</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Being motivated to take action by one’s belief system</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Developing a sense of responsibility toward nature, others, the future</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Finding solace in a moral/spiritual conception of the world</td>
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<td>• Prayer</td>
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<tr>
<td>Civic</td>
<td>Focus of engagement is primarily on the commons</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Speaking out about climate change in public</td>
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<td>• Attending hearings or public meetings</td>
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<td>• Writing letters to the editor of a newspaper</td>
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<td>• Participating in protests</td>
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<tr>
<td>Political</td>
<td>Focus of engagement is on the political process</td>
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<td>• Voting for candidates representing one’s climate-related position</td>
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<td>• Voting for local/state climate-related initiatives</td>
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<td>• Running for office to influence policies and decisions</td>
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It Starts and Ends with the Audience

• Where can you make the biggest difference?

• Therefore, who is/are your primary audience(s)?
Effective Engagement

For communication to be effective, i.e., to facilitate an intended societal response or desired social change, it must accomplish two things:

1. sufficiently *elevate and maintain the motivation* to change a practice or policy

&

2. *contribute to lowering barriers and resistance* to doing so
Spell Out & Test Your “Theory of Change”

- **What do we want to ultimately achieve?**
  - How will that look? How do we know?

- **What will have to happen before we get there?**
  - How will that look? How do we know?

- **What will have to happen before we get there?**
  - How will that look? How do we know?

- **What will we do to make that happen?**
  - What activities will we undertake, with whom? What could get in the way?
  - How much time will it take? Do we have that much time?

- **What resources and skills do we need?**
  - How can we get them?
Drum roll, please....

There is no trick!
(only diligent work and persistence)
Thank you!

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