

Behaviour Change Interventions

Persuasion



What?

Persuasion is defined as using communication to encourage positive or negative feelings or actions.

It is most useful when there are negative or positive beliefs about the consequence of the new behaviour and what physical skills and mental capabilities that the new behaviour can impact.

Generally, persuasion is effective when the communication resonates with the individual's motivations, desires, and goals. For example in active travel terms when the individual has set intentions or goals such as save money, get fitter, become more active, lose weight or reduce the use of a car.



Practical Examples

- Leaflet campaign encouraging people to walk, wheel or cycle for short journeys, using positive health/financial/environmental messaging when comparing traveling actively to public or private transport.
- [Case studies](#) showing the positive benefits experienced by others living in the local community in similar situations after changing their behaviour e.g. those with similar work life balance, social status, opportunities available, similar age, and health status
- Providing information to employers on the benefits to them of an active workforce, and the difference investing in e.g. cycling to work can make to work productivity and health.
- [Community or workplace champions programme](#) which shares positive personal stories and experiences of active travel either face to face events, via a blog or social media.

Persuasion is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions (www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

“In order to be effective persuaders, we must first get people’s attention, then send an effective message to them, and then ensure that they process the message in the way we would like them to.”

[Principles of Social Psychology - 1st International Edition](#) by Dr. Rajiv Jhangiani and Dr. Hammond Tarry

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Coercion



What?

Coercion is defined as using the threat of punishment or cost to prevent behaviour.

It is most effective when the threat is enforceable and credible. For example, using speed cameras to make drivers obey the speed limit. If the threat is not credible, it is unlikely to have an impact on people's behaviour.

Generally, coercion is best used in conjunction with other measures, and where the risk incurred to the individual of going against the intervention outweighs the reward of continuing with the behaviour.

In terms of active travel, coercion is likely to take the form of regulation and fines/penalties aimed at reducing either the speed or volume of traffic in a certain area.



Examples

- The [Workplace Parking Licencing](#) (WPL) giving Local Authorities the discretionary power to charge employers who provide parking spaces to employees in urban centres. A general increase in public car parking prices and/or residential parking permits
- [London's Congestion Charge](#) is a famous example - £15 per day to drive in the City Centre.
- [Low Emission Zones](#) (LEZ's) being introduced in various locations, where vehicles that produce emissions over a certain level will no longer be allowed entry, and will be subject to a fine if caught.
- 20mph zones where the speed limit is reduced and fines and penalty points will be applied to those caught speeding.
- Road/Bridge Tolls – where people are charged to cross a boundary in a motor vehicle.

Coercion is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions (www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

“A parking levy, like congestion charging, is a way to discourage the use of cars...it's important that revenues collected are used to fund alternative sustainable mobility solutions.”

Mohamed Mezghani,
Secretary General of the
[International Association of Public Transport](#)

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Education



What?

Education is defined by increasing knowledge and understanding.

Evidence suggests that education is needed to achieve high levels of cycling ([Brook Lyndhurst](#) for DfT, 2016). It is a frequently utilised intervention type for active travel.

Education interventions can be effective as behaviour change is often hindered by a lack of knowledge or awareness. They work particularly well when individuals already have goals and intentions around traveling more actively or becoming more active.

It's important to think about consistency of the messages, who they are targeted at, who is delivering them, and therefore how they will be received by different audiences.



Examples

- Tailored route planning with individuals, to show best routes to their work, school, local town centre etc.
- [Local radio station providing information](#) on way to travel actively and sustainably across the city and the benefits of travelling actively
- Information/video played on Plasma TV's at local GP surgery with a GP endorsing walking and cycling initiatives and the benefits to specific health conditions
- Signage in a local community highlighting a local walk, how long it will take, what people should expect and who the route is suitable for
- Producing a local quieter routes map, to highlight lesser known active travel options
- Installing 'Share with Care' signs at busy areas of shared use paths

Education is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions (www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

“The station and bus advertising promoting walking and cycling have proved their effectiveness in recent survey results, showing a significant increase in walking and cycling and reduction of driving in particular to and from our railway stations.”

Lindsay Haddow, Policy Planning Manager, Midlothian Council, Smarter Choices Smarter Places Case Study

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Enablement



What?

Enablement is “providing support to improve ability to change in a variety of ways not covered by other intervention types” ([Public Health England](#), 2019).

Enablement has a lot of overlap with other intervention functions – training could be seen as a form of enablement, for example. However, enablement seeks to go a step further, go the extra mile, and bring in a combination of factors (e.g. providing use of a bike (material) along with sessions on how to ride it safely (capability), and organising group rides for sociable, traffic free routes (opportunity).

Often enablement involves the provision of something tangible, such as the loan or ownership of a bike and/or supporting materials for free or at a subsidised rate.



Examples

- Bike Loan scheme to enable access to a bike e.g. Bike Library- [West Lothian Bike Library](#) and E Bikes (no or low cost), child seats and adapted bike loan
- [Subsidised access to public bike hire scheme](#) and support to use it
- Buddy/mentors programme helping mentees to set realistic goals around travelling actively
- Personalised travel planning (e.g. buddy support)
- Providing [bike repair stations](#) on routes, especially in rural locations
- Community Action Planning: Community engagement to support people to come up with solutions for their community
- Dr Bike sessions in the community
- Providing beginner cyclist sessions in a safe environment

Enablement is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions (www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

“After 20 years not having a bicycle, I got a bicycle again. It’s like getting your freedom back”

Graeme, Bike Life Inverness

“There was so much more to this course than just building a bike. I’m already using the bike to get around – I really enjoy tinkering with it and will keep it in great condition”

Craig, Build Your Own Bike participant, Bike for Good

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Environmental Restructuring

What?

This intervention is probably the one we are most familiar with and involves changing or adding to the physical or social environment to make it easier to walk, wheel and cycle.

This restructuring can also provide cues in the environment to encourage the desired behaviour, making it the more obvious or pleasant choice.

These interventions often address the 'Material' component of the [ISM](#) model, whereby something is built, created or altered.

It could also be about 'building' a new social context that supports the behaviour, e.g. large scale cycling events that create a feeling of safety in numbers, and which normalise cycling as a behaviour.



Examples

- Restructuring the physical environment to give priority to pedestrians and bike users e.g. [Dunblane Street Design](#)
- Benches, street art, waymarking on paths to encourage responsible shared use of paths
- Infrastructure that supports walking, wheeling and cycling such as segregated cycle lanes and paths, benches and accessible bike parking
- Planting and streetscape improvements
- Safe and secure bicycle parking and storage facilities
- Bike repair stations or public bike pumps
- Other public realm changes e.g. Art, Sculptures, information boards (e.g. [North Edinburgh Story Boards](#)); play areas; picnic benches and toilet facilities
- Electric bike charging facilities
- Changing rooms/storage facilities at workplaces

Environmental Restructuring is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions
(www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

“The Mural celebrates the diversity of the local community through the arts & provides colour and vibrancy to the cycle lane, which should encourage cycling, health and wellbeing in Govanhill.”

Nadine Gorency, Project Manager, Govanhill Baths Community Trust

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Incentivisation



What?

Incentivisation creates the expectation of receiving a reward. This reward could be material, financial or part of a challenge where points mean prizes or other recognition.

There is often some form of monitoring within this intervention. This could be self-monitoring or monitoring provided by an external source.

This monitoring could be of the behaviour itself (e.g. recording number of active journeys made) or the outcomes of the new behaviour (e.g. improved sense of wellbeing after commuting by bike twice a week).



Examples

- Employers offering Cycle to Work scheme/pool bikes to staff
- Tangible rewards: Bike Breakfast, local café offering free coffee for those who walk, wheel or cycle in.
- Participation in nationwide incentive programmes ([Sustrans Workplace Journey Challenge](#), [Paths for All Step Count Challenge](#), [Living Streets Walk Once a Week](#))
- [Beat the Street](#); a virtual game using traveling by bike, scooter or foot as a way to gain points. Whole communities are targeted to get involved in the game
- National rail operator offers discounted entrance fees to those who travel actively using public transport to destination
- Award schemes to recognise where good work has been done e.g. (Cycling Scotland's '[Cycling Friendly](#)' awards, [Walk at Work award](#), [Healthy Working Lives](#) etc.)

Incentivisation is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions (www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

“Since completing the [Workplace Journey] challenge my behaviours have completely changed. Because it was such an enjoyable experience, I’ve carried on doing it.”

Sharon, NHS Ayrshire & Arran worker

“I’m quite competitive and so the league table was a great motivator to me and my team”

Jim, Step Count Challenge Case Study

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Modelling



What?

Modelling is providing an example for people to aspire to or imitate. Ideally, models should be people that individuals or a community can relate to.

When considering who would make good role models it is important to consider who the audiences or community being targeted are e.g. in relation to their age, ethnicity, economic status, where they live etc.

Local champions must be people who are respected and known in the local community. They should be aware of the challenges people face and be able to relate to these, framing solutions in ways that are relatable and achievable.



Examples

- [Buddying systems](#) – friends or colleagues offering to join others on their active journeys for support and guidance.
- iBike Crew or Junior Road Safety Officers; [Workplace/School Champions](#); Volunteer Peer Mentors; [Community Cycle Ride Leaders](#) are all good examples of models as they are already bought into the behaviour and can be seen as role models.
- E-bike trial in schools aimed at teachers ([iBike Inverness](#)) produces modelling on two levels, encouraging peers to commute to work using E-bikes and via normalising cycling to pupils.
- Famous role models such as [Mark Beaumont](#) or [The Adventure Syndicate](#), or local people who have been seen to take on challenges related to walking, wheeling and cycling.

Modelling is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions (www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

“Role models can impact us in three ways. They show how to perform a skill and achieve a goal — they are *behavioural models*; they show us that a goal is attainable — they are *representations of the possible*, and they make a goal desirable — they are *inspirations*.”

Morgenroth et.al. (2015) ‘*The Motivational Theory of Role Modelling: How Role Models Influence Role Aspirants’ Goals*’

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Restriction



What?

Using rules to reduce the opportunity to engage in target behaviour (or to increase the target behaviour by reducing the opportunity to engage in competing behaviours).

Restrictions usually focus on how people think, feel and react rather than on how the external environment limits behaviour.

These interventions can be very powerful and interventions such as the smoking ban have seen a huge change in the way people think, feel and react about smoking in public places.

Discouraging behaviours can work well, but it can be controversial especially where local buy-in isn't established from the outset.



Examples

- Street closures around schools e.g. I Bike projects in Edinburgh, Aberdeen & East Dunbartonshire [School Street Closures](#)
- Edinburgh's [monthly Sunday Street closure](#)
- Restrict parking outside the school gate – but this needs to be enforced somehow.
- Traffic free areas and Pedestrian and Cycling only zones
- Allowing cargo bike deliveries to local businesses during traffic free hours or other major works (e.g. [Leith Walk Trams Extension](#))
- Rescheduling of loading and unloading of deliveries during traffic free hours (Leith Walk Trams Work)

Restriction is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions (www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

“School Streets is a powerful way of showing parents what’s possible when cars are removed”

Teacher, St Mary’s CE Primary School, Southampton

“There is strong economic evidence that a good pedestrian environment is good for business”

Stuart Hay, Living Streets Scotland on Leith Walk project

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Training



What?

Training is about imparting skills to support and carry out the desired behaviour. This training can be formal or informal but should consider and be adapted to the target audience.

Training should incorporate, instruction, demonstration and practice in order to build confidence.

Training can be delivered in a one to one or group setting.

There is also a role in 'training the trainer'. By upskilling individuals to be able to implement the training of others, projects can increase the capacity of a community, creating a more sustainable and long-lasting legacy.



Examples

- Practice & rehearsal of behaviours related to aspects of cycling e.g. [Essential Cycling Skills/](#)
- Basic Bike Maintenance e.g. puncture repair
- Behaviour experiments e.g. ride a route with a buddy before you ride it to work
- [Bikeability](#) cycle training for primary school pupils
- [Strength & Balance](#) training helps to stay active
- I Bike Project in North Ayrshire took small groups of children on trains with their bikes to practice embarking and disembarking safely, where to store them and to show them a journey they could do with their family by catching the train to a destination and cycling back.
- Driver awareness training. A popular, CPD accredited option for drivers of large vehicles and/or learner drivers is the [Practical Cycle Awareness Training](#)

Training is one of the 9 Behaviour Change Wheel intervention functions (www.behaviourchangewheel.com/)

Why?

I learned how to build my confidence in riding a bike. This felt amazing; I wanted to teach other women who never had the chance to learn, how to ride a bike and feel that sense of freedom."

Fatima, Bike Life Dundee

"I loved it (Bikeability). I didn't feel safe on my bike but I do now!"

Pupil, P5, Eastbank Primary,
Bike for Good Report 2017/18

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