Fear and Doubt: What Stands Between Us and a Vaccinated Public
February 22, 2021
Our Objectives Today

Understand how mindsets shape behavior
Understand how messages shape mindsets
Explore what traps to avoid
Identify what strategies to advance
Tell us about your vaccination conversations.
“Vaccine hesitancy – the reluctance or refusal to vaccinate despite the availability of vaccines – threatens to reverse progress made in tackling vaccine-preventable diseases.”
Have I ever...?
Have I ever been a member of a cult?
MINDSETS

- Heritage
- Experience
- Friends
- Family
- Community
- Workplace
- Media
- Social Cues
- Culture
Worldview
Perceptions of those like them
Who they trust
Perceptions of risk
Consistency of message
Convenience of getting vaccine
TRAPS TO AVOID
#1 Fact Checking
**MYTH** “The flu isn’t a serious disease.”

**FACTS** Influenza (flu) is a serious disease of the nose, throat, and lungs, and it can lead to pneumonia. Each year about 200,000 people in the U.S. are hospitalized and about 35,000 people die because of the flu. Most who die are 65 years and older. But small children less than 2 years old are as likely as those over 65 to have to go to the hospital because of the flu.

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**MYTH** “The flu shot can cause the flu.”

**FACTS** The flu shot cannot cause the flu. Some people get a little soreness or redness where they get the shot. It goes away in a day or two. Serious problems from the flu shot are very rare.

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**MYTH** “The flu shot does not work.”

**FACTS** Most of the time the flu shot will prevent the flu. In scientific studies, the effectiveness of the flu shot has ranged from 70% to 90% when there is a good match between circulating viruses and those in the vaccine. Getting the vaccine is your best protection against this disease.

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**MYTH** “The side effects are worse than the flu.”

**FACTS** The worst side effect you’re likely to get from a shot is a sore arm. The nasal mist flu vaccine might cause nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat and cough. The risk of a severe allergic reaction is less than 1 in 4 million.

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**MYTH** “Only older people need a flu vaccine.”

**FACTS** Adults and children with conditions like asthma, diabetes, heart disease, and kidney disease need to get a flu shot. Doctors also recommend children 6 months and older get a flu shot every year until their 5th birthday.

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**MYTH** “You must get the flu vaccine before December.”

**FACTS** Flu vaccine can be given before or during the flu season. The best time to get vaccinated is October or November. But you can get vaccinated in December or later.

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For more information, ask your healthcare provider or call 800-CDC-INFO (800-232-4636)  Website www.cdc.gov/flu
Myths misremembered as facts

- Got worse over time

- Attributed false info to CDC
Bush assertion that tax cuts increase revenue.

“The tax relief stimulated economic vitality and growth and it has helped increase revenues to the Treasury,” Bush said in his weekly radio address. “The increased revenues and our spending restraint have led to good progress in reducing the federal deficit.”

Same message, plus data

“However, even with the recent increases, revenues in 2005 will remain well below previous projections from the CBO. The major tax cut of 2001 and further cuts in each of the last three years were followed by an unprecedented three year decline in nominal tax revenues, from $2 trillion in 2000 to $1.8 trillion in 2003.”

Conservatives more likely than liberals to believe that tax cuts increase revenue.

But, conservatives exposed to myth + fact were TWO TIMES more supportive of “tax cuts increase revenue” statement than those exposed to just the myth.

Human cognition is not logical.

Our goal is to offer alternative, more compelling frames, not refute the ones that don’t align.
Offer an alternative frame

- **Recognize existence of misperception.**
  “Contrary to what you may have heard...”

- **State affirmative case**
  “In fact...”

- **Expand affirmative case**
  Examples, explanatory chain, etc.

- **Kill off misperception completely**
  “The data clearly shows...”
#2 Crisis Framing
“The choice not to get a COVID-19 vaccine is the choice to be among the almost now 230,000 people who have died from this virus.”

Paul A. Offit, MD
Crisis framing is designed to elicit a behavior change. BUT IT DOESN’T LAST.
The Problem With Problems

- **Baseline**
- **Urgency**
  - High
  - Low
- **Efficacy**
  - Low
  - High
- **Fatalism**
The Problem With Problems

- Low Motivation

- MAGIC!

- Baseline

- Low Efficacy

- Urgency
  - High
  - Low

- Fatalism

- Low Urgency

- High Efficacy
#3 Resonance
Communication Issues? Meet People Where They Are

Published on April 20, 2016

Meet People Where They Are, Not Where You Would Like Them to Be

6 Ways For Leaders To Make Their Messages Resonate

When you’re truly invested in your message, you don’t have to shout.

WHAT’S THAT YOU SAY?

EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION BY MEETING PEOPLE WHERE THEY ARE

Lucy Crown
Greenway Coordinator

Joey Robison
Communication Specialist

Sara Henry
Riverfront Redevelopment Operations Coordinator

Meeting People Where They Are

Posted on January 11, 2016 by Erin Hennessy

Over the past 20 years, when I haven’t been working in higher education, I’ve worked in government, at both the state and federal levels. So I’m always pretty
If I asked people what they wanted, they would have said “faster horses.”

Henry Ford
Beliefs that vaccines have serious side effects

Intent to vaccinate

Confirmation Bias

“People will resist abandoning a false belief unless they have a compelling alternative explanation.”

Support for Evidence-Based Addiction Policies

Interdependence

[Bar chart showing support levels]
Support for Evidence-Based Addiction Policies

Interdependence: 6
Ingenuity: 4
Support for Evidence-Based Addiction Policies

- Interdependence
- Ingenuity
- Empathy
We can hold two competing frames as true.

Our goal is to appeal to the more productive frame.

Resonate in the right direction.
#4 Data Dump
Children with diagnosed developmental disability

- Intellectual disability
- Autism spectrum disorder
- Other developmental delay
- Any developmental disability

Prevalence:
- 2014
- 2015
- 2016

Note: Based on data for children aged 3-17 years from the National Health Interview Survey.
Source: National Center for Health Statistics

FY 2015/2016
- Supported Employment Individual
- Supported Employment Group
- Work Activity Programs
- Day & Look Alike Program

Data from Department of Developmental Services (DDS) Purchase of Service

US Employment of Developmentally Disabled Statistics

- DD Employed 2016
- DD Unemployed 2016
- No DD Employed 2016
- No DD Unemployed 2016

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics
Some Kids Doing Better, Others Fall Behind: New Report Pinpoints Victories and Problem Areas for California

The well-being of California children has held amazingly steady, despite the horror stories that we all hear, says a new report from the state's leading child advocacy organization. School achievement, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress, shows scores at par with those of the early 1970s, while the percentage of California youth who work part-time and contribute to family incomes has remained constant over the same period. More young people are volunteering than ever before, with 40 percent of all youth regularly involved in community service. And, while it is commonly believed that drugs and crime occupy young people's time, in fact marijuana use has declined substantially, and "kids today use marijuana less than their parents did," says the report. The violent crime rate has increased from 1 in 100,000 youth to 3 in 100,000 youth, but that statistic is interpreted by California Kids First leader Jim Johns as meaning "the chance of being involved in teenage violent crime is about as high as being hit by a meteor." Johns attributes the good news to "the social cohesiveness of neighborhoods." He explains this as "when adults socialize, care about their community, go to church, and join clubs," the community does a better job of "nurturing young people." "What we need to do," according to Johns, "is reach out to those areas without a community focus, and help them build a sense of neighborhood through community centers, churches and schools." On some factors, however, California lost ground. Poverty continued to rise among the poorest families, and the number of teen deaths reached an all-time high in 1998. The number one reason for teen death is auto accidents, followed by suicide. Teen pregnancy has receded in recent years, but it is too early to tell if this is a trend or a blip on the screen, say experts. The report tracked four key indicators of youth achievement — health, education, safety and financial security — and found 1 in 7 children in the state is at risk to such a degree that "their chance of becoming a productive adult is seriously at question."
Results

- Disbelief and skepticism
- Questioning of methodology
- Manipulation of findings to support original assumptions

“I question almost the whole story.”

“How did they do this poll?”

“Maybe. Maybe not.”
Use data to **underscore** your point.
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- **State affirmative case**
  
  “Vaccinations are overwhelmingly safe.”

- **Underscore with data**
  
  “In fact, the COVID-19 vaccine went through every safety step of any vaccine…”

- **Frame the data**
  
  “That includes the [LIST OF VACCINES]…”

- **Reaffirm the case**
  
  “The safety of the COVID-19 vaccine is well established.”
#5 Ridicule
Most people who get COVID don't die!

You're right—It's a lot like idiocy.

It may not kill you, but there's a danger...

...You'll spread it.
Instead of admitting error, “members of the group sought frantically to convince the world of their beliefs,” and they made “a series of desperate attempts to erase their rankling dissonance by making prediction after prediction in the hope that one would come true.”
STRATEGIES
#1 Find Common Ground
Antivaxxers are part of a tribe, but it isn’t their only tribe.
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- **Parents:** Role model for kids
- **Neighbors:** Member of a community
- **Workers:** Modern workplace
- **Americans:** History of pragmatism
- **Adult Children:** Protect aging parents
#2 Reframe. Don’t reject.
Provide Alternative Frames

Rather than refuting, create a more compelling alternative.

Common Values

Start with universally appealing frames, We/Us
#3 Be transparent.
Be explicit about your motivations AND their barriers.
Who needs to change?

How must they act?
Why would they do that?

Why wouldn’t they do that?

Who needs to change?

How must they act?
#4 Tell a story.
People → Conflict → Ideals → Resolution
Hero Elect

- Ascribe rare personal characteristics to people who do something special.
- Bystander effect – people witness an emergency and assume a hero will help.
Advance

“What Surrounds Us Shapes Us”

Universal Applicability

Explain the role of context, resources, systems in shaping outcomes.

Share stories that can be universally applied.
#5 Evoke the right emotions.
Fear destabilizes and reverts people backwards.
Fear
Shame
Outrage

Love
Hope
Community
QUESTIONS