



FRAMING CHECKLIST

This checklist is based on Animal Think Tank's *Framing Mini Guide* and social science research. Use it as a quick reference guide for crafting communications and planning campaigns. Where possible, test what works with your audience to know if it resonates.

Know the framing landscape about this issue

Before you write anything:

- Who are you talking to, and what do they already believe about this issue?
- What unhelpful frames exist about this issue that you need to avoid triggering or repeating?
- What helpful frames do you want to reinforce and activate instead?
- What is the core frame you want to leave your audience with – and can you express it in one or two sentences?

Quick check: Does your core frame connect to your audience's existing values, make the problem feel real and urgent, and open the door to hope and change?

Are you using values-based framing?

You can try this simple and effective framework for structuring longer messages:

- What shared **value(s)** can you frame this issue through that resonates with your audience? (e.g. care, fairness, family, kindness, freedom)
- Have you framed the **problem** as a violation of those shared values – so it feels relevant and relatable?
- Have you framed **solutions** as achievable, and showed how change is already happening (so that change feels both possible and inevitable)?
- Have you painted a **vision** of a better future, so change feels desirable – not just necessary?
- Have you given your audience a meaningful role – inviting them to be someone, not just do something?

Quick check: Does your message lead with why this issue matters (values) to frame it for the audience, before presenting evidence or solutions?



Check for framing traps



- Are you accidentally negating a harmful frame – and therefore reinforcing it? (e.g. "animals are not food")
- Are you repeating industry language, even to argue against it?
- Are you activating a food frame when you want to build empathy? (Food frames activate a personal choice mindset, not compassion.)
- Are you using directive language that could trigger defensiveness? (e.g. "go vegan") Are you instructing rather than inviting?
- Are you using abstract language that creates emotional distance? (e.g. "welfare standards", "sentience")?
- If you need to address a harmful frame directly, are you using a **Truth Sandwich**? (Open with your frame → address their frame briefly → close with your frame)

Use the FRAMES checklist



Test every message before it goes out:

- F** — **Frame the issue:** Does it reinforce the values and vision you're promoting?
- R** — **Reframe the opposition's story:** Does it change the story by reinforcing your core narrative frame, rather than repeating the opposition's frame?
- A** — **Accessible to the audience:** Is it crafted with language, values and imagery that will resonate with this specific audience?
- M** — **Memorable & meme-able:** Is it sticky and spreadable? Does it use a symbol, slogan or metaphor that conveys the core narrative frame?
- E** — **Emotional:** Does it trigger an emotional response – hope, urgency, joy, outrage – rather than just presenting facts?
- S** — **Simple & short:** Does it get to the core narrative frame clearly and concisely?

Finally:

- Does it trigger a helpful emotional response – hope, care, urgency – rather than despair or defensiveness?
- If you can, show it to 1–3 real audience members; note what lands and what jars.
- Save what works to your team's notes/style guide for this audience.

Reminder: Framing isn't a finishing touch – it's the foundation of communications. The same message, framed differently, can expand thinking or limit it.

Unsure how to apply this?
Contact us for a quick chat or reach out via the [Slack #ask channel](#).

