

# Telling the Story of American Diversity

April 27, 2017

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The **Opportunity** Agenda

# Methodology

## Focus Groups (January-February)

- Charlotte, NC (white women, mixed gender African Americans)
- Phoenix, AZ (white men, mixed gender Latinos)
- Baltimore, MD (white men, white women)



## National Online Dial Survey:

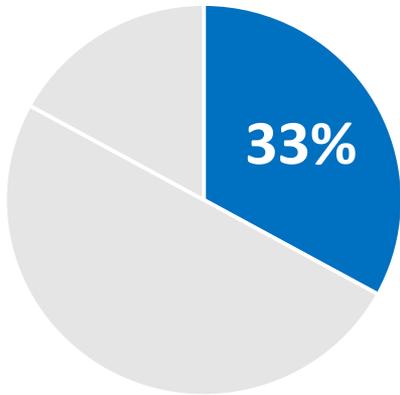
- March 1 through 6, 2017.
- 1,000 registered voters nationwide
- Oversamples
  - 100 African Americans
  - 100 Latinos
  - 100 millennials.
- Margin of error +/-3.1%.
- 100 activists, conducted March 2-24



# Base



- Strongly embrace diversity
- Believe it helps us solve problems
- Believe discrimination towards many groups is a very serious problem;
- See a strong role for government in ensuring everyone has opportunity.

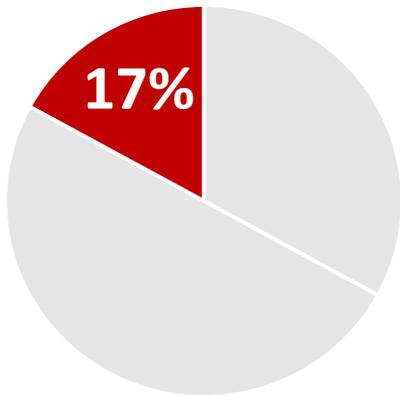


More likely to be women, younger, Democratic, and African American.

# Opposition



- Are either ambivalent or against diversity
- Believe government assistance has created a culture of dependency
- Believe minorities use racism as an excuse for their own failures.

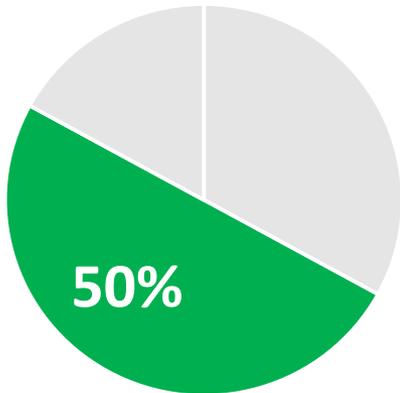


More likely to be male, older, white, from the South, and Republican.

# Persuadables



- Have attitudes that overlap with both base and opposition.



More closely reflect the demographics of registered voters. Slightly higher percentage are Latino.

# Context



# All voters express strong concerns about the tone of politics and the ability for families to make ends meet.

Thinking about things in America today, how concerned are you about each of the following? (0 to 10 scale, Total 8-10 Concerned Shown)	All	B	O	P
Tone of politics and political conversation	69	79	64	64
Ability for families like yours to make ends meet	60	61	47	64
Level of respect for people from different cultures	60	75	27	62
Ability of society to solve the country's problems	60	63	45	64
Ability to find a good paying job	56	56	39	62
Opportunity to pursue dreams, no matter where people come from	55	63	21	59
Ability to trust the media	54	31	76	62
Opportunity to pursue dreams	53	56	31	59
Ability of America to compete in a global economy	49	47	31	57
Safety of the community you live in	44	32	26	59

# Base, persuadables see relations between racial and ethnic groups, racial division, racial discrimination, and economic inequality as serious problems.

How serious of a problem do you think each of the following are today in America? ( 0 to 10 scale, Total 8-10 Serious Problem shown)	All	B	O	P
Political division	74	82	74	68
Relations between racial and ethnic groups	66	83	32	66
Racial division	64	78	34	64
Racial discrimination	60	84	7	62
Economic inequality	58	80	12	60
Lack of economic opportunity	55	64	30	57
Gender discrimination	49	65	6	54
Age discrimination	41	45	13	48
White privilege	39	55	2	42

# Values



# All voters agree freedom, respect, and dignity are values we need to protect.

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement on a scale of 0 to 10 (Total 8-10, Agree, Shown)	All	B	O	P
Freedom, respect, and dignity are foundational values that we need to protect	80	98	83	68
Freedom, respect, and dignity are important values that we need to protect	84	94	93	74
We are not born hating people from different backgrounds. Hatred is taught, and can be undone by getting to know people from different backgrounds	73	93	56	66
We are not born hating people from different backgrounds. Hatred is taught, and can be undone by teaching tolerance	70	91	51	63
Everyone should try to do what they can to interrupt bigotry and prejudice	71	91	50	66
Everyone should try to do what they can to heal the wounds of bigotry and prejudice	72	89	54	67
Embracing diversity makes us united as a country	70	97	35	63
Embracing diversity makes us strong as a country	66	96	29	61

# Base and persuadables also believe America is stronger when everyone's rights and dignity are respected and that acceptance of differences helps us solve problems.

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement on a scale of 0 to 10 (Total 8-10, Agree, Shown)	All	B	O	P
America is becoming more and more diverse. It might make some people uncomfortable but it is our reality. We are stronger when everyone's basic rights and dignity are respected	68	94	43	60
America is becoming more and more diverse. We are stronger when everyone's basic rights and dignity are respected	67	88	44	61
When people with different backgrounds and from different communities join together, we are more likely to creatively solve problems	68	92	40	62
When we accept people with different backgrounds and from different communities, we are more likely to creatively solve problems	64	91	28	59
People from different cultural backgrounds make positive contributions to American society	66	92	41	58

# For base, AA and Latinos face greater obstacles, and government has role to ensure equal opportunity.

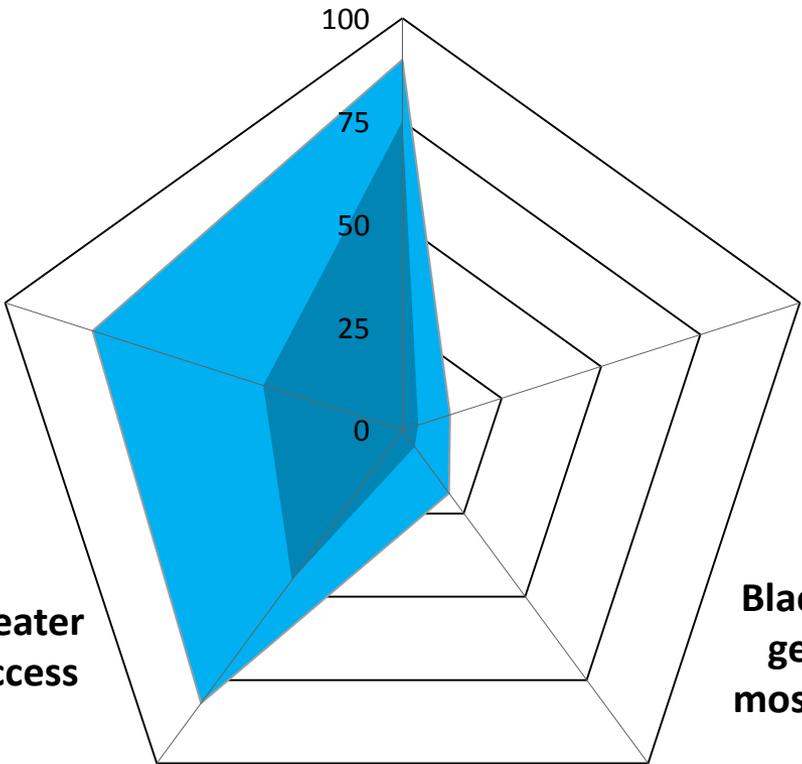
Our government has an important role to play in ensuring that every American has equal opportunity

Latinos face greater obstacles to economic success than whites

African Americans face greater obstacles to economic success than whites

The government has gone too far in helping minorities to the disadvantage of other groups

Blacks and minorities who can't get ahead in this country are mostly responsible for their own condition



**Somewhat agree**  
**Strongly agree**

**BASE**    OPPOSITION    PERSUADABLE

# Opposition believes AA and other minorities are responsible for their own condition.

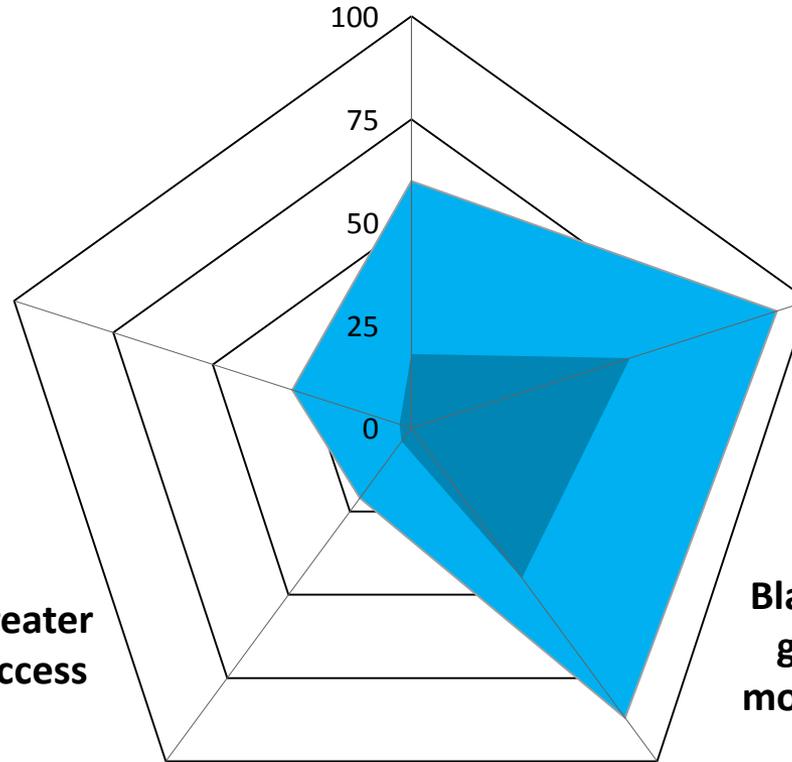
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Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

BASE

OPPOSITION

PERSUADABLE

# Persuadable voters exhibit contradicting beliefs.

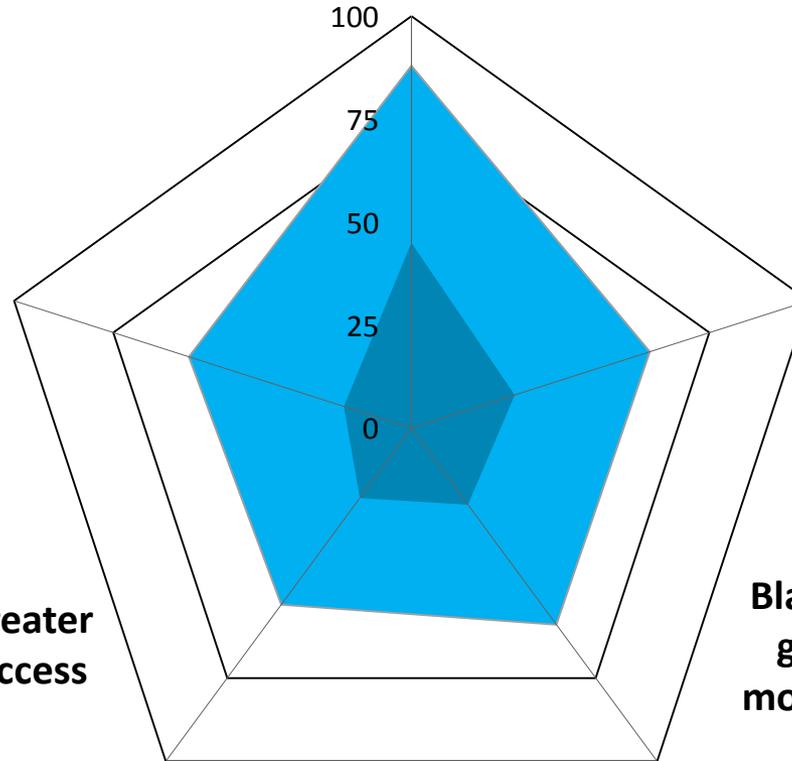
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**Latinos face greater obstacles to economic success than whites**

**African Americans face greater obstacles to economic success than whites**

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**Blacks and minorities who can't get ahead in this country are mostly responsible for their own condition**



Somewhat agree

Strongly agree

BASE

OPPOSITION

PERSUADABLE

# Language

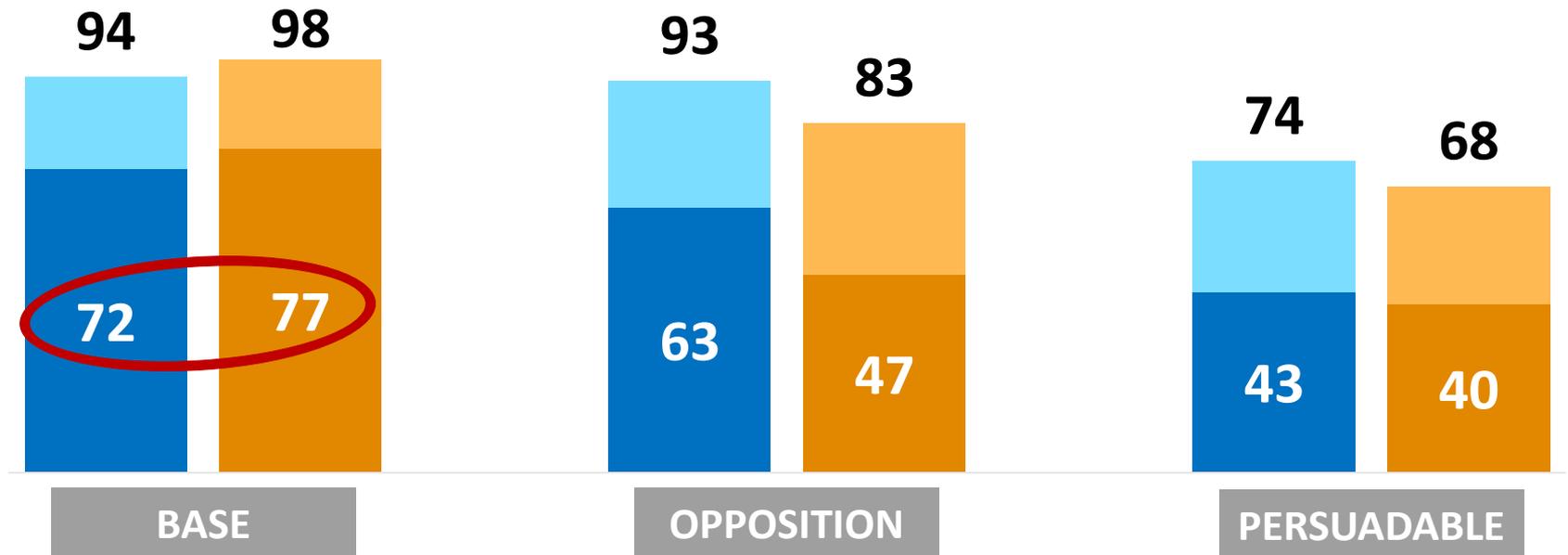


# All groups value freedom, respect, and dignity. “Foundational” resonates slightly more strongly with base voters.



Freedom, respect, and dignity are important values that we need to protect.

Freedom, respect, and dignity are foundational values that we need to protect.

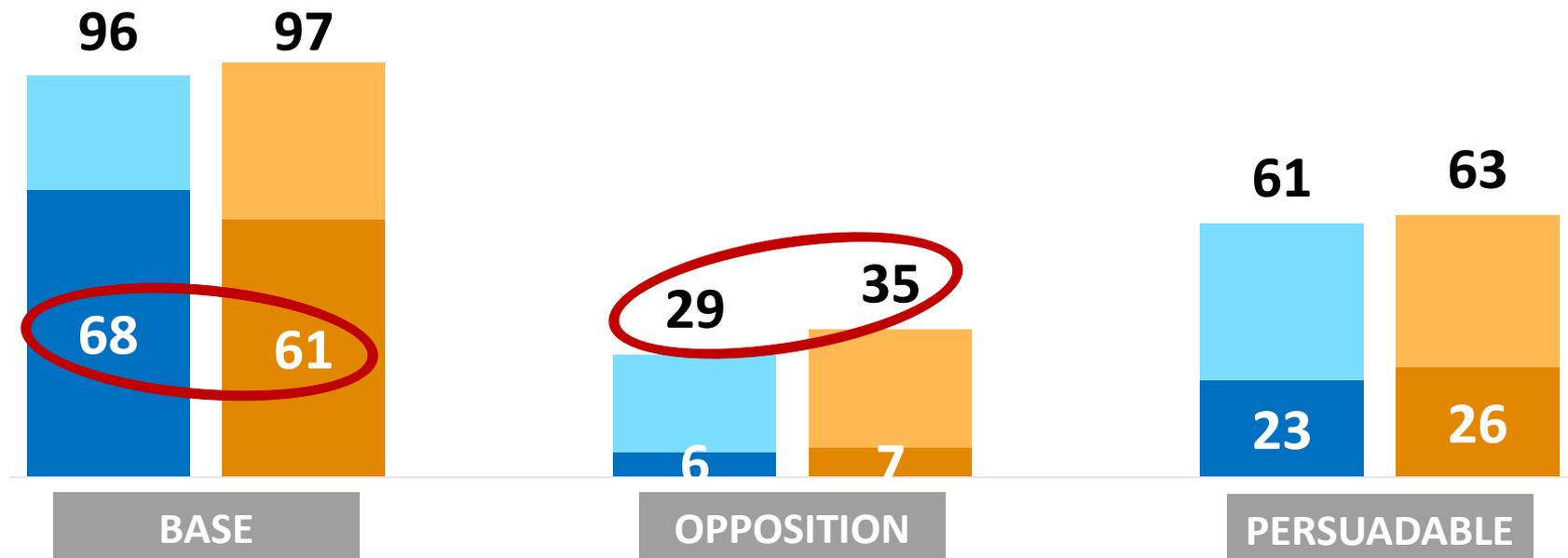


# Link diversity to strength (and problem solving) rather than unity.



Embracing diversity makes us strong as a country.

Embracing diversity makes us united as a country.

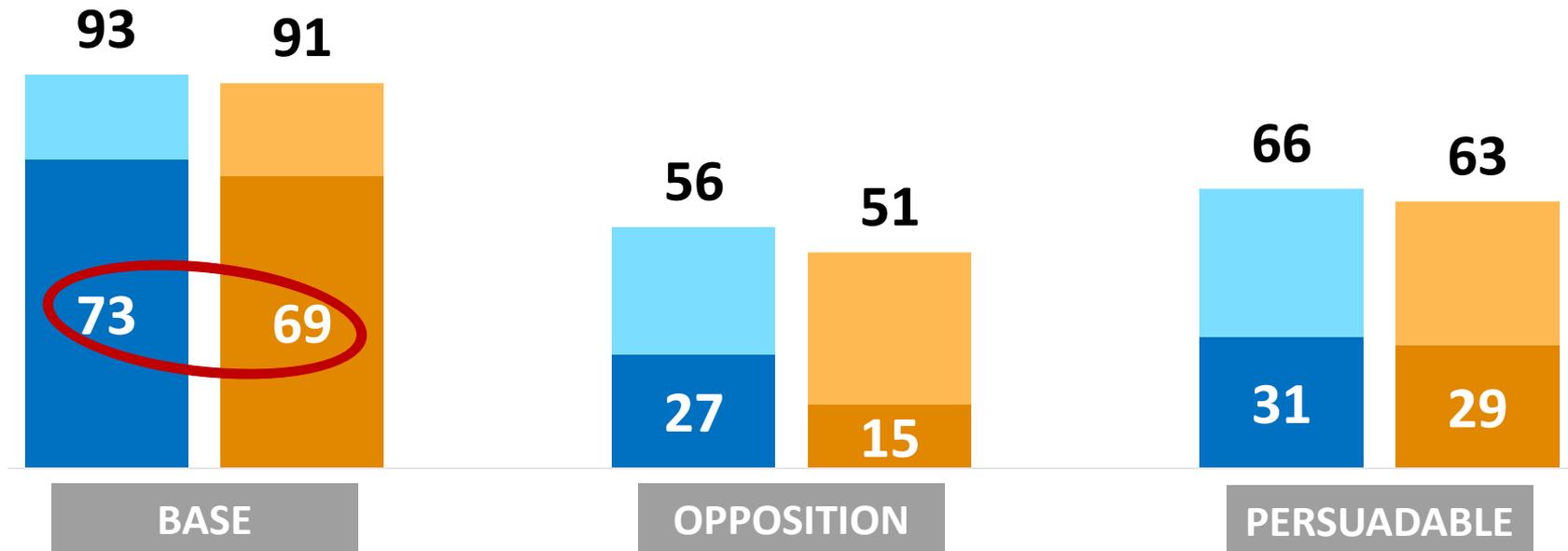


# “Getting to know people from different backgrounds” is a stronger approach to undoing hatred than “teaching tolerance.”



We are not born hating people from different backgrounds. Hatred is taught, and can be undone by getting to know people from different backgrounds.

We are not born hating people from different background. Hatred it taught, and can be undone by teaching tolerance.

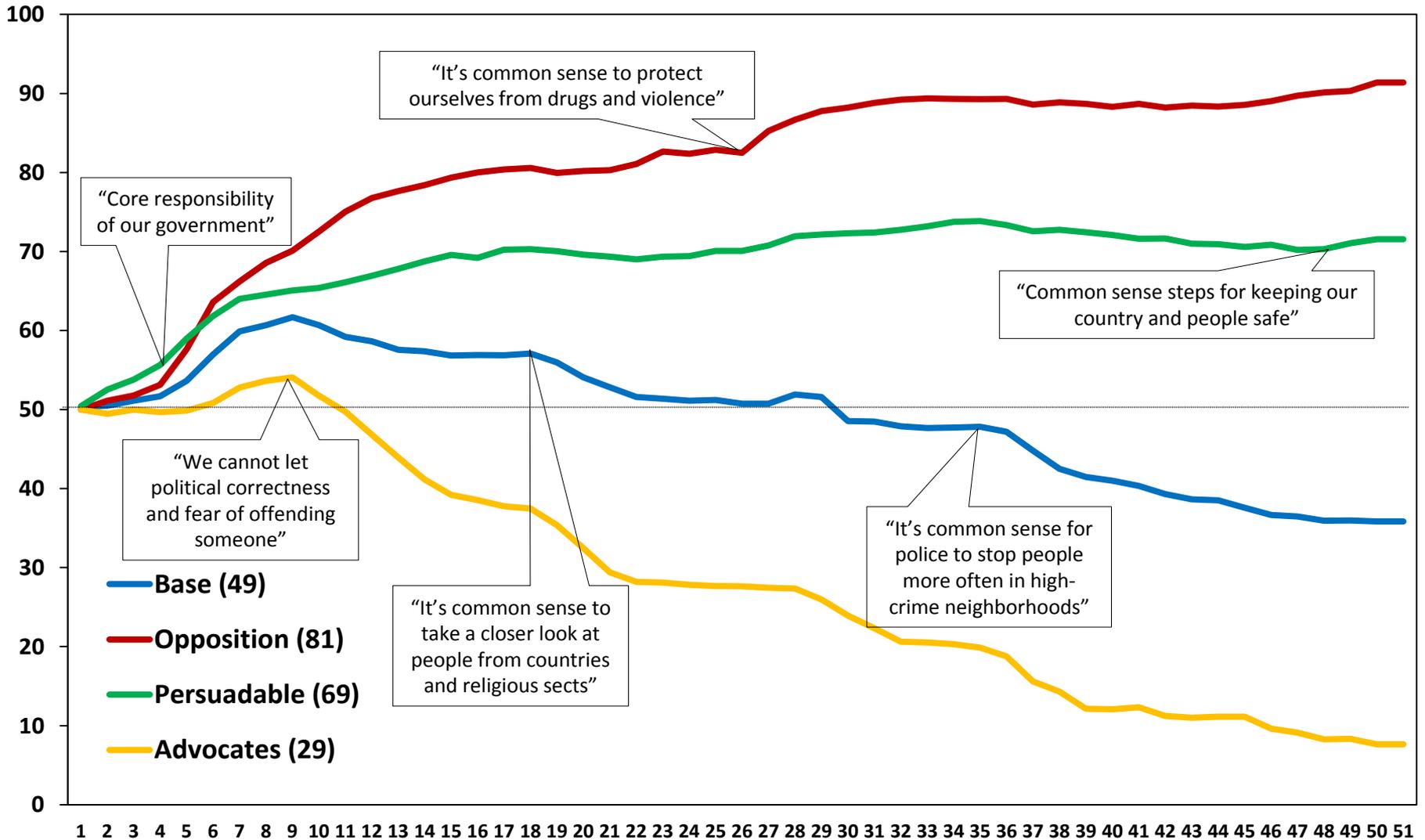


# Messaging





# Opposition



# Opposition

## How convincing did you find this message?

100 – very convincing      Total 80-100

All **13** 41

White **13** 46

African American **9** 25

Latino **7** 31

Activist **1** 5

Base **5** 13

Persuadable **16** 46

Opposition **23** 81

## WHAT WORKS (for them)

- ✓ All dial up at “core responsibility of our government.”
- ✓ Persuadables find convincing.

Persuadables dial up at:

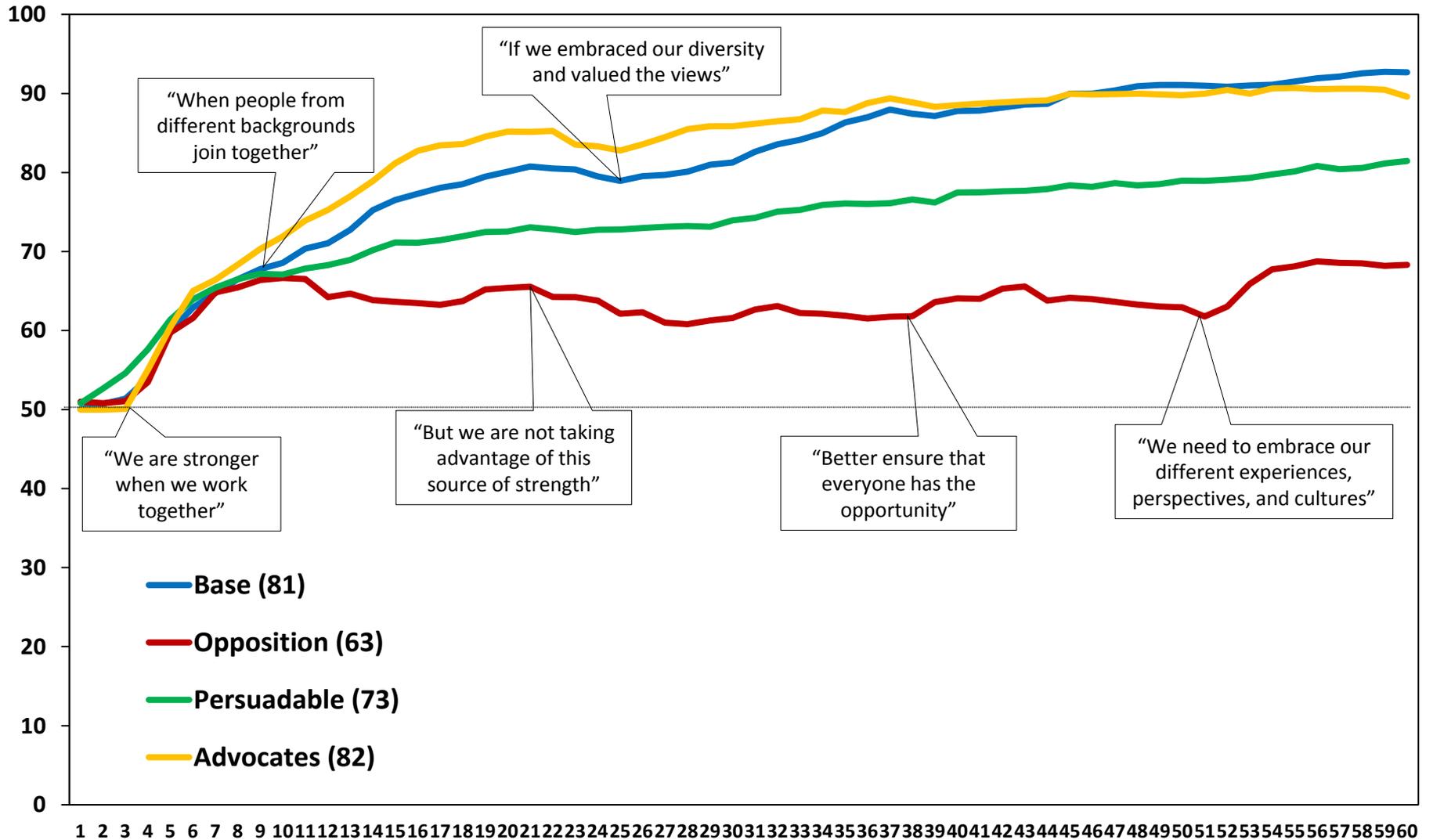
- ✓ “It’s common sense to protect ourselves from drugs and violence.”
- ✓ “We cannot let political correctness and fear of offending someone.”
- ✓ “Common sense steps for keeping our country and people safe.”

## WHAT FALLS SHORT (for them)

- X Our best messages solidly beat theirs with persuadables.



# Diversity as Strength



# Diversity as Strength

## How convincing did you find this message?

100 – very convincing      Total 80-100

All      17      57

White      14      54

African American      20      62

Latino      14      60

Activist      20      65

Base      25      78

Persuadable      16      52

Opposition      3      34

## WHAT WORKS

- ✓ Fast take off.
- ✓ Strong convincing and unconscious dial ratings among the base.
- ✓ Opposition dials down at “but we are not taking advantage of this source of strength.”

Linking diversity to solving problems resonates with base and persuadables:

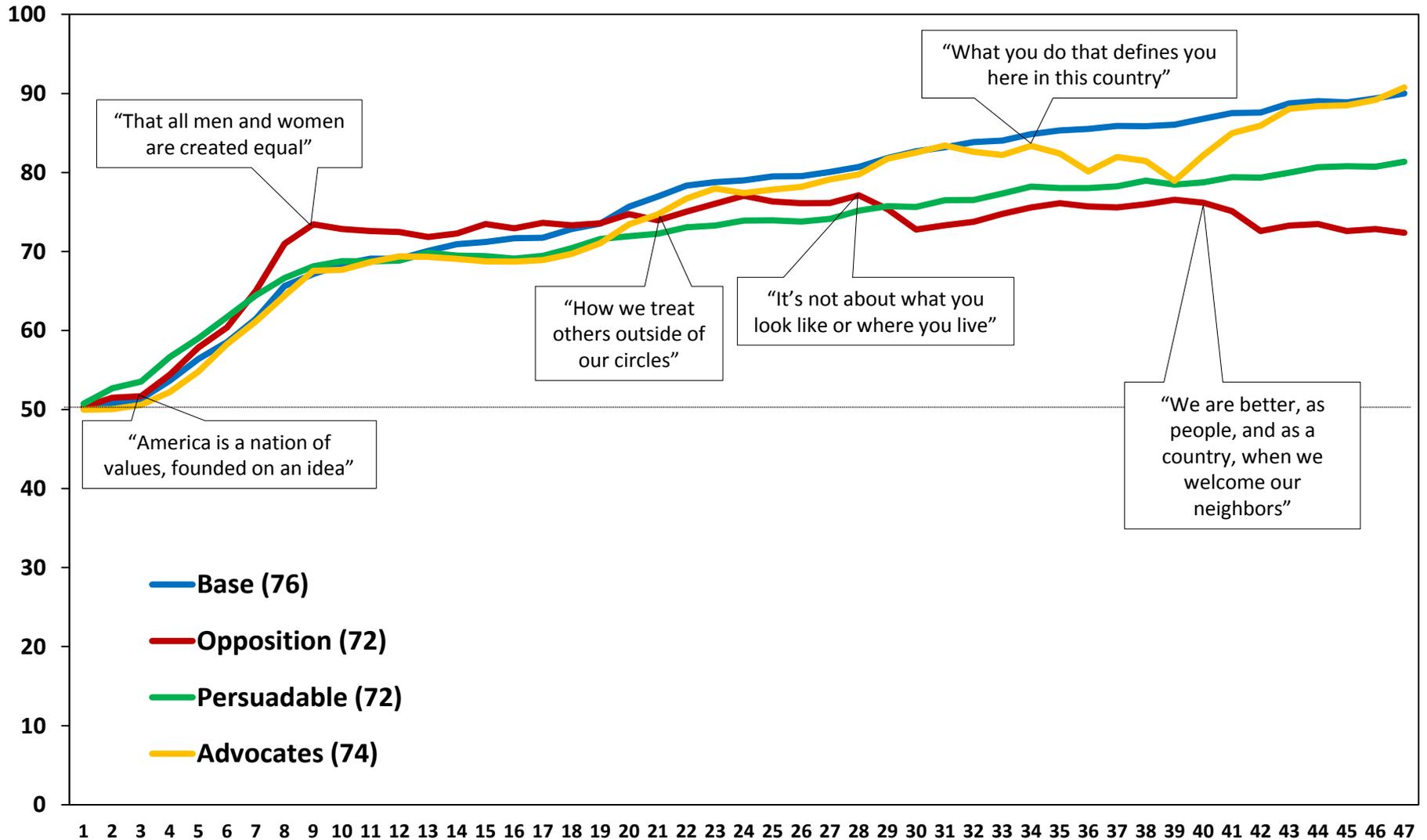
- ✓ “Stronger when we work together.”
- ✓ “When people with different backgrounds join together.”
- ✓ “If we embraced our diversity and valued the views of others...we’d be more likely to find solutions to problems.”

## WHAT FALLS SHORT

- X Unity as a value is less important for our base.



# Real America



# Real America

## How convincing did you find this message?

100 – very convincing      Total 80-100

All      17      59

White      15      57

African American      16      60

Latino      16      58

Activist      22      53

Base      21      75

Persuadable      20      56

Opposition      2      39

## WHAT WORKS

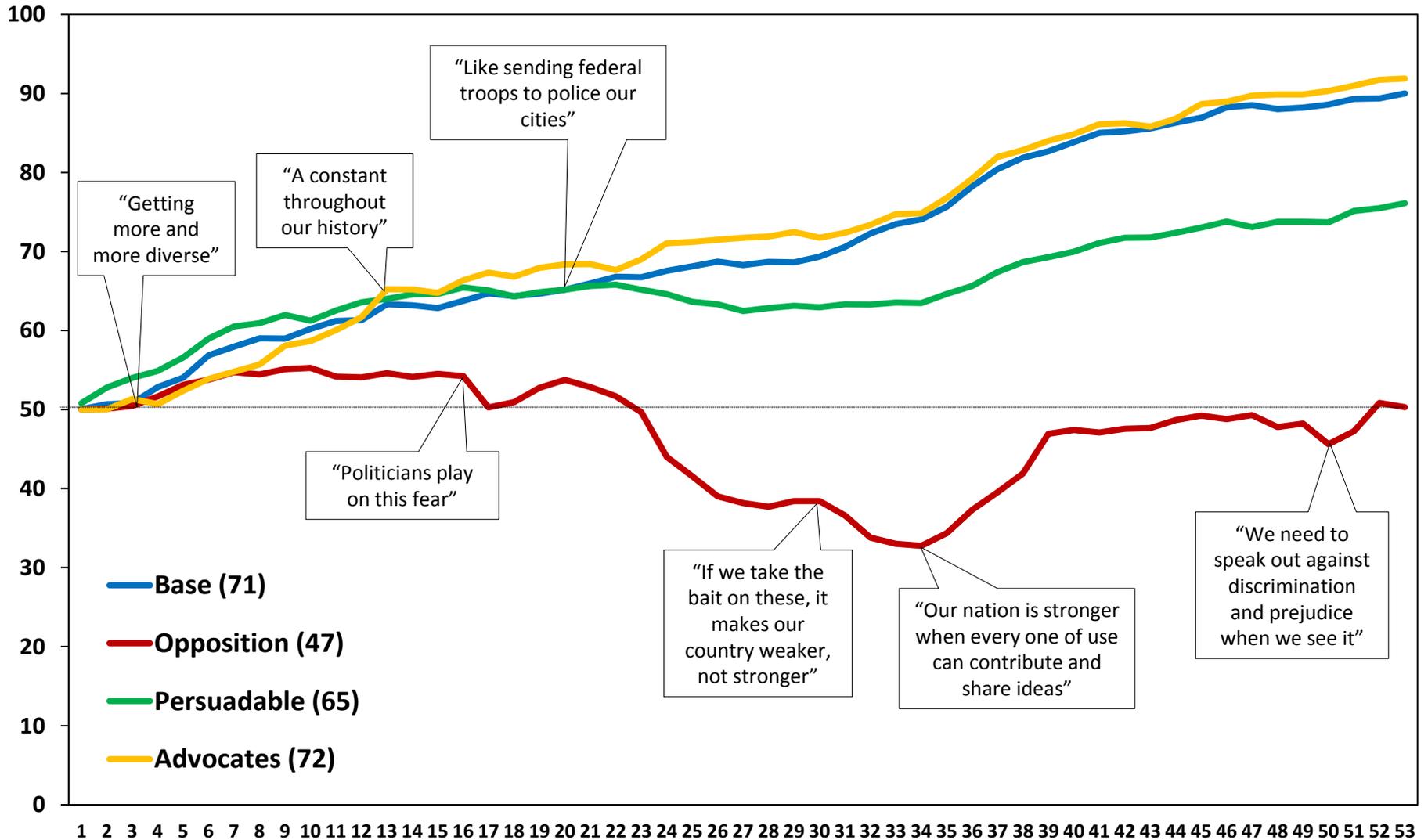
- ✓ Quick start in call to foundational value of equality.
- ✓ Base and persuadables dial up on “how we treat others outside of our circles reflects our commitment to the values that define us as Americans.”
- ✓ Base and persuadables dial up on “it’s not about what you look like or where you live...its how you live your life and what you do that defines you here in this country.”
- ✓ “When we welcome our neighbors” alienates opposition.

## WHAT FALLS SHORT

- X Holds opposition throughout.



# Pragmatism



# Pragmatism

## How convincing did you find this message?

100 – very convincing      Total 80-100

All      14      47

White      11      41

African American      24      66

Latino      11      53

Activist      14      67

Base      24      71

Persuadable      13      44

Opposition      13

## WHAT WORKS

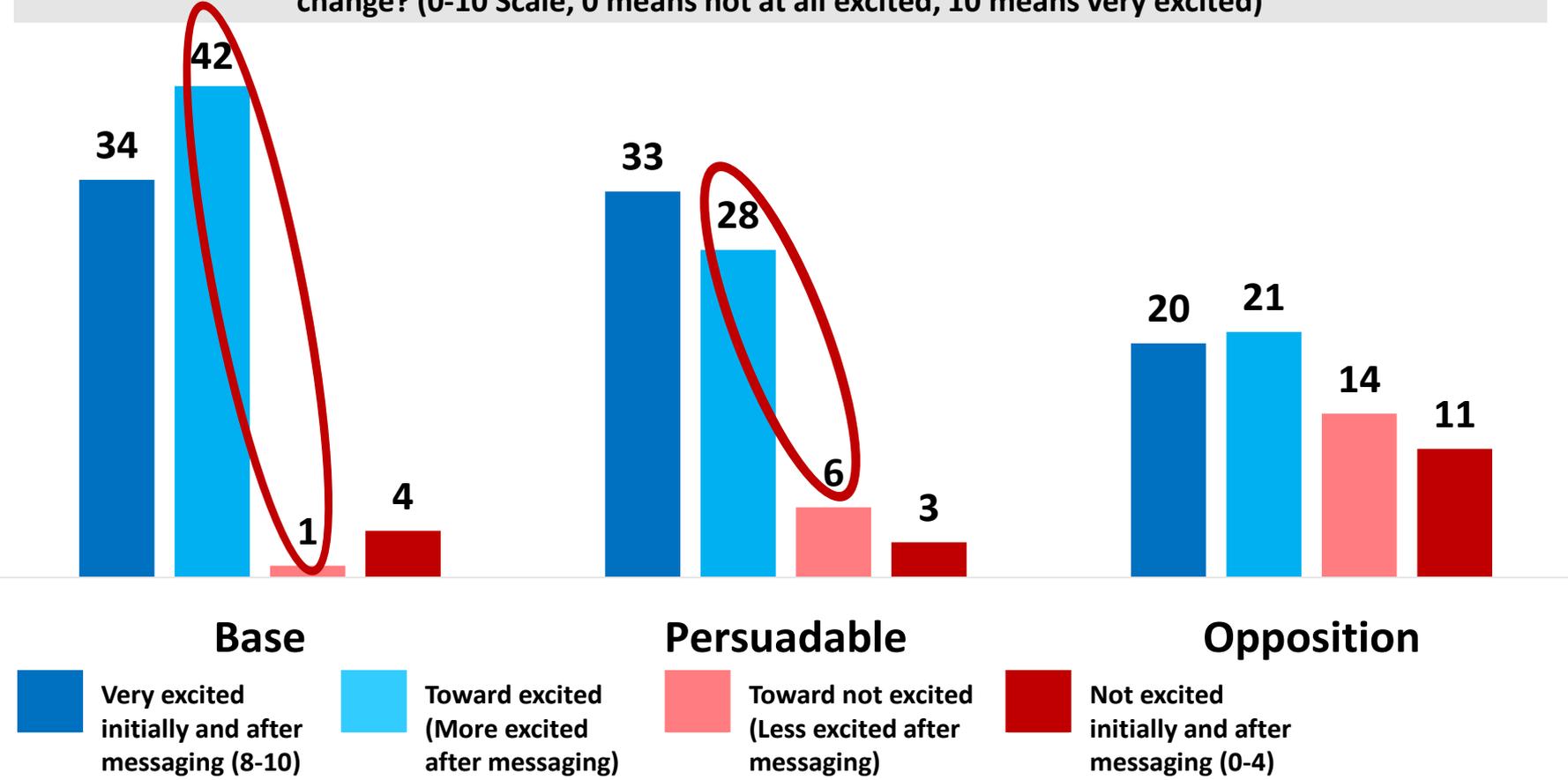
- ✓ Calling out intentional division is very effective:
  - ✓ “Politicians play on this fear.”
  - ✓ “If we take the bait on these, it makes our country weaker, not stronger.”
- ✓ Strong close with base and persuadables at “we need to embrace ideas that unify us as a diverse people and make our country stronger, and we need to speak out against discrimination and prejudice when we see it.”
- ✓ All groups dial up on “our nation is stronger when every one of use can contribute and share ideas.”
- ✓ Alienates opposition.

## WHAT FALLS SHORT

- X Slow start.
- X Weak conscious and unconscious ratings with persuadables.

# Messaging moves base and persuadable voters toward even greater excitement for joining together.

How excited are you to join together with other people in your community to take action and bring about change? (0-10 Scale, 0 means not at all excited, 10 means very excited)



# Recommendations



# Messaging Recommendations

- ✓ **Link diversity to problem solving, strength, and healthy communities rather than economic competition.**
  - ✓ Talk about how we need to take advantage of our source of strength in diversity.

- ✓ **Define opportunity through the means that enable a tangible payoff: pursuing an education, getting a good paying job or career.**
  - ✓ Position discrimination as a barrier to opportunity.

- ✓ **Talk about our need to hold the wealthiest corporations and individuals accountable for paying their fair share.**
  - ✓ People are prone to think in zero sum terms. Repositioning the “haves” as the wealthiest corporations (instead of people receiving government assistance) is more effective than trying to argue we all do better when we all do better.

# Messaging Recommendations

✓ Acknowledge that some people might be uncomfortable with change when asserting the importance of diversity.

✓ Highlight the importance of getting to know and accepting people from different backgrounds as a solution.

✓ When talking about universal values of being American that should apply to all people, explicitly say no matter what someone looks like/where they come from/what their race is.

# Messaging Recommendations

## When they call it political correctness:

- ✓ Call out manufactured fear as “bait” from “politicians trying to divide us.”

## When they talk about safety:

- ✓ Talk instead about strength, and how fear makes us weaker.

## Provide a strong call to action:

- ✓ Remove the barriers of discrimination that hold people back.
- ✓ Lean in to ideas that unify us as a diverse people and make us stronger.
- ✓ Speak out against discrimination and scapegoating when we see it.

# Messaging Recommendations

## Messaging Do's and Don'ts

- DO link diversity to core values of freedom, opportunity, respect, and dignity.
- DO talk about the need to embrace or accept people's differences.
- DO acknowledge that change can make some people uncomfortable.
- DO explicitly mention race and racial differences, but do so after leading with a core shared value.
- DO talk about the barriers of discrimination in the context of age, race, and gender.

Say	Instead of	Notes
"Foundational" values	"Important" values	Implies that other socially desirable ends depend on those values.
Diversity helps us "solve problems" or "makes us stronger"	Diversity helps us "compete economically"	Strength and problem solving are broader goals that include economic competitiveness, and resonate more strongly with our base.
We need to "heal the wounds" of racism	We need to "interrupt" racism	Framing bigotry as a harm that causes wounds is a stronger call to action.
People, no matter where they come from	People	We need to be explicit that we mean everyone.
Reducing hatred by "getting to know each other"	Reducing hatred by "teaching tolerance"	People believe hatred is taught, and people getting to know each other is the best way to undo what has been learned.
We	I	People are more likely to believe that "we" can do something to change racial attitudes, than themselves alone.

# Questions?

# Four Types of Communications



Branding



Campaign Communications



Crisis Communications



Long-Term Movement of  
Hearts & Minds

# How do we move hearts & minds?

## With:

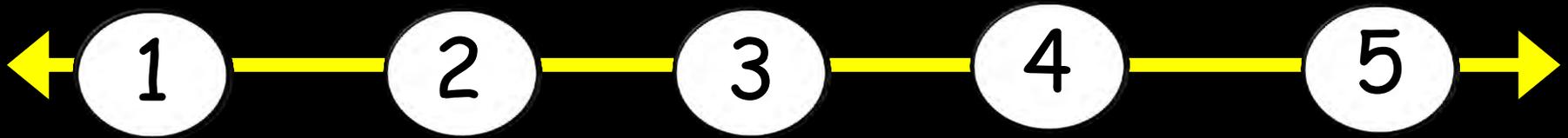
- Values-based Narratives
- Drumbeat of Connected Messages
- Solutions-focused Communications
- Thoughtful Audience Strategies

## Via:

- Culture
- Advocacy
- Media – New and Traditional
- Everyday Communications

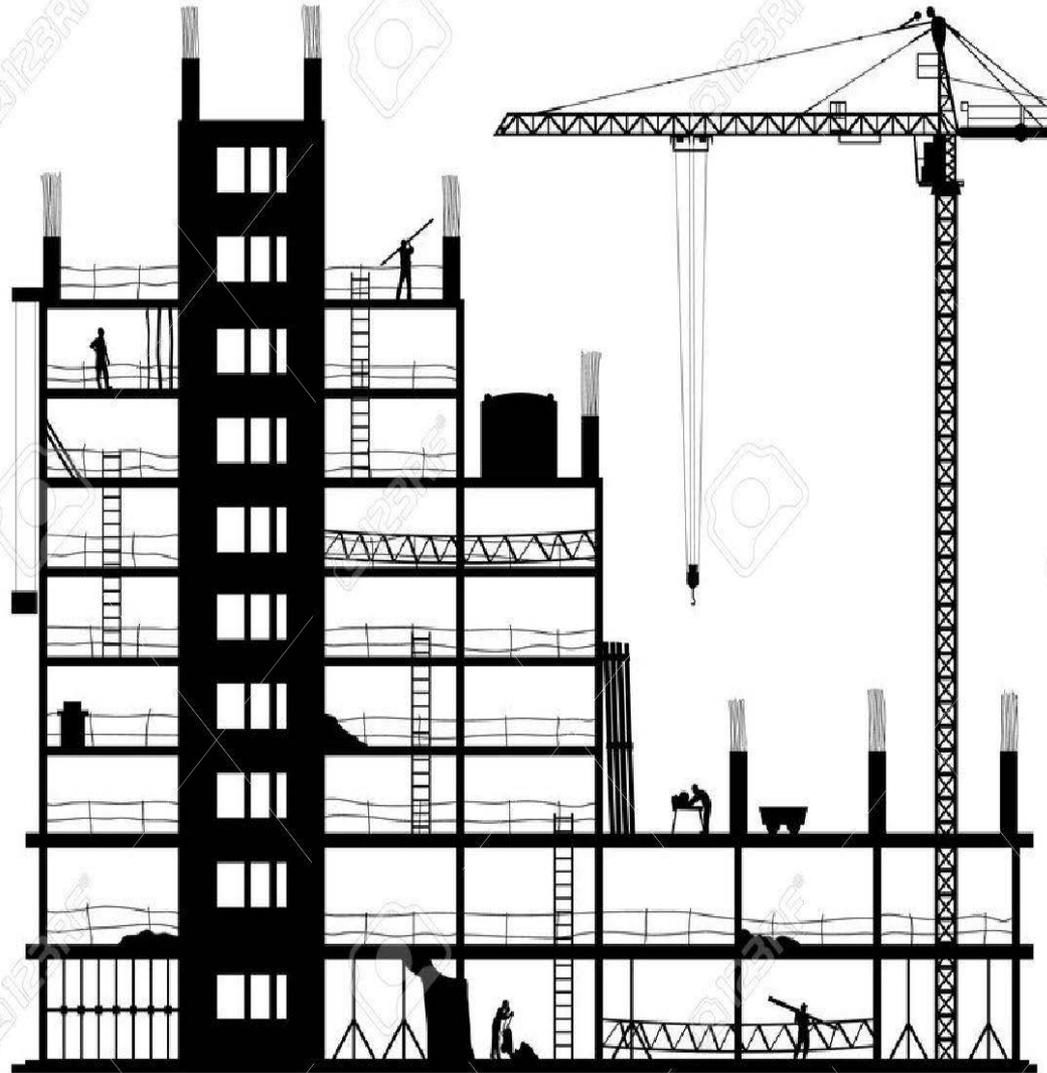


# Audience Strategy

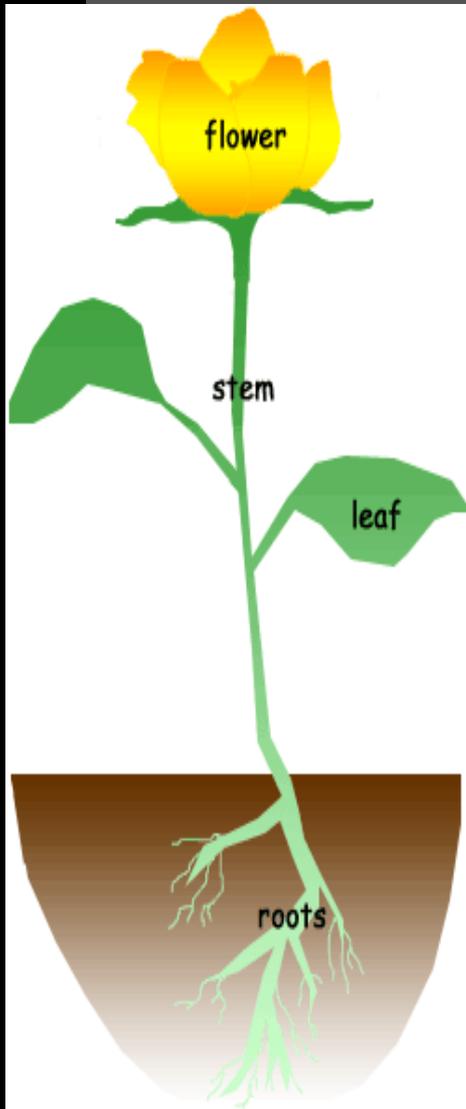


- Mobilize/Energize 1-2s
- ID Themes, messages and spokespeople to move 3s and 4s.
- Neutralize the opposition's effect on the rest.

VPSA:  
Building  
a Message



# Building a Message: VPSA



**Value**

**Problem**

**Solution**

**Action**



# VPSA

## Value

We are stronger when we work together and when we learn from each other's experiences, united as Americans. When people from different backgrounds join together we all benefit from the diversity of those perspectives. It helps us find new ways to deal with old challenges.

## Problem

But we are not taking full advantage of this source of strength.

## Solution

If we embraced our diversity and valued the views of our fellow Americans, we'd be more likely to find solutions to our problems and better ensure that everyone has the opportunity to pursue their dreams.

Whether white, Black, or Latino, whether Christian, Jew, or Muslim, we are all Americans. We need to embrace our different experiences, perspectives, and cultures because united we stand, and divided we fall.

# Values

- Respect
- Dignity
- Freedom
- Diversity
- Community/unity  
(getting to know each other/working together)
- Problem solving
- Opportunity

# Describe the **Problem**



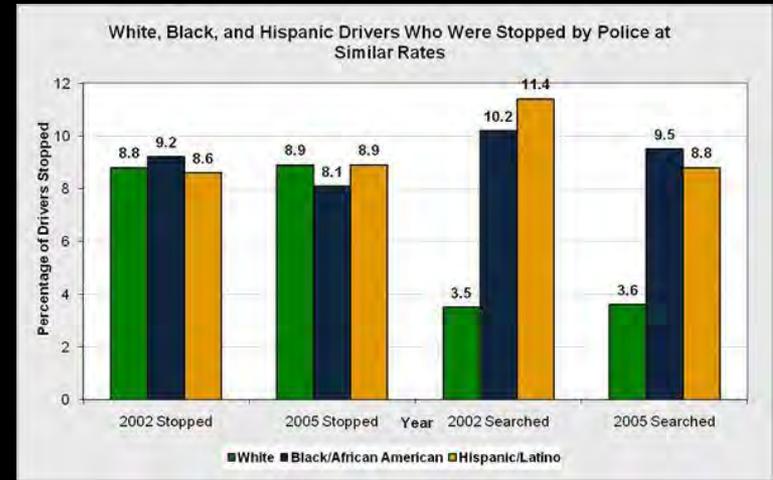
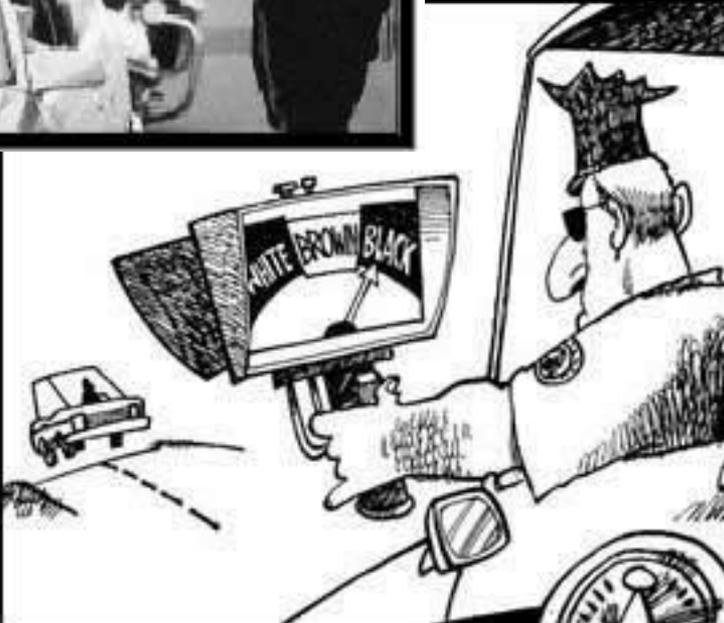
- Frame problems as a threat to values
- Use stats and facts carefully
- Systemic & human: It's about all of us

# Tell an Affirmative Story



# Episodic vs. Thematic Storytelling

## Bad Apple Cop vs. Racial Profiling



# Present Your **Solution**



- Tap into pride in “can do” ingenuity
- Provide examples of success & alternatives
- Assign responsibility:  
Who needs to do what?

A good metaphor goes a long way...



○ People think in shortcuts

○ Make complex problems and solutions manageable

# Action!



- An action someone can picture themselves doing
- Concrete Action

Questions?





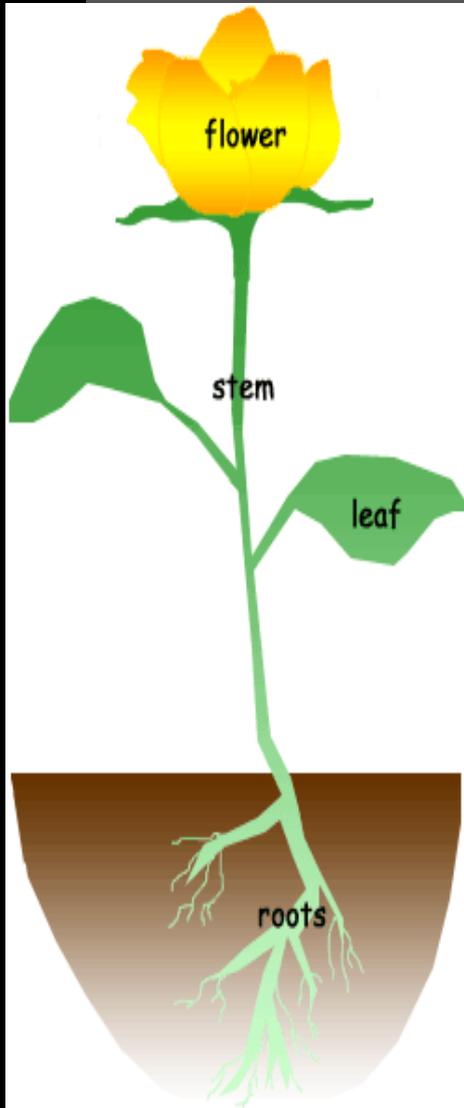
If you only  
remember three  
things...

# #1 – These Messages Work

Sorted by Mean Convincing Ratings of Base	Mean Convincing Rating (Conscious)				Mean Dial Rating (Unconscious)			
	Base	Opp	Pers	Act	Base	Opp	Pers	Act
Diversity as Strength*	88	60	78		81	63	73	
Real America*	87	66	79		76	72	72	
Pragmatism*	86	40	72		71	47	65	
Opportunity*	85	64	78		76	70	72	
Hate is Taught*	85	66	77		74	65	70	
Respect and Freedom*	85	58	75		78	70	73	
Hate as Disease*	85	34	69		78	52	68	
What Kind of Country*	84	48	72		73	55	67	
Move*	84	49	70		72	57	67	
Inclusion*	83	32	67		72	49	65	
Safety*	82	56	74		70	64	69	
Scarcity*	81	45	73		73	50	67	
Opposition	35	89	70		49	81	69	



# #2 - VPSA



**Value**

**Problem**

**Solution**

**Action**

# Thanks!

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