

Training on Awareness Raising, Public Relations and Lobbying



**28th of March-4th of April 2004
EYC Strasbourg**

Final Report

Background of the training

Within Youth Action for Peace we believe that Peace is something that can only be reached through the active participation of everybody. For this reason, the branches of YAP, and their activists organize a number of international activities on a wide variety of topics.

For many of the young activists in YAP this is very stimulating work, but it also poses the risk of forgetting the bigger picture and the society which surrounds us. Therefore the associations involved in YAP felt a need to find tools and methodologies to better diffuse their ideas and beliefs.

We do many activities but we have to find a more efficient way of promoting what we believe in.

This training therefore aimed at increasing the visibility and outreach of YAP movement through training its representatives, and increasing the knowledge and skills of the participants in the field of awareness raising, public relations and lobbying.

The training course followed the "non formal education approach". A number of different creative and interactive methods were used by the international training team designed based upon the profile of participants. Learning new skills, as well as exchanging and challenging each other's attitude and experience were some of the bases in this training course.

Programme

28.03.04	29.03.04	30.03.04	31.03.04	01.04.04	02.04.04	03.04.04	04.04.04
Arrivals	Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentations • name games • COE 	Communication	Presentation of campaigns (reporters from working groups)	PR strategy	Lobbying Strategy	Open Space	Departure
	YAP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • presentation • back-ground of training 	Awareness Raising	Public Relations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • introduction • advantages 	Relations with media	Techniques & Tools		
Lunch							
	Expectations	Campaigns <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • steps • practice • medium 	Free Afternoon	Essentials in publications	Local, national, international lobbying	Summary	
	Team Building	Group work Implementation		Making good presentations	Various targets Informal Lobbying	Evaluation Closing	
Steam groups							
Dinner							
Welcome evening	Organizations Fair	Intercultural Evening	Dinner in town	Free	Free	Farewell Party	

Daily reports

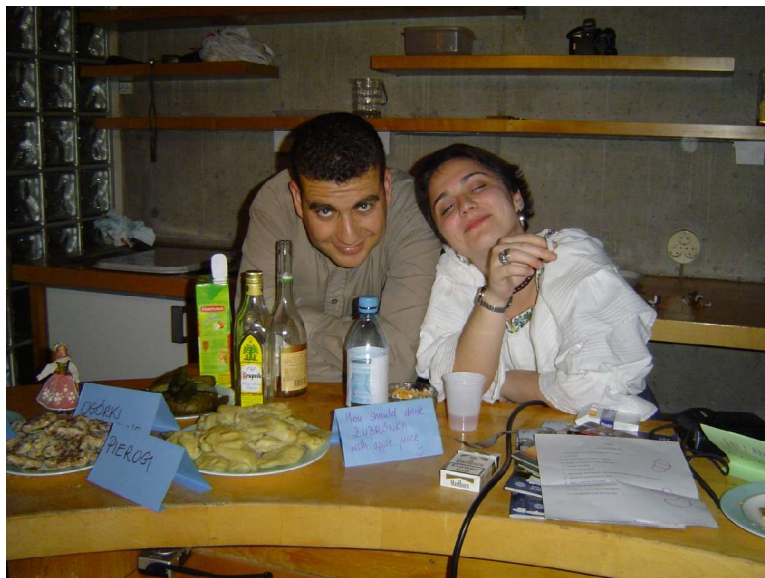
Sunday, 28th March 2004: DAY 1

Welcome Evening

Finally, the long awaited day for the training on "**Awareness Raising, Public relations and Lobbying**" has come and 30 participants as well as 6 team members met together at the European Youth Center in Strasbourg. Everybody came with great willingness to learn and have a beautiful week in an international environment.

"Welcome evening" at 21.00 p.m. was when we started the first official meeting for the whole group. The *Austrian room* immediately got crowded with young people from Austria, Azerbaijan, Croatia, Estonia, France, Germany, Hungary, Jordan, Lithuania, Mexico, Palestine, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Serbia and Montenegro, and Spain.

The preparation team did a great job on organizing ice-breaking games so that the participants could get to know each other better. In the beginning everyone was a bit confused with dozens of new information to remember (starting with names and countries). But that was not an obstacle to enjoy the "Welcome evening". All participants showed great enthusiasm, energy and the party continued with music, dancing, snacks and drinks. It seemed, like most of the people knew each other before the seminar, as "love and friendship was in the air". Despite the fact that some participants had to travel for 24 hours to reach Strasbourg, there was no place for passive behavior. It didn't matter if it was already midnight, "I feeeel gooooood" played in the background and everybody was dancing again. There was no doubt since the first evening that the forthcoming week will be a success.



Monday, 29th March 2004: DAY 2

Getting to know each other, our expectations and our organizations

Morning:

Opening the training by the prep-team, introduction of team
 Presentation of Council of Europe (see attached power point presentation)
 Presentation of YAP (see leaflet, or www.yap.org)

Afternoon:

Collecting and presenting expectations for the training in groups
 About the programme of the week (more detailed)
 Technical stuff...(reimbursement, etc)
 Team building exercise

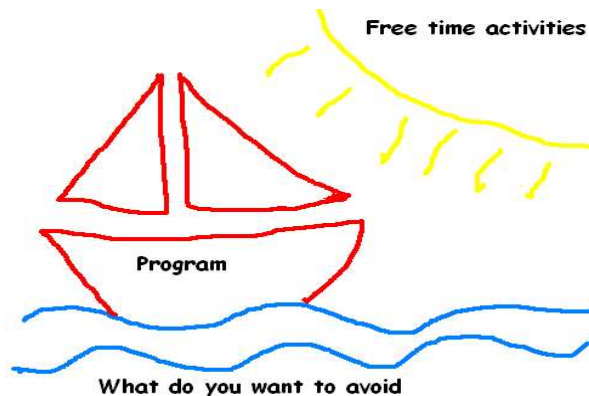
Evening:

Presentation of the organisations in groups, setting up Organisations' fair

Some more details:

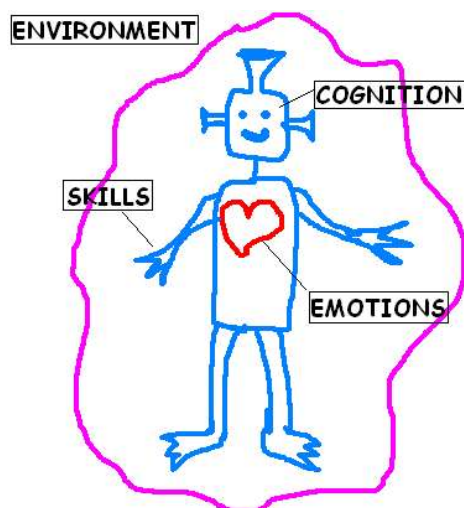
The expectations and the input of the week were collected by 4 groups, on two drawings" (reproduced to you by Javi :O)

The first drawing was about *what we can contribute* to the training and *what we wish to avoid*:



Figures:	Symbolising:	Collected data:
boat	Programme	Sharing information about our organizations, experiences, skills...
sea	What u would like to avoid	Intolerance, boring lectures, too much theory, pregnancy...
sun	Free time activities	Excursions, games, juggling workshop, dancing lessons, sports, sightseeing in the town with Majid

On the second drawing there was a cute UFO. Here are what the parts of the drawing represented:



Parts of the drawing:	Symbolising:	Collected expectations:
Head	knowledge	Useful information about lobbying, PR and awareness raising (theory and practice)
Heart	emotions	Friends, connections staying long-term, unified community
Fingers	skills	Practical skills on PR, AW, and L that can be implemented in our own organization
Cloud around him	environment	Good and enough food, sightseeing, good weather, friendly atmosphere

Team building exercise “crossing the river”

There were white sheets of paper put in two rows on the floor (the number of sheets corresponded with the number of participants). These white sheets represent the “rocks in the river” and the task was to cross the river by only stepping on them, otherwise the crocodiles will eat us. Another rule was that after stepping on a stone and leaving it, the stone was taken away. Only one person could step on one stone. So all of us had to manage to get through the stone bridge.

We managed through using the following strategy: there is one person on every stone, and the people going to a further stone had to step on the feet of the people before them. So of course when leaving the bridge to step on the other side of the river, we had to step on each others feet again... uuuggghhh... (the more generous ones took off their shoes)

Presenting the organizations in groups: time limit 4 minutes

- Making a song:
This “method” was used by 2 groups. The first one chose a Mediterranean melody and had the Portuguese guitar artist Antonio. The other team-members were singing short info about their organization, and “we’ve got 3 minutes... we’ve got 2 minutes...”. The second group was influenced by the melody of “Yellow Submarine” and the refrain: “We all stand for a new and peaceful world!”
- A TV talk show with representatives of the organizations
- Being presented on a car radio (while representatives drive)
- A more detailed presentation with posters for the different organizations
- An amazing TV report from all country representatives

Tuesday, 30th March 2004: DAY 3

Communication and Awareness Raising

Morning:

Introduction to communication
Communication principles
Awareness Raising

Afternoon:

Group Presentation
Input on Awareness Raising and Campaigning
Working groups
Steam groups

Evening:

Intercultural Evening

Communication – How it works

The session started with a game. The group was split in couples, sat down back to back. One of them received a drawing which she/he tried to describe to his/her partner. The later had to draw it without asking questions or getting any clarifications.

Then a prepteam members explained the principle of the black box.

Principles of communication

- Inescapable (communication is everywhere)
- Irreversible (it cannot be taken back)
- Complicated
- Contextual (cultural, personal differences, etc.)

Wiio's Laws

1. Communication usually fails, except by accident.
2. If a message can be interpreted in several ways it will be interpreted in a manner that maximizes damages.
3. There is always someone who knows better than you what you meant with your message.
4. The more we communicate the worse communication succeeds.
5. In mass communication the important thing is not how things are but how they seem to be.
6. The importance of a news item is inversely proportional to the square of distance.
7. The more important a situation is the more probably you forget an essential thing which you remembered a moment ago

Essentials

Make sure you communicate with the right person
Keep the different cultural backgrounds in mind
You should put yourself in the place of the other
Trust is the basis
It is not important to be right

Campaigns: one general message that is being delivered through different means of communication and through different media vehicles, in a limited time period.

The participants were split in 8 working groups and had to analyze 8 campaigns, 4 from the press and 4 TV spots. They had to answer the following questions and report back in plenary.

1. What is the **theme** of the campaign?
2. What is the **goal**?
3. What is the **communication strategy** used?
4. How is the **message** communicated and how it works on different levels? (**rational, emotional, cognitive, moral, tone & style...**)
5. What is the **target group**?
6. What should be **added** in the campaign:
 - in terms of activities undertaken
 - in terms of using different media

Then a prepteam member gave us a theoretical input on campaigning and discussed the following:

The first step in making an awareness raising campaign is to analyze the needs of our community. Answering these questions might be useful:

- ✓ What are the needs of my community/target group?
- ✓ What are the challenges/issues that should be addressed?
- ✓ How does it fit in my organisation's strategy?
- ✓ What are the major obstacles?
- ✓ What resources are available?

Campaign planning steps

- Overview – situation analyses
- Objective
- Target
- Desired action
- Basic message
- Tone & style
- Choosing a medium
- Execution



Social Campaigns

- Influence **Social behaviour**
- Benefit to the **target audience** and the **general society** instead to the marketer
- Use the tools of marketing to improve society and help people

Usual targeted behaviours Social Campaigns impact:

- Avoid or stop risky practices
- Stop antisocial actions
- Seek counseling for destructive behaviour
- Take preventive measures
- Seek out and use information
- Reexamine personal attitudes towards actions against inhumane or discriminatory practices
- Organize and raise financial support
- Become involved in community activities

Target response:

- Awareness
- Knowledge
- Liking
- Preference
- Conviction
- Action

Message:

Attraction
Interest
Desire
Action

Keep
It
Short and
Simple

Characteristics of Awareness Raising Campaigns

- ◆ they meet extravagant expectations
- ◆ they often influence non-existing demands
- ◆ they often influence negative demands
- ◆ they must understand highly sensitive issues
- ◆ the benefits are often invisible
- ◆ the benefits come to third parties
- ◆ long term changes are central
- ◆ the budgets are limited

Wednesday, 31st March 2004: DAY 4

Making a campaign and intro to Public Relations

Morning:

Presentation of campaigns

Public relations:

- introduction
- advantages

Afternoon:

Free afternoon/evening

Awareness raising

Four groups were formed on Tuesday. Each of them chose a specific topic and prepared an awareness raising campaign for that topic; the results were presented in the plenary on Wednesday, using different methods such as flipcharts, posters, and role playing.

- **A. BE INCLUDED**

The group presented a campaign to increase participation among adolescents (14 to 18 years old) from Austria, Spain, Serbia and Montenegro, Poland, Germany, Lithuania, France, Israel, Romania – all of them, at a local level. The concept was to be developed in sequential smaller campaigns, focusing on one topic (e.g. "Be included in social work", "Be included in environmental protection", "Be included in drug prevention") and all of them using an inviting, friendly, cool and joyful tone.

The means used included local TV spots, posters, billboards, training courses, conferences, presentations, as well as below-the-line (BTL) events. Among the latter, they presented visits to high-schools, week-end activities with the adolescents (e.g. visiting an orphanage, nature trips, contests, outdoor concerts, etc) as well as meetings and presentations for teachers, parents, youth leaders and NGOs.

- **B. BULLYING IN SCHOOLS**

The rationale behind the campaign was that some kids are showing violent tendencies towards each other: on the playground, at school, etc. there are always children that impose themselves over others, mainly through physical abuse. Therefore, the objective was to inform the public about the problem of violence in schools.

The main target was formed of pupils and students, but teachers and parents were not forgotten (they were a secondary target).

As for the desired action, the group thought about showing a TV spot in schools, public areas, on the Internet and through conferences.

The basic message of the "Bullying in schools" campaign was: "Invest in your future. Stop violence now!" and the tone and style used in the spot were moral and dramatic ones.

- **C. PROMOTING WORKCAMPS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE**

For this group, the location of the campaign was a big European city. The target group was young people between 18 and 25. The rationale behind the campaign was that many young people spend their free time in a non-creative way: watching TV, taking drugs, smoking cigarettes or drinking alcohol as well as wandering around in the streets.

The desired action was to make these youngsters participate in international voluntary workcamps, as "It's a fun way of spending your holiday" (the basic message). Consequently, the tone and style used were cheerful.

The media used in order to promote this action were local TV stations, Internet, posters, magazines for young people, and radio programmes.

- **D. I TRAVEL THE WORLD / I BUILD MY WORLD / I VOLUNTEER**

The objective of this campaign was to increase the number of volunteers by raising awareness about voluntary work, the target group was men and women aged 18 to 35.

As for the desired actions included the creation of an info-centre, free cards, billboards, TV spots, concerts and other cultural manifestations.

The basic message was "Become responsible about your life" and the tone and style used were direct and simple. The products were to be spread in bars, restaurants, clubs, educational institutions, as well as youth and sports centres.



From the discussions following the presentations, several conclusions were drawn, the most important one was to make the difference between a campaign and a public relations (PR) action. The campaign promotes an idea, a value while PR is about promoting the image of an institution.

Public relations

In order to improve the session, the participants were divided again into two groups. Within each group, the meanings of PR were found through brainstorming discussions, then some "official" definitions were given.

In one group, the debate focused on whether PR meant telling the truth or manipulating (giving information or influencing recipients), the conclusion being that for an NGO the important issue is to create a good image. The advantages of PR were sorted out through putting together a puzzle. Later on, the participants had to fulfill an exercise called "PR Toolbox", where they enumerated the means and methods used by their organisation to build PR.

The other group focused on the advantages and the tools used in PR, playing afterwards a game using the "Fish bone technique". The game gave the floor to participants to share three experiences they already have with PR.

Definitions of Public Relations

- Public Relations represent the deliberate, sustained and planned effort to establish and maintain the mutual understanding between an organisation and its public.
(British Public Opinion Institute)
- PR practice is the art and social science which analyses techniques, predicts their consequences, advises organisational leaders, introduces action plans which serve both the organisation's and the public's interest.
(adopted by the World Assembly of Public Relations in Mexico City in 1978, recognised by 34 PR organisations)
- Public Relations represent all planned and regular actions aimed at spreading information about your organisation

Tools of Public Relations

- PRESS
- RADIO
- TV
- INTERNET
- PUBLICATIONS
- EXHIBITIONS
- INVITATIONS/MEETINGS
- COOPERATION WITH /SUPPORT TO OTHER ORGANISATIONS



Advantages of PR

- It deepens your roots in the local community or sector
- It gives you a public profile
- Strengthens the organisation
- Helps in achieving the aims and objectives of the org
- Helps in fundraising
- Helps in recruiting volunteers
- Increase communication with stakeholders
- Increase membership
- Have more beneficiaries
- Locate yourself politically

Outcomes of the brainstorming on PR:

- it is not only about media relations
 - it is two way communication : from the organisation to the public + from the public to the organisation
 - represents the promotion of the organisation, its activities, not of a specific message like the awareness raising campaigns
 - it is about having a public profile/image
 - can help an organisation by getting a critical look at itself
 - it means listening to others and developing a two-way process based on mutual trust and understanding
 - dialogue! make it easier for the public to communicate with you
 - dialogue – you need to listen to others, to see things from their perspective to take on board their criticism and complains, particularly if they are your beneficiaries.
- Image matters because it is about how you are seen. Your activities might be just the thing young people need, but if they don't see it that way, they will not approach you.
 - Developing the right image takes time, it's a process, not an event.
 - Beware of image gaps!!! If your image does not match the reality you are in trouble

There are two types of PR:

1. Internal PR
 - team meetings, staff meetings, newsletters, news-sheets, notice boards, staff training sessions, visits to your branches,
2. External PR
 - when you reach to your public
 - when public reaches you



Thursday, 1st April 2004: DAY 5

Public Relations

Morning:

PR Strategy
Relations with Media

Afternoon:

Essentials in publications
Making good presentations

Evening:

Free evening

The main point of the session was the PR strategies of NGOs and non-profits, an introduction.

A good PR process:

1. should start with finding people who are going to be in charge of the PR
2. the next step is to make a research how the organization is being perceived by the outside
3. define the aim / point concretely to what you want to achieve
4. target your message / address the message according to the people to whom you want to communicate with
5. make a plan / coordination
6. implement the plan
7. evaluate results (use tools like questionnaires etc...)

Afterwards the group started to work individually on an analysis of the PR strategy of the organisation he/she represents. This exercise gave the opportunity for everybody to collect and systematize used ways of handling PR in each organisations. During the next 2 days every participant will have the opportunity to consult one of the prep-team members to get a feedback and combine the received knowledge with the experienced practice of the individual organisation.

A prep-team member asked the participants to sign up for one of these topics and form teams:

- ownership of media / directories
- news releases
- how to handle interviews
- press conferences
- publication & design

The used methodology for the groups was:

- Make a research (different materials from library; internet)
- Practical experiences of each participant
- Prepare report to present in plenary

The ***ownership of media*** group gave after its introduction on this issue some interesting examples of the current situation of the media in the countries the group members represented. In Palestine the TV plays an increasing role and has most of the power in comparison to other kinds of media. In Lithuania, the media faces the problem of economical dependency which threatens the objectivity of information while In Germany the newspaper sector is facing monopolisation of editorials.

The ***Publications & Design*** group started pointing and explaining some useful aspects to make

our publications understandable and readable, based on the existing theory: Importance of the paper; spaces between text; not too much use of capital letters; good contrast and harmony; logical structure; no text on pictures; put an emphasis on basic information; good selection of words; make use of designs and symbols to stress out the message; don't assume too much (write for the reader); and adequate length of sentences.

At the same time, they showed some good and bad examples (leaflets, posters, free cards) for each aspect. Also, the group presented some additional tips, such as: use of colours, pictures (if there are not good ones, better don't use them), make target groups curious about it, connect it to needs and create a visual identity (standard).

The part regarding design covered the following "tips on designers and printers": find a designer with a recommendation, expressing needs and/or hire some student (cheaper). Afterwards give him/her the information: project assignment, function, target group, PR strategy, style, good and bad examples of similar publications, materials collection and budget. As mentioned above, it is also very important the selection of colours, folding style, photos, typeface and most of all to define an "IDENTITY" for the publication.

As for print shops/print studios, it's important to establish a long cooperation with them and when possible, print larger quantities in order to decrease costs.

Each person received a handout on ***presentation skills*** and a topic in order to present it the following day during the steam groups.



Friday, 2nd April 2004: DAY 6

Lobbying

Morning:

Lobbying strategy
Techniques and tools

Afternoon:

Local, national and international lobbying
Various targets
Informal lobbying

Evening:

Free evening

The aim of lobbying session was to get to know the strategies, techniques and tools for effective lobbying. The objectives of the team were to show us in the easiest way the theory and the main concepts about lobbying. For the first part of the session, the group was placed outside the activity's room, being very informal and sitting on the floor. The preteam started with a confrontation exercise where the group needed to choose whether they **agree** or **disagree** with the following statements and explain why:

- You cannot precisely define what lobbying is.
- Lobbying without advocacy doesn't make sense.
- Lobbying for NGOs is only effective when is done in coalition with others NGOs.
- Boycotting IS NOT lobbying.
- There are laws & rules concerning.

There were some misunderstandings because of some unclear words, and for that reason in some cases the position of the group was not defined. The exercise was not to find a definition of lobbying because there are many, but rather to understand the main concept behind it. After the exercise, the group discussed the theory of lobbying strategies, techniques and tools.

For the rest of the session, the group was divided in 4 smaller groups each of them having a topic, and then the groups were subdivided in 2, to have one in favour of the topic and the other against.

Once the group had the topic, they started to make the strategies using the information that we got in the morning. The idea of this was to convince the whole group to accept your group's position about the topic, using voting criteria to see the results of this group's lobbying. The exercise included lobbying tips and pointers.

In this session the group used some of the techniques they were introduced to during the previous days such as PR and making good presentations.

The conclusion was that knowing lobbying skills is very important, particularly if one is working in NGOs, and also in the laws field. The group also realized that we need to be lobbying every day in different ways and that one's lobbying strategies and techniques can improve easily.

LOBBYING

Lobbying strategy:

- learn about the **problem** that you are going to deal with
- find out about decision- or law-making **procedure** and key «moments» in it
- learn how to effectively and efficiently use all necessary lobbying **techniques and tools**
- have sufficient access to relevant **information**
- determine your final **goal** (use the predefined priority list from your members)
- determine the **issue** (through synthesising it in 1-page information)
- look at the synthesis again from target group point of view

1-page information:

- problem description
- proposed solutions (incl. state budgetary resources needed)
- relevant arguments

Target group

- define your problem
- «attach» this problem to an institution responsible/competent
- define allies and enemies (e.g. opinion leaders)
- learn how to effectively and efficiently use all necessary lobbying techniques and tools

Lobbying techniques:

- letter/e-mail writing, phone calling, faxing
- direct contact (debates, discussions etc.)
- calling radio/TV talk shows
- contacting staff people, consultants, advisers!!
- consultations in drafting and reviewing legislation
- national, international networking
- court cases (e.g. to expose lack of law enforcement)
- street demonstrations, blockades

Lobbying tools:

- one-to-one meeting
- list of good arguments (do not forget public interest! but do not over- or misuse it)
- "spin" - a set of presentations for different audience/target groups
- opinion leaders (e.g. pop-stars, Pope)
- "products" (reports, open letters, Internet site etc.)

Coalition with other NGOs:

- combined efforts
- contacts
- potential to garner enormous legislative strength
- fragile (member/s dissatisfied)
- members, leaders, secretariat
- coalition's issue priority or not for members
- lobbying techniques are the same as individual organisations
- communication within!!!

The main difference between the formal and informal lobbying:

Formal channels - direct efforts by legally designated group representatives to persuade public officials. Pressure strategists consist of lobbyists providing services to judicial, administrative and legislative officials. In some countries, for example, it is common for lobbyists to talk directly with legislators, promising future support in exchange for favourable

consideration in legislation pending before the deliberative body. These talks may include promises of financial support in an upcoming election, vote trading on the floor of the legislature or even bribery.

Although formal relationships exist between governing officials and interest-group advocates on a vocational basis, vocational forms exist on a large scale. One strategy involves strengthening contacts between governing and non-governing elite. In any case the purpose of the strategy, as with interaction between public and private elite generally, is to make consultation timely in order to bring group views into the policy process before rather than after decisions are made. This opens the process to group representation while building widespread support for government decisions.

Informal channels - Informal contact and communication between lobbyists and official audiences are no less important strategies than formal means. A major portion of the professional lobbyists efforts goes towards sustaining informal ties. The haves and have-nots are created in the world of polity through this channel of informality. Lobbying takes place informally through intermediaries rather than face-to-face contacts between governing officials and professional or amateur lobbyists.

In some countries, strategies include efforts to influence officials by persuading their constituents to support policies the lobbyists advocate. These extend to grass roots lobbying - arranging direct contacts between constituents and the officials in the public and private forums, lobbying officials' personal friends, letter and telegraph (now even email, SMS and telephones) campaigns inundating officials with consumers/citizens pleas, PR campaigns, corporate advertising, contributions to election campaigns.



LOBBYING TIPPS

The specific tips below address lobbying with a state legislator, but the same can be used to contact other state or local elected or appointed officials.

Lobbying

Many people feel intimidated by the word "lobbying." Lobbying a state official merely means you make a phone call, write a letter, or arrange a meeting with an official or their staff. You provide them with background information and materials on an issue and you persuade that individual to act or vote in a certain manner. This kind of lobbying is the only "real" lobbying according to the definition. But, you may also try to get other members of your community to let the official know their views on an issue or persuade your local newspaper to write an editorial on an issue of concern to you. All of these actions can be considered a kind of lobbying.

The Importance of Making Contacts

State officials spend a lot of time and money to measure public opinion in their districts. They host town meetings, conduct polls, and assign staff to clip the local newspapers. They will read and respond to editorials, send you information about major initiatives, and respond to most letters and calls they receive. Even more importantly, state officials, or their staffs, will make time to meet with constituents. Most officials emphasize constituent contact because it helps direct their voting behaviour. They want to know who supports an issue, how many support the issue, why they support it and how it will impact the district.

Tips for Visiting State Officials

State officials have offices in both the state capital and local communities. To find the address and telephone number of the local office, check your telephone book under state government listings. Once you reach the number, ask for your legislator's office; you can ask for information about the local office.

Visits to your state legislator or their staff can be done at either office. The best time to visit is when they are in the district office, rather than in the state capital. If the legislator is not in the home district when you need to visit, and you cannot make it to the state capital, then arrange a visit with the senior staff person in the local office.

Planning Your Meeting

When you call for an appointment, ask to speak to the scheduler or appointment secretary. Be specific about your reason for wanting the appointment so the person with whom you meet is familiar with your issue. If you are asked your position on the issue, tell them. It is better they know ahead of time what to expect.

Keep your request for time brief. Fifteen minutes is a long time to discuss your views. Your respect for their time will be appreciated and remember the next time you want access. Depending on the issue, consider bringing with you someone who is known to that office (someone who regularly works with that office, an important supporter or contributor, a religious ally). If you bring someone, tell the office in advance. If it is someone they know, it may help ensure you see the legislator her/himself or a senior staff person. Meet ahead of time and plan what points you want to convey and how to split the time.

During The Visit

Unless you have made previous arrangements, don't assume you will speak directly with the state legislator. Meeting with staff is not a sign you're "getting blown off". A majority of the information legislators rely on comes from the staff. If a staff person sees things your way you

have been successful.

Present yourself and your views in a respectful, dignified manner. Dress appropriately, as if you are going to a business appointment. If you have written background materials or talking points bring them with you and leave a copy. Be direct and concise. Know what you want the legislator to do (cosponsor, vote for/against) and present your views clearly. If your legislator has a bad voting record on your issue or if the legislator, or staff, makes comments that offend you, keep a cool head. In some offices all you may achieve the first time is a civil exchange of opinions, but if you handle yourself well you can begin to establish a working relationship with the office. Whenever possible, demonstrate that you speak for other voters in your legislator's district. Back up your claim with petitions and letters. Let her/him know that you intend to communicate about your visit through newsletters, political events, etc.

If your legislator has a good or excellent record of support -- THANK THEM! Our friends need to know we are aware of their support and that it is appreciated. After the visit, send a letter thanking the legislator or the staff member with whom you met for the time they took to visit with you. Summarize the discussion you had and if you asked for specific action, reiterate your request.

Tips for Letter Writing

Individuals need to stay in written contact with their state officials. These officials use letters as one way to measure public opinion in their district. Their offices count the pieces of mail FOR and AGAINST every issue.

In Your Letter

- Make sure your legislator knows you are her/his constituent.
- Cover one subject per letter; write more than one letter if you have multiple issues.
- If the issue can be identified by a bill number, include it. Describe the legislation and how it effects you. If you know the position taken by your legislative representative, include it. This demonstrates to the legislator that you are serious and are keeping a close watch on the progress of the bill.

Selling Your Position

- State your position and exactly what you want the legislator to do in your first paragraph. Be brief and concise. You can send background materials or talking points with the letter. Type or write clearly.
- Give reasons for your position. Remember, you are essentially trying to sell your idea or position on an issue to the legislator.
- Avoid deeply emotional demands or threats. Legislators do want to know how a bill or proposal will affect the lives of their constituents. Tell your own experiences.
- Follow up: Request a reply. You are more likely to receive a reply if you ask.

Follow Up

- When you receive a reply from the legislator informing you that she/he supports the position you have advocated, write back and thank her/him.
- If you receive a reply that informs you of the intent to vote in opposition to your position, write and explain your position again. Don't let her/him off the hook.

- Address your letter:

[Example: CA State Senator]

The Honorable _____

State Capitol

Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Senator _____:

REMEMBER—THE ONLY EFFECTIVE LETTER IS ONE WHICH IS WRITTEN AND MAILED!

Tips for Hosting a "Letter-Writing" Party

One effective method to solicit multiple letters from our community is to host a letter-writing party. The parties can be hosted by individuals or organizations, and can be as large or small and as formal or informal as the host wants. The goal is to make it easy for individuals to write.

Inviting Your Guests and Being Prepared

- Invite more people than you want to attend since there are always no-shows. If you invite guests to a formal letter-writing party, let them know. Don't surprise them.
- Have sample letters and information on legislation available for use by your guests.
- Have plenty of paper, pens and envelopes on hand, and make sure there are places where guests can write comfortably. You may want to separate the areas used for letter writing and socializing. Having stamps on hand tells guests their letter is being sent out right away.

Other Important Things to Keep in Mind

- Your goal is to generate mail. At an informal party, you may need to make more of an effort to get people to sit down and write their letters.
- Follow up! Be sure to thank your guests for their time. Let lobbying organizations know you held the party because that information is important for their work.

Tips for Contacting Your Legislator by Phone

Legislators also count phone calls, which are either FOR or AGAINST an issue. Phone calls to a legislative office are most useful when a vote has been scheduled and there isn't time to write or visit the office.

Making The Call

- Expect your call to be received by office staff. If you ask for information about the legislator's position, expect you will either receive a letter in the mail or a return call.
- If you call to register an opinion, you can expect staff to record your call on paper, take your name and address to verify your residence in the district and give a summary of your call to the appropriate staff person.
- If you are calling to request information about the legislator's position, your call will likely be transferred to the staff person in charge of the issue. She/he will be able to discuss in detail the legislator's position and the current status of pending legislation.
- Cover one subject per call. Different staffers handle different issues for the legislator.
- Make sure the staff person who speaks with you knows you live in the legislator's district. Be sure to provide the staff member with your name and address for follow-up.

Selling Your Position

- If there is a pending vote, your phone call should be short and simple: "I support HR 1430, the Civil Rights Act of 1997 and I urge Assemblywoman Gonzales to vote for the legislation." The information will be recorded and forwarded to the appropriate staff person.
- If the issue isn't pending, it is still important to be brief and concise in your conversation. Be prepared to state your position, what you want the legislator to do, and be ready to back up your position with one or two supporting arguments.

Follow-Up

- If the staff person doesn't have an answer for you, ask them to speak with the legislator and get back to you, either by letter or phone.
- When you receive a reply by phone, thank the staff person for getting back to you, even if the information is bad news.

Lobbying is about educating your legislator about important issues that affect you and your community. It is equally a mechanism to build a relationship with them and their staff. Activists who contact or meet with elected officials make an important contribution to different progresses. These officials count votes, they count contributions to their campaign, and they count phone calls, letters and office visits. Even if your official is supportive on your issues, you

should still call, visit or write, since they will hear the other side. They also need to hear that an issue is important to your community. Every contact you make is one more voice for your aim.

Tips on Meeting with Your Elected Officials

What is a lobby visit?

A lobby visit is merely a meeting for you to tell your elected representative what you think about a certain issue or bill, and to try to get him or her to take action on that issue.

Requesting Your Meeting

- Make your request in writing and follow up with a call to the Appointment Secretary/Scheduler.
- Suggest specific times and dates for your meeting.
- Let them know what issue and legislation (by bill number, if it has one) you wish to discuss.
- Make sure they know that you are a constituent.

Prepare for Your Meeting

- **Collect materials.** You should have information to help you decide on your talking points, as well as materials that you can leave with your elected official.
- **Decide who will attend the meeting.** Bringing more than four or five people can be hard to manage. Keep it small, but bring people who represent different groups that have an interest in the legislation like doctors, veterans, religious leaders, school board members, etc.
- **Agree on talking points.** It's tough to make a strong case for your position when you are disagreeing in the meeting! If a point is causing tension in the group, leave it out.
- **Plan out your meeting.** People can get nervous in a meeting, and time is limited. Be sure that you lay out the meeting beforehand, including who will start the conversation.
- **Decide what you want achieve.** What is it you want your elected official to do - vote for or against the bill? Make a commitment to introduce or co-sponsor legislation? Asking your legislator or his or her staff member to do something specific will help you know how successful your visit has been!

During the Meeting

- **Be prompt and patient.** Elected officials run on very tight schedules. Be sure to show up on time for your appointment, and be patient - it is not uncommon for legislators to be late or to have your meeting interrupted by other business.
- **Keep it short and focused!** You will have twenty minutes or less with a staff person, and as little as ten minutes if you meet with your elected official. Make the most of that brief time by sticking to your topic.
- **Bring up any personal, professional or political connections to the elected official that you may have.** Start the meeting by introducing yourselves and thanking the legislator for any votes he or she has made in support of your issues, and for taking the time to meet with you.
- **Stick to your talking points!** Stay on topic, and back them up with no more than five pages of materials that you can leave with your elected official.
- **Provide personal and local examples of the impact of the legislation.** This is the most important thing you can do in a lobby visit.
- **Saying "I don't know" can be a smart political move.** You need not be an expert on the topic you are discussing. If you don't know the answer to a question, it is fine to tell your legislator that you will get that information for him or her. This gives you the chance to put your strongest arguments into their files, and allows you to contact them again about the issue. Never make up an answer to a question - giving wrong or inaccurate information can seriously damage your credibility!
- **Set deadlines for a response.** Often, if an elected official hasn't taken a position on legislation, they will not commit to one in the middle of a meeting. If he or she has to think about it, or if you are meeting with a staff member, ask when you should check back in to find out what your legislator intends to do about your request. If you need to

get information to your legislator, set a clear timeline for when this will happen. That way, you aren't left hanging indefinitely.

After the Meeting

- Right after the meeting, compare notes with everyone in your group to compare what the elected official committed to do and what follow up information you committed to send.
- Each person who took part in the meeting should promptly send a personal thank you letter to the Congress member.
- Follow up in a timely fashion with any requested materials and information.
- If the elected official or staff member doesn't meet the deadline for action you agreed to during the meeting, ask him or her to set another deadline. Be persistent and flexible!
- Remember that a personal meeting with your member of Congress is one of the best opportunities to demonstrate that there is a constituency for civil liberties in your district.

Lobbying Tips

The Personal Visit

Personal Visit DO'S

1. Make an appointment.
2. Dress neatly.
3. Introduce yourself.
4. Stick to the subject at hand.
5. If you don't know, say so.
6. Be Honest.
7. Know something about the official.
8. Be cordial to the secretary and other staff.
9. Be on-time, but prepared to wait.
10. Thank the public official.

Personal Visit Do Not's

1. Be angry.
2. Be hostile ("I'm a taxpayer")
3. Threaten ("you'll pay for this at the polls")
4. Be afraid to be assertive.
5. Have a lot of material (it'll never be read)
6. Lose credibility (it will affect everyone who lobbies on the same subject after you).

Points to remember:

1. Most public officials are happy when their constituents visit--they'll be friendly.
2. Public officials want people to like them.
3. You pay for their salary, they work for you.
4. Cultivate a good rapport with the secretary and staff — They can be very helpful.

Common Pitfalls (don't let them throw you):

- The public official doesn't show up for your appointment.
- Public official is late for your appointment.
- Constant interruptions during your meeting.
- Meeting is cut short.
- Public official is not familiar with your issue.
- Public official takes control of meeting and you never get to make your points.
- Public official asks so many questions you find it hard to make your points.
- Opposition walks in while you are talking.
- Public official says: "I always hear from the other side, not yours" or "Don't worry, it'll never come to a vote," or "It's a lost cause."

Hints:

1. Confirm appointment, the morning of the appointment.
2. Know exactly what you want to get from the official (yes or no vote, commitment to support or not support proposal, etc.)
3. Prioritize your points (especially important if the meeting is cut short).
4. Know background (voting record, positions on issues, personal history).
5. Try to find common ground and start with that.
6. Make yourself available as a resource.

7. Thank the secretary or staff.
8. Write a follow-up letter thanking the official and reiterating your points.

Remember

Every peaceful, law-abiding act that you participate in to ensure that your rights are not taken away helps. If everyone thinks that their speaking out won't help, then it won't. If each person believes that a single voice can make a difference, each voice quickly adds up to a chorus. Each of us needs to be willing to say: "I am here, this issue is important to me and I WILL BE HEARD."



Saturday, 3rd April 2004: DAY 7

Open space and Evaluation

Morning:

Presentation on Funding Opportunities

Afternoon:

Open Space

Summary

Evaluation

Closing

Evening:

Farewell Party

The morning session was a presentation on funding opportunities within the framework of the European Youth Foundation's programmes and of the Youth Programme of the European Commission.

During the afternoon the methodology of the open space has helped the participants in choosing or proposing a session/topic they are interested in.

Photography workshop (10 participants)

The workshop was primarily dedicated to show through practicing with a digital camera the promotional use and influence of photography, especially for posters and billboards. In front of the European Parliament there was a short introduction into the basics of photography. A preteam member gave a theoretical overview on which elements are included in photography, how to make use of the parts, what is used for what and finally also about the composition of photos. After brainstorming on what are the ideas and wishes that comes to mind when thinking about the EU, the Council of Europe and the Human Rights Court the group started to take pictures according to their thoughts. Unfortunately time was short to realize all the ideas and there were lots of them. However the group seemed to be confident with the outcome. In the end the photos were burnt on a CD for all the participants.

YAP Info workshop (12 participants)

The YAP Info is the electronic newsletter sent from the International Secretariat every two months, with the idea to keep branches, partners and interested individuals up-to-date about what is happening in the YAP world. Editing the YAP Info is the "task" of the volunteer of the IS and as this volunteer was participating in the Training Course it was of importance for her to get some feedback on the YAP Info as well as to exchange ideas about newsletters in different kind of organizations. After introducing the history of the YAP Info the group could have a look on the latest editions.

A fruitful discussion about content, layout and design started. The main points were:

- In order to make the articles more attractive for the readers a short sum-up after the headline as well as important sequences in bold or bigger fonts would be appreciated.
- Another question was if the articles could be shorter as they sometimes seem very long.
- Pictures, comics and/or drawings on almost every page of the newsletter.
- Maybe a brief info note about the editor should be given as most of the readers do not know who it is and why after about a year there are changes in style and layout of the newsletter.
- In order to establish a direct link to the article's writer the email-address could be added (for more information, feedback or discussion).
- Finally it should be headed for a standardization of the appearance of the YAP Info (create a visual identity through use of same color/s and format).

Talking about several issues - next to the points mentioned above also about the period a newsletter should be published or the ways how to spread it - the initiator of the workshop felt to have the aim fully achieved.

Other open space groups

The rest of the participants split in smaller groups. The social committee prepared the Farewell Party and worked on games in order to make it an unforgettable evening for both the participants and prepteam. There was time left to go in the EYC Library and exchange leaflets and other materials with participants from other organisations.

During the second part of the afternoon the evaluation session took place. First the participants were invited to watch a slide show presenting all the pictures taken during the training. The aim of the presentation was to remind everybody of each section and session of the programme and be ready to fill out a written evaluation of the whole training. Then the group met in the steam groups to have a more detailed evaluation.

The next part of the evaluation consisted of a nice exercise where everybody had to write on a petal one word which translated the feeling the training has given inside him/her. Then the petals of the flower were folded, the flowers put in a glass of water. In a couple of seconds all flowers bloomed while the participants walked around to see the words. A final round of last words continued before everybody got ready for the final party.

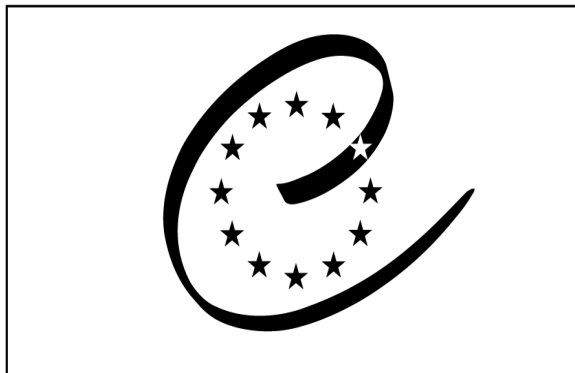
On behalf of YAP, special thanks to the staff of the EYC Strasbourg for their support, to the team for their work and dedication and to the participants for the success of this activity and for their participation, and to Timo for the pictures... !

***Gisele Evrard
International Secretary***



**With the kind support of the Council of Europe
Youth and sports directorate**

European Youth Centre



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