Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Staying On Frame in Real Time

*The vast majority of questions and comments that communicators hear from the public and policymakers can be predicted by the research-based **"swamp"** of cultural models on that issue.*

If you can predict, you can prepare.

A strategic framer prepares by anticipating the questions that will emerge from the swamp, considering the "traps" that are lurking in a possible response, and then choosing a well-framed response with the potential to build a more productive way of thinking about the issue.

The sample question-and-answer sequences here show this tactical thought process in action. The exemplars come from questions and issues raised by stakeholder groups, but the models aren't intended to simply script "the right answers" to questions you might be asked. Rather, this is a teaching tool, offering illustrations of how to talk more effectively about environmental health and related issues by applying FrameWorks' research-based recommendations. While communicators are welcome to use the recommended responses, we encourage you to use the analysis of "false start" and "reframed" answers to build your capacity to apply these principles fluidly throughout your communications practice.

QUESTION

What is Environmental Health?

ANSWER

THE FALSE START ANSWER

The commonly accepted definition of environmental health and protection was developed by the Committee on the Future of Environmental Health as a result of peer review comments by some 75 representatives of such agencies and groups as (National Center for Environmental Health (NCEH), National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO), National Conference of Local Environmental Health Administrators (NCLEHA), American Public Health Association (APHA), National Environmental Health Association (NEHA), Association of State and Territorial Health Officials (ASTHO), Health Services and Resources Administration (HRSA), Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), various state and local health agencies, as well as several accredited environmental health and protection academic programs and schools of public health.

The report this group issued defined the term "environmental health" in this way: "Environmental health and protection is the art and science of protecting against environmental factors that may adversely impact human health or the ecological balances essential to long-term human health and environmental quality. Such factors include, but are not limited to: air, food and water contaminants; radiation; toxic chemicals; disease vectors; safety hazards; and habitat alterations."

THE REFRAMED ANSWER

Good environmental health happens when the places in which we live, learn, work, and play are safe and free from hazards that can affect people's wellbeing. A range of factors contributes to healthy environments: for example, affordable, safe, and secure housing that promotes good health and reduces our risks of injury; economically vital neighborhoods that foster strong business practices, good jobs, and safe communities; clean air and water, so we don't contract preventable illnesses; food that is safe for human consumption; and safe parks and pathways that encourage outdoor activities and exercise.

As a nation, we have a responsibility to sustain healthy environments for all Americans; it's a complex job, and to get it done, we rely on a network of professionals who are trained to identify potential problems in conditions upstream from our daily lives and solve them before they cascade downstream, where they can pose a threat to our health. Just like a ground crew at an airport, these experts are responsible for a wide range of essential tasks: they build and maintain safe systems, assess the conditions around us, conduct safety checks, and make sure appropriate regulations are in place and enforced.

Our environmental health ground crew consists of highly trained professionals from multiple national agencies who work in partnership with state, local, and tribal departments and community organizations to maintain healthy environmental conditions. Ground crew members use their technical expertise and specialties of focus to ensure safe and healthy built and natural environments for everyone.

ANALYSIS

FALSE START ANALYSIS

- This answer spends too much communications real estate loading up on "insider baseball" facts about how the definition was developed and by whom.
- A clear chain of causality is missing—the public is left to fill in the blanks about how environment affects health.

REFRAMED ANSWER ANALYSIS

- This reframed reply begins with an explanation that provides concrete examples to connect environments to health.
- This reply defines environmental health as more than just contaminants or pollutants—the examples make the scope of environmental health work visible to the public.

- The definition focuses on contaminants and pollutants to the near exclusion of all other aspects of environmental health, feeding into the narrow, limited understanding of environmental health that dominates public thinking on the issue.
- The problems are many, but the solutions are absent. What exactly is the "art and science" of environmental health? The public is left to imagine what that means.
- Strategic framing identifies who is responsible for addressing an issue or problem. This answer does not assign any responsibility.

- The sentence, "As a nation, we have a responsibility . . . to all Americans," infuses the answer with tested Values—*Responsible Management* and *Fairness Across Places*—to tap into productive cultural models and show why the audience should care about environmental health.
- The metaphor *Upstream/Downstream* is introduced subtly here to help people to think about population-level solutions and responsibility beyond the level of the individual or family.
- *Ground Crew* introduces the agents responsible for environmental health work and gives the government a positive, protective role, drawing on a productive dominant model of public thinking about government.

QUESTION

I've seen coverage of teams cleaning up environmental disasters like the BP oil spill in the Gulf. Is that what you mean by "environmental health professionals"?

ANSWER

THE FALSE START ANSWER

Environmental health extends far beyond disaster cleanup, and environmental health professionals perform a wide range of functions, including cleaning up contaminated sites, to maintain safe environments. They play a critical role in protecting the public's health by preventing outbreaks, responding to environmental emergencies, and enforcing public health standards. They contribute to the physical, mental, and communal wellbeing of the population by monitoring the conditions that affect public health.

Environmental health professionals are responsible for inspections, investigations, collection of specimens, information dissemination, and policy development. These experts hold many different positions, with various education and training requirements. They work primarily in government agencies on such tasks as monitoring air and water quality, keeping our food supply safe, and enforcing industry regulations.

There are also environmental health professionals who work in the private sector, ensuring that their companies understand the law and follow good practices. Businesses and employers, working in conjunction with workers and local communities, have a part to play in strengthening the connections between healthy communities and healthy people. In addition to their responsibility to adhere to industry regulations, businesses are responsible for making sure that consumers are kept informed about product safety risks and environmental hazards.

THE REFRAMED ANSWER

Just like an airport ground crew performs essential work that makes air travel safe, environmental health professionals ensure the safety of the built and natural environments in which we live and work. We are familiar with the person waving lights on the runway to guide planes to the tarmac, just like we all have seen people cleaning oil off coastal birds in the path of a spill. But like its airport ground crew counterpart, the environmental health ground crew carries out many more responsibilities behind the scenes.

In an airport ground crew, highly trained professionals—designers, engineers, mechanics, operators, inspectors—are responsible for the range of tasks that help move thousands of people safely from one destination to another, every day. In the same way, many experts collaborate daily on a shared goal: maintaining systems and conditions in our environments that support good health.

It takes a lot of well-trained people to do this work: for example, environmental health practitioners monitor air and water quality, keep our food supply safe, enforce industry regulations, set guidelines for local and state public health agencies, and develop standards for safe buildings. This national ground crew of researchers, scientists, technicians and other professionals working at national agencies like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Prevention, the Food and Drug Administration and others collaborate with state and local agencies and community partners to prevent problems, inform the public, and make and enforce policies that protect all of us. Yes, they help to clean up environmental disasters when they happen. But just as importantly, they protect us every day from potential public health risks by managing them before they become real problems.

ANALYSIS

FALSE START ANALYSIS

- By focusing on description rather than explanation, this answer does not help its audience to understand how environmental health professionals' work ("inspections, investigations," etc.), has direct relevance to Americans' daily lives.
- This "objective" description does not give the public any cues to demonstrate why the public should care about environmental health work and who is responsible for it.
- Although the response emphasizes the "critical role" of environmental health professionals, it doesn't illustrate the cohesiveness of environmental health as a profession. Cooperation, coordination, collective action, and citizen engagement are absent.
- The role of business as its described here leads into the part of the swamp that activates health individualism: it discusses people as consumers, not citizens, and focuses on individual choices (e.g., which products are safe to buy).

REFRAMED ANSWER ANALYSIS

- This answer begins with an appeal to a sense of community—"all of us, every day"—that provides a lead-in for talking about the broad community of professionals who collaborate and share the same goals.
- Introducing the *Ground Crew* metaphor at the beginning offers a simple model for understanding environmental health as diverse work performed by members of a well-trained profession.
- The entailments of the explanatory metaphor help to emphasize population-level problems and solutions (e.g., moving thousands of passengers safely is a big job that we necessarily entrust to professionals).
- The examples illustrate the diversity of conditions and responsibilities covered by the term "environmental health." It isn't *only* about contaminants, although that's part of it.
- The government is a positive and necessary agent in this answer, one that works closely with partners at all levels to protect Americans.

QUESTION

"Environmental health" is the same thing as environmentalism, right? Reduce, reuse, and recycle . . . that kind of thing?

ANSWER

THE FALSE START ANSWER

The two have similar names, but environmentalism and environmental health are not the same thing. Environmentalism is the commitment to the conservation and protection of our natural environments and resources, whereas environmental health is a field devoted to studying and improving the impact of natural and built environments on human health.

Environmental health addresses all the physical, chemical, and biological factors external to a person, and all the related factors impacting behaviors. It encompasses the assessment and control of those environmental factors that can potentially affect health. It is targeted towards preventing disease and creating health-supportive environments.

Environmentalism focuses on reducing the impact of people on the natural world in order to preserve it for future generations. Environmental health focuses on reducing the negative impacts of unsafe environmental conditions—like polluted air and water—on people, in order to decrease preventable illness and injury rates.

THE REFRAMED ANSWER

Our wellbeing depends on our environment, and we all live downstream from conditions that can either promote or potentially damage our health. Environmental health is the work of making sure that we manage our environments responsibly, so that they contribute to good human health. It's focus on how environments affect human health is what separates it from environmentalism. Environmental hazards like foodborne pathogens, air pollution, and unsafe built environments can directly affect public health if they are not detected and dealt with before they become problems. That's why we need well-trained experts—environmental health professionals—who work to cultivate healthier environments downstream by addressing these kinds of potential risks upstream of where we live, work, and play. By intervening early and proactively, environmental health professionals can prevent or mitigate events that could otherwise lead to consequences like premature death, avoidable illness and disability caused by non-infectious, non-occupational environmental and related factors. And stemming these problems upstream can have cascading effects: clean air, for example, not only can reduce asthma and other respiratory problems, but also can support good health by encouraging more people to enjoy outdoor exercise. To protect public health, it's important to ensure that all Americans live and work in healthy environments.

ANALYSIS

FALSE START ANALYSIS

- By comparing definitions of environmentalism and environmental health and opening with what environmental health is "not," around what this response is likely to reinforce, not dislodge, existing understanding.
- This answer misses an opportunity to build a strong causal chain between environments and human health.
- Americans see health as an individual responsibility—one of personal choice, just like recycling. By not attributing responsibility for protecting environmental health to any particular groups or people, this answer fails to help its audience move away from individualist thinking.

REFRAMED ANSWER ANALYSIS

- Research shows that the public has a limited understanding of the connection between environments and health. Applying the metaphor of *Upstream Environments, Downstream Health* illustrates those causal links and shows who is responsible for managing the problem.
- People respond well to the tested Values of Responsible Management and Protection. Emphasizing the importance of early intervention and prevention efforts taps into these cultural beliefs to build support for the work that EH professionals do.

- Mentioning prevention in the final sentence is a good step towards inserting a Value into the message, but it's more effective to cue a tested Value before explaining an issue, because tapping into a productive Value first helps to shape the way your audience hears whatever you say next.

- The entailment of cascading effects makes a strong case for preventive efforts.
- A specific, memorable example—the benefits of clean air—helps to maximize the explanatory power of the metaphor.
- The Value of *Fairness Across Places* appeals to citizen engagement.

QUESTION

I understand why wellness programs and insurance subsidies are part of the Affordable Care Act, but what does the ACA have to do with environmental health?

ANSWER

THE FALSE START ANSWER

Rising rates of preventable disease and death reveal that Americans are not as healthy as they could be and that they are becoming increasingly unhealthy over time. Many factors contribute to the erosion of the population's good health, including lack of access to nutritious food, physical activity, economic wellbeing, and healthy and safe environments.

Creating healthy environments can improve Americans' health and lower their health care costs. To achieve this, the Affordable Care Act included a requirement that a council on prevention be created, and that the council develop a national prevention and health promotion strategy.

The resulting strategy includes a section on healthy and safe community environments, which recommends attention be paid to pollutants in our air, land, and water, and points out disparities in pollution exposure. Lead exposure, environmental triggers of asthma, safe neighborhoods for walking, and job-related hazards are all noted as environmental hazards that can make people less healthy. The ACA mandates that hospitals work with community organizations to identify and address local risk factors that may affect a population's health.

The National Prevention Council envisions a prevention-oriented society where all sectors recognize the value of health for individuals, families, and society and work together to achieve better health for all Americans.

THE REFRAMED ANSWER

The conditions of the environments in which we live, work, and play have important consequences for our health. For example, buildings with poor ventilation can lead to respiratory problems or exposure to toxins; unenforced building codes can result in human injury. Clean air, land, and water are important for good health, but some communities are more exposed than others to environmental health hazards.

Many of these potential health risks are "upstream" from us – that is, they are preventable if we invest in efforts to identify and deal with them before they become problems for those living downstream. Solutions such as reducing lead exposure, creating safe neighborhoods for walking, and improving air quality can contribute to better community health.

In recognition of the connection between environmental health and human health, the Affordable Care Act included a requirement that a council on prevention be created to develop a national strategy to promote public health by preventing problems and keeping our environments safe. The resulting strategy focuses attention on addressing air, land, and water hazards upstream in order to protect all of our communities. It calls for collaboration among government agencies, state and local health departments, and community groups to assess local communities' environmental risk factors and implement upstream solutions. The National Prevention Council envisions a prevention-oriented society where all sectors recognize the value of health for individuals, families, and society and work together to achieve better health for all Americans. To get there, we need to build healthy and safe community environments for everyone, no matter where they live.

ANALYSIS

FALSE START ANALYSIS

- The negative introduction in this response is in danger of cueing up the fatalism that dominates public thinking on social problems that are overwhelming or "too big to think." Using "they" instead of "we" removes the audience's connection to the issue.
- The second paragraph appeals to consumerism by painting health care as a commodity. Consumerist thinking pushes people back into the swamp of individual solutions, which defeats discussions about collective action and responsibility.
- The brief reference to disparities introduces the issue of environmental justice without explaining why it matters.

REFRAMED ANSWER ANALYSIS

- Although this reframed reply introduces the problem early on, it also proposes solutions right away, which helps to create optimism about the manageability of the problem.
- The metaphor of *Upstream/Downstream* builds on existing public conversations about the importance of environmental regulation and uses its entailments to discuss disparities in environmental health across communities.

- The response ends with a strong Value appeal to *Opportunity for All* but no clear solutions that engage communities; a better approach would be to reframe the opening with this Value and to offer specific examples of how citizens can participate in the council's vision.

- By revising the description of community needs assessment (e.g., removing the word "mandates"), it avoids triggering Americans' distaste for government "intrusion" while still focusing on collective action.
- Appealing to the tested Value of *Fairness Across Places* directs attention away from zero-sum thinking and underscores communal benefit.

QUESTION

I pay attention to product recalls to keep my family safe from food poisoning and chemical exposure, but accidents happen. The best we can do is act fast when there's a problem.

ANSWER

THE FALSE START ANSWER

Improving food safety is critical in the United States, where an estimated 48 million cases of foodborne disease occur annually. Currently, more than a dozen federal, state, and local agencies regulate or oversee the food safety system. This complex system requires ongoing coordination, planning, and surveillance. It is not surprising that systemic gaps occur regularly, resulting in outbreaks of foodborne illness.

Food contaminated with dangerous bacteria and other pathogens such as *E. coli* O157:H7 and *Salmonella* cause an estimated 3,000 deaths each year, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Foodborne illnesses are particularly dangerous for vulnerable groups, such as young children and older adults, and can lead to long-term health problems or death.

In addition to preventable illnesses and deaths, the five most common foodborne pathogens cost the U.S. economy more than $44 billion each year in medical costs and lost productivity.

The battle to protect our safety depends on better food safety legislation, such as the Food Safety Modernization Act. The Act is currently underfunded, but if fully implemented, it will put into place new policies to reduce the spread of pathogens in our food supply through better regulation of food imports, agricultural water quality, food processing plants, and other sites of food production.

THE REFRAMED ANSWER

Food safety is a major component of environmental health work. We may not associate the food we buy at restaurants and grocery stores with environmental health, but our nation's food supply has important consequences for public health. Foodborne illnesses can be serious, especially for susceptible populations like our youngest and oldest citizens. That's why we rely on highly skilled environmental health professionals to enforce safety standards at food processing, wholesale, and retail sites. They are to our food supply what an airport ground crew is to air travel safety—making sure the conditions under which our food is processed and sold keep us safe from foodborne illness and other negative health impacts. When problems do occur, this environmental health ground crew is on hand as first-responders, but just like an airport ground crew, their priority is to prevent problems from occurring in the first place. For example, they make certain that food manufacturing sites meet safety criteria and that food handling is sanitary. They coordinate their work between local and state agencies and engage communities and businesses, too, when dealing with problems that affect local populations. This ground crew also enforces legislation like the Food Safety Modernization Act, which is designed to reduce the spread of pathogens in our food supply through better regulation of food imports, agricultural water quality, food processing plants, and other sites of food production. We wouldn't expect an airport ground crew to be able to keep us safe without the right equipment. In the same way, our food supply is safest when we provide environmental health professionals at local, state, and national agencies with the resources and authority to enforce food-safety legislation.

ANALYSIS

FALSE START ANALYSIS

- Listing stark statistics can invoke crisis thinking, which can stymie efforts to mobilize people to support a course of action. Media coverage typically uses this tactic, which contributes to anxiety but not to support for solutions that match the scale of the problem.
- For the same reason, words like "dangerous" and "battle" are best avoided.

REFRAMED ANSWER ANALYSIS

- This reframed response discusses the seriousness of the problem but avoids using numbers without context.
- This reply fills the empty slots in the media narrative by showing a relationship between environmental conditions and public health and between advance/preventive environmental health work and positive outcomes.

- Using financial losses as an argument conjures up cultural models, such as consumerism and public health as a business, that undermine the message.
- In discussing the need for more resources in order to provide better government oversight of industry, this response unintentionally paints government as ineffective and inept—unproductive cultural models that do not help to build public support for the argument.

- Concrete examples redirect away from fatalism or "too big to fix" thinking.
- This reframed answer asks for public support for stronger legislation and more resources by explaining the value and importance of the work already being done. Nobody likes to spend money on a project that seems destined to fail.

QUESTION

Big Business isn't going to stop polluting unless it helps the bottom line—and forcing companies to make expensive changes will hurt our economy. Pollution is just the price we pay for a modern economy.

ANSWER

THE FALSE START ANSWER

Despite what some industry advocates say, we don't have to sacrifice economic success to enjoy safe and healthy environments. Many companies have found ways to successfully incorporate green environmental practices into their business models, even turning a bigger profit in the process.

But industry would have little incentive to invent new, safer ways to conduct business, harvest raw materials, manufacture products, and use energy without the pressure of government regulation, which standardizes the expectations for all players in an industry. Those regulations help keep us safe and encourage businesses to find creative ways to lessen their impact on our environments while still remaining profitable. The EPA's proposal to cut carbon emissions from coal-powered plants, for example, will encourage energy companies to invest in alternative energies.

Businesses and employers play a critical part in keeping all of us safe in the places we live, work, and come together. There is plenty that business can do to support environmental health, including reducing their carbon footprint, providing healthier work environments, supporting better public transportation options to reduce the number of employees who must drive to work, and offering access to resources for supporting mental and physical health.

THE REFRAMED ANSWER

We need to manage our resources responsibly, so that our environments and economy are sustainable in the long term. When industry is poorly regulated upstream, it can increase environmental health risks downstream where we all live. That's why federal, state, and local government agencies, along with industry, community organizations and other private-sector partners, share responsibility for monitoring these risks, implementing policies that promote responsible stewardship of our resources, and enforcing protective laws that keep us and our environments safe. For example, the Environmental Protection Agency's recent proposal to reduce power plants' carbon emissions by 30 percent by 2030 is one way we can regulate and promote better industry standards upstream to make our downstream environments safer. Excessive carbon emissions from these factories build up in the atmosphere and act much like a heat-trapping blanket around the Earth. That blanket causes temperatures to rise, and hotter temperatures can lead directly to preventable climate-related health risks, like food insecurity, water- and insect-borne disease, and greater rates of cardiovascular and respiratory disease. A 30 percent reduction in these emissions is an important step towards ensuring that industry does its part to protect our air, land, and water. When we harness government agencies' expertise to anticipate and prevent problems through their research, technical, and enforcement capabilities, we can change conditions upstream to reduce their cascading effects in our downstream environments.

ANALYSIS

FALSE START ANALYSIS

- A strategically framed reply pivots away from questions that are mired in unhelpful dominant models of thinking and redirects the discussion to the specific message they want to communicate.
- By emphasizing examples of how companies can benefit from regulation, this response gives in to the argument that industry profits always take precedence over the public good.

REFRAMED ANSWER ANALYSIS

- Opening with an appeal to the Value *Responsible Management* provides a tested, reliable cue for collective responsibility.
- This version provides a model for thinking about solutions scaled to the size of the problem.

- There's no discussion of who, exactly, "pays the price" of pollution—connecting causes and consequences can build public support for regulation.
- The answer includes a nod to government's protective role but perpetuates cultural models of industry as autonomous (e.g., companies provide safe and healthy work spaces not simply out of beneficence but because the law requires them to do so as a means of protecting workers/citizens).

- Using an explanatory chain and the *Heat-Trapping Blanket* and *Upstream/Downstream* metaphors increases audience understanding of the relationship between industry practice and climate change-related health problems that affect all of our communities.
- Government agencies are assigned important research, monitoring, and regulatory/protectionist role, but there's also a role here for collective, collaborative action among all stakeholders.

QUESTION

I hate thinking about climate change—it's all just so hopeless and overwhelming!

ANSWER

THE FALSE START ANSWER

The scientific community recognizes that climate change is happening at increasing rates, and if we don't take drastic measures to correct these changes soon, they may be irreversible. We are all vulnerable to the downstream effects of climate change, which include increased risk of death, injury, and illness due to extreme weather events, increased susceptibility to respiratory and cardiovascular illness due to greater air pollution, particularly ozone smog, and other potential hazards like drought-related food insecurity and water shortages. Even upstream events like elevated levels of pollens caused by warmer temperatures that result in longer pollen seasons lead to downstream effects like increasing cases of allergic disease. By committing to lifestyle changes, embracing alternative energy sources, and cutting back on our consumption, we can limit the effects of climate change and protect ourselves from the worst of the impacts.

THE REFRAMED ANSWER

Yes, climate change is a major challenge, but if we take a thoughtful approach to protecting people and places, we can make a difference. It helps to think of the conditions of our immediate environments—for example, the air and water quality in the places we live, work, and play—as the result of upstream conditions, such as heat-trapping carbon emissions. The upstream environment has downstream impacts, like the incidence rate of respiratory health problems. With this in mind, we can see a strategy—we can apply solutions on both fronts, upstream and down. We can call for policies and regulations that address upstream conditions such as our reliance on fossil fuels, and problems with air quality hazards. At the same time, we can build our ability to respond and adapt to downstream impacts on health. We also have an extensive network of environmental health professionals on our side, who are working upstream to find and help us to implement solutions to climate change and its related health risks. But they can't do it alone. Working together, health departments, government agencies, businesses, and community organizations can more effectively anticipate, prepare for, and respond to a range of climate-sensitive health impacts.

ANALYSIS

FALSE START ANALYSIS

- This answer applies the *Upstream/Downstream* metaphor but in a way that reinforces fatalist thinking about environmental threats—these cascading effects seem unstoppable.
- The crisis-oriented tone of words like "drastic" and "irreversible" reinforce the fears the answer is trying to allay.
- Problems take up much more real estate than solutions.
- The solutions offered focus on individual choices; they don't match the scale of the problem.

REFRAMED ANSWER ANALYSIS

- The *Upstream/Downstream* metaphor is used here to direct attention to solutions that fit the scale of the problem and make it seem more manageable.
- A Reasonable Tone and the assertion that Solutions exist both reframe the issue as one people can approach, rather than avoid – an essential strategy for building public will on this topic.
- This response moves responsibility from "me" to "we." Citizens, government, community groups, and the private sector all play a role in working together to solve climate change-related health problems.

QUESTION

I agree that environmental health is important, but what can ordinary people do about it? Can individual citizens really have an impact?

ANSWER

THE FALSE START ANSWER

CDC is committed to forming new partnerships and seeking solutions to community-wide public health problems. Every person has a stake in environmental public health. As the environment deteriorates, so does the physical and mental health of the people within it.

The former director of CDC's National Center for Environmental Health, Richard Jackson, MD, MPH, in the preface to the monograph *Creating a Healthy Environment* (2001), stated: "We must be alert to the health benefits, including less stress, lower blood pressure, and overall improved physical and mental health, that can result when people live and work in accessible, safe, well-designed, thoughtful structures and landscapes."

Your address can play an important role in how long you live and how healthy you are. The physical design of your community affects your health every time you step out your front door. Sometimes making healthy choices is not easy—being physically active is hard if you do not have access to sidewalks or parks, and eating right is hard if healthy foods are not available. You can help make the healthy choice the easy choice. Attend community meetings where decisions are made about how land will be used, talk with elected officials, and work for policy change.

Your actions can help:

- Reverse adult and childhood obesity
- Reduce your risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes
- Lower air pollution
- Reduce traffic injuries
- Make the community stronger and more enjoyable for everyone
- Increase safety and reduce crime.

THE REFRAMED ANSWER

All of us have a stake in environmental health and a role to play in promoting healthy places that support our communities' physical and mental wellbeing. Residents' participation is vital to this effort.

The physical design of our communities affects our health in ways we don't always recognize. For example, access to safe sidewalks and parks encourages more outdoor physical activity, which can lead to improved health. Living in a neighborhood where it is easy to find fresh, healthy food in stores and at farmers' markets increases people's likelihood of eating nutritious meals, another factor in good health outcomes. CDC is committed to ensuring that all Americans, whatever their address, are able to enjoy the positive effects of good environmental health.

That's why we are helping community members to identify and resolve community-wide public health problems. You can make an impact by using the resources on our website, including the "Healthy Places Checklist," to identify public health problems in your community, talk to friends and neighbors, and take action together. Attend community meetings where decisions are made about how land will be used, talk with elected officials, and work for policy change.

Your actions can help:

- Reverse adult and childhood obesity
- Reduce the community population's risk of heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes
- Lower air pollution
- Reduce traffic injuries
- Make the community stronger and more enjoyable for everyone
- Increase safety and reduce crime.

ANALYSIS

FALSE START ANALYSIS

- This answer focuses narrowly on individuals: phrases like "every person" and "make the healthy choice" individualize decision-making, whereas phrases like "all people" have a collectivizing effect.
- The direct quote isn't memorable enough to warrant that much communications space, and the citation carries no resonance for the average community member.
- Framing explanations negatively ("Sometimes making healthy choices is not easy…") has the effect of emphasizing the problem instead of the solution.

REFRAMED ANSWER ANALYSIS

- The reframed answer emphasizes effects on groups and collective responsibility ("all of us," "our," "all Americans").
- The cause-and-effect explanatory chain illustrates concrete solutions and links them to desirable outcomes.
- Using the tested Value of "Fairness across Places" shows the public what's at stake in the outcomes of CDC's work.
- The third paragraph ties CDC's efforts more closely to community members' engagement. This reinforces the message that government agencies and ordinary citizens are mutually invested in each other.