



## Framing Your Message to Reach a Broader Audience

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### What is Message Framing?

Framing is organizing your information to touch an emotional chord with your audience. People act based on emotions, not intellect.

*"Frames are the mental structures that allow human beings to understand reality."* George Lakoff

**Deep Frames:** Deep frames are based on values and morals. They are unconscious and automatic. We often think of them as 'common sense.'

**Surface Frames:** Surface frames are what we think of as 'spin.' They are phrases and talking points that rely on deep frames.

### Why Use Message Framing?

- ▶ Framing is more than spin.
- ▶ The goal is to find common values that make your message resonate with your audience.
- ▶ You are creating context that will be remembered longer than your fact sheets or talking points.

### Some Common Frames

Bad Apple Frame: "A bad apple spoils the barrel."

Tradition is Right Frame: "passed the test of time."

Adaption Frame: "If you can't change it..."

Slippery Slope Frame: "What's to stop them from..."

Prototype Frame: Social Stereotypes

### A Few Simple Message Framing Rules

Values resonate.

Keep it emotional, not cerebral.

Translate for your target audience.

Keep it simple.

### Target Audiences When Developing Message Frames

- ▶ Know your audience.
- ▶ Before developing your frame, think about who your intended audience is.
- ▶ Are you trying to convince people who already think like you? How does your target audience think about the issue?
- ▶ What are your shared values?