

Some Guidelines For Communicating With Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers

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This paper is based on extracts taken from my book [*What Makes People Tick: The Three Hidden Worlds of Settlers Prospectors and Pioneers*](#), which is about the motivational differences between different 'types' of people. Their different psychological needs exert a powerful but unconscious effect on how they respond to any attempt to communicate with them.

Although Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers can all understand each other, or the same propositions, what really feels right to them often differs markedly. At work or in another 'functional' situation they may 'adapt' and behave in ways that really don't feel right but enable them to 'fit in' or 'get the job done'. But given free choice, their different values will lead them to do different things, or do the same things but for different emotional rewards.

This means that like the child's toy with the round peg and the round hole, and the square peg and the square hole, although we can try to force people to accept communications that don't 'fit' their values, the experience will be uncomfortable. As soon as they are free to avoid it or ignore it, they will do so.



Settlers

Prospectors

Pioneers

If we want to persuade rather than try to coerce people, it helps to create asks and offers (like the holes in the wooden bench above) which are suited to the human template of values, rather than trying to 'hammer home' our 'message'. Start from where the audience is, not from where you are.

Some general guidelines for communicating with Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers are given below. Much more detail can be found in 'What Makes People Tick', including for example, what

sorts of things Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers like to read in the media, differences in how they spend their leisure time, the way they dress and the impression they would like their home to give, as well as their orientations to things like engaging in 'issues' and politics.

Rules of Thumb

Rules of thumb are dangerous things and to design communications that are likely to work, you really need to research your audiences and test your proposed communications. There is much more to this than just deciding on a 'message'. Indeed if possible it's best to avoid using the term 'message' altogether. Who the messenger is, where and when the communication occurs (context), how it is delivered (channel) will also have a strong effect. But recognizing that the 'public' includes three different sets of people when it comes to motivation – in other words, why they may do something or refuse to do it – is better than nothing. Even if you don't do research, enhanced guesswork is better than pure guesswork.

Bear in mind that you need to decide

- who you are already talking to or engaging with – Prospectors, Settlers or Pioneers?
- which World you are coming from – personally and as a group or organisation
- who you need to engage, whether or build support for a campaign, or gain new customers, or deepen relationships

This might mean doing more and better within a Values World, or reaching out to people from different Values Worlds, or finding ways to reach all three. It depends on what you are trying to do, and how it might be done.

At the most fundamental level:

- Communicate with Settlers in ways which enhance safety, security or belonging
- Communicate with Prospectors in ways which enhance esteem of others or self-esteem
- Communicate with Pioneers in ways which involve ideas, innovation, selfchoice or ethics

The values of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers have been mapped by repeated surveys involving tens of thousands of people, responding to over a thousand different questions by CDSM (Cultural Dynamics Strategy and Marketing – www.cultdyn.co.uk) in the UK and elsewhere. These have been correlated responses to similar sets of questions run by Shalom Schwartz and others in many countries. The findings of those surveys have been augmented by, values segmented qualitative research, and the experience of developing products, offers and asks for the different groups. This experience suggests that communications will be more likely to succeed for the different groups if they involve factors like those shown below:

Settlers:

Taking or keeping control.
Introducing rules where they are needed or upholding rules and staying within them.
Keeping away new or foreign threats; reducing risk of any type (social, financial, physical etc).
Being with the people you know, and people like you.
Doing what's normal – what the majority do, or what the majority of your group do.
Standing up for your community.
Taking care of your family.
Doing your duty.
Playing your part without complaint.
Looking after kith and kin.
Making sure the basics get done: survival, getting by, being healthy, having enough food and a decent place to live.
Saving lives.
Giving children a traditional upbringing.
Being modest and accepting your lot but with an occasional treat.
Staying with what works – familiar, tried and tested brands, practices, associations, services and systems.
Remaining loyal to those who've helped or looked after you and yours.
Not trying to change what can't be changed, or trying to fix what isn't broken.
Sticking with the proven ways and learning the lessons of the past.

Prospectors:

Being successful and being seen to be – socially and materially.
Having fun, having a good time, enjoying yourself.
Getting the right stuff, going shopping and buying what you want.
Having the latest things, following fashion.
Keeping up with new trends and developments.
Looking and feeling your best.
Seeking the best and better for yourself and your friends and family.
Bettering yourself, getting ahead.
Being a winner.
Trying something a bit different.
Enjoying sensation.
Following and sharing in celebrity.
Not waiting, finding shortcuts, ways to get what you want by bending the rules.
Making things bigger and better – maximising.
Looking to the future.

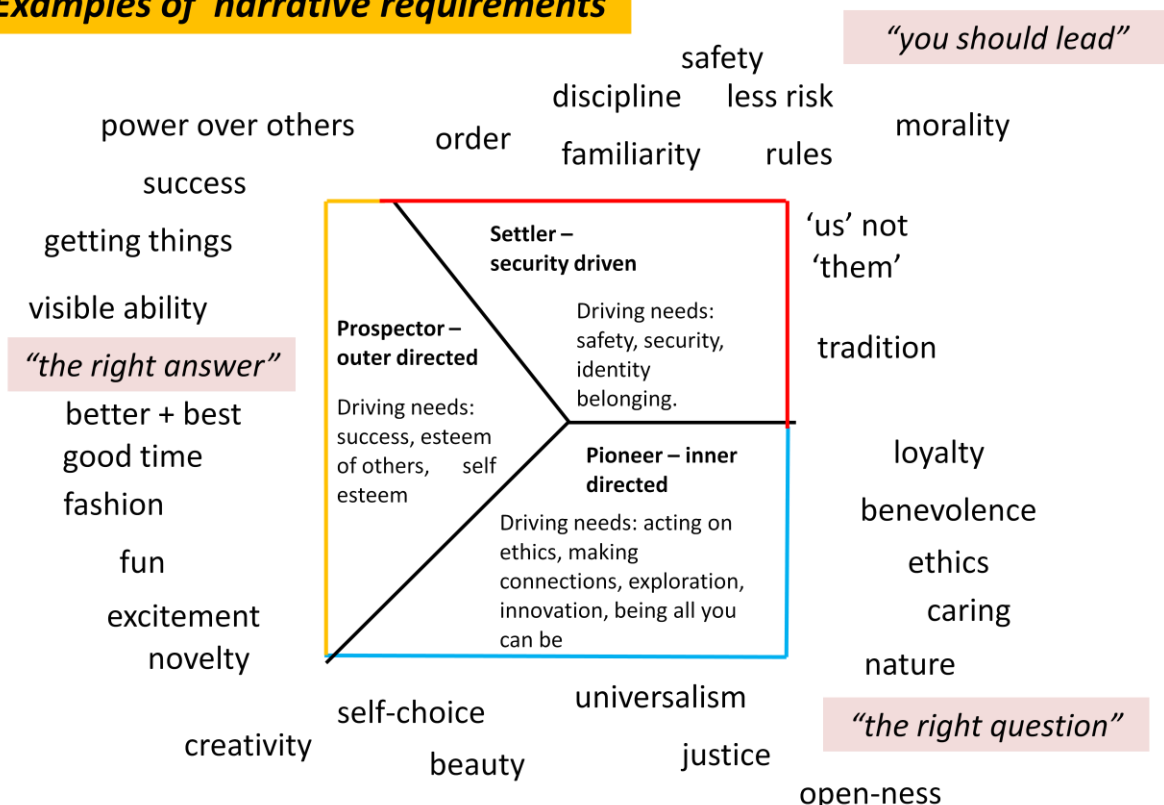
Pioneers:

- Living ethically and exploring new connections.
- Connecting with new and different people.
- Discovering and sharing new ideas and new ways: innovating, experimenting.
- Questioning things and asking better questions.
- Caring for the environment and for others – from local to global.
- Finding the best overall outcomes, and doing your own thing.
- Making your own choices and direction.
- Being at one with life as it is but also finding ways to improve it.
- Being creative and seeking justice.
- Helping children fulfil themselves.
- Blending or sampling the new and the traditional but finding what’s authentic.
- Finding the optimal way to live in the present.

‘Hot Buttons’ in Speeches and Stories

Here are some ‘narrative hot buttons’ that would be likely to work for the different ‘Values Worlds’ or ‘Maslow Groups’.

Examples of narrative requirements



Although the above was constructed with political speeches in mind, the ‘thought at the back of the mind’ for Settlers is often ‘you should lead’, while Prospectors will be waiting to hear ‘the right answer’, and Pioneers will want to know if ‘the right question’ has been asked.

Anyone addressing a mixed audience, as in a speech or a story, could hit some 'hot buttons' for each Values World and have a reasonable chance of it 'registering' with all of them. Or one might compose a 'proposition' with three reasons why something was a good idea, such as it makes us safe, it makes us successful, and it's the ethical thing to do. People will tend to hear what they want to hear and filter out what doesn't resonate with them but the rule of too much also applies – give too many reasons which don't work for them and you can easily lose your audience. And while you can pepper any talk or even soundbite with hot buttons that work for the three groups, the trouble comes once that leads to a conversation with any one person: that may draw you into 'agreeing' in ways which work for that person but which alienate others.

So it's safer and generally more effective to talk to each audience separately, and in their own terms. To do that, it helps to select channels and contexts that appeal to the relevant values group.

Finding and Reaching Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers – Contexts and Channels

Self-selection means that people from the Three Worlds of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers tend to buzzaround 'things that work for them', like different types of bee visiting favourite varieties of flowers. So their preferences for activities, contexts and channels are a good way to find people from each World, and that in turn, can be used to plan communications to suit them.

Of course although the Three Worlds show clear preferences, most channels of communication and contexts will be used by *some* people, *some* of the time, from *each* Values World. So these are never absolutes or exclusive.

[*What Makes People Tick: The Three Hidden Worlds of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers*](#) gives examples of how Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers chose to read very different types of feature within *within* a newspaper, and surveys have also shown distinct preferences for different tv programmes for instance. Clearly the specifics are often cultural or determined by what's available in different countries.

In Britain for instance, BBC TV's *Newsnight* has a very strongly Pioneer audience (and then strongly focussed on just one subset of Pioneers) but you can't chose to watch that in a country which doesn't show *Newsnight*. However the same reasons that drive 'Transcender' Pioneers to watch *Newsnight* more than other values groups will lead them to make similar choices in any country. The motivational differences are universal – they apply everywhere. How they get expressed depends on how cultures work locally. So Settlers for instance will always be the most traditional but traditions of course, vary from place to place, or between identity groups.

I am sometimes asked about social media but the same thing applies there – although Pioneers will have been the first to start using social media per se, and Settlers the last, it is now so pervasive that in many countries, large numbers of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers will all be using it. The recent slowingⁱ in new registrations of the world's most ubiquitous network, Facebook in many richer countries, suggests that uptake is 'saturated'. Such countries also tend to have proportionately more Prospectors and Pioneers. We can expect it to continue to expand (where available) in 'emerging' economies (which evidence suggest have very large young urbanised Prospector segments) before the same thing happens there but in any country, the

way Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers use a social media channel (or indeed “online” as a whole) will tend to differ.

(If you are interested in running surveys to map out the different preferences, choices and behaviours of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers in your country, or using values segmentation to create and test ideas, then you can contact me chris@campaignstrategy.co.uk, or go direct to Pat Dade at CDSM – Pat@cultdyn.co.uk). Bearing that in mind, here are some likely channel and context choices:

Settler Channels and Contexts:

Familiar local media, clubs and societies which have a strong identity, and face to face communication with people you know: family, friends, neighbours if you know them, and otherwise people like us.

Word of mouth.

TV news and media about past-times and hobbies, local history and traditions, and local or family gatherings and events.

Those channels which have been used by authority and officialdom for a long time.

Regular, traditional events with content about the ways of the past, and or which offer family fun and entertainment.

The military.

Charities and help groups which save life, care for things, or defend what needs to be defended.

Places where people come together to affirm group identity.

Familiar nature.

Celebrations of the familiar and the domestic

Prospector Channels and Contexts:

Shops and brands, especially ‘High Street’ⁱⁱ, big and mainstream brands, endorsed by celebrity and or with glitz and glamour.

Clubs and venues for socialising, dancing or comedy.

The latest communications technology and networks on the market.

Social media which allow for face to face and taking on a persona (eg avatars), or improving your appearance online.

Beauty parlours, hairdressers, fashion shows and gyms.

Any media which allow you to make dates or organise social activities.

High profile sports events, games and lotteries.

Organised extreme sports.

Entertainment venues, events and special occasions which are ‘hard to get’ or ‘must-haves’.

Media about beauty or fashions – such as for clothes, cars or home decor and design.

Any channel or context which allows you or your children to become famous or to be successful. Causes of the moment, led by stars and celebrities.

Places where people come together to be seen.

Competitions where the winner triumphs over the loser (as a spectacle).

Parties.

Pioneer Channels and Contexts:

Cinema, museums, arts and music events and organisations which allow for exchange and exploration of ideas.

Causes and campaigns to make the world a better place.

Publications, online or broadcast media about current affairs and ideas.

Debates based on ideas.

Gatherings and events to ponder about big issues, wring hands and worry about important things.

Brands which are ethical and or authentic, or simply innovative.

Networks, events and opportunities which you can help create.

Nature – the outdoors, including extreme weather.

Politics, charities and civic activities.

Appreciations of beauty.

New (innovative) experiences.

Creative gatherings or publications about creativity.

Moments of the present to revel in.

Places where people come together for ideas.

Nature anywhere.

Messengers for Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers

One of the most powerful communications effects is who the ‘message’ comes from. We all know someone who takes more notice of someone else, than they take of us. Here are some rules of thumb for Prospectors, Settlers and Pioneers:

Preferred Messengers for Settlers:

Someone they know well – family, a friend or an established and known local figure who can tell me personally.

Traditional or respected figures of Authority, especially associated with security, safety or belonging

A much loved media personality; someone who has been a long-time news anchor, weather-person or presenter of generations of popular programmes.

Someone who has become known for standing up for ‘us’ against the system

The leader of my group or ‘tribe’ (eg a music tribe amongst young people who usually have a visual identity), a club, union or other group which forms part of my identity.

Parent or grandparent.

My boss at work – *if* I feel I belong there and am looked after and respected.

Preferred Messengers for Prospectors:

Anyone really famous.

Failing that, someone more famous than me.

High achievers are who are famous for being very rich or successful – celebrities.

Leading sports personalities.

TV personalities, film stars, celebrity chefs, competition winners (eg the X

Factor or similar ‘reality’ TV), high profile ‘reality tv’ participants, or well-known online names eg notorious bloggers.

Business leaders.

The powerful.

Super-models and fashion or interior designers, the top flight of ‘footballers wives’, style gurus.

People in gossip magazines.

Messengers for Pioneers:

Someone interesting (because they have done interesting things or, are entirely new and different).

Someone authentic rather than famous (which could be a neighbour, friend or relation or anyone who has a legitimate and authentic reason to know the truth)

People known for human rights or environmental campaigning, for protecting nature or upholding justice, governing successfully or caring for others.

Inventors, discoverers, explorers or innovators.

Solvers of problems

Artists or sculptors

Musicians

Poets

Architects

Creative chefs

Scientists

Writers

Actions for Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers

It is about as golden a rule as you can get in communications, that if you do not know what you want the audience to do, it is impossible to make an effective piece of communication. So you can know as much as you like about Settlers, Prospectors or Pioneers, and your communication efforts are likely to come to naught, if you haven’t worked out what you want someone to do. In other words, the action you want them to take.

This presents relatively few problems for commercial communicators, as their brief is simply to sell a product or service. How this is done, so long as it’s affordable, legal and doesn’t mangle the brand, is not usually an issue. In contrast, it’s most often where cause campaigns, and many communications projects by public bodies, go badly wrong.

The most fundamental mistake Pioneer campaigners tend to make is to try and turn Prospectors or Settlers into campaigners *like themselves*. They may not see it that way, as it might be just 'joining the campaign' but the campaign itself is probably framed in values specific terms – for example, about globalness, justice and universalism, and about 'changing the system' or 'how we all live'.

Here are a few rules of thumb for actions for Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers:

Actions for Settlers:

Do make them:

closed
discrete
uncomplicated
high certainty
achievable
routine
if possible officially approved
preferably familiar
with established precedents
'normal'
reduce risk
give greater control
enhance belonging
enhance safety
increase security

Don't ask Settlers to:

'upset the applecart'
make new connections
create new ways of doing things
be the first to do anything
look at the 'bigger picture'
explore the unknown

Actions for Prospectors:

Do make them:

visible
simple
achievable
fun
displayable
fashionable

real
uncontroversial
rewarded
recognized
sociable
stimulating
recommended
if possible, endorsed by celebrity
'buyable' (ie commodified)
add esteem from others
proven (evidence that it will 'work')
immediate (in action and effect)
applauded

Also: where possible give them options, and offer Prospectors the chance to join conventional marketing exercises such as giving their opinion on product choices, or recording their shopping behaviour, and allow them to 'bend' the rules.

Don't ask Prospectors to:

innovate
make new connections
do anything old fashioned or traditional
'just follow the rules'
actually break the rules
give things up (except by getting something better)
do things primarily for others without social reward
do anything just because it's ethical
do anything just because of an idea or theory
lead in debate or controversy
embrace an open ended problem

Actions for Pioneers:

Do make them:

'interesting'
Ethical
Novel
Intriguing
Complex
Surprising
Authentic
Connecting
Stimulating
Innovative
About beauty, nature or justice

Change-making

About ideas rather than just getting stuff

About theories or possibilities.

About the bigger picture

Also, do let them make up their own minds, allow them to define how to decide what's right or wrong, and to define the problem: allow them to ask questions and 'get inside' your thinking.

Don't ask Pioneers to:

Join 'conventional' marketing exercises or comply with a routine (unless wider interests demand it).

Chose from closed options

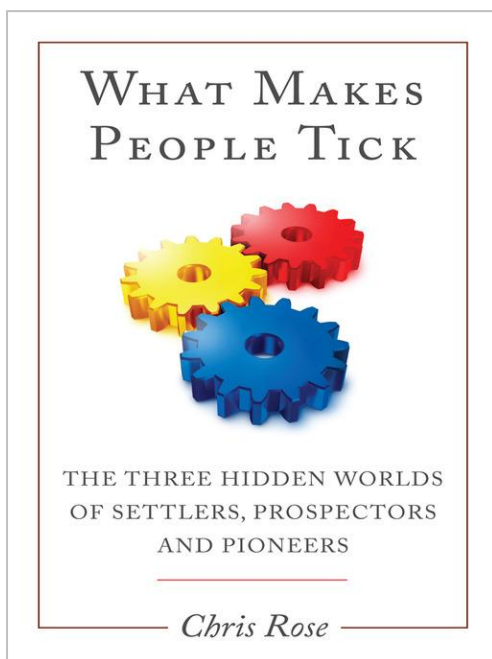
Go on the recommendations of others

Buy something because it's bigger, best or better

Do anything because it's always been done this way

Do something just because it is required by authority

I hope campaigners will find these lists of use. There's much more about the Three Worlds in the book [What Makes People Tick: The Three Hidden Worlds of Settlers Prospectors and Pioneers](#) and papers at www.campaignstrategy.org. You can [buy](#) the book from my website or on Amazon <http://amzn.to/rNfM6Q> in paperback or on Kindle - <http://amzn.to/w14n0f> Kindle or as an e book or paperback [from the publisher](#) Troubador.



ⁱ <https://plus.google.com/u/0/105103058358743760661/posts/DNySU7EtnZu>

ⁱⁱ A British-ism meaning 'mainstream' shopping/ retail