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?