

Changing Perceptions: Educating or Engaging?

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Today

- Information and Engagement
- Strategy and Integration
- The Challenge
- The Response

Information and Engagement

- Need for both: hearts and minds
- Public sector communications traditionally stress minds: facts and arguments
- Move towards greater emotional engagement
 - Media: human interest, advocates
 - Campaigns: *Think!*
 - Employment: Psychological Contract

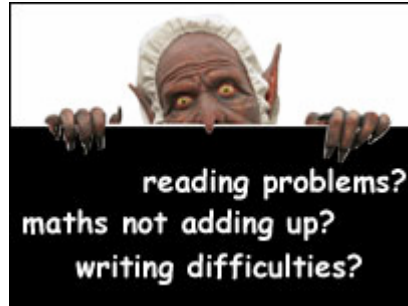
Strategy and Integration

- Strategic Communications: serving the organisation's strategic objectives
- Provides a framework for planning and evaluation
- Integration of different audiences and media (PR, PA, marketing, relationship management)
- Opens up board-level dialogue
- Greater expectations for research and evidence of impact and effectiveness

Challenge

- We know communications makes a direct and critical contribution to every organisation
- But how do we convince decision-makers?
- And if we do...how do we deliver?
 - Limited budgets
 - Challenging audiences
 - Uncertain environment
 - Patchy capacity
 - Patchy leadership

Response



**Don't give up
giving up.**



Response: Social Marketing

- Application of marketing techniques to influence people's attitudes, perceptions and behaviours
- Simple, strategic approach
 - Find out what people think, feel or do now
 - Be clear about what you want them to think, feel or do
 - Engage them: humour, fear, inquisitiveness, greed
 - Persuade them: information, motivation, threats, incentives
- Familiar and tested: from road safety to smoking
- Based on proven techniques
 - Research and evaluation
 - Audience-centred: profiling and segmentation
 - Mix of information and emotional engagement

Affordable Techniques

- What people think and feel?
 - Existing social research (ECSR, Ipsos MORI, etc)
 - Existing internal data (satisfaction surveys, employee perceptions, etc)
 - Online surveys, focus groups, workshops
- Informing and engaging?
 - Acknowledge existing feelings / perceptions to create a shared perspective and build trust
 - Build on these, don't challenge or dismiss
 - Engage through emotion, then deliver the information
 - Use to refresh existing communications and organisational touch-points – and start with your own employees

Questions?