



Being powerful influencers

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Specialists in designing, facilitating training and advising on co-operative decision making in policy and practice

What I will talk about...

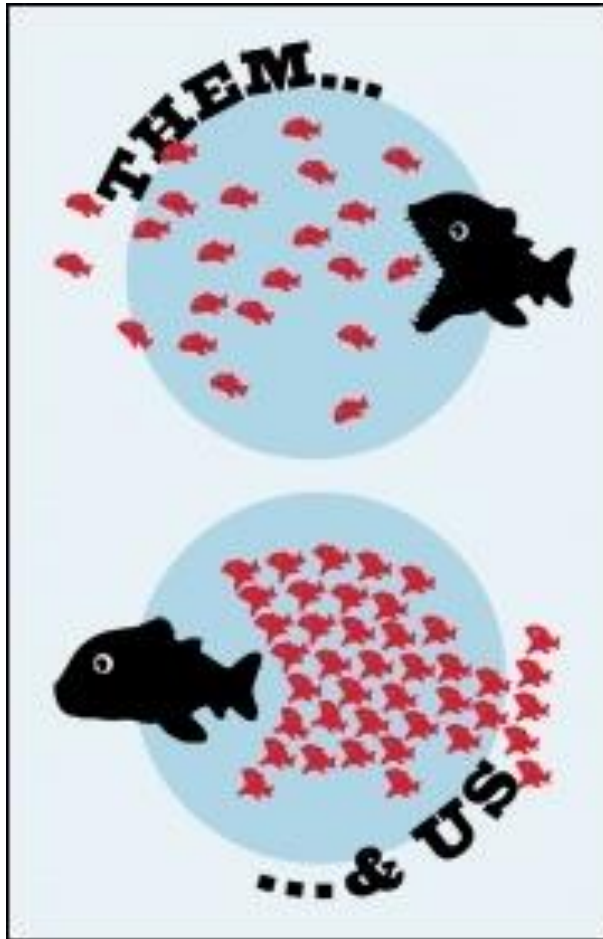


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- Introduction
- Understand ourselves as environmentalists
- Understand human nature
- Influencing positively
- Understanding groups
- To be a powerful influencer....

INTRODUCTION

To influence - change your view



People are the problem

- They get in the way and drain resources
- Science and technical knowledge
- Tell others what to do
- Push others to change
- Formal approaches
- Our ideas
- Experts

We are all part of the problem – and all part of the solution

- They bring resources, ideas and information
- Many forms of knowledge valuable
- Listen with an open mind
- Work with others to agree change
- Informal approaches
- The best ideas are the ones we all make happen
- Partners and allies

(Adapted and developed from Van Boven, G. & Hesselink, F. 2003).

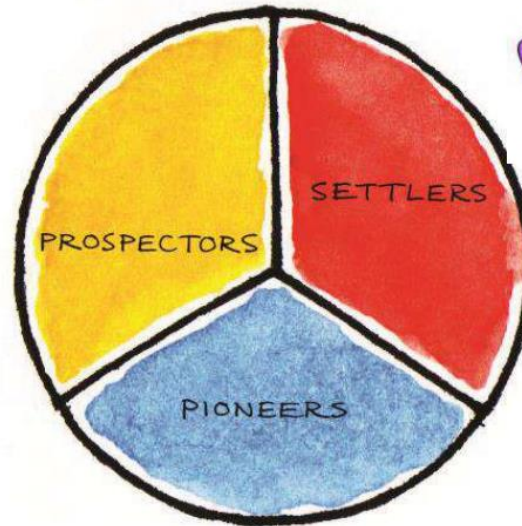
UNDERSTANDING OURSELVES

What makes people tick?

Values: unconscious drivers and behaviours – unmet needs



Prospectors –
outer directed:
need for success,
esteem of others
then self esteem.
Acquire and
display symbols of
success.



Settlers - need for
security driven:
safety, security,
identity belonging.
Keep things small,
local, avoid risk



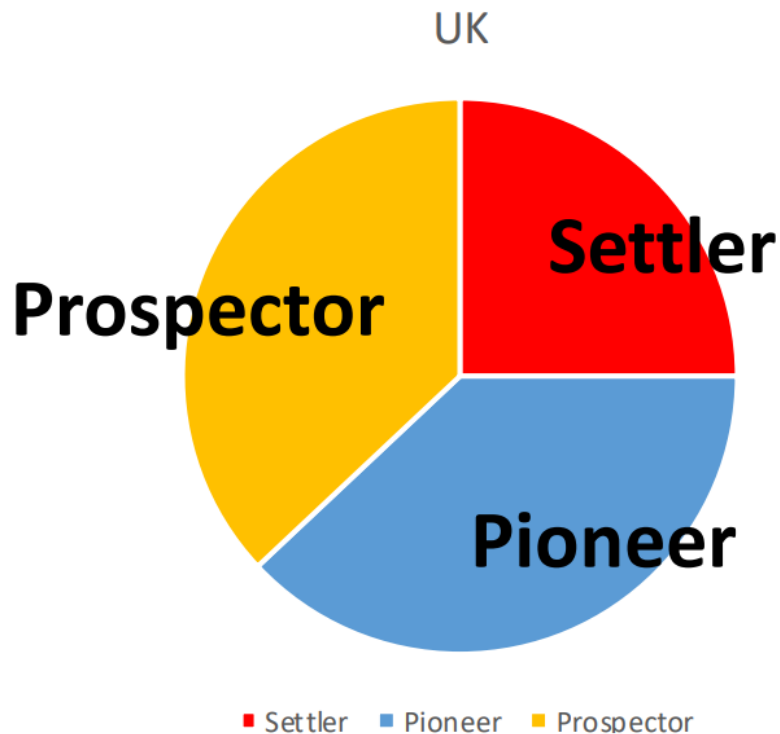
Pioneers – inner directed. Need to
connect actions with values, explore
ideas, experiment. Networking,
interests, ethics, innovation

Campaign Strategy Ltd/ CDSM 2017

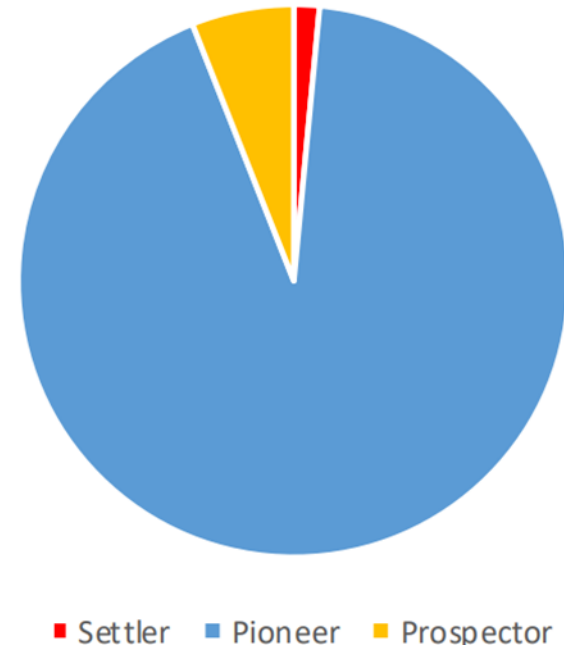
“What makes people tick” by Chris Rose

Environment Community is skewed

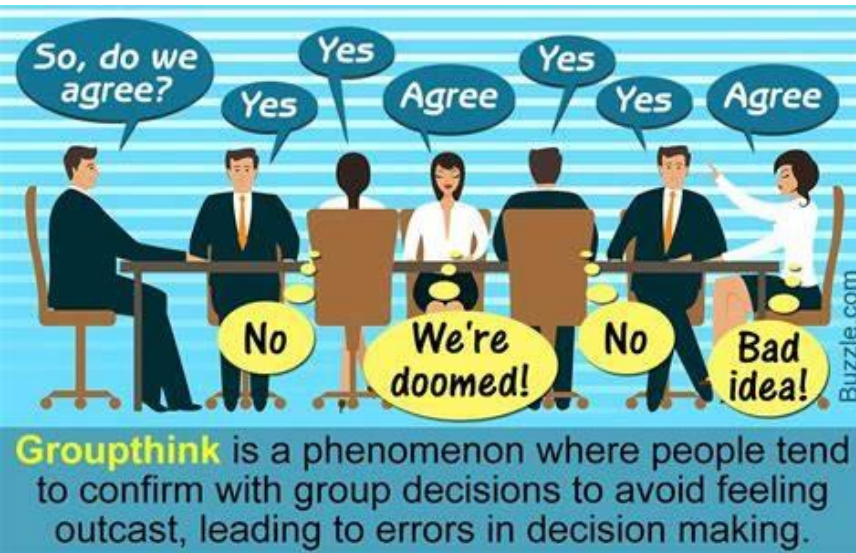
UK population



Coastal Futures 2019



What does all this mean for influencing?



- As pioneers we have particular needs and so do prospectors and settlers - tailor communication
- Learn other kinds of science! Social Science, Psychology, Behavioural change science, new discipline of Evidence Based Wisdom
- Be aware of our own group think as environmentalists and our (often wrong) assumptions about how the world works

Our Group think: they need better information



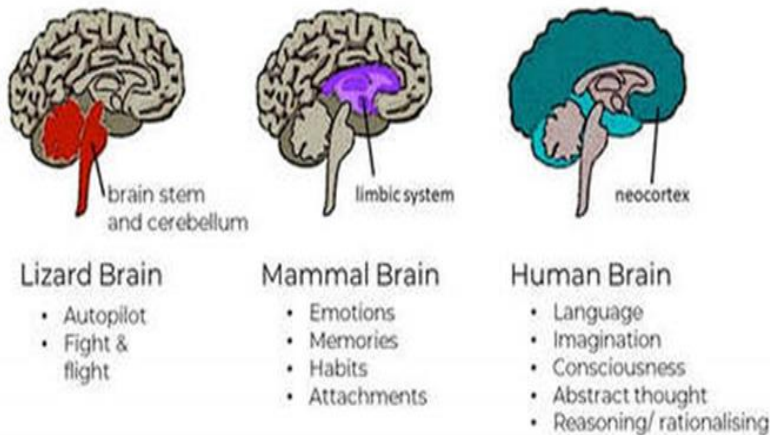
We assume the problem is information deficit and we influence with information ...but...

- **Inattentional blindness** – our brains only see what is relevant at the time
- **Confirmation bias** – we see what confirms our world view - or actively seek it out. (We are less biased if making decisions for others than for ourselves)
- **Technical language, stats and graphs not well understood** (*US representative sample asked people to convert 20 out of 100 to a percentage and 28% failed to do so accurately*) **Stats work better than anecdotes to preach to the convertedbut reverse for the sceptical!**

... and to logically analyse the information

What drives behaviours?

■ The three parted brain:



Most behaviour is not governed by the rational part of our brain..

- 95% of decisions are made using heuristics – decision short cuts:
 - Ease
 - Anchoring
 - Familiarity
 - Sunk costs
 - Functional fixedness
 - Optimism bias
 - Follow the leader
 - Norming
- Time of day - decision fatigue
- Mood

POWERFUL INFLUENCERS: ...UNDERSTAND HUMAN NATURE



People have a natural bias to short- termism and localism



Don't focus on big picture and long term



Environmental complexity and scale are overwhelming



Talk about a long term positive vision

And then connect with here and now for action to get to that vision



People desire autonomy and control



Don't use power to override, push or coerce to get your way.



It's a threat to autonomy.
Might get short term compliance but then resistance and reactance (i.e. they do the opposite!)



Do relate as equals
Understand their perspective
Discuss and share possible solutions and ideas





People are very driven to maintain self esteem



Don't engage in eco and climate shaming of individuals



People feel judged and it triggers cognitive dissonance - their brain will scramble to restore esteem by deciding you and the facts are wrong!



Do use 'I language' to share your experience.
Be curious and uncover their pro-environmental actions.
Acknowledge and appreciate
Ask if they have ideas or plans to build on that - offer support





People pursue happiness and avoid negative emotions (so brains avoid thinking about climate and nature crisis)



Don't focus on the doom and gloom to frighten them into action



It triggers a feeling of threat and fear which causes aversion, avoidance, denial and hyper-defensiveness



Do tell stories of success and progress and hope. It is much more likely to motivate action

POWERFUL INFLUENCERS ...DO SO POSITIVELY

A positive vision



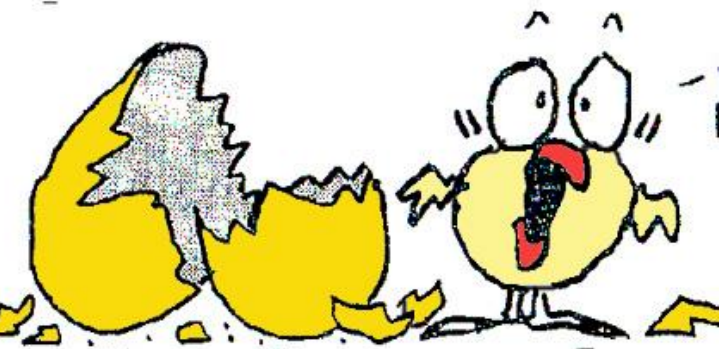
- “The year is 2050. The world is on fire. The air is suffocating and deadly. Entire countries are under water”



- “The year is 2050. The world is breathing. The air is fresh. Nature is thriving. Entire populations have better quality of life”.

The Future we Choose” by Christiana Figures and Tom Rivett

- OH WOW!
PARADIGM
SHIFT!



Problems and issues	Constructive thinking
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Frustration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Motivated
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Efforts not valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Efforts valued
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Environment is complex & difficult = a problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Looking after the environment has many benefits and is do-able
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Feeling overwhelmed	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Believe in own capacity and agency to make a difference
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Risk averse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Fosters innovation
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Disowning – it's not our problem	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Willing to get involved and make a difference
<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ No momentum or resistance	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Momentum for delivery

(Yuliani. 2008)

POWERFUL INFLUENCERS - ...UNDERSTAND POWER



- Power is not fixed
- It can be cumulative
- It can be held, shared, given away, or used to block or enable
- Power affects the nature and quality of decisions

- **Statutory**
- **Knowledge power**
- **Moral and ethical**
- **Landowning**
- Behavioural
- Status/positional
- Financial
- Economic (cost/benefit)
- Resources
- Political
- **People (weight of numbers)**

Work out the types of power you have - and share it or complement and combine it with other people.

POWERFUL INFLUENCERS - ...UNDERSTAND GROUP BEHAVIOUR



Desire to be part of groups with a good reputation



Don't criticise, or use 'them and us' language



Criticism from outside the group provokes anger, denial, power play



Do work respectfully, understand the drivers on the group/sector and develop a shared view of what needs to change



To belong to a group we
create and defend group
norms



Don't threaten group norms,
identity and values



Threatening the group norm
causes the group to close
ranks



Do engage opinion leaders,
explore social acceptability,
uncover social proof, create
norms around working together
to find solutions.



**When there is change,
groups and factions can
polarize**



Don't use positional
behaviour



It causes the other people to
be positional



Do use collaborative
behaviour - work for
win/wins





Strong drive for justice equity and fairness



Don't use power to override and get your way



It threatens a sense of justice and fairness



Do engage with mutual respect and a desire for mutual benefit – win/wins

(If complex or conflicted commission great practice constructive dialogue)

TO BE A POWERFULL INFLUENCER

- *Green won't spread by guilt or fear, we need aspiration and desire.' Carlotta Perez, Economist*
- *Creep subtly into people's hearts. Jane Goodhall, Primatologist*
- *Knowledge is overrated as a way to change behaviour. Sabione Pahl (Plymouth University)*

If you want to be a powerful influencer: know that

How you frame your message and how you behave is more influential than the content of your message!

Ethical influencing – do as you would be done by!



- Respectful
- Be open minded and curious
- Focused listening first - earn the right to speak
- Empathy– walk in their shoes
- Connect with what motivates them
- Invite them to share pro-environmental things they are already doing
- Encourage more
- Support



Speak of your deep love and connection with nature

- You will be authentic
- You will be trustworthy
- You can speak from your core values
- You can connect
- You can inspire with your stories
- You can weave in your knowledge using everyday language



- Engage on a values level, not information
- Boil messages down to simple and profound stories... like proverbs. These have:
 - concrete clear ideas
 - engage through surprise
 - cause people to feel something
 - create images
 - provoke curiosity
 - include recognisable truths
- The mum test – “ I would want my Mum to have the Covid vaccination first” – powerful neurological responses



Attitudes are
contagious:

Make yours
worth
catching!

- **Our behaviour is contagious**
 - Websites that show solar panels in your area - shows clusters - green energy is even more contagious than drinking alcohol or smoking tobacco - so make your choices visible
- **Three degrees of influence**
 - Influence our friends, their friends, and their friend's friends: you can influence people you don't even meet
- **Authentic and honest**
 - Practicing what you preach makes your influence louder
- **Influence yourself!**
 - Green choices lead you to do more... If you stop eating meat you will start to question if you should eat dairy. Practising what you preach makes you more committed to your own cause



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*Our individual boundaries are porous -
we infect each other with ills and joys -
so let's infect each other with stubborn
optimism and determined action*

*A compelling vision is like a hook in the
future. It connects you to pockets of
possibility that are emerging and pulls
them into the present. Hold on to that.*

Christiana Figueres (UN Secretary for Climate
Change between 2010 and 2016)

Let go of doom and gloom - it doesn't motivate you or anyone else!

- Sign up to Global Optimism: <https://globaloptimism.com/>
- Read: The Future We Choose by Christiana Figueres and Tom Rivett Carnac.
- Read my feature article in “In practice” Sept 2020

Find out more about the science of effective communication - choice of language, framing, images, stories, messaging:

- Framing nature toolkit <https://publicinterest.org.uk/nature-toolkit/#>
- “Love. Not Loss” https://www.iucn.org/commissions/commission-education-and-communication/resources/love-not-loss_

For more on Evidence Based Wisdom read:

- The Intelligence Trap - David Robson

To understand more about pioneers, settlers and prospectors read:

- “What makes people tick” by Chris Rose

For more on deliberative inclusive dialogue for a integrated outcomes or training:

- Get in touch!

Sign up

- enquiries@dialoguematters.co.uk
- To get our e-resources with current thinking in Stakeholder Dialogue and Environmental Decision making
- To register interest to hear about our next training course - Spring 2020

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