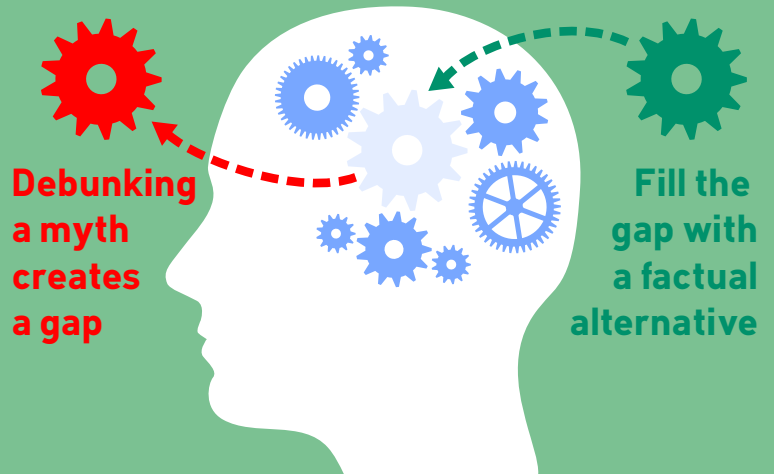


An effective debunking of a myth requires three elements: Fact, Myth and Fallacy:

FACT

Replace the myth with a **factual alternative** that meets all the causal requirements left by the myth. Ideally, the fact is more compelling and memorable than the myth. In other words, **fight sticky myths with even stickier facts.**



MYTH/MISCONCEPTION

Mentioning the myth makes people more familiar with the myth, which risks a **familiarity backfire effect**. Nevertheless, you need to mention the myth to debunk it. Here are 3 techniques to reduce the risk of a backfire effect:

- Emphasise the fact rather than the myth.
- Warn people before mentioning the myth. This puts them cognitively on guard so they're less likely to be influenced by the misinformation. This can be as simple as "A common myth is..."
- Immediately explain the fallacy - the technique used to distort the fact.

FALLACY

Explain the technique used by the myth to distort the fact. This enables people to reconcile the fact with the myth. Common fallacies include:



Fake Experts



Logical Fallacies



Impossible Expectations



Cherry Picking



Conspiracy Theories



Magnified Minority



Red Herring



Misrepresentation



Jumping to Conclusions



False Dichotomy