Beyond research - making it practical:

**Forestry Commission Scotland's recent attempts to influence (my) Visitor behaviour**

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Do you always do what you’re told ??
Visitors to public places regularly ignore safety signs

- It’s attractive not to
- I know what I’m doing, I’ll be OK
- Others also don’t comply (so it must be OK)
- Warning signs being placed in areas where no obvious hazard
- Warning signs remaining in place when operations have ended (or appear to have)
- Sign blindness – Too many signs
Improved visitor compliance with safety signs

Reduced access into active work sites

Improved visitor and staff safety

Better sign management

Improved attitudes towards FCS and its work

Improved understanding of forest operations

Improved Explanations Supplementary signs

Why we need to act...

Safety issues

• We know safety signs are frequently ignored
• We know Lack of active sign management encourages people to ignore our messages
• Improving understanding / acceptance of what we’re doing might help with compliance

Other less critical behaviour issues – dog poo to camping in car parks to ...
Signs certainly aren’t the complete solution

Too many signs/ irrelevant or old signs encourage non compliance

Can we estimate audience beliefs and still produce messages that work? .... at least some of the time?

- How much can we generalise our audiences and extrapolate?
- Can we think our way into the heads of those we wish to influence?
- Remember: We’re only targeting those open to persuasion – NOT those who would comply anyway nor those closed to any message
- Are effective messages always context specific?
Thinking behind our messages

- Significant long-term behavioural change takes time & audiences need to make real effort engaging with messages.
- Be realistic about the desired behaviour. Make it easier for visitors to comply.
- Be clear about the desired behaviour.
- Be clear about the target audience – not the hard core non-compliers & not those already complying.
- Find common ground with audiences.
- Explain why ... time limits ... reasonableness.
- Appropriate style for subject. Retain authority. Don’t trivialise serious subjects.
- Make messages easy to digest and approachable.
Sorry this trail is closed due to:

Please try an alternative route.

We should be able to open the trail by:

Tel:  www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland
No unauthorised persons allowed beyond this point

Sorry this trail is closed due to:

Please try an alternative route. We should be able to open the trail by:

You can see them but can they see you?

Passing a lorry while timber is being loaded can be very dangerous.

Please wait until the operator has clearly signalled for you to pass, or the lorry has finished loading.

Tel: www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland
Horse Sense?

Horses can be easily frightened by dogs and cyclists.
Please be a considerate forest user
Give horses some space and let them know you are coming.
Thank you

Tel: www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland

Accidents can happen to people just like you

People who ignore safety signage can make it dangerous for our workers as well as themselves.

Please keep this woodland a safe place to work and visit by following the signs.
We should be finished here by:

Tel: www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland
Can **YOU** smell the deer?

You might not be able to, **but your dog can!**

During springtime, deer in this wood are heavily pregnant. They give birth in early summer.

**Give them a chance:** please keep your dog in sight at all times or on a lead. Thank you

Tel: www.forestry.gov.uk/scotland
Advice for staff implementing Signmaker:

• Keep it simple
• One message at a time
• Hard and soft messages – Don’t over do it
• TEMPORARY for a reason

We don’t always get it right:
Get your audience on side.
Insulting them isn’t a good start.
Do our message signs influence behaviour?

Thoughtful placement and active management are key
Thank you!