



The Canadian **CE**D Network  
Strengthening Canada's Communities

# Advocacy 101

## The Art of Advocacy

### Presentation in Newfoundland

#### April 19, 2007





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# Introduction

While rebuilding communities, CED practitioners must occasionally work with civil servants and elected officials to shape a public policy environment that strengthens communities and enables local action.

In this *introductory* workshop, participants will be introduced to a framework to guide their CED organization's advocacy efforts.



# Introduction

## Agenda

- Welcome - Introductions
- What is Advocacy? What is not? Why is it important?
- Developing an Advocacy Strategy
- Case Study
- The Role of Partnership in Advocacy
- Advocacy Competencies



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# Lobbying or Advocacy

## Group Discussion

What is Advocacy?

What is not Advocacy?

Why is it important?

When do we do it?



# Lobbying or Advocacy

## **Difference between Lobbying and Advocacy**

Lobbying - lobbyists are defined as “individuals who are paid to communicate with federal public office holders in an attempt to influence government decisions”. (Lobbyists Registration Act)

There are 3 categories of lobbyist each with its own filing requirements:

- consultant lobbyists;
- in-house lobbyists (corporate); and
- in-house lobbyists (organizations).



# Lobbying or Advocacy

## **Difference between Lobbying and Advocacy**

Advocacy - an advocate is someone who speaks up for others. The advocate may be an individual or an organization. Advocacy involves identifying, embracing and promoting a cause. Advocacy is an effort to shape public perception or to affect change that may or may not require legislation.



## Lobbying or Advocacy

**Can charitable groups lobby or advocate?**

**YES**

While non-profits are not allowed to engage in "political activity" (like endorsing a candidate or political party), they are allowed to advocate for their cause.



## Lobbying or Advocacy

A charity may make the public aware of its position on an issue provided:

- it does not explicitly connect its views to any political party or candidate for public office;
- the issue is connected to its purpose;
- its views are based on a well-reasoned position;
- public awareness campaigns do not become the charity's primary activity.

See Customs and Revenue Act (CRA) for guidelines for  
Registered Charity Advocacy





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# Advocacy Checklist

## Developing an Advocacy Strategy

Identify issue - what is your concern, problem or focus?

Set goals - what is your objective? What outcomes are acceptable and what alternatives are acceptable to the membership?



# Advocacy Checklist

## Developing an Advocacy Strategy

Research and get facts - facts make your argument more credible. Avoid anecdotes.

Determine your target audiences - with whom are you trying to communicate? Elected officials, public servants, media, public or membership?



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# Advocacy Checklist

## Developing an Advocacy Strategy

Develop a formal position - develop statements, key messages, brief or scientific paper.

Develop tactical action plan - timelines, activities and assignment of responsibilities.



# Advocacy Checklist

## Developing an Advocacy Strategy

Communicate with your target audience - inform your target audience of your concerns. Establish communications and begin developing relationship.

Consult your membership - continue to seek input from your membership and involve your membership in the process.



# Advocacy Checklist

## Developing an Advocacy Strategy

Keep your membership informed - inform members of your progress along the way.

Build coalitions - look to develop relationships with organizations of common interest. Share information or join in more formal coalitions.



# Advocacy Checklist

## Developing an Advocacy Strategy

Review Campaign - make adjustments where necessary.

Feedback - seek feedback from members, media, public, officials. They can be good indicators of your future success.



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# Case Study

## **CCEDNet Case Study**

Review the Case Study of “CCEDNet’s  
Advocacy Campaign re Human Resources  
and Skills Development Canada’s (HRSDC)”

In small groups discuss the process and  
outcomes.

- Report back on what worked well and what  
did not.



# Grassroots Advocacy

## Where do we fit in?

Grassroots members can play a key role in advancing an organization's goals by interacting with elected officials directly. More importantly, organizations can facilitate such meetings by establishing grassroots advocacy programs.





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# Grassroots Advocacy

## Keys to Success

- Effective advocacy relies on membership involvement.
- Grassroots communication of concerns has the greatest impact on local politicians.
- Broad-based communication will be more effective if it supports a central message.



# Grassroots Advocacy

## Keys to Success

- Using originality serves to break through the clutter.
- A sustained and coordinated approach managed centrally but applied locally is effective.



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# Grassroots Advocacy

## Keys to Success

- Personalized approaches to political leaders works best. Real people explaining real concerns.
- Feedback to your organization following member letters and visits is critical.



# Grassroots Advocacy

## What doesn't work?

- Contact that looks purely bought and paid for, i.e. professional rather than grassroots;
- A confrontational style that harasses or insults politicians;
- Members who are under-informed or are speaking to issues without conviction;
- Providing members with tools that make them look like wound-up robots.



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# Grassroots Advocacy

## Advocacy Kit

- Guide to help you set up a meeting with local MPs and key messages.
- A Feedback Form to complete after sending letters and/or visiting with local MPs.



# Partnerships

## Building Coalitions

- Do the potential partners have a shared vision and shared goals? It is important to define success and get all the coalition players to sign-on to this definition before embarking on a coalition.
- Can the partners agree upon a workable advocacy plan?



# Partnerships

## Building Coalitions

- Are cost-sharing agreements clear and explicit? Many coalitions waste time and energy fighting over cost allocations that should be agreed upon as early as possible.
- Can the coalition partners take small workable steps in the early stage? By focussing on immediate action, coalitions can more easily demonstrate success to all the partners and ultimately help sustain the coalition in the long run.



# Partnerships

## Building Coalitions

- Do the partners have an exit strategy? Each organization should know under what terms and conditions it would abandon the coalition. An organization should also have plans to exit the coalition when it has achieved all of its goals.





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# Advocacy Competencies

- Develop an advocacy strategy.
- Select an effective spokesperson:
  - who is confident and has strong public speaking skills;
  - is knowledgeable of the issues, both internally and externally and appears trust worthy;
  - has the authority to speak on behalf of the organization and its members;
  - who is bilingual if possible.



# Advocacy Competencies

- Develop a position using:
  - membership questionnaires;
  - issue specific committees;
  - contingency plans.
- Prepare a brief:
  - addressed to reach multiple audiences;
  - using facts, figures, case studies;
  - with an executive summary;
  - that avoids being negative.



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# Advocacy Competencies

- Make the most of technology:
  - to research a particular position;
  - monitor government positions;
  - organize, mobilize, and communicate with members;
  - to promote a viewpoint, attract supporters and organize campaigns.



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## Resources

- The Art of Advocacy Handbook - A Handbook for Non-Profit Organizations  
<http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca>
- A Guide to Government Relations for Directors of Not-for-Profit Organizations - Canadian Society of Association Executives  
<http://www.csae.com>



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Thank you

**For more information on our  
activities and membership,  
please visit our website:**

**[www.ccednet-rcdec.ca](http://www.ccednet-rcdec.ca)**