



TASK 3: DECIDING TACTICS

ACTIVITY 1: DECIDING TACTICS & ROLE PLAY

OVERVIEW

Which tactics would best suit your group? In this activity you can discuss and agree the best way for your group to plan tactics and strategy.

TASK 3: DECIDING TACTICS

ACTIVITY 1:

By this stage you should have decided:

- a) Which issue your pressure group is going to campaign about
- b) What your pressure group's name is

You are now going to have a meeting to decide which tactics your pressure group is going to use. You have three main options:

- a) To work 'behind the scenes' (e.g. lobbying parliament, companies, local government...)
- b) To seek public attention (e.g. via leaflets, advertising campaigns, petitions...)
- c) To take whatever action necessary, even if it does mean breaking the law

By the end of the meeting you should have:

- Discussed the pros and cons of different tactics
- Decide which approach your group will follow

PORTFOLIO: WHICH APPROACH HAVE YOU CHOSEN?

TASK 3: DECIDING TACTICS ACTIVITY 1: ROLE PLAY CARDS

Participant A: _____

You are the chair of the meeting. It is your responsibility to ensure:

- That everyone in the group has an opportunity to speak
- That the discussion is focused
- That a decision on tactics is made

You should begin the meeting by asking everyone to introduce themselves and state which tactics they are in favour of and why.

After this, you can have a general discussion about the pros and cons of different tactics. During the discussion, members of the group may change their original positions.

In order to make a decision about tactics, you should have a group vote. If a consensus cannot be reached, you have the final say!

Participant B:

You are in favour of lobbying. This means approaching people in power and convincing them to support your issue.

In your opinion, lobbying is the best way to secure the aims of your group. Protests and demonstrations may receive a lot of press attention, but lobbying is the most likely way of influence political, legal and economic policies.

You are very much against civil disobedience or illegal actions as you think these will alienate public opinion and discredit the reputation of your group.

You should begin the meeting by arguing in favour of lobbying and trying to convince others of its merits. However, if you want, you can change your position during the meeting and, at the end, you should vote for the tactics you think best. You may opt for a combination of tactics.

TASK 3: DECIDING TACTICS ACTIVITY 1: ROLE PLAY CARDS

Participant C: _____

You are in favour of taking any action necessary to achieve your aims, even if this does mean breaking the law.

In your opinion, indirect action (such as lobbying) doesn't work as the people in power are often those who have created the problems in the first place.

You think the ends justify the means. It doesn't matter if you break the law, or even if people get hurt, as long as your final goal is good.

You should begin the meeting by arguing in favour of taking illegal action if necessary and trying to convince others of the merits of this approach. However, if you want, you can change your position during the meeting and, at the end, you should vote for the tactics you think best. You may opt for a combination of tactics.

Participant D:

You prefer direct action to indirect action, but you do not want to break the law or incite civil disobedience.

Your favoured approach is raising public awareness. You would like to do this via leaflets and an advertising campaign. You also think it might be appropriate to approach schools in order to raise the profile of your issue with young people.

You believe that long term change can only occur with support from the general public. Lobbying is not sufficient because it ignores the average person, while illegal action is often counter-productive as it can alienate law-abiding citizens.

You should begin the meeting by arguing in favour of raising public awareness and trying to convince others of its merits. However, if you want, you can change your position during the meeting and, at the end, you should vote for the tactics you think best. You may opt for a combination of tactics.

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Participant E: _____

You like the idea of approaching schools to try and raise the profile of your issue with young people but you do not think a publicity campaign involving leaflets and an advertising campaign is sufficient.

You want to do something which will be more dramatic and catch the attention of the press. You think that the best tactic would be to organise a protest or demonstration. The more people you can encourage to take part, the better.

You should begin the meeting by arguing in favour of organising a protest or demonstration and trying to convince others of the merits of doing this. However, if you want, you can change your position during the meeting and, at the end, you should vote for the tactics you think best. You may opt for a combination of tactics.

Participant F:

You think that the only way to achieve your aims is by inciting civil disobedience. In other words, you are in favour of encouraging people to disobey certain laws and regulations as long as this does not involve resorting to physical violence.

You believe the law is important but you do not think it is perfect and, when laws or regulations are flawed you believe they should be challenged as Rosa Parks did in Alabama USA, 1955 when she refused to obey a bus driver's orders to give up her seat to a white man.

You are not against lobbying. You accept that indirect action is often behind successful direct action but, at the same time, you do not believe working behind the scenes can be effective on its own. Direct action is needed to add impetus.