

Public Health Works Speaker Series 2002/2003

Improving Public Health Through Policy Change

Michael Henry, MBA, CAE

Abells Henry Public Affairs

June 17, 2003

ABELLS HENRY
PUBLIC AFFAIRS

Assumptions

- There is a direct linkage of epidemiologic evidence to the formulation of policy intended to advance public health.**
- Evidence is not value-free**

Acknowledgements

- Dr. Gerry Predy, Medical Officer of Health, Capital Health Authority
- Penny Lightfoot, Director Population Health and Research, Capital Health Authority

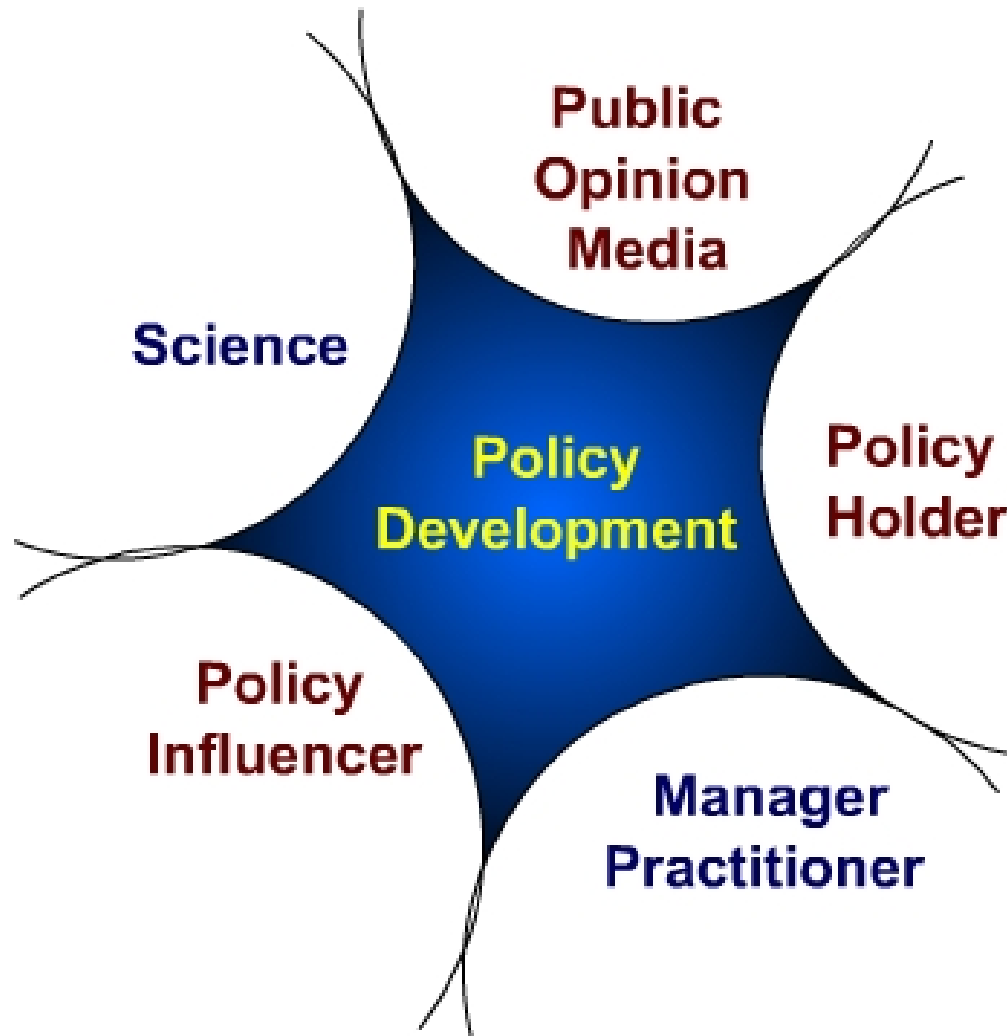
The Current Process

- Research is conducted, peer reviewed, and published
- Some effort to communicate this information to decision makers
- Processes to present the information in a comprehensive manner
 - Cochrane Collaboration
 - Campbell Collaboration

Who are the Policy Decision Makers?

- Federal elected officials
 - MPs, Cabinet Ministers, Committee members, political staff
- Provincial elected officials
 - MLAs/MPPs, Cabinet Ministers, Committee members, political staff
- Municipal Councilors/Mayors
- School Board Trustees

Who are the Players? How do they Relate?



Why does it seem like such a struggle?

1. Similar objectives.
2. Same information.
3. Appears straightforward.

An iceberg floating in a dark blue sea under a cloudy sky. The visible tip of the iceberg is light blue and contains the text 'Physical Structures', 'Rituals/ Ceremonies', 'Stories', and 'Language'. The much larger, submerged part of the iceberg is dark blue and contains the text 'Beliefs', 'Values', and 'Assumptions'. The word 'Artifacts' is written in black on the left side of the visible tip, and 'Culture' is written in yellow on the left side of the submerged part.

Artifacts

Physical Structures

Rituals/ Ceremonies

Stories

Language

Beliefs

Values

Assumptions

Culture

Values, Beliefs, Assumptions

Research

- Process (hypothesis, research, observations, conclusions/recommendations)
- Evidence-based

Elected

- Values (ideology)
- Costs
- Ethics
- Politics

Physical Structures - Rituals/Ceremonies Stories - Language

Research

- Institutional/defined
- Ongoing – publication
- Historical
Accomplishments –
John Snow
- Language of cause
and effect

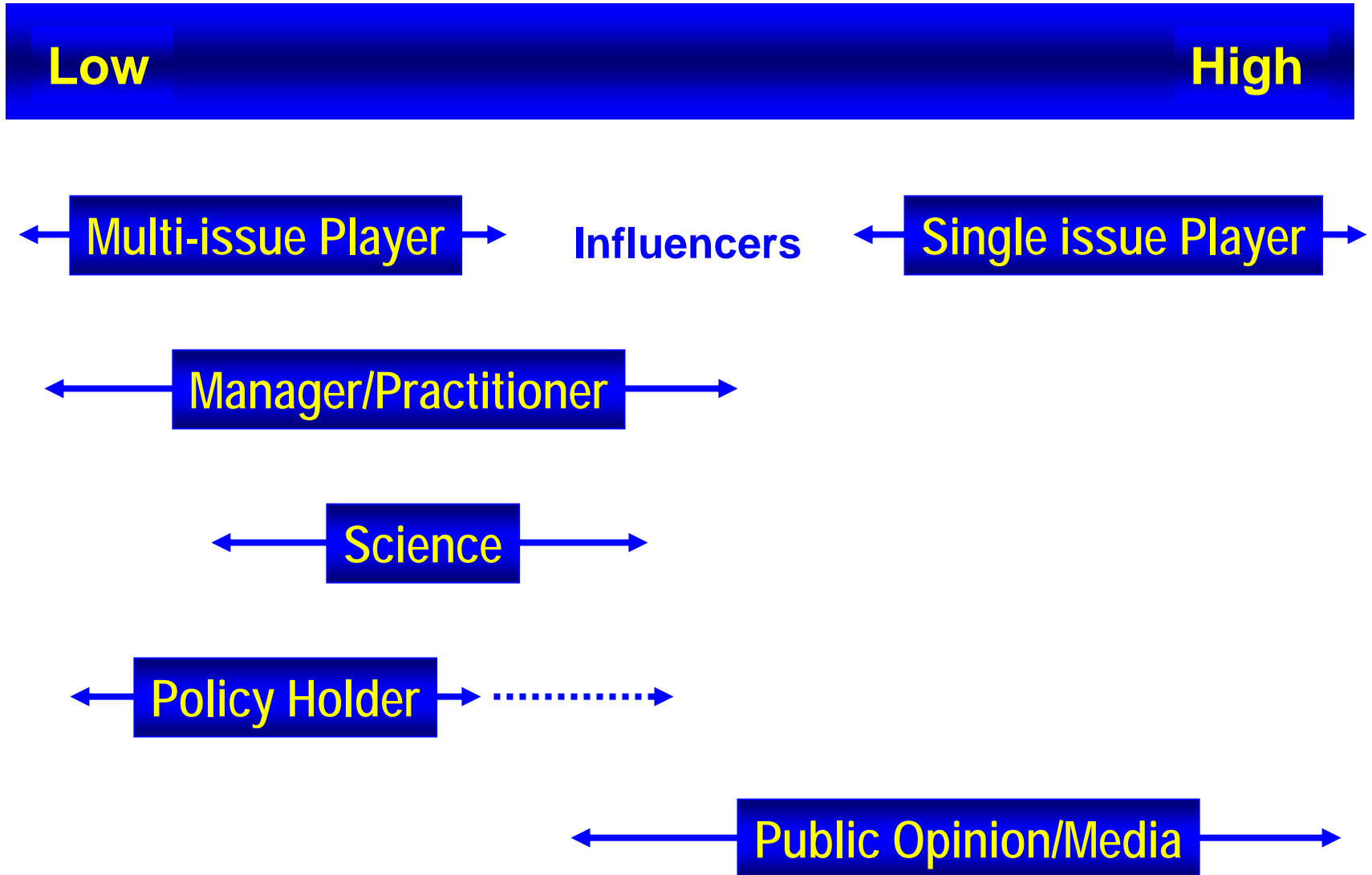
Political

- Multi-dimensional
(publics, caucuses,
constituents)
- Relationship
- Episodic
- Stories of people's
relationships
- Language of influence
and possibilities

Political Currency

- What is it?
- How does the elected decision-maker get and use political currency?
- How does the influencer get and use political currency?

Risk Tolerance for Using/Losing Political Currency



Conclusion

"Okay, you've convinced me.
Now go out there and bring pressure on me."

*President Franklin D. Roosevelt
(In response to a business delegation)*

***But as in most things in life....
.....Timing is Everything!***