

# Developing communication strategies that work

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**Some of the concepts presented are adapted from the following EPA publications:**

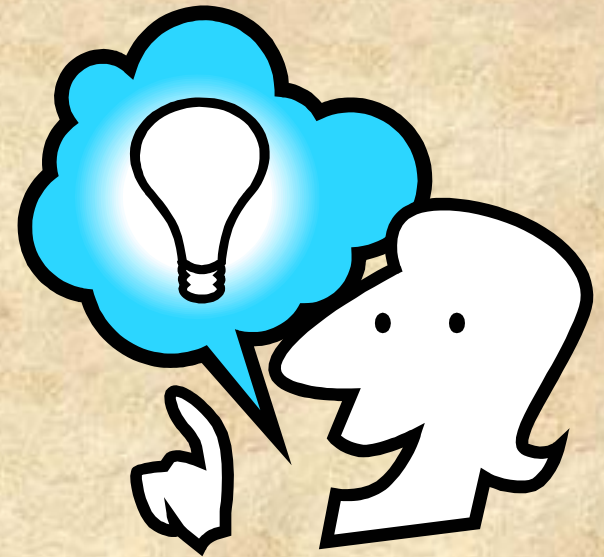
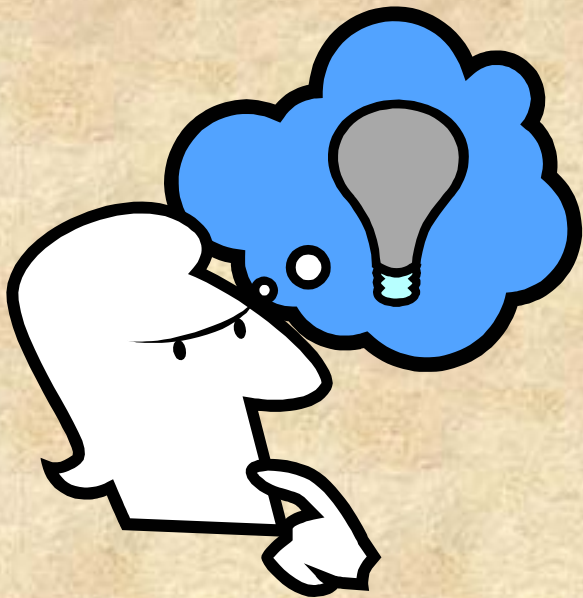
- ***Community Culture and the Environment: A Guide to Understanding a Sense of Place***

**<http://yosemite.epa.gov/water/owrccatalog.nsf/0/de5188f2a992865085256cc6006f084a?OpenDocument>**

- ***Getting In Step: A Guide to Effective Outreach in Your Watershed***

**<http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/outreach/documents/>**

*The ability to express an idea  
is as important as the idea  
itself.*





# THESE ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT CONCEPTS TO TAKE HOME

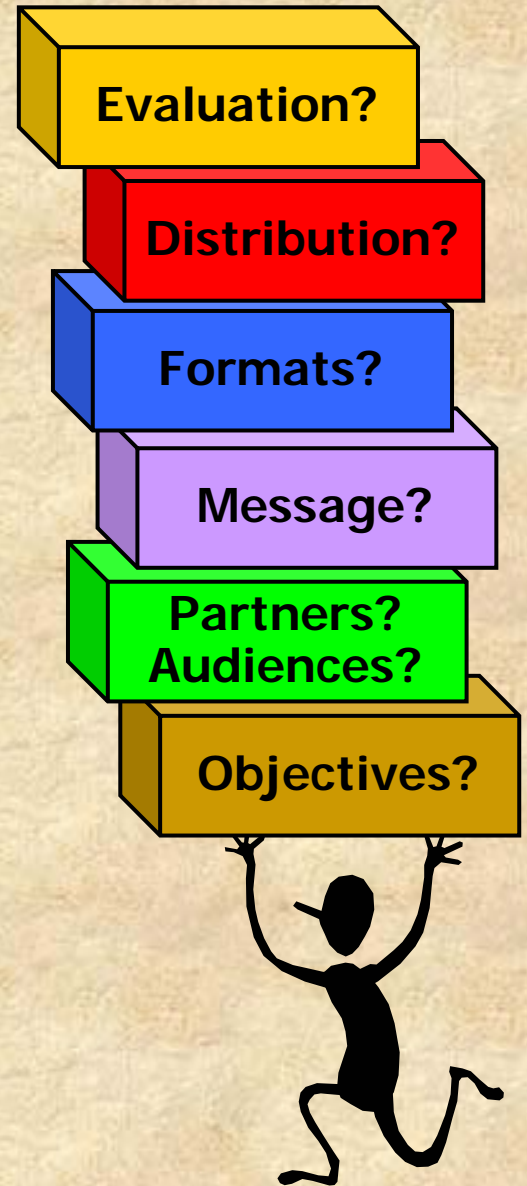
- ❑ Communication is more than “telling”... it is conveying information that you want people to USE and respond to
- ❑ The key to communication is answering the question...



**What's in it for me?**  
**(WIFM)**

# Strategic questions

- What are our *objectives*?
- Who are our targeted and *audiences and partners*?
- What is the overall *message* we want to convey?
- What *formats* are we going to use to convey the message?
- How will we *distribute* the message?
- How will we *evaluate* the success of the strategy(s)?





# MOTIVE

# OPPORTUNITY

**Reason to get involved.**

Message?

Partners?  
Audiences?

Objectives?



**Access to involvement**

Evaluation?

Distribution?

Formats?



Clearly articulated, results-oriented statements specifying what you want to achieve.



Be able to ask and answer...

- Why are we doing this?
- What's in it for us?
- What do we want to accomplish?
- What will be different if we are successful?
- How will we measure success?



*Our objective is to educate city park users about the importance of riparian stream buffers and to build community support for and participation in a "growing not mowing" program.*



# *The Public*

- not monolithic term
- endless ways to group and organize communities of people
- be as specific as possible about which groups of people you are trying to reach

*urban park users*



# Stakeholders



*People who are interested in, who are affected by, or who could possibly affect activities related to environmental protection, restoration, or other management efforts.*



***People who live, work, and/or play in the watershed***



# Community

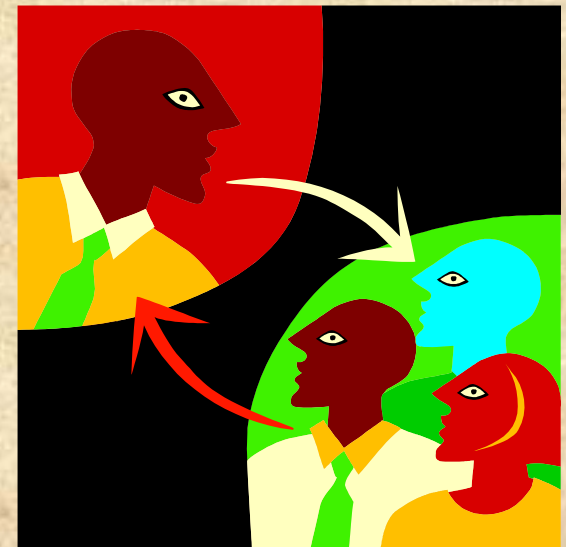


- A group of people with a common characteristic or interest who interact together within a larger society. Three broad categories of “community”
- **geographic** (such as watersheds, towns, cities, states, regions)
  - **issue-based** (such as environment, economic and community development, human rights, the arts, education, human development, religion);
  - **affinity-based** (such as racial/ethnic, religious, ideas and values, classmates, coworkers).



Identify communities and stakeholder groups—and specific individuals within them.

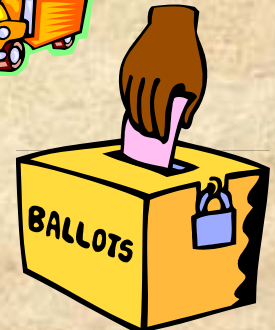
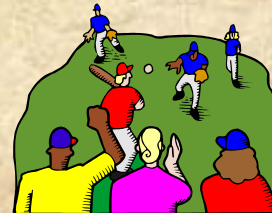
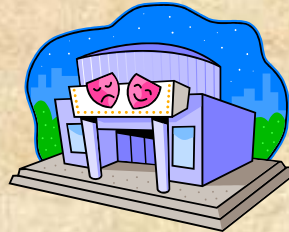
- Who are the leaders in the community?
- Who has the “ear” of the community?
- Who do we need to include in order to get input from all sides of the issue?
- How do people get information?
- Who will use the information or results?



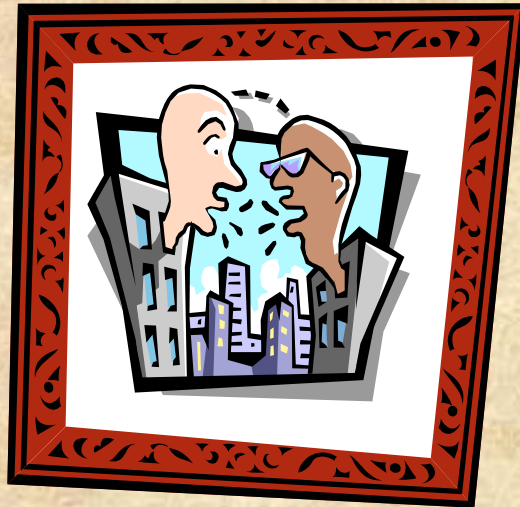


# Getting to know you...Community Characteristics

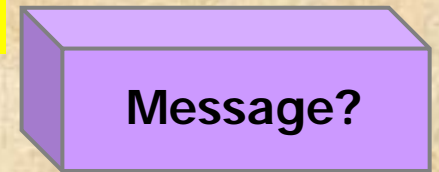
- Investigate the characteristics of a specific community
- The community characteristics you are most interested in will depend on the objectives of your strategy



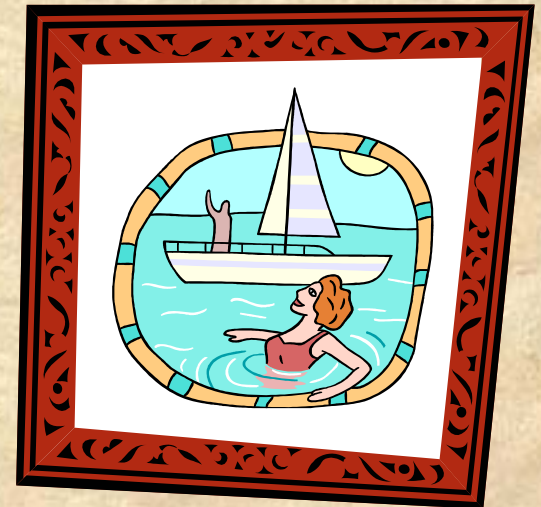
# FRAME the message...community identity



- Frame the overall message in the context of the community's identity and values



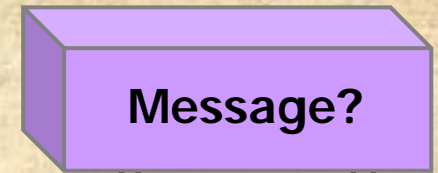
- focus on the relevant economic, cultural, and safety benefits as well as the environmental ones.*





# FRAME the message...WIFM

- ☐ Show a direct connection or benefit to the audience



What's in it for me?



*The beginning of wisdom is a definition of terms* (Socrates)



- Speak in the language of your audience OR make sure that you share your language with the audience
- For example, what does this phrase mean to different people...

**Data Use**



# FRAME the message...problems & solutions

Message?

- Always discuss SOLUTIONS as well as problems.
- The message should always include at least one action people can take — preferably an individual as well as a collective action

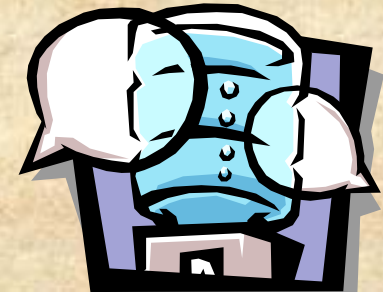




# What formats are we going to use to convey the message?

Objectives, targeted audiences, and message all contribute to how we communicate the information.

- What formats will best allow us to meet our objectives?
- What formats will best emphasize our message?
- What combination of formats can we use to reach the most people?



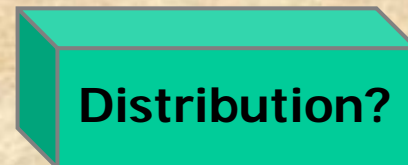




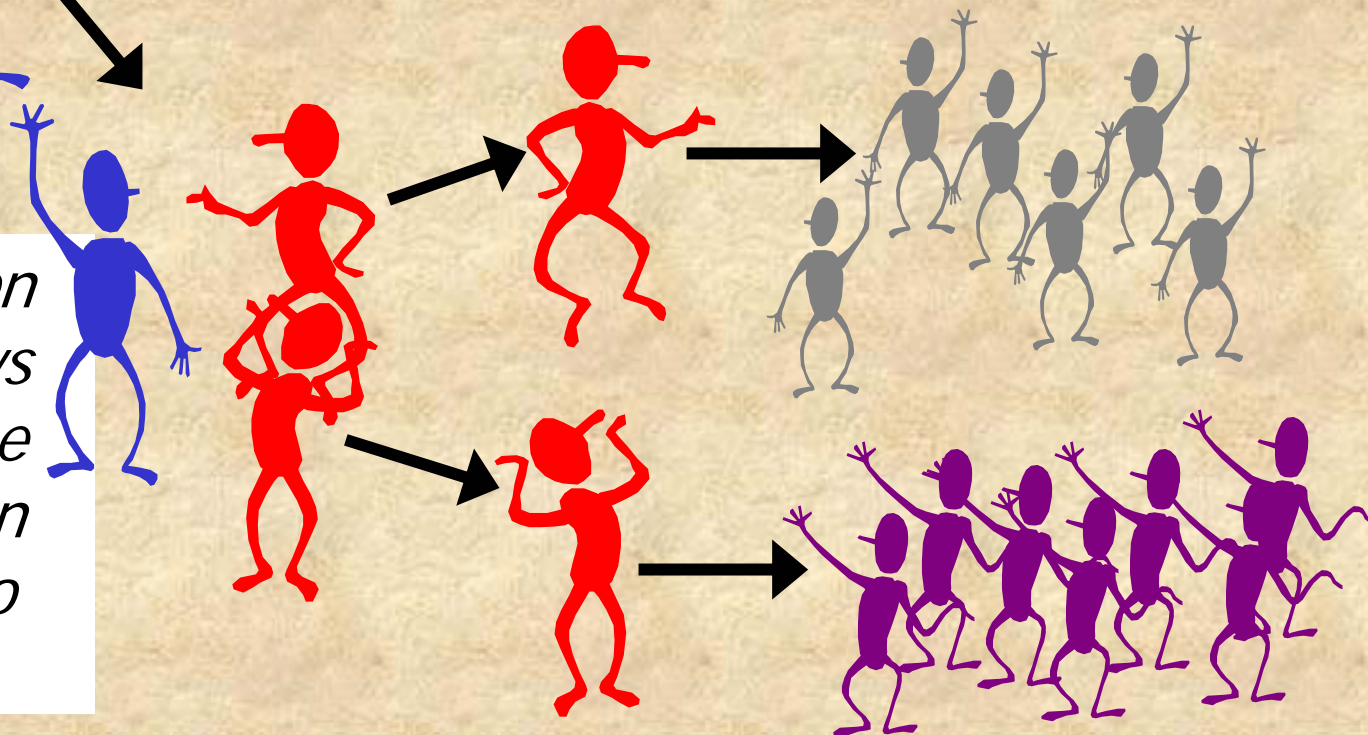
# Every successful outreach strategy includes a distribution plan.

- How can we involve others in announcing and distributing the message?

- How can we make sure that all partners in the project have the means to spread the word?



*Build a distribution system that allows people to hear the message and then communicate it to others.*





How well did we do? Analyze each stage of the process and then use that to improve on future efforts.

- Did people understand what we were trying to convey?
- Did the message reach the targeted audiences?
- Did people take the message and convey it to others?
- Were there people who should have been involved and weren't? Were there audiences we missed?
- Would people choose other formats or distribution methods?

