

From Science to Action: Educating for Behaviour Change¹

What It Is

A handbook of tools and techniques for conservation organizations and agencies to help promote sustained behaviour change, developed through a phased program, and in support of conservation outreach and extension activities including workshops, coaching, presentations, etc.

Benefits

- Assists conservation organizations and agencies in their outreach efforts by strengthening their capacity to engage audiences for long term sustained behaviour change.
- Helps organizations with capacity-building related to issues of staff turnover and the often associated loss of "corporate memory".
- Helps with tools to prevent organizations from "reinventing the wheel" and repeating marketing errors.
- Supports funding organizations by helping recipient organizations use grant funds more effectively. For example, organizations receiving funding for outreach and education aimed at influencing behaviour will benefit from the handbook tips, tools and techniques.



Purpose

Through a phased program, user-friendly and easy-to-use conservation marketing resources will be adapted from the Living by Water Project (LbyW) and other materials.

The long term goal is a complete handbook, accompanied by web-based learning approaches such as webinars for dissemination. Intermediate steps will include PowerPoint presentation notes and guided handbook exercises.

Background and Need

LbyW experience. For a number of years through LbyW we have been supporting community-based groups and government conservation agencies in linking science to action, and fostering long-term behaviour change related to sustainability. This work

¹ Working title only

requires the use of tools and techniques linked to marketing. We term this approach “conservation action marketing” (CAM).

Science and “marketing”. Science often avoids normative, value-driven statements about the need for human behaviour change; yet, many programs of conservation organizations and agencies are oriented towards this very end. Scientists working in the field of conservation education and action tend to have little background in the field of behaviour change, and may feel uncomfortable employing the marketer’s tools of “persuasion”.

Conservation action marketing. CAM builds upon modern ethical business marketing, social marketing, community-based social marketing (CBSM) and environmental education. The intent is to motivate and move people from awareness, to attitude and behaviour change and ultimately sustained behaviour change.

Conservation action marketing uses tools of CBSM but broadens the application to help organizations adopt a more customer-centred marketing orientation, including fundamentals of communication, modern “promotion” techniques and attention to detail. CAM extends the learning which an organization would gain by having staff attend seminars only in CBSM. In these days of limited resources in all sectors, it is particularly important that those involved in environmental programs have the opportunity to learn from the lessons of past projects.

LbyW workshops in CAM. In response to demand, we have offered talks and workshops on CAM, ranging from brief presentations to full day long workshops. A modular PowerPoint workshop has been developed with over 250 slides from which to draw. Workshops have been offered to agencies such as Environment Canada, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Parks Canada, local governments, non-government organizations, including outside Canada, and others.

Need for a manual. In every workshop or presentation that we offer, participants have asked for something in writing that they can take away with them. Our paper “*Tools and Techniques of the Living by Water Project*”, first published in 2001, and recently updated, provides a very brief overview and is available for downloading on the LbyW website (www.livingbywater.ca). Many times we have been asked for more detailed examples of the principles mentioned in the paper. For example, one participant asked for advice on ‘education without alienation’. Another attendee of a CAM workshop who subsequently delivered ten training courses across Canada remarked, “*I never thought it (the training program) would generate such interest.... Participants are starting to ask for a written manual on the subject.*”

This program to adapt and disseminate a handbook is aimed at meeting the need for more support for groups and agencies. The handbook will include practice exercises that demonstrate the principles being taught. Its underlying premise is based on the principles in the sidebar.



Background on LbyW. LbyW co-founders Sarah Weaver and Clive Callaway have produced a highly successful publication “*On the Living Edge – Your Handbook for Waterfront Living*” (close to 17,000 copies sold to date), as well other effective communications materials. Sarah and Clive have taken the information from these materials and delivered hundreds of workshops to a range of audiences about best practices along freshwater and marine shorelines.

In September 2002, Sarah and Clive were awarded the gold medallion in the Clean Water category of the Canadian Environmental Awards program and in 2004 the Canadian Heritage Rivers Conservation Award.

Numerous testimonials, both oral and written, attest to the value of LbyW work, as exemplified in the following quote from a former chair of the Fraser Basin Council:

“Your work is admirable from so many perspectives, its illuminating goal, its inclusiveness, marketability, and outreach. Even your graphics are delightful and beautifully executed.”

Project Approach

The phased approach to this project will enable an incremental, adaptive approach as funding is obtained. It will also provide opportunities at each stage for feedback and modification of materials and approach. Clearly identifiable deliverables will be produced at each stage. The entire project will build upon the lessons learned through the successful CAM workshops offered through LbyW.

Stage 1 (Scoping): Assessment of need, including organizational training needs and project support; detailed planning; gap assessment; detailed table of contents; updating of PowerPoint slides and preparation of speakers’ notes.

Stage 2 (Case examples): Hold selected workshops to solicit case examples and feedback; selected coaching sessions with organizations for case examples; develop handbook exercises and test; additional scoping especially for “webinar” program; fill in gaps; complete balance of general research

Stage 3 (First draft handbook): Adapt CAM PowerPoint presentation into a handbook; fill in any further gaps of case examples/studies; handbook exercises, mock-up draft; pilot and test components with ENGOs (e.g. through coaching).

Stage 4 (Feedback and modification): Document feedback and peer review. Evaluate impact on selected ENGOs. Incorporate feedback and evaluation lessons and finalize second draft for web publication. Possible sites include BC Nature, Living by Water, Stewardship Centre (subject to agreement).

Stage 5 (Dissemination and feedback): Explore potential support alternatives, including a supplementary DVD to accompany the handbook or web-based support. Promote draft handbook to agencies and organizations, and pilot through a “webinar” and workshops. Further evaluation of exercises and contents.

Stage 6 (Print version): Further revisions based on evaluative feedback. Promotion through ENGO networks. Assessment of need and demand for print version.

Stage 1 Deliverables

Stage 1 of this outline has been funded by the BC Ministry of Environment and will be completed by March 2008. See following page for preliminary handbook outline.

- Index of all existing resources
- Itemized list of gaps
- Updated PowerPoint presentation, with added speakers' notes for PowerPoint slides (this will also provide input to the draft document)
- Updated Tools and Techniques paper for posting on the national Living by Water Project website
- Some sample handbook exercises
- Refined Table of Contents
- Budgets for future stages
- Updated master proposal for all stages
- Stage 1 report, including results of scoping, additional needs assessment, etc.

What people are saying

A sampling of comments from participants in LbyW conservation action marketing workshops in Canada and the United States:

"Fantastic workshop."

"Your combined wealth of experience is invaluable and your ability to share is truly admirable."

"I've heard many good things about your workshop in Saint John."

"I have heard many rave reviews..."

"Excellent"

"Good thoughts and techniques"

"...(I) thought that there were some brilliant thoughts in there with direct relevance for Parks Canada and how we work with others."

"The concrete ideas and tips were very useful."

"Communications is such a critical part of our work and your comments will help us focus our efforts"

"I really enjoyed your talk at the Species at Risk conference..."

"As per your recommendation I am ... reading the Leader's Guide to Storytelling. I'm finding it very useful in making abstract ideas become more tangible for the average person to grasp I also attempt to put humans in nature/wildlife pictures I take so they will be useful in a flyer or poster. Great tips - thanks."

For further information:

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Preliminary Revised Outline

**From Science to Action: Educating for Behaviour Change
An Easy to Use Handbook of Tools and Techniques
for Conservation Organizations and Agencies**

"It's often easier to work with fish and streams than it is to work with people so as to prevent them from causing the need to restore the stream in the first place."

Otto Langer

1. So What? Project Effectiveness and Evaluation

- a. Assessing results of education, outreach and behaviour change projects
- b. Behaviour change, education and marketing (including stages of behaviour change, social marketing, conservation marketing, and community based social marketing)
- c. Some key principles of outreach, engagement, education and marketing

2. Persuasion and Ethics

- a. Ethical issues in science extension
- b. Educating for behaviour change

3. We Will...So That...: Thinking in Terms of Outcomes and Impacts

- a. Project planning – working backwards from impacts desired
- b. Building on what exists (avoiding reinventing the wheel)
- c. Scanning for trends (e.g. social - demographic, consumer; economic; political, etc.)
- d. Exercises – project planning; outcomes and impacts; trend analysis

*Begin with the end in mind.
Stephen Covey*

4. Benefits First: Understanding Your Audience Needs

- a. The customer-centred approach: understanding your audience
- b. Tools for understanding your audience
- c. Matching products to audience
- d. Common mistakes and case examples
- e. Exercises – targeting your audience; audience needs; the benefit letter

5. Barriers Inside and Out

- a. Competing behaviours
- b. Fears and barriers
- c. Marketing concepts and barriers to behaviour change
- d. Case examples
- e. Exercises – assessing audience barriers, identifying competing behaviours, developing your approach

6. Fundamentals

- a. The 4 P's of marketing: product, place, price and promotion
- b. Communication principles and tips
- c. Using communication technology wisely– graphics, testimonials, etc.
- d. Case examples and common pitfalls
- e. Exercises: developing your product or service, distribution, price and "the exchange", promotion and communication; messaging; working with the media

7. Measuring Results and Reporting to Funders

- a. Selecting indicators which link to planned outcomes
- b. Exercises: choosing indicators

Appendices – Self-help Checklists and Guides