

Using Behavioural Insights to bust Sludge and support our clients

Just transitions - CLCs leaving no one behind.

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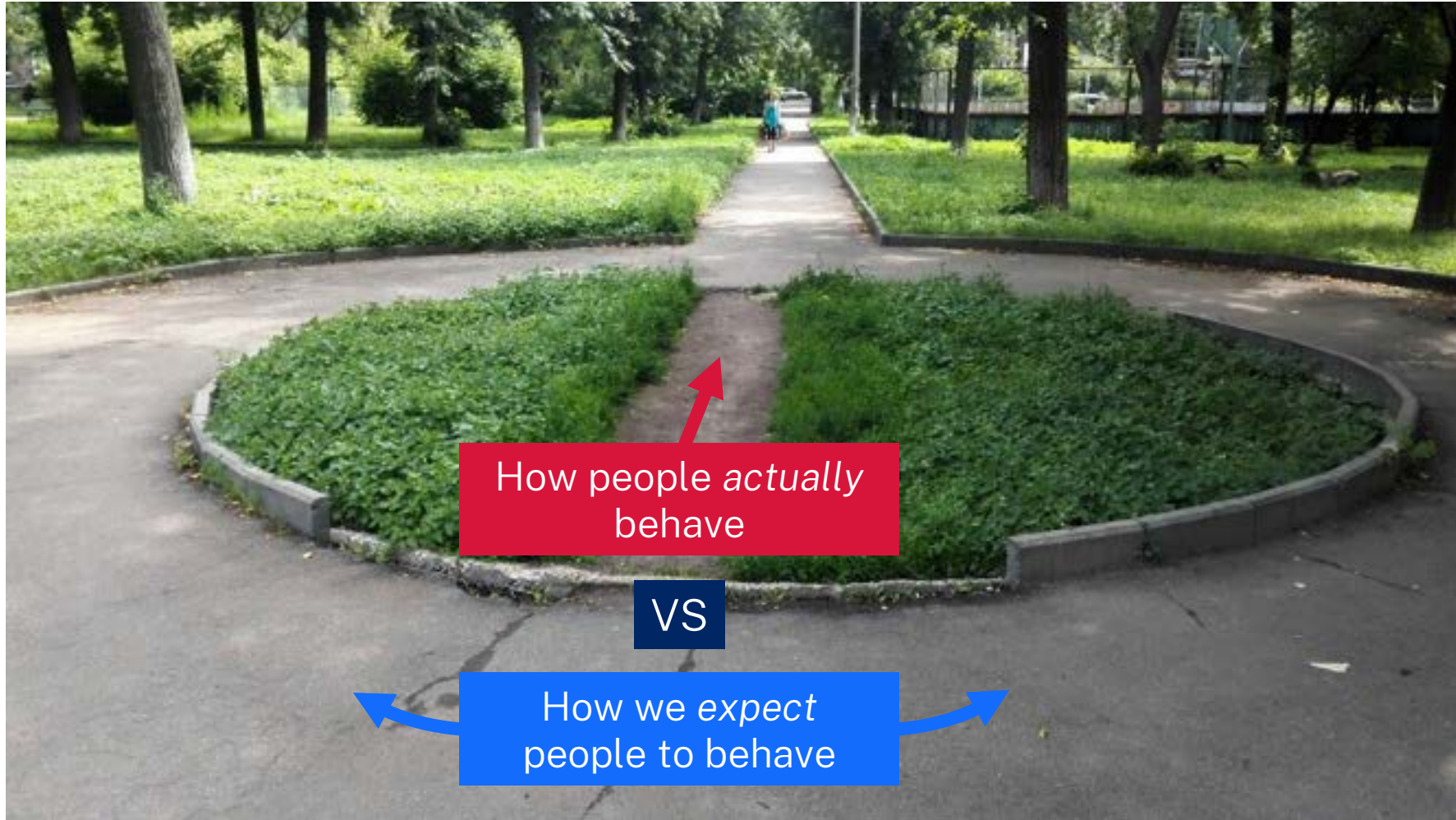


Agenda



- 1. Introduction to BI/sludge**
- 2. Ways to bust sludge**
- 3. Applying BI to the justice space**
- 4. What can you do?**
- 5. Q&A**

Why do we exist?



Behavioural insights helps governments **solve** **complex challenges**



Vaccine take up



Missing hospital appointments



Defendants showing up to court



Apprentices completing training



Seeking help from a government service



Injured employees returning to work



Recruiting people with disability



Paying fines on time



Adopting COVID safe behaviours



Applying for a trade licence



Preventing domestic violence



Supporting customers facing distress



Women applying for senior roles



Use of library services



Girls choosing trade careers



Student teachers in rural NSW







How people make decisions, change behaviour or adopt habits

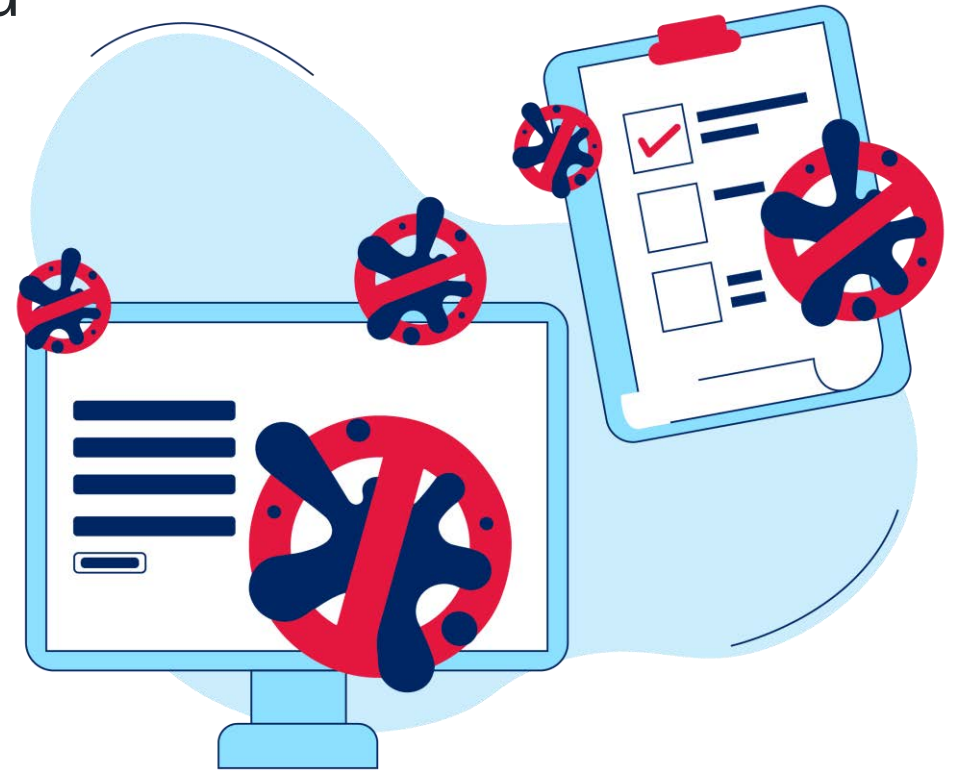
How services frame choices and design for impact

How clients experience services and connect with ease, equity and trust

What is sludge?

The sludge we see in NSW government tends to be **unintentional**

-  **Information** that is hard to find and not written in plain English
-  **Forms** with confusing questions or structure
-  Excessive **wait times**
-  Complex **decision points**

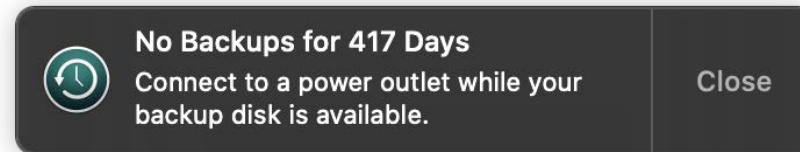


Not **all friction** is sludge!



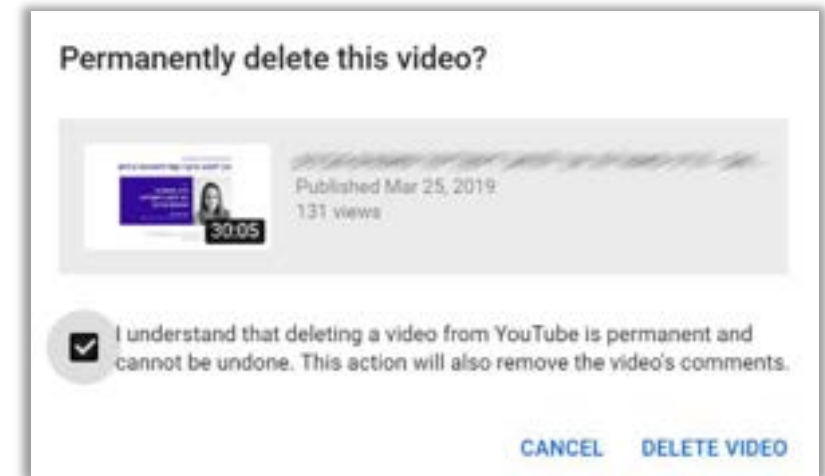
Prevents impulsivity

Friction can help promote deliberation and reflection for important decisions



Provides reminders

Frictions in the form of reminders can help redirect our focus to things we might intend to do, but forget



Prevents errors

Some friction protect against mistakes by making the user pause and reflect

Sludge includes the **psychological and systemic barriers** that make it harder for customers to engage



Embarrassment

Disclosing sensitive information, and processes associated with stigma



Anxiety

Onerous, confusing compliance requirements



Distrust

Hidden terms and conditions, a lack of transparency leading to a loss of customer trust



Exclusion

Processes that rely on resources, are time bound, or expect proficiency in language or jargon can exclude customers from needed services



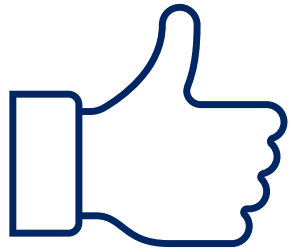
*“Sometimes the process itself is efficient, but there are outcomes of the process **that make people not want to engage**”*

Dilip Soman

Soman, D. (2019) Nudge and Sludge: A conversation with Dilip Soman. *Ethos, Journal of the Civil Service College Singapore*

Ways to remove sludge

Four keys to removing sludge



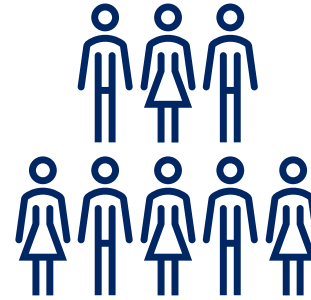
Make it easy

- Simplify processes
- Chunk information
- Use plain language
- Harness defaults



Prompt follow through

- Use decision aids and checklists
- Provide timely reminders
- Use planning prompts
- Show operational transparency
- Harness the goal gradient effect



Make it inclusive

- Provide encouragement to meet clients where they are

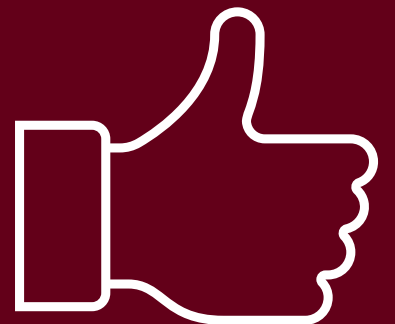


Make it compelling

- Use the right framing
- Harness the messenger effect
- Personalise the message
- Leverage social norms
- Use feedback loops
- Make key information salient

How to remove sludge

Make it easy



Simplify the process to help clients and staff reach their goals

Insight



- ▶ Small barriers or confusion can make people discontinue with a process
- ▶ You, as an expert, likely experience the curse of knowledge and know how to navigate the barriers
- ▶ Streamline processes by removing friction points wherever possible – look at it from the clients' point of view

So what?



- Pre-fill forms whenever information is available
- Link directly to relevant information in situ
- Build guidance into websites/ correspondence, rather than an external document
- Clearly step out the path ahead for the client or your team and cut steps where possible



Case study | Simplifying processes to increase compliance



The UK tax authority removed one step in the process of paying tax

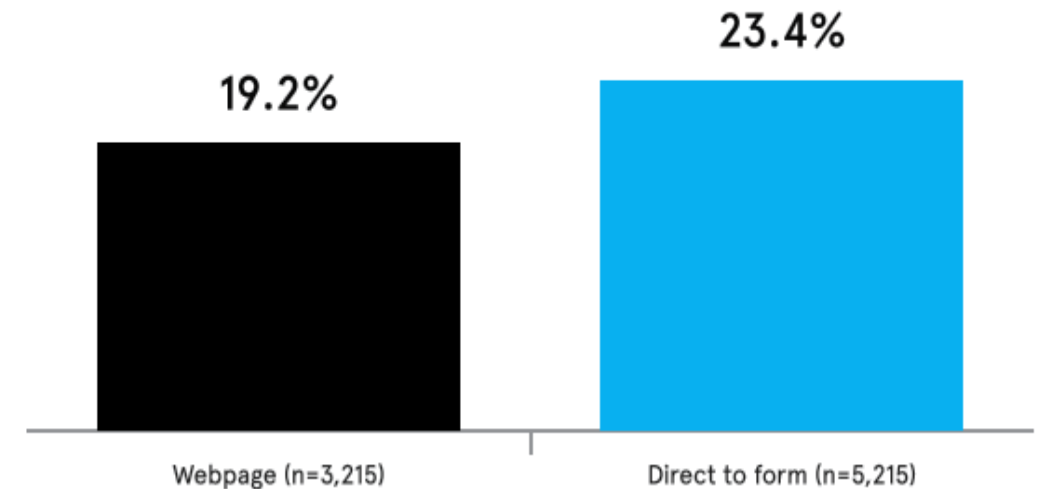


A letter that directed recipients directly to a form - as opposed to directing them to a website that held the form - **increased response rates by 20%**



...all with the **removal of 1 click**

% Response rate to letters directing people to webpage vs form



Chunk information to make it easier to process and identify communications

Insight



- ▶ We have **limited cognitive processing power and working memory**
- ▶ Chunking information or a process into its component parts to make it easier to comprehend

So what?



- Group information into chunks in the order that a client need to use it
- Use headings to signpost information, with language that is aligned with the clients' knowledge and motivations (e.g. **question and answer**)
- This is a great way to organise instructions, or organise complex information so clients / staff find what's relevant to them



Simplify language to help comprehension

Insight



- ▶ **Cognitive scarcity** – people experiencing stress don't have the mental bandwidth to process new, complex information
- ▶ **Therefore**, make it clear to people what they need to do and how to do it

So what?



- Check the Flesch Kincaid score
- Use shorter words and cut jargon
- Use shorter and active sentences
- Have a clear call to action



How to remove sludge

Prompt follow through



Decision aids and checklists can help people make quick and informed decisions to avoid mistakes

Insight



- ▶ Throughout a process, clients will have to make a range of decisions, which can be complex, especially where there's little frame of reference
- ▶ **Therefore**, provide a decision aid that breaks information and decision into manageable chunks

So what?



- Use interactive decision aids to ensure clients are using the correct application, eligible for a service or are funnelled into the right outcome
- If this isn't possible, you can use static decision aids
- Incorporate checklists
- Use the language of the client!



Case Study | Checklists to help reduce error

Table 1. Elements of the Surgical Safety Checklist.^a

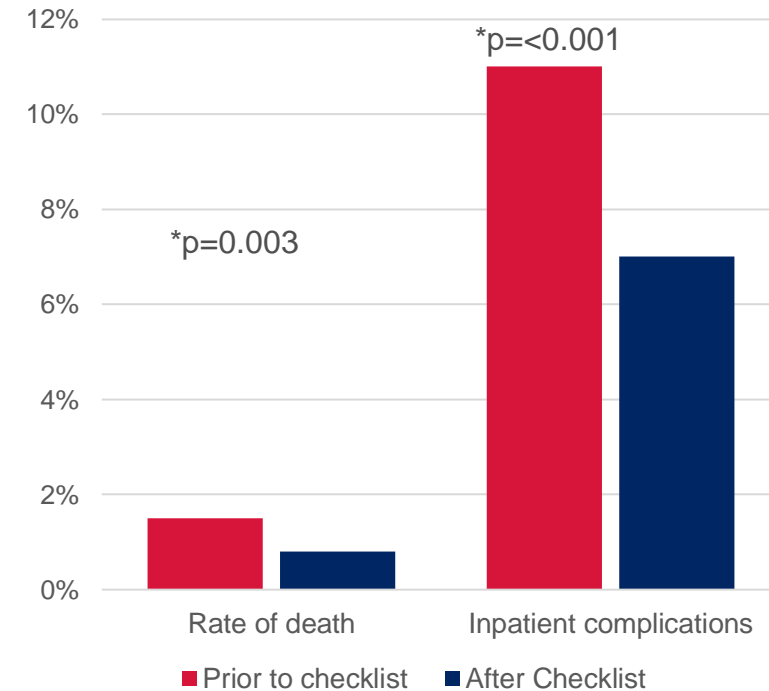
Sign in
Before induction of anesthesia, members of the team (at least the nurse and an anesthesia professional) orally confirm that: The patient has verified his or her identity, the surgical site and procedure, and consent The surgical site is marked or site marking is not applicable The pulse oximeter is on the patient and functioning All members of the team are aware of whether the patient has a known allergy The patient's airway and risk of aspiration have been evaluated and appropriate equipment and assistance are available If there is a risk of blood loss of at least 500 ml (or 7 ml/kg of body weight, in children), appropriate access and fluids are available
Time out
Before skin incision, the entire team (nurses, surgeons, anesthesia professionals, and any others participating in the care of the patient) orally: Confirms that all team members have been introduced by name and role Confirms the patient's identity, surgical site, and procedure Reviews the anticipated critical events Surgeon reviews critical and unexpected steps, operative duration, and anticipated blood loss Anesthesia staff review concerns specific to the patient Nursing staff review confirmation of sterility, equipment availability, and other concerns Confirms that prophylactic antibiotics have been administered ≥60 min before incision is made or that antibiotics are not indicated Confirms that all essential imaging results for the correct patient are displayed in the operating room
Sign out
Before the patient leaves the operating room: Nurse reviews items aloud with the team Name of the procedure as recorded That the needle, sponge, and instrument counts are complete (or not applicable) That the specimen (if any) is correctly labeled, including with the patient's name Whether there are any issues with equipment to be addressed The surgeon, nurse, and anesthesia professional review aloud the key concerns for the recovery and care of the patient

^a The checklist is based on the first edition of the WHO Guidelines for Safe Surgery.¹¹ For the complete checklist, see the Supplementary Appendix.

19-item surgical safety checklist designed for consistency of care was trialled in 8 hospitals worldwide

The goal: To reduce complications and deaths associated with surgery

The outcome? The rate of death reduced, as did inpatient complications



Prompting people to **plan** can help them overcome the intention-action gap

Insight

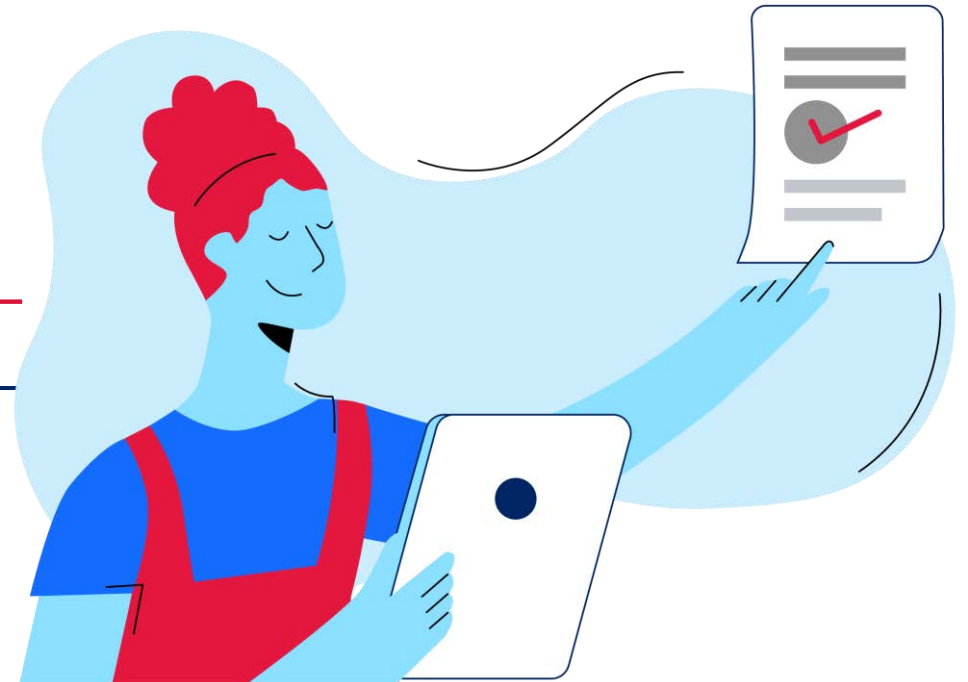


- ▶ Despite our best intentions, we don't always follow through with what we intend to do and tend to be present biased – favouring present rewards over larger, future ones
- ▶ Small barriers can get in the way of intentions, especially without a set plan
- ▶ **Therefore**, help people develop a plan for their intended action

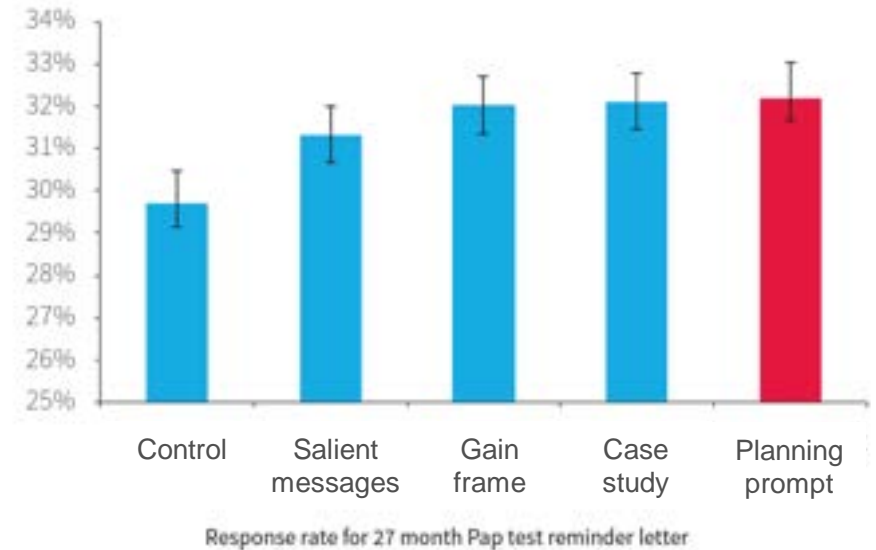
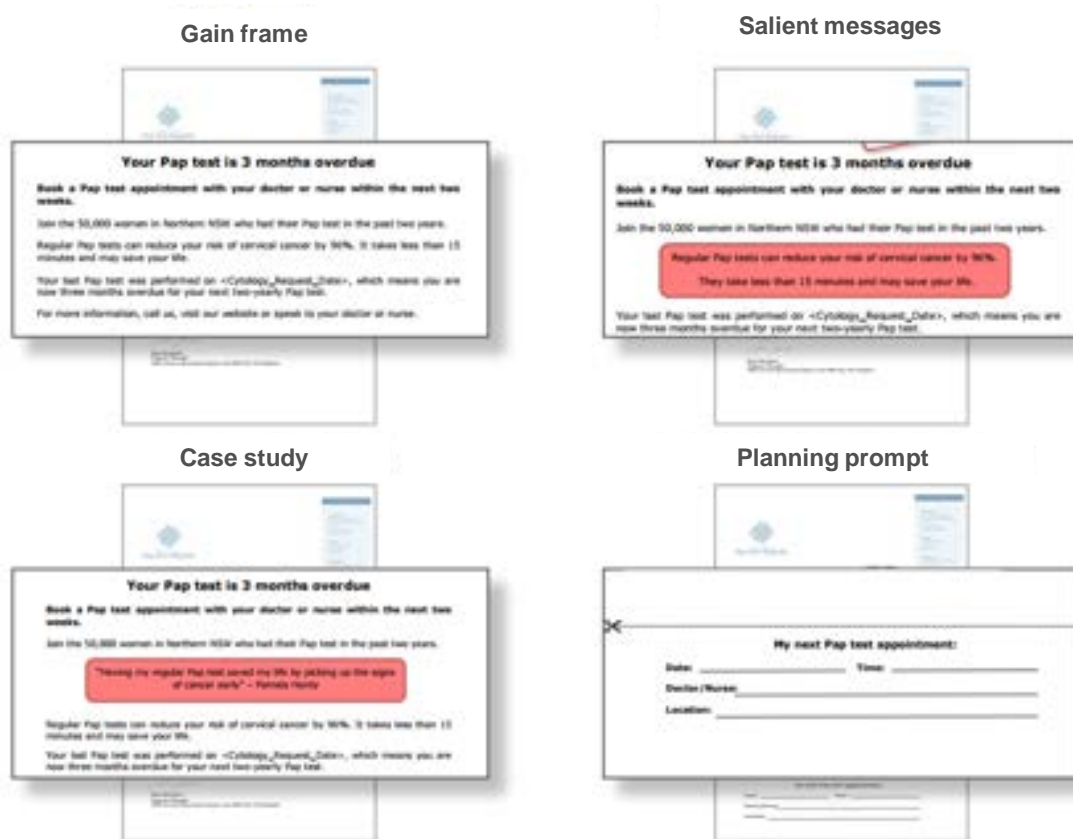
So what?



- Prompt clients to think about when, where and how they are going to complete an action
- Provide clients with information about how long something will take, and where to do it so they can better plan
- The more specific and personal this plan is, the more likely they'll be to follow through
- Writing the plan down or making it public can serve as a commitment device



Case Study | Cervical cancer screening reminder



Over a 12 month period, the **planning prompt** letter could lead to an additional 7,500 women attending their Pap test appointment within three months of receiving their reminder letter

We ran a Randomised Controlled Trial to test four variations of the reminder letter against the standard reminder letter (control). 75,000 letters were sent to women in NSW over a three month period

Timely reminders and prompt people to act

Insight



- ▶ The same offer or message made at different times can have drastically different levels of success
- ▶ This is heightened where clients are busy, or suffering from cognitive scarcity
- ▶ **Therefore**, think about the timing of reminders

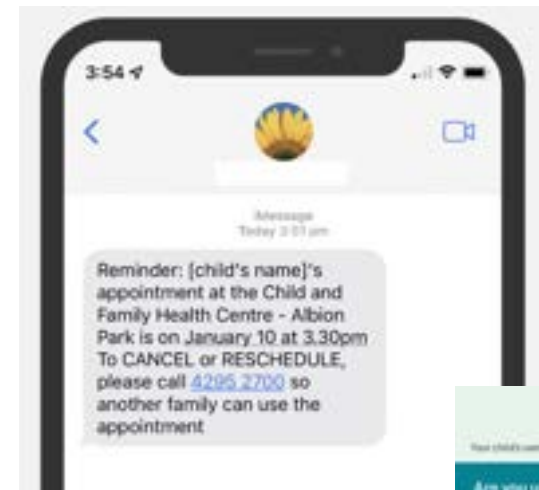
So what?



- Use text messages to nudge your clients to complete an application or respond to correspondence
- Make sure reminders or instructions are provided when the client can act upon them

Text messages to increase health checks

Local health districts used informational magnets and timely reminders to increase booking of children's health checks.

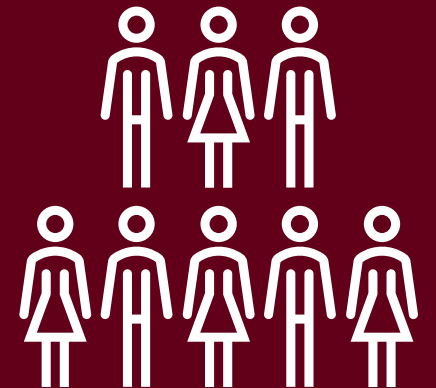


24% ↑
Increase in bookings



How to remove sludge

Make it inclusive



Sludge includes the **psychological and systemic barriers** that make it harder for customers to engage



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Meet clients where they are and **provide encouragement**

Insight



- ▶ Some tasks or services can be harder for certain people to access than for others – through structural barriers themselves, or the negative emotions they can cause
- ▶ **Encourage clients who might miss out otherwise.** Be proactive in prompting or re-engaging clients – rather than waiting for them to come to you

So what?



- Analyse your process to identify any areas that may heighten potential negative emotions for your client base
- Use carefully framed prompts to proactively counter concerns for disengaged clients

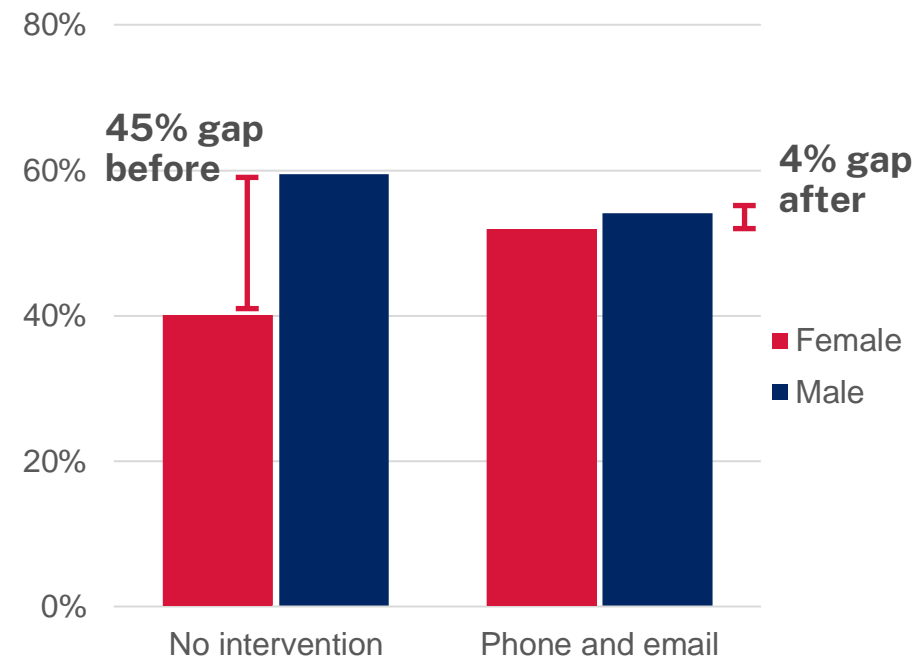


Encouraging women to re-apply for senior roles in Government



Encouraging women to re-apply for senior roles in Government

Interventions to prompt and encourage women to re-apply after unsuccessful applications, saw a **27% increase in re-application**, and significant reduction in gap between male and female applicants



How to remove sludge

Make it compelling



Messenger effect

Insight



- ▶ The messenger plays an important role in how information is received, believed and acted upon
- ▶ The same message delivered by two different people can have different impacts, and this impact can last

So what?



- Use a trusted or authoritative messenger
- Messenger needs to be relevant to the topic they're communicating about and have personal experience
- They should have a track record of honesty and reliability



Over **twice as likely** to appear at court than if not called

Frame the message

Insight



- ▶ How we talk about something impacts how people react
- ▶ Focus on your client's context
- ▶ Frame what you want them to do

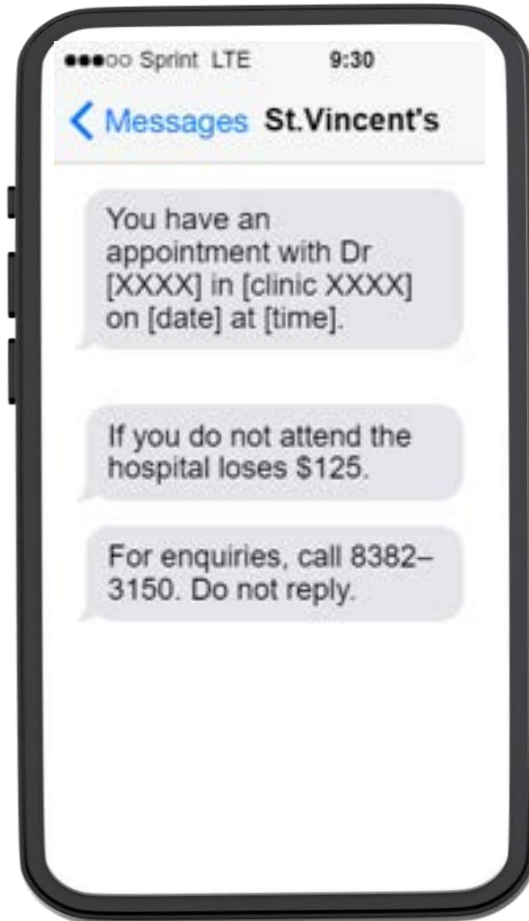
So what?



- **Gain frame** highlight benefits of a behaviour
- **Loss frame** show what can be lost
- **Forms** Think about questions to your clients



Case study | Frame the message



Reducing missed appointments at St.Vincent's

The BIU tested a range of text reminder messages with patients with appointments at St.Vincent's Hospital

Texts that framed the missed appointments as a cost to patients or the hospital were most effective

Make messages **salient**

Insight



- ▶ We know our clients are time poor and that our websites and documents are full of information
- ▶ We tend to scan websites, letters, etc. for key information, rather than reading them in full

So what?



- Make sure important actions, like steps in a process or links, are clearly highlighted
- Use icons and explain key concepts
- Use colour, formatting and imagery to draw client attention to key information



Make messages salient

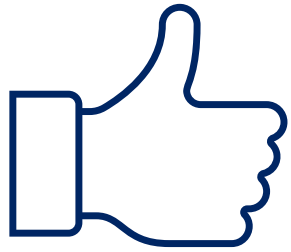
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Four keys to removing sludge



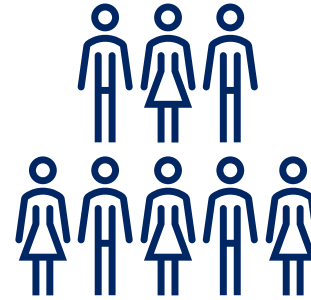
Make it easy

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Prompt follow through

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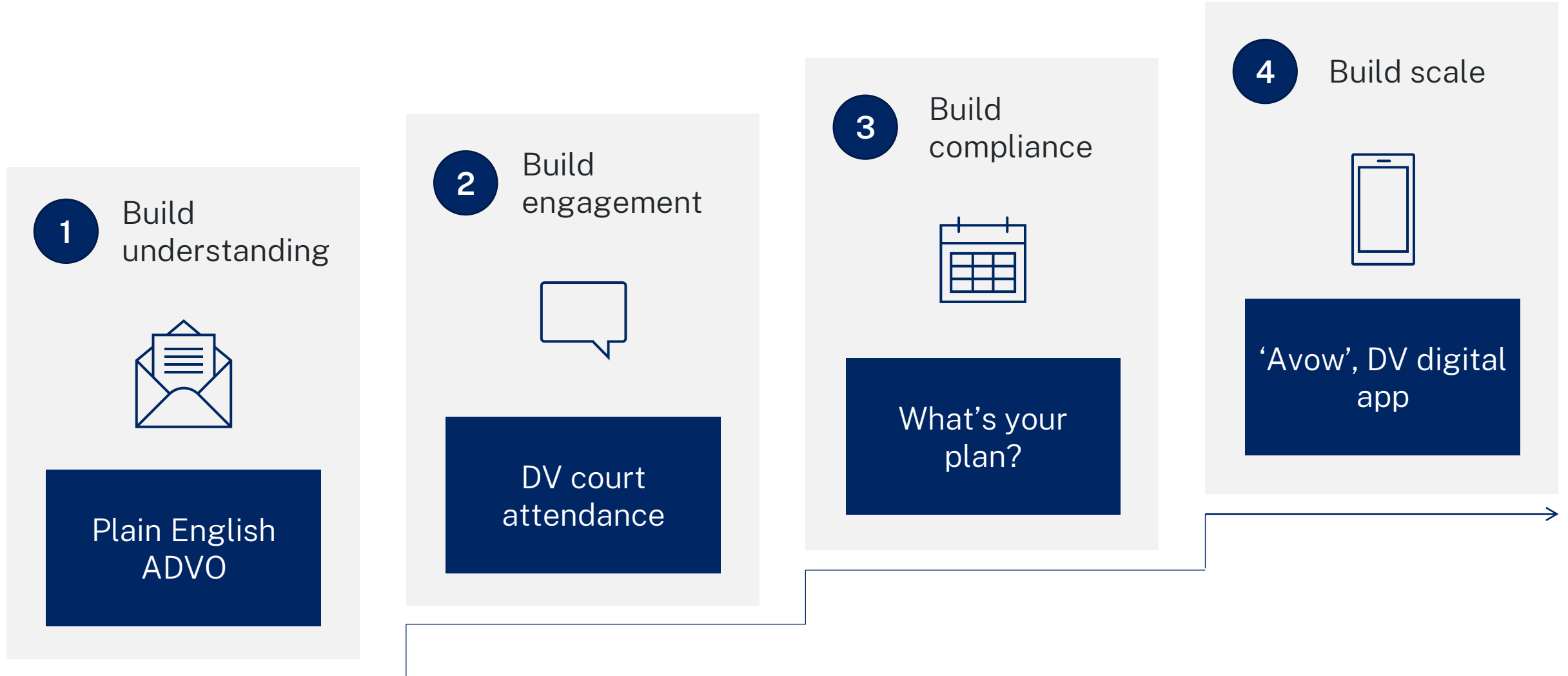


Make it compelling

- Use the right framing
- Harness the messenger effect
- Personalise the message
- Leverage social norms
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Applying Behavioural Insights in the justice space

We have been supporting interventions to reduce domestic violence



1 | Driving comprehension of domestic violence orders

The problem

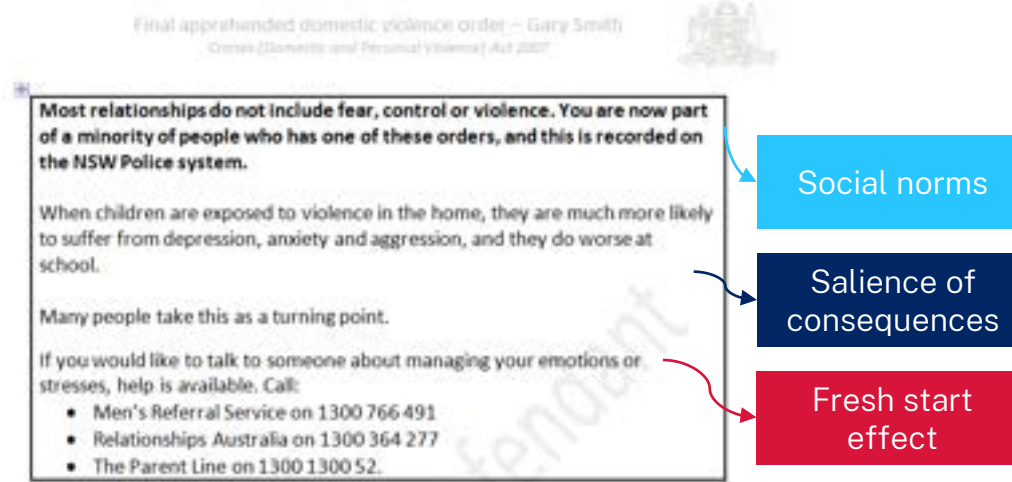
Background:

- Fieldwork in courts revealed that many defendants didn't understand their ADVO
- Many didn't understand what a breach was and what would happen if they breached their orders
- We wanted to increase comprehension of and compliance with ADVOs

What we did

We worked with Women's Domestic Violence Court Advocacy Service (WDVCAS) to redesign the ADVO using behavioural insights

Final apprehended domestic violence order – Gary Smith
Crimes (Domestic and Personal Violence) Act 2007



Social norms

Salience of consequences

Fresh start effect

To improve comprehension and compliance with orders, the ADVO was revised based on behavioural insights principles:

- simplification
- personalisation
- social norms
- examples and explanatory text to help hold defendants to account

The result



Reading age reduced from **13.5 years** to **8 years**



WDVCAS, NSW Police and Legal Aid report that the revised ADVO has improved understanding.

2 | Driving court attendance for domestic violence defendants

The problem

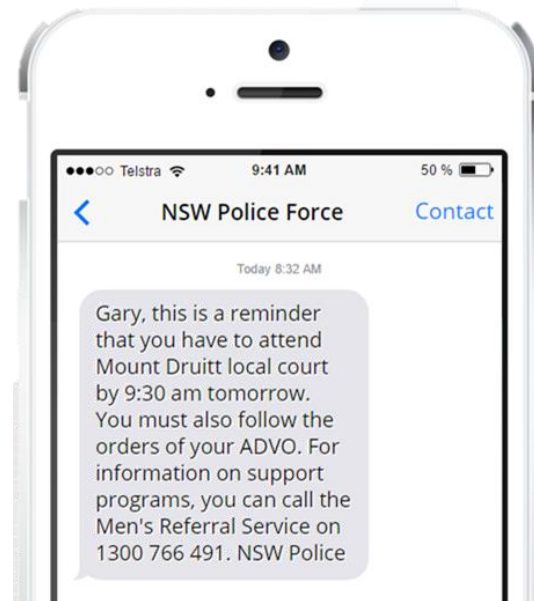
During fieldwork we learned that on average 18% of DV defendants did not appear at their ADVO court listing.

We ran a randomised control trial in 5 courts to test whether sending a reminder text message would reduce court non-attendance.

What we did

We sent an SMS reminder to defendants the day before their court appointment.

The reminder incorporated personalisation, messenger effect (signed off by NSW Police) and was a timely prompt to encourage behaviour.



The result

25% increase in defendants attending ADVO court appointments

Court matters finalised **7% faster**

Increased engagement predicted more positive attitudes to attendance

That means...

- ✓ ADVOs finalised faster
- ✓ Less stress and anxiety for victims experiencing domestic violence

3 | What's Your Plan?

The problem

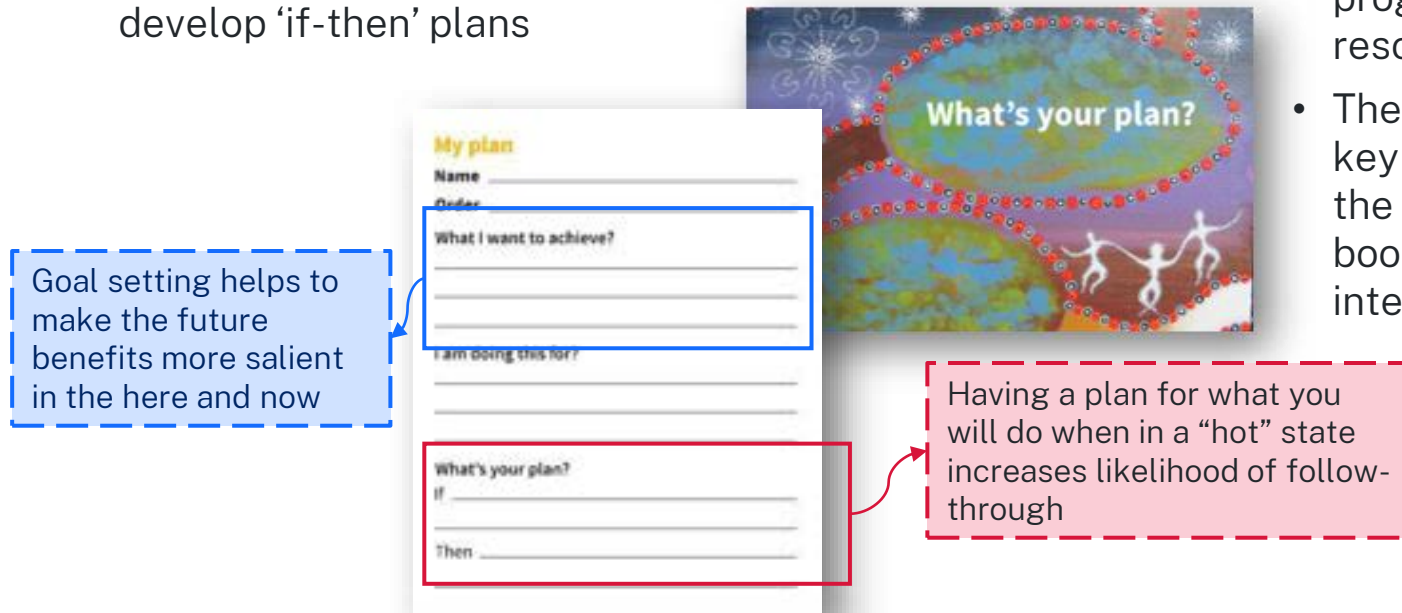
- Many ADVO breaches are 'technical breaches'
- Even where people understand and intend to comply with their conditions
- Often, day-to-day lives and habits can conflict with ADVO conditions, making it difficult to comply
- Clients lack adequate planning guidance to help them develop effective plans

What we did

- 'What's Your Plan': a one-on-one meeting with defendants at court with Aboriginal Client Community Support Officers (ACCSOs)
- Designed to overcome intention-action gap, encouraging follow through on plans to comply with their ADVO and develop 'if-then' plans

The result

- Initial evaluation found no significant result – evaluators suggested that WYP could be enhanced with the addition of other programs, support and resources
- The role of ACCSOs was key to engaging clients and the intervention could be boosted with a more intensive program





Goal setting helps to make the future benefits more salient in the here and now

Having a plan for what you will do when in a "hot" state increases likelihood of follow-through

4 | The AVOW domestic violence app

The problem


 Police need a contactless tool


Victim safety 

When police attend a DV incident, the safety of the victim must be prioritised over the perpetrator's needs, meaning police need a resource they can effortlessly signpost to the offender

COVID-19 

During COVID-19, Police were more reliant on resources that can be delivered virtually


 Offenders need an anywhere, anytime tool to make it easier to comply

 Scarcity and cognitive load

- Though improved, the ADVO is difficult to understand, meaning offenders may not know exactly how their behaviour is limited
- ADVO recipients often face many competing demands, limiting their bandwidth to make good decisions


 Present bias

People tend to discount the value of a future reward for an instant one, meaning that they'll be more likely to breach if they don't remember what they have to lose


 Hard to get help

 Social norms

In some communities there is a normalisation of violence, causing some offenders to minimise their behaviour

 Intention action gap

Habits mean defendants fall into bad patterns of breaching behaviour, even if they have the best of intentions not to

 Feeling alone

What we did

BIU has collaborated with DCJ to make a world-first app for DV offenders

- Avow digitises information and court attendance reminders.
- It provides a digital version of the 'What's Your Plan' conversation
- It digitises a personalised plain English ADVO and self-regulation tools that were previously only available face to face.
- It also provides an additional channel to directly connects users with support services.



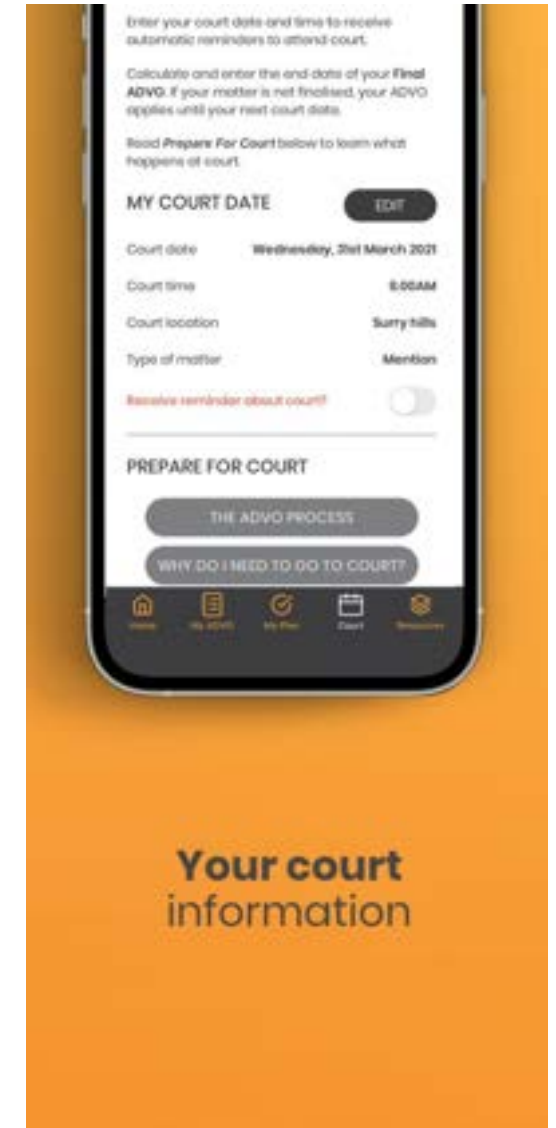
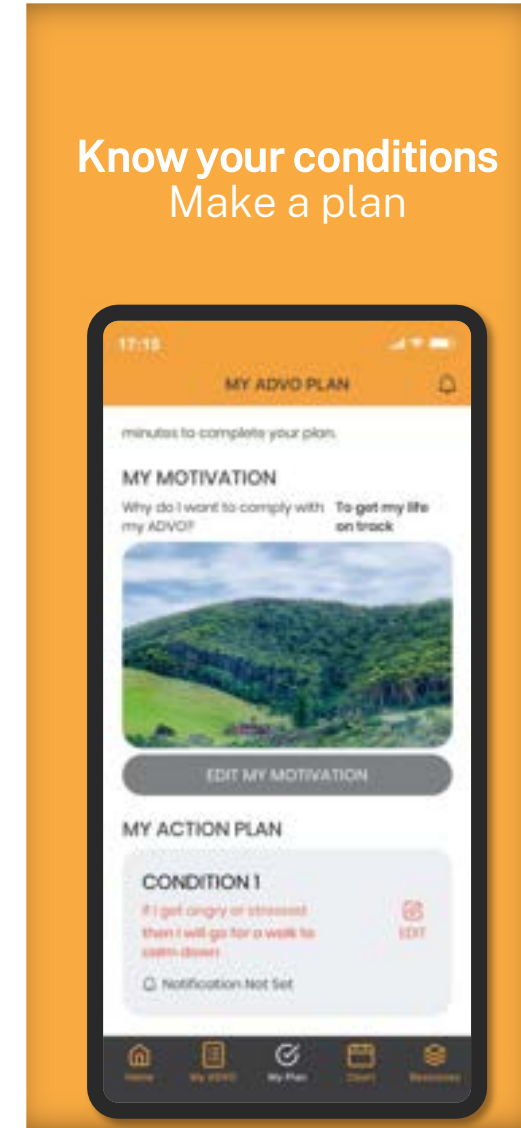
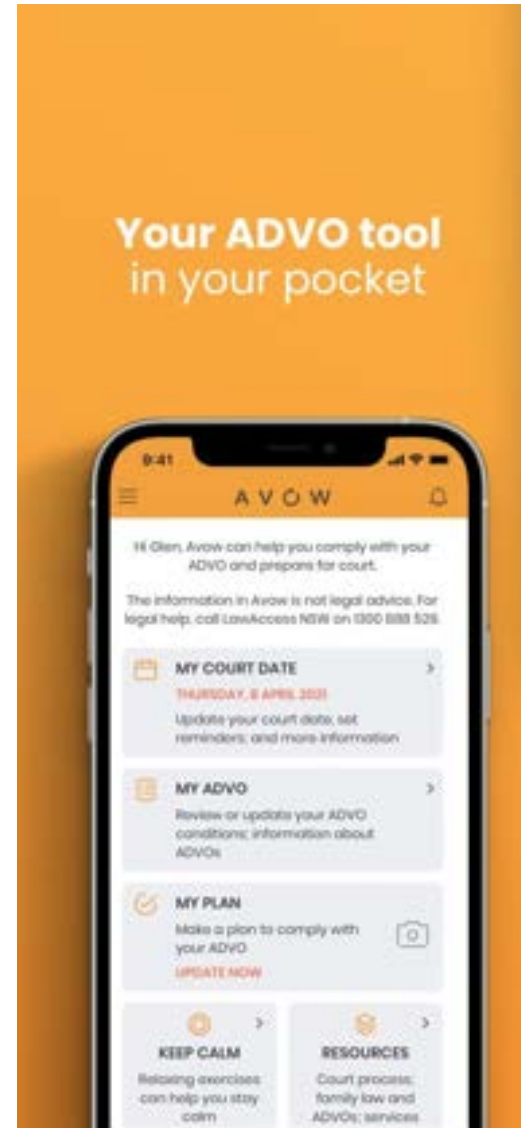
4 | The AVOW domestic violence app



The result

The AVOW app is available and used across NSW

- Part of the Automatic Referral Service for anyone issued with an ADVO, also signposted by LawAccess
- User testing showed it is a "trusted" and "valued" resource that contains important information to support compliance
- Over 1,200 users have used the app almost 10,000 times since it was launched



What can you do?

Check out our **sludge guides**



Where to begin

There are four key elements to think about when identifying and reducing sludge from forms.

What do we mean by 'forms'?
When we talk about forms, we mean any document or page (physical or online) which asks customers to enter information and respond to questions to access something. Examples include online application forms, physical forms at service centres, forms received after inspections and more.


- 1. Access and readiness**
 - Can customers easily find the right form?
 - Do customers know how and why to complete the form?
- 2. Design and structure**
 - Is the structure easy to navigate?
 - Do customers have to "tell us once"?
 - Does the most important information stand out?
 - Are customers alerted to any errors while completing the form?
- 3. Language and content**
 - Does the customer have to fill in only the most necessary information?
 - Is the language easy to understand?
- 4. Next steps**
 - Is it clear how the customer should submit the form?
 - Does the customer know what will happen after they submit their form and how long it will take?

Reducing sludge in forms

Break sections up into shorter, comprehensible "chunks".

Order your questions in a way that makes sense to your customers and meets their expectations.

Example




Research on how people learn new information finds that chunking information can make perception, learning, and cognition easier. Forms should be as short as possible, with content separated into clear sections.

For example, eligibility questions should be completed first, followed by the most important information, with supplementary or optional information presented last.

Clearly explain what customers achieve by completing the form.

Use a decision tree to guide customers to the right form.

Example












For example, one study found that explaining the process of disclosing personal information to an employer and how it would benefit the employee increased fully completed employee disclosure forms from 55% to 85%.¹

You can use a series of questions to take customers through to the right form for them. Customers might have to click on some simple answers to questions about their occupation, what they are looking for and so on, then be guided to the form that meets their needs. This is called a 'decision tree'. Decision trees can be easily implemented digitally and help ensure getting to the right form is easier and more seamless than having to manually search for it.

Our sludge scales are coming soon!



Find your scale by behaviour category

 <p>Reading and understanding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read website Read email Read letter Read text message Read confirmation (text/email) Read notification Read signage Read factsheet/brochure Check eligibility Use website FAQs 	 <p>Interacting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Face-to-face interaction Receive phone call from Government Negotiation process Physical access Paying for something Submit complaint
 <p>Seeking and navigating</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Search for a website Navigate website Use phone app 	 <p>Help seeking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accessing support (via email) Accessing support (via phone)
 <p>Preparing or providing information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete form Gather documents Provide documents Apply for rebate Provide consent Login or enter password 	 <p>Waiting</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wait (active) Wait (idle)
	 <p>Deciding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Make a decision
	 <p>Miscellaneous</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Miscellaneous step
	 <p>Non-customer actions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Government action Third-party action or decision

1.4 Read text message

Reading a text message/SMS sent from **government**

- To give customers an update on the status of an application
- To remind customers to complete an **action**

1.4.1 Reason and call to action

Considerations	Very difficult	Difficult	Somewhat difficult	Somewhat easy	Easy
<p>Reason</p> <p>Does the text message have a clear purpose?</p>	<p>It is very unclear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The text message is sent on an ad-hoc basis and may be sent at an inappropriate time No reason for the text message is provided There is no call to action 	<p>It is unclear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The text message is sent on an ad-hoc basis Reason for the text message is provided, but it is unclear There is no call to action 	<p>It is mostly clear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The text message is not automated and is sent manually. However, it relates to an event in the process and is sent at an appropriate time Reason for the text message is provided, but it may be unclear There is a call to action, but it is unclear 	<p>It is clear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The text message is automated. It is triggered by an event in the process and is sent at an appropriate time Clear reason for the text message is provided early There is a call to action 	<p>It is very clear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The text message is automated. It is triggered by an event in the process, e.g. one day before a scheduled appointment and is sent at an appropriate time Clear reason for the text message is provided early and links directly to call to action There is a clear call to

3.6.2 Security check

Considerations	Very difficult	Difficult	Somewhat difficult	Somewhat easy	Easy
<p>Username and password prompts</p> <p>Are username and password prompts/requirements clear?</p>	<p>There are no prompts</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The label for the username field is unclear. For example, it is labelled 'username' when the username can only be an email The customer cannot view the password requirements from the login screen Customers are not shown any password requirements or common password issues when they enter their password incorrectly 	<p>Prompts are unclear</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The label for the username field may be unclear. For example, it may be labelled 'username' when the username can only be an email The customer cannot view the password requirements from the login screen Customers are shown common password issues when they enter their password incorrectly, but they are unclear 	<p>Prompts are sometimes helpful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The label for the username field is helpful and clear The customer cannot view the password requirements from the login screen, or they are hard to find and/or understand Customers are shown common password issues when they enter their password incorrectly 	<p>Prompts are mostly clear and helpful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The label for the username field is helpful and clear The customer can view the password requirements from the login screen. The password requirements are relatively easy to find and understand Customers are shown the password requirements when they enter their password incorrectly, but the unclear requirements are not highlighted 	<p>Prompts are clear and helpful</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The label for the username field is helpful and clear. For example, if the username is an email, the username field is labelled 'email' The customer can view the password requirements (e.g. '8-15 characters') from the login screen. The password requirements are very easy to find and understand Customers are shown the password requirements when they enter their password incorrectly and the unclear requirements are highlighted
<p>Password reset</p> <p>Is it easy to reset forgotten passwords?</p>	<p>It is difficult and takes a long time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process for resetting the password is difficult and takes a long time due to confusing requirements, bugs or delays Many customers contact staff for support resetting a password 	<p>It is relatively easy, but takes a long time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process for resetting the password is relatively easy, but can take a long time (e.g. due to delays receiving the email/text message with the link to reset the password) Some customers contact staff for support resetting a password 	<p>It is easy, but can sometimes take a long time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process for resetting the password is easy, but may not be fast (e.g. due to delays receiving the email/text message with the link to reset the password) 	<p>It is easy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process for resetting the password is easy and fast 	<p>It is seamless</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The process for resetting the password is seamless (e.g. enter email address/username, receive email/text message with link, enter new password)

What else can you do?



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