

## **Lesson 14: Meeting with Your Target**

### **Goals/Purpose**

The purpose of these lessons is to provide the group with opportunities to plan their meeting with their Target and to rehearse the meeting so that they are fully prepared.

### **Objectives**

- Youth will develop an agenda for the meeting
- Youth will develop talking points for the meeting
- Youth will devise and rehearse roles that people will take on in the meeting
- Youth will practice several different scenarios of what might happen during the meeting with the Target and develop responses

**Total Time** - 2 hours

### **Agenda/Activities**

- Introductions/Icebreakers
- Create or review an agenda
- Create talking points
- Small group work to think through demands
- Small group work to rehearse roles

### **Facilitator Preparation**

- Write up a proposed agenda for the meeting with the Target on newsprint.
- Develop a list of roles students may take on and an idea of who should assume them

### **Materials Needed**

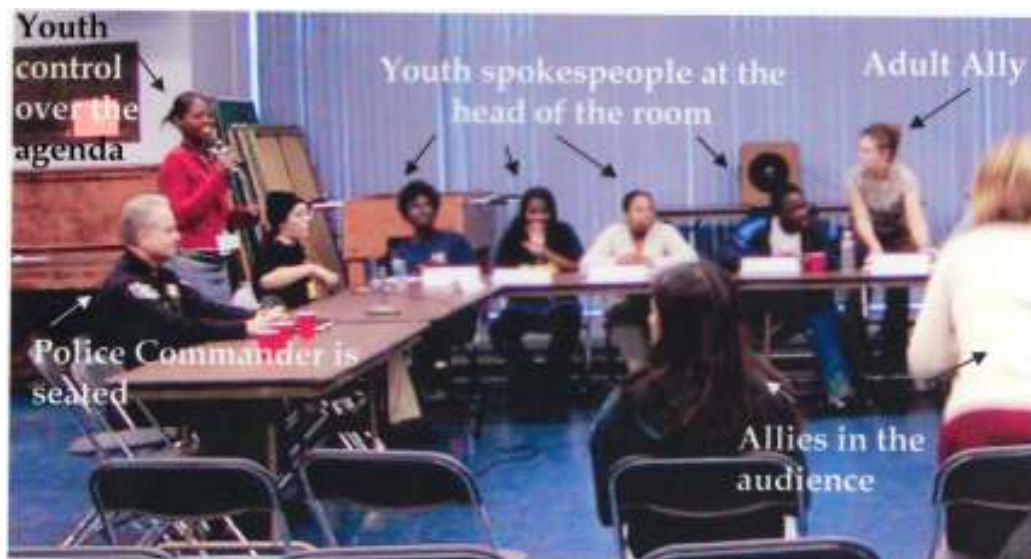
- Newsprint and markers for small group work
- Pictures and other documents for the meeting

## **The Basics**

In the language of direct action community organizing, the Target is the person who has the power to give your group what it is asking for. The meeting with the Target is your group's opportunity to ask the person who has the power to act to do so according to the young peoples' demands. It is a culminating action, one that comes after the group has assessed the community, chosen its problems, crafted its issues, and articulated what it wants. The meeting needn't be hostile in tone, as some people assume when they hear the terms "demand" and "target." The meeting should be upbeat in tone because the young people are, in good faith, making a reasonable request of someone who has the power to do the right thing. The moral authority behind young people who have researched and prepared well is very strong, and difficult for conscientious adults to dismiss.

Preparing for the meeting is essential. Simply stated, the meeting will be successful if your group has prepared itself well, and it won't be if it hasn't. It is important that everything be taken into consideration: the place, time and location of the meeting; the agenda; the roles people will play in the meeting and what they will say; the seating arrangement; the ending time; the scenarios that might play out and fitting conclusions to each possibility. When young people are new to this type of meeting, the adult facilitator's job is to lead them through the preparatory steps. This can feel repetitive and challenging, especially when young people are tired or feel like they are ready before you think they are. Keep at it, and try to make it fun. Your preparation will pay off in the end.

Because this lesson plan includes so many aspects of the meeting with the Target, we recommend that you devote several of your group's meetings to cover it. Our experience is that group members need time to absorb the material and make it their own.



**A Note about Logistics:**

As the adult leader for this group it is your responsibility to set the time and location for the meeting with the Target. Sometimes setting up these logistics takes time. It is ideal if the Target is willing to come to a place that is familiar and comfortable for the group (e.g., your meeting location). If you need to transport the youth to another place to meet with the Target then give them permission slips.

Details related to logistics that you should consider include:

- Name labels
- Refreshments
- Chairs for everyone to sit in
- Parking Permits
- Directions
- The capacity of your meeting room
- Microphones (if the youth will be speaking to a large group)



## **1. Introduction to the Meeting**

**10 minutes**

Materials: Newsprint and markers

Explain to the group that good meeting preparation will make the meeting go well. Ask them to brainstorm a list of what needs to be done in order to prepare for the meeting, and write all the ideas up on newsprint. A sample list is below.

- Create Talking Points
- Create an Agenda
- Cover the logistics
- What are the groups demands
- Practice, Practice, Practice

After discussing the list that your group has generated, ask them:

- What are fears or concerns that group members have?
- What are group members looking forward to in relation to this meeting?

Let your group members know that today they are going to create their message for the Target and practice delivering it.

## **2. Create Talking Points in the Large Group**

**25 minutes**

Materials: newsprint and markers

Explain that talking points are key pieces of information that make a case for a change taking place. At first, you will work on the talking points as a large group. As you continue to refine and practice the talking points, you will create small groups, one for each area of the agenda.

When creating talking points it is helpful for the group to answer the following questions.

- How does your issue impact you and other youth? How does this issue make you feel?
- Why is your issue an important youth issue?
- What have you seen that tells you that a change is necessary? Include information from personal experiences and the community assessment.
- What do you want the Target to do about your issue? How might the Target do this?
- Discuss whether your group thinks these demands are specific. Are they achievable? As the adult leader, you may have information that will help this discussion.

### **3. Create the Agenda**

**15 minutes**

Materials: Proposed agenda on newsprint, newsprint and markers for each group

#### **a. Step 1: Large group discussion**

Work with the large group to create an agenda or review a proposed agenda with the group. A sample agenda that includes the key sections that your agenda should include is found below. After your group has finalized the agenda, break into small groups – one group per agenda item.

Sample Agenda:

1. Introductions
2. Icebreaker
3. The problem and why it is important to young people.
4. Results of the community assessment.
5. What the young people want.
6. Next steps.

#### **b. Step 2: Small group role assignment**

Ask the group members to volunteer for each agenda item. These groups will work together to come up with a script and to role play the presentation.

### **4. Role Play**

**25 minutes**

Materials: Newsprint and markers, 8.5 x 11 paper for note-taking, pens & pencils

#### **a. Activity: Small Group role plays**

Each small group needs to decide on one or two spokespeople who will present the content for their agenda item to the Target. The small group, with the help of an adult if possible, needs to create a short script for the spokesperson. The large group can re-iterate the key points that were discussed before, adding more information or points as they wish. The spokespersons may then want to write up their own version of the talking points or script.

You should acknowledge to the group that some people get nervous when they talk to people they don't know, especially people in a power position. Ask the spokespeople what they need to feel comfortable delivering their message. Some youth may be more comfortable looking at bullet points and improvising. This is fine as long as the young person is able to convey his or her points under pressure. It is important to remind the youth that they are the experts on what they are presenting. The talking points are based on their experiences.

Once the group has chosen its spokespersons, explain that they are going to do a role play to practice their presentation. Go through the agenda item one or two times before going back to the large group.

**b. Activity: Large group role play**

Reconvene the large group and run through the agenda as if you were having the meeting. The spokespeople from each of the small groups will talk when their turn on the agenda comes up. Have a discussion about what questions the Target may ask and come up with the answers.

Do at least two role plays and debrief both of them.

**5. De-brief Roleplay**

**15 minutes**

Here are some questions to help you debrief the role play with your group:

- A. How did it feel to speak?
- B. What went well? What could work better?
- C. Where these specific questions answered?
  - How does your issue impact you and other youth? How does this issue make you feel?
  - Why is your issue an important youth issue?
  - What have you seen that tells you that a change is necessary? Include information from personal experiences and the community assessment.
  - What do you want the Target to do about your issue? How might the Target do this? Are these demands achievable, reasonable and specific?
  - Did the presentation stay on track? If not, problem solve.

**Tips**

1. If you have to transport youth, you will need to work with your organization to develop the permission slip that is right for your group. Ours was developed in collaboration with our risk management group.
2. It is helpful to have key facts and or talking points up on the walls during your meeting with the Target so that the youth can refer to them in a natural way.
3. Talk to the youth about what they are most worried about (i.e. the Target being rude) and help them strategize about how to handle any difficult situations that may come up.
4. Setting up the meeting space is a very important aspect of building and exercising power. Try to have the meeting with the Target in your “turf.” Have the Target sit down and your spokespeople stand-up when they speak. Also have the youth spokespeople sit at the head of the room or head of the table. These arrangements can help youth feel more powerful.



Youth from the Middle College ETA group meet with Contra Costa County Supervisor John Gioia and staff to present findings from their PhotoVoice project focusing on youth access to tobacco and alcohol.