



Designing a people-focused approach to behaviour change: Using community based social marketing to support a nascent Transition Town initiative

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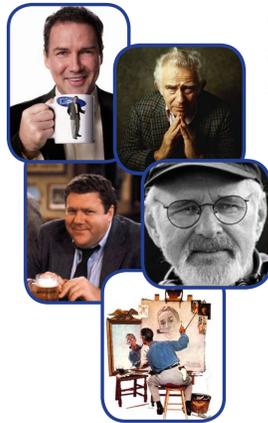
Norms

Norms are sets of **common beliefs** held by group members about what behaviours are acceptable and unacceptable for their members. The individual benefits of norms include a sense of **belonging, identity, confidence, esteem, validation, and approval**. To effectively use this tool, norms should be:

- Noticeable
- Explicit
- Inclusive of direct person-to-person contact
- Pairing the desired behaviour with the opportunity to perform it.
- Promoting performance of positive behaviours, not absence of negative ones

Examples of “**norms in action**” for community gardening:

1. Choose some visual markers of group membership (e.g., hats, boots, t-shirts).
2. Make do-it-yourself garden stakes that display inspirational quotes.
3. Host events that create a sense of community and group cohesion.



Commitment is useful in moving individuals from intention to action. In practice, small requests tend to lead to larger, more dramatic behaviour change. To be most effective:

- Seek **written commitments**
- Ask for **public commitments**
- Actively **involve the person**
- Combine commitment with other CBSM tools
- Help individuals see themselves as someone who is concerned with the issue in question
- Only use freely volunteered commitments; never use coercion.

Examples of “**commitment in action**” for community gardening:

1. Ask neighbors, friends and acquaintances to show their commitment by wearing pins, t-shirts or displaying a poster in their window.
2. Seek out a community champion who is considered an opinion leader in the neighbourhood. The champion’s participation will encourage commitment from many others.



Incentives

Incentives are actions you can take to encourage people to **perform desired behaviours** and avoid undesirable behaviours.

To effectively use incentives, consider these issues:

- The **size and visibility** of the incentive
- Closely pairing the incentive and the behaviour

Examples of “**incentives in action**” for community gardening:

1. Host community dinners where the food grown in the garden can be consumed in a fun and social setting.
2. Hold monthly ‘Master Gardener’ workshops to provide skills training.



Conveniences

Convenience is based on

- **identifying barriers** that might deter people from the target behaviour or program, and
- finding ways to **overcome those barriers**, thereby making the behaviour more convenient

Examples of “**conveniences in action**” for community gardening:

1. Provide low-cost/no-cost babysitting or on-site activities for children.
2. Collect community tools for sharing at the garden site.



Effective Messaging

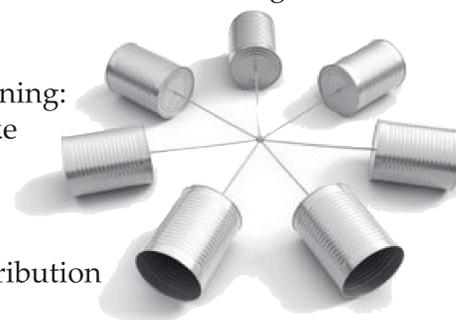
Effective messaging is vivid, concrete and personalized. It captures our attention (encoding) and is easier to remember (recall). To use this tool, ensure messaging is crisp, clear, and memorable. To make messaging as effective as possible, strive to include these features:

- Clearly visible community goals
- Personal contact
- Social modeling
- Social diffusion
- Feedback

Examples of “**effective messaging in action**” for community gardening:

1. A Facebook page where gardeners can place photos, videos, make comments and email each other.
2. Use Twitter — at the very least it can act as a prompt to action.
3. Start a gardening blog, or a column in the local newspaper.
4. Provide all participants with genuine compliments for their contribution to the garden.

Ineffective messaging is inconspicuous and boring.



Prompts

Numerous actions that promote social good are susceptible to the most human of traits: forgetting. Prompts are effective in **reminding people** to engage in the target behaviour. Effective prompts are:

- Noticeable
- Self-explanatory
- Promotional of positive behaviours, not discouraging of negative ones
- Paired as closely as possible to the desired behaviour

Examples of “**prompts in action**” for community gardening:

1. Hold an all-ages ‘poster-contest’ to create a poster with a slogan reminding community members of their responsibilities in the garden.
2. Place prompts in locations where people purchase their food, such as grocery stores, the farmers’ market, convenience stores, and restaurants.
3. Use social media to deliver e-prompts.

