

Influencing Behaviors for Good

DEFINITION

“Social marketing is a process that applies marketing principles and techniques to create, communicate, and deliver value in order to influence target audience **behaviors** that benefit society (public health, safety, the environment, and communities) as well as the target audience.” Philip Kotler, Nancy Lee, and Michael Rothschild, 2006

Similarities to commercial marketing include:

- Exchange theory is fundamental
- Customer-orientation is critical
- Audiences are segmented
- All 4Ps are considered
- Market research is key to success
- Results are measured for improvement

In commercial marketing, however:

- Financial versus societal gain is the goal
- Competitors are other similar organizations

GUIDING THEORIES

Stages of Change Model describes six stages that people go through in the behavior change process.

Social Norms Theory is based on the central concept that much of people’s behavior is influenced by their perceptions of what is “normal” or “typical.”

Health Belief Model emphasizes target audiences are influenced by perceived personal susceptibility and seriousness of the health issue, and benefits, barriers and cues to action for the desired behavior.

Theory of Reasoned Action/Theory of Planned Behavior suggests the best predictor of behavior is intention to act and this intention is influenced by perceived benefits, costs and social norms.

Social Cognitive Theory states that likelihood of adopting the behavior is determined by perceptions that benefits outweigh the costs and belief in self-efficacy (ability to perform the behavior).

Exchange Theory postulates that in order for an exchange to take place, target markets must perceive benefits equal to or greater than perceived costs.

Behavioral Economics Framework helps explain how environmental and other factors prompt personal decisions and that we do not always behave rationally.

TEN STEPS IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

See Reverse Side for Detailed Descriptions of Each Step

- Step #1. Describe the Background, Purpose and Focus for the Planning Effort
- Step #2. Conduct a Situation Analysis
- Step #3. Select and Describe the Target Audience
- Step #4. Set Marketing Objectives and Goals (Behavior, Knowledge, Beliefs)
- Step #5. Identify Audience Barriers, Benefits and the Competition
- Step #6. Craft a Desired Positioning Statement
- Step #7. Develop a Strategic Marketing Mix (The 4Ps)
 - Product
 - Price
 - Place
 - Promotion
- Step #8. Determine an Evaluation Plan
- Step #9. Establish a Campaign Budget and Find Funding
- Step #10. Outline an Implementation Plan

Although steps appear linear in theory, they are actually spiral in reality with each step subject to revision as the process unfolds.



APPLICATIONS

Most social marketing efforts are applied to:

- Improving public health** (e.g. HIV/AIDS, tobacco use, obesity, teen pregnancy, tuberculosis)
- Preventing injuries** (e.g., traffic collisions, domestic violence, senior falls, drowning)
- Protecting the environment** (e.g., water quality, air quality, water conservation, habitat protection)
- Contributing to communities** (e.g., voting, spaying and neutering pets, volunteering, crime prevention)
- Enhancing financial wellbeing** (e.g. saving for retirement, living within a budget, having a checking account)

UPSTREAM & MIDSTREAM & DOWNSTREAM

Downstream social marketing focuses on influencing individual behaviors while midstream social marketing focuses on influencing those “closer” to the target audience (e.g. friends, family, teachers, healthcare providers) and upstream social marketing focuses on influencing policy makers, media, corporations and other social influencers. The same ten step process is applicable for each.

THE ROLE FOR RESEARCH

Market research has a role to play when developing each step and properly focused research can make the difference between a brilliant and mediocre plan.

Formative Research is used to help select and understand target markets and develop draft marketing strategies. It may be new research (primary data) that you conduct, or it may be research conducted by someone else that you are able to review (secondary data).

Pretest Research is conducted to evaluate a short list of alternative strategies and tactics, ensure that potential executions have no major deficiencies, and fine-tune possible approaches so that they speak to your target audience in the most effective way.

Monitoring Research provides ongoing measurement of program outputs and outcomes, often used to establish baselines and subsequent benchmarks relative to goals.

Evaluation Research, as distinct from monitoring, is research that supports a final assessment of the campaign.

PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESS

1. Take advantage of prior and existing successful campaigns.
2. Start with target audience most ready for action.
3. Support and promote single, doable behaviors with significant potential impact.
4. Identify and remove barriers to behavior change.
5. Bring real benefits into the present.
6. Highlight costs of competing behaviors.
7. Promote a tangible good or service to help target audiences perform the behavior.
8. Consider non-monetary incentives in the form of recognition & appreciation.

9. Make access easy.
10. Have a little fun with messages.
11. Use media channels at the point of decision making.
12. Try for popular/entertainment media.
13. Get commitments and pledges.
14. Use prompts for sustainability.
15. Create plans for social diffusion.
16. Track results and make adjustments.

PLANNING PROCESS STEP DESCRIPTIONS

#1. BACKGROUND, PURPOSE, FOCUS

Note the **social issue** the plan will be addressing (e.g., obesity), including a statement of the problem. Summarize factors that led to the development of the plan.

Then develop a **purpose** statement that reflects the benefit of a successful campaign (e.g., reduce obesity) and a **focus** that narrows the scope of the plan's purpose to one the plan will address (e.g., physical activity).

#2. SITUATION ANALYSIS

Relative to the purpose and focus of the plan, describe the factors and forces in the internal and external environment that are anticipated to have some impact on planning decisions.

Factors and Forces Influencing Your Target Market and Your Effort

Organizational Factors	Environmental Forces
(Strengths & Weaknesses)	(Opportunities & Threats)
Resources	External Publics
Past Performance	Political/Legal Forces
Current Alliances and Partners	Economic Forces
Service Delivery	Natural Forces
Internal Publics	Demographic Forces

#3. TARGET AUDIENCE

The bull's-eye target audience for your marketing efforts is selected and described. A marketing plan ideally focuses on a primary target audience, although additional secondary audiences are often identified and strategies are developed for them as well.

This is a 3 step process:

1. Segment the market.
2. Evaluate segments.
3. Choose one or more as a focal point.

#4. MARKETING OBJECTIVES & GOALS

Social marketing plans always include a **behavior** objective – something you want to influence the target audience to do. **Knowledge** objectives include information or facts you want the market to be aware of – ones that might make them more likely to perform the desired behavior. **Belief** objectives relate more to feelings and attitudes.

#5. BARRIERS, BENEFITS, COMPETITION

Barriers are reasons your target audience cannot (easily) or does not want to adopt the behavior.

Benefits are reasons your target audience might be interested in adopting the behavior or what might motivate them to do so.

Competitors are behaviors your target audience prefers or organizations that support or promote "undesirable" behaviors.

	Desired Behavior	Competing Behavior
Barriers/Costs		
Benefits		

#6. POSITIONING STATEMENT

Positioning is the act of designing the organization's actual and perceived offering in such a way that it lands on and occupies a distinctive place in the mind of the target market – where you want it to be. Fill in the blanks to : "We want (**TARGET AUDIENCE**) to see (**DESIRED BEHAVIOR**) as (**DESCRIPTIVE PHRASE**) and as more beneficial than (**COMPETITION**).

#7. STRATEGIC MARKETING MIX (THE 4PS)

PRODUCT

A product is anything that can be offered to a market to satisfy a want or need. In social marketing, major product elements include:

- Core benefit of behavior
- Goods or services you promote for adoption
- Additional product elements to assist in behavior adoption

PRICE

Price is the cost that the target market associates with adopting the desired behavior. Pricing-related strategies to reduce costs and increase benefits include these 6:

1. Increase monetary benefits for the desired behavior
2. Decrease monetary costs for the desired behavior.
3. Increase non-monetary benefits for the desired behavior.
4. Decrease non-monetary costs for the desired behavior.
5. Increase monetary costs for the competing behavior
6. Increase non-monetary costs for the competing behavior.

PLACE

Place is where and when the target market will perform the desired behavior, acquire any related tangible objects, and receive any associated services. Options include:

- Physical locations
- Phone/Mobile devices
- Mail
- Fax
- Internet
- Mobile Unit
- Where people shop
- Where people hang out
- Drive-throughs
- Home Delivery/House Calls
- Kiosks
- Vending Machines

PROMOTION

Promotions are persuasive communications designed and delivered to inspire your target audience to action. At this step you determine **messages, messengers, creative strategies, and communication channels**.

Major social marketing communication channels include:

- Advertising
- Public Relations
- Special Events
- Printed Materials
- Special Promotional Items
- Signage and Displays
- Personal Selling
- Social Media
- Popular/Entertainment Media

#8. EVALUATION PLAN

An evaluation plan outlines why you will be evaluating, what will be measured, how and when. What is measured often falls into one of the categories below:

Inputs	Outputs	Outcomes	Impact	Return on Investment
Resources allocated to the campaign or program effort	Program activities conducted to influence audiences to perform a desired behavior	Audience response to outputs	Indicators that show levels of impact	Improvement in social condition

#9. BUDGET

Identify price tags for strategies and activities with cost-related implications.

- Product-related costs
- Price-related costs
- Place-related costs
- Promotion-related costs
- Evaluation-related costs

#10. IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

The implementation plan functions as a concise working document to share and track planned efforts. Most commonly, plans represent a minimum of 1-year activities, and ideally 2 or 3 years.

WHAT	WHO	WHEN	HOW MUCH