

Common Cause

Messaging Cheat Sheet

The best messaging appeals to people's **values**. While good communications won't solve everything, getting it right is very important.

Everyone has **Intrinsic and Extrinsic** values. Everyone favours one set of values over another.

Intrinsic (not extrinsic) **values** are your friends.

Intrinsic values include:

Benevolence (honest, helpful, loyal) and **universalism** (equality, social justice, peace, unity with nature).

Extrinsic values include:

Power (wealth, authority, social recognition, social power, image) and **achievement** (influential, successful, ambitious).

Australians are more likely to have intrinsic values but they are also more likely to incorrectly perceive that others have extrinsic values and this means they are less likely to take action.

Priming values changes attitudes and behaviour.



People who were asked to think about pros and cons of honesty and loyalty (intrinsic values) were more likely to be helpful when asked, compared to those who were asked to think about pros and cons of successfulness and ambition (extrinsic values).

Use **metaphors** that make your solution sound **both natural and necessary**. Don't use metaphors that appeal to extrinsic values or evoke unhelpful ideas.



Don't say "Unions exist to fight for worker's rights at a time when they are under serious attack."

Fighting is not a desirable behaviour in today's society and panders to notions of union thugger.



Say "Unions restore balance in our society at a time when corporate power goes unchecked by government."

Balance is always desirable.

Include a **target** in your message and direct blame at them.



Don't say "Workers comp cuts are hurting the injured."



Say "The Government will hurt injured workers if it cuts worker's comp."

This creates a direct causal link between the target and the harm not intermediated by a policy.

Don't repeat the opposition's message, even to **negate** it.



Don't say "Penalty rates are not hurting small business."



Say "It's only fair that weekend workers are paid more to compensate for missing time with family and friends."

Don't hedge. Say it and mean it.



Don't say "By becoming a member you will join thousands of other workers striving to defend and advance our rights."



Say "By becoming a member you will join with thousands of other workers to advance our rights."



Vision, Obstacle, Action

is a better organising frame than



Anger, Hope, Action

- which is based on fear.