

Educating customers to improve recycling

Federation of New York Solid Waste Associations

Solid Waste & Recycling Conference

May 5, 2015

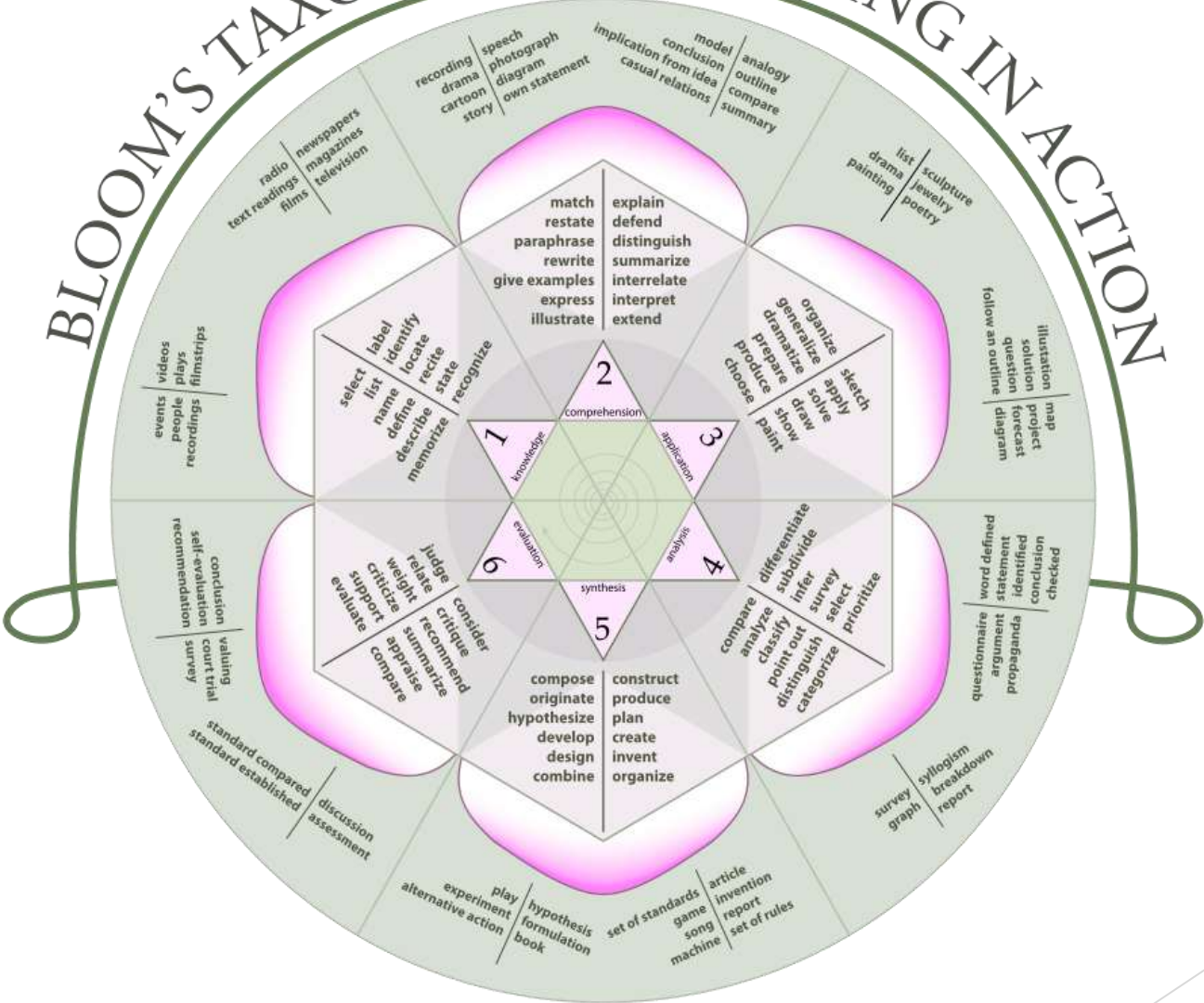
What are we really trying to do?



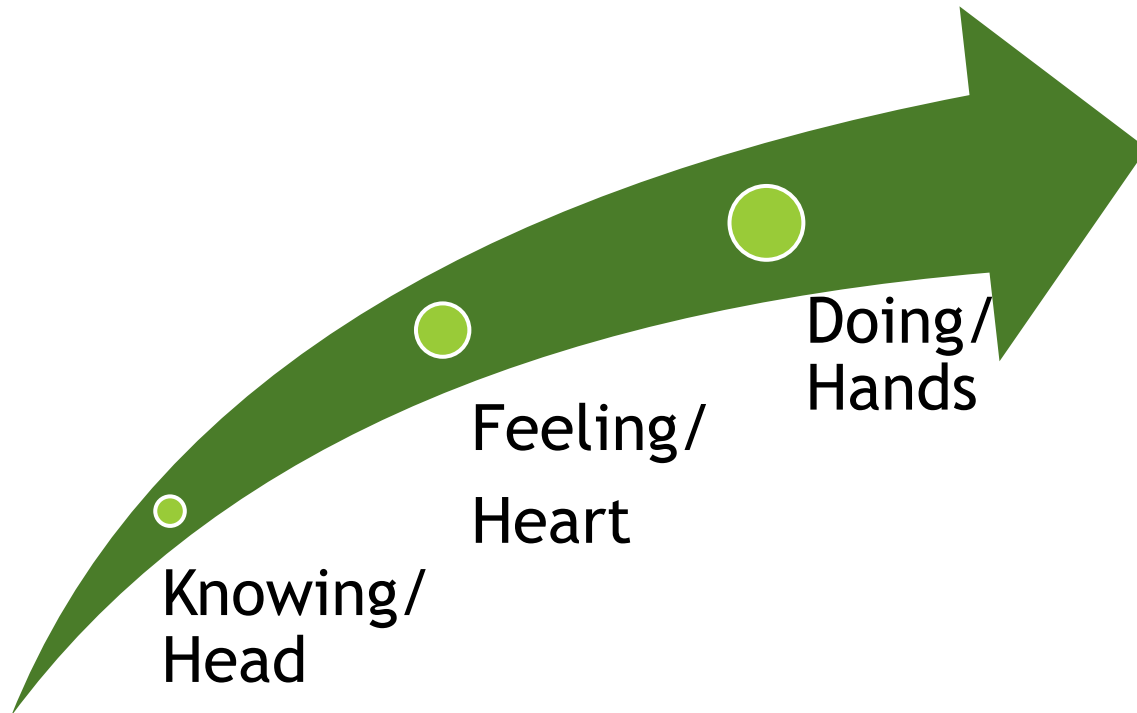
The purpose of recycling education:

- ❑ Encourage participation.
- ❑ Allow communities to increase recycling rates.
- ❑ Allows participants to be better recyclers.
- ❑ Address problem areas/misunderstandings.
- ❑ Gives us a chance to share what we learn as best practices.

BLOOM'S TAXONOMY - LEARNING IN ACTION



Educational Objectives



Why education is critical:

- ▶ People want to participate.
- ▶ They need to know HOW to participate.
- ▶ Programs differ from one community to the next.
- ▶ Ensure a supply of good quality recyclable materials.
- ▶ The public is a critical component of the recycling system.
- ▶ People forget and need to be reminded over time.
- ▶ Programs change.

Education...Do I have to?

- ▶ YES!!!
- ▶ Participation must be promoted.
- ▶ Behavior must be reinforced.
- ▶ EDUCATION improves participation.
- ▶ EDUCATION improves quality.
- ▶ EDUCATION is a critical part of your program.

Education... Do I *Really* Have to?

- ▶ Other issues and services are promoting themselves.
- ▶ There's a lot of competition for audience attention.





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Education... Do I *Really* Have to?

- ▶ Other issues and services are promoting themselves.
- ▶ There's a lot of competition for audience attention.

- ▶ “Rise above the noise.”
- ▶ Now, more important than ever.
- ▶ Communications *must* be ongoing and consistent.



Education Best Practices



- ▶ Promote bins/containers.
- ▶ Encourage new residents to get on board.
- ▶ Focus on the audience you need to reach (non-recyclers), not those *already* recycling.
 - ▶ 10-80-10
 - ▶ 15-70-15
 - ▶ 20-60-20

Moving the masses

- ▶ When looking to increase recycling, focusing on the top performers is far less effective than engaging the middle.
- ▶ Why?
- ▶ Greater numbers and more room for improvement make the middle tier more likely to produce additional volume of material to recycle.

Education Best Practices



- ▶ Promote bins/containers.
- ▶ Encourage new residents to get on board.
- ▶ Focus on the audience you need to reach (non-recyclers), not those *already* recycling (20-60-20 rule).
- ▶ Use local facts and messages when promoting recycling.
- ▶ Be creative - Think outside the “bin” when developing your materials
- ▶ Your Web site is your most powerful and cost-effective tool.
- ▶ Measure the impact of your efforts.

Limited funds? Focus on the basics...

1. Make sure your **messaging is consistent** and that you are communicating accurately to your residents.
 - ▶ Incorrect or in-consistent messaging will cost you more.
2. **Leverage your Web site**, make it more user-friendly and promote it everywhere as the “go to” source of info on recycling.
 - ▶ Save on printing, post info and materials on-line.
3. Study what others are doing, **use resources** like CVP, SWANA, etc. to help guide your way.
 - ▶ Talk to your peers!
4. Find cheerleaders who promote your program

Measuring Successful Education

- ▶ At the end of the day, it's about tons!
 - ▶ Did we move the needle?
- ▶ Set your benchmarks up-front
 - ▶ How many bin requests are we getting?
 - ▶ What are our set out rates currently?
 - ▶ What is our MRF tonnage?
 - ▶ Do we have historical data to spot trends?
- ▶ Measure after three, six, nine and twelve months
 - ▶ Adjust course if you're not seeing change
 - ▶ Are bin requests up?
 - ▶ Look at MRF volume and compare
 - ▶ year over year
 - ▶ not month over month
 - ▶ Review set outs or participation rates
 - ▶ Have they increased?

Contact me:



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