

2025 ENERGY EFFICIENCY FORUM

Keynote Speaker

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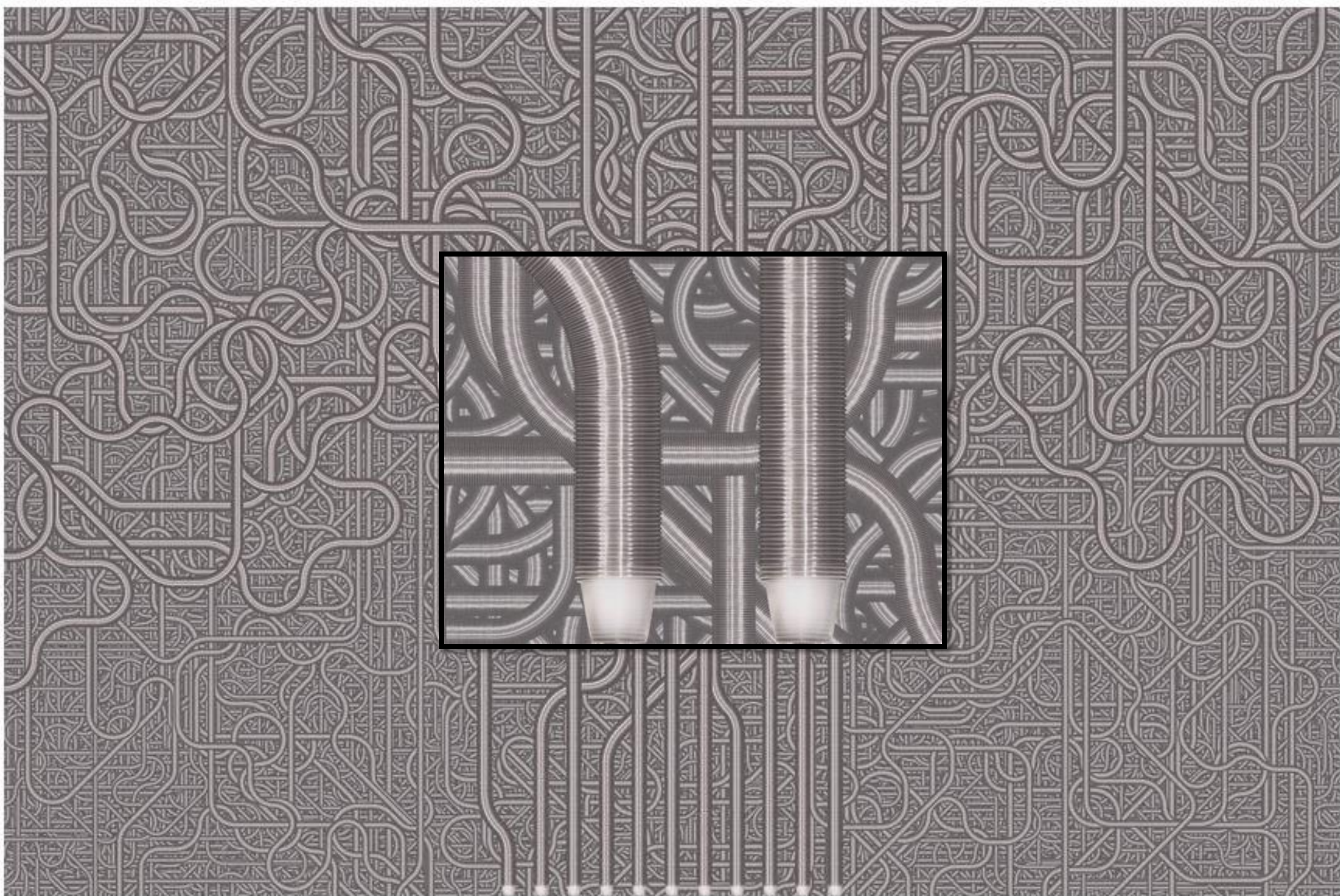


Getting Shift Done: How to Reduce Energy Use

Reuven Sussman, PhD
Director of Behavior, Health and
Human Dimensions Program

VAEEC Virtual Keynote - Oct 15, 2025





Behavior Program at ACEEE

- Research and write reports
 - Review current programs and test new strategies
- Assist outside groups – BEAR Hub
 - Design and implement behavior change interventions
- Work with ACEEE teams
 - Transportation, buildings, local/state policy, industry
- Review and publish academic work
- Outreach and communication about behavior research
- Behavior, Energy and Climate Change conference (BECC)



Plan for Today

- Behavior Matters
- The Behavioral Science Approach
- EAST Framework



The Behavioral Approach

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What Drives Behavior?

Common Assumptions

- People don't know
- Money is everything
- Technology will save us
- Policies and laws are all we need to change behavior
- People make rational decisions



What Does Drive Energy-Related Behavior and Decision-Making? The EAST Framework

- Easy: Simplify the process
- Attractive: Make the behavior more appealing
- Social: Show others are doing it
- Timely: Intervene at the right moment



The background of the slide is a photograph of a high-voltage power line tower standing in a green field. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow and long shadows. Several other power line towers are visible in the distance. The sky is filled with soft, white clouds.

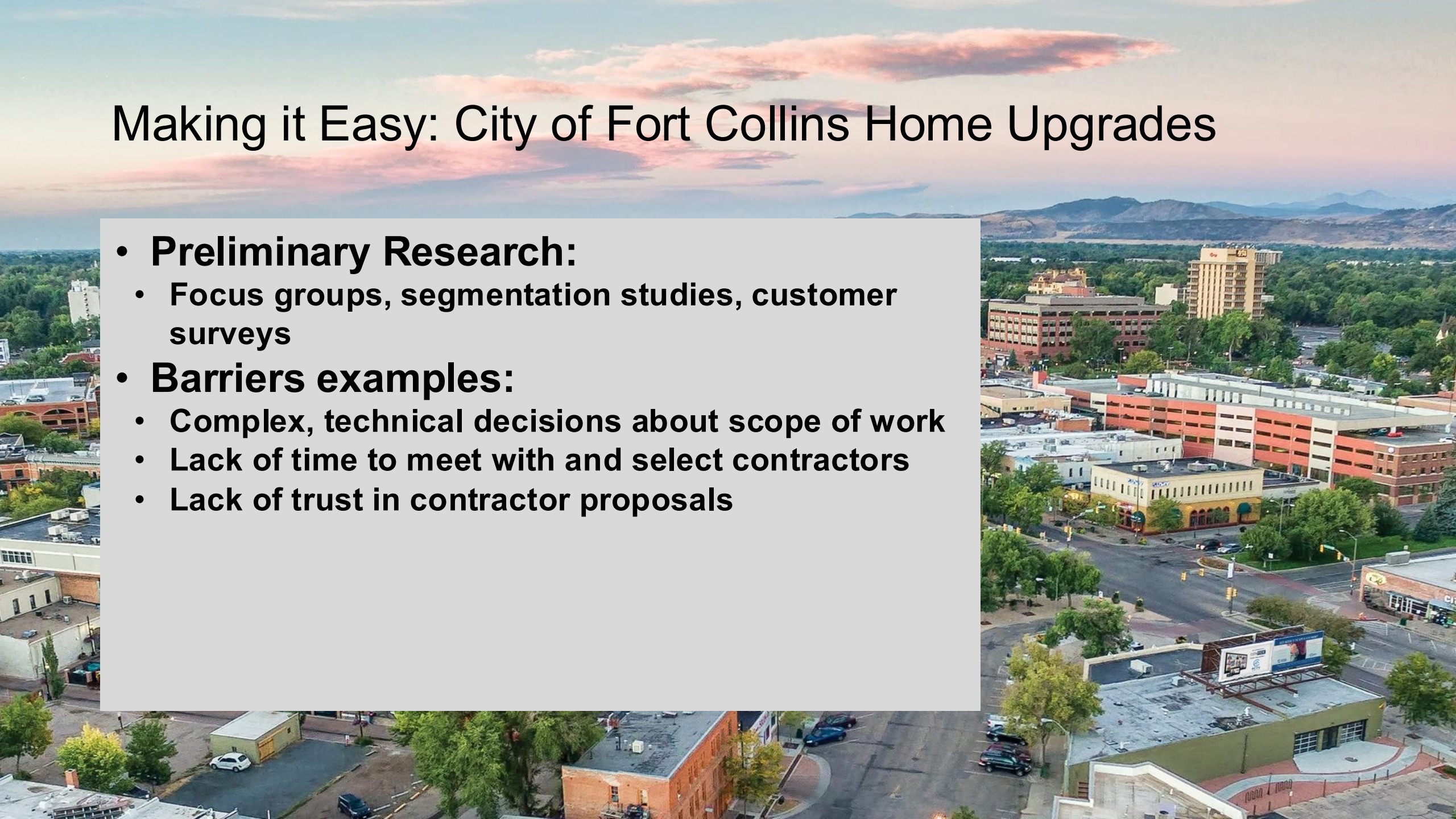
Easy

Simplify the process

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Making it Easy: City of Fort Collins Home Upgrades

- **Preliminary Research:**
 - Focus groups, segmentation studies, customer surveys
- **Barriers examples:**
 - Complex, technical decisions about scope of work
 - Lack of time to meet with and select contractors
 - Lack of trust in contractor proposals



Solution Example: Fort Collins

- **Streamline the process**

- Hotline for assessments
- Assessments assigned to contractors
- Standard packages with standard prices (rebates included)

- **Solved:**

- Fewer visits to home needed
- Less comparison shopping needed

- **Improved:**

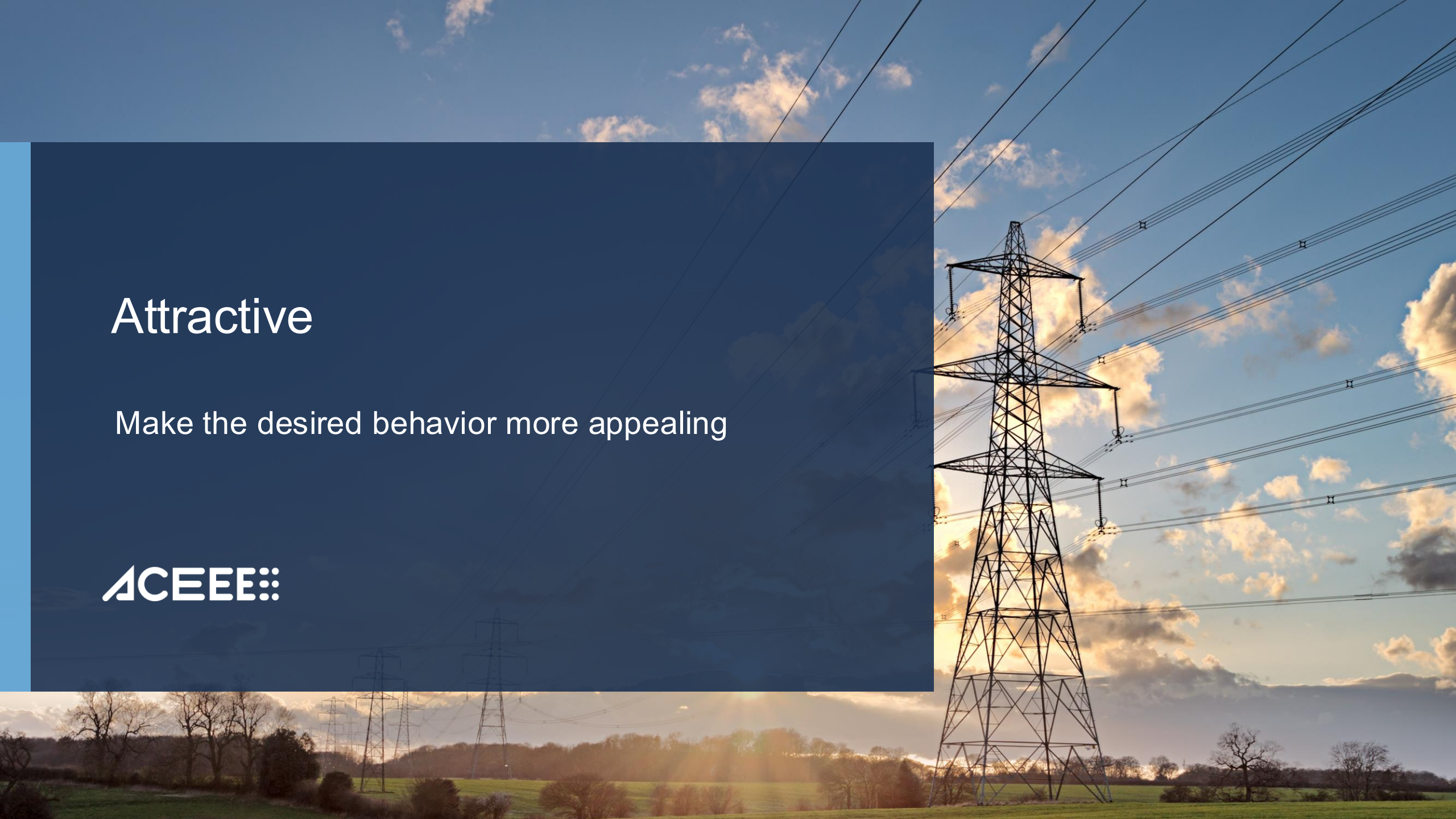
- Reduced home visits from 6 to 2
- Less effort for homeowner (did not have to apply for rebates)
- Reduced completion time from 119 days to 76 days
- Enrolled 2x more homes
- Reduced natural gas use by 70% (vs 50% with old process)



Attractive

Make the desired behavior more appealing

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Attractiveness is Relative (Huber, Payne, Puto, 1982)

Example (Beer)

- Presented like this:
 - “Below you will find 3 brands of beer. You know only the price per six pack and the average quality ratings made by subjects in a blind taste test. Given that you had to choose one brand to buy on this information alone, which one would it be?”



Making Energy Upgrades More Appealing (Sussman & Chikumbo, 2017)

Item	Cost	Annual savings	SIR
Seal Air Leaks	\$1,015	\$142.43	2.8
Attic Improvements	\$1,883	\$140.17	2.2
Upgrade and Adjust Thermostat	\$170	\$197.02	12.7
Upgrade Water Heater	\$1,223	\$72.75	0.9
Upgrade Lighting	\$77	\$238.91	21.9
Refrigerator	\$1,336	\$68.86	0.9

More target items
1.6 vs 1.2

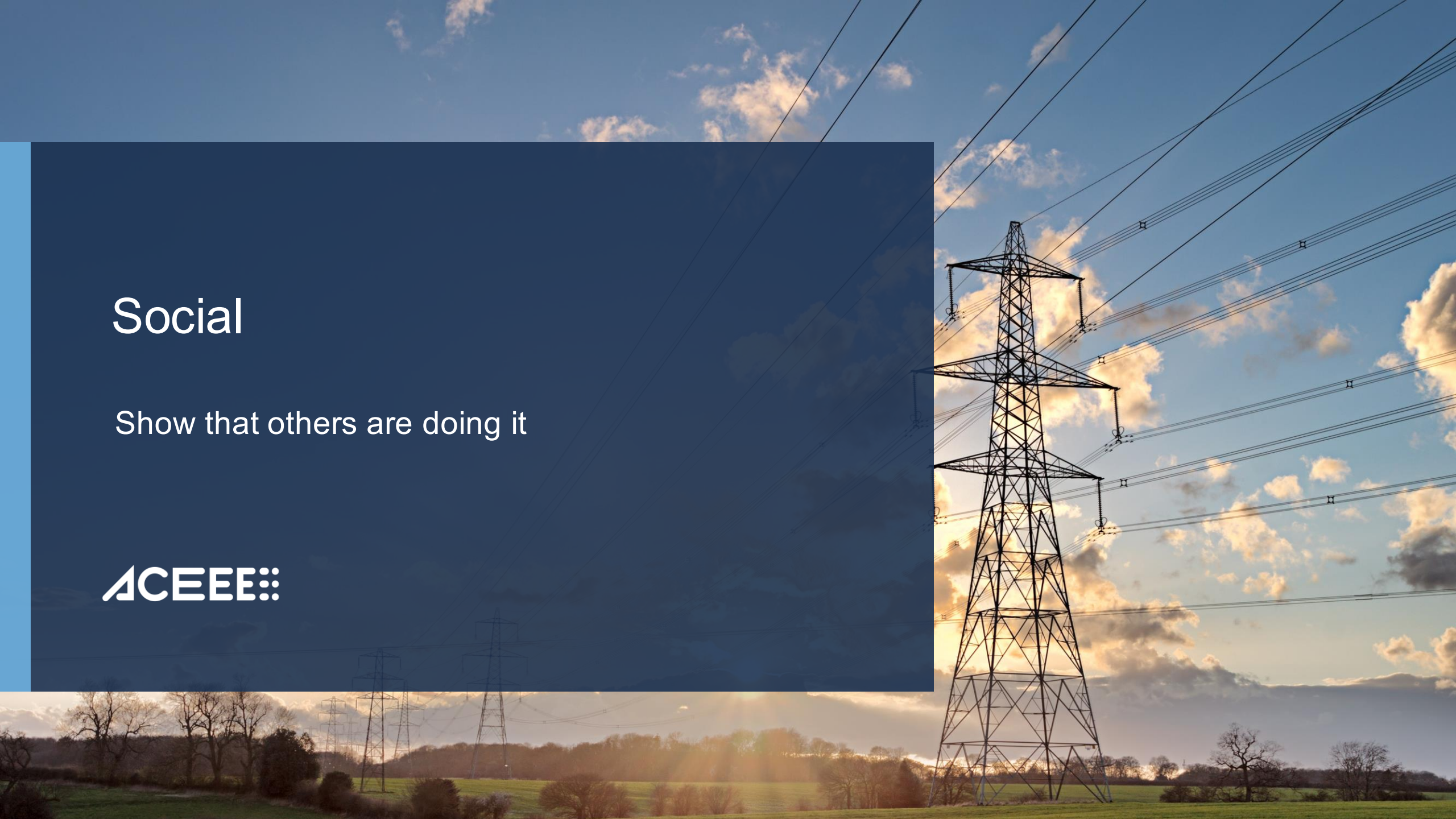
Higher total spending
\$4,521 vs \$1,760

Item	Cost	Annual savings	SIR
Seal Air Leaks	\$1,015	\$142.43	2.8
Attic Improvements	\$1,883	\$140.17	2.2
Upgrade Water Heater	\$1,223	\$72.75	0.9
Cooling System	\$3,355	\$183.8	0.8
Heating System	\$6,288	\$263.68	0.8
Refrigerator	\$1,336	\$68.86	0.9

Social

Show that others are doing it

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What motivates people to save energy?



SAVE MONEY



SAVE THE
PLANET



BE A GOOD
CITIZEN



YOUR
NEIGHBORS
ARE DOING IT

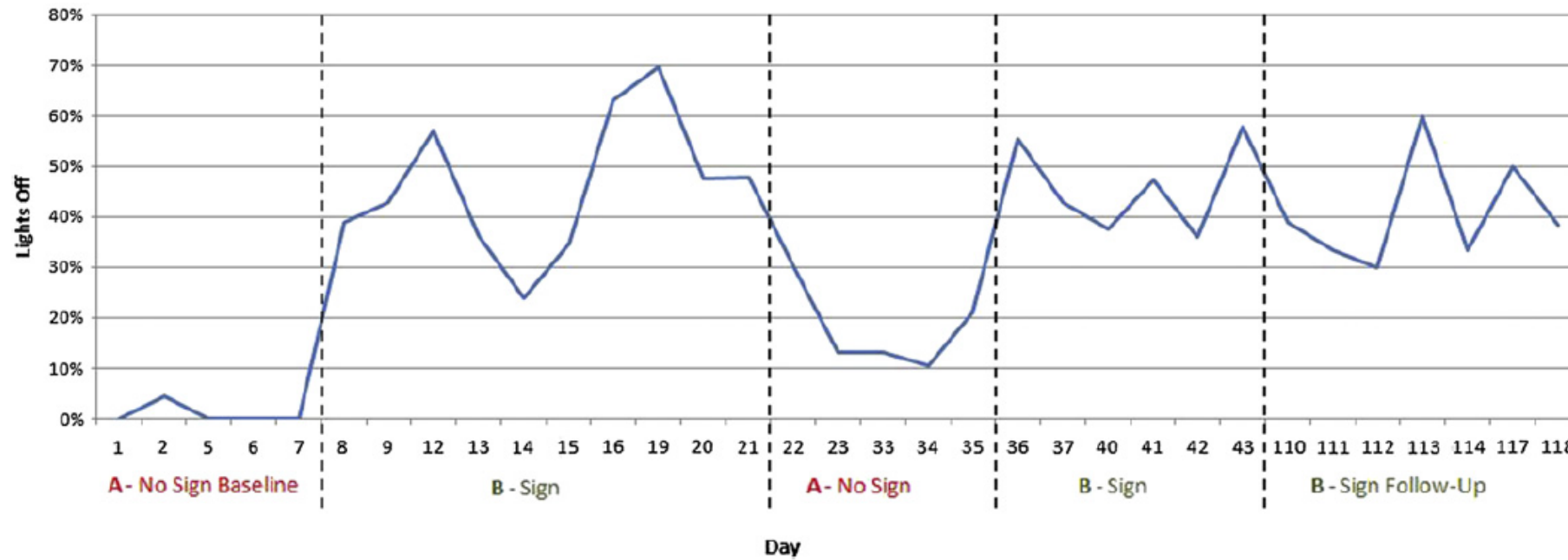
The background of the slide is a photograph of a landscape. In the foreground, there is a green field with some trees and bushes. In the middle ground, several high-voltage power lines and their supporting towers are visible, stretching across the landscape. The sky is a deep blue with scattered white clouds, and the sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow that illuminates the clouds and the landscape. The overall mood is serene and suggests a connection between nature and infrastructure.

Timely

Intervene at the right moment

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Please Turn Off the Lights



Key Takeaways

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To Sum Up

- Behavior matters
- More than incentives and mandates
- Make it EAST



HE SPECIALIZES IN DRAWING CONCLUSIONS



becc

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Thank you!