Evaluation and evidence in Media Literacy:
Our plan for the next 12 months
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Making sense of media

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Why evidence-based Media Literacy: an example

If you need to assess the credibility of an **unfamiliar website**, which approach would you choose?

Choose one

Read the website carefully

Is it a .org domain?

Are there reputable links and references?

What does the "about" section say?

Spend little time on the website, and search for other sources almost immediately
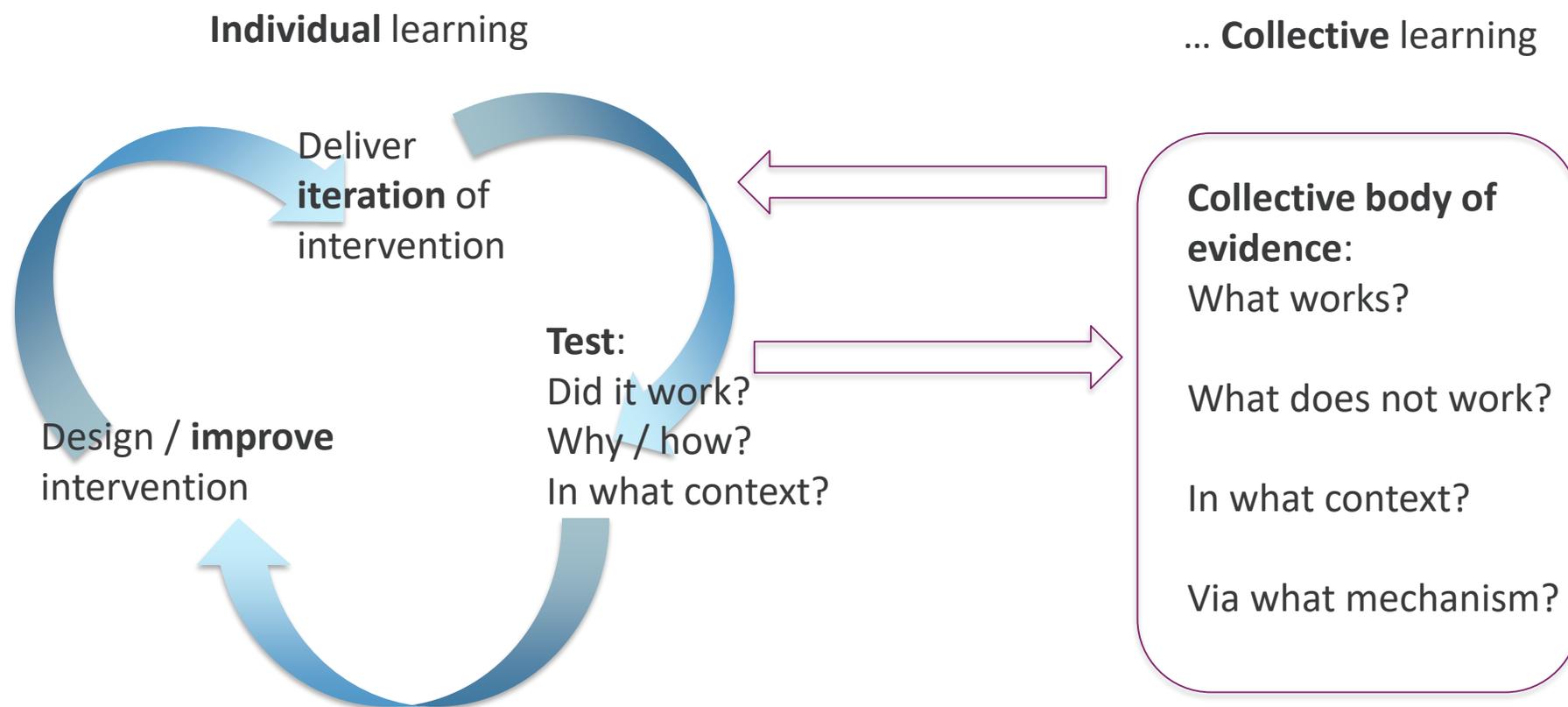
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Much more popular

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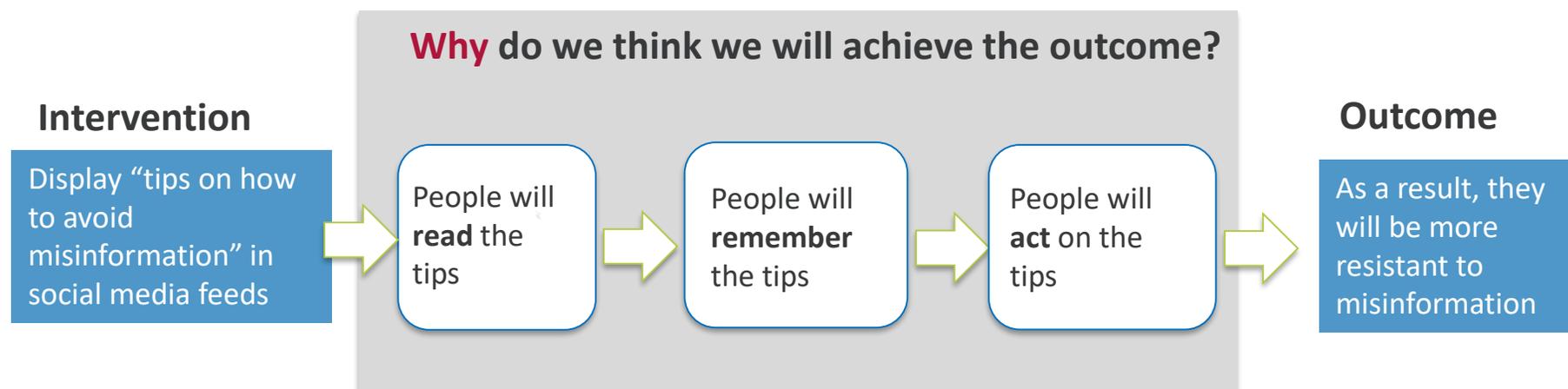
Much more reliable, faster
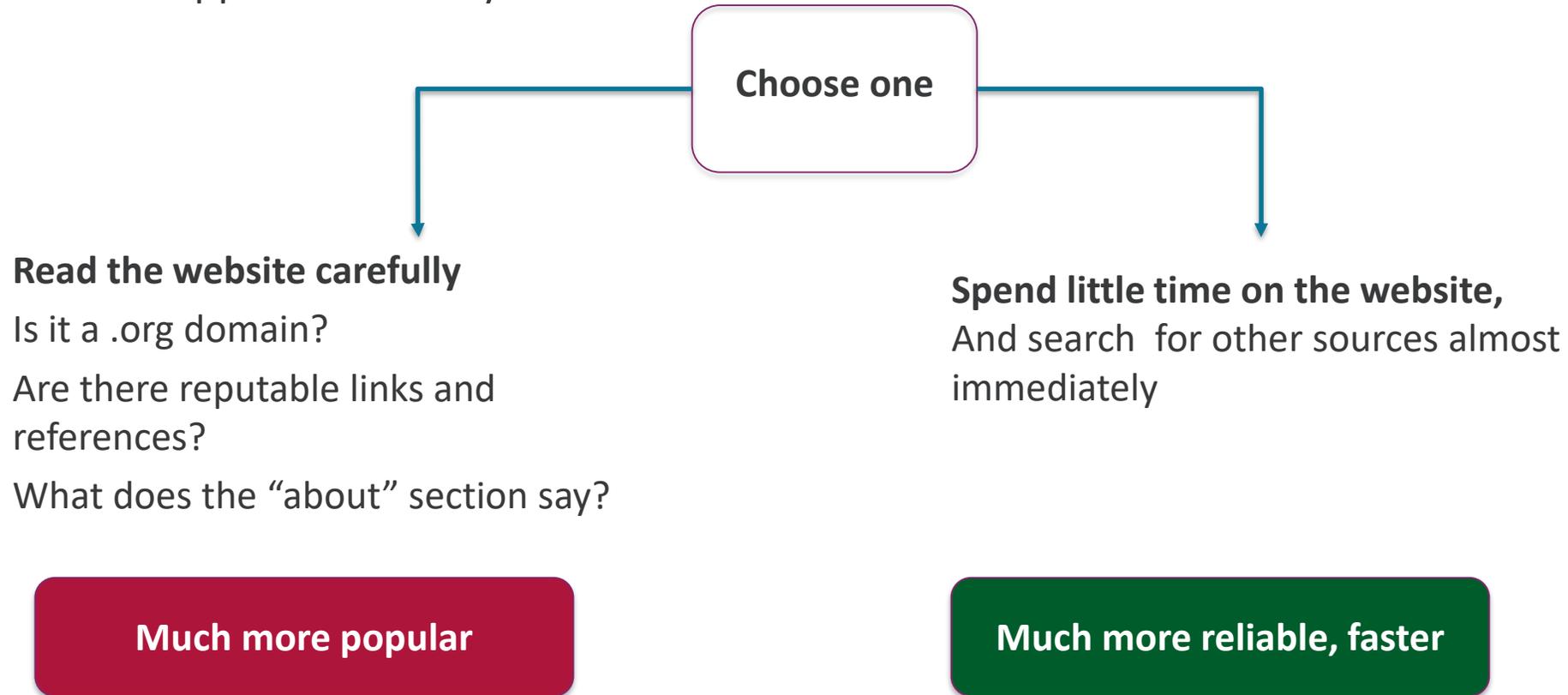
Source: Stanford History Education Group, several studies with thousands of participants from 2015-2019

We engaged with Media Literacy stakeholders who want more collective learning about "what works"

Individual learning

... **Collective** learning

Deliver **iteration** of intervention

Test:
Did it work?
Why / how?
In what context?

Design / **improve** intervention

Collective body of evidence:
What works?

What does not work?

In what context?

Via what mechanism?

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Our evaluation framework will help break down interventions into building blocks

Illustrative example

Intervention

Display "tips on how to avoid misinformation" in social media feeds

Why do we think we will achieve the outcome?

People will **read** the tips

People will **remember** the tips

People will **act** on the tips

Outcome

As a result, they will be more resistant to misinformation

Each **building block** can be evaluated separately

Ofcom
making communications work
for everyone

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This approach helps **improve interventions** even with small evaluation budgets

Intervention

Display "tips on how to avoid misinformation" in social media feeds

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Outcome

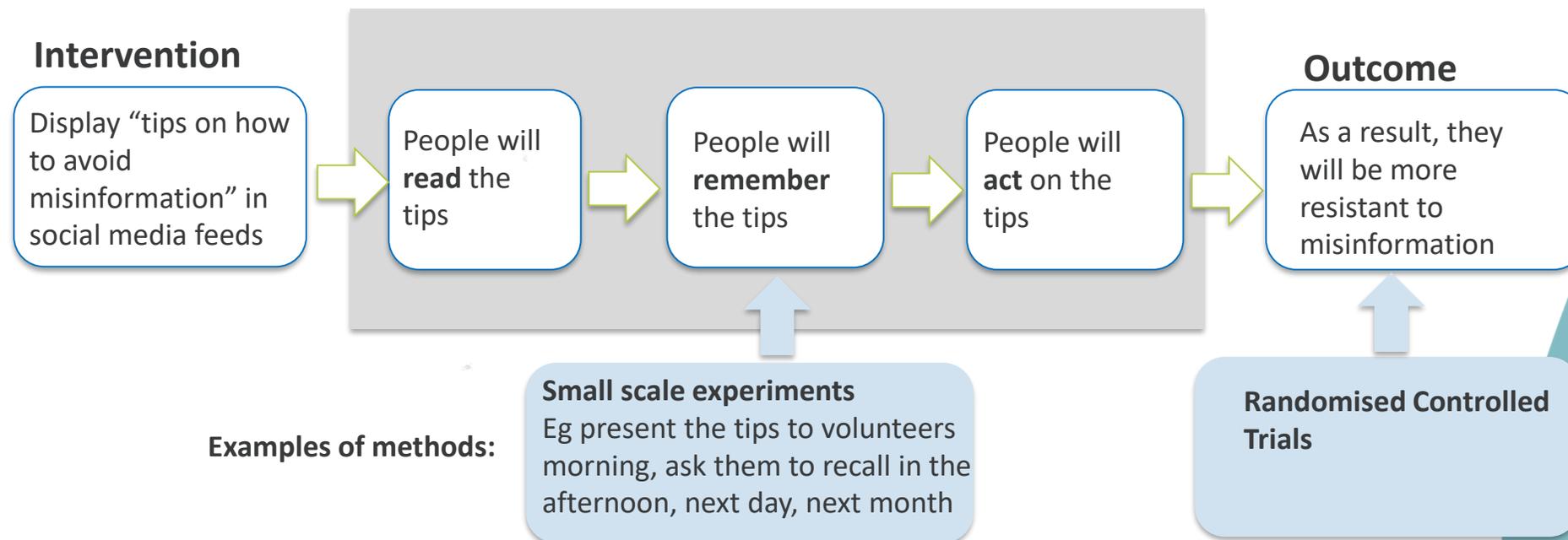As a result, they will be more resistant to misinformation
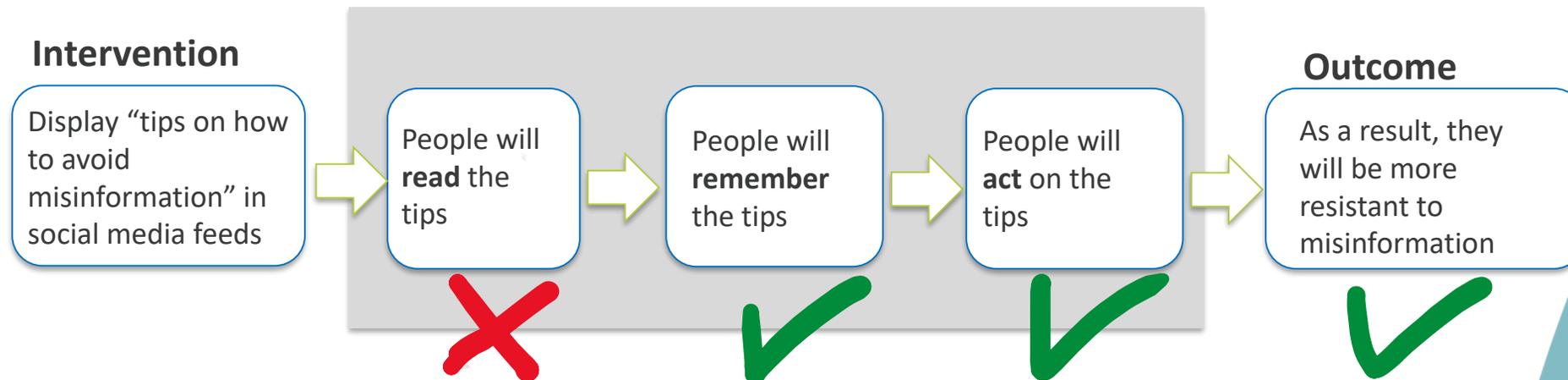
Google's 41 Shades of Blue

Google famously tested 41 different shades of blue for their ad hyperlinks in Gmail and search, to find out which shade led to more clicks. They found that slighly purple-ish blue was best.
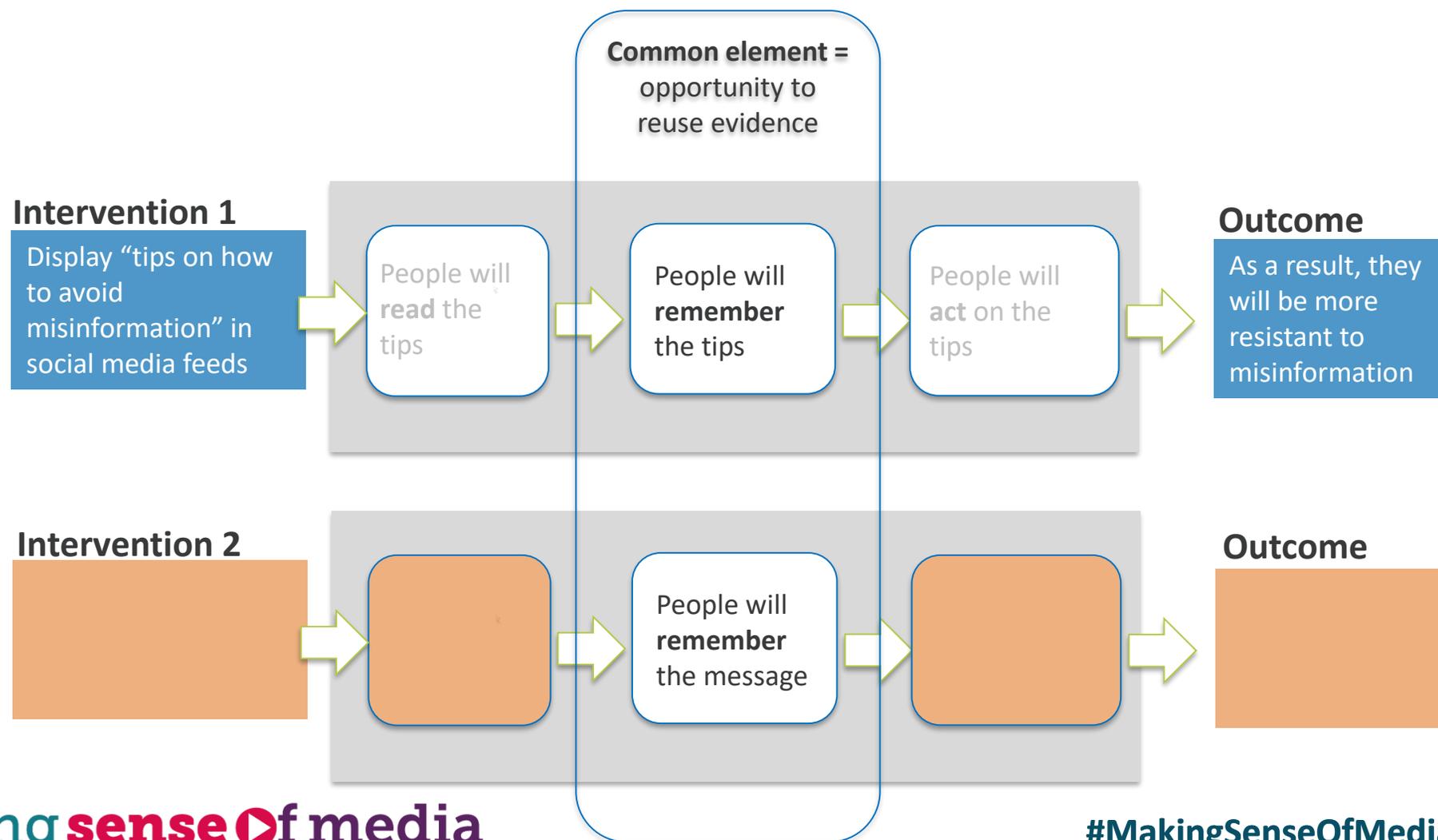
They estimate the gain from this change at around £200m.

This is one example of how testing even a single link in a much larger chain can lead to valuable improvements.

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It helps find **appropriate methods** and metrics

Intervention

Display "tips on how to avoid misinformation" in social media feeds

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Outcome

As a result, they will be more resistant to misinformation

Examples of methods:

Small scale experiments
Eg present the tips to volunteers morning, ask them to recall in the afternoon, next day, next month

Randomised Controlled Trials

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… and to find the common "building blocks" across interventions to reuse evidence

Common element = opportunity to reuse evidence

Intervention 1

Display "tips on how to avoid misinformation" in social media feeds

People will **read** the tips

People will **remember** the tips

People will **act** on the tips

Outcome

As a result, they will be more resistant to misinformation

Intervention 2

People will **remember** the message

Outcome

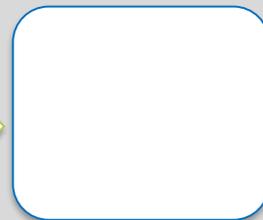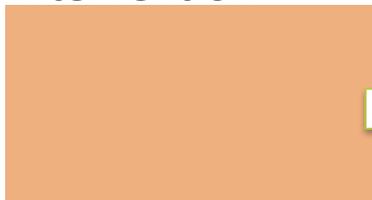# We all have a theory of why our actions will get results – writing these down bring benefits

What am I doing?

Why will this work?

Why am I doing it?

Intervention

Outcome

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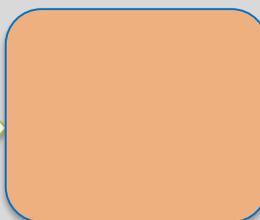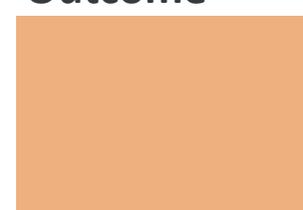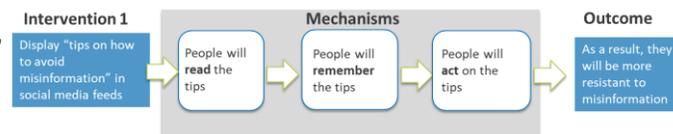
How will we promote this approach?

We will build a **digital evaluation and evidence toolkit:**

1 **Guidance**: how to use the "building blocks" approach?

We will beta-test an early version from November – volunteers needed

Intervention 1	Mechanisms			Outcome
Display "tips on how to avoid misinformation" in social media feeds	People will **read** the tips	People will **remember** the tips	People will **act** on the tips	As a result, they will be more resistant to misinformation

Illustrative example

2 **Library**: what evidence exists that can I reuse?

We will start with a **review of evidence on disinformation**, to be published next year

Evidence:
What makes a message memorable?

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