



Focus Module 3

Advocacy



Introduction to the module

Advocacy is a better way to spread a message. It involves using third-party “cheerleaders”, in order to promote you through their own communication channels. It’s an extension of that age-old tactic: word-of-mouth marketing, and it’s a great way to generate those all important meaningful relationship moments.

To do advocacy means leveraging the networks of the people who like you and/or invested in your success, such as your beneficiaries and employees. For many NGO, these two groups are their biggest untapped resources as well as their biggest fans.

By involving as many of these people as possible you can extend your communication goals, because they will proactively talk about and advocate your organisation through their own networks. As advocates, they will work for your NGO and will share positive sentiments with their communities. This can be more credible than company-led advertising methods, including marketing.

Building your own advocacy program and recruiting advocates doesn’t happen overnight. In this module we’ve put together a guide for getting started with using advocacy, including some examples and best practices.





Differences between Advocacy, Communication and Social mobilization

These categories are built up by three distinct sets of activities, all of which have the shared goal of causing a behavioural change. One of the major distinctions between them is the target audience.

Advocacy works primarily to change the behaviour of public leaders or decision-makers

Communication generally targets individuals and small groups

Social mobilization aims to secure community-based support

The distinction between the three categories is often unclear, and interventions under one area may beneficially influence or facilitate processes in the other areas.



Social Advocacy



Social advocacy can help us to influence social policy (including governmental decision- makers) for the purposes of advancing social justice.

Advance the interests of social justice, particularly on behalf of populations or groups that have been disadvantaged, disempowered, or discriminated against.

the sound of silence



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What is Advocacy and how do we use it?

Advocacy can promote equality, social justice and social inclusion. It can empower people to speak up for themselves. Advocacy can help people become more aware of their own rights, to exercise those rights and be involved in and influence decisions that are being made about their future.

The notion of advocacy as a mechanism to promote social justice is an element of other advocacy definitions from various sources. Social justice reflects the activism of advocacy and has been explained as “an idea that mobilizes people to act in order to bring about change” (Newman and Yeates, 2008).

Advocacy is a way to ensure that everyone matters and everyone is heard, including people who are at risk of exclusion and people who have particular difficulties in making their views known.

Advocacy focuses on administrative and corporate mobilization through parliamentary debates and other political events; partnership meetings; press conferences; news coverage; TV and radio talk shows; popular TV series; summits, conferences and symposia; celebrity spokespeople; meetings between various categories of government and civil society organizations; official memoranda.





Case (or issue-based) and systemic (or cause) advocacy

This model identifies two elements of advocacy:

Case or issue-based advocacy

(where work is focused with individuals or small groups such as families in a task-centred way)

Systemic or cause advocacy

(where knowledge from individual cases contributes to collective advocacy for systemic change to legislation, policy or practice)

SELF ADVOCACY

**I CAN SPEAK UP
FOR MYSELF**

INDIVIDUAL ADVOCACY

**I SPEAK UP
ON BEHALF
OF ANOTHER**

SYSTEMATIC ADVOCACY

**WE SPEAK ON
BEHALF OF
THOSE WHO
CAN'T SPEAK
FOR THEMSELVES**





Plan and set goals

Without a clear obtainable goal, your advocacy plan will lack purpose. You must first analyze the problem and decide what kind of solution is within your spoke of experience. This is for both short and long term goals. A short-term goal has a more immediate resolution and may be only a one step plan. A long-term goal is one you eventually hope to obtain, and it usually has many factors to address.

If the issue you are advocating is controversial or not supported by the community, you will need a longer time frame to make any affect. Also, you must frame the issue in a way that will gain the most support depending on whom you are targeting at the time.

In addition to analyzing the issue, research the counterpoints to your cause in order to be effective in presenting your issue. You must have knowledge of both sides of the discussion. Remember, if there wasn't an opposing view, there wouldn't be a problem to begin with.

Make sure your key points:

- Are easy to understand
- Have a clear target
- Result in meaningful life improvements
- Instill a sense of power to the powerless





Targets – Who are the key players?

Targets are people who have a stake in the proposed change. Identifying the key players is crucial in determining the potential success of your advocacy efforts as well as knowing how to present information to them. Determine which of these targets would have an interest to advance or protect your issue as allies. In addition, research those in opposition to your issue, and look at your issue from their perspective.

Possible **stakeholders** could include:

- Elected officials
- Federal, state, and local government
- Organizations
- Religious, civic, public and private
- Media outlets
- Television, radio, print, internet
- Family, friends, co-workers

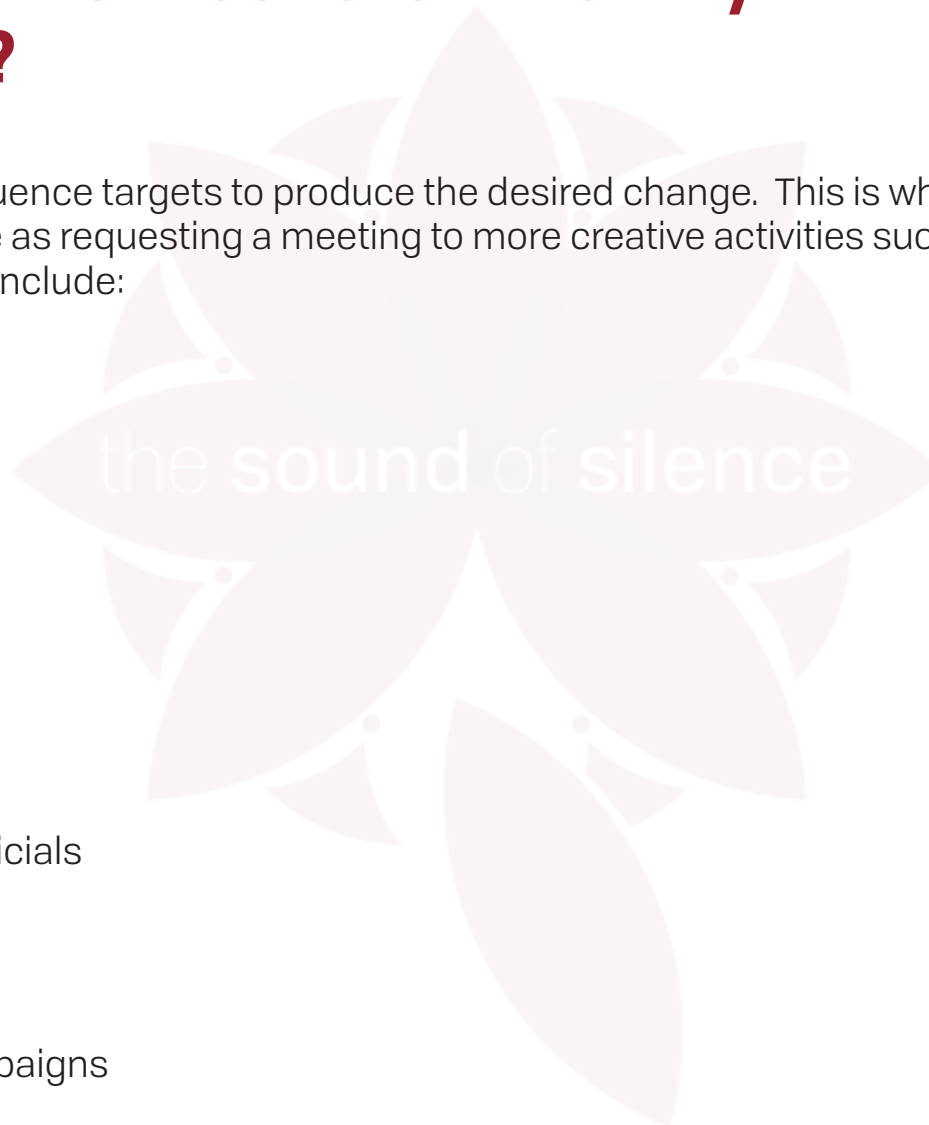




Tactics- What's the most creative way to make a point?

Tactics are activities used to influence targets to produce the desired change. This is when advocacy can be very creative and fun. Tactics can be as simple as requesting a meeting to more creative activities such as a candle light vigil or a flash mob. Some examples of tactics include:

- Face-to-face meetings
- Appointments with officials
- Rallies /Demonstrations
- Advocacy days
- Emails
- Blogs
- Facebook, Twitter & YouTube
- Phone calls
- Writing campaigns
- Letters to the Editor and to officials
- Petitions
- Editorials
- Media coverage
- Grassroots, door to door campaigns



Stay connected



Focus Module 3:
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Building relationships is one of the most important things you can do in your advocacy campaign. Even with your opponents, you want to create a relationship where they welcome the opportunity to speak with you again. Also, follow up with the targets you have spoken too by sending them a thank you letter, email or phone call.

Remember to provide a debriefing with allies and other participants to discuss where to go forward. This will also help to establish any new networks that have become supporters. Stay connected to your supporters you will ensure your cause will grow.



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