

Key Findings: Best Practices in Sustainability Communications and Persuasion

Define the terms you are using: What is sustainability?
Sustainability can refer to the economy, environment, or other systems. Make connections between types of sustainability that your audience cares about and be clear about what you are referring to.

Make it personal: What does the audience care about?

Identify the pressures, attitudes, community or organizational norms, barriers, motivations and priorities of your audience and tailor your argument their specific perspective.

Use specific examples (with relevance to your audience)

Examples can help explain complex principles and make a theory relevant to the audience. Pick examples the audience will relate to and understand.

Engage enlightened community members as leaders

Find individuals who are already engaged in pro-environment work and support them, leverage their network, and help them ask as messengers to reach new individuals.

Empower people so they feel like they can play a part in the solution, while using the big picture to motivate why action is needed

Smaller actions can reinforce that change is possible, while the bigger picture of the importance of pro-environment work can motivate longer term and larger projects.