



## **Action groups and Community Organising 2**

### ***Conversation Frameworks***

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Group:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Organiser:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Course:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Steps to effective listening

- Keep calm and attentive throughout
- Show respect for what the other person is saying even if you disagree
- Use body language which shows you are interested eg maintain eye contact
- Don't interrupt
- Allow silences without embarrassment
- Listen with awareness as to how what is being said fits with your knowledge
- Listen with empathy
- Listen for key points which relate to the main issue.
- Reinforce the speaker by reflecting what they are saying:
  - What I hear you saying is....
  - In other words....
  - Do you mean...
- Clarify by asking opening questions
- Be committed to understanding what is being said

## **Exercise 1 - Listening in Pairs**

Instructions for participants:

The idea is for listeners to practice/experiment and develop your listening skills. Listening is a skill that needs to be developed Good communicators are excellent listeners

1. Form into pairs
2. One person will be the the listener the other will be the talker
3. The talker must select a topic to speak on for 3 minutes eg a book, holiday, hobby film etc)
4. listener is not to ask questions or talk at all
5. listener is not to take notes or write at all
6. at the end of 3 minutes the listener is to summarise what the talker has told them to the satisfaction of the talker
7. when everyone is ready start timing.

## **Exercise 2 - Open questions in Pairs**

Instructions for participants:

1. Form into pairs
2. One person will be the the listener the other will be the talker
3. the listener only asks open questions (this may be more difficult than you think)
4. the listener does not make statements
5. the listener should mainly listen on a 70/30 rule
6. rather than doing a spiel without stopping as the talker may have done in the above activity the talker gives the listener opportunities
7. when everyone is ready start timing.

# **Outrage Hope Action**

**A framework for communication...**

## **Outrage**

- **A motivator**
- **A way to overcome fear**

## **Hope**

- **A reason to come on board**
- **A way to overcome apathy**

## **Action**

- **A step in the right direction**
- **A concrete commitment, no matter how small**

# Outrage, Hope, Action

## Outrage-

Use questions-

How do you feel about...

What do you think about...

Are you concerned about...

Do you think its right that...

Use comments-

I can't imagine living under those conditions

It seems unjust to me

## Hope

Use questions-

Do you think its important to try and change the situation?

Do you think it would make a difference if....

## Action

Use questions-

So will you come to our next meeting? bring a friend if you like.

We are having a movie night next week, will we see you there?

Use comments-

I'm glad you're concern. We need you to:

Sign this petition

advertise our film night

come to one of our monthly meetings

# Organising Conversations

## Introduction:

Hi there, nice to meet you, my name is....

## Basic information:

How is your day going?

We are here to today to have a chat to people about Human Rights

## Educating about a campaign:

Anger: Do you think its right that.... (Eg women in afghanistan have less rights than women in Australia?)

Hope: Did you know that? (Eg Australia is committing over \$1 billion in aid to Afghanistan that can assist the rights of women.....Amnesty international is lobbying the government to ensure that that aid money is spent appropriately and that women's rights aren't bargained away)

Action: Would you like to (eg sign the petition, come to a film night, join our amnesty group)

## Handling Objections

Explore: What is stopping you from....

Equalise: I can understand you'd be hesitant if....., I can see why you'd think that....

Elevate: Did you know that.....

## Wrap up/closure

Thanks for signing the petition we'll keep you informed about other things happening in your area. Can we add you to our group's mailing list to keep you up to date with what we are working?

So we've talked about x,y,z and you've agreed that Australia should be doing more to protect the rights of ..... all that's left to do is for you to (sign the pledge/ petition/ come to our meeting next week)

So we can do nothing and the plight of.... will probably not change and may even get worse. OR you could (insert action) and we could make a difference in the lives of (insert campaign)

# The Three E's to Handling Objections:

## 1. Explore

## 2. Equalise

## 3. Elevate

### Explore:

- Listen to the objection
- Use Questions to identify what the real concern/issue is
- This will clarify for the supporter/potential supporter what their own concern is.

### Equalise:

- Acknowledge the person's concern/feelings- "I understand why you'd feel that way", "I understand why you would think that"
- Build rapport by empathising
- This step aims to reduce the person's hostility

### Elevate:

- Continue to pose questions that allow the person to review and change their position
- Help identify an alternative viewpoint
- Assist them to change their attitude and get a commitment to do something
- This step shifts the potential supporter to a different way of thinking about the issue.

# One to one communication role plays

Instructions: Use these questions as a basis for a roleplay between activists and or organisers around some of the things supporters say when we ask them to get more involved with Amnesty

Question 1:

Supporter: I don't see any point in getting involved. Amnesty won't achieve anything for (insert campaign) they have so many issues.

Activist: What would you know about Amnesty? Have you ever been involved? It's the best, I can vouch for it. If you think you can do better, why don't you start your own NGO!

FREEZE ACTION!

*Ask what was good and what was bad about response. Then ask the roleplayers to replay it with a more appropriate response. Possible answers could look like this:*

Supporter: I don't see any point in getting involved. Amnesty won't achieve anything for (insert campaign) they have so many issues.

Activist: I can see why you would say that. There are a lot of human rights violations occurring in (insert campaign). Did you know that Amnesty has a track record of success on stopping human rights violations in many countries?



# Closure- A technique to gain commitment

One of the key roles of an activist is to gain commitment from the supporter or potential supporter to do something. Its almost a definition of organising- to move people.

We know there are a number of stages in moving people. These include:

- building rapport
- explaining the issue, building outrage
- developing hope that something will change

The final stage is gaining their commitment to do something for the campaign. This is when they move. We call this last stage 'closure'

Closure

Closure describes techniques to gain commitment. It may be commitment to join your local group or it may be commitment to talk to their friends, family and networks about the issues.

Closure techniques assist in gaining commitment. Each closure technique:

- suggests a positive action
- goes not give people an out
- avoids questions which have a yes or no answer

The four main frameworks for closure are:

1. Direct close
2. Suggestion close
3. Choice close
4. Summary close

## 1. Direct Close

- As you want to do something about (insert campaign) all that's left to do is for you to sign the petition.
- To make a difference you need to sign the petition/pledge card
- As we discussed earlier, if we are going to change this situation we need your support. The first step is signing this petition
- To increase support for this campaign we'd like you to talk to a couple of others about it.
- look if we don't take this opportunity now
- this is a unique opportunity to ensure the (insert campaign) are protected what we need you to do now is.....

## 2. Suggestion Close

- it seems like you are keen to learn more about (insert campaign) I would suggest you

come to (group meeting, film night or other event)

- I would suggest that rather than you handing out flyers yourself, you get some friends to help you hand them out at uni.

### **3. Choice close**

- So we really have two choices here, we could not do anything and the situation for (insert campaign) will never change or we could take this unique opportunity to encourage change for the better for (insert campaign)

### **4. Summary close**

In the summary close the activist goes through what has been previously discussed with the supporter and the reasons why the decision is so obvious.

- We have discussed the importance of this issue and how you feel strongly about it and we have discussed the importance of ensuring we present a strong argument to (the purpose of the campaign/who it is directed at) so the next step is for you to (come to a meeting, sign a petition)
- As you agreed, the campaign is going to be more effective the more people are aware of it. So we need your help to (insert action)

These techniques have helped activist. If you start feeling tense at the closure stage, simply use one of the standard close lines you are comfortable with.

We have a saying, three strikes and you're out. If, at the point of closure the potential supporter raises an objection, attempt to handle it using the three E's. If this doesn't work after 2 more attempts, stop trying, you are not going to get them to support the cause.

Some may feel that this approach is pushy, but what counts is how the potential supporter feels and you have to get past how you feel. It is often how you feel that stops you using some of these techniques.

Good luck. We hope the techniques help you in your activism!

