

The Pyramid of Engagement

Is there a model for maximising participation in your next engagement project?

I think so. This model arose from interviews* with project officers who had run successful farmer field days and forums.

The model is that magnetic engagement projects tend to share 4 design ingredients:

Pop Successful projects have surprising elements that break expectations. These out-of-the-ordinary aspects are what drive attention and buzzworthiness.

Simply an unusual title can do the job.

Here's some nice examples: *Small landholder. Long lunch / Bunny Boiler Challenge / Paddock before the plate.*

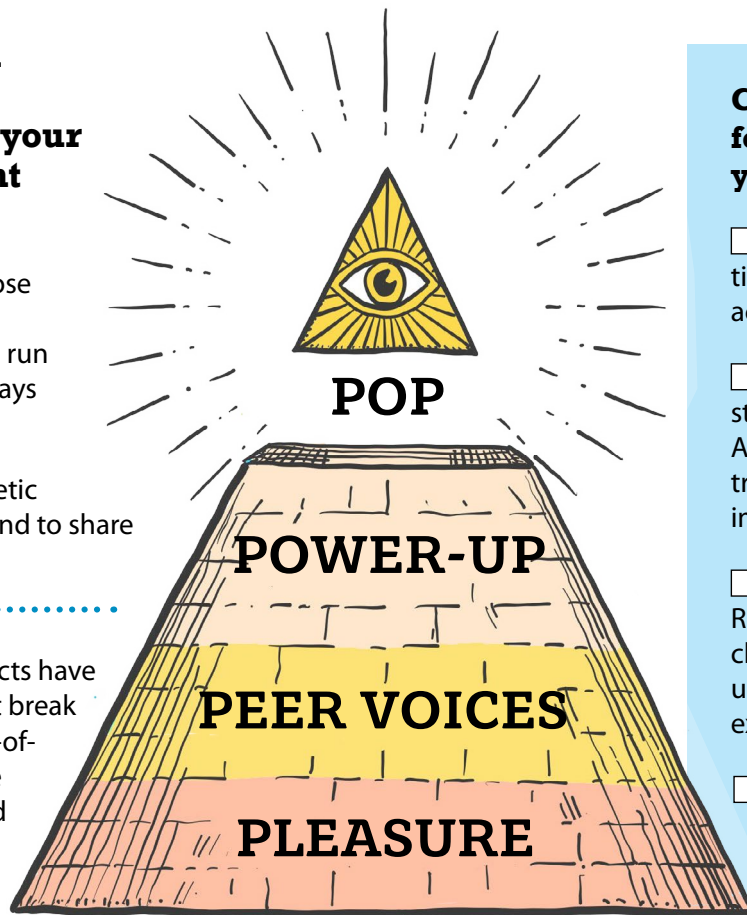
Power-up Successful projects promise to increase peoples' power to act on real scarcities, problems or frustrations they're facing in their lives or businesses.

They demonstrate practical solutions people can immediately apply, ideally giving them a chance to touch and feel, experiment and play with new skills, products and technologies.

This builds on the principle that nothing builds self-efficacy and lowers fears like seeing exactly how to do something.

And it's good mix of different contents, so there's something for everyone. A taster of 5 subjects can be better than an in-depth focus on one subject.

* I interviewed 12 extension and natural resource management professionals in Qld, NSW and Victoria who described 25 farmer engagement projects they felt were successful. This was part of a project for the Department of Primary Industries, Qld.



Can you build these four ingredients into your next project?

- ☐ **POP** An unexpected title or out-of-the-ordinary activity that grabs attention.
- ☐ **POWER-UP** A credible step-up in people's powers. A promise of new skills and tricks they can put to use immediately.
- ☐ **PEER VOICES** Respected peers tell their change stories and offer unique tips from their lived experience.
- ☐ **PLEASURE** A chance to hang out with people they'll enjoy being with, an interesting place, games, tasty food.

Peer voices

Let your people hear from respected peers who are ahead of the game but not too different in outlook, for example a similar farmer who's experimenting with new fertiliser practices.

Real, ordinary peers honestly sharing their struggles, lessons and successes is the best way to generate hope and self-efficacy.

Vitally, keep in mind that learning is a social process so members of the audience should be able to share their own stories and achievements.

Pleasure Make it enjoyable. The acid test is, 'Would you want to go even if you weren't being paid?'

Here's some examples from farmer projects:

- Let farmers taste wheatgrass juice made from good and bad soils (they taste the sweetness).
- Thanks James Diack, Soil for Life.

- Let farmers see soil bugs in a microscope, with a microbiologist comparing dead (glyphosate) soil and live soil. - Thanks Helen McCosker, Carbon 8
- Dig up and taste tillage radishes from good and bad soils. - Thanks James Diack, Soil for Life.
- Farmers bring their own soil to test.
- A bus trip: *"So much happens when they're on the bus talking. Farmers share their huge knowledge and skills. They love to hear what others are doing! They chatted all day, with the facilitator occasionally prompting questions."* - Renee Madsen, Fitzroy Basin Association.

And remember the food! Food grabs everyone's attention. It's the glue that builds connections, helping easy interactions to occur. It. Always highlight the food in the invitation - it's good to have people salivating when they're reading about your event!

Here is a wonderful example from Phillip Island Landcare: 'Bunny Boiler Challenge' - a rabbit control information night that's also a fun social event, with tasty rabbit stews, 'pin the tail on the rabbit' games, rabbit poems and more. There is so much pleasure here, it's unmissable!

2021 Bunny Boiler Challenge

Phillip Island Coastcare Blitz Project

Rabbits are our national disgrace - they also taste great!
This is a chance for professional chefs to present their favourite rabbit recipes.

When: Wednesday December 1, 2021 - 6.00pm until late
Where: Phillip Island Winery, 414 Berrys Beach Rd, Ventnor
Cost: \$35 per head or \$80 per family

Entry includes:

Rabbit dishes from competing Professional Chefs

Presentation by Rabbit Guru Tim Bloomfield titled 'We are smarter than rabbits, now let us prove it!'

'Pin the tail on the rabbit'



Book now to avoid disappointment of a sell out.

RSVP by Friday November 26. Book online at:

www.phillipislandlandcare.org.au/bunny-boiler-dinner

For more information, phone or email bookings contact Deborah Morris
0407 900 959 debmor142330@gmail.com



The Phillip Island Coastcare Blitz project is supported by Coastcare Victoria and the Victorian Government.

"We had 110 folks turn up in March with a mad scramble at the end for tables. It's 90% fun and eating and 10% reality, with music, poetry and an expert talk in rabbit control techniques."
- Joel Geoghegan, one of the organisers.

Here's an example of the 4 ingredients in practice.

Title that pops

Peer voices

Pleasure



Springhill Beef Field Day

Paddock before the plate

A jam-packed field day, on-farm with Adam and Jody Turner, owners of Springhill Beef, that you will not want to miss!

Hear and see first-hand what is being done on-farm to continually improve land management and business operations of a successful paddock to plate operation.

WHEN: Friday 18 October 2024, 10am - 3pm

WHERE: Springhill Beef, Mount Rivers (Lower Hunter)

Lunch and refreshments will be provided

Some of the great things to be discussed and demonstrated:

- *Multi species crops
- *On-farm brew fertilisers
- *Grazing management
- *Farm tech - see in action
- *Animal nutrition inc. free-choice mineral trailer
- *Reading cattle manure
- *Paddock subdivision
- *Farm water
- *Riparian zone projects
- *Biological seed amendments
- *Much more!

REGISTRATION via the link below or by scanning the QR code:

<https://comms.lis.nsw.gov.au/pub/pubType/EQ/pubID/zzzz66ac3257242ba857/interface.html>



Attendees = 80

Power-up: a rich diversity of valuable, practical content

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