

# Appendix B: Identifying and Removing Barriers to Behavior Change

Knowing why people do things and what might make them change a particular behavior will help you identify the most appropriate ways to convince the target audience to adopt the behavior you're recommending. Use this worksheet to help uncover the barriers to behavior change so that you can remove or minimize the barriers before you develop your message. Answer the questions in the Barriers column on the left; then circle the ways you intend to remove or minimize the barriers in the Barrier Breakers column on the right. (Be creative! Develop new Barrier Breakers for your situation and add them to the list.)

<b>Physical or Economic Barriers</b>	<i>Is it expensive for the target audience to perform the behavior?</i>
	<i>Why?</i>



## Barrier Breakers

- Subsidize the cost.
- Find a cheaper way for the audience to engage in the behavior.
- Use partners to offset the costs.
- Provide incentives to encourage the behavior.
- Piggyback onto an existing activity to lower the cost.

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*If it's too expensive for homeowners to install permeable-pavement driveways, offer reduced tax assessments to help offset the cost and act as an incentive. Another idea would be to work with homeowners' associations to sign up individual homeowners and pool them together for discounted bulk orders.*



Because planting trees along streamside property is both time-consuming and expensive for homeowners, partner with a local nursery to provide discounts to anyone planting trees for this purpose. Promote the nursery in your effort, and provide tip sheets on how and when to plant the trees.



If shoppers exhibit an unwillingness to buy recycled products, encourage them frequently with positive messages about how important it is to "close the recycling loop." An annual, month-long "Get in the Loop" campaign in Washington State reminds shoppers to buy recycled products through in-store promotional materials and identifies specific recycled-product choices right on the store shelf.



When recruiting local Girl Scout troops to conduct a beach cleanup, hold a mini trash-pickup training session to show them things to avoid (such as used syringes and toiletries) and when to ask for adult help.



To combat the stigma associated with the real or perceived health risks of picking up pet waste, use humor when developing your message and formats.

## Physical or Economic Barriers

**Does it take more physical effort to perform the recommended behavior than the opposing behavior?**

**Why?**

**Does the recommended behavior present a risk to the health and safety of the target audience or their family members (e.g., area designated for stream cleanup in or near known gang hangout, poison ivy, or fears of disease-causing organisms)?**

**Why?**

## Barrier Breakers



- Piggyback onto an existing activity to lower the effort required.
- Provide physical or monetary assistance to promote the behavior.
- Provide monetary rewards or recognition to encourage the behavior.
- Highlight others in the target audience engaging in the behavior to show that it's not as difficult as perceived.

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- Educate the audience on real and perceived risks.
- Remove risks by offering safety tips.
- Provide statistics to show real risk levels.
- Provide security.
- Provide preventive health services (e.g., hepatitis shots, etc.).

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Physical or Economic Barriers

*Is it difficult to get the information or resources needed to adopt the behavior?*

*Why?*

*Are there other physical or economic barriers?*

*(Please list.)*

**Barrier Breakers**


- Educate the audience on how to adopt the behavior.
- Make it easy to get the resources or information needed by posting it online, providing alternative locations to obtain materials/information, and taking needed materials/information to the audience.

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*If you're promoting soil testing to homeowners to prevent overfertilization, provide free soil test kits, available at select locations or by sending an e-mail request to the county soil and water conservation district.*



Make it socially acceptable to have a not-so-lush lawn by finding homeowners willing to use alternative vegetation or reduce their fertilizer use and asking them to post signs on their lawn that say they have a water-friendly yard.



Work with local schools to develop household hazardous waste education campaigns. Have students take home "Nontoxic Home" pledge forms to ask parents to commit to reducing their reliance on toxic household products. After the parents have committed to this small pledge, ask them to make a larger commitment by hosting a community Household Hazardous Waste Pickup Day at the school. Provide stickers for parents to place on products that say "toxic," "recycle," or "save" to serve as prompts for the whole family.

**Social or Psychological Barriers**

**Is there social pressure to avoid the behavior?**

**Why?**

**Is the behavior contrary to community norms?**

**Why?**

**Is there fear of social disapproval or rejection for performing the behavior?**

**Why?**

**How do members of the target audience feel they might be perceived by their peers if they adopt the recommended behavior?**

**Why?**

**Is the behavior consistent with the target audience's self-image?**

**Why?**

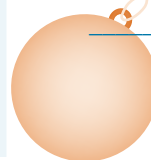
**Other emotional or psychological barriers?**

**(Please list.)**

## Barrier Breakers

- Research current community norms and reasons for those norms through focus groups.
- Develop messages that make it seem socially desirable to perform the behavior.
- Provide frequent and strategically placed prompts to remind people of the behavior.
- Identify early adopters in the community, and partner with them to spread the word and convince others to adopt the new behavior. They can help develop new social norms that include environmental behaviors.
- Use community gatherings and events to show that social pressure is perceived and not real.
- Clearly communicate the percentage or number of people that are currently engaging in the recommended behavior.
- Try to gain small commitments from members of the target audience to engage in "easier" behaviors before asking them to adopt the "harder" behavior. Sociologists and marketers agree that getting people to say "yes" to something small makes it easier for them to say "yes" to something larger later on because people like to be viewed as consistent. (Remember: Written commitments are more effective than verbal commitments.)

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**Knowledge Barriers**

**Does the target audience need to learn new skills to perform the behavior?**  
*Why?*

**Does the target audience know the benefits of the recommended behavior?**  
*Why?*

**Does the target audience know the impacts of the opposing behavior?**  
*Why?*

**Barrier Breakers**

- Provide training on the new behavior.
- Recruit early adopters to demonstrate the new behavior in daily activities, at events, or during training sessions.

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- Show the immediate consequences of both adopting and not adopting the behavior; convey consequences (positive and negative) in your message.

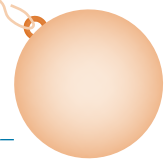
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- Identify and communicate actual or estimated environmental, social, or economic impacts (e.g., statistics, before-and-after photos) of the opposing behavior and the recommended behavior.

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*Create train-the-trainer sessions for volunteer stream monitors so that they can train others and expand the volunteer pool.*





*Provide statistics on the number of dogs in the county that need to be picked up after, or the number of stream miles owned by private landowners that need to be buffered.*

**Knowledge Barriers**

***Does the target audience believe that individual actions are not significant enough to improve the environment?***

***Why?***

***Are there other knowledge barriers?***  
***(Please list.)***

**Barrier Breakers**

- Provide statistics on the collective impacts of individual actions.

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