



Thanks to Climate
Outreach for some of the
slides:
www.climateoutreach.org

Workshop on
**Effective Messaging for Climate Action:
Extending the Outreach**
June 3, 2023

Facilitated by Mary Stockdale
(with technical support from Laura Sacks)



Purpose

By the end of this training, you will have:
worked through some research-based theory on climate communication, using two exercises to develop your own approach to telling your story and connecting with your peers.



Agenda

9:30 Welcome, Territorial Acknowledgement

9:35 Purpose, Agenda of Workshop

9:40 Climate Communications I

9:50 Exercise 1: Telling your Story

10:00 Debrief

10:10 Break

10:15 Climate Communications II

10:25 Exercise 2: Connecting with your Peers

10:40 Debrief

10:50 Final Words, Wrap Up



Climate Communications I: Telling Your Story



TALKING CLIMATE

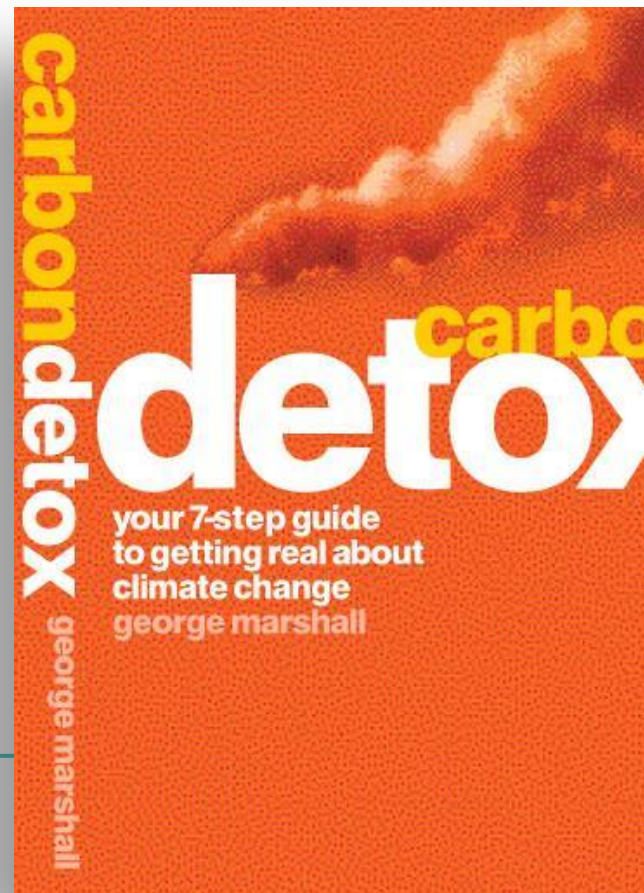
HOW TO COMMUNICATE CLIMATE CHANGE EFFECTIVELY AND ENGAGE NEW AUDIENCES IN ALBERTA



**DON'T
EVEN
THINK
ABOUT
IT**

**WHY OUR
BRAINS
ARE WIRED
TO IGNORE
CLIMATE
CHANGE**

GEORGE MARSHALL

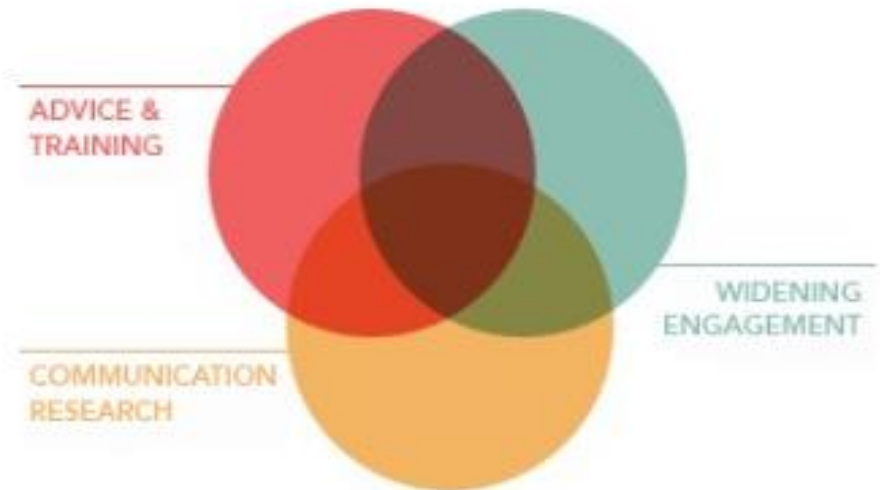


Climate Outreach

'We partner with leading academic teams to research some of the most central questions about climate change communication and translate this work into practical resources and workshops for our partners.'



How We Can Support You



Theory of Change

Clarke et al. (2020)

<https://climateoutreach.org/about-us/theory-of-change/>

We've been trapped in a vicious cycle



Credit: Climate Outreach

A strong social mandate creates a virtuous circle



Credit: Climate Outreach



What works:

trusted communicators

positive vision

shared identity and values



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trusted communicators
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People's views are formed by the people they know and trust - their peers



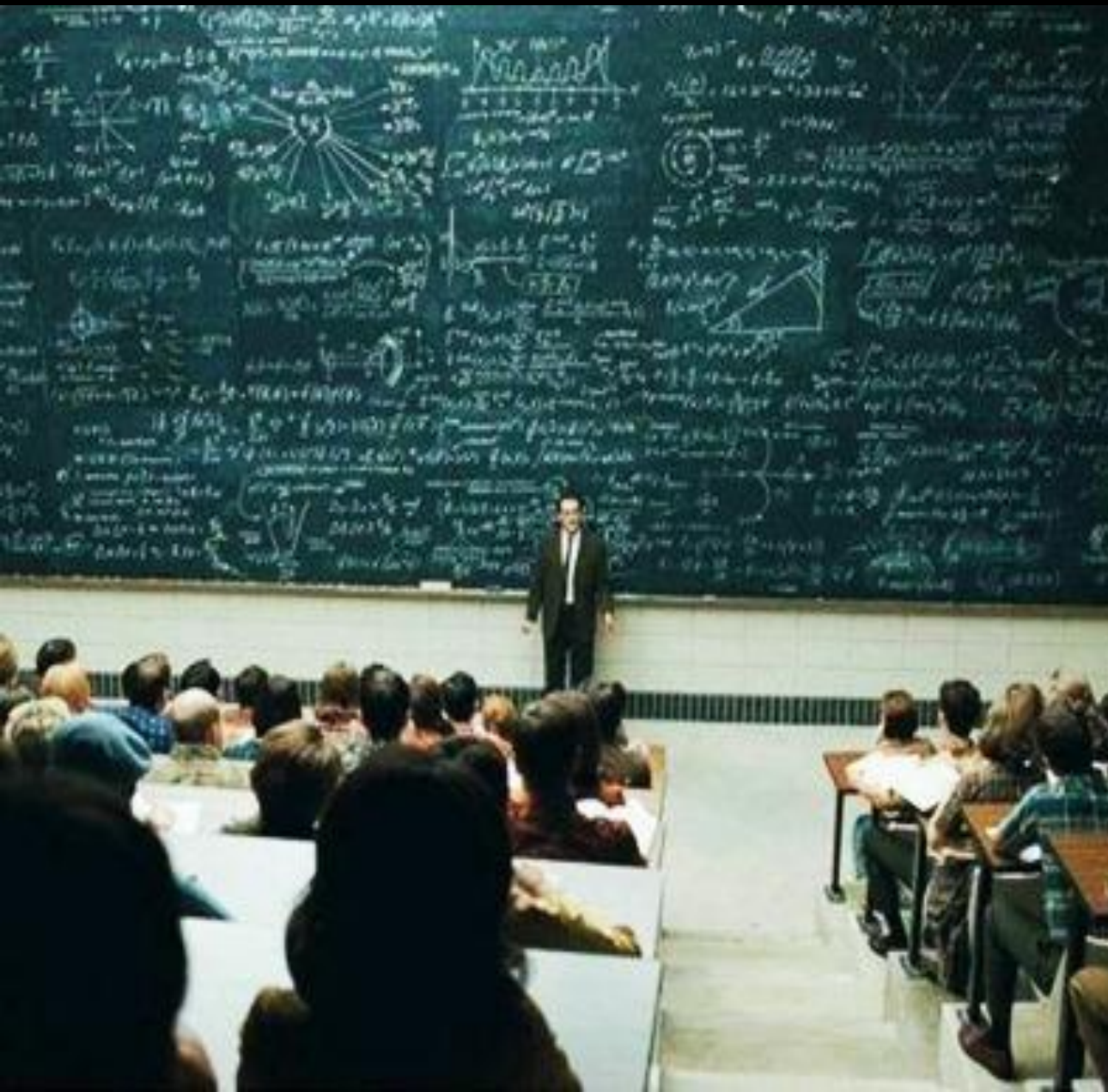


“Who do you trust for information on climate change?”

Climate scientists (70%)
Family and friends (67%)

Source:

Climate Change in the American Mind:
Yale University March 2015



The only people motivated by facts and figures are the people who understand them



People *are* motivated by shared identity and values, and the joy of belonging..



Qualities of Trusted Communicators

**Think back to an individual you met personally
who had a big influence on you:**

What were they like?

How did they speak to you?

What made them inspiring?

Qualities of Trusted Communicators

Sincere

Committed/consistent

Well informed - good judgement

No vested interests

Brave - prepared to stand by what is right

Exercise 1. Telling Your Story

What this story could look like:

- I am ...
- I have things in common with you....
- I am not a 'typical' environmentalist
- I believe that the climate is changing because....
- I was not always like this. What changed for me was...
- I have seen big changes in my lifetime.....
- When I think of climate change I feel....
- We have to do something because....
- So I am doing....
- It's not always easy....
- But doing something feels.....

Exercise 1. Telling Your Story

Construct your own story, based on the cues in the earlier slide.

Keep a 'peer group' in mind as your audience as you do so.

Total time: 10 mins in pairs in a breakout room

- 2 mins to introduce yourselves, read the instruction slides*, think about your story
- 4 mins each to talk about your ideas for your story, and 4 mins to listen attentively to your partner.

**This instruction slide, and the one before, were emailed to you an hour ago, and Laura has put a link to them in the chat.*



Exercise 1. Debrief

How did it go for you?

What did you learn from this?

What stood out?

Do you have any questions?



Break



Climate Communications II: Connecting with Your Peers



What works:

trusted communicators

positive vision

shared identity and values

SPECIAL REPORT GLOBAL WARMING

TIME

**BE
WORRIED.
BE *VERY*
WORRIED.**

Climate change isn't some vague future problem—it's already damaging the planet at an alarming pace. Here's how it affects you, your kids and their kids as well

EARTH AT THE TIPPING POINT
HOW IT THREATENS YOUR HEALTH
HOW CHINA & INDIA CAN HELP
SAVE THE WORLD—OR DESTROY IT
THE CLIMATE CRUSADERS



Communications based on disasters, negativity and distant impacts have little impact on attitudes.

The typical storyline...

A terrifying future is coming. Whatever we do it will be a disaster.

You must immediately give things up to prevent it being even worse.

And even then it may be too late.

Acceptance

...a different version.

Identity

Big changes are
already happening.

We are resilient, creative and
proud of who we are. We can
work together to prepare and
protect ourselves.

When we do, we can make the
future better.

Co-operation

Positive vision



What works:

trusted communicators

positive vision

shared identity and values

Strong Communicators Say:

This is who we are.

This is what we care about.

When we do this we belong more to our group.

And the world becomes more how we want it to be.

We define ourselves by who we are (our in-group)



<http://comicx222.deviantart.com/>

AND who we are not (our out-group)

Many people distrust environmentalists

Green

Eco-

Save... stop... defend...

Polar bears

Environment

No!

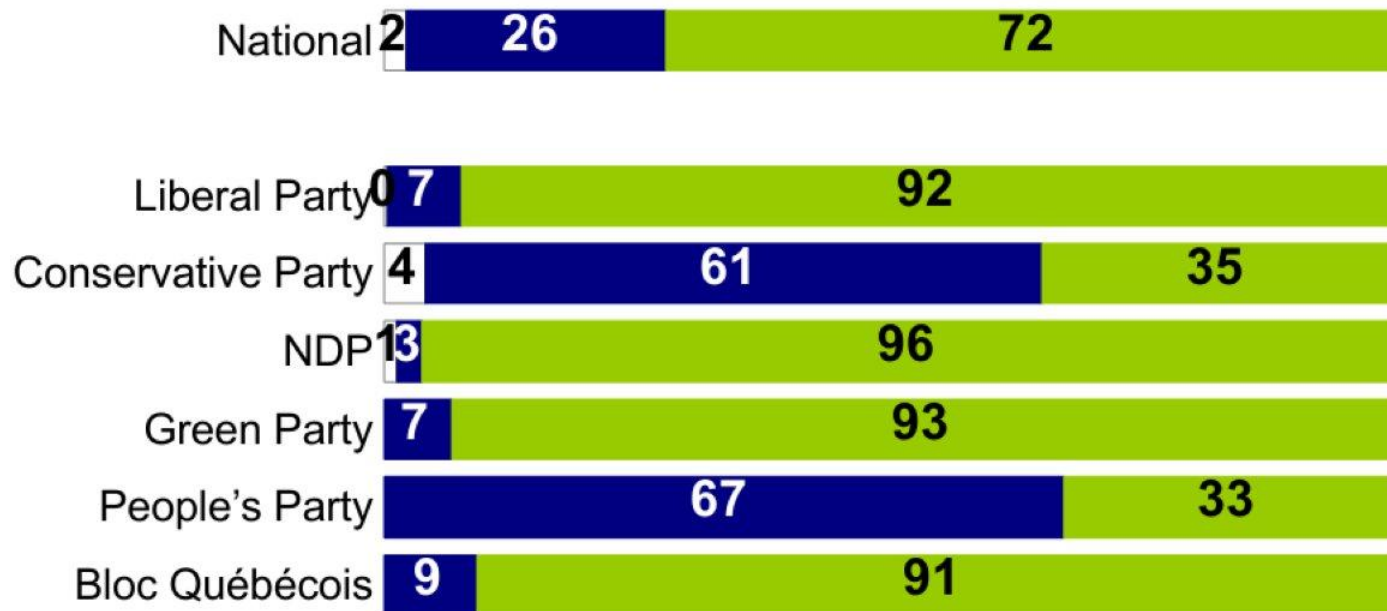


We can also be divided by our politics

(EKOS poll, Sept 2022)

Climate change acceptance by vote intention

Q. Which statement is closest to your view, even if it doesn't perfectly mirror your opinion?



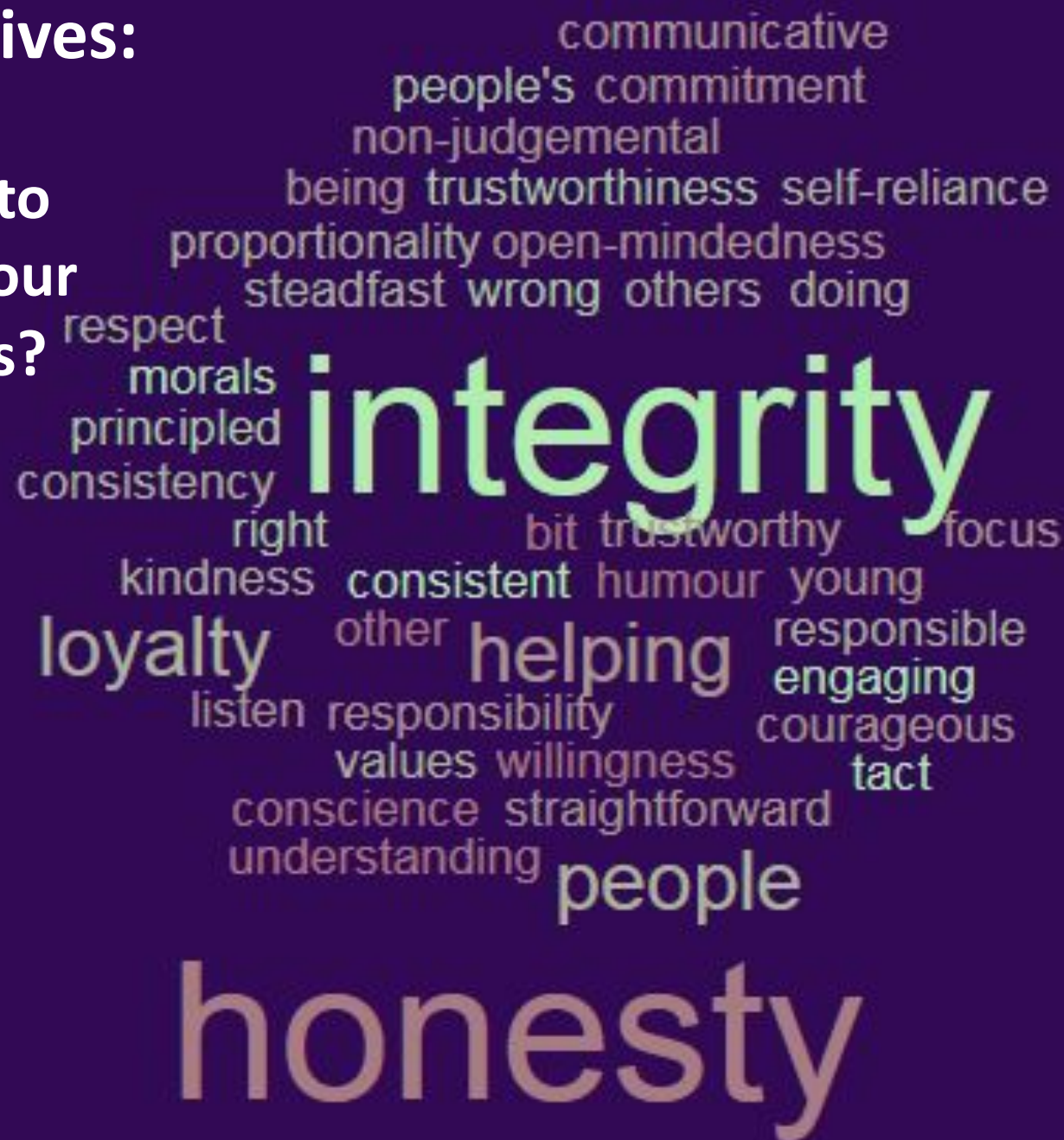
DK/NR

Everything said about climate change is exaggerated

Climate change is a global emergency that has to be tackled immediately

Asking
conservatives:

One word to
describe your
core values?



Case Study

You are trying to persuade the population of Texas to stop littering

- How would you describe their *identity*?
- How would you describe their core *values*?
- How would you work with these?

Don't mess with Texas



Texas Dept for Transportation

The campaign has been running for 20 years.





MESSAGING THAT WORKS: **Does your audience *like* or *dislike* the following climate arguments?**

1. Save the planet and glaciers and the polar bears!
2. We have a responsibility to our children and future generations to reduce emissions.
3. We will work together in our local community to prepare for climate change impacts.
4. There will be exciting changes and many new lifestyle opportunities in the low carbon future.
5. Climate change hurts vulnerable people in Bangladesh.

Exercise 2. Connecting With Your Peers

Strong communicators say:

- **This is who we are** (*think about your group's sense of identity*).
- **This is what we care about** (*think about your core values*).
- **When we do this we belong more to our group** (*create a sense of belonging*).
- **And the world becomes more how we want it to be** (*remember to include the positive vision: what are some important co-benefits for this group*).

Exercise 2. Connecting With Your Peers

Construct a message for your peers, based on the cues in the previous slide. Keep your same ‘peer group’ in mind as you do so.

You may craft it around a specific climate solution in your community, if you like.

Or, make this the main message: “we need to electrify everything using clean energy, and get off fossil fuels”

Total time: 15 mins in pairs in a breakout room

- 1 min to introduce yourselves, read the instruction slides, and think about your story
- 7 mins each to talk about your ideas for your story, and 7 mins to listen attentively to your partner.



Exercise 2. Debrief

How did it go for you?

What did you learn from this?

What stood out?

Do you have any questions?

Final Words

- What is your main take-home message from this training?
- What did you like about the training?
- What are your suggestions for improvement?
- What would you like to happen next?

Resources

Corner and Clarke (2017) Talking Climate: From Research to Practice in Public Engagement. Climate Outreach.

<https://climateoutreach.org/reports/book-talking-climate-from-research-to-practice-in-public-engagement/>

Hatch, C. & Granados, M. (2023). What Do Canadians Really Think About Climate Change? Re.Climate.

<https://reclimate.ca/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/2023-public-opinion-summary.pdf>

Excellent webinar related to the above:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L27E03X_6eE

Climate Access (2021) Climate Messaging that Works: Talking Climate Change and Energy Transition in Canada

<https://climateaccess.org/resource/climate-messaging-Canada>

Thank You

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Principles for Engaging the Public in Climate Action:

**Focusing on behaviours and
audiences that matter**

High Impact Behaviours (for mitigation)

- *Transportation*: **fly less, avoid personal car use**
- *Food*: **eat less meat**, reduce household food waste, eat local and organic
- *Residential*:
 - invest in efficient equipment or technology (**renewable electricity use in homes, heat pumps**, more efficient appliances);
 - reduce heating and cooling in buildings (**better insulation and construction**)
- *Civic action and political engagement*: **this is needed to change the system**

High Impact Individuals

- Carbon emissions increase sharply with higher income and other forms of privilege. The top 10% of emitters are responsible for close to half of all emissions.
- Vulnerability to climate impacts also increases with lower income and marginalization. Those most vulnerable are:
 - elderly citizens
 - youth
 - those considered low socio-economic status (SES)
 - Indigenous populations