

# Behavior Change & Social Marketing: Common Pitfalls, Practical Tips

Moving from Awareness to Action  
to Reduce the Use of Fossil Fuels



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# Overview

- Stories of Common Pitfalls
- Lessons Learned & Practical Tips
- Ten Fundamental Components of Successful Programs
- Resources

# Stories of Common Pitfalls

1. Relying almost exclusively on communication approaches:  
*“If you communicate the right information the right way, the target audience will do the right thing.”*
2. Simplistic view of the audience as “them” — the people standing in the way of success.
3. Inadequate research or downplaying it because you “know” the problem
4. Ignoring competition

# Three Lessons Learned about Common Pitfalls in Approach

- Audience-focused mindset versus goal or organization-centered mindset
- Realistic process for carrying out program/campaign
- A set of concepts and tools that make the process effective

# Practical Tips

1. Frames matter more than facts.
2. Make it easy, a.k.a., ‘nudges’ are effective
3. Be relentlessly consistent. Pick at least one concept and test everything against that one, or more, concepts and models of change: stages of change, social norms, diffusion of innovations, social psychology and behavior change research on cognitive biases and decision-making preferences.

# Consensus on Ten Fundamental Components

1. Audience-centered orientation, (requires formative research)
2. Segment the audience
3. Address real and *perceived* barriers
4. Benefits for individuals in the target group
5. Variety of means to reach target audiences
6. Pre-testing with target audience

# Components, cont'd

7. Seek participation by target groups
8. Form partnerships for credibility and access to target groups.
9. Create synergy with all other types of approaches to social change (holistic)
10. Make a substantial and long-term commitment, remembering that social change does not take months, but rather years or decades.

# Resources

- *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth and Happiness*, Thaler & Sunstein
- *Social Marketing in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, Andreasen
- *Influence, the Psychology of Persuasion*, Cialdini
- Frameworks Institute ([www.frameworksinstitute.org/](http://www.frameworksinstitute.org/))
- Marketing Partners website & blog ([www.conversations.marketing-partners.com](http://www.conversations.marketing-partners.com))

