



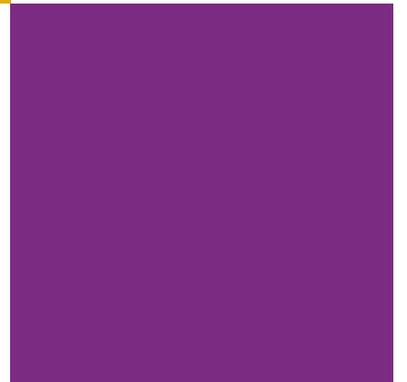
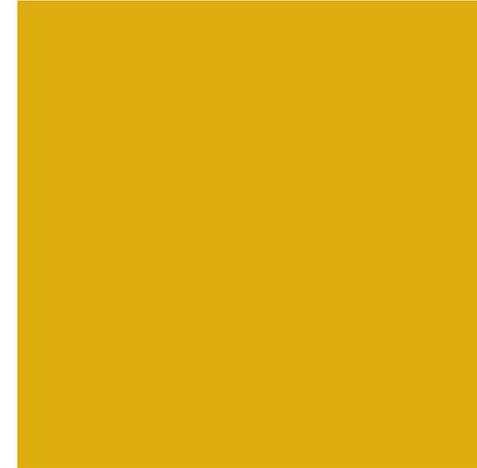
AcademyHealth

Communicating with Policymakers

Strategies & Tools for Success

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AcademyHealth

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AcademyHealth



Today's Agenda

- ✓ Why Communicate with Policymakers
- ✓ Policymakers as a Target Audience
- ✓ Crafting Effective Messages
- ✓ A Quick Look at Message Delivery

Today's Session is a Workshop

- Polling & Breakout Rooms
- Asking for volunteers to share learnings
- Chat Box for ongoing conversation



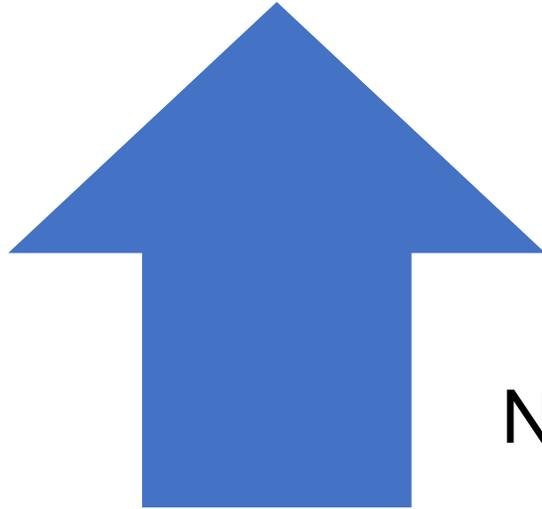
Polling Questions

1. How often do you communicate research findings to policymakers?
2. For what type of policymaker does your work most often have implications?

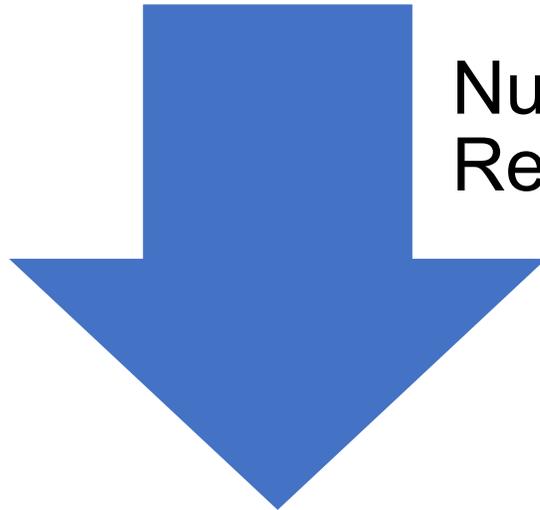


Publication is Not Enough

So Much Information, So Little Knowledge



Number of Articles Published

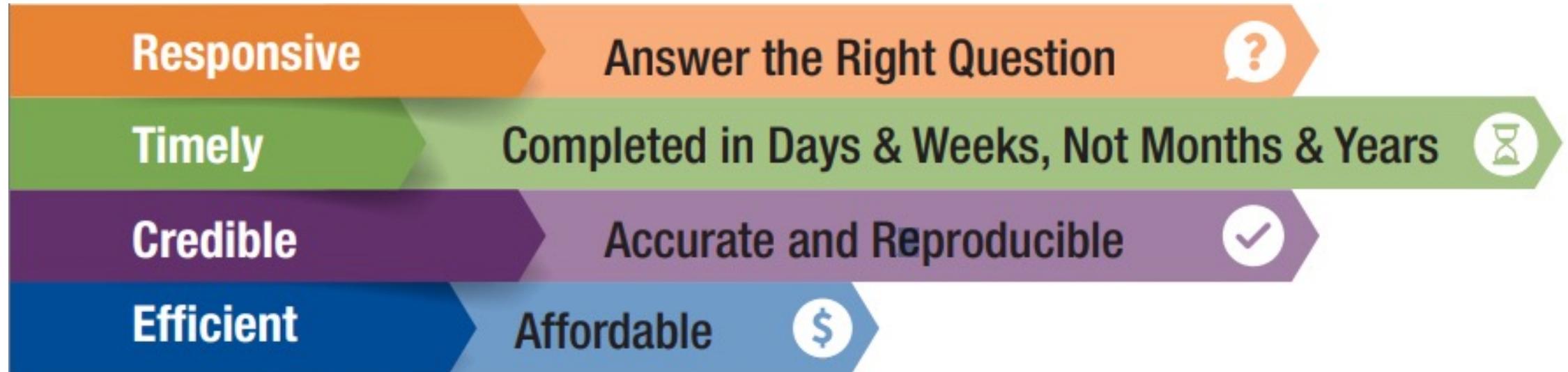


Number of Articles
Read

Lag in Published Work's Use in Policy/Practice

17 Years is About 17 Years Too Long

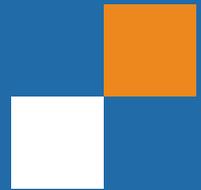
Policymakers need evidence that is:



Advocacy ≠ Not Lobbying

- Advocacy: any activity to influence policy
 - Talking about a policy problem
 - Seeking change to address it
- Lobbying has strict legal, IRS definitions
 - Asking policymakers to act on specific legislation
 - Asking others to ask the same
- Lobbying doesn't make you a lobbyist

Advocacy is the primary goal of today's session.



Policymakers as A Target Audience

Key Characteristics





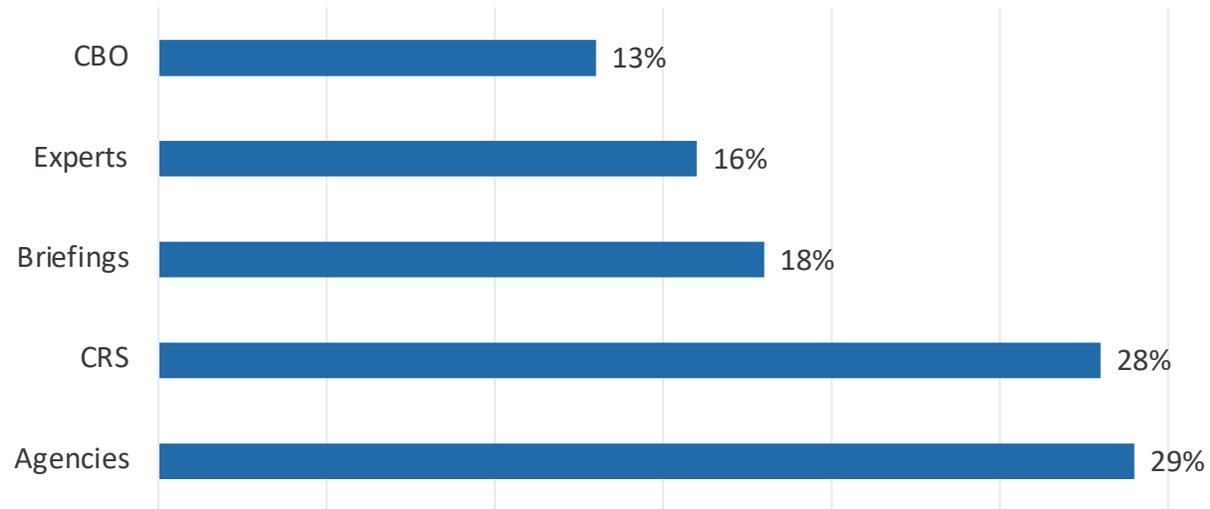
Getting to Know Your Audience

- What level of influence do they have and who influences them?
- What do your target audiences care about; what do they need to do their jobs?
- What is their culture and their context?
- What have they done lately?
- What do they believe now? What are the “words that work”?





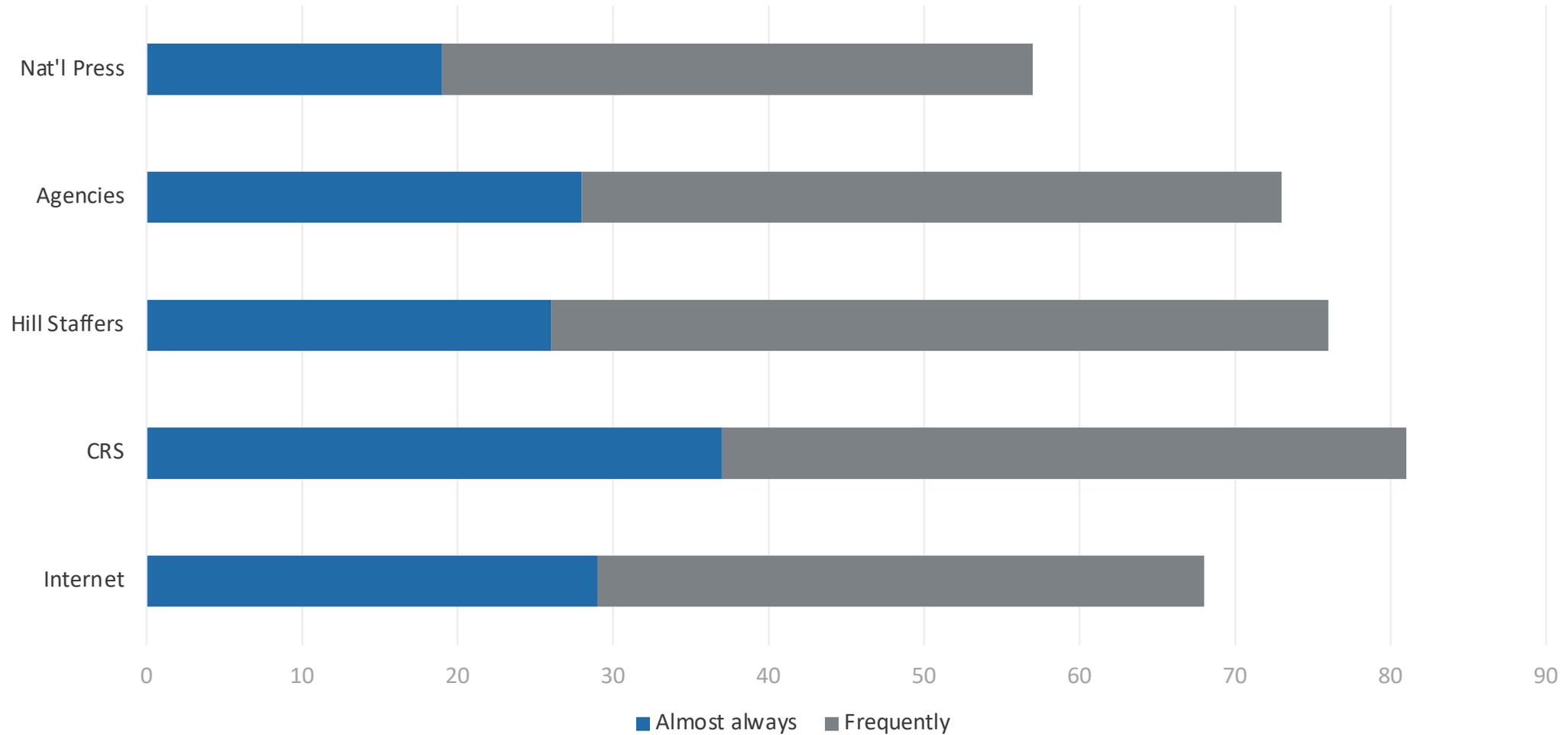
Agencies Lead the List of Sources



These aren't fixed variables

The ranking and list has changed since the 2012 survey. CRS, ranked first in 2012, has fallen to number 2; Academic or issue experts has fallen from #2 to number #4; CBO has fallen from #3 to #5; Relevant Federal Agencies moves up from #5 to #1 with 29%.

Where Policymakers Find Information



“Congressional Communications Report, Vol. 3”

Most Important Determinant of Access per Staff



Providing credible, reliable information 43%

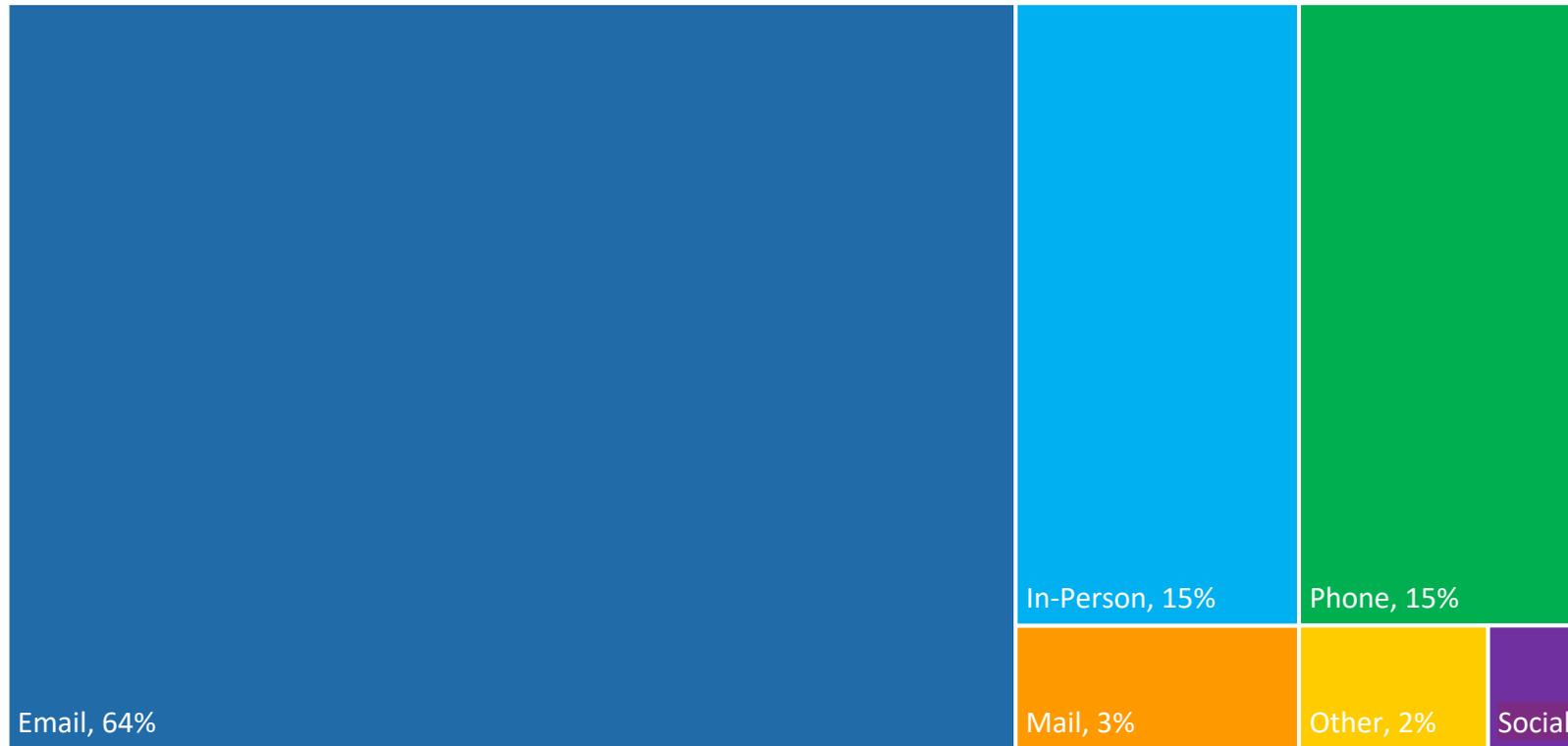


Existing relationships 36%



Other
(home state/district related, relevant to current work, timeliness)

Preferred Method of Contact





How to Research Your Audience

A List of Online Resources & Primary Research



- 1 | Social media channels
- 2 | Recent interviews or speaking engagements
- 3 | Surveys, interviews, and focus groups
- 4 | [ProPublica's Represent Project](#)
- 5 | Google news search and recent press releases

Case Study Audience Profile

City Councilwoman Sue Smith



■ Worries about:



■ Wants:



■ Needs:



■ Is influenced by:



■ Reads:



■ Recently:



■ Believes:





Exercise - Breakout

Develop an Audience Profile



What do they want? What is their goal?



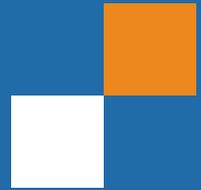
**Who are they influenced by?
Who do they trust?**



Where do they get their information?



What have they done recently?



Effective Messaging

Beyond “three key points”





Today's Message

- Our work among several projects that indicates that children with combined mental health & complex physical health conditions are a very important group, with needs and health care utilization that are extremely high.
- Our message has to do with how integration of mental and physical health services for these children is an extremely important function that must be resourced and funded.





What You Say

Choosing the right word goes beyond its dictionary definition. Using 'plain language' and concrete examples can ensure accuracy and understanding.



What They Hear

Beyond connotation, our understanding is shaped by our experience, world view and perspective. Framing helps ensure your message resonates as credible with a specific audience.



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Connotation.

Context.

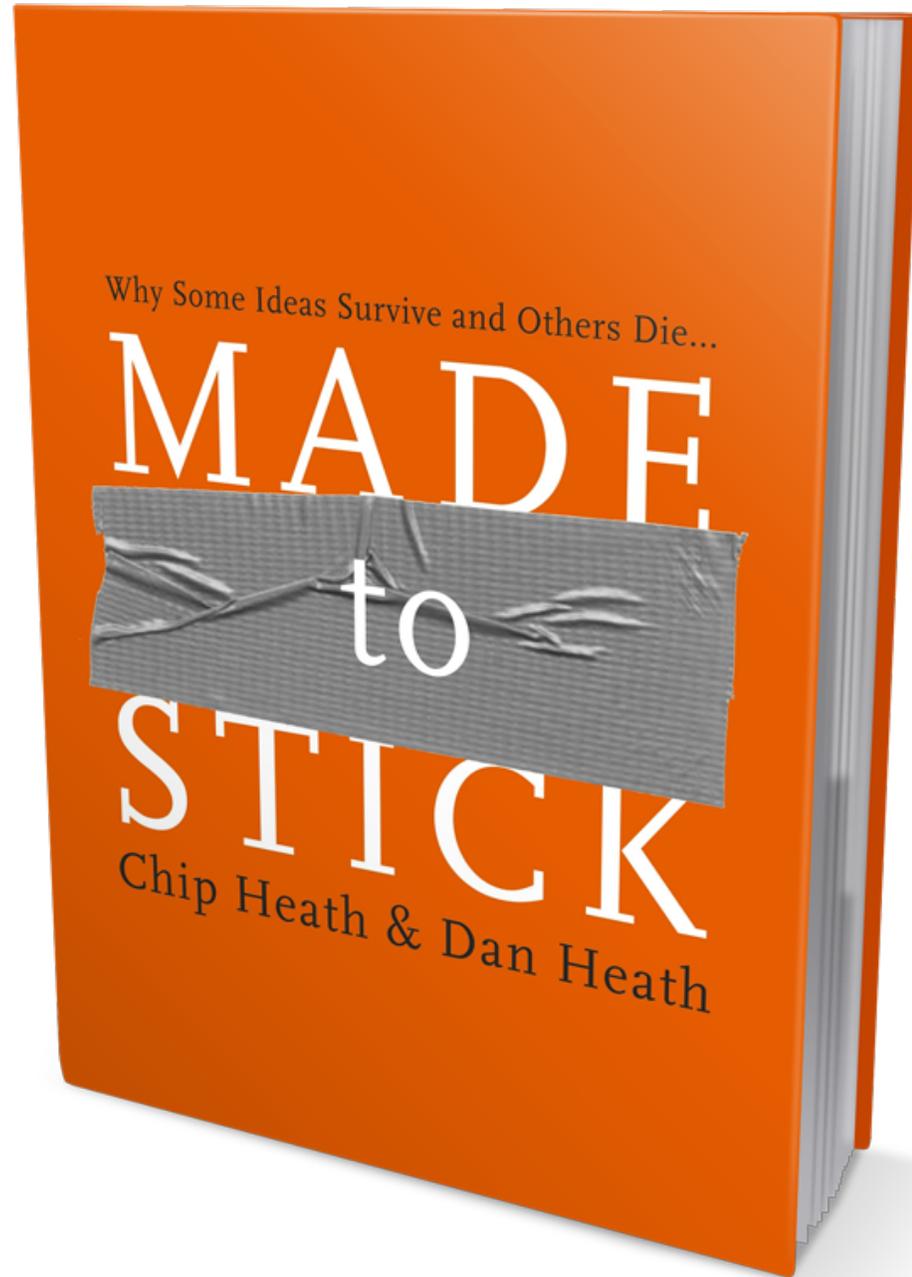
Framing.

Word Choice Can Trigger Positive or Negative Frames

Affordable Care Act
Entitlement reform
Public health
Smoking Ban
Global warming
Gun control
Risk assessment

Obamacare
Medicare cuts
Nanny state
Smoke-free
Climate change
Gun safety
Scare tactics

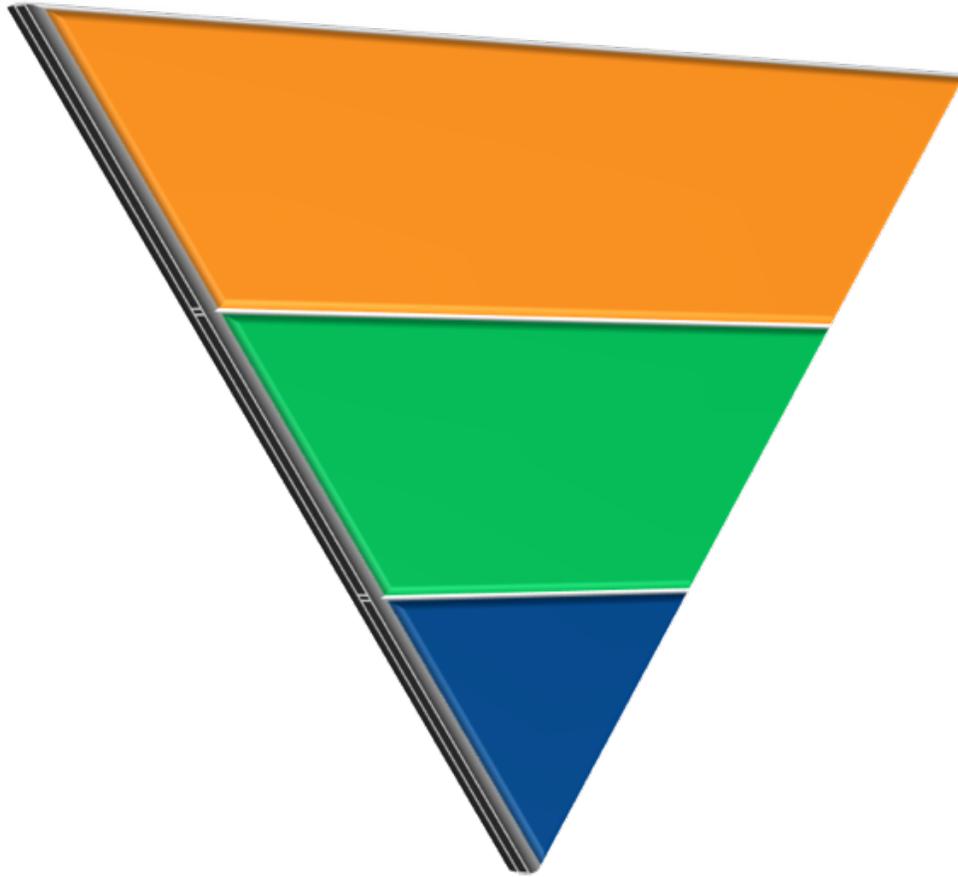




Building Messages for **SUCCESS**

- ✓ Simple
- ✓ Unexpected
- ✓ Concrete
- ✓ Credible
- ✓ Emotional
- ✓ Stories

Invert the Abstract & Lead with Impact



Lead with conclusions and impact

Describe how you got there

Then, and only if interested, share the methods.



Message Madlibs -- Breakout

A tool to focus your “elevator pitch”

I’m here today to talk to you about _____ *the problem or vision* _____

It’s important because _____ *why THEY care* _____

(My) Research shows that _____ *offer options* _____

Let me give you an example _____ *one sentence story* _____

That’s why I’m asking you to _____ *make your ask!* _____



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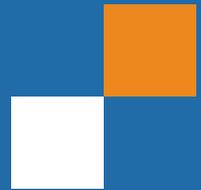
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(My) Research shows that _____ *offer options* _____

Let me give you an example _____ *one sentence story* _____

That’s why I’m asking you to _____ *make your ask!* _____

Our Topic Today: Integration of mental and physical health services



A Quick Look at Message Delivery

Choosing Your Channel





Choose the Right Channels



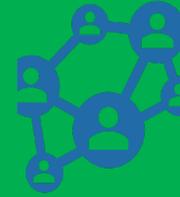
Meetings



Letters, Op-eds



Publications



Social Media



Public Speaking



**Interviews/
Media**



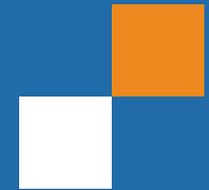
Use Trusted Messengers and Grassroots Influencers

- Always ask: am I the right messenger? If you are not, who could be?
- Think about meaningful partnerships
- Find opportunities to listen and build trust
- Remember, collaboration moves at the speed of trust



Determine When and Where to Engage

- Timeliness – Congressional, legislative calendar
- Preferences and media use of audience
- Messengers and champions
- Together or alone
- Abstain or engage



Questions & Final Thoughts

