

Group Work: Lobbying and advocacy techniques

Objective

To train basic techniques for lobbying and advocacy, such as gathering information, preparing presentations and writing press releases.

Material

Copies of handouts, computers/laptops with internet access, a poster, marker pens, papers, pens, etc.

Time

Approximately 2 hours.

Procedure

Divide participants into small working groups and distribute the handout. Each working group should have one resource person to support them.

- 1. Group work: Gathering information (45 minutes)*
- 2. Group work: Public presentation (30 minutes)*
- 3. Group work: Writing and presenting a press release (30 minutes)*
- 4. Feedback of all participants in plenary about the strong points of the presentation / press release and points needing improvement (15 minutes)*

Handout: Lobbying and advocacy techniques

Choose an issue you want to lobby for. In this session you will apply three important techniques to this issue in order to make your lobbying efforts efficient and successful:


- **Gathering information**
- **Preparing a presentation**
- **Writing a press release**

For any lobbying activity, it is important to have reasonable and reliable arguments and to be well informed. Thus, **the first step** is to gather relevant information on the issue in order to convince others. This is not only helpful in finding and defining your position, but also to learn more about the opinion of others (not only possible allies, but also opponents).

The second step is to communicate the results of your information gathering and the position reached via presentations and/or a press release.


1. Group work: Gathering information (45 minutes)

Access to reliable information is essential. The internet provides an almost unlimited range of information, but of varying quality. Useful information can also be found in printed documents such as books, journals, magazines and newspapers.

1. Find information which can help you to describe how things are and/or to compare situations (e.g. now and 10 years ago).
2. Find useful statistics, e.g. via the internet links in the  *Fact Sheet “Disability and Poverty”* in the handbook/website.
3. Collect the information you have found on a poster.


2. Group work: Public presentation (30 minutes)

One way of presenting a position or situation in meetings or conferences is to deliver a speech. This needs extensive preparation, as it is difficult to catch the interest of an audience and deepen their interest in any given issue. A speech or presentation should have a clear structure, and the speaker should endeavour to speak as entertainingly as possible. It is often helpful to illustrate presentations with visual elements such as diagrams, pictures or graphs. It is also helpful to have visual eye-catching elements such as posters or pamphlets that could attract the attention of passers-by.

1. Prepare a presentation about the issue your group has chosen.
2. Use the information you have gathered and follow the handbook's  *Checklist: “Presentations”*.
3. Make your presentation in the plenary.

3. Group work: Writing a press release (30 minutes)

A press release or a press statement is a short written statement on a specific issue. It is designed to inform the media with the aim of being published. Normally a press release is sent to as many different forms of media as possible. The best way to distribute press releases is either by email or fax, and in general they will only be published if they are considered sufficiently newsworthy and interesting. After distribution, a systematic follow-up can ascertain whether journalists actually received the press release and if they need or are interested in obtaining more information.

1. Write a press release about the issue you have chosen.
2. Use the information you have gathered in the morning and follow the handbook's  *Checklist: “Press Releases”*.
3. Present your press release.