

they know about your program, what are their attitudes and beliefs towards this, what are their behaviors or practices related to your program and which communication channels do they use?

Researching on your Audience

When you conduct a research of your target audience, you have to determine the following:

1. Knowledge
 - v Are the target audiences aware of the problem? Are the 75% of your cooperative members aware that you have a health insurance program?
 - v Do they know the key facts? Do they know how much they will contribute and how much they will get? Do they know how they will access your health insurance?
 - v Do they have any misconceptions? Do they feel that health insurance is a good investment? Or do they feel otherwise?
 - v Do they know how to prevent or control the problem? Do they know how to control or prevent issues on health? If they have health problems, how do they remedy them? Where do they get the money for hospitalization or consultation? Where do they go when they have financial problems?
 - v Where do they get their information about the problem?
2. Attitudes and Beliefs
 - v Do target members believe they are at risk? Maybe they do not believe that they will get sick because at the moment they feel very healthy?
 - v How important do they feel the problem is, compared to other issues they face in their lives? Look into the possibility that if your target audience belongs below the poverty line, perhaps health is not their real problem because their main concern is to earn so that they would have food to eat. Maybe saving is not an option because there is nothing left to save?
 - v How do they feel about the behavior you will ask them to perform? Do they feel it would be very difficult to save some money to pay their insurance premiums? Do they find going to the cooperative a hassle and would prefer having you come to them to collect their contributions? Do they live far from your cooperative?
 - v What are the benefits and barriers they see to performing the behavior? Would it be convenient for them to pay their contribution directly to your cooperative? Maybe, when they get to your cooperative, they would still be asked to wait for the treasurer and thereby lose much of their precious time?
 - v Do they think they can perform the new behavior?
 - v Do they think that the people in their social network will provide positive support to their new behavior? Maybe they belong to a group with co-members who do not support their views? Maybe other members of the group or the community where they belong to are always discouraging your target member?
 - v Who do they look up to? Identify who they believe in and hopefully, once you get this person to join, you will also be able to convince the target member to join in your health insurance program.
3. Behaviors — What are the current behaviors of the target audience related to the problem? Definitely, you know that 75% of your members are not into your health insurance program

and so you have to know:

- v At what stage of behavior change are they? In other words, have you discussed the health insurance program with them? Perhaps they have only heard of it once and are therefore not convinced?
 - v Have they tried the new behavior? If so, why have they not adopted it? What are the circumstances or chances of having to pay the premium in consonance with paying for the membership dues and other programs you have where they are members of.
 - ❖ In what circumstances do they perform the behavior currently?
4. Communication Habits and Preferences — Do you know your potential health care program (HCP) member in terms of their communication habits?
- ❖ Which media channels (TV, radio, newspaper) do the target audiences pay the most attention to? Is it TV or radio? Is it local or DZMM? Local. Do they buy newspapers?
 - ❖ Which types of vehicles in each channel (TV: talk/variety/drama etc.) are preferred by the target audience? If they prefer the radio, which programs do they prefer to listen to: drama, variety, talk show or commentators?
 - ❖ At what times and places do the target audience view or listen to these media? In one of your worksheets, you shared how and to whom your target audience get their information. Many of you said, “during community meetings” but you overlooked the sari-sari store where people often go and meet, and find out about the latest happenings in the neighborhood. Another popular place where people share and get information (especially the men) is the barbershop.
 - ❖ What does your target audience do during their leisure time? If your target audience is comprised of coconut farmers, find out what they usually do after work. After climbing coconut trees, after harvesting coconuts, after removing the husks after drying the copra what do they do? If they go drinking after work, you need to have strong bodies to be able to get to these coconut farmers because sometimes you might have to socialize with them.
 - v Which organizations they belong to? Do these coconut farmers belong to any other organization? What other groups do they belong to?
 - ❖ Who do they see as a credible spokesperson about the problem? Who do your target audience believe in?

What about YOU?

- ❖ Who are your contacts? What about the sari-sari store owner? If you had a misunderstanding with the sari-sari store owner, will you still be able to convince his customers?
- ❖ Have you approached your contacts positively? Do they have a good impression of you?
- ❖ If not, how will you approach them? If your target audience listens to the local commentator, have you contacted the commentator before? Do you have any contacts in the local radio station?

How Do We Get the Information?

If you want to get facts about your audience or your communication channels, there are many methods:

1. Qualitative methods – These involve the use of non-numerical data. Data collected are understood because they are like listening to stories. The person gathering the data would approach the target respondents and ask them to tell a story about their experiences on the topic. Types of qualitative methods used for social marketing include:
 - a. Focus Group Discussion
 - b. In-depth interviews
 - c. Case studies
 - d. Observation studies
2. Quantitative methods – These utilize numerical data. You use this if you are already serious data-gatherers. The most common qualitative methods that may be used include:
 - a. KAP surveys – (Knowledge, Attitude, Practice) These are surveys where the one conducting the research goes from house to house asking homeowners questions and recording them accordingly. Data collected would be analyzed.
 - b. Marketing databases.

While these two types are different, both are important because they help us understand others.

Tips

1. Social Marketing is all about segmentation. There is no such thing as the “general public.” In other words, the more you specify, the more you put a face in your communication plan, the more effective it will be. Remember that the communication plan depends on how well you know your audience and knowing your audience means being able to segment them.
2. The challenge now is for you to be able to further segment your audience. To segment does not just mean getting the common characteristics of all. It is not supposed to cover the whole group but it should identify a distinct group from the total population.
 For example you can say that, “we want to convince the corn, pineapple and rice farmers.” This is good but what if that is the whole universe in itself? What if all of us here, for instance, are corn, rice or pineapple farmers?
 We can further segment these farmers according to age. Saying you will target those aged 16 to 60 years old will not be enough because it is just like saying you will target the whole population. Why do we have to be specific? Because maybe a 60 year-old farmer would have different health needs from a 20 year-old. In the same way, rice and corn farmers might be exposed to different health risks.
3. How will I know which group to target? Identify the majority. Which population is larger: those who are 20 years old or those who are 60 years old? If those who are 20 years old is the larger group, then I should focus on them.
 This group of 20 year-olds may be further segmented according to gender. How many are males, how many are females? If there are more males, then I would focus on them.
4. Segment and further segment only if appropriate. For example, these male corn farmers aged 20 can still be segmented according to education. However, will educational attainment matter in this instance? If it won't matter, you don't have to factor it in.
5. Only when a clear segment has been arrived at can we make our communication strategy.
6. Eventually, the other groups or the smaller groups will also be important but with limited time and resources, we have to concentrate first on the larger segment.

7. The purpose of segmentation is to guide our communication strategy. For example, if you know that the farmers are men who work at certain season when will you hold a meeting? If we did not know our primary audience well enough and just conducted a meeting whenever and wherever we liked, what will be the result?
8. Segmentation is categorizing individuals into groups but it doesn't mean dividing your group. It doesn't mean you have to hold a meeting for each segmentation made no matter how small or large the group is. It only means prioritizing and focusing on the larger group to accomplish your objectives. If in your coop 80% are men, then you know that you have to understand the men's lifestyle more than the women's lifestyle. It does not necessarily mean that you have to hold one meeting for each or that you have to make a plan for each group no matter how small. If there is an equal number of men versus the women in your coop, then perhaps you can hold two assemblies: one for the men and one for the women. Otherwise, prioritize the population that belongs to the majority.