



Practicing Effective Framing

Local Council Annual Retreat

Centennial, CO

April 20, 2016

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In talking about our work, framing *REALLY* matters





Does this look at all familiar?



One of us - let's call her Jane - is at a family gathering...



She tries to talk about what she does...

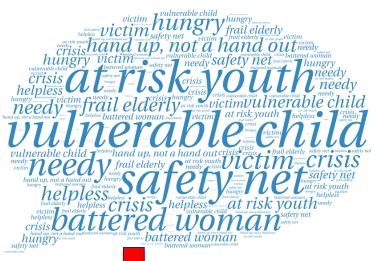




Jane thinks she knows how to fix this. *Unfortunately...turns out she's wrong.*

So, knowing jargon doesn't work, Jane talks about issues using words we think are powerful and will connect...







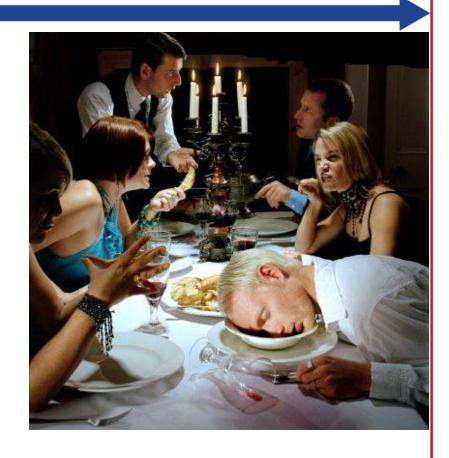


@aphsa1

Usually ends up looking something like this.











Keep in mind this phenomenon I'll call the "Facebook Effect:"



People *like us* read our posts, and we read theirs – this makes us believe "lots of people" agree with us

Whatever we like FB shows us more of – this narrows and magnifies this effect.

In other words...

If we want to keep getting the support we're already getting...

We should keep doing what we're already doing – communicating in ways that make sense and feel right <u>to us.</u>



LET'S START BY PEERING INSIDE OUR THINKING APPARATUS...



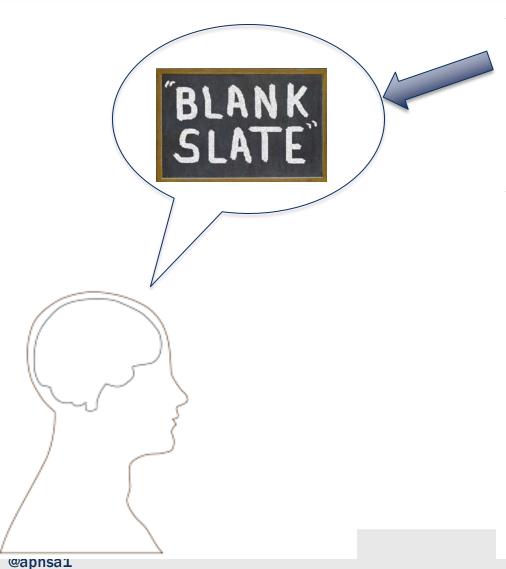
HOW THE BRAIN "MAKES MEANING" OF INCOMING COMMUNICATIONS



- What we are "speaking "into" when we talk about human nature, human potential, and human services
- How the ways we talk about our clients, our organizations, our work, our practices, our communities —can inadvertently reinforce innaccurate understandings or embed new, productive ways of thinking



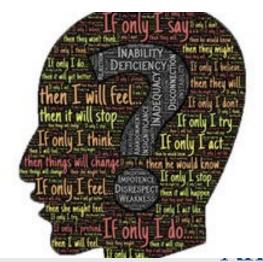
The Neuroscience of Communications



What we think is on the receiving end when we share an idea or concept

VS.

What we're actually speaking "into"





The brain's response to messages is mediated by what we've already heard.

What's "in there?"

Cultural or 'simplifying models' that make it easier for us to think about incoming information, made up of:

Values that Americans hold deeply

"Facts"

Metaphors - like, for example. old sayings, truisms







The more often something is repeated, the deeper the "groove" it leaves in the brain. New messages tend to slide into the deeper grooves.

Information "feels" more true the second time you hear it, and more and more true each subsequent time.

Debunking a 'myth' by restating it as 'not true' slides into the groove of the myth itself. In other words, "AIDS cannot be caught from a door knob" lands as "AIDS can be caught from a door knob."

Two Key Takeaways:

Don't debunk misinformation – provide new, correct information and repeat it – create a new groove, and deepen it

Know what's already "in there" - grooves where your communication may land





Common – dominant – American metaphors:

The Little Engine that Could
Pulling yourself up by your bootstraps
Making lemonade out of lemons

Strongly held American Values:

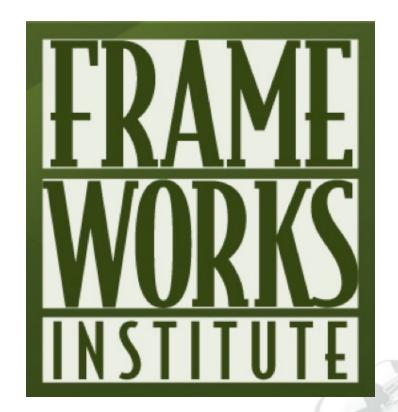
Opportunity Fairness across places

American Exceptionalism (we are the best nation in the world)

Rugged individualism







Framing Experts

www.frameworksinstitute.org

4 Key Concepts to Keep in Mind

- 1. Widen the Lens show how issues impact all of us, not "them"
- 2. Make an affirmative case state what IS true
- 3. Avoid stories of crisis "doom and gloom"
- 4. Use well-framed data and stories



Find a Partner...

A quick first bit of practice



What's Wrong with the Framing?

Purpose: to advocate for a drop-in center for LGBT youth

Peoria's gay teens are in grave danger, facing life threatening problems from homelessness to hate crimes. These vulnerable teens need a safe place to spend time – a place where they can have what straight kids have – support, tutoring, health care.

Purpose: to generate support for keeping a neighborhood senior center open

Elderly residents of Highland Park have earned a place to spend time in retirement – we call them the "Greatest Generation" because of what they did for us — don't we owe them at least one hot meal a day and the companionship of other seniors?



What's Wrong with the Framing?

Crisis – sky is falling

Purpose: to advocate for a drop-in center for LGBT youth

Peoria's gay teens are *in grave danger*, facing *life threatening* problems from homelessness to hate crimes. These *vulnerable* teens need a safe place to spend time – a place where they can have *what straight kids have* – support, tutoring, health care.

Purpose: to generate support for keeping a neighborhood senior center open

It's about "them," and about who's worthy

Elderly residents of Highland Park have *earned* a place to spend time in retirement – we call them the "Greatest Generation" because of what they did for us — don't we owe them at least *one hot meal* a day and the companionship of other seniors?



What's Might Work Better?

Purpose: to advocate for a drop-in center for LGBT youth

All of Peoria's young people need lots of kinds of support in order to set their lives on a positive track – help with schoolwork, with thinking about careers – access to health care and to people who care. The LGBT drop in center will be a place for some of our teens – teens who are at a high risk for bullying or violence, and for being rejected by family members - to get this kind of support in a safe place. This center will join the network of drop-in centers we run, offering another place for our teens to spend time and make good choices.

Purpose: to generate support for keeping a neighborhood senior center open

As a community, we Washingtonians take pride in making sure that all of us have safe places to connect with neighbors, learn and stay active. Our older neighbors in Highland Park live healthier and more fulfilled lives because of all their senior center offers. Community centers are like the cornerstone we lay when building a city where we all can thrive.





Applying Frameworks Research*

Recommended Narrative for Human Services Sector

Why does this matter to society?

Human Potential

What impedes it?

Construction: Shaky Foundations, Missing Materials, Life's Storms

How does this work?

Construction: Well-Being Is Built, By a Team, Over Time

What promotes it?

Life Cycle Examples: Human Services Supports Across the Life Span

Solutions: Your Policy Asks Here!

*Developed by Frameworks Institute.



When we talk about human services, providing supports and services to people who need them...

it "lands in" these mental models or cognitive "short cuts"

I pulled myself up by my bootstraps – giving people help for more than a short term emergency makes them dependent

Remember the 'good old days' when people took care of each other?

Government is inept

Human Services is... (blank stare) - the cognitive hole

These are the values, metaphors, 'facts' you *don't* want to trigger





Here's some of 'what's in there' that we DO want to trigger

Every person is born with the potential to build and live a good life (human potential)—and everyone needs support at times in their lives to maintain well being (life cycle)

There are common sense solutions that we know work (aka pragmatism)

We can prevent problems from getting worse and costing more by acting early on (aka prevention)

And a tested metaphor we can consider using

CONSTRUCTED WELL BEING

Metaphors are particularly important in helping people "see" the way systems and structures work







Systems of Care*



Key Values:

- Human Potential
- Civic Potential
- Pragmatism

Explanatory Metaphors:

- Solid tracks for development
- Levelness
- Resource Grid



^{*}Drawn from Frameworks Institute research on Community Wide Partnerships for Child Well-being.



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Applying the Research

Before Reframing

We must do more to help disadvantaged and troubled youth, who have little chance of success without our interventions. Additional resources are needed to deliver programs and services to help these kids break the poverty cycle that plagues their families. By supporting government agencies like child protective services and juvenile justice, and connecting youth to these services, we can improve outcomes for low income families. Our county government should be there to extend a helping hand to people in need.

What's wrong with this framing?

After Reframing

Our community needs to keep our youth on track — making progress and moving forward, with stops along the way. Like a train needs a connected and coordinated system of tracks to travel smoothly and quickly to where it needs to go, youth in our community need a connected and coordinated system of services working together — like health care, early learning, after-school care, child welfare and more — so that youth get the resources they need when they need them. By building a System of Care we are ensuring solid tracks for development, making sure that all the pieces are in place for all youth in our community to move forward in life.





Applying the Research

Before Reframing

Our community needs a strong safety net to help people who are hungry, homeless or victims of domestic violence Battered women, elderly people who don't have enough money to feed themselves — we can pull together to make sure we take care of those who are less fortunate.

What's wrong with this framing?

After Reframing

Each of us needs others to construct a successful life. Parents are vital, and so are extended family, teachers, coaches, clergy, guidance counselors, and, when we're older, career advisors, people who can teach about money, lenders, contacts who help with getting a job and finding a home, librarians, public officials, counselors when you encounter bumps in the road (debt, alcohol, marital problems) . . . Every person taps into a web of people and relationships who can help along the way – sort of like tapping into the electrical grid to power your home appliances. No one who succeeds is "off the grid." Our community has built a grid of resources and services — we need to make sure it's in good repair and reaches everyone.



Constructing a successful frame requires well-made *frame elements*



Values

Explanatory Metaphors

Landscape Stories

Social Math



The formula for a well-constructed policy frame





Use Smart Social Math

- Tell why it matters first, followed by the numbers
- Use numbers in a social context
- Make comparisons with familiar things that help paint the picture
- Avoid false comparisons







What Does Smart Math Look Like?

Less Effective

Smart Math









What Does Smart Math Look Like?

Less Effective

 You're more likely to die from a fall in your bathroom than to be killed by a terrorist.

Smart Math

If you're a 50 year old
 American, you stand a 1 in
 14 chance of being the victim of
 a robbery or assault in your
 lifetime. You stand a 1 in 20
 million chance being the victim
 of a terrorist attack.



Telling Stories: Orientation Matters





Landscape

Portra



What story does this tell?

How about this?





How about this?



Your Turn





What's wrong with this framing?

The Columbus Dispatch

Ohio's elderly forced to choose between food or medicine

Ohio seniors sometimes go hungry, struggling more than most to pay bills and afford healthy meals

Elaine Sperry knows too many friends who have had to make the impossibly difficult tradeoffs of choosing among eating, buying medication or paying bills.

"There's no good choice," she said. To the elderly, health is often affected, no matter what they do.

Ohio ranks first in the Midwest and 12th nationwide for food insecurity among older adults, according to a new report by the National Foundation to End Senior Hunger and National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities.

The report found that more than 16 percent of Ohioans age 60 or older — an estimated 385,037 people — were at risk of hunger in 2013, the latest year for which data were available. Being at risk means they expressed concerns about getting enough to eat or eating the right kind of food.

That's a 26 percent increase over 2012.

"It's just wrong," said Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, the executive director of the Ohio Association of Foodbanks. "This level of increasing hunger among our seniors, the greatest generation, has very significant public-health implications and represents a looming financial crisis."

What's wrong with this framing?

Tone = crisis

Doesn't show how the issue works

What causes this problem? What caused the increase?

Why should we care =

these people are worthy (and the sky is falling)

Ohio's elder increase?

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