

# Vaccine Hesitancy: *Having the Conversation*

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**ALL FOR YOU**

# Objectives

1. Describe vaccine hesitancy (in general)
2. Discuss COVID-19 vaccine hesitancy in the US
3. Understand how to build trust with people expressing hesitancy
4. Identify effective words and phrases to use in conversations about COVID-19 vaccines
5. Use motivational interviewing and appreciative inquiry techniques to improve vaccine confidence

# What is vaccine hesitancy?

## HESITANCY



*"I'm ready"*

*"OK, I guess I'll vaccinate"*

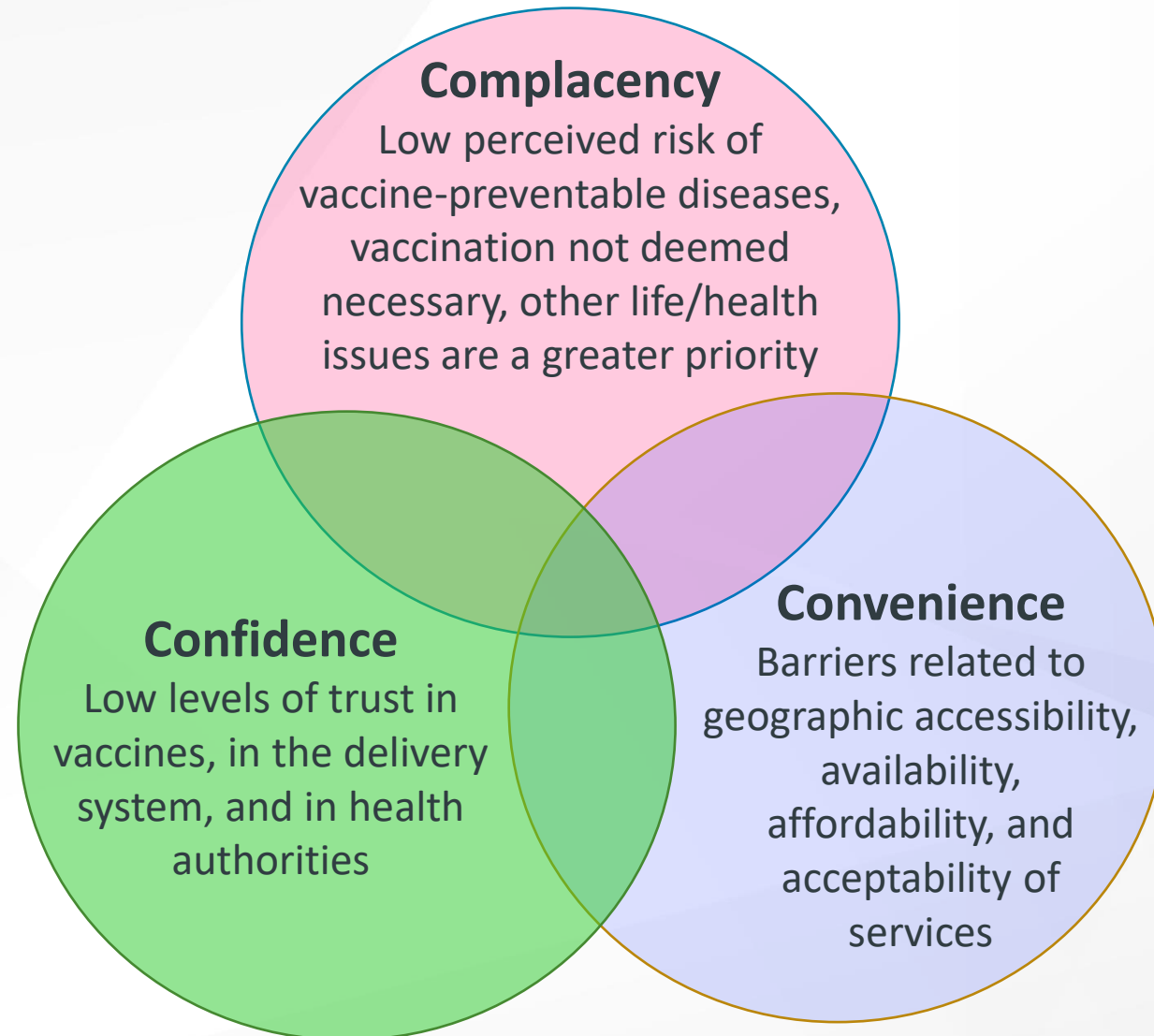
*"I don't know"  
"I have doubts"*

*"No, I'm not sure this is right for me"*

- **A delay in acceptance or refusal of vaccines**, despite availability of vaccination services
- **Complex and context specific**, varying across time, place and vaccine

Source: Dhawan (2017); WHO

# Factors contributing to vaccine hesitancy



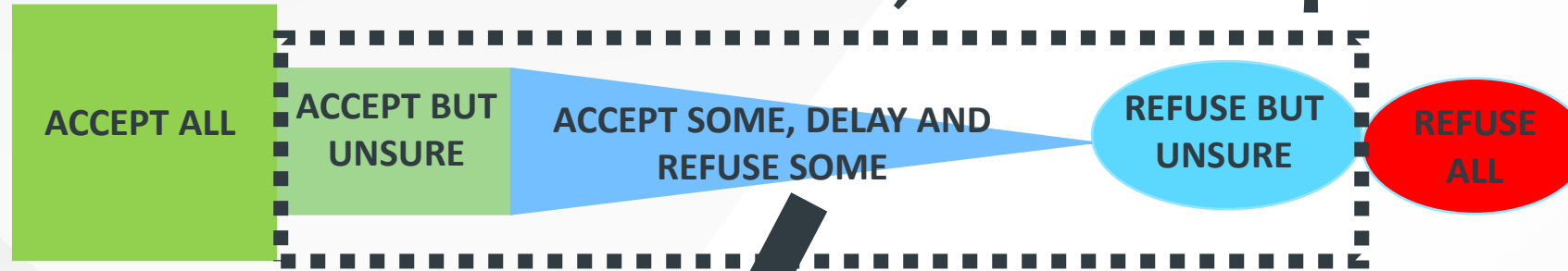
Source: Dhawan (2017); WHO

# What factors influence decisions about vaccination?

Contextual	Individual and group influences	Vaccine/vaccination - specific issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Media and public communication</li><li>• Politics</li><li>• Religion, culture</li><li>• Accessibility of services</li><li>• Trust in authorities</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Beliefs and attitudes about health and disease prevention</li><li>• Knowledge and awareness</li><li>• Quality of health service experiences</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mode of administration</li><li>• Source of the vaccine</li><li>• Vaccination schedule</li><li>• Any costs associated with vaccination</li><li>• Knowledge/attitudes of healthcare professionals</li></ul>

Source: Dhawan (2017); WHO

# If hesitant, how to proceed?



Accept all	Vaccine hesitant	Refuse all
<p>Offer positive encouragement: <i>"That is great!"</i></p> <p>Help schedule an appointment</p>	<p>Conversation guided by <b>Motivational Interviewing, Appreciative Inquiry, and selective language</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <u>Do not</u> dismiss</li><li>• Do not make it a debate - focus on <b>their</b> concerns</li><li>• Leave space for any discussion</li><li>• Offer to refer to reputable sources of information such as CDC, WHO, health care systems</li></ul>

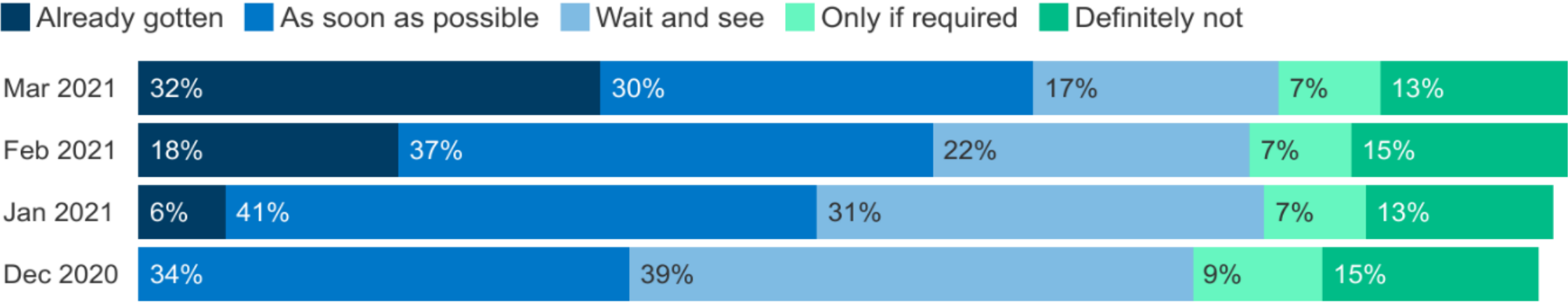
Adapted from: Dhawan (2017); WHO

# COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy

# Kaiser Family Foundation Poll - March 2021

## One-Third Report Having Received At Least One COVID-19 Vaccine Dose; Share Wanting To "Wait And See" Continues To Shrink

Have you personally received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, or not? When an FDA authorized vaccine for COVID-19 is available to you for free, do you think you will...?



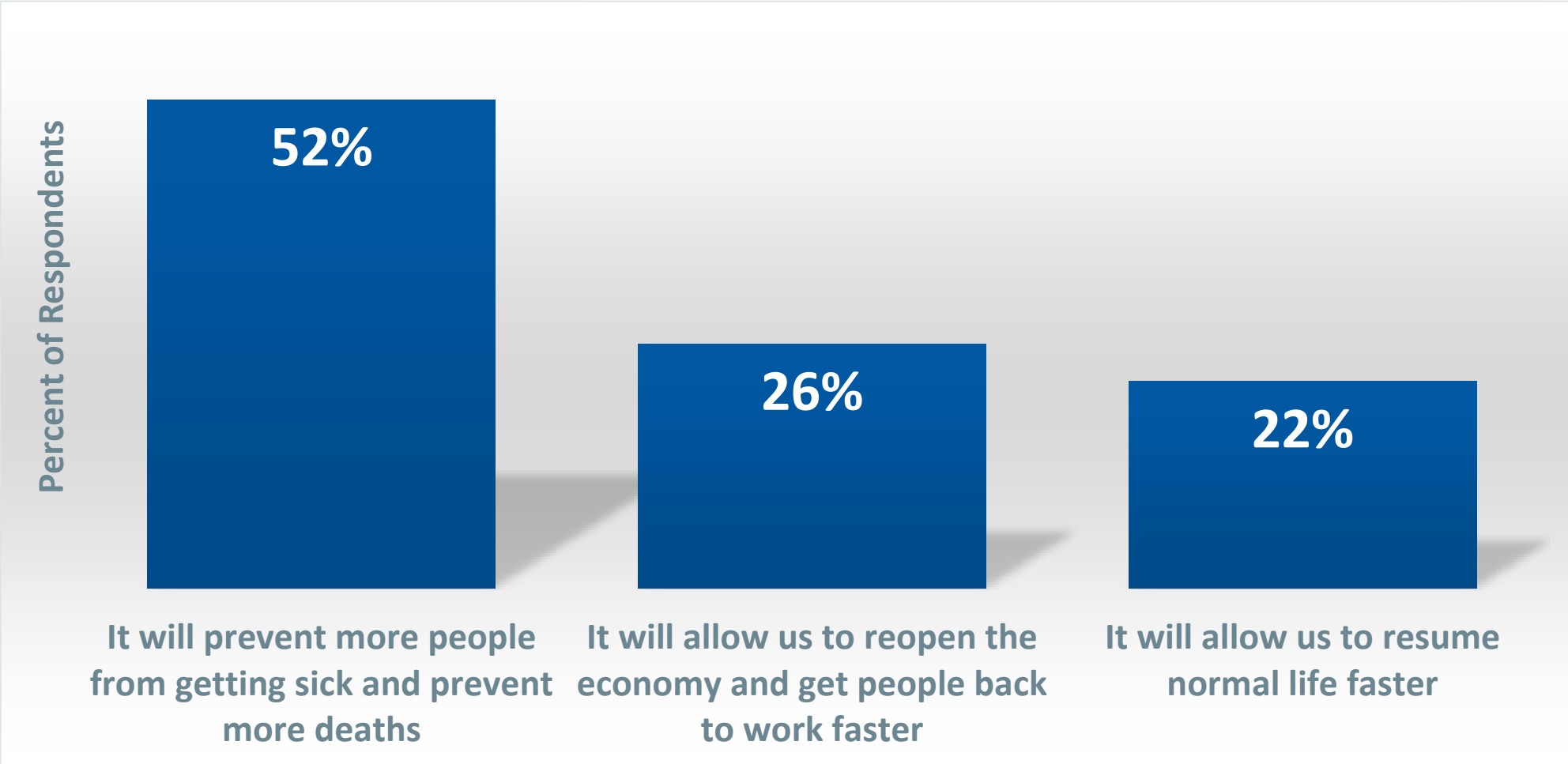
NOTE: December 2020 survey did not have an option for respondents to indicate they had already been vaccinated. See topline for full question wording.

SOURCE: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor (March 15-22, 2021)

**KFF COVID-19  
Vaccine Monitor**



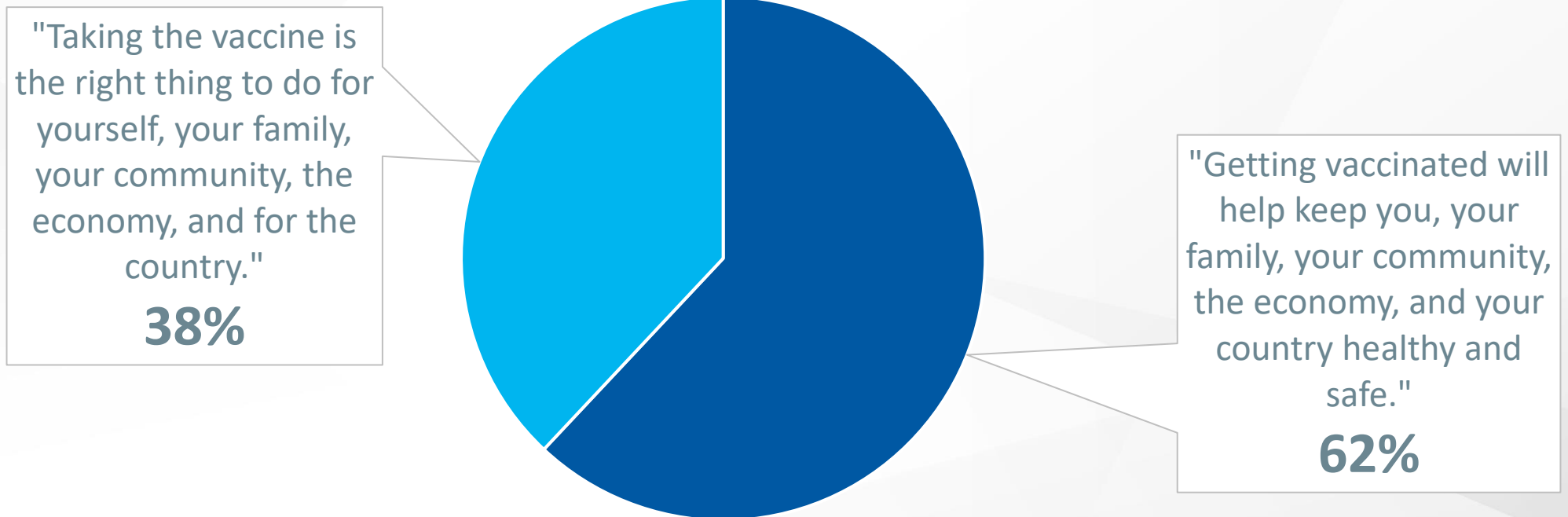
# Which is the most convincing and compelling benefit to take the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as it is available to you?



Source: de  
Beaumont

# Personal benefits of the vaccine

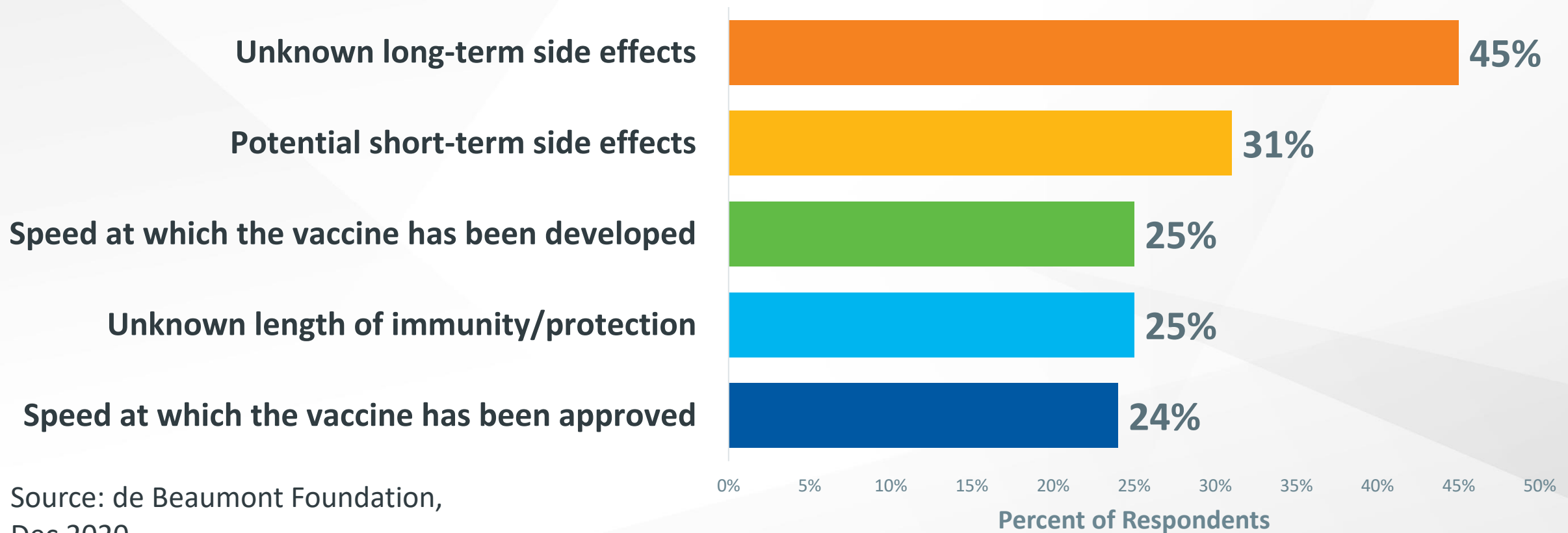
*Which statement about the need to get vaccinated for COVID-19 is MOST convincing and compelling you to in getting vaccinated yourself?*



Source: de Beaumont Foundation,  
Dec 2020

# Biggest Reasons for COVID-19 Vaccine Hesitancy

*Regardless of whether you plan to be vaccinated, what is your biggest hesitancy with taking the COVID-19 vaccine, if any?*



Source: de Beaumont Foundation,  
Dec 2020

# Your Words Matter

Language to use about vaccine side effects:

- The largest percentages of respondents in the de Beaumont Foundation poll said their biggest concerns were *long-term or short-term side effects*
- **The top three statements about side effects that respondents found most reassuring were:**
  - “The likelihood of experiencing a severe side effect is less than 0.5%”
  - “Mild side effects are normal signs that their body is building protection”
  - “Most side effects should go away in a few days”

# Your Words Matter



## Use These Words MORE:



## Use These Words LESS:

The benefits of taking it

The consequences of not taking it

Getting the vaccine will keep you safe

Getting the vaccine is the right thing to do

A return to normal

Predictability/certainty

Your family

Your community

Medical experts

Scientists/health experts

Research

Discover/create/invent

Medical researchers

Drug companies

Damage from lockdowns

Inability to travel easily and safely

A transparent, rigorous process

The dollars spent; number of participants

Safety

Security

Pharmaceutical companies

Drug companies

Advanced/groundbreaking

Historic

Vaccination

Injection/inoculation

America's leading experts

The world's leading experts

Skeptical/concerned about the vaccine

Misled/confused about the vaccine

# Key Findings

1. People's motivation to get vaccinated varies:
  - health and safety
  - return to normalcy
  - apply BOTH messages to reach all
2. Trends in different racial/ethnic groups does NOT mean groups are homogenous!
3. See each person as an individual with specific reason(s) for hesitancy.
4. Don't treat getting the vaccine as a responsibility/duty or an altruistic action for the betterment of wider society or the country.
5. ALWAYS personalize it down to family and how it helps the person on an individual level in their life.

# Using Coaching Techniques to Improve Vaccine Acceptance

# 5 Things You Should Do

1. Establish Trust

2. Ask Open-Ended Questions

3. Reflect and Respond

4. Focus on the positive

5. Be respectful

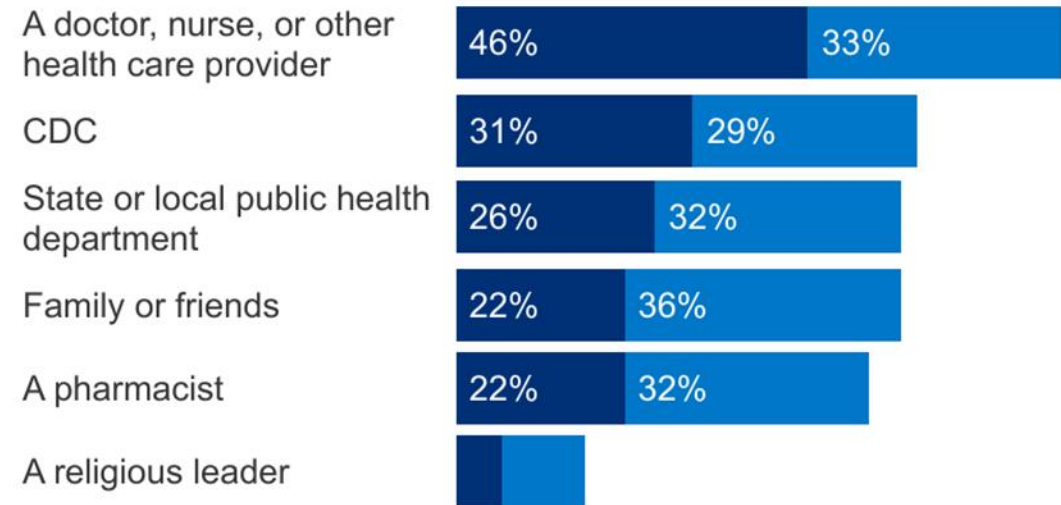


## Establish Trust

- Ask permission: “Do you mind if we talk about the vaccine?”
- Approach with compassion.
- Be nonjudgmental.
- Be empathetic.
- Listen intently to what the person is saying
- Reflect/repeat back what you heard

Percent who say they are very or somewhat likely to turn to each when deciding whether to get a COVID-19 vaccine:

■ Very likely ■ Somewhat likely



SOURCE: KFF COVID-19 Vaccine Monitor (conducted Jan. 11-18, 2021).

# Ask open-ended questions

Open questions using “*what*”, “*how*”, “*tell me...*”  
to explore reasons behind hesitancy



<i>Close ended questions</i> Answer is only a yes or no	<b>Open ended questions</b> Answer goes beyond a simple yes or no
<i>Are you getting the vaccine?</i> <i>Are you afraid of side effects?</i>	<b>What do you think of the vaccine?</b> <b>What concerns do you have?</b>

## Ask appreciative questions

People feel empowered/creative/brave when they:

- can envision what an ideal/positive/better future would be like.
  - bring successes from the past into their future.
  - can design their next step toward that success.
- 
- *What are you looking forward to after your concerns about getting or giving the COVID infection are over?*
  - *What thoughts raise your spirit/mood as you see a light at the end of this COVID tunnel?*
  - *What do you need/hope for to bring your life back to the freedom you experienced before COVID?*

# Reflect and respond

Simple reflection: directly repeating what the person says.

Complex reflection: repeating what you think the person means.

**“I know vaccinating will help protect my health, but I am afraid.”**

- *Simple reflection: “I understand that you are afraid.”*
  - *Complex reflection: “You have concerns about the vaccine, and you want to protect your health.”*
- Use both types of statements to acknowledge concerns.

Source: Dhawan (2017); WHO

# Responding to hesitancy: examples

Complex reflection followed by open-ended question(s)

***“I know vaccinating will help me but I am afraid of side effects.”***

*“I understand that you want to make the best choice for yourself. (Respect) What side effects are you concerned about?”*

**Please note: Be careful not to add potential concerns by mentioning issues not originally raised.**

Source: Dhawan (2017); WHO

# Respond with empathy using PEARLS statements

PEARLS	WORDS FOR EMPATHY AND TRUST
<b>P</b> artnership	"I am glad we can talk about this. I care about you."
<b>E</b> mpathy (Naming feelings, reflecting process and situation)	"I imagine/hear that you feel frustrated/concerned."
<b>A</b> cknowledge	"These are such challenging times."
<b>R</b> espect (Appreciation)	"I appreciate your willingness to talk about it." "I give you credit for dealing with this."
<b>L</b> egitimization (Validation)	"You are not alone in feeling this way about this decision."
<b>S</b> ilence (Nonverbal communication)	Silence allows for thinking and new thoughts to arise.



## Affirm the strengths

*“It is great that you are thinking through all of the options.”*

*“It’s okay to be cautious or even skeptical because it is a protective behavior.”*

## Validate concerns

*“The health of your loved ones is important to you.”*

*“Protecting yourself from illness is important for you and the health of your family.”*

*“You have a right to have your questions answered and concerns addressed.”*

Source: Dhawan (2017); WHO

# Accentuate the Positive

“Getting vaccinated will help keep you, your family, and your community healthy and safe.”

“By getting vaccinated, you can help end the damage to the economy, prevent more illnesses and deaths in America, and eliminate COVID-19.”

“Vaccines will help bring this pandemic to an end.”

“At 95% efficacy, the vaccine is extraordinarily effective at protecting you from the virus.”

Source: de Beaumont Foundation





## Be Respectful

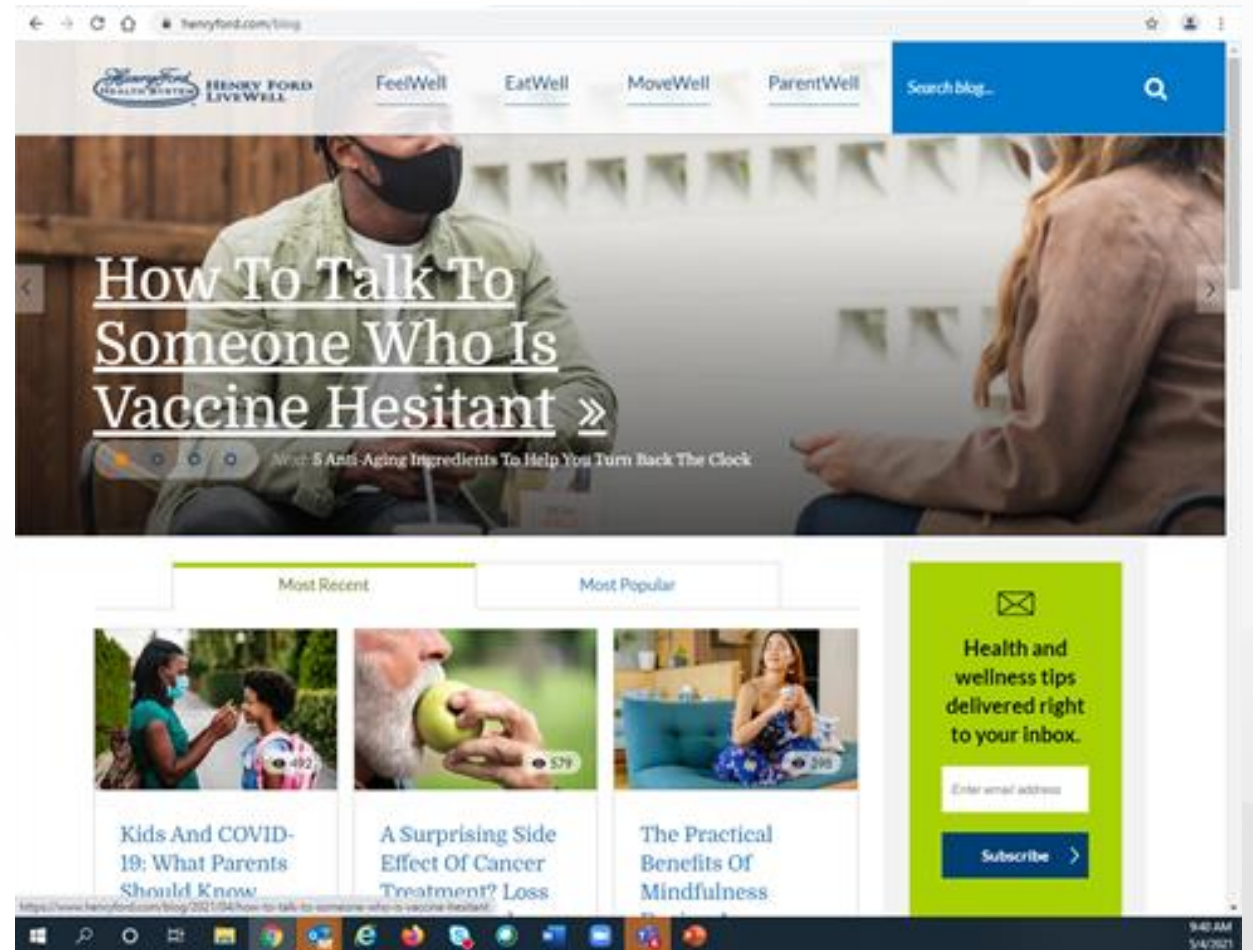
- Respect their decision.
- IF YES: offer praise to affirm the decision.
- IF UNDECIDED: Leave the door open for a new discussion:
  - “Let’s revisit this once you have had a chance to think more about vaccination. How does that sound? ”
- IF REFUSAL: Do not debate. Leave the door open:
  - “I understand. Please know that if you change your mind and want to talk about vaccinating, I am always available.”
- The goal of the conversation isn’t to change their mind.

# Reminders

✓ DO	X DON'T
Do take an appreciative approach.	Do not take a traditional directive and argumentative style.
Do work with the individual to establish trust.	Do not identify and solve the problem for the individual.
Do explore doubts and interest in vaccination. Think from their perspective.	Do not argue or debate with the individual.
Do take time to reflect on what the individual is saying.	Do not rush through without listening.

Source: Dhawan (2017); WHO

# Questions?



# References

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