

Behaviour Change towards Sustainable Travel in Perth – the TravelSmart Workplace program

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1 Introduction

“If we are to make the transition to a sustainable future, we must concern ourselves with what leads individuals to engage in behaviour that collectively is sustainable, and design our programs accordingly.”

Doug McKenzie Mohr, 1999

This paper discusses approaches to voluntary behaviour change and their application to developing travel plans to reduce car use through the TravelSmart Workplace program. An overview of the TravelSmart Workplace program will be provided, then theories of changing behaviour discussed with reference to their use by the program. Two case studies will be presented, followed by reflections of what has been learnt through experience, and what could be improved upon in the program.

2 Background to the TravelSmart Workplace Program

The TravelSmart Workplace program is jointly run by the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Department of Transport. The program has enabled 35 organisations with 68 sites, and 35 500 staff and students to complete workplace travel plans.

A travel plan is a package of practical actions designed to enable employees, clients and visitors to carpool, use public transport, cycle, walk or telework. Travel plans usually take six to twelve months to prepare and result in a variety of workplace actions that the employer implements. Travel plans are tailored to suit workplace location, requirements and cultures, and therefore no plan is identical. Travel plan actions usually include cycling facilities, marketing travel options through workplace information and promotions, provision of incentives, and policy changes to encourage change in travel behaviour.

These six basic steps are used in developing travel plans through the program:

1. Getting started – deciding on the scope of plan (just for employees, or including visitors/ clients, how many sites, timeframe, focus on commuting or include business trips etc), and establishing a working group to oversee the plan.
2. Access audit – identifying barriers and opportunities for sustainable travel to and from the workplace.
3. Travel survey – surveying employees (perhaps visitors/students/clients/patients also) to determine how people are currently travelling to and from the site. This can be in the form of an online, printed or intercept survey.
4. Stakeholder workshops – engaging stakeholders (including employees) in the process to create sense of ownership for the plan and collect ideas for action.
5. Writing the plan – drafting a travel plan outlining what actions the workplace will undertake; including timeframe, responsibilities, and budget.

6. Gaining management approval for implementation of the plan.

The travel planning model is also used elsewhere in Australia, and overseas to manage transport impacts of workplaces and other trip generators. Travel plans are widely used in the United Kingdom. For example the National Health Service, England's largest employer, requires all of its sites to develop board-approved Sustainable Travel Plans as part of a strategy to cut carbon emissions by 80% by 2050¹. Across the UK local councils often require developers to complete a travel plan as a condition of planning approval. Transport for London and the UK Department for Transport have funded workplace travel planning to tackle vehicle emissions and congestion.

3 Theories of behaviour change and their application to TravelSmart Workplace

Dr Carmen Lawrence comments that '...behavioural change is notoriously difficult. This is, in part, because there is such a vast range of factors that can influence behaviour.' (Lawrence, 2009 p. 4). Working to influence people's behaviour is not easy. It is increasingly being recognised that simply providing information about an issue does not lead people to change; the process of inducing behaviour change is much more involved, and we need to learn from the social sciences in developing effective behaviour change programs.

Many behaviour change programs have not placed due importance on this, and failed. Some initiatives have been so poorly developed or misinformed that the opposite of the desired behavior was actually achieved. For example, in a psychology experiment, warnings about the negative impacts of watching violent films caused a higher desire to watch the films (Robinson, 2008a, citing Bushman and Stack 1996). Program developers need to be careful of inciting reactance, where people reaffirm their current behaviour with additional vigour in response to strong pressure to change.

The TravelSmart Workplace program aims to stay up to date with research from the growing field of the psychology of behaviour change for sustainability. The program was not based on one specific model, but on broader behaviour change research.² Many behaviour change theories have informed the direction and evolution of the program, and have been useful in assisting workplaces to develop travel plans. This section discusses three major behaviour change theories that have had impact on the TravelSmart Workplace program, discussing issues raised by these approaches, points of resonance and divergence. These are Community Based Social Marketing, Enabling Change, and Organisational Psychology.³

3.1 Community Based Social Marketing

¹ National Health Service Sustainable Development Unit, 2009

² A Masters study (Marshall 1997) tested the effect of a workplace awareness campaign on travel behaviour. A Doctoral study (Baudains 2003) trialed different workplace interventions to reduce car commuting, finding that travel plans had the greatest potential.

³ There are many other behaviour change theories which could not be discussed in this paper. For example, "Education for Sustainability", the Australian Government's recently released current focus for the Living Sustainably Action Plan: Sustainably: The Australian Government's National Action Plan for Education for Sustainability, Department for Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, 2009.

Community Based Social Marketing (CBSM) is perhaps the behaviour change strategy which has been most influential to the program, and in which program staff have been most trained. CBSM was developed in Canada by Dr Doug McKenzie-Mohr. It is based on the concept that in order to influence people's behaviour, we need to firstly understand why they engage in particular activities, and what they perceive as the barriers and benefits to the new behaviour. It is then a matter of working to minimize the barriers (or perceived barriers) and maximize the benefits of the desired behaviour.

The CBSM approach involves identifying these barriers and benefits (through research), designing a program that utilises behaviour change tools, piloting the strategy, and implementation and evaluation of the program (McKenzie-Mohr 1999). There are a range of behaviour change tools including commitments, prompts, norms, communication and incentives. Identifying barriers and implementing commitments as a behaviour change tool are two aspects of this approach most utilised by the TravelSmart Workplace program.

3.1.1 Identifying barriers

In order to influence people's behaviour, it is important that we know why people act the way they do; to avoid making assumptions about why people behave in particular ways. However informed our guesses may be about the motivations behind people's actions, they are limited by our personal biases. Therefore, qualitative research is important in the development of any behaviour change initiative.

We know that behavioural changes are motivated by a wide variety of factors. Each behaviour that we could choose has a set of barriers and benefits, and it is the job of a program developer to change either the circumstances or the presentation of the desired behaviour so that the benefits out weigh the barriers.

Take public transport for example: TravelSmart Workplace would work with an organisation to decrease the barriers to public transport, such as funding a shuttle bus to increase service frequencies, and increase the benefits, such as providing financial incentives for public transport. As car driving is such a pervasive cultural norm, it is also ideal to simultaneously decrease benefits and increase barriers to solo car driving, say by ceasing to provide readily accessed free car parking.

It is important to note that barriers and benefits may be either perceived or actual. In working with people to change travel behaviour, there has been considerable anecdotal evidence of sustainable transport barriers that are perceived rather than actual. For example, "There is no public transport where I live" or, "It takes 45 minutes to take the bus", is not consistent with public transport service information or program staff experiences of taking public transport to the worksite. In a household survey, people were asked how long they thought it would take to reach a particular destination. They overestimated public transport travel time by 50%, while car travel time was underestimated by 20% (Socialdata 2000). This suggests a barrier in perception, where people's preconceived ideas or prejudices against public transport are informing their decisions, rather than accurate information. Whether perceived or actual, these barriers are a real factor in people's decision making – but knowing this informs whether awareness raising of public transport options would be a useful initial strategy, or

whether moving straight to another option such as an incentives scheme would be more beneficial.

The program collects information about barriers and benefits in several ways. During the stakeholder consultation, focus groups and/ or stakeholder workshops (depending on the size of the workplace) are held, where qualitative data is collected. The travel survey also asks respondents why they travelled the way they did for commute their trips.

Table 1 lists common perceived and actual barriers and benefits to using sustainable travel options collected from employees, visitors and students at workplaces developing travel plans.

Table 1 – Barriers and benefits to sustainable travel modes

Transport mode	Barriers	Benefits
Public transport	Lack of frequent, direct public transport services Inconvenience Inability to make side trips Have company vehicle so no reason not to drive Not as comfortable/ private/ enjoyable as car travel	No parking/ driving in busy traffic, reduce stress Satisfying to be traveling by sustainable mode Car can be used by other family members Can be cheaper/ faster if good routes available
Walking/ cycling	Lack of good end of trip facilities at workplaces (bike parking, showers, lockers) Weather Distance from home to work Inability to take bikes on trains during peak times when riding part way	Arrive at work refreshed Low cost Incorporate exercise into work day Interaction with local community and environment
Carpooling	Requires organisational work Loss of flexibility/ independence Potential to be stranded if carpool partner not available	Still have benefits of car driving Save parking/ petrol costs Spend social time with work colleagues/ family/ friends
Teleaccess/ Working from home	Lose quality of interpersonal interaction Can be costly Difficulties with connections and sound quality	Save travel time Save travel costs, especially interstate Potentially fewer distractions Work/ life balance; flexibility to meet family and work commitments

3.1.2 Commitment as a behaviour change tool

CBSM suggests that asking people to make commitments is a useful behaviour change tool. It has been demonstrated that people are much more likely to give blood, for example, if they have already given commitment over the phone that they intend to do

so.⁴ Commitment is most useful when written, or publicly given. People have a strong desire to be consistent (McKenzie-Mohr, Smith, 1999), and strive for cognitive consistency, where we feel like our behaviours match up with the visions we have of ourselves.

Doug McKenzie Mohr also suggests that committing to one small sustainable behavior leads to being much more likely to agree to a larger, potentially more difficult sustainable behaviour. In a study in the United States focused on increasing bus use, some participants were required to make a verbal pledge to ride the bus at least twice a week, while others were given a financial incentive, and others were only given information. Participants who had made a pledge rode the bus just as frequently as those who had been given free bus tickets (McKenzie Mohr, Smith, 1999 p. 51).

Commitment studies have indicated that those who make a commitment start to see themselves as the 'type of person' who cares about that issue, or who is active in that area. In the above example, participants might have seen themselves as people who care about the environment, or who save money by using public transport. In this case, people are happy to pay for their bus fares rather than suffer the cognitive dissonance⁵, of believing in the virtues of public transport but failing to use it. In this case avoiding cognitive dissonance and upholding their commitment was just as powerful a motivator as having free bus tickets.

Commitment is a tool we aim to utilise in the TravelSmart Workplace program. On agreeing to accept a workplace into the program, letters are exchanged between the Director General of the Department of Transport or the Department of Environment and Conservation and the Director General or Chief Executive Officer of the incoming workplace. The workplace is required to outline key motivators for developing a travel plan, and ideally to commit some staff time and resources.

We hold an annual launch event, where we congratulate workplaces that have completed their travel plan, and welcome new workplaces into the program. Here workplace representatives are given a certificate and publicly commended, either for committing to develop a travel plan to reduce car use, or for what they have committed to achieve in their travel plan. We aim to have the workplace's local media covering the travel plan to achieve written and public commitment. Workplaces are also profiled through our newsletter which goes out to all stakeholders.

There is some debate around the effectiveness of the commitment tool. The Simple and Painless report (WWF 2009) argues that the positive spillover theory of relatively simple and painless sustainable actions leading to larger and more significant actions (on a 'virtuous escalator') has limited empirical evidence to support it. If people are asked to catch public transport for business meetings, for example, there is little evidence (WWF 2009 p. 14) that this will lead them to becoming more regular public transport users, or lead to the more challenging task of leaving the car at home and taking public transport for the daily commute. 'Don't be distracted that 'every little helps'. If everyone does a little, we'll achieve only a little', is the sobering message from physicist David McKay

⁴ McKenzie-Mohr, Smith 1999, p. 47

⁵ 'Cognitive dissonance describes conflicting thoughts or beliefs that occur at the same time, or when engaged in behaviors that conflict with one's beliefs.' Tim Cotter, "The Gap between believing and doing", Awake February 2008 edition.

(WWF 2009). This assertion is a challenge for behaviour change programs such as TravelSmart Workplace to continue to examine our methodologies to ensure the program is as effective as it can be.

Nonetheless, CBSM has been a useful tool for TravelSmart in reducing car use. However, CBSM is not the whole picture. As Skamp et al argue (2007), findings from evaluations of CBSM approaches have appeared contradictory. Skamp et al argue that changes results from CBSM initiatives are often limited and not sustained; when positive results do occur, they almost always decline over time. This indicates that CBSM alone is not always a guaranteed recipe for success, and that programs may need to last longer, or a secondary intervention may be required.

3.2 Enabling Change

The second behaviour change theory this paper addresses is Les Robinson's Enabling Change work, informed by Diffusion of Innovations theory.

This suggests four conditions for change – the person must want to change, feel able, be invited, and gain satisfaction from the activity. In the TravelSmart Workplace program we aim to address each of these criteria as much as we can within the limitations of our influence. Gaining satisfaction, which is crucial for sustaining action, is where the program is most constrained. Conditions such as fast, direct public transport and good bicycle paths will affect whether or not people find the alternative mode a positive and satisfying experience, and such infrastructure developments are outside our realms of control.

Table 2 details the actions that the program and the participating workplaces undertake, and what we aim to achieve in addressing the four conditions for change.

Table 2 – Addressing the four conditions for change

Wanting	Feeling able	Being invited	Gaining satisfaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating situation where change is required/ preferable eg reduced car parking, increased parking prices • Raising awareness of related issues – climate change, air quality, health and fitness, as people may want to make a change when fully informed • Making alternatives more attractive through financial incentives, rewards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Easy to access public transport information • End of trip facilities for cyclists • Video conferencing facilities • Working from home policy • Flexitime policy to increase flexibility for public transport timetables • Bike buddy system/ bicycle training, to develop skills and confidence in riding 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplaces are officially invited into the program • Individuals in the workplace invited to be involved in actions in various ways, eg participate in challenges, join the Bicycle User Group, through emails, direct contact, publicity, CEO encouragement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal reward of being 'part of the team' involved in making change • Rewards and recognition from employer • Positive experiences of sustainable transport modes; fast, direct routes, saving money, getting exercise

system, etc			
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Les Robinson also suggests that there are three key motivational factors that affect our behavioural choices – time, control, and self esteem (Robinson, 2008b, citing Deci and Ryan 2000). This concept raises some interesting issues for the TravelSmart Workplace program.

Firstly, sustainable transport modes will be experienced differently by each individual, depending on personal values, services/ facilities available, previous experiences, family circumstances, and so on. Many people enjoy fast public transport routes, feel a sense of control and time management from being able to read and relax while travelling, and gain self esteem from feeling that they are ‘doing the right thing’ in taking public transport. And walking and cycling can offer people more time, control, and particularly self-esteem; there is a sense of identity and pride amongst cyclists which is not found amongst public transport users.

However, in many cases, sustainable transport options are not seen as offering people more time, control and self esteem than driving to work alone. This is particularly the case for public transport; it may take longer than driving, offers less independence and control (waiting for services, deviating around the suburbs), and offers less self esteem (this is more difficult to measure, but it is clear many people gain a feeling of self worth from their cars, and the ‘public transport is for poor people’ prejudice is still prevalent).

So whilst many people do have positive sustainable transport experiences, and many others have the potential to adopt the sustainable transport with if provided with accurate information, there are limitations to a behaviour change program such as TravelSmart Workplace. Les Robinson comments that ‘The counter-intuitive point is that most social changes don’t involve people changing. Probably I should say that again. *Most social changes don’t involve people changing.* People’s hopes, wants and motivations stay pretty much the same.’ (2009, p. 34) I do believe that some people’s priorities are changing; for example the self esteem gained from taking sustainable transport to minimise carbon emissions has become more important than time for some people. However, the point remains that while sometimes behaviours need to be promoted differently to appeal to people’s deep needs rather than the aims of the program, other times behaviours are simply not adoptable, and it is important for the program to work alongside infrastructure improvements.

A second interesting issue raised from these three motivational factors is the assertion that money is not a significant influence in behavioural decisions. This is not to say that money plays no part in behaviour change - financial incentives or disincentives can play a key role in changing behaviour (although it is important to note, financial incentives

also create social norms and implicit expectations, which may be just as important as the financial savings). This approach suggest that money alone rarely induces behaviour change.

However, we have found that limiting parking availability and increasing parking prices is one of the most successful ways to reduce vehicle use at workplaces. Limiting parking increases the barriers to car driving, and increasing parking prices can assist to break unquestioned habits and routines (especially if parking is pay by day, rather than an annual pass), but this also suggests that pricing does have some impact on the choice to drive.

3.3 Organisational Psychology

So far, this paper has focused on motivators for individuals to change their personal travel behaviour. However, TravelSmart Workplace operates on two levels – to create change for individuals and for organisations. It is important for individual employees in an organisation to make a change, but with the high staff turnovers many workplaces experience, changes need to be built into the infrastructure and embedded in the culture of the organisation for lasting reductions in vehicle use. TravelSmart Workplace focuses largely on organisational change, and equipping organisations with the tools to foster individual change.

Organisational change literature has identified conditions which assist successful organisational change – including management support, linking the initiative to core business, presenting the case formally, involving staff, long-term commitment and clear communication.

Management support and leadership has been cited as critical for gaining broader support (Cotter, 2005). The program has found that management support and modeling is vital for the success of a travel plan – it is easier to rally support for the travel plan in workplaces where the Chief Executive or Mayor is seen arriving at a TravelSmart event on a bicycle, rather than in their large company car.

It is important to create a sense of ownership of the initiative, and involve people at all levels of the organisation (Jones, Aguirre, Calderone, 2004). It is useful to identify TravelSmart leaders not only in management, but at all levels of the organisation. The travel planning process aims to engage staff through the committee, focus groups, workshops, the travel survey, and face to face interviews. It has often been important to involve people who are identifying problems and barriers to the travel plan in developing solutions. This sense of ownership has been vital for the successful implementation of travel plans.

Organisations function differently to individuals, and their motivating factors are different. The program aims to present a strong business case which focuses on the benefits to organisations of developing a travel plan. As described for individual change, it is important not to make assumptions about what inspires sustainable change in workplaces. Some motivators that have been key for organisations we have worked with to date have been making financial savings, solving problems (car parking, local traffic congestion, etc), and building a reputation as a leading environmental/ equitable/ responsible organisation.

4 Case studies

This section presents two case studies of organisations which have worked with TravelSmart Workplace to develop a travel plan. These are Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre, a major health campus, and the City of Joondalup, a suburban local government authority. These workplaces have been chosen for case studies as they feature different challenges and successes with their travel plans.

4.1 QEII Medical Centre

Queen Elizabeth II Medical Centre (QEII MC) is a major health centre approximately four kilometers west of Perth. The site hosts 36 organisations, with Sir Charles Gairdner Hospital, Lions Eye Institute, PathWest and the Oral Health Centre as the major trip generators. QEII MC has approximately 8000 employees, with 3073 parking bays (983 visitors, 2091 staff bays). The hospital is the largest employer, with just over 600 beds, treating 420 000 patients each year.

In 2005 the QEII MC Trust (the statutory authority responsible for management, development and control of the site) developed a travel plan to manage the traffic generated from the site, and to address employee and visitor car commuting. Additionally, workforce numbers and activity at the site are planned to significantly increase within the next 10 years, with the development of a new children's hospital and other health, education and research facilities at the QEII MC site.

It took approximately 18 months to develop the plan, with a committee of employer representatives and interested employees providing input (Wake, 2007)⁶. Existing staff survey results from the transport assessment for the site structure plans were used to provide employee travel data. Management interviews, focus groups, and stakeholder workshops were conducted to maximize engagement from employees and acceptance of the plan.

The project has grown, and there is now a full time TravelSmart Coordinator to responsible for the travel plan. Actions implemented to date are listed in Box 1.

Box 1 – QEII MC key actions implemented since 2005

- TravelSmart presentations included in fortnightly staff inductions
- On-line car-pool register
- TravelSmart and public transport information provided around the site
- A second end-of-trip bike facility developed (showers, lockers, bike parking)
- TravelSmart information dominates the Trust's internet site
- Access guide developed
- 79 bus commenced July 2008 (co-funded by the Trust and the University of Western Australia)
- Regular TravelSmart events held on site: the launch of the travel plan, Bike Week, Walk Week, the launch of the 79 bus, and a 'TravelSmart Week'

⁶ For a more a more detailed report of the development of the QEII MC travel plan, see Wake (2007)

- A 'Green Commuter Car Park' created for carpoolers, and occasional use by employees who travel by alternative transport at least three times a week.

A parking review was undertaken in late 2008, which has been identified as the single biggest factor in lowering single occupant vehicles arriving onsite.⁷ All employees are required to reapply for a parking permit on an annual basis, and parking is allocated based on need. Three Priority Groups were established identifying who required onsite parking⁸, with 300 employees in 2008 and 500 in 2009 losing on-site parking. In the first year staff who didn't obtain a permit were offered parking at Graylands Hospital (approx four km from the hospital) with a shuttle bus provided and funded by the QEIIMC Trust, however the uptake on this has been minimal.

This parking review was a significant policy change for the culture of QEIIMC. Parking priorities were decided strategically on a needs basis (shift workers, people with special disability access needs, those on emergency call etc), and to maximise the use of each bay. All staff who work standard day hours (between 7am and 6.30pm), were in the lowest priority group – whatever their level or function on the site. Department heads were not automatically entitled to a parking permit. The provision of car parking is no longer being offered up as a 'reward' or 'perk' for those in senior positions. This represents an important shift, and in combination with the other TravelSmart initiatives is changing the cultural norm. This is an instance where the CBSM approach of increasing barriers to car driving, whilst decreasing benefits of sustainable travel modes have been implemented.

A second travel survey was held in May 2009, and the results from this are encouraging. Employees arriving by car have decreased from 85% in 2006 to 69.7% in 2009.

Table 3 – Travel to QEIIMC by group and mode: targets and actual

Group	Travel mode	2006 (%)	2009 (%)	Change (% points)
Standard work day employees	Car driver	85	70	-15
	Car passenger	3	3	0
	Public transport	6	12	6
	Cycling or walking	6	11	5
Patients and visitors	Private car	78	73	-6
	Public transport	10	12	2

Source: Survey report by SKM, July 2009. Note: Figures are rounded.

4.2 City of Joondalup

The City of Joondalup developed a travel plan in 2007 for two of its worksites - the Administration Building and the Joondalup Library, which are located next to each other with a combined workforce of 466 employees.

⁷ 2009, Pers. Comm. 27 July, Lynette Murphy

⁸ For more information see QEIIMC Parking Policy April 2009

From the outset, a key benefit to the travel plan is the location of the Joondalup train station approximately 500 metres from both workplaces, with nineteen bus routes feeding into the station. The high frequency Joondalup CAT bus also services the local area. A key barrier for the travel plan is ample free car parking available for all staff. In October 2008 paid parking was introduced to the Joondalup Business District. Unfortunately for the travel plan, all City of Joondalup staff received a parking permit, and can access free parking directly in front of the Administration and Library buildings.

The employee travel survey results from March 2007 showed that 83% of staff commuted by car solo. In March 2009 the staff travel survey was repeated, indicating a reduction of car solo commute trips to 72%.

This mode shift is significant – even more so considering that every staff member has access to a free car parking bay. Factors that have contributed to this success are examined below.

Box 2 – City of Joondalup key actions implemented since 2007

- Five pool bikes available for staff for recreational and business use
- TravelSmart promoted in staff inductions
- Additional and upgraded bicycle end of trip facilities
- Five corporate SmartRiders (public transport cards) for staff business travel
- Regular media and publicity – TravelSmart initiatives promoted in internal bulletins and newsletter, local radio and print news.
- TravelSmart Champions: employees who travel sustainably profiled in posters and bulletins to continue promotion
- Frequent staff participation in TravelSmart events: Walk to Work Day, Bike Week Challenge, Freeway Bike Hike, 10 000 steps, Cycle Instead in Spring etc.

The SmartRiders have been a key success for business trips mode change. These are available from reception and booked the same way as cars, through the online booking system. Over the last 15 months a total of \$2000 has been spent on public transport use through the SmartRiders, with staff making 342 trips totaling 7840km by public transport instead of by car (Pilkington, 2009).

The City of Joondalup TravelSmart Officer suggests that the biggest factor in the success of the travel plan has been creating a cultural norm supporting the use of travel alternatives.⁹ Staff involvement in regular TravelSmart events, internal media articles and promotions have resulted in a TravelSmart presence in the workplace for the last two years. TravelSmart Champions were a clever behaviour change tool; colleagues who travel using sustainable modes were promoted and celebrated; staff were able to see someone ‘just like them’ who was traveling sustainably. The TravelSmart Officer has worked to develop partnerships with other business units; all staff are aware of the TravelSmart initiative.

⁹ 2009, Pers. Comm. 12 August, Lisa Pilkington

The travel plan, sitting under the Governance and Marketing Directorate, is linked to other strategic aims of the City of Joondalup, helping to meet environmental, climate change emission reduction, and human health goals. The TravelSmart Officer has worked to promote TravelSmart to management and to the councillors, with regular updates about the successes of the program. This has helped to secure future funding, and for the initiative to become more centralised in the business of the city.

The travel plan has just reached the end of its term and is currently being reviewed. A staff travel allowance for those travelling by sustainable modes is an option that may be considered for future strategies, in an attempt to counteract the impacts of free parking. Other propose strategies include assessment of other council buildings, and teleaccess options will be explored.

5 Reflections and conclusion

5.1 What we have learnt

As the travel planning process is tailored for each organisation, the challenges and success factors have been different. However, there are several elements which have emerged over time as essential to the implementation of a successful travel plan.

Box 3 – Key ingredients for travel planning

Travel planning works best when:¹⁰

- Working with organisations and individuals that are ready to change
- Workplace is willing to address parking (pricing and constraint)
- An employee has dedicated time to implement the travel plan
- There is high level management support
- There is good engagement from staff, with an active TravelSmart committee
- TravelSmart initiatives are integrated into organisation's policy and practices

5.2 Where we could improve

There are opportunities in the program for refinement of our use of behaviour change tools, and uptake of additional tools.

Evaluation is a significant step in CBSM, and best practice for programs generally. Individual travel plans in active workplaces are regularly reviewed and updated; travel survey results provide annual or biennial data on the success of travel plans. The program as a whole has undergone internal reviews, and in 2007 Dr Elliot Wood, Organisational Psychologist, UWA carried out interviews with TravelSmart Workplaces to assess the effectiveness of travel plans and the usefulness of the program's

¹⁰ Wake (2004)

assistance.¹¹ However, a wider evaluation of the program would be useful, to assess our effectiveness and test our behaviour change assumptions.

There are other CBSM tools which are underutilised, such as the use of prompts to encourage and sustain behaviour change. TravelSmart key rings (from the TravelSmart Household program) bearing the message “Is it close enough to walk or cycle?” have been provided to participating workplaces. These have been used for fleet car keys, to encourage people to think again – however at this stage it is probably too late to change behaviour for that particular journey. Some workplaces have pop-up prompts when booking a car to consider public transport or car-pooling. Other materials could also be developed, such as door signs, internal bulletins, and screen savers.

The program could strengthen our business case promoting the benefits of a travel plan, increasing our use of the organisational psychology concepts discussed in this paper. The program aims to present a strong business case and make travel plans meaningful to employers, but more work could be done to frame the program, focusing on addressing motivating factors for organisations. The TravelSmart Workplace program’s main functions are to reduce emissions, and address air quality and traffic congestion, but this not necessarily what motivates workplaces. When promoting to potential employers, the business case focuses on benefits to employer such as addressing parking issues, being seen as a responsible employer and an environmental leader, improving equity through access options, reducing fleet costs, and improving employee health and performance. It would benefit the TravelSmart Workplace program to have more detailed studies of the business benefits of a travel plan.

5.3 Conclusion

The TravelSmart Workplace program works with Perth workplaces to develop a travel plan to reduce driver only vehicle use and encourage the use of sustainable transport modes. It has been found most effective to use a combination of behaviour change approaches. TravelSmart Workplace intends to continue to evolve and incorporate further behaviour change tools as understanding of behaviour change develops.

The concluding quote cites environmental education, but can equally be applied for behaviour change programs working in sustainability, and illustrates the complexities and opportunities of working with people to change behaviour:

‘... environmental education is unlike other professions - it is extraordinarily different because it aims to change the future. It is a calling. Our purpose is to change people, businesses and government. We are, necessarily, agents of change. And change is the toughest business there is. There is no ‘best practice’. The only thing we can be sure of is that... we have a lot to learn. The one thing we will always be changing is environmental education.’
(Robinson 2000)

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