# The 4Ps and Sample Nudges

## Possibilities

### What choices are offered?
Possibilities refers to the options or choices that are available. This includes the assortment that is offered—the specific items and their attributes—the quantity that is offered, and the arrangement of items.

Interventions along this axis nudge people toward healthy alternatives either by making available options healthier or making healthier options more attractive.

- Among children, the availability of fresh fruits and vegetables may be the number one driver of consumption.
- Create a large assortment of options, and people will be more likely to choose a healthy option (fruit over cookie).
- Provide short, wide glasses, and people will pour and drink more than they do from tall, thin ones.
- Bundling a salad with a small portion of fries—a “vice-virtue” bundle—can persuade people who would have ordered fries to instead choose 1/4th fries and 3/4ths salad.

## Process

### How are choices made?
Process interventions influence behavior by altering the position of what’s available. This can mean either adjusting the physical location of options, or altering the structure of choices.

Behavioral economists refer to these kinds of changes—Process interventions—as “choice architecture,” because they involve changes to the context in which a person makes a decision.

- Accessibility & convenience exert a powerful influence—more water is consumed when eye-level in the refrigerator, less ice cream is consumed when in a closed rather than open freezer.
- If healthy items are served first in a buffet, people will consume more of them.
- Among a set of three items, the middle item holds the “privileged” spot.
- Assigning a default option—fruit over homefries—can effectively guide people toward the healthy choice.

## Persuasion

### How are choices communicated?
Interventions through Persuasion change behavior by providing the right kind of information and messaging, as well as through social norms. Persuasive messaging refers to what information is presented, how it is framed and communicated, at what moment it is presented, and who delivers the message. Persuasion communication requires sending the right message at the time when the individual will be most receptive to it—at the so-called “moment of truth.”

- Visual images are very effective; a vial of fat from a gallon of whole milk will stimulate disgust and fewer purchases.
- Simple green/yellow/red traffic light labels increased the sales of healthy items and decreased unhealthy item sales.
- Signs beside elevators—a “moment of truth” decision point—that read “Burn calories, not electricity” have increased stair use by as much as 40 percent.
- Names matter—the vivid name “Fresh Florida Oranges,” for instance, increased school cafeteria fruit consumption.

## Person

### How are intentions reinforced?
Interventions in the Person category shift the focus from the individual decision in a particular context to helping decision-makers choose more wisely regardless of context. Most attempts to change people’s general behavior are purely informative; that is, they offer advice.

But there are simple ways to support healthy intentions that don’t rely solely on willpower. A few specific strategies for nudging people toward healthier choices are through the use of goals, habits, and pre-commitment.

- Goals that are concrete, measurable, and divisible into sections can effectively motivate healthy behavior; tracking “small wins” also builds momentum.
- Habits can be broken by disrupting environmental cues, which means that poor habits are most easily broken when people change their environment (travel, move, etc.).
- Pre-commitment also promotes healthy behavior. In an elementary school, children who pre-ordered their lunch were more than twice as likely to go with the healthy entrée.
- “Temptation bundling” works too: pair the temptation of a great TV show with the activity of exercise, for instance.