

# Hacking for Health

## Purpose

In this first activity, participants use the *MediaBreaker* platform to “hack” (or edit) a media product created by the health industry. The facilitator will introduce how to use the tool and participants will spend time experimenting with the different editing features to become comfortable with them. The activity encourages participants to analyze the various elements/techniques used to promote industry health messages. In using the different re-mix features, participants are encouraged to clarify or adjust media narratives and express new points of view.

## Learning Goals

### Participants will:

- Gain skills in online video, audio, and text editing
- Analyze production elements of specific health-focused media products that help lead a specific consumer/audience segment to a particular action
- Develop a deeper appreciation and a keener eye for the use of these elements in health media
- Create alternative messages with these skills

## Time

45 minutes to an hour

## Supplies

- Computer with video/audio capabilities for each participant (if possible)
- Internet access

## Facilitator Preparation

**The facilitator will first need to collect materials to be “hacked” by the participants (both video and audio) and upload these into the *MediaBreaker* platform.**

For this first activity, advertisements for health products and public service announcements on health issues will both be useful. News articles about health and advertisements for exercise gear are also appropriate. Plan on uploading at least 3 to 5 media products. The time needed for this part of the preparation will depend on the facilitator’s skill in using this tool.

The facilitator should be familiar with the *MediaBreaker* tools and be able to explain and demonstrate them to participants with uploaded media products. Step-by-step instructions for using the tools are provided at <https://www.ngoconnect.net/resource/media-breaker-studios-quick-start-guide-and-instructions>. The time a facilitator needs to understand the platform will vary greatly.

## EXPRESS ACTIVITIES

# Hacking for Health, *continued*

### Introduce the Activity to Participants

Begin with several open-ended questions to warm participants up to both the subject of health promotion in the media and the idea of “hacking”:

- About how often in an average week do you think you see advertisements or public service announcements (PSAs) on some health topic?
- Are most of them (any of them) aimed at you? Or are they aimed at some other group/s? *(How do you know? Give examples of ads/PSAs you think are actually aimed at you.)*
- What does it mean to “hack”? *(Accept any explanation that includes going into someone else's online work without their knowing and altering it.)*

### Introduce and Demonstrate the Tool

Tell participants that today they're going to learn how to “hack” media products—specifically those focused on health. Explain that they will not be doing anything illegal and we will not post the materials online for the public to see. Our purpose will be to learn new online editing skills and also to analyze media products and experiment with changing certain elements in order to clarify their messages or achieve a different impact. The goal is to create more accurate or helpful media products and give participants the chance to *express themselves* with these new, altered products!

### Launch the Activity

#### Part 1:

1. Screen one of the pre-uploaded media products.
2. Ask participants:
  - Who is this video aimed at? (How do you know?)
  - What feelings or mood does the video create?
  - Why was this video made/what “action” is being promoted?
  - Who is delivering the message in this video? Why/what is their motivation/goal?

#### Part 2:

- Explain that you will show them how to “hack” this video and change some features to produce a different result.
- Walk participants through the MediaBreaker tools, demonstrating how each works by editing/re-mixing the sample video.

#### Part 3:

Tell participants it is now their job to work in their teams to “hack” any of the media products uploaded into *MediaBreaker* and do a “re-mix” of their own. They can add titles, subtitle, or voice over to clarify a message. They try to change the tone of the video with different music or alter the message in some way. They can even cut and paste footage or replace some images if they like.

They have 30 minutes to complete their re-mix.

#### Part 4:

Screen all of the re-mixes the participants produced and discuss for each one:

- What were the major technical changes made?
- Were they well done?
- How did the edits change the message, tone, or impact of the product?

### Debrief and Reflect

**End the activity with several open-ended questions to encourage sharing and reflection, such as:**

- Was the tool difficult to use or were you able to catch on? *(If difficult, which aspects?)*
- Was it fun to use the tool? *(Which aspects in particular?)*
- Do you think you will be more aware in the future of how the media draw in different audiences for health-related messages and how they convince you to take certain actions?