

UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY

April 2013

*How do we
change behaviour?*



Scan the QR code below
to download an electronic
version of this report.



Editorial:
Gideon Skinner
Chloe Forbes
Bobby Duffy

Information
chloe.forbes@ipsos.com
www.ipsos-mori.com

Follow
www.twitter.com/IpsosMORI

01.

Foreword by Bobby Duffy

02.

The science of
behaviour change
An interview with Professor
Susan Michie, Director of
University College London's
Health Psychology Research
Group

08.

Coming up for air:
Building financial
resilience in an age of
austerity
How an understanding of
behaviour can help policy-
makers design systems to
improve people's personal
financial management

Chris Perry, UK

13.

Simpler: The future
for government?
An interview with Professor
Cass Sunstein, who until
recently was the Administrator
of the White House Office of
Information and Regulatory
Affairs in the Obama
administration in the US

20.

Using smarter information
to empower energy users
The behavioural techniques
the UK energy regulator and
others in the energy industry
are using to encourage more
efficient energy use and keep
energy bills low

Chris Branson, UK

27.

Nudging our way to a
healthier population
Interview with Professor
Theresa Marteau, Director
of the Behaviour and Health
Research Unit at University of
Cambridge

30.

Contextualised brands:
A perspective on health
communication and
behaviour change
The idea of behaviour as a
brand and insights for
public health

Alec Ulasevich, USA

34.

Tailoring approaches to
meet unique behavioural
research challenges
How the Ontario Ministry of
Health and Long-Term Care
used behavioural approaches
to re-vamp their smoking
cessation and free seasonal flu
vaccination programmes

Chris Martyn, Canada

38.

Keep calm and carry
on: A behaviour change
framework for
community safety
How the emergency services
in Australia developed a
behavioural change model to
help them understand how
best to keep citizens safe in
the face of natural disasters

Tom Lowe, Australia

Foreword

Welcome to the latest edition of the Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute's *Understanding Society*. In this issue we bring together some of the world's leading thinkers in social psychology and behavioural economics and researchers from the global Ipsos network to consider the impact these disciplines are having on public policy.

In recent years governments around the world have started to think differently about how they influence behaviour, looking for alternatives to heavy-handed legislation and choosing instead softer interventions. These interventions – or *nudges* – draw on an evidence-based understanding of human behaviour to inform, persuade or influence, helping citizens to make better choices for themselves, making their lives easier by defaulting them onto the right path and doing away with confusing complexity.

Partly this change in approach reflects the financial realities of the times. The global economic crisis of 2007/8 has meant that there are fewer tax receipts for big government programmes, making throwing money at a problem much less of an option. Nudges – done well – can be simple and low-cost whilst still having a real impact, going with the grain of human nature and taking account of the way we all think.

We are delighted to have in this publication an interview with Professor Cass R. Sunstein, one of the key figures in describing then applying these approaches. Professor Sunstein is the Robert Walmsley University Professor at Harvard University and Harvard Law School and until recently, Administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Obama administration. Perhaps best known globally for co-authoring

Nudge: Improving Decisions about Health, Wealth, and Happiness with Professor Richard Thaler, he has just published a new book – *Simpler: The Future of Government* – and as the title of this edition shows, we feel this sums up a key theme in behaviour change. In office, he took a decidedly empirical approach to working out which regulations work, and he outlines here some of the insights from his time in the White House.

We are equally thrilled to have interviews with Professors Susan Michie of University College London (UCL) and Theresa Marteau of the University of Cambridge. Professor Michie, Director of UCL's Health Psychology Research Group has advanced one of the most well-regarded frameworks for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions. Professor Michie discusses the advantages of starting from a diagnosis of the "behaviour in context" and drawing on what has worked before, as well as outlining new areas of research she and her team are working on.

Professor Marteau, Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit at University of Cambridge, discusses the role of behavioural economics and social psychology in public health, and the huge challenges for public health interventions, in the face of pervasive encouragement to act in less healthy ways.

Staying with public health, this edition includes case studies of how the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care in Canada used behavioural approaches to re-vamp their smoking cessation and free seasonal flu vaccination programmes. The idea of behaviour as a brand and the insights for public health are explored here also, giving an alternative perspective on

health communication.

Also included are articles covering: how the behavioural techniques Britain's energy regulator and others in the energy industry are using is encouraging more efficient energy use; how an understanding of behaviour can help UK policy-makers design systems to improve people's personal financial management during this tight fiscal period; and how the Australian emergency services developed a behaviour change model to help them approach how best to keep citizens safe in the face of natural disasters.

We hope you enjoy this update on public policy and behaviour change. Ipsos MORI remains committed to sharing the messages from our research, in the belief that a better understanding of public attitudes and behaviour will lead to better policy. If you would like to discuss any of the research here, please get in touch.



Bobby Duffy

Managing Director
Ipsos MORI
Social Research Institute



@BobbyIpsosMORI

The science of behaviour change

An interview with Professor Susan Michie,
Director of University College London's Health Psychology Research Group

by Chris Perry



CP: Your 2011 paper *The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions*¹ (co-written with Robert West and Maartje M van Stralen) has become a mini-classic. It presents a really helpful and structured way of thinking about behaviour as a 'system' and using that to think about appropriate interventions and policies. What prompted you to write it in the first place?

SM: Whilst working with the UK's Department of Health, I was often asked what I thought about various frameworks for achieving behaviour change that had been developed. They all had something to commend them. They were far from comprehensive and clearly lacked coherence from a behavioural science perspective, with different types of constructs arranged in arbitrary ways that did not make theoretical sense. I thought there was a need to have a framework that synthesised the content of these frameworks and arranged it in a conceptually coherent and useable form.

As a clinical psychologist, I would

never jump in with an intervention without making a thorough assessment of the target behaviour within its context and making a formulation – or diagnosis – as to what was maintaining the behaviour and what needed to change for the behaviour to change. Just as we would hope that a doctor would seek to make a diagnosis before deciding on a treatment plan, so we should not jump in with interventions before having a good 'behavioural diagnosis'.

The 'COM-B' model of behaviour –

Just as we would hope that a doctor would seek to make a diagnosis before deciding on a treatment plan, so we should not jump in with interventions before having a good 'behavioural diagnosis'

the starting point of the Behaviour Change Wheel – provides a method for making a diagnosis of 'behaviour in context' and for considering what aspects of capability, opportunity and motivation need to change for behaviour to change. This points directly to the types of intervention likely to be effective.

CP: Could you give us an overview of the paper?

SM: The paper presents the Behaviour Change Wheel, a framework that is based on a synthesis of 19 frameworks relevant to behaviour change, drawn from a systematic review of a wide range of literature, including environmental, cultural and social marketing frameworks. At the heart of the Wheel is the COM-B model – pronounced 'combee' – which describes a 'behaviour system'. There are three factors that interact to generate behaviour: capability, opportunity and motivation.

A person's capability is both mental – knowledge and skills – and physical. Opportunity refers to all the factors that lie outside the individual that make the behaviour possible or prompt it. Motivation is all those brain processes that energise and direct someone's behaviour. This includes both the reflective thinking involved in conscious decision-making and regulating behaviour, for example by goal-setting, and the automatic processes involved in routines and habits, drives and emotional responding. Behaviour is conceptualised as an interactive system, reflecting the fact that capability, opportunity and motivation influence each other: for example, a person's opportunity to do something can influence their motivation, and vice versa.

Figure ONE.

The COM-B Model

CAPABILITY

MOTIVATION

OPPORTUNITY

BEHAVIOUR

This 'system' forms the hub of the Behaviour Change Wheel, linking the 'behavioural diagnosis' to nine intervention functions. Around the intervention layer of the wheel are seven policy categories that serve to support the enactment of the intervention functions. So, COM-B is the starting point for thinking systematically about what the barriers and enablers of a specific behaviour actually are. For one behaviour, the barrier might be capability limitations, while for another it may be enough to provide or restrict opportunities, while for yet another, changes to capability, motivation, and opportunity may all be required.

An important departure from many current behaviour change approaches is that this one does not just look back at existing barriers and facilitators of the behaviour – asking why do some people do the behaviour and others not? Rather, it goes beyond this to ask the question: 'what will it take to get the behaviour changed to how we want it?' This may involve adding something completely new into the mix, for example, providing a new incentive, or

Figure TWO.

The Behaviour Change Wheel



Sources of behaviour
 Intervention functions
 Policy categories

re-structuring the environment to provide better prompts. It directs planners to think about all the various options that might be brought into play and how these link up with mechanisms of change.

CP: Are there any good examples you can share with us of the model being put into practice?

SM: We recently published findings of an evaluation of a national intervention to improve hand hygiene amongst hospital staff – a feedback intervention that complemented the CleanYourHands campaign.² The CleanYourHands campaign can be conceptualised in terms of capability, opportunity and motivation. The CleanYourHands campaign addressed tackling opportunity by putting hand-sanitising gel by all beds and asking hospital wards to identify someone to be responsible for making sure the dispensers were functional and filled. It also addressed motivation in that hospitals were engaged in creating and displaying motivational posters in the wards, regularly changed to prevent habituation to them.

What they had not taken into account was capability – in this context, the capability of developing strategies to prioritise hand hygiene over competing demands. We developed an intervention that comprised regular target setting, observation, feedback and action planning, along with certificates for those achieving their targets; these were linked to future appraisals and therefore served as incentives. The results of the randomised controlled trial showed that, for those who implemented the feedback intervention, there was increased hand hygiene.

CP: Could you tell us a little bit about your work on interventions and behaviour change techniques?

SM: One problem is that intervention designers and researchers do not specify the content of behavioural interventions precisely. This impedes our ability to replicate and therefore accumulate our knowledge, and to implement effective interventions. Current practice is akin to doctors describing a pharmacological intervention as ‘a big, red, round pill’, rather than defining it in terms of its active chemical ingredients.

People may use the same term to mean different techniques, or different terms to refer to the same technique. We have developed a method of specifying intervention content in terms of behaviour change techniques (BCTs), with the 93-item BCT Taxonomy v1 recently published in Annals of Behavioural Medicine. Our work on improving methods for studying behaviour change interventions is an ongoing process and we are currently collecting more reliability data and

investigating different types of training for applying the BCT taxonomy method for reporting and investigating interventions.³

CP: A criticism sometimes levelled at behavioural interventions is that they work OK for the period of the intervention but they lose their efficacy afterwards. How much of a barrier do you think this is when it comes to changing behaviour?

SM: Some of the behaviours with the potential to improve population health are one-off, such as attending a MMR vaccination. Some are infrequent, such as health screening, some happen many times a day, such as dietary behaviours and some are ongoing, such as physical activity. For the more frequent behaviours, change requires the establishment of routines and habits and/or changing the environment. Unless short-term change translates into long-term maintenance, the desired benefits, for example, in health or environmental sustainability, will not be achieved.

To alter habits, you need to shift the responsibility for behaviour from a person's decision-making and self-regulatory processes to environmental cues and prompts. Teeth cleaning would be much less frequent if it depended on a reflective decision each night or morning. Instead, a routine of the same behaviour in the same situation has been established which over time has become habitual so we may not even be aware of whether or not we have brushed our teeth. Sometimes I have had to check whether my toothbrush was wet or not, because I could not remember whether I had cleaned my teeth: this is what we are aiming for in maintaining behaviour change in the long term.

If people are using different methods of describing things we are not going to make progress

The study of habit is important to sustain behaviour change. My colleague Ben Gardner,⁴ here at UCL, has done some good work in investigating how habits are formed, how long that takes and how habit is more than just doing something frequently. There has been insufficient funding of research into habit; partly this is due to the cost of funding long-term evaluations, but partly it is due to insufficient regard for its importance. There is an argument that we cannot afford not to fund such long-term work, if short-term effects have been demonstrated. The importance of long-term evaluations was a point that was raised by the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee in their 2011 report on Behaviour Change.⁵

CP: There's an idea in the psychology and behavioural economics literature that our 'mental resources', things like self-control and willpower are 'bounded' or finite and can be exhausted.⁶ Does this mean that some types of intervention are fine for some but not for others i.e. those with less available mental resource? What are the implications of this?

SM: This question starts from the point of view of constraints on behaviour change; I'm a great believer in not just looking at a deficit model of behaviour, but instead identifying strengths and building on those strengths. Intervention designers often limit their behavioural assessment to barriers to change, and I am continually saying, fine, but what about the facilitators, the enablers, the drivers of change? These are important for behaviour change, with good evidence from health and clinical psychology. An effective approach is to



identify what is working well or what people have successfully done in the past. A good starting-point for intervening is to build on the areas that people have some degree of confidence in, across their capabilities, opportunities and/or motivations. By doing this, you are working with, rather than against, the grain in reinforcing these achievements, shaping them up and building on them.

Your question asks about individual differences. What we need to do is to teach people to be their own behavioural scientists and to have a model of their own behaviour. So, someone who drinks too much might say, well I have tried saying I will stop after three pints and it has not worked. OK, well I am going to change my rule to 'no drinks whatsoever'. Or they may recognise that

What we need is to teach people to be their own behavioural scientist and to have a model of their own behaviour.

they don't yet have the capability for this type of self-regulation unless it is accompanied by changing opportunity and they may conclude that what is going to be important is to change their environment and follow the rule 'I will not socialise in bars'.

CP: That reminds me of what Professor Richard Thaler recently mentioned in a blog for the Behavioural Insight Team.⁷ He was talking about businesses helping customers to make use of their own data in order to make more informed choices...

SM: Yes, I am collaborating in a multi-centre project led by Lucy Yardley⁸ at Southampton University called



There needs to be a movement for people to own their data and use their data for what they want to achieve

UBhave.⁹ What we are doing is a methodological bit of work considering mobile phones, not just as a method of intervening, which has been shown to be effective, but also as a means of data collection. From this, we can build up a pattern of a person's behaviour, and learn when and how to most effectively intervene. This involves using mobile phones as sensors, which can detect where you are, how much you are moving around, co-location with other people, light, sound, and even moods from voice.

For instance, if there is somebody who has recently quit smoking and is moving around on a Saturday night in the middle of London with lots of friends, you may think this person is vulnerable to relapse. You would therefore send a different kind of message from one that you would send to someone who has been at home all day, phoned no one

and moved little, behaviours that in the past have been associated with a depressed mood. Using mobile phones to both provide and collect information, you can intervene appropriately to help people achieve their goals, and simultaneously build up behavioural profiles of people, learning about which kind of message will be most suitable for each risky situation. The long-term aim is to link mobile phone data with data from social media.

We are also collecting data to find out when people are most receptive to getting messages. If people are motivated to change, they are generally willing for this data to be taken from their mobile phones and have it linked to other data sources, helping them to achieve their goals. We have found there is also quite a bit of distrust of a 'big brother' aspect.

Generally, we need to be able to tailor interventions to individuals on a mass scale. There is increasing evidence that tailoring increases the effectiveness of interventions. Just as we have personalised medicine, there needs to be a focus on developing a science of personalised behaviour technology.

CP: It does raise the question of Big Brother style monitoring. What do you make of the criticism that use of behavioural economics and social psychology is just an excuse for governments to meddle even further in their citizens' lives?

SM: This is an important area often not talked about: social values and ethics. The question is, in whose interests are data being collected and used? Everything has the potential for negative and positive consequences. We live in a society where there is a lack of

real participation and a lack of power amongst ordinary people. An example of a scientist addressing this is Tim Berners-Lee.¹⁰ Having developed the internet for positive purposes, he has been trying for years to stop the internet used for what might be termed 'exploitative marketing'. By this, I mean information being extracted from us without genuine consent and used to change our behaviour, not for positive ends but to engineer our spending on things we do not necessarily need or want for commercial gain. This is part of a much bigger picture but I think there needs to be a movement for people to own their data and use their data for what they want to achieve.

CP: At Ipsos MORI Social Research Institute we're increasingly working with mobile technology in order to understand people better but a common criticism of our work is that what people say and what people do are different things and just asking questions does not get you far in understanding behaviour. What do you make of this criticism?

SM: One of my favourite papers when I was an undergraduate in the mid-70s was "*Telling More Than We Can Know*" by Richard E Nisbett and Timothy DeCamp Wilson. It reported elegant research showing that people are not good at reporting on their internal, cognitive processes and influences on behaviour. Nevertheless, if you want to find out about subjective experience, then asking people can be helpful: we need to understand subjective experience if we are going to maximise engagement with mobile technology. I think a mixed methods approach to understanding behaviour is most useful.

If you end up with similar findings from different methods of studying behaviour, you can start to feel more confident about the story the data are telling.

It is also helpful to approach research with a theoretically informed design. Without that, you are unlikely to understand the mechanisms of action of the effects of interventions being evaluated. Another issue is context and developing a theoretical understanding of context. I gave evidence to the House of Lords Science and Technology Sub-Committee inquiry,¹² which was collecting evidence about the use of behaviour change interventions as a means of achieving government policy goals. The committee wanted to know what works. The members were frustrated by responses stating that what works 'depends'... There is no getting away from the complexity of the evidence we need to build: the question is not "what works?" but "what works for whom in what situations?"

Intervention trials are conditioned, constrained and contextualised by their particular target and setting: a certain population in a certain situation at a certain time. Interrogating the literature to find out what works to change a given behaviour and trying to apply that to a particular situation is not always successful. There are many dimensions of variation from the study trials to the situation the intervention is being applied in. To what extent can we generalise from a study conducted in the USA in the 1990s to a particular urban or rural situation in the UK in 2013? We need to develop theories and methods for understanding and applying the key dimensions of generalisation across contexts: how should we conceptualise context, how should we measure it, how do we assess generalisability?

I have been on NICE's Public Health Interventions Advisory Committee¹³ for seven years and we are continuously having to grapple with this question because much of the literature is not about the UK's healthcare system. Yet we have to make evidence-based recommendations for UK populations, considering impact on population health and inequalities. We have a long way to go and we need to make progress on how to better conceptualise, theorise and measure context.

CP: So, clearly that alone is a substantial challenge for the future but what else do you think will be important to the field of – for want of a better term – behaviour change in the coming years?

SM: Mobile, digital technologies will be important in terms of the types of interventions possible and the potential for providing and collecting valid real-time data. Once you put those two things together, you have a powerful mix. Whilst the opportunities from technology are huge, they also pose new challenges such as developing research methodologies that can produce results in rapid testing cycles before the technology being evaluated has become obsolete. New kit excites people but this is not enough; they need to keep a focus on the theoretical and empirical underpinning of the behaviour change techniques. Our knowledge about these will depend on improving our methods for unpacking complex interventions and demonstrating causal mechanisms.

CP: Thank you very much.

Biography

Professor Susan Michie studied Experimental Psychology at Oxford University, obtaining a BA in 1976, and a DPhil in Developmental Psychology in 1982. She studied Clinical Psychology at the Institute of Psychiatry, London University, obtaining an MPhil in 1978. She is a chartered clinical and health psychologist, and elected Fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences, the European Health Psychology Society and the British Psychological Society.

She is a former President of the EHPS and a former Chair of the BPS's Division of Health Psychology. Committee memberships include NICE's Public Health Interventions Advisory Committee, Behaviour Change Guidance Committee, and Implementation Strategy Group; the cross-Government Scientific Pandemic Influenza Advisory Committee; and the Medical Research Council's Methodology Panel.

In 2002, Professor Michie joined the Psychology Department of University College London, where she is Professor of Health Psychology, Director of UCL's Health Psychology Research Group, Co-Director of the BPS's Centre for Outcomes Research and Effectiveness and Co-Director of the National Centre for Smoking Cessation and Training.

Coming up for air

Building financial resilience in an age of austerity



Chris Perry

In our qualitative work into household finances we often come across people talking about the importance of having 'breathing space' or 'room to breathe' when it comes to money. In the decade ahead, it may become increasingly important to build reserves of this financial breathing space to protect us and our families against the unexpected. Several areas amenable to policy – savings, credit and financial education – appear particularly promising in terms of developing financial resilience. Yet, developing suitable products and interventions to help people along their way in these areas depends to a large degree on being able to understand our often-irrational financial behaviours.

Whether or not the UK – like much of the western world – is currently, technically in austerity¹⁴ 'the decade to 2020 looks set to be unprecedentedly hard for low to middle income households.¹⁵ While the richest households may be hit hardest by tax

and benefit changes¹⁶, it is low and middle-income households that are more likely to struggle. In the coming decade, many of us will have less money and many more of us will be poor¹⁷.

This means that many households will increasingly lack the financial 'slack'¹⁸ to cope in the face of any unexpected shocks. Even small changes in circumstances may easily and quickly undermine the fragile financial – and often relational – stability of households with less.¹⁹ A lack of money can bring "both emotional misery and low life evaluation"²⁰, and when our qualitative work²¹ touches on household finances, it is almost always the case that money is a main source of anxiety as well as a trigger for worsening relationships within families.



I try not to [worry], 'cause it just will take over. ... 'cause I've had periods of time like that and it just isn't beneficial at all 'cause [the whole] family suffers.

(Lone parent household, recently transitioned into work, London)

Beyond this though, it is often the case that those on lower incomes are the least able to control their economic resources efficiently. A lack of financial capability has been shown to have significant and substantial psychological costs over and above those associated with low income or deprivation alone.²² Experimental evidence suggests that just having less – money, time or any other type of resource – may result in greater susceptibility to engaging

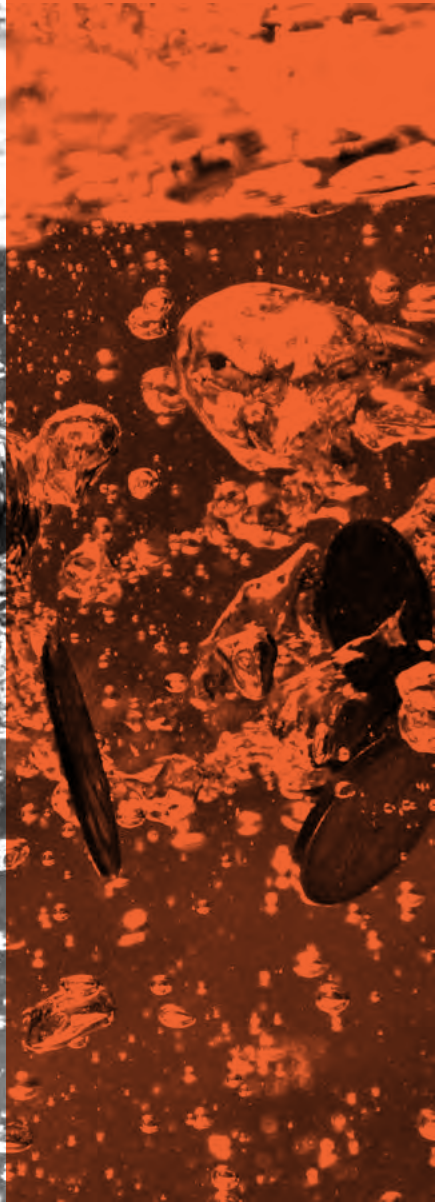
in unhelpful financial behaviours like excessive borrowing.²³ It is easy to see how having less could result in a downward spiral in terms of both money and happiness.

Savings

Ipsos MORI's work for the Resolution Foundation and the UK Department for Work and Pensions²⁴ has shown that low to middle-income households, and benefit and tax credit recipients in particular, often have little or nothing left at the end of the month and that less than a third of low-to-middle income households make monthly savings.²⁵ We may assume that those with less do not want to save or cannot save but this is not necessarily the case all the time.

Ipsos MORI's qualitative work for UK's HM Treasury and the Department of Education²⁶ suggests that with the exception of those who rely on benefits or on the very lowest wages, many people are often in a position to save – albeit in a modest way. But either they do not realise it or simply do not think that saving small amounts is worthwhile, instead using apparently arbitrary rules of thumb to make decisions about the point at which to start saving. What we often see is that those new to saving or who save in less formalised ways – typically leaving monies in current accounts – often prefer to wait until money is 'spare' rather than put money away upfront as is usual with more practiced savers. Interestingly, those new or informal savers tended to report benefits from developing more formal, regular methods of saving and were often surprised at their ability to 'not miss' the money transferred to their savings product.

Money is a main source of anxiety and a trigger for worsening relationships within families



The behavioural literature draws attention to these kinds of shortcomings and suggests that limited attention, procrastination and a lack of self-control may all mean that people do not save when they can or intend to.²⁷ While it may be relatively more difficult for those with less to save it is not necessarily impossible with the right sort of helping hand. Recognition of these kinds of behavioural patterns can help in the design of more effective savings products.

This might mean providing something as simple as a reminder to save in order to overcome limited attention. For example, clients at banks in Peru, Bolivia and the Philippines receiving either text messages or letter reminders to make deposits into their accounts saved

significantly more than others did.²⁸

Specifying goals and using pre-commitment mechanisms can also be an effective way of turning intention into action.²⁹ The UK bank RBS/NatWest's "Your Saving Goals" is designed to encourage saving for specific purposes through personalised accounts, assistance in calculating an appropriate amount and feedback on progress towards the goal. The average amount of saving in this type of account tends to be significantly higher than that contained in comparable savings accounts.³⁰

Some accounts take this a step further and allow individuals to set a specified savings goal and then restrict access to the money until the goal has been reached. One such product, Popular's Acceso Popular account

which has a savings "pocket" into which small sums are automatically transferred, has "made great strides in reaching the 50% of Puerto Rican residents who are unbanked" but in a way that also significantly increases financial resilience.³¹ Another, similar product, the "SEED" (Save, Earn, Enjoy Deposits) account helped its customers increase their savings balances by 81% in comparison to non-users.³²

Credit

Like saving, access to credit can provide an insurance mechanism for lower income households facing emergencies and provide an important means for smoothing consumption in the face of income volatility. Levels of credit use vary little with household income but in contrast to people who are better off those on lower incomes tend to borrow more often for necessities and use sources of credit that have higher charges.³³ Indeed, it has been estimated that 7.8 million adults across the UK do not have access to affordable credit,^{34,35} and this, combined with inadequate income means that many people face an unnecessary premium for credit and a vicious cycle of debt out of which it is difficult to break.

Ipsos MORI often comes across examples of high cost credit use due to a lack of options or just as a way of life. A textbook case from an ethnographic study looking at family finances saw a lone parent on a relatively low income regularly use high cost loans in order to tide the family until the next paycheck when the money ran out at the end of the month. The parent was well aware of paying a premium but appreciated being able to get the money quickly and easily, knowing exactly how much would have to be paid back and that the repayment could be made quickly and easily. People are happy to pay a premium for not having to exercise self-control or allocate attention to a problem, as also seen in intentionally choosing pre-payment meters for gas and electricity.³⁶

Other qualitative work also suggests that – partly due to good design and partly due to a lack of alternatives – the



use of high cost credit is becoming increasingly normalised rather than something to be avoided. With this in mind, there are lessons to be learnt about the availability and presentation of credit products, which might make the lives of those with less, somewhat easier.

In North Carolina, the State Employees Credit Union (SECU) offers an alternative to payday lending called

Those who want to be able to use less expensive credit may end up choosing higher cost credit just because it is easier.

the Salary Advance Loan Program (SALO), intended to help break the lending and debt cycle.³⁷ SALO allows members to take out salary-advance loans at rates much lower than high cost credit and at the next pay date, the loan and the accrued interest are debited from the individual's account. SALO not only provides the loan but it also provides a linked 'Cash Account' into which 5% of every loan can be transferred. This 5% then accrues interest in the account helping to initiate or build personal savings as well as aiming to break the debt cycle altogether.

The presentation, accessibility and ease of use of financial products are of vital importance to their take up and potential effectiveness. In a survey of the unbanked in the US, less confusing fees – clarity – and the ability to get money faster – convenience and speed – were cited as key obstacles to opening an account.³⁸ We may observe points of similarity between the attractive features of high cost credit and the attractive features of bank accounts in this instance.

As the behavioural literature points out, choice and decision-making can be overwhelming. Those who want to be able to use less expensive credit – assuming it is available – may end up choosing higher cost credit just because it is easier. For example, one study of loan take up in South Africa found that reducing the number of combinations of interest rates and loan tenures led to as much of an increase in uptake as reducing the interest rate charged by 2.3 percentage points.³⁹ Using the principles of more attractive financial products, especially clarity, convenience and speed, could make for much more effective credit products and a positive impact on overall financial resilience and capability.

Financial education

In theory, financial education could be a tool to improve savings and borrowing behaviours. Our work suggests that while people are often positive about the idea of financial education, they often feel they are already sufficiently good financial managers and it would not be a good use of their time and energy. It is often thought that young people would gain the most from this sort of provision as they are still developing their financial habits and are at the greatest risk of finding themselves in debt.⁴⁰ However, other research we have conducted casts doubt on the idea that financial education provided at school can be as helpful as people hope it might be. These findings are corroborated by other research into financial education which suggests general financial

education programmes, especially those delivered to young people in school, are not particularly effective.⁴¹

However, there may be circumstances in which financial education may be highly effective. When Citizens Advice Bureau trainers delivered short financial skills training sessions to social housing tenants over 9 months they saw impressive results: the recipients of the training were better able to maximise their available income, choose financial products and avoid financial difficulty. As a result, they were much more financially resilient; indeed, 20 per cent of those who received the training changed their saving behaviour and were saving, on average, an extra £11 per week.⁴²

The apparent success of this programme may at least in part be the product of effectively targeting⁴³ the audience and specific aspects of financial activity and behaviour that could make a difference to the lives of the audience. In short, the programme was both relevant and current, in a way that financial education for school age children cannot be.

Aligning financial education with existing behaviours and ways of thinking may also make it more effective. For example, a standard financial literacy programme for entrepreneurs in the Dominican Republic had no impact on financial behaviours until it was simplified and built around the 'rules of thumb' that people actually use already.⁴⁴ Once the programme was adapted and more effectively targeted, good financial practices became more common, and the entrepreneurs involved saw increases in the profitability of their business ventures.

Towards better policy

Clearly, working with the grain of human behaviour is crucial to developing the kinds of policies and interventions that actually help to build financial resilience. With this in mind, it may be worth considering three simple principles to guide the development of intervention.

First, it is a good idea to test ideas for interventions as comprehensively as possible. Ipsos MORI research into the UK government's Universal Credit found that financial stability and control is of paramount importance in the lives of those who have less. The proposed method of monthly payments of Universal Credit (changing from weekly) was a source of concern to many partly because it was seen as making budgeting harder and increasing the risk of running out of money.⁴⁵



It's almost the same as saying okay, we're going to give you your lump sum of pay all in one ... instead of just getting it monthly, you now get your annual salary paid to you directly and ... you're supposed to manage on that. People will be broke within a few months.

Discussion group, London

Developing these kinds of ideas can also be informed by paying attention to how similar policies play out in different contexts. A related example can be

There are no silver bullets and only a combination of a clear understanding of a specific behaviour alongside a carefully designed and targeted intervention will really make a difference

seen in the provision of food stamps in the US. In this instance, a monthly sum often means that individuals tend to overspend in the first part of the month and are left with too little money for food by the end.⁴⁶ There, as in the UK, smaller but more regular instalments could help reduce the need to exercise that level of taxing self-control.

Second, even better is to use small-scale pilots and appropriate evaluations to discover whether something works or not. Even interventions based on the best behavioural evidence and

designed by leading behavioural scientists are not guaranteed to work. For example, Karlan and Zinman's Borrow Less Tomorrow intervention in the US combined a simple decision aid, social commitment and reminders in order to reduce household debt but their pilot found weak evidence that the intervention worked.⁴⁷

Thirdly, even if the intervention has been implemented on a large scale, a behavioural analysis may help to make sense of the mechanism for why something worked or not. The UK Employment Retention and Advancement programme to provide help and incentives to get people – especially low paid workers and long term unemployed – to progress at work through tailored guidance and targeted financial support found participants with lower life satisfaction and 'more money struggles' after five years than non-participants.^{48,49}

Two of the most plausible explanations⁵⁰ for why this happened

draw on behavioural principles. Firstly, loss aversion – the tendency to prefer avoiding loss than making gain – might explain why those who are given money and then have it taken away are less satisfied. And second, the idea that behaviour is sticky – or difficult to re-adjust – might help explain why participants struggled to adjust their consumption patterns when assistance was no longer available outside the programme period.

In sum, there are some clear areas of opportunity for building financial resilience in what is set to be a difficult few years for many people and especially those with less. However, while there are lots of clues there are no silver bullets and only a combination of a clear understanding of a specific behaviour alongside a carefully designed and targeted intervention will really make a difference to people's lives – and even then it might take a few steps along the way.



Simpler: the future for government?

An interview with Professor Cass Sunstein,
Robert Walmsley University Professor at Harvard University and Harvard Law School

by Bobby Duffy

BD: Until recently, you were the Administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs in the Obama administration. Can you tell me a bit about the role and what it involved?

CS: The Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs, created in the early 1980s, is in the Executive Office of the President. It has two main responsibilities. One is that if there is any attempt to make the American people fill out forms and reports for

government, the office approves that. Second, the better-known role, for significant regulations from a large set of American agencies – including the Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Agriculture and Department of Energy, and others – the office approves those regulations. There is an oversight role with respect to regulations and there is a general role of helping to set regulatory priorities and policies, subject to the President's oversight.



One fallibility is being faced with many complexities and becoming overwhelmed – we are not computers

BD: How did you come to take on that role?

CS: I was fortunate to have been a colleague of the then-President Obama in Chicago and I worked on his presidential campaign, and he was generous enough to give me a chance.

BD: You have a new book – *Simpler: The Future of Government* – outlining your work from that time and how government rules can encourage “better” behaviour and economic outcomes. One of the terms you use is behavioural market failures, which is a useful way to explain why government intervention is required. Can you say a little bit more about that?

CS: Within economies, there are market failures, for example when a polluter makes people sick who are not parties to any transactions with the polluter and its business. These are standard economic failures. Behavioural market failures, however, involve issues

with human fallibility that leads to harmful outcomes.

So one form of fallibility is being faced with many complexities and becoming overwhelmed – we are not computers. In addition, some aspects of social situations are not visible to us, we are focused on some aspects of it but not all; our eyes cannot see every ingredient of a situation. Both complexity and let's call it limited attention span can lead to behavioural market failures.

For example, thinking about financial products, if people have pages of detail, they might not sufficiently process the information. For this reason, the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau in the US has as one of its goals to make sure that this is not the case and people can understand the information. It even has a little slogan: ‘know before you owe’.

In my time in office, we spent a lot of time on fuel economy and energy efficiency, both because of environmental considerations and because of energy independence. Compared to previous administrations, President Obama got much stronger on fuel economy standards and was much clearer on informing consumers about what they would get or what they would pay, for example, depending on whether they had fuel efficient cars or not.

We also imposed regulatory requirements for promoting things like energy efficient refrigerators. Often people are focused on how much a refrigerator costs today and maybe not on the lifetime energy costs. Both information and, in some cases, energy efficiency regulations are a justified response to that behavioural market failure.

BD: The title of the book runs as the key theme throughout – making

things simpler for people and businesses. You also point out that Richard Thaler’s mantra is “make it easy”,⁵¹ David Halpern said the same in our last *Understanding Society*. Our boss at Ipsos has simplification as his key business objective. It seems to be the theme of our times – maybe thanks to the increased potential for complexity in the modern world and the opportunities that technology provides for simplification. Is that what you see driving this?

CS: Technology is important, making simplification in some cases more feasible than it otherwise would. Similarly, in some cases, it makes complexity more feasible than it otherwise would.

The driver is that we are in a difficult economic period, where there is a pressing need to make sure that economies grow and both public and private institutions are able to do the best they can. If you have a government imposing costs on business because of excessively complex paperwork requirements, that is going to hurt real people. So my focus is the consequences for human beings.

BD: A related theme in your book is that government should help people to be on the “right track” even if they take no action at all. Careful consideration of default positions is one of the key mechanisms for this. Automatic enrolment in pensions and savings schemes is being rolled out in various countries, including the UK, but how far do you see this automatic approach going? What other areas could we apply it to?

CS: We will see a great deal more consideration given to default rules in the public sector and private sector. We are just at the beginning of appreciating the potential uses of automatic enrolment. For example, there was a university in the United States a few years ago that changed its default from print on a single page to print on both front and back. In the first semester, that saved over seven million paper sheets, even though people could easily opt out and print single-sided.

The environmental area is one where we can do a lot of thinking about good defaults. Thanks to technology, we are seeing both a rise of helpful defaults with the private sector – energy, credit cards and cell phone plans for instance – and with the government as well as more personalisation.

BD: There are exciting possibilities around personalised default rules, where information on our preferences can be gathered and tailored default positions chosen automatically for us. However, I am also scared by it – it could be seen as somewhat ‘Big Brother’. Does it scare you too?

CS: The risk is where there is dissemination of personally identifiable information that you would like to keep private. So suppose you have a real taste for some provocative political writer, and only the person you buy his writings from knows that. You may not want it on the internet that you are interested in this political figure. One way to handle this is if you are defaulted into privacy protections. Another way to do this is for them to say your information would be shared unless you say you have a problem with this, as

providers do in many cases.

Whether pro-privacy rules are the right way to go and whether they are in the interest of users or of private providers or government is an interesting and important question. It is interesting to think about both the risk associated with information sharing and the social gain that information sharing helps make possible.

BD: Another major theme of your book is the importance of cost-benefit analysis, rigorously assessing and monetising the impact of government actions. This is a key element of Ipsos MORI’s work too, in evaluating government programmes. You outline the challenges of doing this in advance of policy implementation, including monetising things like human life (which has a current value in the US of \$9million). For people who do not work in this area, putting a monetary value to these things seems like a strange concept. Can you explain why it is important to attempt to do so?

CS: Cost-benefit analysis is not an arithmetic straitjacket, but rather a tool for figuring out how to proceed and for explaining why some cases are clearly good ones to go forward – because the benefits are very high compared to the cost.

Suppose your question is whether regulations would increase safety on the highways by, let’s say, making trucks stop faster so that they do not bowl into people or making trucks more stable so they are less likely to roll over. You can imagine one case where it costs \$600 million and it would save two lives a year or another where it would cost say \$100 million and it would save 200 lives a

year. If we were willing to spend hundreds of millions for even a very tiny increase in safety, we would run out of currency quickly. So, what is the right balance to be struck?

When American regulators value a statistical life they are not really saying a human life is worth \$9 million, they are just dealing in statistical risks. For example, what is involved in eliminating a risk that one in 100,000 people will be killed and how much is it worth?

Studies suggest that the answer in terms of what the individual is willing to pay is on average \$90 to counter this level of risk [that 1 in 100,000 people will be killed – hence \$9 million]. Some people might value that at zero dollars – one in 100,000 is after all not a massive risk. However, for some it might be say \$100 to eliminate that risk, leading to a value of a statistical life of \$10 million. If the average value is \$9 million, and you have a regulation that would save two lives a year that would be, at a first glance, worth \$18 million. This means that it may not be worth eliminating that one in a 100,000 risk if the cost is, say, \$100 million.

BD: The President made it clear softer values such as dignity, equity and fairness needed to be included in your assessment of regulations. The Wall Street Journal called it a “values loophole”⁵² and others criticised it. Your discussion of this is one of the few places in the book where you seemed genuinely angry at the response, calling it “shameful”. Can you explain your reaction to that, and why you think these factors need to be included?

CS: The idea we should disparage principles such as dignity does not hold true with American traditions. There are

rules where the notion of dignity is important, if you are protecting people from being raped or if you are ensuring that people who are back from a war can use a bathroom when they are in a wheelchair or that people are not going to be subject to sexual harassment at work. In all these cases, it is important to talk about monetary consequences, but if you disregard dignity as a goal, you are losing sight of one of their animating motivations. That is why I was pleased to follow the President's direction in considering this.

BD: Your discussion of the common objections to paternalism⁵³ at the end of the book, which covers concerns about its impact on people's welfare and autonomy, is particularly interesting. Which objections do you think are strongest or we need to be most mindful of, and which are missing the point?

CS: I distinguish between two kinds of paternalism, bans on the one hand and nudges on the other. People should be concerned about mandates or bans if the goal of the mandate or ban is to stop adults from entering into transactions. In some cases, we do want such mandates and bans, but in a free society, consenting adults are generally allowed to make such agreements as they like. So, to scrutinise carefully rules that forbid voluntary agreements is prudent.

With respect to nudging people towards certain behaviours, the concern about paternalism is reduced because people can always go their own way. If you have automatic enrolment in a savings plan and people think this is silly and want to take the money home and not save, they can. Or, if you have a disclosure policy that informs people

The problem with the anti-paternalism movement in its strongest form is that it disregards the extent to which some sort of government intervention is unavoidable and always present. So there is nothing in nature or God's law that allocates defaults in a certain manner such as around savings and pensions.

about what a healthy meal looks like, they can say I agree with you what a healthy meal looks like, but I want an unhealthy meal because it is delicious, then they can. The stakes are just lower for the nudges.

There are a couple of objections I do think are worthwhile though. One is that some forms of nudging could have illegitimate motivations. For instance, if you are enrolled automatically in a voting programme by which you support one of the parties that would not be so great.

I really learned a lot from a book called *Taking Liberties*.⁵⁴ It is a very careful and sceptical book, and one point the author makes is that for the very reasons that nudges are effective, it may be too quick to say that they are easily reversible. The idea is that people can always opt out, but we know from the data that people often will not. And it goes in two directions, one is in some cases you really do want active choosing rather than a default and second, you want to make sure people are informed of their ability to opt out and give them an occasion to do that.

But paternalism at least in a weak sense may be unavoidable. In both the public and private domains, there are default rules in place that have not been chosen by the individual but by the legal system at some point, and to which the individual is frequently subject. The problem with the anti-paternalism movement in its strongest form is that it disregards the extent to which some sort of government intervention is unavoidable and always present. So there is nothing in nature or God's law that allocates defaults in a certain manner such as around savings and pensions.

BD: The way something is framed can also affect people's decisions. For

example, people are more likely to choose an operation if they are told that 90% of those who have it are alive in five years rather than if they are told 10% of them die. This begs the question, what would be the right way to frame that so that people understand the risk or is there a right way?

CS: Both. Probably both ways are correct to some extent. If you say, 90% are alive then people think it is a large number. So probably, the best way to do it is just to say, it is an operation where 90% are alive after five years and 10% are not.

They actually did that in policy where we had a new labelling rule for meat and poultry products. We said that if they say that it is 80% lean, they can do that but they also have to say it is 20% fat. Allowing the information but not in a way that would play on the effect of framing.

BD: Many of the tools that the private sector use to encourage us to buy products or act in a certain way appeal to our emotions and encourage visceral reactions. However, it could be considered more controversial for government to do this, particularly when they are requiring private companies to discourage use of their products (as with cigarettes warnings). What is your view on whether this is a legitimate approach for government?

CS: That is a great question. As far as the government is working to discourage people from texting while driving or from engaging in illegal conduct or from smoking, I do not think there is a problem really with the government itself being graphic. If the government has data that is reliable which shows that texting while driving is

killing people and it thinks that people who are texting while driving are not sufficiently alert to that fact, I think to get a bit graphic is fine.

With respect to cigarettes, many governments all over the world, including the US government, are using or considering graphic health warnings and I think that is also fine. In the United States alone, over 400,000 people die every year through smoking – that is worth pausing over. In addition, there is data suggesting that the graphic health warnings save a non-trivial number of lives every year. Those who are selling a product that kills that number of people are allowed to do so, but in some nations, they have to give a vivid sense of ultimate risks to the consumer, and I think that is legitimate. It is right to distinguish between the government's own graphic communications and those imposed on producers, and I would want to be more cautious on the second side, but cigarettes are, in many nations of the world, shortening lives and that is worth trying to stop.

Smokers tend to be unrealistically optimistic about their health prospects. Smokers do have a good sense of the statistical risks that they are subject to, but when thinking about their own personal risk – as in me the smoker – they are pervasively optimistic. So we need information campaigns that give people a very vivid sense of what it is like to be sick from a smoking-related disease to push people away from their unrealistic optimism.

BD: You outline how randomised control trials (RCTs) are the gold standard for understanding the effects of policies, but that we do not use them as much as we could. We will be running an event on this very

point with King's College London and the Royal Statistical Society later this year. How widely do you see RCTs being employed in the future? Do you think they will fit with the shorter-term horizons of politics and the desire for governments to act quickly and decisively?

CS: I do think they are the way of the future. We see them in public policy in two ways. One is where there is a policy question on which public and private institutions are uncertain and a research institution, say a university, does a study using an RCT, and the findings can then be brought to bear when ready. This is of course a familiar process in medicine when drugs are tested in this manner. It often takes a long time, but once you get really good data it is crucial and informative for what governments do.

Then there is the government officials also doing it themselves and we are seeing a large number of RCTs run by the UK Government, for example. There is definitely interest in this in the United States. Civil servants are privy to data, which becomes more useful as it builds up over time. Action in a certain area of policy can be tested against non-action and the status quo to see what works and to see whether you did the right thing.

Actually, one of the most transformative decisions that President Obama made in the regulatory domain is to require regular reassessment of rules on the books to see if they are working. It is called retrospective analysis, which is clearly compatible with the use of RCTs to see whether we have something that is worth keeping.

BD: You also talk about the importance of engaging the public in

evaluating government actions and rules. Indeed, your final line in your epilogue in *Simpler* is that government should listen closely to those they serve. Do you think government listens enough?

CS: In the area of regulation, there was a tremendous amount of listening; in fact, this was probably the biggest revelation to me coming from the private sector, that if there was a rule and it gets to 100, 500 or 10,000 comments, people pay great attention to what the comments are. And this is not a matter of saying what do the interest groups think, it is a matter of seeing did we make a mistake and, if so, how can we fix it? There is real beauty in the process of proposing rules to the public before they take effect, getting comments and suggestions and then learning from that.

BD: Do you have examples of where actions have changed because of listening?

The US Environmental Protection Agency and Department of Transportation proposed two different fuel economy labels⁵⁵ to provide the public with new information on vehicles' energy use, fuel costs, and environmental impacts.

One option was a letter grade and one was more just the facts. The conclusion that it did not have to be a letter grade, but also had to go beyond just the facts, was greatly informed by public comments. And especially it was urged, by the public, that the letter grade for automobiles could well be confusing, because it could look like the government was saying this car's an A and that car's a B when in fact it was

The thing to do is to think what problems does the organisation or government have and what are the best things we can do to fix them. A government is solving problems, not introducing theories

just about fuel economy. So you could have a great car but it doesn't have great fuel economy.

BD: You call *Nudge*, your book with Professor Richard Thaler, the parent of all that you say in *Simpler: The Future of government*. *Nudge* certainly had a huge impact around the world. Were you surprised by the reaction?

CS: The book seemed to resonate in a way that is extremely gratifying. No author anticipates that kind of response and it takes some luck and some time to get it.

BD: You have clearly spent a lot of time advising people working in government and public services how to turn behavioural theory into practical policy. What advice do you have for our readers on the best way to do that, if they are struggling to think how they can apply this theory to their own work or service sector?

CS: The thing to do is to think what problems does the organisation or government have and what are the best things we can do to fix them. A government is solving problems, not introducing theories. In the US, the focus was on the economy; we have to make sure our regulatory system promotes and does not undermine the economic recovery.

We also have an issue in the United States with childhood obesity, with which the First Lady is very concerned. We had something called the Food Pyramid,⁵⁶ which was our principle kind of food icon to describe healthy eating. Moreover, it was a bit confusing for the public to understand. Behavioural economists helped to explain why people found it confusing and not helpful, and what's needed to have an icon that is useful to people and informs them and helps tackle childhood obesity. We replaced the Food Pyramid with something called the Food Plate,⁵⁷ which is easier to understand.

Behavioural work in the United States also informed the provision of free school meals to children who cannot afford them. A number of them were not signing up for the programmes, perhaps



Biography

unsurprisingly. It is somewhat confusing to sign-up and if you are impoverished, to figure all that out might not be your top priority. The United States has introduced a programme called Direct Certification where, if kids qualify, they can just be automatically enrolled,⁵⁸ rather than relying on a separate application process. That is providing free meals for hundreds and thousands of kids who have a legal right to them and solving a problem.

We have financial aid for people, which behavioural economists found had such confusing application forms that it discourages large numbers of people from completing them. The consequences are that people do not go to college who should be and it would help the economy because college graduates do better. So we simplified that form.

As you can see from these examples, the way I would approach this is to look for the problem to be solved and ask, what tools do we have?

BD: And finally, Glenn Beck⁵⁹ famously called you “the most dangerous man in America”. Did you ever feel dangerous?

CS: He also called me the most evil, but you are right – that was striking. There are many murderers that are in jail – I am more evil than they are? I hope I am dangerous on the squash court, but nowhere else.

I did feel honoured to be able to serve the American public!

BD: Thank you.

Cass R. Sunstein is the Robert Walmsley University Professor at Harvard University and Harvard Law School and the Director of the Program on Behavioural Economics and Public Policy. From 2009 to 2012, he served as Administrator of the White House Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA) in the Obama Administration. During his time there, he promoted a fundamental rethinking of national regulation. He helped to eliminate or streamline costly rules, ensure the use of cost-benefit analysis, increase the fuel economy of cars and the energy efficiency of appliances, inform consumers about mortgages, nutrition, and education, and combat childhood obesity and distracted driving. He also helped to oversee the implementation of the new health care law.

Sunstein graduated magna cum laude from Harvard Law School in 1978. He became a professor of law and political science at the University of Chicago and eventually became the Karl N. Llewellyn Distinguished Service Professor of Jurisprudence. In 2008, he joined Harvard as the Felix Frankfurter Professor of Law before accepting President Obama's invitation to become the Administrator of OIRA. In 2013, he became the Robert Walmsley University Professor, Harvard Law School's highest honour for a faculty member.

Highly respected in the fields of constitutional, administrative and environmental law as well as behavioural economics, Sunstein is the most-cited law professor in the United States. He was elected to the American Law Institute, the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and the American Philosophical Society. In 2007 he was awarded the American Philosophical Society's Henry M. Phillips Prize “in recognition of his intellectual leadership in Constitutional Law and Political Science.”

Sunstein has authored or co-authored hundreds of academic articles and many books, including the bestseller *Nudge: Improving Decisions About Health, Wealth, and Happiness* (with Richard Thaler), and *Republic.com 2.0*. He has appeared frequently on television and published many essays and comment articles in leading newspapers and magazines, including the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal, USA Today, the Financial Times, and the Washington Post. He is a columnist for Bloomberg View.



Using smarter information to empower energy users



Chris Branson



With the relentless growth of the internet, social media usage and our increasingly “multi-screen” lives, government and businesses around the world are having to fight harder and harder to get their messages across. The problem is not just the sheer volume of background noise, but also the rapid pace of our lives, where being constantly connected makes us less likely to pause to consider messages carefully. In an age of short text messages and tweets, consumers find long or complicated pieces of information less and less appealing.

This trend is of particular concern for politicians and policy-makers, since providing information is one their most

fundamental and important ways of attempting to influence the populace. The problem is particularly acute in the energy sector, where public behaviour is a powerful factor in a number of key political issues, including prices, environmental wellbeing and international relations.

Whatever the motivating force of the politician's nudge, be it a financial incentive or a warning about energy security, the public needs to notice and digest the message if it is to have any effect. To achieve this goal, the sector is increasingly using the ideas of behavioural economics to ensure this information makes an impact.

Energy and the public

The energy market in Britain poses a particularly complicated behavioural challenge to policy-makers, highlighted by the twin goals of Ofgem, the industry regulator in Great Britain. First, Ofgem seeks to encourage consumer engagement in the energy market: it is thought that if the public becomes savvier when choosing tariffs, then the competition model will function more efficiently, ultimately delivering a better deal for consumers. In addition, Ofgem aims to encourage citizens to use energy more wisely and make their homes more energy-efficient.⁶⁰ This will help move people out of fuel poverty and contribute to meeting the UK's challenging emissions targets; domestic households contribute 27% of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions.⁶¹

In the big scheme of things, energy-related issues do not register highly on the public radar. Since September 2008, the Ipsos MORI Issues Index has shown that the leading issue for the public is the economy: in the January 2013 poll, 52% of British adults cited the economy as one of the most important issues facing the country.

Of those issues most directly related to energy consumption, concern about prices and inflation has risen steadily since the 2010 general election, but remains at a comparatively low 14%. The issue of pollution and the environment is significant for an even smaller minority, with only 5% naming this in our most recent survey.⁶²

However, that is not to say that the public is unconcerned about energy issues, and in particular in how they

relate to the underlying current of concern about the economy. A 2009 Ipsos Global Advisor poll showed that the primary energy concern for British residents is the cost to the consumer.⁶³ In light of this, government interventions about energy have increasingly focused on communicating how users can make savings.

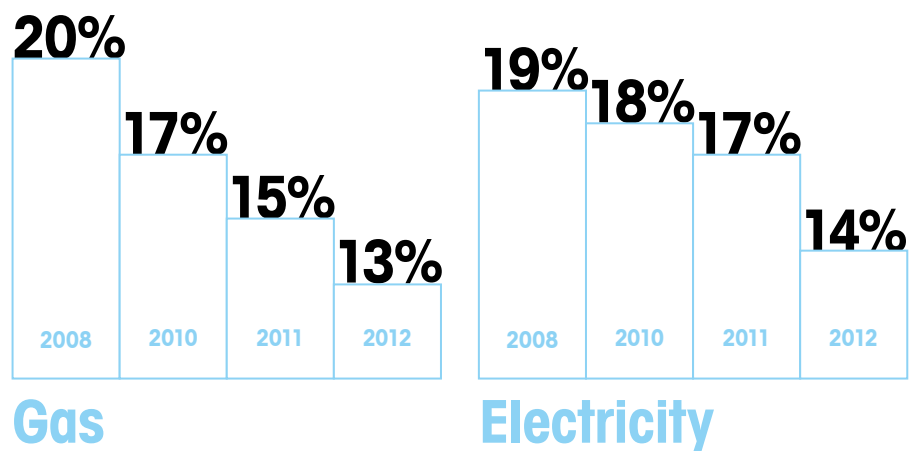
When it comes to changes in household energy use, survey findings give a mixed picture. On the one hand, rising energy prices and tightening household budgets have led many to perform cost-saving behaviours. In a 2011 survey, half of UK adults (50%) reported that they had reduced their household energy use over the previous year to make savings, both in terms of their use of heating (or air conditioning) and their use of lighting and electrical appliances. At the other end of the scale, however, 16% said they had done nothing in the last year to reduce their energy use.⁶⁴

Engagement in the energy market

Our research shows quite clearly that, for many, the message that there are savings to be made by switching tariff is not getting through. Indeed, the March 2012 edition of Ipsos MORI's tracking survey for Ofgem revealed a significant minority of consumers who are unaware that it is possible to switch energy suppliers (19% of non-switchers). Three quarters of bill payers who have never switched were simply happy with their current supplier(s) (78%), whilst one in five agreed with the statement that

Figure THREE.

Did you switch your energy supplier in the previous year/12 months? % Yes.



“switching is a hassle” (20%).⁶⁵

The Ofgem tracking survey reported that 13% of gas customers and 14% of electricity customers switched their supplier during 2011.⁶⁶ These figures, when compared with previous waves of the survey, actually indicate that engagement in the market is falling, representing a decline for gas and electricity customers since 2008. The survey also suggests that the consumers who are benefiting most from switching are those who are already financially stable – defined as keeping up with their bills without difficulty – and who have higher-than-average education. Customers in potentially vulnerable groups are lagging behind. These include those on state support and those who do not have access to the internet.⁶⁷

One explanation for people choosing not to switch appears to be a lack of faith that there are significant differences between tariffs and suppliers, which is perhaps founded on a mistrust of the industry. When energy

users are asked whether they trust suppliers to be open and transparent in their dealings with consumers, the overall balance of opinion is negative.⁶⁸ Ofgem's Consumer First Panel⁶⁹ has highlighted concern about “excessive profit-making” in the energy market, while another review reported concern with lack of transparency in energy company pricing models, including the perception amongst the public that companies have a tendency to put prices up quickly in response to rising international oil and gas prices, but reduce them relatively slowly if these costs fall.⁷⁰

Regular increases in prices have led many to feel powerless, despite their efforts to save energy in the home, and whilst most were aware they could switch, few saw an incentive to do so. Prices are perceived to be similarly high across tariffs and suppliers, such that there is little belief that there are worthwhile savings to be made by switching. Whilst some believe it may



have once been possible to make big savings, the feeling is that reductions are now seen to be marginal and relatively short-lived, as other suppliers adjust their tariffs to remain competitive.⁷¹

Making energy and tariff information smarter

One of Ofgem's key strategies for increasing engagement in the market is to make potential savings clearer to customers, and to make clear how these savings can be achieved.⁷² In other words, the aim is to simplify the process of making comparisons between tariffs. Ofgem's Consumer First Panel highlighted the urgency of this plan, with participants bemoaning the complexity of the terms and phrases used by energy suppliers, including their different pricing mechanisms.

Seizing the moment



For consumers, an important trigger for thinking about comparing tariffs is a high energy bill.⁷³ It is important that information that aims to encourage switching is received during the window of opportunity opened by the bill. Research in the financial sector has shown that, once an individual has decided to complete a task, delays can greatly reduce their likelihood of doing so. In the case of one experiment, a two-hour delay resulted in 60% lower completion.⁷⁴ As such, Ofgem hopes to include switching information about cheapest tariffs on bills, annual statements and other key documents.

Seizing the moment

Using this summary as an opportunity to remind customers about switching

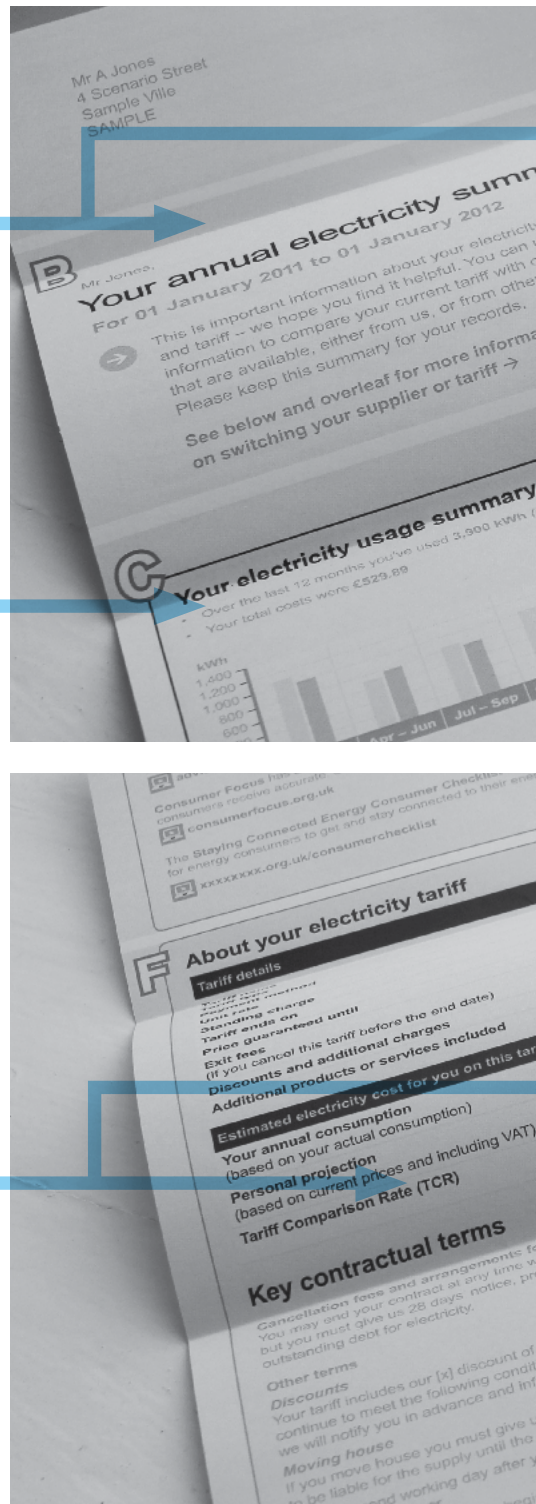
Simplification

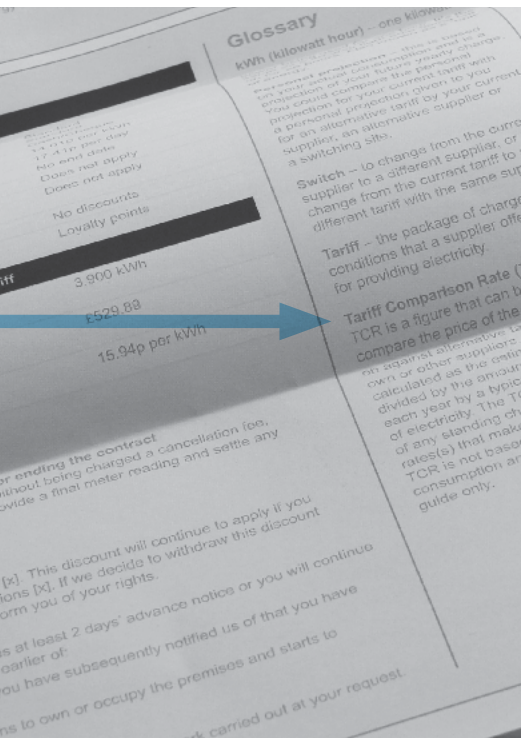
Summarises usage and gives a personal projection of costs for the next 12 months

Mental Chunking

A single Tariff Comparison Rate helps consumers choose the best tariff for them

Figure FOUR.





Making the potential saving explicit

|||||

|||||

23.

Making it relevant

One key barrier to engagement in the market is the widely held doubt that savings can be significant. For the majority, differences between tariff prices are not salient: consumers cannot extrapolate from these prices to the effect they will have on their bill. To remedy this, suppliers will be asked to include a personalised message that states clearly how much the household could save if it switched to the cheapest tariff.⁷⁸ The headline above the message is designed to speak directly to the consumer, making it clear that it is personally relevant: “Could you pay less?”

‘Mental chunking’

One barrier to engagement in the energy market is the difficulty of making price comparisons between tariffs. Even some energy literate consumers are unsure whether they are on the best tariff for them.⁷⁹ Different standing charges and unit prices mean that there is no obvious way of comparing the likely cost of a tariff for a household without performing often complex calculations. Overall costs are always dependent on the amount of energy used by the household. To address this complexity, Ofgem is using a “mental chunking” technique, whereby the consumer will be provided with a “Tariff Comparison Rate” (TCR) for their tariff. The TCR indicates the cost of the tariff

for a medium energy user in their region (taking into account regional variations in standing charges), and can be directly compared with the TCRs of other tariffs. While the TCR may be less accurate for households using a low or high amount of energy, it will give the majority a clearer idea of relative tariff costs without the use of a calculator.

Understanding home energy use

The UK government’s home energy strategy prioritises the national rollout of smart meters, due to be completed by 2019. Smart meters, combined with an In-Home Display (IHD), enable consumers to see what energy they are using and how much this is costing them. It is hoped that by offering every home a smart meter and IHD, public understanding of energy usage will increase, thereby reducing waste. In a recent survey with energy bill-payers, Ipsos MORI found reasonably high awareness of smart meters for monitoring home energy usage (50%), and four in ten currently without a smart meter expressed interest in having one (40%). Ipsos MORI is currently working with the UK Department for Energy and Climate Change (DECC) to evaluate the early rollout of the first smart meters across the UK.

Just like Ofgem’s proposals to revise supplier communications, smart

meters with IHDs aim to communicate user information in a way that is more relevant to the consumer. In addition, though, a number of other behavioural techniques are used to trigger and consolidate energy-saving behaviours.

Loss aversion

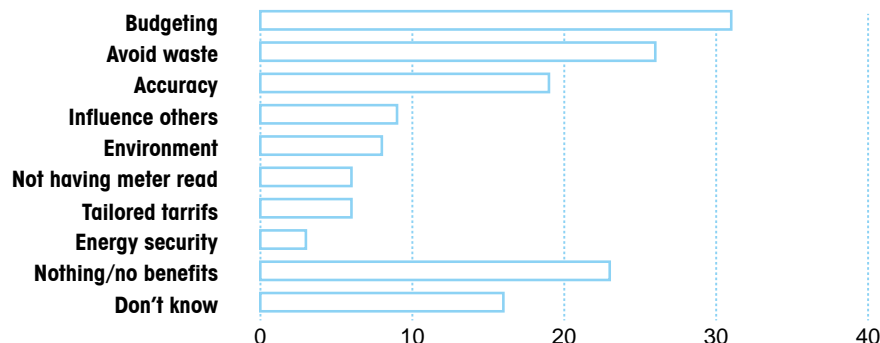
One key feature of IHDs is their capacity to show the amount of electricity a household uses at any instant. This alerts people to the amount different appliances are costing them, particularly anything that is wasting energy such as over-filled kettles or appliances on standby.

This aspect captures the imagination of many: when we asked how people would benefit from having a smart meter installed, the most common response was that it would help with budgeting (31%), and a quarter said that it would help them avoid wasting gas and electricity (26%)⁸⁰. In other words, consumers are attracted to the thought that smart meters could help them stop losing money unnecessarily. The psychological literature emphasises that

Figure FIVE.

Smart meters are perceived to help avoid losses

Q: What, if anything, do you think you would benefit from if you had a smart meter installed in your home? %



“losses loom larger than gains”⁸¹: loss aversion is roughly twice as motivating as the promise of gaining something.⁸² By helping to frame areas where energy is being wasted, this aspect of smart meters could prove especially effective.

Goal-setting

Many smart meters possess a budget function that allows users to set targets, either to check they are not over-spending, or in an attempt to reduce their usage. The budget acts as a commitment that we feel automatically bound to,⁸³ thus providing an element of motivation over and above the aim of saving money. Furthermore, the instantaneous or daily feedback provided by the meter breaks the long-term plan into smaller steps. Breaking goals down into stages lessens the intangibility of the future objective, making it more accessible.⁸⁴

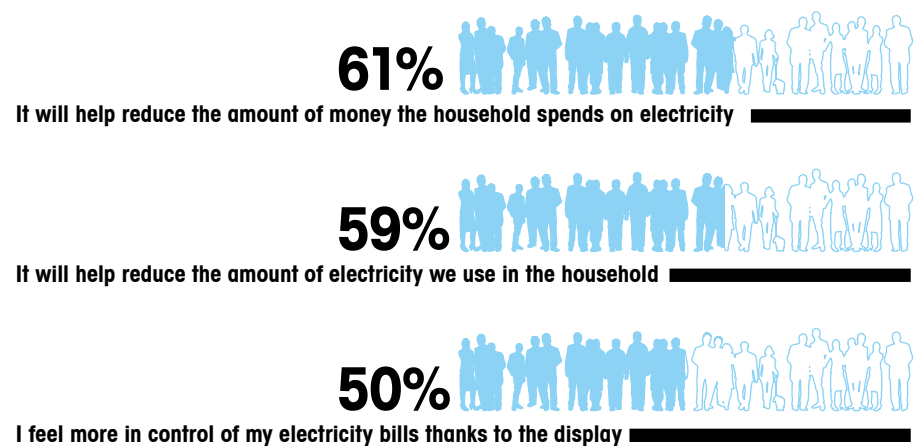
Education

Arguably, the most significant contribution of IHDs could be their potential for educating individuals about their energy use. As in the case of revised annual statements, here the information is being presented in a simple, salient manner in order to make it more relevant and impactful: for example, displays can show usage in pounds and pence, rather than kilowatt hours, which research shows is much more meaningful for most people.⁸⁵ When a customer's electricity usage is high, their IHD will display a red light, but when it is low, they will be rewarded with green. These education tools appear to result in manifold effects, with customers reporting that their IHDs had helped prompt one or more saving behaviours, such as turning items off at the plug, reducing heating, or identifying

Figure SIX.

IHDs promote greater engagement, as well as money-saving

Q: Thinking about how you use your in-home energy display or energy monitor, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? % Agree



**Arguably,
the most
significant
contribution of
IHDs could be
their potential
for educating
individuals
about their
energy use.**

and replacing 'high use' appliances such as an ageing fridge freezer.⁸⁶

In addition, for some, it appears that these techniques are helping to generate a more considered engagement with energy use that extends beyond the consumption indicated by the IHD. For example, consumers with an electricity IHD had also taken measures to limit their spending on their gas central heating.⁸⁷ An Ipsos MORI survey highlighted a greater feeling of control over electricity bills that is felt by many users of IHDs (50%), as well reductions in energy use (59%) and expenditure (61%).⁸⁸

This broader behaviour change should provide encouragement for those hoping for greater engagement in the energy market. As consumers become educated about the cost of their energy use, it seems plausible that their engagement in the energy

that the meter would lock the consumer into a relationship with an energy supplier.⁸⁹ This concern could potentially be assuaged by the following message, which will be provided to all consumers: “Remember – it might be worth thinking about switching your tariff or your supplier”.

How powerful can information be?

Ofgem’s revised Annual Statements and DECC’s smart meters and IHDs demonstrate many nudge techniques for making information smarter, and hence more impactful. Improving the salience and motivational aspects of information helps ensure that it is not lost amongst the noise of the zeitgeist.

As a technique for influencing behaviour, smart information is popular both with the public and with policy makers. People commonly say they want more information to be able to make more informed decisions and politicians see information as cheap, quick to administer, and less likely to provoke opposition than stronger interventions.⁹⁰ This principle is embodied by the government’s ‘midata’ programme, which promises to empower customer choice by giving people access to their personal consumer information.⁹¹

However, scepticism remains about how effective information alone can be at changing behaviours. George Loewenstein and Peter Ubel have argued that many solutions from traditional economics should be prioritised over the more subtle approaches of behavioural economics:

for example, they point out that, when it comes to reducing consumption and promoting cleaner energy sources, a carbon tax would prove much more effective than a social norms message. For them, the nudges of behavioural economics should support, and not replace, the shoves of traditional policy.⁹²

Regulators and government departments have also heeded the claim, made in the UK Parliament’s House of Lords report on behaviour change, that “measures used in isolation are often not likely to be effective,” and that a range of policy tools should be applied. It may be that smarter information needs a smarter infrastructure around it. To support the simplification of supplier communications, Ofgem has also ordered a simplification of tariffs, reducing them in number and complexity, thus making it much easier for customers to use their cost and usage information to make savings. In addition to smart meters, DECC is advocating a number of measures to help reduce energy use, most notably the Energy Companies Obligation (ECO)⁹³ and the Green Deal.⁹⁴

Many of the ideas behind smarter information appeal to us because they strike us as common sense. Whether education will always translate into action, however, is not as clear. Having proposed greater standardisation of the information included in bills and annual statements, Ofgem’s next challenge is to measure its effectiveness at promoting engagement and likewise for DECC’s rollout of smart meters and IHDs. Only by conducting rigorous evaluations can we confidently attribute changes in attitude and behaviour to the smarter information itself.⁹⁵

market may also grow. After all, this could provide another way of lowering the cost figures on their smart displays. A growing concern for and awareness of energy usage and costs could thus positively feed into the goal of creating a competitive market.

Positive feedback could also work in the opposite direction: research suggests that one significant barrier to the take-up of smart meters is the fear

Nudging our way to a healthier population

An interview with Professor Theresa Marteau,
Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit at Cambridge University

by Jonathan Nicholls



JN: Can you tell us a bit about yourself, the work you do and how that relates to behaviour change?

TM: I have degrees in social, clinical and health psychology, from the London School of Economics, and the Universities of Oxford and London. Studying psychology from these different perspectives has provided me with understandings in both group and individual level behaviour change. Since 2010, I have directed the newly formed Behaviour and Health Research Unit at the University of Cambridge, funded by the Department of Health Policy Research Programme.

JN: Your particular focus is changing health-related behaviours. In this policy area there has tended to be a focus on providing information to citizens in the hope that that will lead them to adopt healthier lifestyles. In your view, how effective are information-led strategies?

TM: Information-based strategies for behaviour change have been largely ineffective. Even when the information is

novel and personalised, such as that based on genetic testing, people's ability to persist in behaviours that many of them want to change is both fascinating and sobering. It is this failure that is leading an increasing number of researchers to focus upon the non-conscious routes to behaviour.

JN: You also have a particular focus on neuroscience – how has that helped you better understand behaviour and design interventions that are more effective?

TM: Neuroscience contributes another set of theory-based observations and methods to the many others that involve the study of behavior, including social, clinical, cognitive and experimental psychology. It is particularly useful in providing methods for studying processes that guide behaviour outside of awareness. We are currently running a series of studies to see whether we can prime, or activate outside of awareness, pre-existing healthy eating goals to improve the healthiness of food people buy. We have developed some images that, in preliminary experiments, influence behavior: for those who are hungry and have been exposed to priming images, they are more likely to select fruit than a less healthy snack in a choice task. We don't know whether this effect is based on the fruit becoming more rewarding, or the less healthy snack becoming less rewarding, or some combination of the two. We are using brain imaging to shed some light on these and other possible pathways for priming effects, which will contribute to the design of a wide range of interventions that aim to inhibit less healthy responses and activate more

healthy ones.

JN: In a radio interview you outlined how potent “bad nudges” are (for example, from companies trying to sell less healthy food), and that “good nudges” have their work cut out to compete and are often ineffectual. Do you still hold that view? Has your work provided evidence for that?

TM: Our environments are full of stimuli which make unhealthy behaviours more likely, including appealing advertisements for energy dense foods and alcohol, large default serving sizes for food and drink, as well as the ready availability of all these products. Moving sweets away from a checkout may well reduce their purchase, but the size of this effect is likely to be dwarfed by the counter-nudges elsewhere in the store. The introduction of plain packaging of tobacco in Australia reflects evidence that recall and attention to the negative nudge of warning labels is increased when they are placed on unbranded compared with branded packets, the latter acting through their complex designs as positive nudges to smoke.

JN: How confident are you that we can “nudge our way to a healthier population” (as you raised in a BMJ article) as opposed to using bans and pricing mechanisms?

TM: *Nudging*, or “Choice Architecture” interventions are those that involve altering the properties or placement of objects or stimuli within microenvironments, with the intention of eliciting health-enhancing behaviour. Typically, they require minimal conscious engagement, can, in principle, influence the behaviour of many people

simultaneously, and are not targeted or tailored to specific individuals. It is expected that they work largely through automatic habitual processes. In principle, if all the cues to unhealthy behaviour were removed or muted, and those for healthy behaviour were introduced or enhanced, this should be evident in improved population health. It is a separate question whether legislation is needed to remove or introduce new nudges that may be in the interests of population health but against some corporate interests (e.g. reduced consumption of alcohol, food and tobacco). Price mechanisms are also important, as shown in the relative success story of the declining use of tobacco in the UK, for which increased price has played an important part.

JN: Your work in this area is focused on the automatic bases of behaviour. A criticism levelled at traditional – question-asking – research is that it is unable to reach some of the unconscious factors that affect behaviour that people cannot articulate, and of which they may not even be knowingly aware, and thus is a waste of time. Do you agree?

TM: What people say about themselves is, of course, of interest but if your focus is on behaviour change, reliance on self-report can be at best irrelevant and at worst misleading. Generally, people overestimate the extent to which their behaviour arises from internal events to the neglect of external stimuli – the so called fundamental attribution error. People also tend to overestimate the extent to which they have acted positively. For example, 39% of men and 29% of women report engaging in 30 minutes of

People, like rats, are energy misers – they conserve their finite energy by finding the easiest way to achieve a goal

moderately intense physical activity five times a week, in keeping with current guidelines. When objectively measured the figures drop to 6% and 3% respectively.

JN: There are always fashions in public policy-making – do you think the focus on behavioural insight is a fad or here to stay?

TM: I like to believe that this focus on the contribution of behavioural science to policy making is not a passing fad, but an increasing recognition that many of the problems faced by governments are those of human behaviour for which the behavioural sciences can provide much of the salient evidence to inform policy.

JN: What is your single favourite example of behavioural insight in action?

TM: My favourite behavioural insight is that people, like rats, are energy misers – they conserve their finite energy by finding the easiest way to achieve a goal. By slowing the speed with which lift doors close more people take the stairs: their goal of getting to a new floor is more readily achieved by using the stairs than the lift. Likewise, people will more readily help themselves to the food that is nearer to them, regardless of food preferences. Living closer to a tobacconist reduces the success of a quit attempt. The “energy miser” insight can be used to generate many possible interventions, the effectiveness of which require evaluation given these are invariably just one of multiple stimuli to which people are subject at any one time.

JN: Are there any common errors when considering behaviour change interventions? Alternatively, to put it another way, how do we avoid ineffective nudges?

TM: We need to avoid introducing ineffective nudges and worse – those that make a problem worse. Two routes to avoiding these outcomes are first, designing interventions based on systematic syntheses of existing studies; and, second, implementing nudges as part of evaluations.

JN: Director of the Behavioural Insight Team at the Cabinet Office, David Halpern, in a previous article for Understanding Society, defended nudge approaches from accusations of government “sneakiness” by saying that as long as government or public service providers are open about what they are doing it is fine. Do you agree?



TM: Many organisations aside from government try to influence our behaviour. Think of the advertising industry. While many are aware of having seen an advertisement, the subsequent influence on their behaviour can often occur without awareness. Government or public service provider attempts to shape behaviour should be presented in the broader context of these many other influences of which people are often unaware: the standard set for government changing behaviour – with good intent – should not be higher than that set for others.

JN: Ipsos MORI produced a report on the public acceptability of behaviour change interventions around the globe.⁹⁶ The report showed there was a lot of stated support for specific government interventions, including in health – maybe more than we expected. Does that surprise you?

TM: More important than the absolute levels of support found in this survey, was the variation in support according to how intrusive interventions were, with more support afforded to the provision of information than to the use of incentives and disincentives. The amount of support reported for any intervention depends critically upon how the question is framed. When framed in a general way, as was the case for the Ipsos MORI report, support can be high. When questions are posed regarding different policies within a domain such as health, much variation is revealed. We have recently completed a narrative review based on 200 studies. We found that acceptability varied as a function of: (a) the type of intervention, with less intrusive interventions and those targeting children and young people

attracting most support; and (b) the targeted behaviour, with more support observed for smoking-related interventions; (c) the characteristics of respondents, with support being highest from those not engaging in the targeted behaviour, and with women and older respondents being more likely to endorse more restrictive measures.

JN: Nevertheless, in the same survey a majority also said they did not want government interfering in their lives. So how do we square those findings?

TM: People can hold many views that appear to conflict. Only when these views are brought together is there a motivation for individuals to resolve them. We have recently conducted several experiments that reveal people are prepared to trade off a general dislike for interventions that are intrusive in exchange for population benefit, with greater acceptability found for interventions that provide most benefit. So, for example, acceptability of a minimum unit price for alcohol even as high as £1 is significantly increased when benefits to the population are presented in terms of crime and health. The limited evidence that public acceptability of intervention is to some extent contingent on evidence of intervention benefit, will hopefully be reflected in more nuanced thinking amongst policy-makers regarding public acceptability of policies to change behaviour.

Biography

Professor Theresa Marteau is Director of the Behaviour and Health Research Unit, the Department of Health funded policy research unit in behaviour and health. She studied psychology at the London School of Economics and Political Science and the University of Oxford. Prior to joining Cambridge University, she was Professor of Health Psychology at Kings College London. Her current research focus is upon developing ways of changing behaviour at population levels, drawing on neuroscience, behavioural economics as well as psychology.

JN: Our report also showed hugely varying social norms in different countries. In your experience, how transferable are the lessons from behavioural insight to different cultures or even between population groups in the same country?

TM: Half of the 200 studies we included in our recent narrative review were from the USA. Much of what we know about acceptability is therefore through a USA lens. More cross-cultural studies are clearly needed to compare understandings of health-related behaviours, their link to health outcomes, as well as perceptions of the roles of government and salient industries (including food, alcohol and tobacco) in shaping behaviour to influence health and wellbeing.

JN: Thank you for your thoughts.

Contextualised brands

A perspective on health communication and behaviour change



Alec Ulasevich

The conceptualisation of behaviour as a brand is not a new idea of social marketing and behaviour change.⁹⁷ Health promotion efforts in the USA such as the Truth Campaign, which seeks to prevent youth smoking, or Verb, which promoted physical activity, relied on branding by infusing the desired, promoted behaviours with certain characteristics to make it more appealing to the audience.

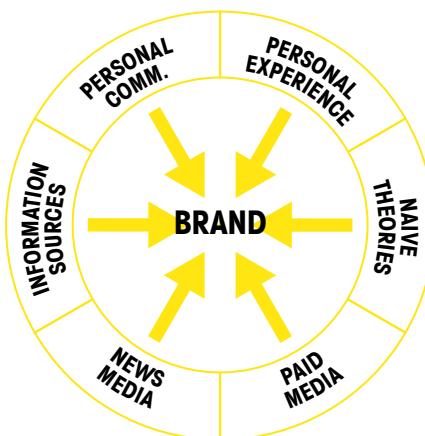
Figure SEVEN.



If we consider Keller's definition,⁹⁸ "brand" is simply a set of associations consumers have with a product. As noted by Keller, these associations may be our attitudes about the product, the effective reactions the product invokes, our perceptions of its benefits, as well as our knowledge of its quality and performance.

From this perspective, any behaviour can be considered a brand. Factors identified in the literature as influencing the adoption of health behaviours include self-efficacy, perception of the method's effectiveness and social norms, as well as subjective beliefs like self-identification with the behaviour.

Figure EIGHT.



These factors all fit well under the rubric of brand attributes.

We learn about the behaviour from numerous sources. Some image attributes associated with behaviour might be results of our previous experiences: some of us tried to diet and failed. We learn about behaviour from talking to our family, friends and co-workers, both face-to-face and virtually through social networks. Some image attributes may be surmised based on our naïve theories: if something "boosts" our immune system, it would protect us from the flu. And of course, we glean knowledge and opinions from media, both news and advertisement, as well as from informational resources such as web sites and books.

Competitive context

In the commercial space, brands compete. This competition arises



because there are usually several products or services that achieve a similar function, need, goal or desire. The survival of a brand in a free economy thus depends on consumers' choosing it over other brands.

In the public space, when social marketers talk about alternatives competing with the promoted behaviours, we typically refer to them as the "bad guys". For instance, video games, television and internet lure people to their couches as we try to get them to be more physically active. Unlike the commercial sector, those alternatives do not satisfy the same needs, desires or functions. Rather,



alternatives to the promoted behaviour lead to opposite consequences than engaging in the promoted behaviour. Thus, in social marketing, competition is most often conceptualized as something standing in the way of individuals adopting the promoted behaviours.

An argument can be made that there is competition between health behaviours. For example, qualitative findings show that children express a negative stereotype of children who “eat healthy”, suggesting preference for physical activity over nutrition.⁹⁹ Quantitative data show that the majority of adults trying to maintain or lose weight are dieting (73%) whereas a

smaller percentage (59%) reported increasing physical activity. Only 17% of adults trying to maintain or lose weight tried to limit caloric intake and increase physical activity, again indicating a preference for one approach to lose weight versus the other.¹⁰⁰

The competitive set may also include behaviours that the audience believes are effective, even though the beliefs may not be rooted in empirical evidence or reality. In fact, competition may exist between behaviours not necessarily related to a similar health goal. We are constantly advised to do things for our health: quit smoking, exercise, get more sleep, use suntan lotion, get scheduled diagnostic tests. Findings suggest that individuals rarely follow all recommendations, but also rarely ignore them all. In other words, we choose some over the others.

Marketing context

In the commercial space, the survival of the brand also depends on whether it is available and whether it is priced correctly. No matter how much we love the brand, if the manufacturer cannot get it into stores; we soon lose interest and move on to another.

In the public sector, the issue of availability is straightforward when it concerns products. For example, condom use depends on the availability of condoms in a community, and unless we can get treated mosquito nets to a population, they will not be used to prevent malaria. Similarly, the lack of grocery stores limits the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables in some urban neighbourhoods.

In other instances, we need to look at the effects of regulatory actions and social policy. Under the auspices of ecological models of behaviour change,¹⁰¹ these population-based approaches either favour certain behaviours, or discourage them by limiting the opportunities to engage in the targeted behaviours. For example, regulations banning cigarette vending machines were intended to discourage smoking by limiting youth access to cigarettes.

In the commercial sector, the actual price of the product can serve as a barrier for adopting behaviour. In some cases, regulatory policy intentionally raises the price of the product to discourage behaviour: increasing taxes on tobacco products are intended to reduce consumption by pricing consumers out of the market. Extra taxation of junk food and sugary drinks also intends to decrease consumption.

Marketing context may be defined by regulatory and social policies that affect opportunities to engage or not to engage in behaviour

In the public sector, price is conceptualised beyond financial costs to include emotional, psychological or time-related costs of the behaviour.¹⁰² In other words, price can be conceptualised as a barrier, which requires some amount of effort and resources to overcome. Person-specific factors such as lack of free time, lack of financial resources, or psychological factors, such as the extent of addiction, loss of peer approval, or fear of a sexual partner's rejection increase the cost of such behaviours.

The effects of the market context should also be seen with consideration to the competitive context. Market

factors may favour one behaviour over another. For example, a shortage of a flu vaccine (as was the case with H1N1 "Swine Flu" in 2009) may lead individuals to rely on alternative methods to prevent the flu.

Decision space

Unlike the ecological models that rely on regulatory action and public policy initiatives, *Nudge*, with its roots in behavioural economics, relies

on subtle changes in the decision environment. For example, offering healthy side dishes (making students ask for greasy French fries) serves as a nudge toward healthier meal choices in school cafeterias.¹⁰³ An effort to make staircases more prominent and attractive than elevators has been suggested as a nudge to increase physical activity.¹⁰⁴

However, commercial marketers also use similar techniques to promote their products, and some of them compete with healthy choices or behaviours. Sugary cereals with attractive cartoon characters are often placed at the eye-level of younger children in grocery stores.

Supply and demand

The Contextualized Brand approach suggests that measures of brand image such as willingness of individuals to engage in the behaviour can be measures of demand. If individuals prefer a promoted behaviour to the alternatives, or if the decision space gives the promoted behaviour an advantage, the demand is high. Conversely, if the promoted behaviour is viewed more negatively than alternatives, the demand is low.

The market context influences the supply. Supply here is defined somewhat loosely, as the barriers to actualising the promoted behaviour. For example, policies and regulations may increase the opportunities to engage in a behaviour or disfavour alternatives and competitors. This would be the high supply situation. On the other hand, the same factors may



limit the opportunities to engage in behaviour, require more effort to do so, or favour the alternative or competing behaviours. This is a low supply situation.

Program managers may then face four types of situations:

- High demand/low supply
- Low demand/high supply
- Low demand/low supply
- High demand/high supply

The H1N1 vaccine shortage illustrates the extreme case of high demand/low supply. Long lines at the few locations that offered the H1N1 vaccine indicate audience's willingness to get the necessary vaccine. However, the shortage of the vaccine affected the ability of the individuals to actually get it. A less drastic example of the same situation may be the convenience of flu vaccination availability. Individuals who are willing to get a flu vaccination may do so only if the vaccine is available at the work place, but may not expend time and energy to go to a pharmacy or the doctor's office.

Recent efforts to improve nutrition in school lunches have led some students to hoard junk food in their lockers.¹⁰⁶ This is an example of low demand/high supply situations. Regulatory policies made healthy food available to the students and employees, but they are not buying it.

Low demand/low supply situations occur when the promoted or targeted behaviour is not on the targeted audience's radar screen, because the threat is new or there are other priorities that take precedence. These situations may arise because the audience favours other methods of achieving the same health outcomes as the promoted

behaviour. The goal is to increase the demand and the supply.

The optimal situation is when there is high demand and high supply. Yet efforts to maintain the high demand/high supply situation may be necessary to keep the behaviour salient in an audience's minds. This is an opportunity to develop an audience's commitment to the behaviour, making them less susceptible to any unforeseen changes in the market context.

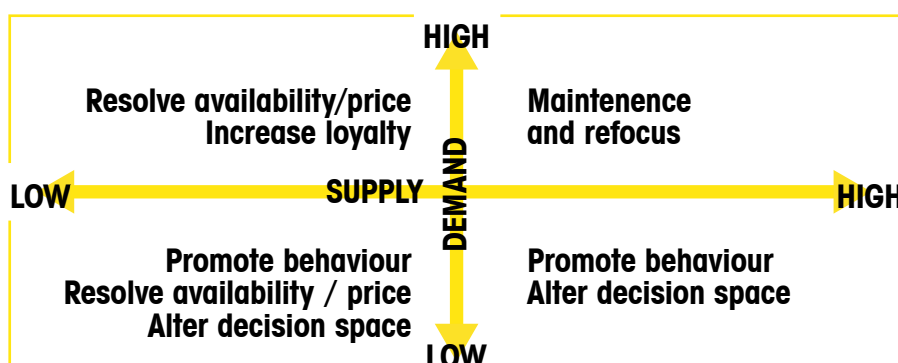
Finally, it is also worth considering the audience segments that might not have adopted the behaviour to the same extent of other audience segments. For example, most locations in the United States have relatively strong tobacco control policies. However, the 2010 smoking rate of about 19% of the adult population¹⁰⁶ showed little change from 2005.¹⁰⁷ This figure approximates the percentage of what Rogers called "laggards",¹⁰ who do not respond to media messages and require more personal approaches to change behavior.

Understanding behavior as a contextualised brand integrates three

approaches to consumer behavior and behavior change: social marketing, ecological models, and behavioural economics (although it can be argued that these distinctions are false in the first place, and that all are looking at the same thing). Contextual brand is essentially a decision making model, where the decision to engage in a behavior is influenced by our perception of the behavior on different dimensions in comparison to other behaviors, including the contextual factors that may favour one behavior over the others.

The simple truth is that if we consider engagement in a behavior as a consequence of a consumer choice influenced by our attitudes and experiences, as well as contextual marketing factors and the characteristics of the decision space, all approaches are potentially viable and potentially necessary. Deciding which approach would bear the most fruit (e.g. relying on advertising, manipulation of decision space, or manipulating market context) will depend on the situation.

Figure NINE.



Tailoring approaches to meet unique behavioural research challenges



Chris Martyn

The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care is responsible for the health care system which serves 13 million residents in Canada's largest province, with an annual budget of approximately CAD\$40 billion. This places it among the largest publicly funded healthcare systems in the world.

The Ministry undertakes literally hundreds of health programmes each year, ranging from general public education and information to the promotion and, in rare cases, the

mandating of certain desirable health behaviours. The Ministry uses research as a cornerstone source of decision-making information for almost all of the programmes it initiates.

When the Ministry reviewed the progress of its programmes recently, it was clear that two of the priority programmes for public health – the smoking cessation programme and its free seasonal flu vaccination programme – had stagnated somewhat and were experiencing significant challenges in delivering their desired results.

Despite having a research and evaluation programme in place for these programmes, it became clear to Ipsos and the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care that a new approach was required to move these programmes forward.

The first milestone was a recognition that these challenges differed in many important ways. One had to do with finding ways to re-invigorate the smoking cessation effort, essentially focusing on creating a new behaviour among the core group of the public who continue to smoke. The other had to do with re-calibrating an existing behaviour,

essentially focusing on nudging it to continue in the future.

There was also a recognition that these two different challenges require different remedies, tailoring constructs

Free flu vaccination:

Launched in the late 1990s, flu vaccination take-up quickly reached the 50% level, with the largest proportion of users getting their flu shot early in the season. However, a trend started to develop in 2005, and has continued since, where not only did overall flu shot uptake start to decline, but the bulk of eventual users delayed getting their flu shot until well into the season. This delay in uptake was particularly problematic because one of the key benefits of a vaccination programme is to maximize community immunity. Community immunity is where a sufficient proportion of a population is immune to an infectious disease (through vaccination and/or prior illness) to make its spread from person to person unlikely. Even individuals not vaccinated (such as newborns and those with chronic illnesses) are offered some protection because the disease has little opportunity to spread within the community.

34.

Smoking cessation:

Anti-smoking campaigns have been a priority for the Ministry for decades, generating significant declines in smoking rates. However, as funding money has become tighter and a variety of other issues have emerged to compete for funding dollars (e.g. flu vaccination, diabetes and childhood obesity), the ability to focus on smoking cessation has necessarily been affected.

Figure TEN.

Health Belief Model (for Program Area Strategists)

Susceptibility

(Belief about the chances of experiencing a risk or getting a condition or disease)

Severity

(Belief about how serious a condition is and/or leaving it untreated)

Benefits

(Belief in efficacy of the advised action to reduce risk or seriousness of the disease threat)

Self-efficacy

(Confidence in one's ability to take action to produce the desired outcome)

Barriers

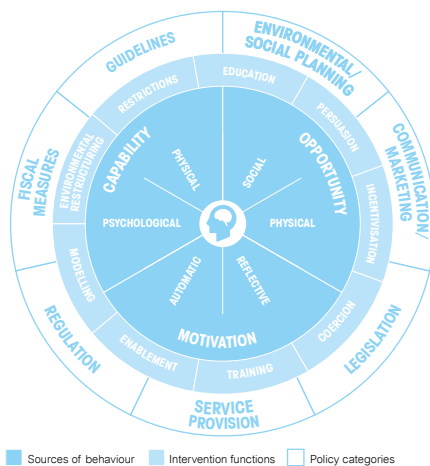
(Belief about the tangible and psychological costs of the advised action, negative aspects of a particular health action)

Action

(Strategies to activate "readiness", events either bodily <symptoms> or environmental <e.g. media publicity> that motivate people to take action)

Figure ELEVEN.

Professor Michie's Behaviour Change Wheel (for policy decision-makers)



to meet the need, not tailoring the need to meet some overarching cast-in-stone construct.

Reversing a trend toward delayed positive behaviour in flu vaccination uptake – a longitudinal approach

The research team began by conducting a census of our online panel

early in flu season to identify people who had not yet had the flu vaccination, but did not totally dismiss the possibility of getting it, as well as asking a few behavioural and attitudinal questions to set a baseline. We then followed up with these very same people late in the flu season to conduct an extensive survey about what had transpired since we first surveyed them. Linking what they said at the outset with the reported outcome, enabled us to produce a map to better understand the causes of poor uptake of flu vaccinations.

The team then explored the behavioural change theories and approaches that might be appropriate for this particular puzzle. The “programme area” experts (mainly medical scientists) wanted to plug the data from this longitudinal study into the simple Health Belief Model, which forms the basis for their activities. Nevertheless, the “strategy” decision-makers (officials and politicians) wanted a broader framework that could take into account context beyond specific “disease-related” items. In order to address the needs of both groups, we used the COM-B model and Behaviour Change Wheel devised by Professor Susan Michie et al. And, the same source of data was analysed and interpreted using both frameworks for both audiences.

Almost all of those who said they “definitely” intended to get the flu shot actually did. People saying they “probably would” or “might” generally did not follow through. Strongly “decided” intention is the key factor in forecasting actual behaviour – something we have also found in our political polling and purchase intent studies.

Being flexible in the frameworks used to analyse data was key to building a comprehensive picture of

the situation, and thus responding to it appropriately. For example, the Health Belief Model analysis revealed that delayed flu vaccination uptake was, in fact, not primarily driven by specific elements in the model, but was more of a result of “contextual” options. In short, people had bought into general preventative communications (for example, correct hand washing procedure) associated with other health promotion areas in addition to flu – for example cold prevention – and had used this to rationalise a much lower priority than they would otherwise have for getting a flu shot.

The COM-B and Behaviour Change Wheel analysis revealed that it was more about opportunity than delaying decisions. *Opportunity* includes all the factors that lie outside the individual that make the behaviour possible or prompt it.¹⁰⁹ It was not that people

Figure TWELVE.

Visualising behaviour change as a journey – smoking cessation

dismissed the flu as irrelevant, but rather, as with the Health Belief Model analysis, it was that their context for evaluating the flu shot as an option, had been tainted by other factors. This led to the conclusion that the most relevant intervention function should focus on persuasion (under the broader policy theme of marketing/communication and environmental/social planning) rather than the harder alternatives that many decision-makers were contemplating.

Re-invigorating a focus on smoking cessation – visualising things as a “journey”

In an effort to re-invigorate the Ministry’s smoking cessation programmes, the research team decided to add an approach to the cycle of traditional research by using a “journey” framework. The rationale was that we could learn how to affect future behaviour by understanding the motivations, barriers and behaviours of those who had recently tried to quit smoking.

We began by outlining the overall framework for what we wanted to achieve. This involved secondary research and an exploration of the behavioural change theories and approaches which seemed to make the most sense. Again, we used the COM-B model and Behaviour Change Wheel.

We then conducted a two-stage

Pre-Quit



Have thought about quitting for some time OR have tried to quit in the past

Motivation:
Overall health
Children & family
Medical reasons

Start

Buy-in of family, friends & co-workers

Choosing approach & techniques to quit

Excited, nervous, hopeful

research program. The first stage involved a series of in-depth, in-person interviews with study participants who had tried to quit smoking in the past year, included those who were ultimately successful and those who were not. We took them through the journey they had experienced, ensuring that we explored stages, turning points, influencers and emotions.

The second stage was to conduct a large, in-depth quantitative online survey using a questionnaire probing the “journey stages”, turning points and emotions identified in the first stage of the research. We also used this survey to explore and test future smoking cessation ideas based on what a particular respondent reported in the questionnaire itself. The research findings provided an in-depth map of potential ways to re-invigorate the smoking cessation programme.

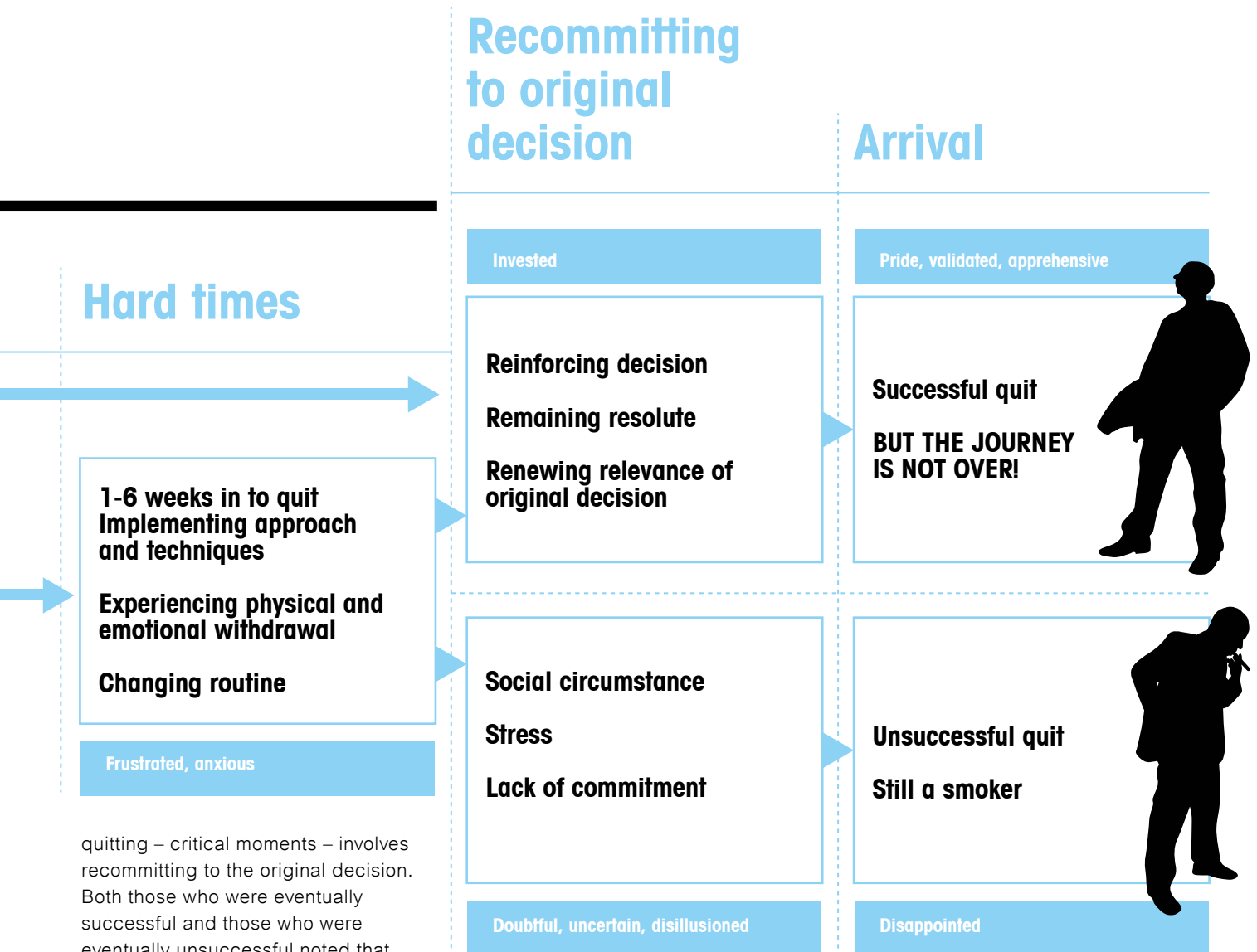
How smokers perceived themselves when they set out on their journey was an important factor in determining whether they were successful or not. A

sizeable core of those who were clearly regular smokers by their reported behaviour, viewed themselves more as social or occasional smokers, and these people were eventually less successful than those who admitted that they were regular smokers up front.

Surprisingly to some, before they set out on their quitting journey, smokers associated more negative than positive emotions with the fact that they currently smoke. While aids and therapies to quit smoking were found to be relevant, it is the emotional side of the smoking cessation journey that appears to offer significant potential to help people give up.

While nicotine replacement therapies hold potential, a majority of current smokers indicated an unwillingness to use these or other quitting aids, preferring to rely more on their personal will power to start. Helping people with their will power requires a different mix of information and supports than the products and aids currently being promoted.

The key period for successful



quitting – critical moments – involves recommitting to the original decision. Both those who were eventually successful and those who were eventually unsuccessful noted that this is when some kind of personal intervention (from family or friends) clearly helped, or would have helped get them over the hump. Again this speaks more to the mental than physical challenges associated with the smoking cessation journey.

Finally, it was revealing that virtually all of those who were eventually successful in quitting stated emphatically that they felt that their journey was not over. They believed that they had reached a first key milestone but that they did not think that there was an end-point to their journey, rather that it would be lifelong. The implication of this was that people who had given up smoking would benefit from ongoing support structures to ensure that once formally not smoking anymore, this continued into the future.

So what is the bottom-line from what transpired in these initiatives?

Sometimes we need to think out of the box when it comes to devising research in support of behaviour challenges in the social marketing space. In some cases, a longitudinal approach is a viable option. In other cases, learning from past behaviour to inform potential future behaviour by visualising things as a “journey” is another.

While existing theoretical models and approaches are excellent in their own right, sometimes advantage can be gained by ensuring flexibility in what is and can be used. It can be an amalgamation of different ideas and constructs that provide the pathway to effectively dealing with a challenge.

In the case of the flu vaccination challenge, the Health Belief Model and the COM-B and Behaviour Change Wheel both contributed to understanding remedies for the challenge at hand, not only by enabling us to approach the issue from different perspectives. In the case of the smoking cessation challenge, it was less about the overarching construct and more about finding ways to accurately allow our target audience to translate and express their feelings and experiences in real-life, in a meaningful way.

Keep calm and carry on

A behaviour change framework for community safety in Victoria, Australia



Tom Lowe

2013 has continued a trend of extreme weather conditions in Australia. Emergency services and entire communities have contended with bush fires, floodwaters and storms, sometimes within weeks of each other. With Australia's Climate Commission contending that extreme weather is likely to increase significantly in years to come, Australian emergency services are seeking effective ways to promote safer behaviours.

In 2012, Ipsos Social Research Institute Australia was asked to produce a behaviour change framework to guide Victorian emergency services towards a more effective and collaborative approach to community safety. The result was a series of guiding principles that emphasise the need for an evidence-based and participatory approach to community safety programs and for organisations to begin with an assessment of their own capacity to conceptualise and devise effective interventions.



People should be allowed and encouraged to take responsibility for their own preparedness and safety and to make their own decisions on how they will respond to a threat of bushfire.

Australasian Fire and Emergency Service Authorities Council Limited (AFAC) (2012)
Bushfires and Community Safety: Position (v5.0).

Australian community safety policies place a significant proportion of responsibility for personal safety upon the individual. As such, it is important that people respond to the threat from

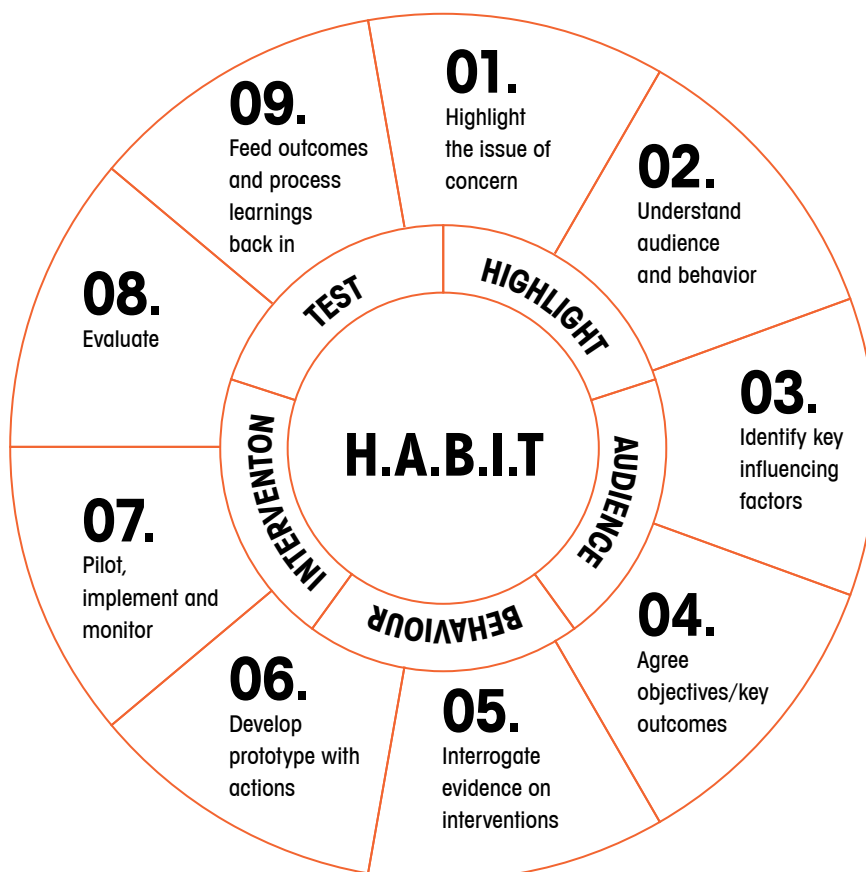
natural hazards such as bushfires, storms and flooding in ways that minimise their exposure to risk from harm. However, despite efforts by the authorities to communicate risk and prepare people for natural hazards, recent experiences have highlighted the fact that Victorians are not adequately prepared to cope with the extreme environmental conditions that are predicted to become more common in the future.

A growing body of evidence, including the investigations arising from

the 2009 'Black Saturday' bushfires in which 173 people died, suggests that a more effective approach is needed to build the levels of community capacity required to deal with an increasingly volatile and extreme natural hazard environment. The challenge for the Victorian Fire Services Commissioner was to identify how Victorian emergency management agencies can be more effective in influencing people's choices and behaviours surrounding low probability, high impact events such as bushfires and flooding.

Figure THIRTEEN.

The 'HABIT' behaviour change framework for community safety





The research brief was to identify, in collaboration with Victoria's emergency management agencies, an effective framework for behaviour change that would meet two major objectives. The Bushfires Royal Commission found that a number of those who died in 2009 strongly believed that they were adequately prepared. So, first, it must enable emergency management agencies to move individuals, families or communities from a position of being underprepared for the risks they face and over optimistic about their ability to deal with threats to one of heightened awareness, realistic appreciation of risk and, ultimately, preparedness. Second, it must be a workable model that is agreed to and understood by all agencies charged with designing and implementing community safety initiatives.

The research suggested that the use of existing behavioural theories to create a 'model of behaviour change' was too prescriptive for the Victorian emergency management environment. While many excellent behavioural

Using existing theories to create a 'model of behaviour change' was too prescriptive for the Victorian emergency management environment

theories and models of behaviour change exist, community safety from natural hazards, or any type of hazard for that matter, cannot be boiled down to a single behaviour or discrete set

of behaviours. Indeed, the idea of a 'model of behaviour change' is treated with caution by some researchers and practitioners as it suggests that, once found, the work is done and no further analysis is required.¹¹⁰ The reality is quite the opposite. Effective behaviour change approaches in this area must be dynamic and reflective enough to account for constantly shifting behavioural influences and interactions as well as the diverse range of environmental factors that influence natural hazards.

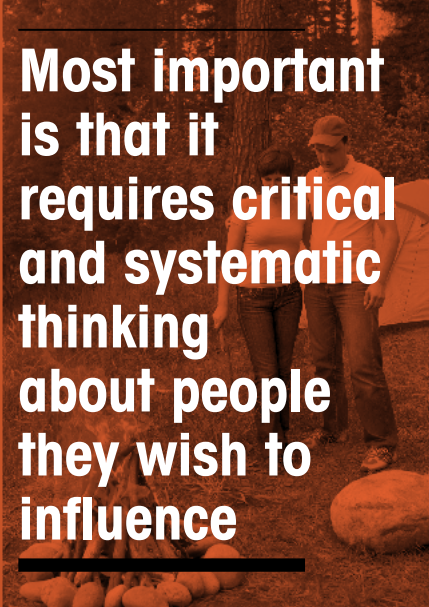
For example, debate still rages in Australia between those who feel evacuation is the safest course of action and those who feel the home can offer the best source of protection and quick recovery in the face of many hazards. The truth is that either course of action could prove to be extremely wise or unwise, depending upon the fickle and seemingly quite unpredictable nature of the flood, fire or storm. That said, a great deal of risk can be mitigated through forward planning and preparation. The challenge for authorities is to identify the correct mix of interventions (be they through design, regulation of voluntary action) for a particular scenario or context to create clear pathways towards the safest actions.

However, rather than finding ways to reduce complexity and simplify systems (as has been the traditional approach of the emergency services), it appears important to identify ways to work with social and environmental complexities. In this respect, the research found that approaches to behaviour change must encompass complexity within their design. This approach, of course, has broader implications for government and governance. It requires flexibility to trial

new activities and manage organisational expectations in relation to program measurement, evaluation and reporting; factors that would present significant challenges to any organisation, let alone the risk averse and operationally focused emergency services.

The behaviour change framework that emerged from Ipsos' literature review and consultation activities reflects the need for an 'action research' approach to the identification and understanding of specific behaviours and the interventions that are most likely to influence them. The HABIT Framework (an acronym for the five consecutive stages; Highlight, Audience, Behaviour, Intervention, Test), which has been adapted from two frameworks for planning behaviour change interventions,^{111,112} outlines a series of principles and processes that are intended to guide emergency management organisations through the uncertainties and complexities that are associated with human interactions with hazards. The key principles that support the framework are described below:

1. A **"Problem based"** approach: The framework should begin with the 'audience' and the 'behaviour' in question and select interventions that address the factors that underlie them.
2. A **deliberative process**: One that engages and consults the target audience throughout. This is not only the most effective way to bring about change among them, it also ensures equity, avoids negative feedbacks and creates long-term, sustainable change.



**Most important
is that it
requires critical
and systematic
thinking
about people
they wish to
influence**

3. A **fair process**: The perceived equity or fairness of interventions can make the difference between success and failure. This should be a consideration from the start of the process, with genuine engagement with target audiences, piloting and feedback used to identify potential issues or problems.
4. An **analytical approach to policy development and delivery**: The framework should be treated as an analytical approach that identifies the factors that underlie behaviours. The process of analysing the problem itself reveals opportunities for interventions.
5. A **cyclical approach**: The framework uses a collaborative 'action research' approach to learn from monitoring and evaluation activities and feedback into the development of the intervention. It should not be regarded as containing discrete steps that can be taken in isolation.
6. A **partnership approach**: In order to take advantage of the fact that many behavioural factors are shared across a wide range of community safety and well-being objectives, the framework should, where possible, make best use of the networks, skills and resources that exist at various levels, both formally and informally.

HABIT.

**Highlight, Audience,
Behaviour, Intervention, Test**

While the HABIT framework and its underpinning principles are not groundbreaking in their design, perhaps the most important facet of the framework is that it requires organisations to think critically and systematically about the people they wish to influence. All too often, the 'problem' is seen as existing outside of the organisation; assumptions are made, conclusions jumped to and programs developed. If an intervention works in one setting, it will be 'rolled out' across the state without consideration for social, economic or environmental variations. Thus, the HABIT framework is only as effective as the organisation that is using it.

The lesson from this particular project is that the focus of attention, at least in the initial phase, should be upon the ability of the organisation to understand the principles and to recognise the importance that each step of the framework has upon the design, acceptance and influence their interventions will have upon people's behaviour. The framework is in its infancy within Victoria's emergency management sector and it will take a long-term and concerted effort by the Fire Service's Commissioner to ensure it becomes embedded in normal practice. However, early signs are that some of the activities advocated by the framework are already in use within Victoria's emergency management agencies. The next phase of the project will be to highlight these positive examples while closing gaps in areas that are less well understood or practiced.

REFERENCES

1. www.implementationscience.com/content/pdf/1748-5908-6-42.pdf
2. www.bmj.com/content/344/bmj.e3005
3. www.ucl.ac.uk/health-psychology/BCTtaxonomy/index.php
4. www.ucl.ac.uk/hbrc/gardnerb.html
5. www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/science-and-technology-committee/news/behaviour-change-published/
6. Mullainathan, Sendhil and Richard H. Thaler (2000), "Behavioral Economics," Working Paper 7948, National Bureau of Economic Research
7. <https://blogs.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/behavioural-insights-team/2013/01/24/guest-blog-post-from-richard-thaler/>
8. Lucy Yardley is Professor of Health Psychology at the University of Southampton and Director of the Centre for Applications of Health Psychology. www.southampton.ac.uk/psychology/lucyyardley
9. ubhave.org
10. www.guardian.co.uk/technology/2012/apr/17/tim-berners-lee-monitoring-internet
11. people.virginia.edu/~tdw/nisbett&wilson.pdf
12. www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/lords-select/science-and-technology-committee/inquiries/behaviour/
13. The independent Public Health Interventions Advisory Committee considers and interprets evidence on the effectiveness and the cost effectiveness of public health interventions. It produces recommendations on the use of public health interventions in England in the NHS, local government and in the broader public health arena. www.nice.org.uk/aboutnice/howwework/developingnicepublichealthguidance/publichealthinterventionsadvisorycommittee/public_health_interventions_advisory_committee.jsp
14. conservativehome.blogs.com/platform/2013/01/andrew-lilico-what-jonathan-portes-gets-wrong-and-why.html
15. www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/media/downloads/Gaining_from_growth_-_The_final_report_of_the_Commission_on_Living_Standards.pdf p76
16. www.ifs.org.uk/pr/GB2013.pdf
17. www.ifs.org.uk/comms/comm121.pdf
18. <https://psych.princeton.edu/psychology/research/shafir/pubs/Mullainathan%20and%20Shafir.pdf>
19. www.brookings.edu/research/books/2012/noslack
20. inequalitiesblog.wordpress.com/2011/08/17/does-money-buy-happiness/
21. www.smf.co.uk/files/1913/4779/2202/20120916_Sink_or_Swim_web_ready2.pdf
22. <https://www.iser.essex.ac.uk/publications/working-papers/iser/2011-18.pdf>
23. scholar.harvard.edu/mullainathan/files/some_consequences_of_having_too_little.pdf
24. <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2011-2012/rrep800.pdf> pg 4
25. www.resolutionfoundation.org/media/media/downloads/Poor_household_finances_risk_chocking_off_recovery.pdf
26. http://www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/savings_gateway_evaluation_report.pdf
27. www.cgdev.org/files/1426679_file_Datta_Mullainathan_Behavioral_Design.pdf Mullainathan (2012) Behavioural Design, pp4-5
28. karlan.yale.edu/p/Top%20of%20Mind%202011jan.pdf
29. vhil.stanford.edu/pubs/2011/hershfield-jmr-saving-behavior.pdf
30. www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/15427560.2012.680995?journalCode=hbhf20
31. Barr, Michael S. (2004a), "Banking the Poor," Yale Journal on Regulation, 21, 121–237 psych.princeton.edu/psychology/research/shafir/pubs/Behavioral%20decision%20making%20among%20the%20poor.pdf
32. karlan.yale.edu/p/SEED.pdf
33. www.jrf.org.uk/publications/affordable-credit-low-income-households
34. www.jrf.org.uk/publications/poverty-role-institutions-behaviours
35. www.savethechildren.org.uk/sites/default/files/docs/Why%20Money%20Matters.pdf ch7



36. m.ippr.org/events/54/6539/a-budgets-report-the-risks-and-opportunities-of-personal-budgets; Seasonal Grants, Strelitz
37. psych.princeton.edu/psychology/research/shafir/pubs/Behavioral%20decision%20making%20among%20the%20poor.pdf
38. Barr et al, Preferences for Banking and Payment Services among Low- and Moderate-Income Households, p12
39. Bertrand et al. 2010 in www.cgdev.org/files/1426679_file_Datta_Mullainathan_Behavioral_Design.pdf Mullainathan (2012) Behavioural Design
40. www.hm-treasury.gov.uk/d/savings_gateway_evaluation_report.pdf p6
41. www.economist.com/news/finance-and-economics/21571883-financial-education-has-had-disappointing-results-past-teacher-leave-them
42. www.bristol.ac.uk/geography/research/pfrc/themes/fincap/pfrc1207.pdf
43. papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1118485
44. www.cepr.org/meets/wkcn/7/784/papers/FischerFinal.pdf
45. www.smf.co.uk/files/1913/4779/2202/20120916_Sink_or_Swim_web_ready2.pdf v
46. see Gennetian et al. 2011 in Mullainathan, CGDEV www.cgdev.org/files/1426679_file_Datta_Mullainathan_Behavioral_Design.pdf
47. crr.bc.edu/working-papers/borrow-less-tomorrow-behavioral-approaches-to-debt-reduction/
48. inequalitiesblog.wordpress.com/2012/07/19/when-social-policy-goes-wrong/
49. research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/rports2011-2012/rrep765.pdf
50. www.natcen.ac.uk/media/966145/niesr%20well-being%20seminar.pdf
51. www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/publications/1519/Understanding-Society-December-2012.aspx
52. online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704881304576094132896862582.html
53. papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=2182619 Paternalism is behaviour, by a person, organisation or state, which limits some person or group's liberty or autonomy for their own good. Paternalism can also imply that the behaviour is against or regardless of the will of a person, or also that the behaviour expresses an attitude of superiority. Cass Sunstein and Behavioural economists Professor Richard Thaler in a 2003 article in the American Economic Review coined the term libertarian paternalism. The authors developed their ideas in a longer article in the University of Chicago Law Review that same year. They propose that libertarian paternalism is paternalism in the sense that "it tries to influence choices in a way that will make choosers better off, as judged by themselves". It is libertarian in the sense that it aims to ensure that "people should be free to opt out of specified arrangements if they choose to do so". The possibility to opt out is said to "preserve freedom of choice".
54. 16: Rebonato, Riccardo Taking Liberties: a critical examination of libertarian paternalism 2012
55. www.epa.gov/carlabel/
56. www.nytimes.com/imagepages/2011/06/03/business/03pyramid-old.html
57. www.nytimes.com/2011/06/03/business/03plate.html
58. In the USA, all children living in households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program/Food Stamp benefits, Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations benefits, or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families cash assistance can bypass the standard application process and be "directly certified" for free school meals. Families do not have to fill out a paper application to be processed by the school for determination of eligibility. Instead, agencies share information with schools, through data matching that must occur at least three times per year, to identify eligible children and automatically enrol them free school meals.
59. Glenn Beck is an American television network producer, media personality, radio host, author, entrepreneur and political commentator.
60. www.ofgem.gov.uk/About%20us/Pages/AboutUsPage.aspx
61. www.foe.co.uk/resource/reports/home_truths.pdf
62. Ipsos MORI Issues Index. Base: 965 British adults 18+, 4th – 10th January 2013.
63. Ipsos Global Advisor Survey. Base: 1,005 online interviews with British adults 16+/ 21,623 online interviews in 23 countries, December 2009.
64. European Parliament (2011) Eurobarometer: Special EB 75.1. www.europarl.europa.eu/pdf/eurobarometre/2011/2011_04_21/eb75.1_energie_synthese_analytique_en.pdf
65. Ipsos MORI (2012) Customer Engagement with the Energy Market – Tracking Survey 2012, report prepared for Ofgem. www.ofgem.gov.uk/Markets/RetMkts/rmr/Documents1/Customer%20Engagement%20with%20the%20Energy%20Market%20-%20Tracking%20Survey%202012.pdf
66. Ibid
67. Ibid
68. Ibid

69. Ofgem's Consumer First programme is designed to help the regulator better understand the needs of consumers, and includes primary research to inform policy. The Consumer First panel is a group of 100 domestic energy consumers who meet regularly for three hour workshops to provide the "ordinary" person's perspective on topical and challenging energy issues. Panellists are selected from diverse backgrounds across different UK locations, and the list is refreshed annually.
70. Department of Energy and Climate Change (2012) Smart Meters: research into public attitudes. Crown Copyright. www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/48381/5424-smart-meters-research-public-attitudes.pdf
71. Ipsos MORI (2012) Ofgem Consumer First Panel – Year 4: Findings from the first workshops. <http://www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/Ofgem%20Panel%204.1.pdf>
72. For details on Ofgem's proposals, see Ofgem (2013) The Retail Market Review – Final Domestic Proposals. www.ofgem.gov.uk/Pages/MoreInformation.aspx?docid=460&refer=Markets/RetMkts/rmr
73. Ipsos MORI (2012) Consumer engagement with the energy market, information needs and perceptions of Ofgem: Findings from the Ofgem Consumer First Panel Year 4: second workshops (held in March 2012). www.ipsos-mori.com/Assets/Docs/Publications/Ofgem%20Panel%204.2.pdf
74. Decision Technology/Axa/University of Warwick (2007) Turning Good Intentions into Actions: Experimental Results Summary. www.dectech.org/docs/briefs/Brief-AxaPart2.pdf
75. Cf. Ipsos MORI (2012) Consumer engagement with the energy market, information needs and perceptions of Ofgem: Findings from the Ofgem Consumer First Panel Year 4: second workshops (held in March 2012)
76. Hernandez, M. (2009) 'A Conversation with Daniel Kahneman' cfed.org/blog/inclusiveeconomy/conversation_with_daniel_kahneman (Accessed 20.02.13)
77. Lawes Consulting (2011) The Retail Market Review: Energy bills, annual statements, price rise notifications; advice on the use of layout and language. www.ofgem.gov.uk/Markets/RetMkts/rmr/Documents1/Lawes_Language_Report.pdf
78. To be precise, the message provides: (1) "narrow savings": the savings to be had on the supplier's cheapest tariff that includes the same payment and billing options (e.g. quarterly payments and paper bills); and (2) "wide savings": the amount to be saved on the supplier's cheapest overall tariff, which may include different options (e.g. direct debit payments and online-only bills). See Ofgem (2013) The Retail Market Review – Final Domestic Proposals.
79. Ipsos MORI (2012) Ofgem Consumer First Panel – Year 4: Findings from the first workshops.
80. Department of Energy and Climate Change (2013) Quantitative Research into Public Awareness, Attitudes, and Experience of Smart Meters (Wave 2): Research conducted by Ipsos MORI for DECC. www.gov.uk/government/publications/quantitative-research-into-public-awareness-attitudes-and-experience-of-smart-meters-wave-2-of-3
81. Daniel Kahneman (2011) Thinking, Fast and Slow. London: Penguin: p.284.
82. Richard H. Thaler and Cass R. Sunstein (2008) Nudge: Improving Decisions and Health, Wealth and Happiness. New Haven & London: Yale University Press: pp.33-4.
83. Dolan, P., Hallsworth, M., Halpern, D., King, D. and Vlaev, I. (2010) 'MINDSPACE: Influencing behaviour through public policy.' Cabinet Office/Institute for Government: pp.26-7. www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/sites/default/files/publications/MINDSPACE.pdf
84. Antony Elliott, Paul Dolan, Ivo Vlaev, Charles Adriaenssens & Robert Metcalfe (2010) Transforming Financial Behaviour: A Summary. Consumer Financial Education Body: p.14. www.fairbanking.org.uk/20100709_transforming_financial_behaviour_summary.pdf
85. Lawes Consulting (2011) The Retail Market Review: Energy bills, annual statements, price rise notifications; advice on the use of layout and language; Ipsos MORI (2012) Ofgem Consumer First Panel – Year 4: Findings from the first workshops.
86. Department of Energy and Climate Change (2012) Smart Meters: research into public attitudes. Crown Copyright.
87. Ibid
88. Department of Energy and Climate Change (2013) Quantitative Research into Public Awareness, Attitudes, and Experience of Smart Meters (Wave 2): Research conducted by Ipsos MORI for DECC.
89. Department of Energy and Climate Change (2012) Smart Meters: research into public attitudes. Crown Copyright.
90. Ipsos MORI's Acceptable Behaviour (2012) presents opinion data that shows public acceptance of information interventions is higher than support for incentives, restrictions and bans across a range of policy areas. www.ipsos-mori.com/DownloadPublication/1454_sri-ipsos-mori-acceptable-behaviour-january-2012.pdf
91. See, for example, the government's "midata" programme. www.gov.uk/government/news/the-midata-vision-of-consumer-empowerment
92. George Loewenstein and Peter Ubel (2010) 'Economics Behaving Badly,' in The New York Times: 14th July 2010. www.nytimes.com/2010/07/15/opinion/15loewenstein.html?_r=1&ref=opinion



93. Department of Energy and Climate Change (2011) Extra help where it is needed: a new Energy Company Obligation. Crown copyright. www.gov.uk/government/publications/extra-help-where-it-is-needed-a-new-energy-company-obligation
94. www.gov.uk/green-deal-energy-saving-measures/?&gclid=CJ9tYKS67UCFcRQ3god6EMAgQ
95. Laura Haynes, Owain Service, Ben Goldacre and David Torgerson (2012) Test, Learn, Adapt: Developing public policy with randomised controlled trials. Cabinet Office, Behavioural Insights Team. www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/62529/TLA-1906126.pdf
96. www.ipsos-mori.com/researchpublications/publications/1454/Acceptable-Behaviour.aspx
97. Evans W D, (2011) Public Health Brand Research: Case Studies and Future Agenda. Cases in Public Health Communication & Marketing. 5:48-71. Available from: www.casesjournal.org/volume5summer.
98. Keller, K.L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57, 1-22
99. Zawislanski, A., & Ulasevich, A. (2003). Eat Smart, Play Hard formative research: Building the foundation brick by brick. FNS Nutritional Education Conference. Washington DC.
100. Mokdad, A., Bowman, B., Ford, E., Vinicor, F., Marks, J., & Koplan, J. (2001). The continuing epidemic of obesity and diabets in the United States. *Journal of American Medical Association*, 286(10), 1195-1200
101. McLeroy, K., Bibeau, D., Steckler, A., & Glanz, K. (1988). An ecological perspective on health promotion programs. *Health Education and Behavior*, 15(4), 351-377.
102. Lefebvre, G. R., & Flora, J. (1988). Social marketing and public health intervention. *Health Education and Behavior*, 15(3), 299-315.
103. Just, D.R. & Wansink, B. (2009) Smarter lunchrooms: Using behavior economics to improve meal selection. *Choices*, 24 (3).
104. Marteau, T. (2011). Judging nudging: can nudging improve population health. *British Medical Journal*, 342, 263-265.
105. www.npr.org/2012/10/02/162154687/are-federal-calorie-limits-leaving-kids-hungry
106. Schiller JS, Lucas JW, Ward BW, Peregoy JA. (2012) Summary health statistics for U.S. adults: National Health Interview Survey, 2010. *National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat* 10(252).
107. CDC (2011). Vital Signs: Current cigarette smoking among adults aged ≥18 Years — United States, 2005–2010. *MMWR*60(35), 1207-1212.
108. Rogers, E.M. (1995). *Diffusion of Innovation*. New York, NY: Free Press.
109. www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3096582/
110. Darnton, A. (2008b) 'Practical Guide: An overview of behaviour change models and their uses' Centre for Sustainable Development, University of Westminster.
111. Darnton, A. (2008a) Government Social Research (GSR) Behaviour Change Knowledge Review, Reference Report: An overview of behaviour change models and their uses; Government Social Research Unit
112. <http://youngfoundation.org/publications/the-capital-ambition-guide-to-behaviour-change/>

FIGURE References



- ONE: Michie et al. (2011), The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions; Michie et al. *Implementation Science* 2011, 6:42 www.implementationscience.com/content/6/1/42
- TWO: Michie et al. (2011), The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions; Michie et al. *Implementation Science* 2011, 6:42 www.implementationscience.com/content/6/1/42
- THREE: Source: Ipsos MORI/DECC
- FIVE: Base: Adults aged 18+ who are at least partly responsible for paying household energy bills: Wave 1 (2,396), 30th March – 26th April 2012; Wave 2 (2,159) 5th – 20th October 2012. Source: Ipsos MORI/DECC
- SIX: Base: Adults aged 18+ who are at least partly responsible for paying household energy bills and look at their in-home energy display at least occasionally: Wave 2 (157) 5th – 20th October 2012 Source: Ipsos MORI/DECC
- TEN. Rosenstock IM (1966), Why people use health services, *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* 44 (3): 94–127, PMID www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/5967464
- ELEVEN Michie et al. (2011), The behaviour change wheel: A new method for characterising and designing behaviour change interventions; Michie et al. *Implementation Science* 2011, 6:42 www.implementationscience.com/content/6/1/42
- THIRTEEN Source: Ipsos Social Research Institute Public Affairs, Australia

Information

Ipsos MORI
79-81 Borough Road
London SE1 1FY
t: +44 (0)20 7347 3000
f: +44 (0)20 7347 3800

www.ipsos-mori.com
 www.twitter.com/IpsosMORI

About Ipsos MORI's Social Research Institute

The Social Research Institute works closely with national government, local public services and the not-for-profit sector. Its 200 research staff focus on public service and policy issues. Each has expertise in a particular part of the public sector, ensuring we have a detailed understanding of specific sectors and policy challenges. This, combined with our methodological and communications expertise, ensures that our research makes a difference for decision makers and communities.