



## Transcript:

### Pitching Prevention: Explaining the Importance of Prevention through Effective Messages

Presenter: Jessica Goldberg & Erin Ficker  
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PRESENTER: Hi, everybody. Welcome. Thanks for joining us. We're going to give people just a minute or so and then we will get started.

All right. Again, welcome to "Pitching prevention, explaining the importance of prevention through effective messages." Our speakers today are Erin Ficker and Jessica Goldberg. This webinar today is brought to you by the Great Lakes PTTC and SAMHSA. The Great Lakes ATTC, MHTTC, and PTTC are funded by SAMHSA for the following cooperative agreements.

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We have a couple of housekeeping details for you today. If you are having any technical difficulties, please individually message Kristiina Spannbaauer or Stephanie Behlman in the chat section at the bottom of your screen, and they'll be happy to assist you. Please put any questions you have for the speaker in the Q&A section, also at the bottom of the screen, and we will respond to those during the presentation.

We will be using automated transcriptions for today's webinar. And you will be directed to a link at the end of the presentation to a very short survey. We would really appreciate it if you could fill it out. It takes about three minutes, and it's how we report our activities back to SAMHSA.

We are recording this session, and it will be available on our website. It usually takes about 7 to 10 days, sometimes up to two weeks. And certificates of attendance will be sent to all who attend the full session, and those can also take about two weeks, and they will both be sent to you via email. I'm sorry, the certificates will be sent to you via email.

If you would like to see what else we're doing, please follow us on social media. And keep an eye out for our weekly email updates on upcoming trainings. Those come out on Thursdays. So they're always for the week coming up so that you don't miss anything.



Again, our speakers today are Erin Ficker and Jessica Goldberg. Erin serves as a prevention manager for the Great Lakes PTTC. And for more than 14, years Erin has worked in substance use prevention, supporting communities to use evidence-based strategies and data-driven process and substance use prevention planning and implementation. She works with community level prevention practitioners and schools in the development, implementation, evaluation, and sustainability of prevention interventions.

Jessica Goldberg is responsible for providing virtual and in-person training and technical assistance to prevention practitioners served by the PTTC in region two, as well as state agencies and community-based organizational clients of EDC's Prevention Solutions Initiative and school-based staff members through the Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education's Social and Emotional Learning and Mental Health Academy.

Previously Miss Goldberg provided training and TA to community coalitions in Massachusetts working to prevent substance misuse, obesity, violence, and crime and to promote positive mental health and youth development. Welcome to you both, and I am going to turn it over to you.

ERIN FICKER: Thank you so much. Can you all hear me? Am I officially unmuted? Wonderful. Well thank you for the introduction, Ann. And we wanted to get to know you all a little bit through the chat and wanted to know when you tell people that you work in prevention, what type of response do you typically get?

I had a friend who worked in prevention for 30 years, and her mother thought that she worked with kids. She told people, my daughter works with kids and said that for a number of years. So not everybody always understands what it is that we do. So I'd love to hear what your response has been when you tell people that you work in prevention.

So-- oh, do you go to schools? What does that mean? What do you do? Loss prevention? Oh, I haven't heard that one, but I can see that. Oh, you give presentations. Oh, you do DARE.

What is that? What is that? Oh yeah, exactly what it is-- what is it you do? Just generally a confused look. You talking to kindergartners about drugs. Oh, you hand out pamphlets. Prevention of what? Oh, these are great, you guys. Yeah, absolutely. We definitely see really funny answers.

I will say the opioid crisis definitely helped when I said I worked in prevention because people were able to say, oh, do you work on the opioid crisis? And so that was helpful. I don't work in prevention but adding tools to harm reduction toolbelt. Oh yeah, that's a hard one.



What do you mean? They think I'm a counselor? Oh, you do DARE. Oh, I get that. I've gotten that many times. Oh, thanks so much for sharing, you guys. It can be really difficult to explain our job, and that's exactly why we wanted to share with you this presentation today on pitching prevention.

OK, there we go. On pitching prevention. So explaining the importance of prevention through effective messaging. So we're going to talk a little bit about how to tell people what you do or what it is that you do and also how to create an effective message.

So our objectives today are to describe how to use contextual information about a community to create a persuasive message. So how do you know that community? To define the elements of prevention message? What are those key elements? And identify barriers to engaging new partners and a few strategies to overcome them. So hopefully we'll give you something to think about, and hopefully that's what you're here for today.

So-- oh, I am really awesome with my sides. So communicating the value of prevention is where we'll start. And what's the point? Why do we need to communicate the value of prevention? I'm going to try harder to not mess up my slides.

So when you say "prevention," I work in prevention, and we heard a lot of great answers from you guys. So we hear sometimes, so you're a social worker? And I think I saw that in the chat. Why do you work in the summer if you work in schools? Oh, yeah, why do you?

We all know that's not what you're doing. And then finally, treatment is so important. So people think you work in treatment. So those are just some examples of some of the things that we hear. And so that's one of the reasons it's just so important for us to help people understand. And there's so much that we do.

As preventionists, it's important for us to be able to communicate and explain what we do because often it's so misunderstood. And this word cloud that you see in front of you represents just some of the different kinds of language we use to describe our work. So you can see community and identifying outcomes, risk strategies. So I'm going to turn it over to Jessica to talk a little bit more about communication goals, and I'm going to get you started.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Thanks so much, Erin. Hi, everyone. I hope I'm audible. And this word cloud actually was developed by a group of preventionists who share their thinking around how they've articulated their work in the past. It's a lot of the answers that we heard that we know that you would give if you were talking to someone that had a strong understanding of the prevention field. But this is some of the language, or that was some of the language that we could use to describe prevention.



And we can be really creative and effective in our responses. And it makes me think that our field, we know how to find the right words to talk about what we do, and some of the common words that came up from the responses of the preventionists represented in the word cloud are around providing skills and information, strategies to help people live their healthiest life, finding root causes of the problems that we're trying to address or providing youth with skills that they need to make good decisions. And we want to reduce risk and promote safety, and so you see all of those different ideas reflected in the word cloud.

It's all proactive, upstream work. And these are just a few of those terms that come to mind when prevention professionals are asked to describe their work. But just like you said, Erin, there are some goals that we can hone in on in terms of what we want to accomplish more generally through our communication efforts. And this is all about moving beyond the world of prevention, since we know we can't be effective working in isolation.

And so as a group, we need to be able to communicate effectively in order to be better understood. And so if we could-- exactly, go to that slide. So we want our prevention work to become embedded into the fabric of a broader community context. We also want to be able to communicate with partners in order to activate a network of energy in our communities.

Not long ago, I was talking with a state staff member, and they described this metaphor that they loved when talking about the need for cross-sector collaboration. And she talked about that network of energy almost like a circuit breaker or a circuit board, where the energy is going through all of these different connections, and all of the connections are needed for that circuit to work. So if any one of those connected pieces was missing, the energy couldn't reach beyond to the other areas of that community and create the positive change there.

And so we want to be able to make the case that each of our prospective partners can support and participate in our efforts, can collaborate with us as appropriate, advocate for our work as appropriate. And so that it can be sustained and the energy reaches where it needs to go wherever in the far reaches of our community it does need to go.

And so that was just a little bit about communication goals and some of the language that we typically use. But I think, Erin, on the next slide, I'm going to hand it back to you to talk a little bit about how we can be looking at contextual factors to get a better understanding of our stakeholders' perspectives related to prevention.

ERIN FICKER: Sorry, I couldn't unmute myself. I'm back on board. Absolutely. So we want to talk about why context is important when thinking about sharing your prevention message. And so community matters when it comes



to health and behavioral health. So we want to know when it comes to health and behavioral health, what's the thing that matters most?

What's important to people in the community you're working in? If it's your community or if it's a community that you're working in, what's important, and what's unique about that community or that state? So many times we hear, oh, we're different, this is a different way of thinking about things. We do things differently here.

And when we hear that, it's important for us to recognize it and acknowledge it, even if we've seen that same work done somewhere else. We still want to-- or if we've seen some of those same things. But we do want to know what's unique in that community. And that just really gives us some context to understand where the community currently is on issues of behavioral health and really who they are. I can't press that button for the life of me.

So considering individual complexity. So if we think about the complexity of the community and what are they thinking and what's unique about the community, then what about the individual? So we want to think about all the different things about the individual that we're trying to pitch prevention to. When we're talking to someone, we want to think about things about who they are and how they might receive our message. So what are their values? Is there an income level or their socioeconomic status? Or what are their opinions, if you can get a hold of that? Their geographic location, their education level, gender identity, race and ethnicity, gender, and religion.

There's so many things that we want to make sure that we know about the person we're approaching. Without that, it's hard to tailor a message and make sure that we communicate that effectively. Anything to add there, Jess? JESSICA GOLDBERG: No, I mean, I think that that was great. I would just add, actually, we often talk about this idea of the general population, the general public in prevention. And we'll talk about more today that really we do the broad community awareness.

Certainly awareness raising, but often we really need to be honing in to segmenting our audience to try to tailor our messages specifically to what we understand will resonate with different kinds of cultural groups or groups of people. And so it's thinking about this at both the individual level, but then these identities represent groups of people that do have a shared common identity, and some of those groups are the ones that we're trying to reach. ERIN FICKER: Great, thank you. So we also want to-- we want to understand and consider the context in the community. So we talked about what matters most. We talked about what-- but we want to know what are the norms in that community. Is this a community that has norms around substance use that are maybe different from another community?

Is it more permissive? Is it less permissive? Do they have alcohol at public events things? What are the norms that regularly happen in the community?





Some of the practices and the beliefs and symbols. So what are the things that we need to know about the beliefs in this community and their practices? And this is important to make sure that we understand where the community is coming from, especially if we're not of that community.

So if you're coming into a community to do this work, it's important that you take the time to understand the context in which the community exists and the norms and beliefs that exist in that community. If you are doing it in your own community, where you live, sometimes this is a little easier. But also, we can take for granted that we think we know everything about our own community.

So even if you're working in your own community, you want to take a step back and ask yourself all of these questions and do some due diligence to find out what is the context. Because we have our own lens, and through that lens, I can say, boy, I really think that my community is permissive around alcohol use, but maybe that's just a sliver that I'm seeing. So we want to make sure that we look more broadly to understand the context in that community.

So we have to know what people are thinking. So we've said all this that we have to understand norms and we have to understand what people think about things. So what are they thinking? And that's where we get down to brass tacks and think about gathering data.

We want to think about understanding the community and understanding what people are thinking. And so there's a lot of ways that we can do that. There's key informant interviews, so you can sit down one on one with people who are influential in the community. They may not be a coalition member, they may not be someone you even end up pitching to, but just to sit down and ask them some questions about the communities. Who's often going to leaders in the community.

You can do a focus group. So as we looked at that list of identifiers, do you want to have a focus group with folks with disabilities or with parents or women or youth? So you want to think about all of those things too, in a focus group will get some dynamic conversation going. You get to understand what people are thinking.

You can also use community forums, which can be interesting. I've done a couple of those in my own community, which sometimes get a little raucous with passionate beliefs. But that told me a lot about my community that my community does have strong beliefs around these issues.

Social media posts-- you can-- or observations. So you can just observe the community. I skipped that one. Social media posts-- so looking on social media about are there community pages? My community has lots of different pages that cater to specific groups. So I can dig into those and understand those a little bit.



News articles-- so dig into the media that's happening. Does the community have its own paper? Do they have a website? Is there a subsection of a larger paper that addresses the community or neighborhood in which you're working?

And then want to do some document review, and so just understanding-- and I think of this as going back to maybe some past surveys, some more data, and making sure that you have a chance to look at those. And there may be different sources, there may be different places to go. So there may be an incident that happened a long time ago or a couple of years ago. And if you can go find that in the newspaper, that's great.

And then last but not least is surveys. And we do a lot of these, especially with youth and at schools. And so sometimes that's a great way to go back to that data that's already existing that maybe you have a state level data that can be aggregated down to your community. Maybe you have some national data that you can look at.

What are parents thinking? So parents surveys I find are not-- there's not as many existing parent surveys, so parents are less likely to be surveyed-- it's harder to find archival data on parents. I have also found that parents tend to answer the questions the way they think they act, as opposed the way they want to act, the way as opposed to-- or the way they think they're supposed to think, as opposed to maybe really truthfully.

So for example, parents might say, and adults in general, if you say, did you go to the gym today, or how often do you go to the gym, they'll say, oh, three to four times a week. But really, I sleep in pretty much, I don't always get there. And maybe the truth really is that it's once a week. So that's how-- I mean, so understand the quality of the data and the quality of the information that you're getting may not be as robust as other sources. OK.

So we're making the case that prevention is important, and we want to do our homework. So this is what we've talked about. So looking for clues in the community about what they think about prevention, about substance use, about all of the different things in the community that we want to understand. So I'm going to show you my next slide-- there we go.

So if we're listening for clues, what does that look like? Can you hear people in forums say, other parents, it's other parents that are the problem. They model irresponsible drinking. So are you hearing, oh, maybe parents are the problem?

My kids have parties in my basement sometimes. Oh, OK, that's another clue right there that maybe there is some unsafe activity going on that parents are involved in. You'll also maybe hear, my organization doesn't focus on this type of stuff. Why am I here?



So this may be someone who says, I don't do this work, so why would I be here? That might be someone who works at the YMCA, and that might be someone you really want to bring on board. So if they are already thinking, this doesn't apply to me, that's going to be a hard pitch, and there may be several of those kinds of organizations.

I grew up in this town, and everyone knows everyone. So if it's a small, tight-knit community, sometimes that can be difficult because I live in a very small, tight-knit community where everyone knows everyone, and often people don't want to answer surveys or they don't want to respond to data. So you have to think about how you might reach someone and hear for the clues in the community, what's going on and what's the context in which people are working. Or, excuse me, working and living.

So where is the disconnect? So why is it so hard to talk to communities and people about what we do? And this is a really helpful frame I find that people have an understanding of current issues that's sometimes incorrect or unproductive assumptions. So maybe not every parent is letting their kids do something, or maybe they think that their agency doesn't do anything about that but they actually do. So a lot of times our perception is just the world that we see and not the entire world.

So oftentimes we see that, and we think of that as their baseline knowledge. So this is what we're working with, this is where they're at when we come to talk to them. So their baseline knowledge includes incorrect or unproductive assumptions and their current understanding of the issue, which may be dated.

And so we need to tell them why is prevention important and why is it needed. Explain why it's needed. And that really you have to go back to kind of what's happening in the community, maybe go back to your data to understand why is it needed. What's the problem we're addressing?

What can be done? This often is how you explain interventions and why those interventions are helpful. So if I'm doing social emotional learning with young kids that is helpful in the prevention of substance use later, we really want to explain that to folks that that's being done and this is how it impacts the problems. We want to make sure that all of those components are in there. And then we can really have an effective message. So that's the place where if that's our effective message and we have to get through their baseline knowledge with our message to correct those incorrect perceptions or assumptions. Are there any-- I'm going to pause right here and see if there are any questions.

PRESENTER: Thanks, Erin. We do have one. What do you mean by "symbols?" How do you differentiate norms and practices?

ERIN FICKER: I'm going to let Jess take that one.





JESSICA GOLDBERG: That sounds great. It's a great question. And there are more formal definitions to each of these different attributes of a community that form a community group than what I'm going to give. I'm going to just pick off the top of my head.

But for symbols, what came to mind for me were certain religious groups certainly will sometimes wear symbols-- jewelry around their neck to represent their membership in a group. So there's sometimes visual cues that will indicate some aspect of a person's identity or membership in an identity group that they can wear visibly like a symbol. There are other also good examples that I'll try to come up with as you move through the session.

But to differentiate between beliefs and norms-- so in my mind, beliefs are more about a thought process. So your perceptions or your assumptions about a particular type of issue, what you hold intellectually to be true about something. And then norms are more-- I think they can be spoken or written or formalized, but they're often more unspoken rules that govern behavior that you wouldn't necessarily know or understand unless you were a member of a group.

And so something that came to mind as we're doing that section was, in my town, where I grew up, it's a real sports town, youth sports town. And so after a game, people hang out in the parking lot, and they eat barbecue and drink. And you wouldn't necessarily know that unless you were a member of the community.

You might drive by and think, there was a big event, when actually it was just a normal Saturday and it was a softball game or something like that. So that community has that norm that can either be formal or spoken or unspoken, but it's about what we do, how we are, and it governs your behavior if you're a member of that group and you subscribe to that norm. I hope that helps, and that was a great question.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah. Do we have any more questions, Ann?

PRESENTER: We do. I don't know that it's specifically a question, but we need to also do our best to tie various segments of prevention together when we're working throughout the community. Various areas do not stand alone. They're all connected with the overall end goal of healthy children, families, and communities.

ERIN FICKER: That's a great point, and we're going to get to. We're going to get to how you may communicate with different folks in different fields and how you might hear them and understand them and why that's so important. So—

PRESENTER: One more, quickly.



ERIN FICKER: OK.

PRESENTER: How do we help individuals see things differently when they have their own beliefs of prevention?

ERIN FICKER: I think I'm going to defer that and see if we can answer that through the next couple of slides. What do you think, Jess?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: I think it makes perfect sense. I hope we hit on that. And if not, we won't lose it, I promise. We'll come back to it.

PRESENTER: Awesome, thank you.

ERIN FICKER: OK, so I'm going to turn it over to Jess now to talk about-- oops, I'm in the wrong place. About creating-- I can't get there-- about creating effective messages and how do we do that. So that's one of the questions that we've been working at.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Absolutely. Thanks so much, Erin. Thanks, everyone, for the questions and for your participation in the chat. I think the comments thus far are absolutely on point, and it's great to hear what you're thinking around these issues.

So we're going to shift now how to develop messages. So we've been talking more broadly about communication until now, and now we're going to really focus in on creating a standalone message that will be effective in that it's going to resonate with your intended audience, whoever that might be, and it's going to inspire them to take some kind of action.

And so I want to just first start by asking you to reflect with us about who some of the stakeholder groups or individuals have been in the past that you have pitched prevention to. So what kinds of groups or organizations have you tried to communicate about the value of prevention or have you gone to with a specific ask? So I'm going to ask you to think on that and then put your answers into the chat box, and we'll just see who some of the folks-- I bet there will be some themes that come up in terms of who you've tried to reach out to or who you've tried to make inroads with as far as developing partnerships with them or bringing them to your table or going to their table. So we'll give you a minute to reflect on that.

ERIN FICKER: It looks like we have the Elks club, schools, community coalitions, local churches, civic organizations, schools, churches, and community groups. So hearing a lot about community groups. Group homes-- that's great.

So foundations-- I just want to point out too that if you want to use the dropdown box to respond to all panelists and attendees, that would be great.



I'm getting a lot for just all panelists. So fraternal organizations, business, community centers, rotary, chamber of commerce, city council, the media, other non-profit organizations. So lots and lots of really great examples, Jess. JESSICA GOLDBERG: Oh, yeah, they're great. This makes me think of the 12 sectors. Anyone who's worked for a DFC support program grant, the 12 sectors of the community that we try to engage, they're all represented here.

I did see one comment fly by that said that the person works with all parts of the community and the business community has been the most challenging to engage. so? I think it's a really nice observation that we want to bring many, many different groups and sectors in the community into the fold with us. But some maybe come more easily than others, and some will take a little bit more persuasion. And that's where having that strong messaging comes into play.

So lots of great examples here. Student council, art therapy programs, government, all of the above. YMCAs, absolutely. And so thank you for that. And we ask you to reflect on that just so we can see the types of organizations or groups that you're really pitching to in real time.

And so on the next slide, you'll see a little one, two, three formula for crafting a prevention message. And the slide title might be misleading because is it really as easy as a one, two three step process? So the answer is yes and no, but the process helps us to really hone in on a few important aspects of an effective message.

One is to identify your goals, so you know exactly what you're hoping to get across and exactly what you're trying to accomplish through your message. And how do you know when you're effective? How do you know that you got there? It really begins on knowing what you're hoping to accomplish through the message.

And then we have to figure out the stakeholders that we need to engage that we're trying to reach and who we want to communicate with. Who are you actually trying to persuade? What group of people is going to have that biggest impact on whether or not you reach that goal?

And then with all of that information in hand, you create an effective message. And the effective message has and absolutely must contain those three elements that, Erin, you introduced on the disconnect slide with the wires. And we're going to explore those a little bit more in a few minutes.

But first, we'll go on the next slide to identifying the goal. And that's really the first step in the message creation process is to be crystal clear on exactly what it is that you need because the more specific that you can get in identifying your need, the more likely you are to be successful. And so getting more people connected to your project, maybe aware of what you and your coalition is doing is important. But knowing exactly what you need to then go



out and look for those specific resources, those skills, and then connect people to your project that can engage and empower community members to be invested in your outcomes.

And so just a few things on this. What you need at different times can really vary. So if you're using a data informed process like the SPF to guide your efforts, you might be engaging stakeholders around data needs. And this will be different and require different people with different skills depending on where you are in your process.

So if you're in the assessment phase, you might need people who have access to the data you need or who are interested in coming to look and interpret the information. But if you're further along in the cycle, you might want someone who can take the data that you have and frame it in a way that really connects to your community. Or maybe someone was skilled at social media who can help you share that data out to different people.

So where you are in your process affects the goal that you might have for your communication. And you also have to think about where your community is in terms of the level of readiness. And so if there's not a lot of readiness around prevention within the community as a whole or within certain sectors of the community, you might be trying to find someone who can have one-on-one conversations with other people and help build some relationships and rapport and get people on board by raising awareness that the problems that you've identified in your community actually are problems in your community.

And then if you're at a higher level of readiness, you might be looking for more influential leaders in the community to become involved in your efforts or take on different roles in your events, things like that. And so you might be looking for those gatekeepers. You might be looking for someone who has the kinds of skills you need in writing press releases or who has connections to the interfaith organization in your community who can get your coalition on the agenda to talk to those groups about the trends that you're seeing and how they can be involved.

And then last but certainly not least, we might be looking at the need to generate some resources. and so what organizational capacity or financial or space needs do you have? If you're planning for sustainability, who's going to help that? Who can do the grant writing or help you think about creating policy? Or who can help you think about how to earn income with some of your prevention services as needed? So these are all some of the considerations that go into identifying your goal.

And then on the next slide, we think about identifying our stakeholders. And so I don't know what comes up for you when you hear the word "stakeholder," but these are really the kinds of people in your community who have a potential stake in your work. Who's impacted by the problems or the consequences that you're seeing in the community that you're working on?



And so all the people that have a stake in your work you may need to pitch to at one point or another. And so once you know what your goal is, what your need is, how can you connect to those people that could fill the need? So you see some of these usual suspects on the slide-- medical professionals, educators, pharmacists, law enforcement, and then volunteers in the community. And there's definitely others, and you've already put quite a few in the chat of different sectors that you want to connect with.

But something we want to emphasize here is that you cannot know enough about or have enough understanding about your audience before you try to create your message. We realize it's something that many of you are just doing naturally, you've done it for years. But I just want to encourage you to think very consciously about how you would do this and how you might engage folks that you haven't been previously engaged with in the past.

Using the tools that we talked about in the last section that, Erin, you covered around listening for context, looking at the cues within a community to understand the community's beliefs or values or norms or maybe some of their opinions. I put a note in the chat that I'm really looking at the local media is a great way to understand and listen for those cues about community readiness, the kind of language that you might see if you have a local paper.

The terms that are used can be a good indicator about where the general public might be in terms of their understanding of prevention-related issues. And so you have to learn as much as you can about what's driving your audience's current understanding of these issues. What they think is responsible for the issues, what they think can be done about them. And then also listening to that contextual piece around their culture, their beliefs, and values. This is all really hard, so that's why we're taking the time to spell out these different steps for you.

So then creating an effective message. So this is where we really put it all together. This is the nuts and bolts of the message itself, and they consist of three main components. So the first one is to have a compelling reason for your audience to care.

So here you're going to hail back again to what you heard when you got to know your audience, what matters to them. What do they value? And then you can try to use some of that information to convince them to see things from our perspective.

And then you also want to provide whatever you need to as far as additional explanation goes as to why this is important. So that can be information that helps the audience better understand our issues or to reconcile those gaps in their knowledge. So what they believe to be true and what actually is true. Since we know in our work what's actually true and effective in prevention,





and so what kind of additional information is going to help resolve those disconnects in our audiences' mind?

And that might be around benefits or barriers to their participation in our efforts. It might be about what they might need to know and just don't know. What will help strengthen that reason for them to care. And here can be a nice opportunity to use data, if you have data to support your message.

I'm sure you're probably all either collecting data or may have some access to data that you use to guide your prevention efforts. And so if you could incorporate some data, and that can be really effective for audiences that like to see either the hard numbers or the qualitative stories that bear out how important our work is.

And then finally, what's the desired action that you want your audience to take? And so here is an opportunity to be really specific and asking for what you need. And so we need somebody who can provide us with this year's school survey data, or we need someone who can help us analyze data to chair our data subgroup in our coalition. What is the ask going in? And it's an opportunity now to link back to the goal that you already articulated about what can be done to move that goal forward.

And so we are going to just have a little bit more about this and a few more considerations around each of the components of an effective message. So based on that information we gather, want to understand why might our stakeholder agree that what we're doing is important. Why is it important to them? Why is it important to our community as a whole?

And we have to be sure not to make this too overwhelming. We want to be passionate, but we want to not overwhelm someone that we're talking to. So just in the course of our conversation, try to make that case for why our message is important.

And then also based on that data that you collected about your audience, do you have those data points that you can use to help inform them about the message that you have? Is there a way you can convey the information, the data to others that are engaged in the work that illustrate the kinds of opportunities that you have together, to work together so the audience might see your ask as more of a partnership than you going to them and asking them for something and not giving them anything in return.

And then when we think about our call to action, we want to be used in concrete actionable steps. Make sure that they're actually steps that people can take that you can do, and make sure that they have the access to any information they might need, any support they might need, or resources they might need to follow through on those steps.



OK, so that's just a little bit about the crafting of the message. And here are the components of the message in practice, and this is what it's going to sound like in practice. And so we have our goal of our example is to build support for local prevention efforts, and we're going to try to do that with an audience of business leaders in our community. So I was really happy to see that comment in the chat around the business community, because for communities I've worked with, it's been challenging to sometimes engage members of that group, and so that's why we built this example around that.

So what might be a compelling reason for the business community to care about prevention efforts or to support those efforts or to become involved? Well, we know that making the case for the idea of shared responsibility for preventing substance use among youth can be a reason that resonates across stakeholders. And that's based in some research that was done by a group called the Frameworks Institute.

It's an organization that tries to build communication capacity in the nonprofit sector by researching what the public thinks about social issues and then determining how to reframe communications to help shape public understanding and discourse. And so that compelling reason if there's a shared responsibility we all have, we all have to contribute to preventing substance misuse, can be something that really resonates with different members of our community.

And so then we can strengthen that claim by adding that additional explanation about that responsibility by saying that when we work together as adults in a variety of capacities, we each play a really vital role in preventing and reducing the harmful effects of substance misuse. And that collaboration both better fuels better implementation of prevention initiatives, but that it also creates better outcomes for us. You might also include information on benefits to them as collaborators in the spirit of with them or what's in it for me. Since we know that explanation that highlights benefits or resolves barriers to participation can actually facilitate a more positive response to your call to action.

And so I would close that message with a specific ask that you want to make. So in this case, to designate a seat on the local chamber of commerce for a youth member from the coalition youth group. And you'd want to make the case that would ensure that the youth perspective is heard and considered in context. And it would facilitate that cross pollination between the coalition and the business sector to have one of our youth members take part in that organization.

And so the beginnings of the message that we would craft then are we all have a shared responsibility to prevent young people in our community from using substances. And by doing that, we build a strong community and also a healthy future, a healthier environment for our local businesses. And so that would just be the start of what would be our message with a compelling



reason to care, thoughts about benefits and participation for the potential audience in the sentence on the screen.

So a longer message would also include some more of that explanatory information and then that very, very clear, concise, specific call to action that we want them to take. So we started it here, and we have some time to build out a few examples together. So we can practice incorporating those three key elements into a message.

ERIN FICKER: Great.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Yes, Erin, I want to hand it over to you to start us off.

ERIN FICKER: OK, great. So I want to just say, Jess did such a great job of showing us the steps of going through, making sure you have all those things before you approach a potential community member or a potential funder, all of these things. And so you saw how simple it is to may answer each one of those questions and then put it together. So we're going to do that together, and we're going to do for a couple of audiences, and we want you to participate by putting in the chat some of your ideas on what we could do.

So the first audience is that non-prevention audience. So this could be someone in your organization, if you work in a large organization and you're one of two or three people who do prevention and you need to explain it to someone else in your office. This could be really any member of the community that just has no understanding of prevention.

So the goal is to get other departments in the area-- so we're going to go with the agency example. So get other departments in your agency to co-sponsor a coalition of it. So you really need to get them on board.

So the intended audience, that is the people working in your organization in non-prevention related roles, or if there's a specific department that would be who you were going to talk to. So this is where we want to get you involved and ask you, what's the compelling reason? What do you think would be a compelling reason for those folks to get involved?

And I'm going to open the chat so I can take a look. So feel free to go ahead and write in the chat what you think might be a compelling reason. Anyone? Jess? Do you have a compelling reason?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: I do, and I think Sarah actually—

ERIN FICKER: Yeah.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Anticipated me. But that's one that it came up for me as I was thinking about it. It might be not only advancing our efforts of our



program, our coalition, but also it might advance the interests of your organization as a whole, and that would benefit them as well.

ERIN FICKER: So we've got-- and we'll just write it right in here-- become more-- whoops-- visible in the community. Whoops. So there we go. So we have our compelling reason.

Someone else said, and I think it's great, is greater follow through on participation into other programs if substance abuse risks are addressed. So that's a great-- so if substance use is addressed and reduced, then it can contribute to kids being more involved in your programs. So let's say you're at the YMCA and you want the pool to help you, the aquatics department to help you, you can explain that if we address these issues, we could have more kids at open swim. So that's a great example.

Someone also said reducing substance use can contribute to a reduction in related crimes in the community. So that's one. And that might be really useful when you're talking to law enforcement.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: And I think all of these are great examples of compelling reasons. And I would say that the response around the greater follow through on participation in other programs if substance misuse is addressed, that's actually more, in my mind, it's also a compelling reason, but it can also be an additional explanation for this reason. So we'll be more visible in our community because we're going to have better participation, we're going to have more people coming to us if we're able to address those substance misuse related issues.

ERIN FICKER: So that's a great segue into our explanation. Let's think about explanations. So how can you explain to someone why it's important to become more visible in the community?

So someone said, greater participation in your own programs, so that's a good explanation. Anyone else want to take a stab at that? It takes a minute to think. These are not easy questions. They're not things we have always on the top of our minds.

To lead by example. Reducing substance use can contribute to drug-related crimes in the community. Oh, we already read that one. But we can also lead by example.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: And I was also thinking, Erin, any data that you might have on the impact of the event that it's had on the community or on your coalition new members, new partners, new collaborations that have sprouted from the event if you've held it in the past, anything that can make the case for these folks to be involved.



ERIN FICKER: Yeah, well, I think I'm going to go with the greater participation in your own program. That's a great explanation. And why it's important is you might be able to get kids more engaged in community activities generally.

This is really the "what's in it for them." But we could generally say to get kids- let's see, the explanation is, when kids are not using substances, then they are more likely to participate in other activities. And this may be something you learned through some of that community background that you did.

So becoming more visible also increases networking opportunities for the future. That's a great point. So the more visible that folks could become, they may have greater opportunities to collaborate. So it's like come with me and help me with this event because there are going to be people there who I think you should meet. And this may be really useful for you in meeting and understanding some of the folks in our community. I think that's a great example.

OK, and then what's the call to-- excuse me-- what is our call to action? Oh, my computer. Sorry. The call to action is, what is that?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Well, the call to action, we know it should be really specific, very concise, very concrete. And so we're just asking you all on the line to use your creativity. If there's something-- we want them as a goal to help cosponsor an event. But is there something specific that you might ask of them around that cosponsorship?

ERIN FICKER: Integrate services promoted by integrated programming and referrals available. OK, so I'm not sure that I got all of that. But maybe you're asking for volunteers from their department.

OK, so specifically, I need your volunteers from your department to help make this event work. We just don't have enough people. So could you just be there to help? If it's a carnival or a health event or a coalition function, a call to action could be I'm just asking you for volunteers.

Attend the event, volunteer at the event, show up at 7:00, and run the booth. That's very specific. I love that one. Ask them to help with the event. And then I've seen some good explanations or some good compelling reasons, like making drug-free clubs for youth, cross-promoting opportunities.

So those are good explanations or compelling reasons. I think some of the great call to actions that I'm hearing are things like, can you provide volunteers is what I'm going to add here to support the event. So there you go.

So you have your ask, which is here to put all that together and say, coworker, I am really hoping that you could help me with this prevention event that we're doing. It's coming up really soon, and we're working on this





because we need to become more visible in the community. We need people to see the work that we're doing.

And for you, your participation in this program might help you also become more visible. But we know that this when we do programs like this that kids are-- and kids aren't using, they're more likely to participate in other activities. So I'm hoping that you could maybe help me out and provide some support for the event with some volunteers.

So there you go. So I just put that all together really quick on the spot. Jess, I'm going to make you do the next one. Because it's hard, even when you have them all, it's still hard to put that together in a nice ask.

But let's try another one. So we have another example here of coalition members. Oh, I've got to clear my screen. Doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, doo, because we don't want that to happen. Clear. OK, there we go.

So what's the goal? So we were going to recruit volunteers to help with event-- oh we're really just we just did this, but we want our coalition members now. So we're talking to people who are already involved. They know prevention, they know what's important. So these are new or potential coalition members, and we want to help recruit them to volunteer.

So this one might go quickly. Let's see. So what's the compelling reason? Anyone?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: So just thinking about these are new or potential members, so they're not people actively engaged. So not people who typically do volunteer for your events.

ERIN FICKER: Yep. So I see a couple of good ones already from Michelle. So promote the event to their base of people and organizations that they collaborate. So the reason I need you there is so that you can promote this event.

Become more involved in the community. So one compelling reason is that you can become more involved in the community. Increasing leadership skills and networking. And again, remember we're trying to look for the compelling reason, a why we're doing this? What's our goal? It's the compelling reason for our goal, which is our event.

So collective impact with everyone collaborating and sharing ideas and resources will help us address or substance use disorders in a variety of pathways. Well, that is very compelling. A chance to connect with youth and strengthen credibility with them, joining a group with common goals in the community. These are all really great. Jess, what do you think I should write up in here?



JESSICA GOLDBERG: I really like all of these, and it's around why should they care. So why do they care about this issue? Maybe the chance to connect with youth and strength and credibility could be a great compelling reason. I mean they're all great, but I think that one is a little bit different than the one we just did, so maybe it will take us down a different path.

ERIN FICKER: OK, so that is a great compelling reason. OK, let's keep going and find out what's the explanation.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: So what else would they need to know before they said yes to you? And what would they need to know about the event, about the reason that you just gave that they should care? What else might they be interested in knowing?

ERIN FICKER: Again, this can take a while-- what is it? What is it that I would need to tell them other information?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: In real life, you wouldn't be doing them in three minutes. [LAUGH] You will spend more time on it. But for this one, I can tell you-- I do see some answers coming in.

ERIN FICKER: Bringing you to your program. Time and place for and who will be there. I think that's really important. Who's going to be there and why that's important. Opens up more networks for their organization by coming together to help. Specifics about time commitment. Yeah, so I see a lot of specifics about the event.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: And that's where my mind went as well. It's much easier to say yes something that's finite and that you understand what will actually go into it. Something is manageable. We're looking to move people into action. So if it's a one-time event they're committing to, is there a set number of hours or tasks associated with it? I think all of those things are important explanation to include.

ERIN FICKER: So the event is Thursday at 1:00 PM. So—

JESSICA GOLDBERG: We're late.

ERIN FICKER: I know, and I did not do that intentionally. And there will be youth and youth-serving organizations there. So that gets to the this might be useful for you. You're someone we want to bring into our coalition, so this might be a reason why they would want to be there because they would be around other youth-serving organizations.

So that's another good reason why they might. I think I got most of them. Is there me that I missed? Jess, is that good?



JESSICA GOLDBERG: Yeah, I think it's perfect. I think it's a great explanation.

ERIN FICKER: OK, so next is our call to action. What do we specifically want them to do? And it's kind of our goal. So it's like we're going back to the goal.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: And what specific piece of help do we need? So setting up for the event, exactly.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah, spreading the word. So if we want them to recruit volunteers-- we want to have them spread the word and set up the event. Or I like "set up the event." That's great. Maybe we want this volunteer coalition member to MC the event. Oh, I love that. Making them feel important and highlighted.

Yeah. Yeah, I think giving them-- a small ask to a new coalition member is, I think, a really good way to get a win with that person or making them feel really important in their role. Assist in engaging attendees at the event. So is there anything they need to help? So let's go with, can you MC the event? What do you think? Jess, I'm going to give it to you to try to put that together.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: All right, I'm ready. I think it's great. And I want to say that before I do, I did my formative research on this community and on this audience, and I know that our new members are joining because they are really passionate about serving youth and preventing substance misuse among youth. And so we know that that reason will be compelling because of that research that we did.

So if you can help out at this month's event, it will be a really great opportunity to meet some of the other coalition members, especially our youth members, our youth group members, and some of the youth-serving organizations that are part of the coalition. It really makes being part of the coalition more meaningful when you can contribute actively and make those connections.

And so this is a one-time event on Thursday. We're anticipating it not taking any more than three hours of your time, and we'd ask you if you'd be willing to MC. We want you there by 3:00 if you can do it, and the whole thing is going to go from 4:00 to 6:00. And we'll maybe have you speak up a few different times, make some announcements, and host the raffle for us, but that's it, and that's all. So would you be willing to help out by MCing the event?

ERIN FICKER: Boy, Yeah, I'm on board. You totally convinced me. I can't wait.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Well, I have to tell you that this group, I had done a little thinking about what my ask would be. And you actually-- we did not plan any of this in advance, but you actually picked the compelling reason, the



explanation that I had already thought through for this one. So it made it a little easier for me, I think, Erin.

ERIN FICKER: That's great. OK, so we're going to move on, and I'm going to clear my screen first. Do you want to do one more? You want to do one more? We can do that because we have one more, and that is community members.

So we've got people who are in the coalition, we've talked to people in our organization, and now we want to talk to the community at large. And so our goal is to get them to understand the importance of specific prevention interventions. We need them to really understand why this is important. And this might be something that you're doing-- you've gone through the planning process, you selected the program that you're going to do. You're going to be doing a media campaign, and you need to get them to understand the importance of this specific intervention. So this building community capacity and community understanding to do something.

So who's the intended audience? Oh, I don't have an intended audience. Jess, who is our intended audience here?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: I think it's just community members that aren't really part of the prevention efforts in the community yet. So people without a lot of interest, or we don't know their interest level, but without a huge stake in what we're doing already.

ERIN FICKER: OK, so what would be the compelling reason? What's the compelling reason behind getting them to understand the importance of this intervention? Or what is the importance of the intervention? So maybe you can help us take it from there.

What would be the compelling reason? Why? And this one to me is the one that is about explaining our work the most. So this is where we say, it will improve the quality of life in the community. Collaboration builds a better community. To employers of youth, access to potential successful future employees benefits you.

This intervention can save lives. So if we're working in harm reduction or we're working in an overdose situation or even drinking, knowing that drunk driving can kill. So we can save lives. It's a compelling reason.

And it all depends on what the intervention is you're trying to get them to support. When we play a role in the healthy development of our children, we create healthier children, families, and communities. Well, that, I think, is a very compelling reason.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Yeah, that organization I mentioned earlier, Erin, actually the example, Karen, you gave is around that idea of human potential.



And that was another one that they had researched and found to be really effective in terms of changing hearts and minds in favor of prevention efforts. So that whole idea, we're helping people reach their full potential by doing our work.

ERIN FICKER: I'm going to use the "when we all play a role." Is that OK? In healthy-- whoops. And while I'm typing this, I am going to go ahead and give you the next one, which really is very difficult apparently, explanations. So while I'm typing this, you guys think about the explanation.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: And, Erin, did you suggest that we focus in on a media campaign as our intervention?

ERIN FICKER: I threw that out there. I just threw it out there.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: I think we should just because I think that will make it easier for folks to think about that explanation. So what would they need to know about that particular kind of intervention? Doing some kind of social media marketing campaign around prevention messaging. What more information would we give them that would help them understand why that's so important?

ERIN FICKER: So Karen said, this is a really big part of community messaging, when we all play a role. I think it's a great compelling reason for that. So digging further, the explanation of why this communication campaign. Promoting social media apps for prevention. Research tells us that social support is important for human beings. It brings the community together.

Those are all good examples.

I also think about that a media campaign can change behavior, or it can inform people, to change their behavior. So if we're trying to promote through our media campaign, like parents not giving alcohol to their kids. And I can't I've blocked on-- parents who host lose the most. Let's say you're doing that, you want to explain that explaining the consequences or the reason why this messaging is going to work and why that message makes us healthier.

So the explanation might be, we need to explain-- a media campaign prepares the groundwork for the growth we want. That's great. So yeah, so why are we doing this? Your community needs you. Change won't happen without action. I think that's a great compelling reason for them to be involved. Promoting a consistent message to you throughout their community members. So Jess, do you want to pick one?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Yeah, let me see. I like something-- I mean, I think I love all of these examples, but just relating back to this idea of human potential and development. I saw something come through that I thought was





so on point. Maybe this idea of research telling that social support is important for human development because this is an opportunity to pair with the data.

So we need them to support this intervention because that's how we're going to reach the development, that positive development in our children and our community is by having that support. So we all play a role, but we know that from research-- and if you were able to actually cite data in a way that wasn't intimidating or overwhelming to say, when these efforts are supported by community members, we know they're this much more effective or have this much more reach. If that information, that type of information were available, it would be, I think, a really worthwhile explanation for why this is important.

ERIN FICKER: And the call to action then? Jess, we are a little slim on-- oh, oh, my goodness. I just changed my view by accident. I'm so sorry. So what might you see as a call to action in this pitch?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Now really simply put, I think we want, if it's a media campaign, we want them to share. We want them to post, share, and like. That could be one thing. There's probably lots of other things you could do. But just real clear, clean, quick. When you see it come through your feed, share it if you will or send it to someone who might be interested because it's so important that you do in order to help us create that healthy environment and promote that healthy development.

ERIN FICKER: I think share, like-- post, share, and like the post is great. Someone else said a good one, which was, can your organization contribute \$2,000 for the media campaign? And you know what, sometimes you got to ask for money. Sometimes you got to ask for money.

Can you attend meetings? I really like with this idea of communication campaigns that we just need you to engage with it and share it. The other thing you might ask them is if you hear it communicated, can you communicate it? Can you correct those miscommunications, which I think is a good reason.

Well, let's keep going because we have some more stuff we want to do. But before we do that, we would say, hi, community member. We are doing a communication campaign, and we're trying to get the word out about youth drinking. And I believe that you're one of the people that can really help us.

And you know that when we all play a role in development of our children, we create healthier families and we create a healthier community, and that's really what we want. And we know that research shows us that supporting kids in this way is really important to their development. So we're going to launch this campaign. It's coming out, and I know that you have 40,000 followers all from this community and that you admin to groups on Facebook for our community.



If you see these messages come through on my feed, could you follow me, and then post, share, or like them? Make sure that the message is getting out to a larger audience. It would be so helpful to us.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Nicely done. I think that was great. Well done.

ERIN FICKER: OK, so we want to get to the hard part. There are challenges. And so I'm going to turn it over to Jess to-- whoops, I'm going the wrong direction-- so I'm going turn it over to Jess to talk about overcoming challenges. If I can just get this—

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Well, take your time because I'm going to quickly comment on a comment in the chat, because what I was thinking about this is because this exercise was if you switch out the goal and the audience, the ask is going to be different, the compelling reason explanation, of course, they're going to be different. So Antonio, you put in the chat, we need your input on the development of the media campaign.

And there's probably many-- there are times where we'll want the whole community to weigh in and maybe get feedback from a large swath of the community. But if it's a different audience, we might have that as an ask as well. So maybe it's the youth services coordinator in your community. We might want them to weigh in. Or it's a youth group at a religious organization, a leader or some of the members of that, we might want them to weigh in on the development of the campaign.

And so just a quick message around when you change the goal and the audience, all the other pieces of this puzzle change as well. And so like you said, Erin, we're going to talk now about overcoming some of the challenges that we're going to hit, because we are going to hit them. We don't always land-- our messages don't always land where we want them to, and sometimes they're met with unfavorable response, and then what do you do? How do you meet and overcome those communication challenges as they come?

And so on the next slide, we're going to start by looking at a few specific challenges. But I think that this slide really gets at what I believe is the biggest underlying challenge, which is the assumption that people understand what you're trying to get across. And so I'll let you advance, Erin. It just hasn't advanced on my end. There it goes.

So yeah, there's just a delay. So as we were putting today's presentation together, I was struck by this quote about communication, and this is from the author George Bernard Shaw. And it reads the biggest problem-- "The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place." And I really like the image on the slide because I think it really gets at what we mean.



It's brought to mind this like many, many times in my work that I think I've had a conversation with a colleague or a stakeholder where I've been effective in communicating what I was trying to say. And only after to find my audience came away with a totally different understanding of what was said. You see the email follow-up after, and it's like we had two different conversations.

And so we're both reasonably bright people when that happens. So either it's how I communicated, how what I said was interpreted, or something in between that goes wrong. So the challenge is we're going to look at today try to anticipate those issues and offer some ideas around resolving them. And so there are three challenges we'll be looking at. One-- so the first is you don't know if you're describing your prevention efforts effectively in your message. The next is, you aren't sure that your message is received as intended. And the final one that we're will look at is, what happens if you get a "no" response from a prospective collaborator or partner?

And so we can bring up the first challenge, which is you don't know that you're talking effectively about your prevention efforts. And this isn't really a throw away. We have to be able to talk about our work. Whenever we talk about making the case for prevention, we do reflect on how difficult it is. But it really starts with being able to articulate who you are, what you do, and why it's important.

And so that means really honing in on our three Ws-- the who, the what, and the why of our message. I really struggle with this too. When my father and I talk about my work, he tells me to go do my stuff because he doesn't really know what it is. And then my partner's mother thought I was a social worker for the longest time because she didn't understand prevention, even though she herself is a nurse and does a lot of prevention in her work. And so it took a lot of effort to make her understand.

And so it's taking the time to create this introduction to yourself to perfect your three Ws. It's really challenging, and it takes effort and planning to do well. One of my coalition-- one of my colleagues just went out to a local coalition director meeting. And when she came back, her first comment was, I wasn't prepared to pitch to this audience. I didn't know enough about their priorities or needs. And she also felt that she wasn't able to articulate what she did, and so there was a complete disconnect in between those two-- the audience and the speaker that we have to take some time and work to resolve.

And so here's an example of the three Ws in action. So Vanessa is a task force leader, and she is trying to make a pitch to work on a collaborative project to a business community leader. And so she says, you can see on the slide, she introduces herself-- my name is Vanessa. I'm the coordinator of the Everytown Substance Abuse Coalition.

She shares the mission, which is related to this individual's work. So here's their compelling reasons to care. Our mission is to reduce the growing rates of



alcohol use among young adults. They're particularly alarming-- here's your explanation-- for young adults who are in the workforce where problem alcohol use often leads a poor job performance and onsite alcohol-related injuries.

And so you already see elements of her message in her introduction. But what she does is introduce who she is, what she's doing, and why it's important. And those, again, are the three Ws of your message. Getting those down will really help your message land more, no matter what the audience is that you're speaking to.

So our next example of a challenge is, how do you know that your message is heard and received the way that you intended? It's a really tough one. Because it's rare that we can ask someone to teach back to us what we've said to check for understanding. And so there's a few things we can do. First, we can reiterate the main points of our message multiple times after your initial pitch. As the conversation continues, you can be checking for understanding in all the usual ways by asking, does that make sense? Do you have any questions? What do you think of that?

And then finally here on the slide, there's a few things you can be listening for. Remember back to listening for cues, listening for about the issue that you're discussing what they think about why it's happening, what can be done, and then who should be doing it. And those are the key things that will let you know whether the person you're speaking to is seeing the situation from a different perspective, or are there disconnects in their understanding that need to be resolved before you can move forward? And if those exists, you have to potentially invest some time in building their readiness before you're even able to partner with them anyway because no matter how great your pitch is, if there's a readiness issue you may have to devote some time to addressing it.

And then our last challenge, you get to "no." And you will. I feel like Dr. Seuss in Oh, The Places You'll Go, except sometimes you won't, because you won't always get a "yes" to what you ask. And we all have to sometimes go back to the drawing board.

And here, the goal is really to keep the conversation going. Try to identify some commonalities with the person you're speaking to, and end the conversation in a place where you have plans to talk again. It's all about the relationship building. And the more connected we are to someone individually and professionally, the more we can highlight the ways that we're similar or the similarities between our organizations work and theirs, the more likely you'll be able to deepen that connection. And then the better that you know them, the more you'll be able to tailor the information you want to share to them so they'll be more likely to feel like it resonates.



And so a quick reminder that a pitch that's effective in engaging a potential partner is not necessarily going to be effective for another partner. So we have to be audience-specific, tailored to address our audience's needs and values and priorities. And keep in mind any types of recent events, politically, socially, economically in our communities and then in the broader society that might influence our partners' receptivity to our pitches.

We don't make our pitches in a vacuum, so it's really important to look at your community context, the climate of your community, as these are going to maybe impact how your pitch is interpreted. Sometimes we pitch at the wrong time, and if we read the signs going on, we might have decided to delay until you think your perspective partner might be more receptive. So you're trying to get people to see your side of the issue, and it makes sense to take some time to consider different ways to get your point across if your initial attempt is met with a "no."

And so these are just a few thoughts about some possible communication challenges you might encounter, how to address them. And now I think I'm handing it back to you, Erin, to wrap us up.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah, so we're just going to do just a quick recap of what we've talked about. So when crafting prevention messages, we want to assess the community, the audience, and the community's understanding of the issues. Whoops, for the love of Pete. We want to craft messages that provide compelling reasons, an explanation of why we need to do it, and a clear call to action, and we need to anticipate challenges that are going to come up.

So I want to-- recapping what we've talked about, I want to take some time to answer any questions, and we don't have a lot of time, but I do want to take just a moment to answer questions. Do we have any questions?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: We don't.

ERIN FICKER: OK.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: We had a couple questions, but you were able to answer them during the presentation, so good job.

ERIN FICKER: Great.

JESSICA GOLDBERG: So we currently do not.

ERIN FICKER: OK, and we have someone to ask a question early on, and I don't remember who it was, but I said we will get there. Did we get there when we asked that question? Did we answer that question for you?





Great, yes. Thank you so much. Wonderful. Well, I'm going to just give you a little bit more time to see if you have any questions that are bubbling. And if not, if there's no questions, then we can wrap up for the day.

Oh, is it possible to share the presentation so I can share with my faculty on prevention? Absolutely. So when, as Ann said, we will post the recording. But when that recording's posted, there will also be the slides.

Yeah, so there you can-- that's the link to where you can find all of our products. And it'll be just-- know that it'll be a week, maybe two before this particular event is posted. Any other questions that we can address? Just thought-- it might be helpful to include stakeholders' research into the three-step process. Oh, that's a great idea. Yeah.

Can you mention a prevention pitch that you found compelling? That's a good question. Jess, do you want to-- do you have one?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: Yeah, you know what, I do actually have when it comes to the top of my head. And it's not so much a pitch, but the same elements apply. It was actually a social marketing campaign a community near me did. And they just found the most compelling reasons to care. It was aimed to parents. They did a great job finding really, really compelling images as well. I don't know that they had permission to actually use all the images because there were a lot of very topical, very current images from TV and media. But I just remember reading and thinking, wow, they spent a lot of time understanding their audience, the specific group of parents within their community.

It wasn't just pitching to parents at large. They found these reasons that were so specific and unique to parents in their community based around those norms that we talked about earlier. And they actually evaluated their campaign and found that it was very effective. That it really did change hearts and minds among that group of parents because of the way in which it was communicated. So I guess from that, the take away would be to spend-- if they're going to spend time anywhere, it's really understanding the audience and finding them a compelling reason to care.

ERIN FICKER: I can share a more personal one that's not about prevention, but it is about persistence. I am currently on the board of directors for a preschool, and I was approached by a friend who was on the board, and then I was approached by-- every time I left the building with my daughter in tow, I would say, oh, I'm going to miss this place so much when she leaves. And they would say, you can stay, and they were so persistent and pleasantly persistent.

You can stay connected. There's an open seat on the board of directors. And they were just pleasantly persistent in asking me to engage in their work. And I had a million reasons why I shouldn't, but they really shared with me why I



could help, what I could bring, and why it was important, and the impact that I could have.

So that was-- and they just kept it up. My friend took me out to have lunch, and he sat down, and he said, this is the work we do on the board, this is why it's so important. We need people like you, and made a really great pitch. And I've been on the board of directors now for three years, and it is really wonderful, so it was a very compelling message. Thanks for that great question. And I think we've reached the end of our time together.

PRESENTER: We do have one question, if we can just take a quick minute.

ERIN FICKER: Absolutely.

PRESENTER: What are your thoughts on developing a shared language or understanding concerning prevention? The more consistent and shared are message is, this will help integrate prevention into other areas of work.

ERIN FICKER: Yep, I think that's an important question about using jargon first off. I think there's two parts of that is using jargon so that we're not putting people off by talking about the SPF and ATOD and all these words that we might use that are not-- that someone, a layperson wouldn't understand. But also creating a common language, I think, is important that we understand someone else's language.

So if we're talking to law enforcement that we take time to understand how they talk about and think of these things. So they may think of deferment or diversion instead of prevention. So how do we create that shared language is something that happens over time, but I think is important. So you make a great point. Jess, do you have anything to add?

JESSICA GOLDBERG: The only thing I would add to that is that I think the shared language is huge. Having those sort of, not canned, but those messages that are ready to go can help resolve some of those barriers to not speaking the same language. But then there is that piece around customizing for your own community, for your different stakeholder groups. So I think there's a balance of creating a language that we all share and then make sure we're customizing for specific groups based on their specific characteristics.

ERIN FICKER: That's great, yeah. A lot of that shared language is developed once we get them on board and engaged. Wonderful.

PRESENTER: Thank you. And because we value everyone's time, just we are at the end of our time. So I want to thank both you, Jess, and Erin for a great presentation. And everyone who stayed with us, we appreciate your time.



And again, if you have questions, Erin is putting her contact information up there. And when the recording is up on the website, you'll also get this information as well. So thank you all for your time this afternoon. And I don't know where you are, but it's raining where I am, so I hope at least it's good rain and have a great afternoon.

ERIN FICKER: Thanks, everyone.