



# TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL ADVOCACY

There are some tried and tested approaches you can use to improve your group's chances of achieving its goals.

## 1. Know what you want to achieve

It's best for your group to set a mission, vision or charter. You need to know what you want to achieve. If you're clear on this, you're less likely to get distracted by side issues, and the potential for conflict in the group is reduced.

## 2. Get organised

The more organised you are, the more credible you'll look. Being organised also helps ensure you're using your time and resources wisely, and not doubling up.

## 3. Focus on the big picture as well as the detail

By focusing on why you're doing working on this campaign and what you hope to achieve, you'll be much better placed to ride out small disappointments and stop yourself getting bogged down in petty disagreements.

## 4. Inform yourself

If you're going to be credible, especially in the eyes of government, you're going to need some facts or information to back up your position and your opinion. Emotive language might win people over to start with, but if you can't back it up, you'll probably lose them before you achieve your goal.

## 5. Offer solutions

Don't just raise problems – make it easier for other groups, especially local and state governments, to work with you by offering them your ideas about how issues you raise can be overcome, or seize the opportunities you've identified.

## 6. Always show respect

You probably won't get very far if you resort to name-calling or belittling anyone who stands between you and your goal. It might attract some media attention, but it also discourages other groups from working with you. A cooperative, respectful approach is much more likely to be successful in the longer term.



## **7. Get help from the experts**

If you're having trouble, don't try to muddle through. Seek out people who can help, or advise you, and cast the net wide. There are lots of people in the community, government and other organisations with an incredible array of technical, leadership and specialist skills who might be delighted to help.

## **8. Work together**

Working together means two things: firstly, respecting the other members of the group. Internal harmony is a necessity if you're going to succeed. And also remember to spot and grab opportunities to work with other local groups who share some or all of your goals. Together, you're likely to achieve much more than you would on your own.

## **9. Be inclusive**

If you can create an environment in which everyone is welcome, and everyone feels valued, you will be amazed at the depth and breadth of skills that people bring to the table – even those who you least expect to be helpful.

If you're inclusive, you're also less likely to fall into the trap of speaking for other people who don't want to be spoken for, or putting their positions across inaccurately.

## **10. Make time for reflection**

At regular intervals, make some time to think about what you've done, how you've done it and what you've achieved. Think about how the group is working together, and encourage members of the group to contribute. Reflect on your goals: whether they're being achieved or are achievable, and whether you've got the right mix of short, medium and long term goals. And always make time to celebrate.

## **11. Promote, promote, promote**

Without wanting to over-emphasise promotion, it really can do a lot of good. It's great for influencing people and governments to change, maintaining group morale (especially if small successes are publicly celebrated), and finding new members.

## **12. Keep a record of what you do**

Whether it is a phone call, email or letter try to write down or keep a copy of who you spoke with, what you said and what was agreed etc. It will be really helpful if you have to follow up because something did not happen or you would like to thank someone.

## **13. Saying 'Thank you'**

When someone delivers on your request, it's a great gesture to thank them and to acknowledge their efforts. You can write a letter directly to the person who assisted you, their superiors or their organisation. Where appropriate, it is a great idea to send a letter to the editor of the local newspaper too.