Speaking to Values
MESSAGE STRATEGIES
TO INPSIRE ACTION

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Facts vs. Feelings...
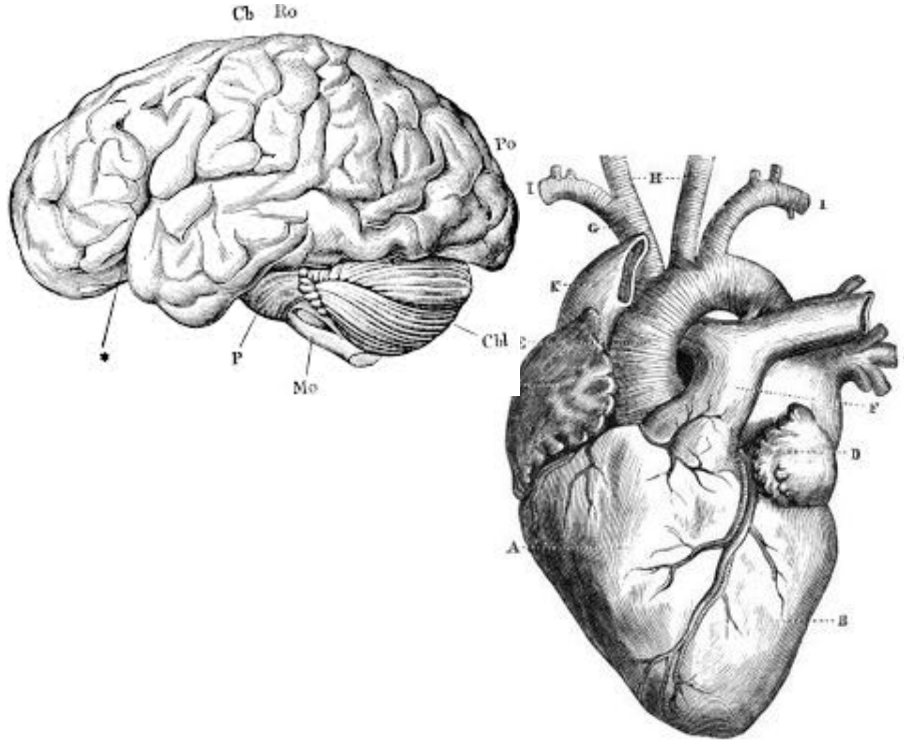
"I've learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel."—**Maya Angelou**

"In politics, when reason and emotion collide, emotion invariably wins."—**Drew Westen,** *The Political Brain*

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THIS IS YOUR BRAIN—ON FACTS

Quirks in the way we think—and the way we think we think

CONFIRMATION BIAS
We cherry pick "evidence" that backs up what we already "know."

THE BACKFIRE EFFECT
Faced with conflicting evidence, the brain defends existing beliefs like a fortress.

GROUP-THINK
Opinions are symbols of belonging, so our brains work hard to protect their group's worldview.

AVAILABILITY HEURISTIC
Conclusions based on one vivid example overpower less memorable narratives.

AFFECT HEURISTIC
Feelings trump facts.

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Environmental *People Protection* Agency

Lakoff reminds us to call regulations what they are: protections.

Say *protections* not regulations

Shift the focus from *corporations* to *people*

Give *examples*, like keeping lead out of our drinking water

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I feel….

I love…

Hats I wear…

I stand against…

My community connections…

My places…

I stand for…

I'm inspired by…

On the flip side...

- **Recklessness**
- **Greed**
- **Irresponsibility**
- **Waste**
- **Cheating**
- **Taking advantage**
- **Harming people and places**

RECIPIES
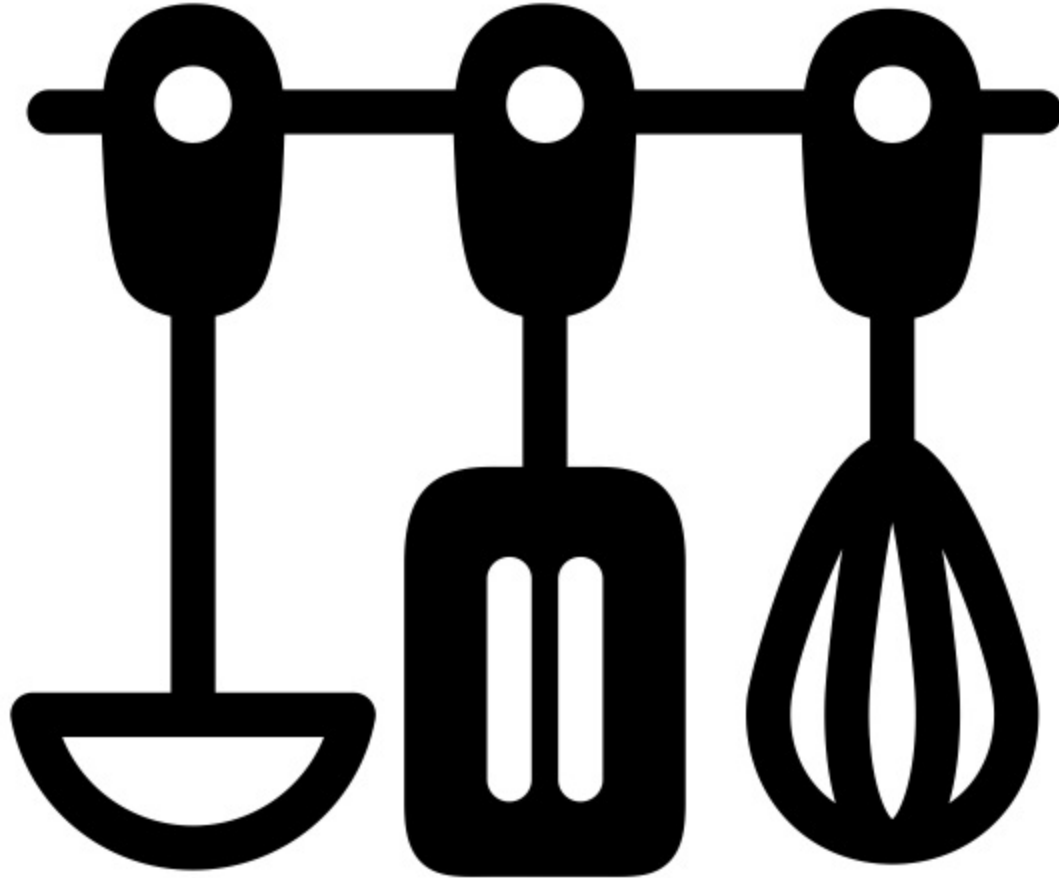
POLICY BROWNIES

Say what it is upfront and in plain language

Talk about the key benefits

Focus on the main outcomes

VALUES SANDWICH

1. First slice of bread—Say why it matters—make it personal (local, concrete, emotional)...

2. The fixings—Your data and findings or your proposed policy solutions...

3. Another slice of bread—Say why it matters—*again.*

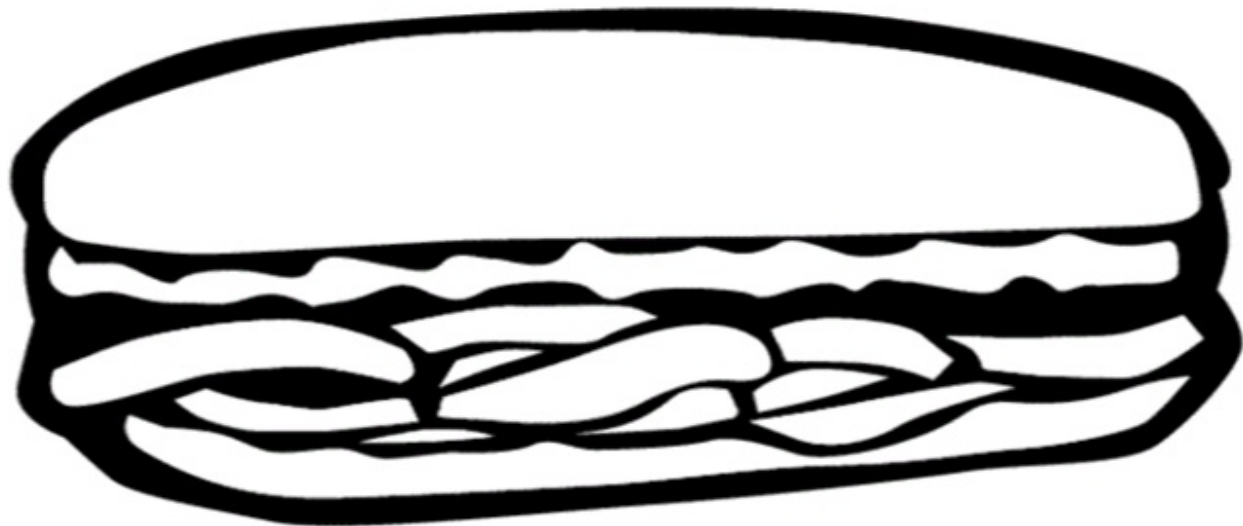MESSAGE CHECKLIST

Is it about people?

Did you say why it matters?

Are you going for the gut or brain?

Are you lost in the weeds? (Get out of the weeds!!)

Did you say it in plain language?

1. **VALUES STATEMENT – WHY IT MATTERS**

2. **DATA, POLICY, FACT, IDEA**

3. **VALUES STATEMENT – WHY IT MATTERS**

Stay in touch!

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