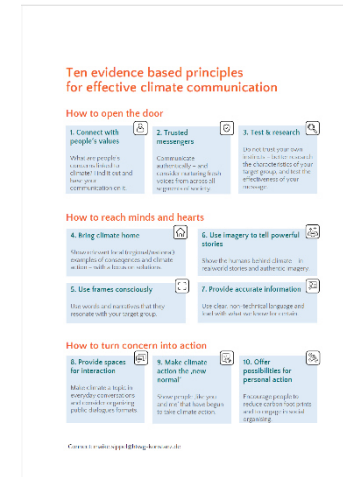# 10 Key Principles for Climate Communication
Tool for application

How can I apply the 10 key principles in my communication context? How can I translate this approach to my current communication tasks?
The following table is designed as a tool for your practical work.

This application tool is based on the 4-pager on the 10 key principles. Download the 4-pager via QR Code:

Notes on how to work with this tool:

Each core principle (column 1) is followed by a series of questions in column 2. These "analysis questions" help you to examine the relevant aspects of your own communication task. Column 3 provides space for your own notes: record your thoughts and answers to the questions in column 2 here. Column 4 is then dedicated to your specific implementation ideas resulting from the previous columns.

Following successful initial tests, we are currently in the process of testing this tool more widely in use and improving it with feedback from users. We look forward to your feedback: maike.sippel@htwg-konstanz.de

Brief description of my specific communication task:

Do not remain on a general level in your description (like the general task "communicate the mobility transformation to the citizens of Stuttgart"). Instead, be really specific, define a specific occasion, a specific situation, the addressing of specific target groups / people, etc. ("prepare the input for a discussion on cycle route development with the city parliament of Stuttgart").

Key Principle	Important questions for my analysis	Answers & considerations & concrete implementation ideas for my communication task
1. Connect with people's values	- Who are "the people", who is my target group? - Which social "type"/"milieu" (or which different "types", according to More in Common) do the people belong to? - And what values do these people have (values might differ between people in your target group, and also as compared to you)? - What bridges can be built from these values to climate action? What things that people care about are threatened by the climate crisis? What is a cause that is close to the heart of the communicator AND the people?	-
2. Trusted messengers	- Who do people in my target group trust? - Who belongs to the target group's community and could be an "ambassador"? - Who are influential people for the target group? Also people of respect ("elite cues") - How can those who communicate around climate increase their credibility and trustworthiness? E.g. by making them tangible as real persons like you and me; by telling when, how and why they themselves started to act for the climate and what they find difficult; by really trying to understand the target group; by investing time in a continuous communication process; by walking the talk and aiming for climate-friendly lifestyles themselves	-
3. Test & research	- Adopt a flexible and agile attitude and a "research mindset" (try things out, discard them if necessary, strive to find out what works and what doesn't)	-

	- How can we monitor the impact of our communication and incorporate the results into subsequent communication strategies? - What does my uncle say about it (ask a friend/family member from outside the "bubble")? - What do people from the target group say about the communication when I show it to them? For reasons of efficiency, go to where these people are anyway. - Can we test whether we are having the desired effect - e.g. via focus groups (= qualitative research) or broader surveys (= quantitative research)? - Can we involve people who represent the target group in a kind of advisory body?	
4. Bring climate home – with a focus on solutions	- Can we find local (/regional/national) examples of relevant climate damage - and how people are responding to it? - How can we show local (/regional/national) examples of people acting to protect the climate (authentic examples)? - How can we avoid a doomsday atmosphere and (also) focus on solutions that create hope?	-
5. Use frames consciously	- Do we know what "framing" is and why it is important? - Are we aware of our use of terms, narratives, examples and framings and do we know why we use them? - Which framings resonate with the target group? (Attention! These may be not the same framings that work for you!) And can we use these framings authentically?	-

	- Would it make sense for us to use a certain framing throughout and consistently (e.g. in our organisation's communication) - and if so, is there a little guide explaining this to everyone in the organisation?	
6. Use imagery to tell powerful stories	- What is my own climate story (e.g. how did I come to deal with it, why does it concern me, what do I do, my doubts, limitations, feelings of guilt) and can it be part of my communication? - What powerful images can we use (real people in real situations with real emotions; telling new stories; showing climate pollution on a large scale (congested highway instead of individual drivers); linking images of climate damage with concrete options for action; be careful with images of protesters who may mainly be appealing to climate activists)? - What stories can be told around the topic? For example, of approachable people who take action?	-
7. Provide accurate information	- Have we relied the facts we refer to on reliable sources? - How do we ensure that we are clear and easy to understand - matching the level of knowledge and understanding of the target group? - Can we help people to deal effectively with arguments of delay, climate denial and fake news? (--> See material on "de-bunking", discoures of delay, disinformation)	-
8. Provide spaces for interaction	- Have we a common understanding, that climate communication is more effective when it is not a one-way road?	-

	- How can we create spaces for interaction and connection? - Can we encourage people to talk more and better about climate and their climate action in their everyday lives? (--> Talking Climate Handbook Climate Outreach) - Can we encourage climate action that creates community moments - and what can this look like? - Can we involve ordinary people in political decision-making processes (participation) and how can this be achieved (requirements in terms of financial resources, process quality, real incorporation of results into the political process)?	
9. Make climate action the 'new normal'	- How can we identify real-life examples and stories that already show solutions? Which people (like you and me) are behind these stories? How can we make these people visible to many? - Do we show how many people/companies/... are already implementing a certain activity? (e.g. "10% of citizens in city xy already have a roof PV system") - Are we already acting in a significant way for the climate ourselves - and is this noticeable/visible?	-
10. Offer possibilities for personal action	- Do we point out concrete opportunities for action for the target group? What are effective opportunities for action for the target group? - If and when we communicate around "Footprint" activities, do we give our target group orientation via the "big points" (which lifestyle choices contribute most to reducing carbon)?	-

	- Do opportunities for action we present target not only "private action" (footprint), but do they also target structural change? That is, do we include action in an addressee's capacity on the job, in their communities, in organisations, as citizens, etc.? Do we include "collective action" as opportunities for action? - Can we contribute to an empowerment of people to act in these roles, to discover their passion for an issue, find an entry point for their commitment and action?	
Other important aspects for my context:	What other aspects do we consider important for this communication task?	-