

Behaviour Change Communications Checklist

About the Checklist

This checklist can be used to improve behaviour change communications or promotional materials. It can be applied in a variety of circumstances, including communications aimed at the general public (eg – around smoking or alcohol misuse) as well as those geared more towards professionals (eg – influencing changes in referral practices). The checklist can also be applied to a wider range of communication forms, including anything from brief messages (eg: a memo to staff) through to extensive promotional resources within large-scale campaigns.

How it Works

The checklist works by allowing the user to 'rate' the extent to which communications or promotional resources aimed at facilitating behaviour change are consistent with what we know is effective from previous research. Towards this aim, the checklist incorporates key elements found within the dominant evidence-based theories of behaviour change. For example, ratings are made on the extent to which communications are action-orientated, and seek to go beyond producing an intention or impulse to providing an opportunity to act on that impulse (as informed by the Transtheoretical Model¹ and PRIME Theory²). The checklist also includes elements from the Health Belief Model³ (in respect of its attention to perceived benefits of behaviour change), Social Cognitive Theory⁴ (in relation to its consideration of self-efficacy) and the Theory of Reasoned Action⁵ (in highlighting the importance of perceived norms and values).

How to Use

It is recommended that scores be generated by at least two 'raters' independently of each other. Ideally, at least one rater will be a member of the target audience. These ratings may then be compared and any divergence discussed. The communication or resource is rated against six criteria on a five-point Likert Scale (giving a maximum total score of 30). The scale is scored as follows: 'strongly agree' = 5, 'agree' = 4, 'neither agree or disagree' = 3, 'disagree' = 2 and 'strongly disagree' = 1. The higher the score, the more the resource or communication is adherent with evidence-based behaviour change theory.

For further information contact Dr. Lisa McNally, Consultant in Public Health, Bracknell Forest Council on lisa.mcnally@bracknell-forest.gov.uk

¹ Prochaska, JO.; DiClemente, CC. The transtheoretical approach. In: Norcross, JC; Goldfried, MR. (eds.) Handbook of psychotherapy integration. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press; 2005. p. 147–171

² West R, The PRIME Theory of motivation as a possible foundation for addiction treatment. In J Henningfield, P Santora and W (Eds) Drug Addiction Treatment in the 21st Century: Science and Policy Issues. Baltimore: John's Hopkins University Press.

³ Rosenstock IM (1966), "Why people use health services", *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly* 44 (3): 94–127

⁴ Bandura, A. , Self-efficacy: Toward a Unifying Theory of Behavioral Change, *Psychological Review* 1977, Vol. 84, No. 2, 191-215

⁵ Ajzen, I. & Fishbein, M. (1980). *Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

Behaviour Change Checklist

Important Benefits?				
Does the message highlight benefits of behaviour change that are important from the perspective of the target group?				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Notes:				
Proximate Benefits?				
Does the message highlight benefits of behaviour change within the near future?				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Notes:				
Self-Efficacy?				
Does the message encourage the view that behaviour change is achievable within existing resources or time?				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Notes:				
Norms and Values?				
Does the message encourage the view that the desired behaviour is normal and valued by peers within the target group?				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Notes:				
Action Orientated?				
Does the message induce action rather than just an intention to act?				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Notes:				
Credible Champion?				
Is the message championed by sources credible or valued by the target group?				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Notes:				
SCORE =				

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