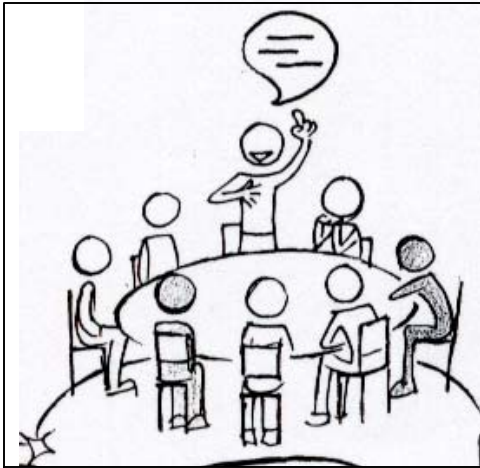


# How

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## put your point across



At various times you or your organisation will want to influence a decision or someone's thoughts on an issue. This is known as lobbying, which is a skill that requires practice to ensure that you put your point(s) across effectively. This fact sheet contains information and advice on how you can successfully put your point across to others.

There are a number of steps to follow when developing your points that you want to use to influence others. They are:

**Identify the issue** – you need to be clear what it is you want to influence someone else about.

**Decide the outcome** – consider what it is you want the individual or organisation to do. Do you want them to agree to something, take up a cause, contact another individual or organisation. Once you've decided the purpose then you can identify who you need to approach.

**Consider your audience** – it is important that you approach the right individual or organisation to lobby.

**Consider how much time you have** – finding out how much time you will have is important to help you put your case together. You could have anything from five minutes to one hour (or longer).

**Research your issue** – visit libraries, use the website, buy newspapers and journals to obtain information on the subject. Also find out more about the individual or organisation to lobby and their views on that issue.

**Put your case together** – base this on your research, remember to have a beginning, middle and end to your case.

**Put your point across** – before the meeting, roleplay the situation with others that will not be attending. Ask them to oppose your arguments, so that you can become confident in countering them and practicing what you intend to say.

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In addition to the points above, identify what you expect to achieve, or at least hope to achieve. That will establish a bargaining position; it is useful to consider what the other person's bargaining position may be.

## Finding information

It may be confusing, trying to find out the relevant individual or organisation to contact. You can find out by looking on the Internet, visiting a library or contacting your local council. BYC's publications, the *Essential Guide* and *Young People Influencing Decisions* contain information on how to find the most appropriate decision-maker at either local, national (including the devolved institutions) or European level.

One way of putting your point across may be through organising a campaign. A campaign is a series of activities that are done to draw attention to a specific issue. The range of activities involved in campaigning usually includes petitions, letters, demonstrations and media work. All these are ways that you can put your point across to influence others.

## How 2's five top tips to put your point across

1. Think about what you want to say and what you want the other person to agree on.
2. Identify the appropriate person to meet.
3. Prepare your argument, including researching the issue.
4. Practice your arguments, as well as encounter arguments and possible responses to your views.
5. Write to the person thanking them for meeting you, with a summary of the agreed points and actions from your meeting.

BYC have produced a publication (Local Action 3) and run a one-day training course (Putting Your Point Across) on campaigning.

## Things to remember

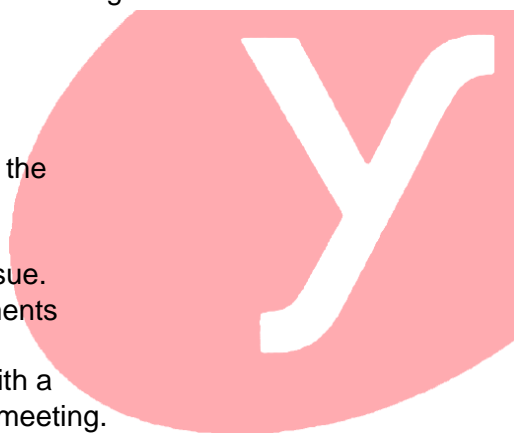
Usually, you will put your point across in a meeting, whether it is on a one-to-one basis or at a public event. If you attend a one-to-one meeting, write up any notes you make and send a copy of them with a thank you letter to the organisation or individual including a copy of the agreed action points after the meeting.

This is a useful reminder to you on what was agreed and also can be referred to and form evidence for the future.

Overall, you should ensure that your points are:

- Specific
- Easy to understand
- Aimed at the right people

If you ensure that you meet the three points above, you should achieve success in putting your point across and influencing others.



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BYC's **How 2** guides is a series of fact sheets for young people and youth organisations, which explain the steps they need to take to develop their organisation and arrange activities. For further copies in the **How 2** series, visit [www.byc.org.uk](http://www.byc.org.uk) or call BYC on 0845 458 1489.