

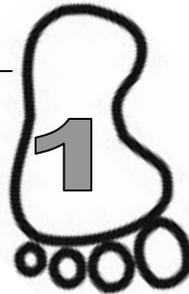


Steps to Action

Ever wonder why people don't take action? Ever frustrated that people are confronted with information about injustice every day and do nothing? Here is a simple reminder of the steps it takes for people to move from awareness of a problem to becoming part of the solution. The example focuses on the environment but the model is applicable to any issue. Remember that individuals are often at different places along this path and it is critical to meet people where they are so we can encourage them along the path to action.

1: Awareness

Many people have a vague awareness of the problem but no real sense of the facts or its relevance to their lives. We must find creative connections between the issues we are passionate about and the people we are trying to reach. For example (e.g.) My niece has asthma and I know it has something to do with the air she is breathing ... I want to do something to help her.



2: Knowledge

To move people towards action we must connect that awareness with knowledge – equip them with facts and information that is accurate and directly relevant. E.g. Power plant pollution in your neighborhood is a direct contributor to poor air quality and increased asthma attacks.



3: Values / Ethics

The church must play a critical role in connecting a value or ethic or moral to the facts. Here we give voice to the values that shape who we are as people of faith. People are more apt to act on information if it touches them on a deeper level. E.g. Our faith teaches us to care for creation and for our neighbors. How can we as Christians allow pollution to destroy the earth and harm our brothers and sisters?



4: Develop Skills

The next step is to empower people for action – to give them skills they need to act on the knowledge they now have. E.g. Where to purchase compact fluorescent bulbs (CFLs) to reduce energy use, how to switch to green energy options if available or how to contact elected officials to advocate for tighter emission controls.



5: Action!

Following steps 1-4, people should be ready for the final step: to take action. Actions can/should include a range of personal, congregational and community options for engagement on the issue. With each action comes growing awareness and knowledge so the cycle of steps will often begin all over again.

