

Effective Communications to Motivate Behavior Change



A case study: Organics Recycling

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Basics of Communication Planning

- Analyze your target audience
- Define your key message
- Identify your tactics
- Deliver communication
- Measure results

Analyze your audience

Don't skimp on research!

- Explore the attitudes and behavior of your intended audience prior to developing your message.



Analyze your audience

Organics Recycling – Conducted a Residential Survey

Benefits

- Convenient
- “Feel good” benefit
- Environmental benefit, visibly seeing a reduction in their own trash

Barriers

- Initial hurdles – no space for bins, devising a new system for managing waste, learning what is and isn't compostable
- Cost of compostable bags
- Not enough material, hard to see the visible difference
- Confusing over best environmental choice – compared to using trash compactor, needing paper bags for compost vs. eliminating bags by using reusables, environmental impacts of another truck coming by.

Key Message “Composting – it’s so easy to make a difference”

Define your message

Specific

- Describe action to be taken in clear, straightforward steps

Simple and easy to remember:

- Don't cover too many topics
- Avoid jargon

Positive

- Avoid doom and gloom
- Suggest actions

Define your message

Audience 1: New participants

Desired action:

- Sign up for organics recycling services

Key messages:

- It's easy
- You can reduce your waste by half
- Explain the basic steps to participating
- Just try it, no commitment

Audience 2: Existing participants

Desired action:

- Compost more materials, emphasis on paper items.

Key messages:

- Reinforce the action taken – you are making a difference.
- Help is available to troubleshoot
- Highlight the paper items that can be included in the program.

Example: cart hangers

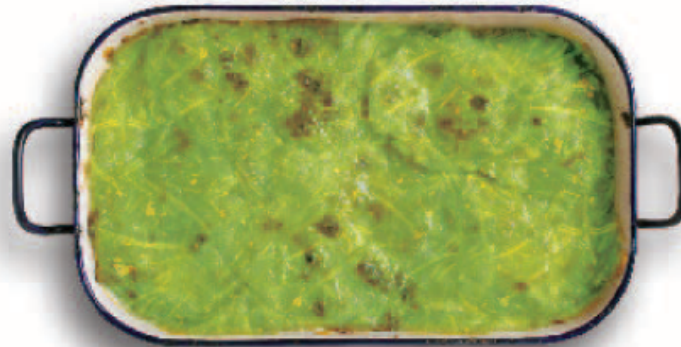
Capture their attention

- Interesting or thought-provoking statements
- Ask a question
- Use vivid images and words

Capture their attention

Effective communications are vivid, concrete and personal

**Nobody touched
Aunt Sally's
green bean
surprise?**



From **Thanksgiving** to **New Year's Day**, household waste increases by more than 25%. Much of that waste is food. Instead of scraping burnt cookies, uneaten casseroles and turkey bones in the trash, you can recycle food scraps and food-soiled paper into compost.

Call today! You could have your organics recycling cart delivered by Thanksgiving.

**Organics
Recycling**
Give Back to Nature



Delivering the message

- Have your message delivered by an individual or organization who is credible with the audience you are trying to reach.
- Encourage individuals to discuss their new activity with others. (social diffusion)
- Where possible, use personal contact to deliver your message.

*Compost
captains
training in
Linden Hills*



Identify your tactics

- One-way communication
 - Website
 - Email
 - Newsletter article
 - Advertisement
 - Flyer
 - Announcement
- Two-way communication
 - Blog
 - Presentation
 - Staffing a booth
 - Activities
 - Discussions
 - Door to door

Model the behavior

- Use pictures of desired action
- Make it personal
 - location, emotions, stories
- Integrate goals and provide feedback



One family's solution.
–The Kellenberger Family

When Greg Kellenberger heard about the organics recycling program, he signed up for it immediately—as a landscape architect he knows first hand how valuable compost is. “Using compost is probably the best thing you can do to protect water quality,” he said. When used in landscaping and road construction projects, compost prevents storm-water from carrying soil and other pollutants into lakes and streams.

Collecting organics for recycling made sense to Greg. However, his wife, Dana, wasn't immediately on board with the idea of collecting food and paper for recycling. “I didn't want a bunch of garbage

on the counter,” she explained. So she was surprised to see how easily organics fit into their lifestyle. “We just used a pot we already had. It sits right here on the counter and looks just fine.” Their garbage and recycling are in the cupboard just below. Greg couldn't believe how much of their trash was compostable, “the only thing left in the trash is plastic,” he said.

About once a day the Kellenbergers empty their small kitchen container into their organics cart, which is wheeled to the curb once a week for pickup. Greg is thinking about switching to a smaller garbage cart. “I'm doing it for the environment, but it's nice to save money, too.”

Create opportunities for competencies, skills and knowledge

- Make your communication, especially instructions for a desired behavior, clear and specific.
- Give people a chance to try an activity.



Maximize trigger events/ change as a byproduct of other events

- Think about the timing
- Use deadlines and trigger events

Organics recycling triggers

- Thanksgiving
- Earth Day
- Moving in

**This
Earth Day,
it's time
to give back
to nature**



Organics composting is an easy way to do more for the environment. Call today and you could have your organics cart delivered by Earth Day, April 22.

Close the loop

- Help connect people with the “big picture” impact of their actions



*School
gardening event
with finished
compost*

Questions

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