International Labour Organization

The Effective Employers' Organization

A series of "hand-on" guides to building and managing effective employers' organizations

Guide Three Advocacy

Maximising the Impact of the Voice of Business

Developing and implementing a successful advocacy strategy

bureau for employers' activities

AMII

International Organizations MBA Université de Genève

Produced for the Bureau for Employers' Activities of the International Labour Organization by faculty members of the University of Geneva International Organizations MBA

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Guide Three Advocacy

Maximizing the Impact of the Voice of Business

… developing and implementing a successful advocacy strategy

CONTENTS

Section One

How to use this guide

This guide – ***Maximizing the impact of the voice of business … developing and implementing a successful advocacy strategy*** – is the third in the series that make up **The Effective Employers' Organization** package. The series as a whole is designed to help executives, directors and managers in employers' organizations to build and run their organizations more strategically and more effectively. It is aimed primarily at those setting up, building and managing national level employers' organizations and business associations in less developed countries and economies in transition. It will, however, provide a wealth of advice for regional and sectoral organizations that exist to represent the interests of business, and it will be of interest to national level employers' organizations in developed countries. This will be the case particularly where organizations are considering or undertaking a strategic review of the way they approach their advocacy work.

Maximizing the impact of the voice of business is a step by step approach to improving the effectiveness of the advocacy work of employers' organizations. It contains a series of practical tools that will help employers' organization leaders to review their current approach to advocacy or to develop an advocacy strategy from scratch. The tools are of four types:

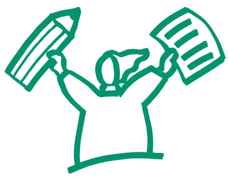
Checklists

Checklists are designed to help review where your organization is currently placed, to identify strategic deficiencies and to plan ways to design and implement a successful advocacy strategy;

Best practices

Best practices provide examples of how other organizations have tackled the problems you face;

Practical exercises



Practical exercises can be used individually, by working parties or by decision making bodies;

Key quotes

Key quotes from respected writers illustrate the most important points; you can use them in your own talks and written materials.

Being recognized as an effective advocate strengthens the employers' organization's public profile both with policy makers and with the business community. Strong performance in the field of advocacy leads directly to increased membership. It also provides the reputation and "brand recognition" necessary to promote the other revenue generating services the organization offers. In short, being recognized as an effective advocate creates a virtuous cycle involving membership growth; revenue increase from subscriptions and member services; and better and more effective lobbying as more resources are available and representivity is increased.

What the guide contains

The eight key steps to successful advocacy, shown below, are described fully in sections three to six of the guide and are summarized in section seven "putting it all together".

Step One	**SECTIONS THREE & FOUR**	Identifying advocacy issues
Step Two		Selecting advocacy priorities
Step Three		Producing a national business agenda
Step Four		Identifying and analysing the supporting and opposing forces
Step Five		Producing the core lobbying document – "The layered folio"
Step Six	**SECTION FIVE**	Developing detailed campaign tactics for each issue
Step Seven		Producing a campaign plan for each business agenda issue
Step Eight	**SECTION SIX**	Measuring success and communicating it to your members

Section eight of the guide offers a *final checklist* that combines the "subject specific" checklists found in the text into an overall organizational review tool. This tool can be used after you have worked through the guide to facilitate action planning, or it can be used at the outset as a benchmark measure of where your organization stands in terms of advocacy strategy and tactics.

Section nine provides a short overview of the academic literature on advocacy and employers' organizations – *"what the business gurus say".* This section describes in one place, and in an academic context, the analytical tools suggested for use in this guide. It is a "stand-alone" section that provides the reader with a basic academic underpinning of the subject of advocacy and points the way to the further reading suggested in section ten. This section identifies sources of further reading or assistance specifically associated with employers' organizations, other special interest groups and advocacy. There are relatively few publications dealing with these topics, and those that exist are not well known. Section ten attempts to guide the reader in the right direction.

The guide is designed to be a multi-purpose tool. Although it is intended to be a relatively straightforward and interesting read, working through the guide from cover to cover is not the only, or always the best, way to maximize its value:

- All employers' organizations will already have some form of advocacy strategy and priorities. They may want to use the guide as a benchmark against which to review their current approaches;
- Some organizations might be specifically interested in particular issues like member mobilization and coalition building as complements to their existing advocacy work;
- Others might wish to use the many practical tools contained in the guide either to improve current practice or to review whether approaches that go beyond the lobbying lunch and the press release might bear fruit.

… the choice is yours.

Finally, this is a short guide to a complex issue. It does not claim to be exhaustive or to contain original ideas. The guide has drawn heavily and unashamedly on existing materials on the subject of advocacy generally and in employers' organizations and special interest groups specifically. It also relies on the experience of the authors in observing what does and does not work in day to day practice. Every attempt is made in the text, in the best practice boxes and the suggestions for further reading, to acknowledge the variety of sources used.

Section Two

Employers' organizations and advocacy

KEY QUOTE

"OK you've convinced me. Now go out there and put pressure on me"

Franklin D Roosevelt
32 President of the United States
1882 – 1945

Almost all employers' organizations include in their mission statements some reference to advocacy or lobbying on behalf of their members. Only the very few organizations that exist solely to provide a single specific service to their members, normally multi-employer collective bargaining, have little or no interest in advocacy work. For most employers' organizations, the provision of member services attracts the levels of membership and generates the revenue that will fund their advocacy activities and add weight and credibility to the organization's "voice".

What is advocacy?

In very simple terms, advocacy is the act of influencing or supporting something or someone. When we talk of advocacy and lobbying in the context of employers' organizations, we generally think of public policy advocacy i.e. actions designed to influence laws, regulations, court decisions and the general attitude and approach of political parties.

Why is business advocacy important?

The nature of the environment in which they do business is crucial to company success. Business creates a nation's wealth. It also creates the jobs that go with the process of creating and selling goods and services. Companies can be more effective if they operate in an environment that is conducive to enterprise and entrepreneurship. To this end, business must influence legislators, administrators and the judiciary; counter the influence of pressure groups that seek to regulate further the environment in which companies operate; and persuade the voting public of the benefits of a "business friendly" operating environment.

The majority of governments today understand the need to provide a business friendly environment in order to foster national economic success and prosperity. Conversely, they face an anti-business lobby that has rarely been so well organized and effective on issues like the environment, marketing freedoms, health, financial management and labour standards. Exponential growth in the number and influence of anti-business activist organizations and special interest groups has been reinforced by massive advances in communications technology and globalization of the media.

Advocacy and employers' organizations

Employers' organizations exist to serve the members that created them and frequently offer a range of services designed to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their members' operations. Most fundamental amongst the services they offer is to ensure that the laws and regulations which apply to business do not stifle enterprise. The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) lists seven characteristics of successful business associations with respect to their advocacy practices.

Business associations that advocate effectively are known to:

- **Articulate members' concerns as a unified voice** – thus attracting the attention of the policy maker to the maximum extent;
- **Meet regularly with decision makers** – to discuss key policy issues and to provide well researched publications;
- **Establish regular channels of communication and close working relationships with government officials**;

- **Use these channels to promote members' interests** – by influencing the pace and direction of specific laws and policy proposals;
- **Engage in both proactive and reactive advocacy to their members' benefit** – seeking to set the policy agenda by voicing concerns and proposing specific policies;
- **Help prevent frequent changes to the business-related legal and regulatory framework**;
- **Monitor the administration of policies** – to ensure that enacted provisions of interest to their members are applied fairly, consistently and swiftly.

Being recognized as an effective advocate strengthens the employers' organization's public profile both with policy makers and with the business community. Strong performance in the field of advocacy leads directly to increased membership. It also provides the reputation and "brand recognition" necessary to promote the other revenue generating services the organization offers. In short, being recognized as an effective advocate creates a virtuous cycle involving membership growth; revenue increase from subscriptions and member services; and better and more effective lobbying as more resources are available and representivity is increased.

The need for a strategic approach

For many, effective advocacy is a responsive and tactical affair. Governments produce many proposals that affect the business environment and employers' organizations do their best to address each of them as they arise.

Although employers' organizations exist to represent the interests of the wealth generating sector of the economy, they are not usually rich themselves. Because they advocate on behalf of the business community as a whole, for many the "free rider" tendency of reaping the benefits of successful advocacy without sharing the cost is a serious problem. Most organizations work to combat the free rider tendency amongst the business population by providing a variety of member services that generate both the membership volume and the revenues that will enable them to advocate effectively.

As in most things, doing the best possible job with limited resources requires key strengths in the setting of priorities and then organizing to pursue those priorities effectively. In short, employers' organizations cannot afford to be blown off track by volume or by "the urgent", rather than "the important". They have to develop and implement a strategy for effective advocacy within which their lobbying tactics are framed.

An effective advocacy strategy is built on three foundations:

1. Clear advocacy priorities;
2. First rate research and analysis capacity;
3. Understanding the processes of government and administration, and knowing how to tap into them in an effective and timely way.

Against this background, the following sections of the guide take a step by step approach to designing and implementing an effective advocacy strategy.

Section Three

Developing a National Business Agenda

KEY QUOTE

"Those who do not know the plans of competitors cannot prepare alliances. Those who do not know the lie of the land cannot manoeuvre their forces. Those who do not have local guides cannot take advantage of the ground."

Sun Tzu
"The Art of War"
Chinese General c500BC

If employers' organizations are to be effective in their advocacy efforts, they must have a clear understanding of the objectives they seek to achieve. Public policy advocacy objectives are described in many ways, but more and more frequently, employers' organizations are describing them as an "Agenda for Business" or a "National Business Agenda".

Because employers' organizations exist to serve the interests of their members, it is crucial that member companies and organizations are involved in the identification of issues and the setting of priorities. Successful advocacy often involves the building of coalitions that agree to undertake concerted actions. For the employers' organization there is no more powerful coalition than coordinated advocacy work undertaken by member companies and organizations. For this reason the organization's members need to be involved in the identification of issues and the setting of priorities; they also need to know where and how to use the key arguments which relate to those issues.

Identifying issues of member concern

The only way to identify issues that are of concern to members is to ask them. This presumes, however, that members have a clear understanding of what the issues actually are; what plans the government (or opposition) has; what the Parliamentary timetable is; what the policy alternatives might be; etc. Most employers' organization members are in business to run successful companies, not to research issues at the local, national, regional or global level. For this reason the employers' organization will need to invest time and energy in researching the current and upcoming agenda.

This is no simple task. Although some employers' organizations focus exclusively on labour or employment issues, others seek to act as the voice of business on the full range of issues that are relevant to it. The business agenda might include employment, safety, trade, marketing, packaging and labelling, environment, financial and fiscal issues, social security, transport and infrastructure, telecommunications and IT, tariffs, business registration arrangements, education and learning. Even for the organization that focuses exclusively on employment issues, there are major overlaps between employment and, for example, social security, fiscal arrangements, safety and education.

Most employers' organizations will already have a facility for identifying and tracking upcoming and important issues; they will probably subscribe to one or more of the specific briefing services that exist in most countries. Some employers' organizations actually sell, as a member service, their own legislation tracking system. To complement these resources it will be useful at this stage for the organization to undertake PEST and SWOT analyses. Both of these analytical tools are described fully in guide two of this series.

The PEST analysis is designed to help the employers' organization identify the external issues relevant to fulfilling its mission. The following extract is taken directly from the strategy guide.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

The advocacy PEST analysis

PEST Analysis is a framework used to scan the strategic external macro-environment in which an organization operates. PEST is an acronym for the following factors:

- **P**olitical factors
- **E**conomic factors
- **S**ocial factors, and
- **T**echnological factors.

PEST factors play an important role in the value creation opportunities of a strategy. However they are usually beyond the control of the organization and are therefore generally considered as either threats or opportunities.

As macro-economic factors differ by continent, country or region, a PEST analysis needs to be performed at the correct level of aggregation. In a country with strong regional differences, it may be done at the regional level. The table below gives examples of typical PEST factors.

Political (including legal)	Economic	Social	Technological
Environmental regulations and protection	Economic growth	Income distribution	Government research spending
Tax policies	Interest rates & monetary policies	Demographics	Industry focus on technological effort
International trade regulations and restrictions	Government spending	Labour/social mobility	New inventions and development
Contract enforcement law & consumer protection	Unemployment policy	Lifestyle changes	Rate of technology transfer
Employment laws	Taxation	Work/career and leisure attitudes	Life cycle and speed of technological obsolescence
Government organization/ attitude	Exchange rates	Education	Energy use and costs
Political stability	Stage of the business cycle	Health consciousness & welfare, safety	(Changes in) Internet

Completing a PEST analysis is a relatively simple process, and can be done via workshops using brainstorming techniques. It may be worth recalling that sometimes extended forms of PEST analysis are used, such as SLEPT (plus Legal) or the STEEPLE analysis: Social/demographic, Technological, Economic, Environmental (natural), Political, Legal and Ethical factors, etc.

PEST is often combined with the **OT** element of the SWOT analysis. The Opportunities and Threats element of SWOT can be conducted at the local, national, regional and global levels to identify the most important issues working for and against the interests of business. Again the following extract is taken from guide two in this series.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

The advocacy SWOT analysis

EXTERNAL OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS		
	Opportunities	**Threats**
National	■ e.g. Privatization programme ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______	■ e.g. Proposed laws on pension financing ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______
Regional (e.g. EU)	■ e.g. EU competitiveness programme ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______	■ e.g. Environmental laws ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______
International	■ e.g. WTO liberalization proposals ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______	■ e.g. ILO work on contract labour ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______ ■ ______

In completing the analysis of current and future potential advocacy issues and developing a list of advocacy options, you might choose to use your own internal resources, to hire a specialist consultant or to involve a few key members with experience in this area. If your organization already has a committee that focuses on advocacy, this will be a good place to start.

The list of potential issues generated through this process will probably be a long one. Your next step will be to refine the long list based upon the relevance of the issues to your organization's members and the likelihood of advocacy success. Remember that an organization with 47 lobbying priorities has no priorities at all. As a guide you should aim for around 12 priority areas, for each of which you will later draw up a detailed advocacy campaign plan. The final number will obviously depend on the complexity of the issues and the resources available to you. The following list of criteria against which issues can be judged has been adapted from that originally developed by the Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE):

- Relevant to the employers' organization mission;
- Relevant to a significant number of employers' organization members;
- Involves policies, laws or regulations (as opposed to sporadic or unpredictable issues);
- Targets "base policy" issues not simply "symptoms";
- Clear-cut issue;
- Good chance of lobbying success in the short term (avoid issues that, for example, require a change in the national Constitution);
- Likely to be publicly backed by employers' organization members;
- Little opposition by powerful groups, legislators or the general public;
- Little chance of damage to the employers' organization reputation.

Having reduced your advocacy priority list to a more manageable number of relevant options you will need to refine it further by getting the views of some or all of your members. Before going to the membership, it might be a good idea to put the draft list you have developed to your Board for their preliminary review and input.

Canvassing member views

Following the preliminary Board discussion of your issues list you can begin to canvass your members to identify what they consider the organization's advocacy priorities should be.

As a part of your everyday working practices you will probably speak to a number of lay members and committee members about their advocacy concerns. You will already have used this information to make informed decisions on the content of the list you intend to put to members. Remember, a part of the member consultation exercise is to ensure that the views of both parties are aligned, but a second purpose is to gain commitment to the agenda and lay the ground for supportive member actions. It is critical that the advocacy policy of your organization is "owned" by your members. Consequently, even if you are convinced that you already have the right list of priorities, you should still consider seriously a much broader consultation exercise.

There are three general approaches to taking the views of members:

a) conducting a census or sample questionnaire;

b) interviewing a sample of members; or

c) holding focus groups.

You might in fact choose a combination of the three. Whichever approach is chosen, you should ensure that the full range of members in terms of business sector and organizational size are covered.

It is almost always a poor idea to design advocacy programmes around negative campaigns and to fail to offer solutions. The questions you ask your members should therefore contain a clear indication of the policy issue, **and also** the policy direction in which a solution is sought. For example, *The minimum wage* may be a priority issue but the policy objective for the employers' organization should be something like *Ensure that any increases in the minimum wage are restricted to a level below the prevailing rate of inflation.*

Carrying out a questionnaire survey or holding interviews or focus groups with a sample of members are relatively simple processes and most employers' organizations will be capable of administering them themselves. Remember that you will need to cover a complete cross section of your membership in any sample based activity, and that it will be useful to collate the responses by business size and sector to identify and evaluate differences in views.

BEST PRACTICES

DESIGNING A MEMBER SURVEY

Your survey questions will probably look something like this:

Question X Please indicate the level of priority you believe that XXXXX [employers' organization] should place on the following policy issues.

	Very high	High	Not very high	Low	Don't know
LIST PRIORITIES					
1. Ensuring that government proposals to increase the statutory minimum wage are restricted to a level below the prevailing rate of inflation					
....					
....					

In drafting questions, you will almost certainly wish to separate the questions both by issue (e.g. employment, education, trade, safety and health) and by level (e.g. national, regional, global).

The administration of a questionnaire might be more difficult or expensive than running a series of focus groups, but the quantitative information you receive may well prove useful in demonstrating the strength of member opinion to those you seek to influence; it might also form the basis for a press release to launch your organization's business agenda.

BEST PRACTICES

An example of a broadly based priority issues survey produced by the US Chamber of Commerce is attached as an Appendix to this guide.

When you have received your members' views on advocacy priorities it is time to turn them into the broad advocacy objectives, your National Business Agenda, upon which you will develop specific campaign plans. At this point you should ensure that your advocacy objectives are approved by your Board.

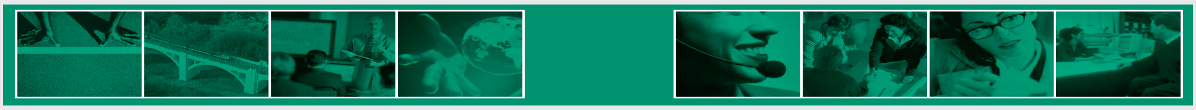
You will now have your first real result – The National Business Agenda. This concise list of the advocacy objectives that your organization intends to pursue is a valuable document and deserves broad circulation and a degree of publicity. A good example of a medium term National Business Agenda that is used to shape an organization's detailed advocacy campaign plans is that produced by the Irish employers' organization, IBEC, described as "Vision 2012". An outline is presented in the best practice box below and the original, and interactive, version can be viewed on their website at www.ibec.ie. In the example below, only Vision 06 relating to the labour market and HRD contains the full text of the policy objective, but the interactive version on the website provides similar detail for each of the "Big 8" vision areas.

BEST PRACTICES

As the organization representing the interests of business and employers in Ireland, IBEC has agreed an overall Vision for Ireland in 2012, focusing on the policy priorities common to all business sectors and regions.

Our Vision for Ireland is based on the belief that, through competitiveness, we will achieve the economic growth necessary to improve living standards to the benefit of all citizens. Our aim is for Ireland to be the most competitive economy in the world by 2012.

We know that IBEC itself cannot make our economy competitive. We can, however, advocate the adoption of economic policies nationally and internationally to support this aim. To promote the achievement of our vision we will focus on eight policy priorities which we will call 'The Big 8'. Our target is to build a consensus among key players that achievement of our 'Big 8' is not only desirable; it is essential for Ireland's future economic development and prosperity.



Vision 01: Measuring global competitiveness

Vision 02: Infrastructure

Vision 03: Education and training

Vision 04: Liberalization

Vision 05: Information and communications technology

Vision 06: Labour market and HRD

Vision 07: Responsible business

Vision 08: The quality of our public sector

"Achieving an appropriate balance in our labour market supply, maximizing workforce flexibility and promoting best practice in Human Resource Development, consistent with the competitive needs of business and the challenges of a changing environment."

Turning your business agenda into effective arguments

KEY QUOTE

"Governments are not interested in hearing about broad problems; they are interested in finding socially, politically and economically acceptable solutions to problems that are capable of resolution."

D. Kindon
The Committee Bulletin's Guide to Lobbying Australia
2005

With your advocacy objectives in place, the move from strategy to tactics begins. To be an effective advocate, you have to be in possession of the facts and use them in the most effective manner. You also have to be able to present acceptable solutions. The importance of getting quality data and information and having the latest research available cannot be over-emphasized. Getting facts wrong or being unaware of important research will undermine even the best planned advocacy campaigns.

In order to plan a campaign in each priority area you will need to know the level of support and opposition you are likely to face, and where it will come from. Conducting this analysis will help you shape your basic arguments, and become more effective when you consider detailed campaign planning.

The best way to identify the source and strength of support and opposition is to use the Distributive Politics Spreadsheet (DPS) described below.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

The Distributive Politics Spreadsheet (DPS) helps you define the potential level of action or involvement of supporting and opposing groups, and their corresponding effectiveness, on an issue that may have consequences for business.

The ***demand side*** looks at the incentives for varying interest groups based on substitutes, the overall magnitude of benefits arising from success, and the per capita benefits that motivate a particular interest group. ***Substitutes*** focus on the alternatives that might be pursued by firms or business organizations, or their constituencies. For example, stockholders are often unmotivated to engage in collective action since they have the alternative of selling their shares. Similarly, business organizations, particularly those that are broadly based, will have a host of issues that they might address, and must choose and cope with competing pressures from their members to address various issues. The ***magnitude* and *per capita benefits*** refer to what the overall benefits and the specific benefits will be for either the company or a business association. Often lobbyists for business associations find that they cannot generate sufficient interest among their members to engage in political action despite large aggregate gains. This may be the result of a combination of large membership but low per capita benefits. In some cases, the benefits of lobbying action may accrue only to some members, and here it will also be difficult to generate consensus on a strategy i.e. high per capita benefits but low aggregate gain.

The ***supply side*** focuses on the power capabilities of the actors in question, their numbers (how many groups or individuals can be involved), their coverage in terms of relevant political jurisdictions, and the resources that can be brought to bear on the issue. In general associations with broad membership will be more effective in generating action, and significant coverage of Parliamentary and Congressional districts will enhance this power. Certain firms and associations may lack size and coverage but are better funded and are consequently able to expend considerably more resources to engage in political activity. The final element of the cost of organizing is probably the most crucial one, since it addresses the problems of ***free riding***.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE (cont.)

THE DISTRIBUTIVE POLITICS SPREADSHEET

IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE COALITION PARTNERS	**Supporting interests for issue being considered**	**Demand side**			**Supply side**				**Prediction**
		Benefits from supporting for each group			***Ability to generate political action of each group***				***Amount of effective political action***
	Interests	Substitutes	Magnitude	Per capita	Numbers	Coverage	Resources	Cost of organizing	
	Group 1 Group 2 …	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	
ASSESSMENT OF OPPOSING INTERESTS	**Opposing interests for issue being considered**	**Demand side**			**Supply side**				**Prediction**
		Benefits from supporting for each group			***Ability to generate political action of each group***				***Amount of effective political action***
	Interests	Substitutes	Magnitude	Per capita	Numbers	Coverage	Resources	Cost of organizing	
	Group 1 Group 2…	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	

A distributive politics analysis can be conducted for both the supporting and opposing sides on any issue. The definitions of what issue or issue-areas are involved, as well as which groups or individuals should be considered relevant political actors, depend on the problem that is being addressed, and on the geographical area in question. With these elements in mind, the spreadsheet provides a convenient way of assessing the likely political action on each side of a particular issue.

At first sight the DPS approach looks complex and unwieldy. It is in fact a relatively simple process, particularly if you replace the detailed financial and other numerical data with a simple categorization of “low”, “medium” and “high”. For most organizations this will provide sufficient depth of analysis. If the result is unclear for a particular advocacy objective, you can always look for more accurate numerical data at that point in time.

A simple example of how the DPS works in identifying potential coalition members and their likely action plans is as follows:

THE ISSUE	*"Opposing government proposals to impose stricter limits on maximum working time".*		
SUPPORTING INTERESTS ANALYSIS – POSSIBLE COALITION PARTNERS			
Group 1 CHAMBERS OF COMMERCE	**Benefits accruing from supporting**	***Substitutes***	Low substitute action rating – will be an issue high on their agenda.
		Magnitude	High effect on membership through reduced flexibility, high bureaucratic recording requirements and expensive recruitment.
		Per capita	Most members will be affected – some at high per capita cost of compliance. Many with medium to high costs.
	Ability to generate political action	***Numbers***	The Chambers have 20,000 members, around 15,000 will be adversely affected and can be mobilized to support.
		Coverage	Good political and media coverage from the Chambers themselves and their members.
		Resources	Relatively high level of resources likely to be made available.
		Cost of organizing	Will use regular advocacy machinery – no extraordinary costs envisaged.
PREDICTION:	Chambers of Commerce are potentially valuable coalition members. Many of their members are affected and the effect of the proposals on small businesses will be a strong argument. Need therefore to get them on board for a general campaign.		

Plainly DPS is particularly useful in the identification of potential coalition partners, and this is discussed more fully in section four below.

Predicting opposing arguments and solutions

Having identified those likely to support and oppose your views, you can now list all the potential solutions that are likely to be proposed – even the ones that are unacceptable to your members. You should then analyse the effects on those you represent and on other key groups and individuals. You can then put arguments together against the less acceptable options and present your preferred option or options in the most attractive overall light.

The analysis should contain a thorough review of the pros and cons of each option and you should be able to defend your position using concrete evidence and statistics. References to relevant research and indicators of international trends and experiences will be extremely valuable.

It is always necessary to remember that you are looking for win/win solutions. All too often employers' organization members prefer to watch a great fight rather than benefit from a good result. They need to be reminded that the objective is to improve the business environment, not to win a fight that results in the public humiliation of the government. Remember, tomorrow you will need to move on to a new issue with the same players!

Core briefing documents

Before moving on to the design of specific advocacy campaigns for each of your business agenda items – discussed in sections five and six, you are now in position to produce your first, and most basic "business agenda" support tool – the "layered briefing folio".

The employers' organization business agenda needs to be a convincing public document that underpins your advocacy strategy. It should be capable of being explained simply and quickly to all audiences, and at the same time have the depth of argument behind it that will stand up to the most strident challenges. The layered briefing folio does exactly this.

This relatively simple approach has been adopted by many major companies. It allows the CEO to explain the organization's advocacy priorities in a compelling way to senior politicians in less than one minute. It provides attractive and convincing "sound bites" on each issue that can be used with the media. It provides sufficient substance for a short meeting with a Minister, and the detail and arguments needed for a longer meeting with civil servants. Its contents will be variously used in press releases, fact sheets and press packs.

BEST PRACTICES

THE LAYERED BRIEFING FOLIO	
Layer one – The key issues	A simple list of the priority advocacy issues in your National Business Agenda described in one brief sentence each. ***e.g. "Eliminate bureaucracy relating to business creation."***
Layer two – The "sound bite"	A one or two sentence description of each issue designed to grab the attention of senior politicians or the media. ***e.g. "The amount of red tape involved in starting a business in this country is driving our best entrepreneurs out of the country."***
Layer three – Key facts	Up to five key facts that can be explained quickly and support the argument. ***e.g. "To set up a new business in this country requires ten forms to be completed involving six government departments who take three months to respond."***
Layer four – The issue brief	A one or two page description of the issue, the main facts, the main opposition views and the proposed solutions.
Layer five – The detailed background brief	A full and comprehensive analysis of the issue, its history, the problems caused (with data), the potential solutions (with cost benefit data), the views of opposing groups and why they are wrong, and the proposed solution (including why it is the most appropriate).

Using this approach you can tailor supporting paperwork for people working in your organization, for Board and Committee members and for rank and file members. Many of these materials can be made available on your website. For those members who have most opportunity to meet policy makers on a regular basis, the layered briefing folio will contain everything they need.

Reviewing advocacy priorities

Overall advocacy priorities shift over time as issues are either resolved or become irresolvable, and as new issues arise. Advocacy priorities do not, and should not, last for ever. It will therefore be necessary to review them on a periodic basis. Organizations should plan for their Board to review advocacy priorities on a formal and annual basis.

THE BUSINESS AGENDA CHECKLIST

- ❑ Does your organization have an advocacy strategy?
- ❑ Does your advocacy strategy have clear objectives?
- ❑ Are your advocacy objectives described in terms of “desired policy outcomes” (A National Business Agenda)?
- ❑ Were your objectives developed as a result of comprehensive external environment research i.e. PEST, SWOT or similar?
- ❑ Were your members’ views on your advocacy objectives canvassed and taken into account?
- ❑ Have your advocacy objectives been agreed by the Board of your organization?
- ❑ Do you have a sufficiently effective in-house or external research capability?
- ❑ Do you know who the most important supporters and opponents will be for each objective?
- ❑ Have you reviewed the strength of both support and opposition to each strategy objective?
- ❑ Have you built a structured series of briefing documents for each objective (layered briefing folio)?
- ❑ Are the key advocacy materials you have developed readily available to your members?

Section Four

Identifying targets and assessing tactics

KEY QUOTE

"The right to be heard does not automatically include the right to be taken seriously."

Hubert Humphrey
US Senator
1911 – 1978

One of the most important features of an effective advocacy campaign is that the targets are precisely identified and unique tactics are adopted to address each of them. This means having a thorough understanding of how the policy making process works, who the "players" are and what the points of maximum influence are at each stage. The advocacy campaign for each priority issue should identify targets in the correct sequence, and each successive action should build on achievements already made or lessons learned.

There are many advocacy targets, but a useful and simple categorization is to think of them as "insider" and "outsider" targets. "Insider" advocacy involves:

- meetings with policy makers and legislative staff;
- providing analyses and information to Parliamentary committees; and
- testifying before committees.

"Outsider" advocacy involves:

- influencing the media;
- fostering grassroots activities; and
- coalition building.

For each issue on your national business agenda you will need to map a specific campaign plan for insiders and outsiders that tracks the issue through its various stages, details the various interventions you propose to make, allocates responsibility for actions and specifies who will coordinate the overall activity. The campaign plan will need to be very specific – but it will also need to be flexible. Policy issues often take unexpected turns that offer new opportunities or pose new threats. You need to monitor the issues very closely and be prepared to change campaign tactics rapidly.

"Insider" advocacy

If an issue is identified early enough, advocacy contact will normally begin with public officials. Contact should be made at the appropriate level, and junior or middle ranking officials should not be missed out or leap-frogged. The time when the public official is researching and considering a problem is the time when s/he is most likely to be influenced. Once pen has been put to paper, the work involved in making substantive changes is considerably more difficult. To do this, and reinforcing the point made above, the advocate has to have a thorough knowledge of the policy/law making process and know (a) where the points of influence are, (b) the name of the person that sits there and (c) where to find the dossier you are interested in.

Just as the movement up the public servant hierarchy has to be well planned, so must the move from administrative to political lobbying. Effective advocacy is about building solid and durable relationships. Taking care not to undercut junior officials and resisting the temptation to jump in at the ministerial level (other than simply to flag an issue) are important if long term relationships based on trust and mutual understanding are to be built. Always remember that failing to persuade politicians and their advisers on one issue does not mean that you will be unable to do so on other issues in the future. Maintain good and cordial relationships even when your ideas are rejected.

When an issue moves from the administrative arena to the political, don't underestimate the power still wielded by public officials over policy development and ministerial decision making. The public official still holds the pen that drafts the amendment and often has the last say with the minister when you have left the office. Remember also that public officials stay in post significantly longer than most ministers!

KEY QUOTE

"Nine times out of ten ministers side with their officials.
Do you want a 10% or a 90% chance of success?"

Anonymous lobbyist

The more formal side of insider advocacy involves meetings with public officials and politicians. Whilst meetings with public officials will almost certainly be longer and more detailed than meetings with politicians, the advocate needs to be thoroughly prepared. For any meeting the following points, adapted from work previously published by CIPE, need to be considered and thorough preparations tailored to the audience need to be made.

PRACTICAL EXERCISE

SUCCESSFUL "INSIDER" MEETINGS

YOUR MESSAGE MUST

- Appeal to the interests of the audience;
- Be convincing – not only is your view soundly based, but the issue is important and needs the intervention of the person you are meeting;
- Be concise;
- State specifically the actions you are looking for from the audience;
- Include answers to the questions you anticipate will be asked.

YOUR PRESENTATION SHOULD

- Start with why the issue is important;
- Demonstrate how many people and groups support the view you will present;
- Describe the positive and negative effects of the approach they propose to adopt (don't forget there will always be a positive reason for the change in the mind of the policy maker and this needs to be acknowledged);
- Describe how the policy change will work in practice. Exactly who it will help and who it will hurt – and to what extent;
- Describe how the policy change will be viewed by key opinion formers – particularly those that are important to the individuals' political base;
- State what action or change needs to be made;
- Either propose or offer to propose specific language for any changes if appropriate;
- Explain that you are happy to follow up the meeting with further written facts or examples if this would be helpful;

Thank the audience for their time and follow up with a letter of thanks that summarizes the main points you made at the meeting.

When planning meetings with politicians it is interesting and informative to understand how they view meetings with you. As explained earlier, more positive public officials and politicians see face to face meetings with well prepared advocates as an opportunity to learn, to get "real world" feedback and to float ideas they might be considering in order to obtain a response. Looking at this question in more detail, when two opposing Australian Members of Parliament were asked how they preferred to be lobbied, they came up with the following lists:

BEST PRACTICES

THE POLITICIAN'S ADVICE TO LOBBYISTS

MEMBER "X"	MEMBER "Y"
■ Keep paperwork to a minimum; ■ Make sure the issue and timing are relevant; ■ Take account of the member's interests; ■ Take account of the profile of those that elected him/her; ■ Keep the approach personal; ■ Be timely; ■ Be memorable – leave behind an effective "footprint"; ■ Avoid the production line technique of letter and e-mail storming; ■ Focus on facts not emotions; ■ Be brief! ■ Be patient!!	■ Be competent on the issue; ■ Be punctual; ■ Be well briefed; ■ Don't trivialize; ■ Back arguments and convictions with facts and evaluated appraisals; ■ Discern between important and unimportant issues; ■ Use and build upon past credibility; ■ Be up front and honest; ■ Have the facts ready; ■ Maximize your time – every second counts.

Becoming "part of the process"

You will have reached the pinnacle of insider advocacy when the policy makers working in your area begin to see your organization as part of the policy development process and stop seeing you as an outright lobbyist. In the same way that you will seek meetings with them on key issues, your objective is that they should seek meetings with you on a proactive basis in order to hear what business has to say. The earlier and less formal this is, the more effective it is likely to be. This means engaging in frequent and useful communication in both formal and informal ways – but ensuring that you are not seen as someone who wastes their time with meetings for the sake of saying hello.

To establish and develop positive long term relationships you might consider the following actions:

- Make sure relevant public officials and politicians have information about what your organization does, who your members are, the issues you work on and your national business agenda objectives. The IBEC "Big 8" example above is a good model to review;
- Invite public officials and politicians to key employers' organization events where they will have an opportunity to meet real members in an informal setting;

- Invite key policy makers to address your members at relevant conferences, key policy making committees and round-tables. Think about organizing meetings which bring together groups that the policy makers would not normally get the opportunity to meet under one roof;
- Offer policy makers the opportunity to visit your member organizations at their place of work and to meet their employees. This way they can "discover" evidence themselves "at the coal face";
- When special committees are set up, make sure that you attend any public sessions and where possible give evidence. If you attend a meeting, make sure those you seek to influence know you were there;
- Identify and secure seats on relevant government and quasi governmental advisory bodies;
- Regularly provide policy makers with good quality briefing materials on issues of interest to them;
- Where appropriate, ensure that you recognize when your views have been taken into account. Thank people personally, send letters with a copy to the individual's boss or party leader, make favourable press comment, etc.

"Outsider" advocacy

The key outside audiences for the message of the employers' organization are the written and broadcast media. Handling the press and broadcast media reporters effectively is the subject for a guide in itself but there are some important strategies and tactics that merit consideration here.

Most employers' organizations are looking for "free" or "earned" media coverage as opposed to "paid media" i.e. advertising. It is worth bearing in mind that in certain (rare) circumstances you might consider paid advertising when you want to get a specific message to a group of readers or viewers without spin or editorial intervention.

As with insider advocacy, your ultimate objective is for members of the media to call your organization when a story emerges either for the view of "business" or to put them in contact with key members who might contribute to their story.

Your overall approach to the media should be strategic. Make sure that key reporters in the most important newspapers, journals and broadcast programmes are aware of what your organization does, who your members are, the issues you work on and your business agenda objectives. Get a reputation for producing good quality materials that are useful to them (production of press releases and other forms of media related materials are discussed below). Be responsive when they look for assistance and provide useful information and copy. By successfully managing a positive and proactive relationship with the press you are most likely to be successful in generating "earned" media coverage. You are also more likely to be able to exploit the tactical opportunities offered by being the first port of call when important stories break.

Don't forget that your members and potential members watch the news, listen to the radio and read the newspapers. Their perceptions of your influence and success will be driven by the volume and quality of coverage that your organization receives. A final word of caution, however, with respect to the media. Journalists can be your best friends – but they can also be your worst enemies. They work to tight timescales and seek contributions that are at best sensational or controversial … and at the very least newsworthy. Move quickly, but tread with care!

The following list of do's and don'ts for dealing with the media is adapted from the excellent series of guidelines produced by the International Competition Network.

BEST PRACTICES

MEDIA DO'S AND DON'TS

Identify at least one person in your office to be the media contact. That person will determine whether to handle the matter or pass it along to someone else. Think about who will be allowed to speak to the media. Some organizations empower employees of all levels to speak to the media, while others either have official spokespersons or have only the most senior executive as a spokesperson. In all cases, it is important for the spokesperson to have a degree of media training;

Be honest with the media – if your organization is perceived to be secretive or dishonest, its actions will not get positive coverage;

When talking with a reporter, remember that everything you say is ***on the record*** unless otherwise agreed upon. Do not reveal sensitive information, even if a reporter asks leading or persuasive questions.

If you don't know the answer to a question, say so. Tell the reporter that you will get back to him/her with an answer ... and do so quickly.

Don't play favourites. Treat all reporters equally, regardless of whether they are print or broadcast reporters.

Remember that reporters are most likely working on a deadline, so respond to their inquiries as soon as possible.

Give reporters advance warning when you expect that something is going to happen. Tell them, without going into particulars, "I may have something you'll be interested in" ... and tell them when you will be free to talk.

To keep reporters constantly informed, some organizations set a fixed time of day when they send out releases via fax and e-mail. This is useful for reporters since they know what to expect.

It is useful to establish an embargo system for certain types of advance information. This helps journalists digest the information before getting it out and, therefore, results in more accurate reporting. Embargo systems sometimes contain penalties for breaking the embargo (three-month exclusion from the system for the first break, increased to six months for a second offence, nine for a third, etc.)

Send out news releases for important announcements. When drafting a news release, try to think in terms of what a reporter would want to know. Read the news release aloud and be sure it makes sense.

Don't just fax or e-mail out news releases. It is helpful if someone from the office calls reporters as well. Tailor your calls to interest individual reporters. If possible, provide a local angle or refer to the reporter's past work.

BEST PRACTICES (cont.)

MEDIA DO'S AND DON'TS

Regularly track your media coverage to see who is reporting on your organization and on the questions which concern you. Call them directly when a news release is issued. Get to know these journalists better by holding a media relations meeting or round-table discussion with them. Invite members of your organization as well, so that they too can become acquainted with these journalists.

Make sure your media telephone and e-mail distribution contact lists are up to date. You should get home and cell phone numbers in case breaking news happens after regular business hours. You also may want to get an editor's number in case your reporter is out of town or on another assignment. This includes editorial staff writers.

Offer reporters someone who can give background information and explain technical issues. It will help make the final story more accurate.

Find out from your members whether they are prepared to assist in handling media enquiries, and who should be contacted in the first instance.

Broadcast media

Broadcast, and particularly TV, media coverage is generally more difficult to secure than print. It is easy to get a slot on the main news of the day only when the news is bad!

The demands of the electronic media are quite different from those of print journalists. Journalists working in radio and television have very little time to tell a story. Typically radio news items are 30 to 60 seconds. Television stories normally run between 90 seconds and three minutes. Interviews have to be extremely concise due to time constraints and reporters also require interesting pictures to help tell the tale.

If your organization seeks to attract the attention of broadcast media, the following points may be useful:

BEST PRACTICES

SECURING BROADCAST MEDIA COVERAGE	
Develop relationships with specialist reporters	■ Research media outlets and shows ■ Target effectively ■ Identify individual reporters who regularly cover the issues on your agenda ■ Proactively advise them of upcoming issues that would be appealing for them to cover
Train and coach your spokespeople	■ Train spokespersons to condense a complex story into a 20 or 30 second clip and to distil the essence of a case in basic terms ■ Coach spokespeople to convey key messages and stick to them, without being shaken by the line of questioning of the journalist ■ Have selected rehearsed interviewees available as part of a media strategy for any big announcement
Think visually	■ When planning communications, think of simple visual examples that illustrate what the case is about ■ Offer television/radio facilities for major announcements where possible ■ Use video news releases (VNRs) where appropriate – essentially, pre-packaged interviews/background footage

Grassroots networks & mobilizing members

Many single issue groups, and particularly activist NGOs devote a lot of energy to mobilizing grassroots support for their cause. Their tools include mass letter writing, telephoning, faxing or e-mailing key targets, providing kits that make leafleting or arranging protest events easy, etc. For employers' organizations, securing grassroots support for a programme usually means mobilizing member support.

Employers' organization members have considerable assets that the effective employers' organization will wish to take advantage of:

- Companies have a particularly credible voice with politicians. They work in the "real world" and can give clear and concise practical examples of how particular changes might help or hinder enterprise and national competitiveness;
- Many larger companies employ senior staff whose specialist role is to deal with government and media relations;
- The CEOs of some member companies are in regular contact with key political figures and opinion formers, and their view on a range of matters is actively sought.

There are, however, limits to the extent companies may wish to engage. An anonymous Chief Executive of a major multinational company spoke for many when he said:

> *"When I want to tell the Prime Minister he is doing a great job – I can do that myself. When I want to tell him he is doing a bad one – I turn to the employers' association."*

In order to become involved in the advocacy process your members need to know what the organization is advocating and why. The obvious first step for the employers' organization is to provide information and education to members. Employers' organizations frequently use briefing meetings, newsletters and periodic reports. The layered briefing folio approach is an excellent vehicle for informing members in a practical way of your advocacy priorities and of the main arguments. Putting much of this information on your website is a great way of securing mass availability whilst keeping materials up to date.

BEST PRACTICES

The "Issue Tracker" publication brought out regularly by the Irish employers' organization is a good example of keeping members up to date on advocacy issues.

Having received the information they need, members then need to know what they should do to strengthen and support your advocacy efforts. These actions might include:

- Meeting local elected representatives or those they already know;
- Writing letters, faxes or e-mails;
- Attending "meet the member" events organized for policy makers by the organization;
- Raising key issues with other organizations which they or their companies may be members of e.g. professional associations, Institutes of Managers or Directors, Chambers of Commerce, trade associations or sectoral employers' organizations.

Remember, your members will need your help, advice and coordination if they are to do the right thing at the right time.

Selecting messengers

KEY QUOTE

"Ten people who speak make more noise than ten thousand who are silent"

Napoléon Bonaparte
« Empereur des Français »
1769 – 1821

A fundamental part of your advocacy plan is deciding who should deliver the message. Although what is said is important, how it is said and by whom is also critical. Having the right messenger can make or break an advocacy effort. It is clear that any messenger you use should:

- Be an excellent speaker (based upon the specific audience e.g. one-on-one or major conference presenter);
- Have knowledge about the subject;
- Have practical experience of dealing with the issue;
- Be affected by the outcome of the process.

Beyond this, the general rule of thumb is to select "horses for courses". Business leaders go down well with politicians and business audiences. Technical experts working in the field work well with public officials. Academics relate well to "think tanks".

The notion of choosing the right person to convey the message may be obvious, and the criteria for selection self-evident … what is important is that you think about it and do it!

Building coalitions

Advocacy coalitions help campaigns by combining resources and ideas to develop a stronger message and a more compelling public image. In short, there is strength in numbers. When they work well, coalitions add enormous weight to a campaign. When they work badly, coalitions can become a tiresome and counter-productive exercise in pointless conflict. If you completed the *Distributive Politics Spreadsheet* you will already have a clear idea who will be the most likely coalition contenders on the issues that matter to you.

Whilst there is a strong temptation for like minded individuals and organizations with their own ideas and strategies to rush headlong into action, coalition membership and organization requires some thought. If your organization is building a coalition, the first step is to consider the broad goals you would wish to see for the group and to think who would be the most likely members. There are frequently issues of competing and conflicting interests that will need to be taken into account … and it is generally better to do this before the coalition partners sit down in the same room.

When the potential coalition members meet, the following issues need to be clarified and written down:

- Who will lead the groups activities;
- What is the common message;
- What is the advocacy strategy and timetable;
- Who will be the spokespeople;
- How work will be assigned to avoid duplication of effort and how expenses will be shared;
- How the group will share information and coordinate activities.

Successful coalitions often develop from ad hoc groups into more permanent cooperation arrangements. If this happens it is useful to become a little more formal and structured with respect to operating practices.

Because of the competitive and conflict of interest issues that might arise, some supporters and supportive organizations may not wish to join a coalition or to associate themselves with all the ideas that emanate from it. These people and organizations will, however, be useful allies in the advocacy campaign, and it is worth considering how informal information sharing and coordination of activities can take place.

THE ADVOCACY TARGETS & TACTICS CHECKLIST

- ❑ Do you have a clear understanding of the policy making process and timing for each of your business agenda priorities?
- ❑ Have you identified the most important insider and outsider lobbying targets at each stage of the process, and do you know when approaches will be most effective?
- ❑ Are your lobbying targets correct for the stage of issue development i.e. you are not leap-frogging?
- ❑ Have you focused in particular on the early stages of issue development when ideas are likely to be more fluid?
- ❑ Do you have a strategy vis à vis insider targets to move from being a lobbyist to being part of the policy making process?
- ❑ Do you have a media strategy?
- ❑ Do you have a complete and up to date list of relevant media and journalists?
- ❑ Do you have a strategy to make your organization the “media choice” for expressing the views of business on your advocacy agenda items?
- ❑ Have you selected appropriate messengers?
- ❑ Do you have a strategy for mobilizing member support for your advocacy objectives?
- ❑ Do you have a plan for coalition building for your National Business Agenda as a whole, and the priority items in it?

Section Five

Developing targeted advocacy materials

KEY QUOTE

"Clarity of writing generally follows clarity of thought. So think what you want to say, then say it as simply as possible."

The Economist Magazine Style Guide

There are a range of tools in the successful advocate's armoury. Many of them have already been described in the body of the guide. For ease of reference these include:

ADVOCACY TOOL	PAGE REFERENCE
Developing a National Business Agenda	7-17
Producing a layered briefing folio	16-17
Meeting politicians and public officials	19-22
Media do's and don'ts	23-24
Securing broadcast media coverage	24-25
Member mobilization	25-26
Building & managing coalitions	26-27

Additional advice on the production of the more important written documents is provided here. The following documents and packages are discussed below:

- The press release
- The issue brief
- The fact sheet
- The press pack.

The press release

A press release, if picked up by the print and/or broadcast media, is one of the most effective ways of getting your message into the hands of the general public, your members and those you seek to influence. Depending on the publication or broadcast programme, as "earned" media, the message that comes through has the benefit of not being seen as "biased lobbying" but as "independently reported information or news".

Content – Journalists receive large numbers of press releases – often on the same subject on the same day. To be used, your release should have the journalist rushing to meet a copy deadline in mind. The following elements are generally accepted in a range of media guides as being fundamental to the production of a good press release. The following best practice example is adapted from a variety of sources based upon an original model provided by CIPE.

Distribution – Develop a comprehensive list of named journalists who work in the media you wish to target and who deal with your issues. You will need to list individuals in the relevant daily and weekly local and national publications, week-end newspapers, professional and technical journals, TV and radio stations. Don't be afraid to call journalists to draw their attention to releases that you feel are particularly important or interesting.

A useful tip is to keep a record of who uses your press releases and which writers produce articles on the issues of concern to you. These are the people with whom you might wish to seek a specific meeting with the objective of developing a longer term relationship. They are also the people you might wish to contact directly before an event in order to "tip them off" with respect to a breaking story.

BEST PRACTICES

WRITING AN EFFECTIVE PRESS RELEASE

CLARITY	When journalists see your release they will decide whether to read it in a matter of seconds. They want to see: ■ Who is the release from? – make sure your organization's name and logo feature prominently at the top; ■ Is it news? – put the release date and time and any embargo date and time; ■ What's it about? – a maximum two line "newspaper style" headline that summarizes the content; ■ Who can I interview? – the name and contact details of someone to contact for more information.
BREVITY	A press release should not be more than one side of A4 and as a discipline should be double-spaced. You are not writing a story for the journalist to print. Only include the most important arguments and data – if the journalists are interested they will want to follow up the story with their own questions and from their own angle.
STYLE	The ideal structure for a press release is: ■ **Headline** – a maximum two line "newspaper style" headline that summarizes the content. ■ **Introduction** – 8 to 10 lines of text containing the key messages of the release. It should say who, what, where, when, how, why. ■ **Quote** – should be short, memorable and from someone worth quoting i.e. a name, company, title or job that is recognizable. Distil the strongest message into the fewest words. A long quote will either not be used, or worse, will be cut to give a spin that you might not like! ■ **Description, figures and/or graphics** – Put any list in descending order of importance and provide numbers that enable the journalist to quantify the issue. Always state the source of any information. ■ **Any crucial background** that will set the release into a broader context. ■ **Who you are** – two sentences that describe your organization, who you represent and its objectives. Add your website address. ■ **Contact person** – the name and telephone number of someone who will provide further information … quickly!
FORMAT	Many organizations produce a comprehensive style guide for their press releases containing standard layouts, type-faces etc. If you issue a lot of releases this makes each of your documents immediately recognizable.

The issue brief

The issue brief is the fourth element of the layered briefing folio described in section three. The issue brief is particularly useful for employers' organization managers and staff, committee members and members prepared to engage in lobbying. In view of the value of this document it is worth including a few simple do's and don'ts in this section.

BEST PRACTICES

THE ISSUE BRIEF

The issue brief is typically a one or two page summary of why an issue is important, what needs to be done and why. The brief should contain the following elements:

THE PROBLEM	Identify the issue or problem and describe it in terms that the audience will understand. If it is an issue involving legislation – describe the legislative history and the likely next legislative steps. *"Too many children leave our schools without the basic levels of numeracy and literacy that make them suitable candidates for jobs in industry. In the planned review of the national curriculum, Government must focus on this issue."*
WHY THE PROBLEM IS IMPORTANT	Explain why the issue is important to the target audience and describe in simple terms how the issue will affect business. Use straightforward terms and provide information, graphs or charts that quantify its impact on business, on the general public or on the economy. *"X% of children today leave school with no formal qualifications and levels of basic numeracy and literacy that render them incapable of performing the most basic jobs in industry. Business today is helping to make up for this failure of the education system by investing in remedial basic education for new entrants in order that they can work productively and safely. Workers under the age of 25 are 3 times more likely to be involved in a workplace accident, and those without basic reading skills are 5 times more likely to injure themselves at work. At a time when business needs to focus on the use of technology requiring higher worker skills, the educational attainment level of new entrants into the workplace is getting lower. The number of functionally illiterate children leaving school has increased from X% to Y% over the last ten years."*
THE SOLUTION	Outline the policy solution to the problem and say specifically who needs to do what. Quantify the effects of the proposed policy solution. *"At its upcoming review of the national curriculum, government needs to focus the national curriculum on the achievement of basic numeracy and literacy standards. Basic mathematics and English [relevant mother tongue] must take up a greater proportion of children's school time. Schools must invest more in employing teaching staff who specialize in remedial level education and more attention must be paid to resolving problems of non-attendance and truancy. Free of charge remedial education classes should be provided and marketed in local communities aimed at functionally innumerate and illiterate young adults".*

The fact sheet

Fact sheets are becoming increasingly popular as quick and easy to digest summaries of issues. They are more externally focused than the issue brief and serve a variety of purposes. Primarily, reporters use them for background information and they can serve as reference material for organization members or the general public. They are particularly suited for use in “series form” on a website. For general purposes, employers’ organizations can use fact sheets to describe labour laws and practices or their services. In the advocacy context, they are used to cover an issue in sufficient depth to provide the reader with a relatively full understanding of the subject at hand.

There are as many different formats and styles of fact sheet as there are organizations that produce them. Good ones have several things in common. They are one to two pages in length, well organized, clear and easy to read and they answer typical questions the reader would ask about the subject.

When writing a fact sheet, the author should consider the following points adapted from the guide provided by RCPI (Research for Communication and Public Involvement):

BEST PRACTICES

PRODUCING EXCELLENT FACT SHEETS	
PLAN YOUR FACT SHEET	***Identify your purpose*** ■ Why do you want to distribute a fact sheet? ■ What do you want your audience to understand and believe? ***Know your audience*** ■ Who are you trying to reach? ■ What does your audience already know, think, and feel about the topic? What else do they want to know?
MAKE IT EASY FOR PEOPLE TO FIND THE INFORMATION THEY WANT	***Provide answers for the questions people are most frequently asking*** ■ What is happening related to my concerns or issues? ■ How does this affect me?
USE UNDERSTANDABLE TEXT AND ILLUSTRATIONS	■ Focus on the big picture—don’t use too many details ■ Keep the message straightforward and the language simple ■ Cut the jargon ■ Limit the use of acronyms, and define the ones you do use
USE AS FEW NUMBERS AS POSSIBLE	***If you need to use numbers***: ■ Remember that numbers are not second nature to most people ■ Consider using an analogy to explain small amounts and relate numbers to something familiar ■ Use whole numbers and fractions instead of decimal points ■ If you must use scientific notation, explain first, and then be consistent
DESIGN A VISUALLY APPEALING AND USER-FRIENDLY FACT SHEET	■ Use drawings, graphics, and photos as much as possible to convey your message ■ Use bullets instead of long paragraphs of text ■ Break up text by using a question-and-answer format or by using helpful headings
MAKE IT EASY FOR PEOPLE TO PROVIDE FEEDBACK OR REQUEST MORE INFORMATION	■ Provide a point of contact ■ Provide other sources of information

The following sample fact sheet is taken from the American Medical Student Association guide to fact sheet writing (www.amsa.org/legislativecenter/factsheet.cfm)

SAMPLE FACT SHEET

Support H.R. 1228 & S. 952
Limiting Resident-Physician Work Hours

The 40,000 physician-in-training members of the American Medical Student Association (AMSA) strongly urge the passage of H.R. 1228 and S. 952, limiting resident-physician work hours. The excessive hours worked by resident physicians are known to impair performance. Doctors routinely make life and death decisions under these circumstances and yet the medical community has been hesitant to address this issue. Although the ACGME has had long-standing guidelines regarding work hours, enforcement has been minimal. Effective as of July 1, 2003, the ACGME's latest regulations promise to be a step in the right direction, yet further regulation is essential to guarantee patient and physician safety is preserved.

- The Institute of Medicine released a report revealing nearly 100,000 annual deaths resulting from medical errors.
- 41% percent of resident-physicians attribute their most serious mistake in the previous year to fatigue. 45% of residents who sleep less than 4 hours per night report committing medical errors.
- The medical community is ill-equipped to enforce work hour rules and cannot provide independent oversight on compliance with such rules.
- Surveys show that between 30% and 40% of a resident's time is spent on non-educational activities. Newly established regulations by the ACGME restrict hours but do not provide any additional funding to free residents from ancillary duties.
- Currently, the public is denied access to compliance information including identification of noncompliant hospitals and number or type of violations.
- The ACGME regulations call for all complaints of violations to be signed. The Residency Review Committees responsible for enforcing the regulations will not review anonymous reports.
- ACGME regulations restrict work hours but allow for averaging over a one-month period. This flexibility permits hospitals to continue scheduling residents with excessive hours on any given week provided the monthly average is met.
- Under ACGME regulations, programs may file for exemptions from the 80-hour restriction (allowing up to a 10% increase) if they can demonstrate "sound educational rationale."

Federal legislation is necessary to protect both patients and physicians. We are urging legislators to cosponsor S.952 and H.R.1228, **The Patient and Physician Safety and Protection Act**. For more information, or to offer cosponsorship, contact:

Name, Telephone (all hours), Address, Email

The press pack

Press packs are normally prepared to back up one-on-one meetings with important media staff. They are typically distributed at press conferences associated with a particular and specific high profile event; provided at product or service launches; or handed out at more social events attended by media representatives. The press pack is a substantial bundle of documents dealing with a particular issue or issues.

Increasingly, organizations post a "virtual press pack" that combines information on the organization and its services together with advocacy fact sheets on their website. This makes up to date information available online to journalists and combines all the information they are likely to need when drafting a story.

In addition to the issue-specific material, the press pack should normally include a selection of the following information. Much of it will be found in existing publications:

- A brief history of the employers' organization
- The organization's mission statement
- Data relating to membership
- A list of services the organization provides and what they mean to business
- A list of officers, management and committee chairmen and their backgrounds
- A fact sheet on national business statistics
- Relevant photographs/images
- A couple of 'stories'/case studies on the work of the organization
- A list of members willing to talk about the organization
- The organization's advocacy priorities and objectives
- A list of current fact sheets
- Current news releases
- A list of upcoming events
- Your contact details

TARGETED ADVOCACY MATERIALS CHECKLIST

- ❑ Have you benchmarked your current advocacy practices and support tools against the materials provided in the body of the guide (developing the National Business Agenda, the layered briefing folio, managing meeting with politicians and public officials, media do's and don'ts, broadcast media guide, building coalitions and mobilizing members)?
- ❑ Does your organization have clear guidelines for the production and distribution of press releases?
- ❑ Do you have a process for tracking which journalists pick up your releases and which cover the issues on your agenda? Do you use this to revise your distribution lists and to develop key contacts?
- ❑ Do you produce one or two page issue briefs for each item on your agenda, which contain all the elements described in the example?
- ❑ Do you produce fact sheets on key issues that contain all the elements described in the example?
- ❑ Do you have a press pack available both in hard copy and on your website?
- ❑ Do you keep the materials on your website up to date?

Section Six

Measuring success and communicating it to your members

If your organization wishes to ensure that your National Business Agenda remains relevant and that you are adopting the most effective advocacy tactics on the ground, you will need to review advocacy efforts in a variety of ways. Your overall advocacy approach will combine a series of strategic priorities; each of these will need to be reviewed separately.

Reviewing the National Business Agenda

You should review your National Business Agenda on an annual basis and at Board level. This will require:

- An updated sweep of the external environment (PEST/SWOT) to add or exclude items;
- Checking that your agenda priorities have not been resolved; have not changed to the extent that your policy objective has to be revised; or circumstances have changed so that the issue has become irresolvable;
- Re-checking with members that the agenda remains relevant to them.

The core tools for undertaking this review are the same as those involved in the original strategic exercise.

There will be times when a new and major strategic issue arises that needs urgent priority attention. This will often be associated with a major change in the operating environment like a currency crisis, oil price shock, natural disaster or other unpredictable event. When this happens, you will need to review your advocacy strategy as a whole in order to put the new issue in the right place on the agenda and to create the resources necessary to tackle it.

Reviewing the layered briefing folio

The documents in your layered briefing folio need always to be “current”. For many of your most important key advocates, this document will be their lobbying Bible. It should therefore be updated with new facts and information as changes occur. This will be a relatively straightforward process for the individual coordinating the advocacy brief for each particular subject. In any event, the material contained in the folio should be reviewed and revised every six months, reissued to key individuals and re-posted on your website to ensure that your members always have up to date information.

Reviewing advocacy tactics

Advocacy tactics should be kept under continuous review to take account of changing timescales, changing policy directions and new opportunities and threats. This review will be the responsibility of the individual coordinating the advocacy effort on the issue in question.

In reviewing advocacy effectiveness the kinds of question you need to ask include the following (adapted from a CIPE checklist):

- Is the issue still relevant to our members?
- Has the issue changed in any way?
- Is further research required?
- Are our goals still achievable?
- Have timelines changed?
- Are we up to date with our advocacy actions?
- Are we targeting the right people?
- Are we reaching the targets?
- Are we using the right messengers?
- Are our messengers sticking to the objectives set?
- Does our message need to be modified?
- Do we have sufficient resources?

- Are we taking advantage of opportunities for coalition work?
- Are our coalitions working effectively?
- Are we coordinating with supporters outside our coalitions effectively?

Member communication

Your members need to be regularly updated on the organization's advocacy objectives, the actions being taken by the organization, the actions it would be helpful for them to undertake, and how the advocacy effort is progressing. They will also need to have available the most up to date facts on the issues on the advocacy agenda. Member communication is vital if you are to secure commitment to your objectives and solicit member help in advocacy actions. Communicating priorities, actions and successes is about more than commitment and support. Your members and non-members will judge the success of your organization as a whole upon how influential and successful your advocacy efforts are seen to be. As successes are perceived, membership will expand and income will increase.

It is often very difficult to explain advocacy success. On many occasions a lobbying success for the organization will mean that a piece of legislation is delayed or is a little less damaging than might otherwise be the case. Advocacy successes are normally qualified and are rarely explainable in win/lose terms. Even where there are relatively clear "wins", it is often difficult for your organization to claim and broadcast them. For you to proclaim a clear "win" means declaring an equally clear "loss" for someone else. This may not help your ongoing relationship with the policy makers and other interest groups like trade unions.

For these reasons, members will often judge advocacy success by the effort they witness you putting in, the relevance of the issues you are working on to their organization and the volume and tone of media coverage. In short, they want clear evidence that you are working hard on the issues that matter to them.

With this in mind, it is important to ensure that you:

- Undertake adequate and regular member consultation on the lobbying agenda;
- Keep members regularly up to date on the actions you are taking through newsletters, magazines and updates;
- Keep advocacy information "alive" on your web site: and
- Ensure members see any helpful media coverage you receive in your regular publications and on your website.

Of course – when you do have a major success that you can talk openly about – then make the most of it with your members.

MEASURING SUCCESS CHECKLIST

- ❑ Do you have a process for reviewing your National Business Agenda on an annual basis with your Board?
- ❑ Does the Board meeting involve a review of the external environment, a reappraisal of current advocacy objectives and an update of how members see your advocacy priorities?
- ❑ Do you have processes for keeping your layered briefing folio and other fact sheet type materials up to date? Are they formally reviewed and revised at least once every six months?
- ❑ Are your tactical approaches kept constantly under review to assess their effectiveness and to respond immediately to changes that present opportunities or threats?
- ❑ Is the information that you provide to members always up to date?
- ❑ Do you have regular processes for communicating advocacy priorities, actions and successes to your members?

Section Seven

Putting it all together – a blueprint for successful advocacy

By now you will have reviewed all the processes involved in the development of an advocacy strategy and the adoption of tactical campaigns to put it into effect. To recap, you will know how to:

- Identify advocacy issues and select priorities … and as a result you will know how to produce a statement of advocacy objectives – your "National Business Agenda";
- Work with the priorities on the agenda to identify those individuals and organizations that are likely to support and oppose your agenda, assess the likely strength of their support and opposition, and the arguments your opponents are likely to use. With these elements in mind you will be able to develop the second essential advocacy tool – "The layered briefing folio";
- Move from strategy to tactics. You will be able to review for each issue on your advocacy agenda the path the issue is likely to take. You can identify the "insiders" and "outsiders" you need to work on and decide when your interventions are likely to be most effective. You will also be able to identify the messengers to use – your organization staff, members or coalitions. Based on this knowledge you can put together a campaign plan for every issue on your agenda;
- Use the advocacy tools described in the text to help you put your campaign plans into action;
- Plan for an annual review of your National Business Plan, periodic revision of your layered folio and constant review of your campaign tactics.

Most employers' organizations will already have lobbying strategies and campaigns under way. For them the guide is a tool to identify any missing elements or to review current approaches with a view to finding ideas that will make the advocacy effort more resource efficient and more effective.

For those starting from scratch, the three core outputs of the process described in the guide are:

- The statement of a National Business Agenda;
- The development of a layered briefing folio; and
- The production of detailed campaign plans for your priority issues.

These are all valuable products which can be used independently. It is not essential to work through the whole process at once; it can be accomplished over time and in stages. Likewise, an organization might have one current overriding advocacy priority and will wish to use the processes and materials contained in the guide to develop an effective campaign for that single issue. You are encouraged to do this.

The following page providea a blueprint for a successful approach to advocacy. This overview of the guide will help summarize the process as a whole.

Maximising the impact of the voice of business – a blueprint for a successful approach to advocacy

STRATEGY					TACTICS	
Identifying advocacy issues: • Existing advocacy agenda; • PEST analysis; • (SW)OT analysis	**Selecting advocacy priorities:** • CIPE relevance analysis; • Canvassing member views; • Designing a member survey; • Board review	**Producing a National Business Agenda:** • Develop policy objectives • Draft national business agenda; • Board approval	**Identifying and analysing the supporting and opposing forces:** • DPS analysis; • Prediction of opposing arguments	**Producing the layered folio:** • Key issues; • Sound bites; • Key facts; • Issue briefs; • Detailed background brief	**Developing detailed campaign tactics for each issue:** • Issue tracking; • Insider and outsider targets; • Messengers; • Coalitions	**Producing a campaign plan for each business agenda issue:** • Combine issues, timing, targets, messengers and tools and budget
SECTION THREE					SECTION FOUR	
CORE ADVOCACY PRODUCTS		NATIONAL BUSINESS AGENDA		LAYERED BRIEFING FOLIO		DETAILED CAMPAIGN PLANS
REVIEW		ANNUAL REVIEW AT BOARD LEVEL		REGULAR REVIEW & UPDATE EVERY 6 MONTHS		CONTINUOUS TACTICAL REVIEW

Section Eight

The advocacy compilation checklist

THE BUSINESS AGENDA CHECKLIST

- ❑ Does your organization have an advocacy strategy?
- ❑ Does your advocacy strategy have clear objectives?
- ❑ Are your advocacy objectives described in terms of "desired policy outcomes" (A National Business Agenda)?
- ❑ Were your objectives developed as a result of comprehensive external environment research i.e. PEST, SWOT or similar?
- ❑ Were your members' views on your advocacy objectives canvassed and taken into account?
- ❑ Have your advocacy objectives been agreed by the Board of your organization?
- ❑ Do you have a sufficiently effective in-house or external research capability?
- ❑ Do you know who the most important supporters and opponents will be for each objective?
- ❑ Have you reviewed the strength of both support and opposition to each strategy objective?
- ❑ Have you built a structured series of briefing documents for each objective (layered briefing folio)?
- ❑ Are the key advocacy materials you have developed readily available to your members?

THE ADVOCACY TARGETS & TACTICS CHECKLIST

- [ ] Do you have a clear understanding of the policy making process and timing for each of your business agenda priorities?
- [ ] Have you identified the most important insider and outsider lobbying targets at each stage of the process, and do you know when approaches will be most effective?
- [ ] Are your lobbying targets the correct ones for the stage of issue development i.e. you are not leap-frogging?
- [ ] Have you focused in particular on the early stages of issue development when ideas are likely to be more fluid?
- [ ] Do you have a strategy vis à vis insider targets to move from being a lobbyist to being part of the policy making process?
- [ ] Do you have a media strategy?
- [ ] Do you have a complete and up to date list of relevant media and journalists?
- [ ] Do you have a strategy to make your organization the “media choice” for hearing the views of business on your advocacy agenda items?
- [ ] Have you selected appropriate messengers?
- [ ] Do you have a strategy for mobilizing member support for your advocacy objectives?
- [ ] Do you have a plan for coalition building for your National Business Agenda as a whole, and the priority items in it?

TARGETED ADVOCACY MATERIALS CHECKLIST

- ❑ Have you benchmarked your current advocacy practices and support tools against the materials provided in the body of the guide (developing the National Business Agenda, the layered briefing folio, managing meeting with politicians and public officials, media do's and don'ts, broadcast media guide, building coalitions and mobilizing members)?
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MEASURING SUCCESS CHECKLIST

- ❑ Do you have a process for reviewing your National Business Agenda on an annual basis with your Board?
- ❑ Does the Board meeting involve a review of the external environment, a reappraisal of current advocacy objectives and an update of how members see your advocacy priorities?
- ❑ Do you have processes for keeping your layered briefing folio and other fact sheet type materials up to date? Are they formally reviewed and revised at least once every six months?
- ❑ Are your tactical approaches kept constantly under review to assess their effectiveness and to respond immediately to changes that present opportunities or threats?
- ❑ Is the information that you provide to members always up to date?
- ❑ Do you have regular processes for communicating advocacy priorities, actions and successes to your members?

Section Nine

What the business gurus say

What the business gurus say is designed to be a "stand alone", optional and multi-use section of the guide. It provides a short overview of the academic literature most likely to be of use to those formulating and implementing a strategic approach to management in employers' organizations. It incorporates some of the advocacy ideas and models used in the workbook and sets them in a more academic context. It can be used as a general background briefing document for those you wish to involve in the advocacy development process or it might be useful in the context of your own member briefing or training services.

All companies operate in so called "market" and "non-market" environments. Put simply, companies make efforts to succeed through market strategies based on elements such as product positioning and pricing. At the same time companies must also be responsive to the political, social, and legal environments within which they operate.[1] The "non-market" environment evolves over time through the actions of politicians and political institutions, courts and tribunals, and a variety of non-governmental organizations. Successful companies develop strategies and tactics to operate in both the market and non-market environment.

One of the key reasons for the development and continued existence of business associations is the attempt by companies to influence the non-market environment. A variety of associations exist at the local, national and international levels to represent the interests of companies in particular sectors, firms with particular economic interests (e.g. exporters), and businesses generally. To be successful, the business association must focus on issues of common concern to its members. Of course, not all members will always be willing to support every business association activity. It is also likely that companies will belong to more than one business association, and many will also undertake non-market activities on their own. It is nonetheless possible to identify some common approaches that successful business associations pursue in the effective representation of their members.

The academic literature is reviewed under four headings:

- **The Four I's** – the issues, interests, institutions, and information that influence the non-market strategy process;
- **The Geographic Orientation** of the business association's members;
- **The Development of Non-Market Strategies** – the formulation of strategies to address potential issues; and
- **Tactical Analysis** – the tactics that can be used by business associations to implement their chosen strategies.

The Four I's : Issues, Interests, Institutions, and Information

In considering the impact of non-market factors on strategy, it is useful to use the concept of the "issue life cycle" developed by Ian Wilson of the US multinational General Electric.[2] This approach distinguishes five phases:

- The identification of an issue;
- The formation of interest groups;
- The development of legislation;
- The administration of rules; and
- The enforcement of rules.

The business association needs to identify precisely the location of each issue that it has identified on the issue life cycle. Different strategies and tactics will be effective in handling issues at specific points in the life cycle.

[1] See Baron (2003) for a detailed discussion of the definition of the non-market environment. This section draws heavily on this work.

[2] See Baron (2003), p. 15 for a discussion of Ian Wilson's work.

In choosing what courses of action to undertake, business associations must first identify "*the issues*" that could potentially affect their members. Next, they need to ascertain the likely "*interests*" that will be involved. Third, they must gauge which "*institutions*" might be the locus of the resolution of particular issues. And finally, they must judge the "*information*" available to the parties involved in the negotiations.

Issues – can include both market-related questions and non-market problems that may affect market activities. In recent years, public interest in issues like the environment, corporate governance, human and animal rights, fair trade and labour standards has brought with it non-market problems that have impacted significantly upon the market strategy of many companies. At the extreme, the multinational retailer "The Body Shop" has built an entire business model on the practical demonstration of the highest moral and ethical standards.

Business associations can canvass their members to ascertain which concerns are most salient to them at any particular time. Associations can also proactively conduct research to help anticipate which issues are likely to affect their members most significantly and then work to secure members' interest and involvement in dealing with them.

Interests – Once issues have been identified, it is possible to judge which interests are likely to be affected by them. These could include a subset of companies in the association, labour groups, non-governmental organizations, activists and consumers. An evaluation of the likely interests that will be most involved and their efficacy in undertaking action is an important part of formulating a strategy to help identify potential allies and opponents.

Institutions – The arena in which issues are likely to be resolved is key to successful advocacy. This might include legislative bodies, regulatory and administrative agencies, judicial bodies, and non-governmental organizations. These bodies may operate at the local, national, regional, or international level. Lobbying by business associations may focus on one or more of these arenas and could include building coalitions of like-minded business associations in one or more countries.

Information – refers to "what is known about the issues". The gathering of this information will involve detailed research. This may include the development of new ways of understanding based on scientific and technological discoveries. In certain cases, "the facts" themselves might be disputed. For example, considerable argument continues on the precise future impact of global warming, with consequences for a host of industries. From an advocacy strategy perspective, the creation of new knowledge may provide a basis for agreement among different groups.

Geographical orientation

In using the four I's to formulate non-market strategies, associations must determine the appropriate geographical area(s) in which the affected member companies operate. These levels can include local or regional levels within countries, the national level, operations at the level of regional trading arrangements such as the EU, or at the global level. In each case, the identification of the four I's must be tailored to the current or potential geographic area.[3]

At the ***sub-national*** level, companies are concerned with local and regional institutions that influence the non-market environment. These include local government officials, elected officials and administrative bodies.

At the ***national*** level, business associations will similarly work with national officials, politicians, and administrative bodies. At this level they often work through "peak" or "national" organizations".

Although advocacy activities within the national context are familiar territory to most business associations, the ***regional*** and ***global*** focus is less well analysed. In a world of growing regionalism the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), MERCOSUR, and the European Union (EU), are some of the most important actors in shaping the environment in which companies operate.

It is estimated that 80 per cent of labour law in the 25 Member States of the EU emanates from the European legislature. For this reason, private sector employers' organizations have formed a regional association (UNICE), and many of them have permanent offices in Brussels.

[3] See Aggarwal (2001).

In innovative work on lobbying in the EU, Cedric Dupont focuses on the different options for lobbying, arguing that among the four institutions of the European Union, three of them—the Council, Commission, and Parliament—are key targets for lobbying policy makers. He goes on to show how companies need to organize for this effort (Dupont 2001).

Similarly, in the Asia-Pacific region, recent studies have examined how European, American, and Japanese firms have attempted to lobby both their home and host countries to improve the environment for business in this region (Aggarwal, 2001; Aggarwal and Urata, 2002; Aggarwal, 2003). More specifically, John Ravenhill (2001) has considered the options available to firms and business associations in the Asia Pacific region with respect to APEC, ASEAN, and the Closer Economic Relations (CER) accord between Australia and New Zealand. These arrangements impact corporate strategies and influence the design and implementation of effective advocacy actions.

Finally, associations often must operate at the *global* level to serve their members' interests. At the global non-market level, the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and its successor, the World Trade Organization, have greatly influenced company strategies. The liberalization of trade brought about through the GATT and WTO has led to considerably increased competition and forced companies to become more internationally competitive. In sectors like the aircraft industry, agriculture, steel, electronics and financial services, companies must take into account new regulations and changes in the WTO. The Uruguay Round introduced a range of new issues that affect firms including changes in intellectual property protection, and the linkage between trade and investment through the Trade Related Investment Measures (TRIMS) Agreement. Particularly significant for employers' organizations is the International Labour Organization (ILO) that shapes the national working environment by setting and monitoring the application of international labour standards.

Companies and their lobbying representatives can no longer simply focus only on policy making in specific countries and ignore the nature of policy making at the regional and global levels.

The development of non-market strategies

The four I's and geographic areas provide the context for formulating non-market strategies. The life cycle model demonstrates that issues go through several stages from identification to enforcement.

In the early stages, when an issue is first identified or where interest groups are still forming, strategies must be oriented toward development of the issue. Informational strategies and tactics such as testimony and working through advisory panels will be particularly effective. At the next two stages of legislation and administration, associations will need to lobby actively and to build coalitions to represent their position in the arenas where policy is likely to be made. Finally, at the enforcement stage, strategies will focus on modes of compliance and response to particular legal arrangements. Here, legal tactics and possibly representation through administrative agencies may prove successful.

Although identification of an issue on its life cycle provides an important first step in the generation of strategic approaches, recognition of the interests that are likely to be involved is crucial. After identifying the likely groups that will be involved in any particular issue, the next step is to assess systematically the supporting and opposing interests. One useful method of summarizing this is to use the "distributive politics spreadsheet" approach.

The Distributive Politics Spreadsheet – DPS (reproduced below) assesses the benefits and costs to each side from supporting or opposing a particular course of action on an issue that may have consequences for business. A point that has extensively been analysed in the literature on lobbying concerns the problems which companies, associations, consumers, and the like encounter when attempting to engage in collective action. Because benefits will almost inevitably accrue to non-contributors, the problem of ensuring that they contribute to collective action (the "free rider" issue) has been modelled in game theory using "The Prisoner's Dilemma"[4] and other similar gaming models. Thus, in analysing the likelihood of involvement of different interest groups, one must not only examine the *motivation* of the actors to engage in collective action but also the *probability* that they will actually do so.

[4] See Olson (1965). A more recent treatment on types of goods and the implications for the creation of institutions can be found in Aggarwal and Dupont (1999).

Hence, based on the well-known literature on interest group politics, the distributive politics spreadsheet provides a method of assessing the likely effective political action that can be generated by groups on each side of an issue.

The ***demand side*** of the DPS looks at the incentives for varying interest groups based on substitutes, the overall magnitude of benefits arising from success, and the per capita benefits that lead to the motivation of a particular interest group. ***Substitutes*** focus on the alternatives that might be pursued by firms or business organizations, or their constituents. For example, stockholders are often unmotivated to engage in collective action since they have the alternative of selling their shares. Similarly, business organizations, particularly those that are broadly-based, will have a host of issues that they might address, and thus must choose and cope with competing pressures from their members to address various issues. The ***magnitude* and *per capita benefits*** refer to what the overall benefits and the specific benefits will be for either the company or the business association. Often lobbyists for business associations find that they cannot generate sufficient interest among their members to engage in political action despite large aggregate gains. This may be the result of a combination of large membership but low per capita benefits. In some cases, the benefits of lobbying action may accrue only to some members, and thus it will also be difficult to generate consensus on a strategy i.e. high per capita benefits but low aggregate gain.

The ***supply side*** of the DPS focuses on the power capabilities of the actors in question, their numbers (how many groups or individuals can be involved), their coverage in terms of relevant political jurisdictions, and the resources that can be brought to bear on the issue. In general, associations with broad membership will be more effective in generating action, and significant coverage of Parliamentary and Congressional districts will enhance this power. Certain firms and associations may lack size and coverage but are better funded and are consequently able to expend considerably more resources to engage in political activity. The final element of the cost of organizing is probably the most crucial one, since it addresses the problems of overcoming collective action in view of the possibility of ***free riding***.

THE DISTRIBUTIVE POLITICS SPREADSHEET

IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE COALITION PARTNERS	**Supporting interests for issue being considered**	**Demand side**			**Supply side**				**Prediction**
		Benefits from supporting for each group			***Ability to generate political action of each group***				***Amount of effective political action***
	Interests	Substitutes	Magnitude	Per capita	Numbers	Coverage	Resources	Cost of organizing	
	Group1 Group 2 …	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	
ASSESSMENT OF OPPOSING INTERESTS	**Opposing interests for issue being considered**	**Demand side**			**Supply side**				**Prediction**
		Benefits from supporting for each group			***Ability to generate political action of each group***				***Amount of effective political action***
	Interests	Substitutes	Magnitude	Per capita	Numbers	Coverage	Resources	Cost of organizing	
	Group 1 Group 2…	....	....	....	....	....	....	....	

Adapted from Baron (2003).

A distributive politics analysis can be conducted for both the supporting and opposing sides on any issue. The issue or issue-areas involved, and the relevant political actors, depend on the problem that is being addressed, and on the geographical area in question. With these elements in mind, the spreadsheet provides a convenient way of assessing the likely political action on each side of a particular issue.

Tactical analysis : Strategy implementation

The last and often the most important element in successful non-market action by companies and associations is the development and use of tactical approaches for strategy implementation. The elements involved in such action encompass more than simply "lobbying" or the "strategic communication of politically relevant information to public officeholders" (Baron 2003). More comprehensively, eight techniques for dealing with non-market problems are:

- lobbying;
- grassroots activity;
- coalition building;
- electoral support;
- testimony;
- influencing the media;
- judicial strategies; and
- participation on advisory bodies.[5]

Lobbying involves providing information to officeholders. This information can be either technical or political. Technical information may reflect research, analysis, and other types of study that may influence officeholders. Of course, there is no guarantee that this information will be uncontested since other groups may provide counter-information in view of scientific and technical uncertainties about the impact of particular policy choices. Political information reflects an effort to influence outcomes by pointing to the impact of policies on the constituencies of office holders, for example, job losses, gains, profits for firms, and the like.

Grassroots activity refers to efforts to generate broad scale public support, with the object of influencing officeholders. Here, employees or other affected groups may be mobilized to write letters, or engage in other forms of communication in order to persuade policy makers or administrative agencies to pursue a specific policy. From a strategic perspective, knowing which groups might be willing to be involved in such a campaign (as well as attention to a possible counter-mobilization by opponents) is a key aspect of this approach. The need to examine other vested interests leads to consideration of coalition building.

Coalition building. An examination of the rent chain of the firms involved can provide the first step in building a coalition for a business association. The rent chain involves firms and other actors affected by the production process of the companies in question. This will include providers of factor inputs such as workers, suppliers, financiers, and local communities. In addition, the actors in distribution channels such as wholesalers, distributors, and retailers, as well as final customers will all potentially have an incentive to engage in non-market activity on behalf of a company or business association. Of course, building a coalition is no small matter, and may lead to significant conflict. Thus, in general business associations should only seek to construct "minimum winning coalitions"—that is, ad hoc groupings that ensure that one will win on an issue without creating additional costs and conflict.[6]

Electoral support. Electoral strategies are a quite obvious, and historically a commonly used strategy. This term refers to the provision of financial or other material strategies to help politicians who are favourably inclined toward a particular issue of importance to a company or business association. For obvious reasons of governance and ethics, the provision of support of various types is increasingly regulated in most developed countries and in many developing countries, thus placing constraints on the strategies that can be undertaken. This issue is not developed further in the body of the guide.

[5] See Baron (2003, Chapter 8 for a discussion). This section draws heavily on Baron's excellent review of strategy implementation.

[6] See Riker (1962) for a discussion of minimum winning coalitions.

Testimony before various types of committees or administrative bodies is a particularly important tactical element. This may involve the standard provision of technical, scientific, or political-economic information to influence such bodies to take favourable action. For example, the U.S. auto industry has repeatedly testified to various commissions in an effort to delay the imposition of minimum fuel economy requirements for vehicles. In addition, testimony may be an effort to influence public opinion by presentations that will influence media coverage.

Influencing the media is closely tied to communication and public advocacy strategies. While such efforts at communicating with the public (tied in some cases to the formulation of a grassroots strategy) need not go through the media, the limited resources of companies and peak business associations means that involving the media to secure favourable press coverage is important for them. Most firms and business associations have an organized group whose primary responsibility is to communicate with the public, the media, and other firms to place their case in the best light on a variety of market and non-market issues.

Judicial strategies involve both reactive and proactive efforts. Companies and associations may be defendants in lawsuits against their activities, but they may also use legal strategies to influence outcomes. Firms and associations may file suits against each other related to market and non-market issues. In an international context, action can also be taken to pursue cases through the World Trade Organization or the dispute settlement mechanisms of other regional or global organizations. Often, suits may simply be used to harass opponents by creating uncertainty, as reflected in the dramatic increase in anti-dumping suits filed against exporters by firms in both developing and developed countries.

Participation in advisory bodies. Associations and their members may attempt to participate in the various advisory panels that have been set up to provide governments or agencies with information about particular issues. Since associations will often have the most information about issues that involve their members, this strategy will be of particular significance at the identification stage in the issue life cycle.

Section Ten

Further reading and links on advocacy and employers' organizations

Business books and articles on advocacy

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Strategic planning books and guides related to employers' (and similar) organizations

The Center for International Private Enterprise	*How to advocate effectively: A guidebook for business associations* (Washington 2003)
Gonzalez Marroquin	*Guide to management of entrepreneurial organizations* (ILO Costa Rica 1997)
Jayemanne	*The public relations function of an employers' organization* (ILO Geneva 1991)
Kindon, D.	*The Committee Bulletin's Guide to Lobbying* (Lobbying Australia (www.members.ozemail.com.au) 2005)
The European Commission	*A Style Guide for Press Releases* (The European Commission 2001)

Useful organizations and websites

The Bureau for Employers' Activities at the International Labour Organization (ACTEMP)

www.ilo.org/actemp

ACTEMP – The ILO Bureau for Employers' Activities maintains close contacts with employers' organizations in all the member states of the ILO. The Bureau operates from ILO headquarters in Geneva and through a network of employers' organization specialists in the ILO's technical teams around the world. Its tasks are to make the resources of the ILO available to employers' organizations, and to keep the ILO constantly aware of their views, concerns and priorities. It promotes international cooperation amongst employers' organizations, and runs a programme of activities around the world.

The Bureau is available, through national employers' organizations, as a gateway through which employers can gain access to some of the best information available on human resources development, industrial relations and a host of other employment and labour market-related subjects.

The Bureau also runs a programme of technical cooperation which provides development assistance to employers' organizations in developing countries and countries in transition to a market economy. This work is mostly done through projects financed by the overseas development assistance funds of donor countries.

The ACTEMP website contains links to the national employers' organization in every member country of the ILO.

The International Organization of Employers (IOE)

www.ioe-emp.org

Since its creation in 1920 the International Organization of Employers (IOE) has been recognized as the only organization at the international level that represents the interests of business in the labour and social policy fields. Today, it consists of 139 national employer organizations from 134 countries all over the world.

The mission of the IOE is to promote and defend the interests of employers in international fora, particularly in the International Labour Organization (ILO), and to this end it works to ensure that international labour and social policy promotes the viability of enterprises and creates an environment favourable to enterprise development and job creation. At the same time it acts as the Secretariat to the Employers' Group at the ILO International Labour Conference, the ILO Governing Body and all other ILO-related meetings.

In order to ensure that the voice of business is heard at the international and national level, the IOE is actively engaged in the creation and capacity building of representative organizations of employers, particularly in the developing world and in countries in transition to a market economy.

The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE)

www.cipe.org

The Center for International Private Enterprise (CIPE) provides a wealth of materials on capacity development in business associations.

Lobbying Australia

www.members.ozemail.com.au

An interesting four part guide to effective lobbying in Australia.

The Humane Society of the United States

www.hsus.org/legislation_laws/citizen_lobbyist_center/lobbying-101

Many special interest groups have interesting hints and tips on building grassroots advocacy. This is one of them.

The Democracy Center

www.democracyctr.org/resources/lobbying

"Helping people build democracy from the ground up". A not for profit organization devoted to encouraging individuals and organizations to play a role in public policy advocacy.

The International Competition Network

www.internationalcompetitionnetwork.org/media_tips

A comprehensive guide to handling the media aimed at the national competition authorities.

The Irish Business and Enterprise Confederation

www.ibec.ire

A good example of creative web publicity of an advocacy agenda.

Research for Communication and Public Involvement

www.wpi.biz.rcpi

A well produced site containing "how-to" information and real-world examples of research and planning, implementation, and evaluation activities that can be applied to the broad spectrum of communication and public involvement practices and specialties.

American Medical Student Association

www.amsa.org/legislativecenter/factsheet.cfm

An excellent guide to fact sheet writing with good samples.

Section Eleven

Appendix

"Building the National Business Agenda 2003-2004"
US Chamber of Commerce Priority Issues Survey (sample survey)

Building the National Business Agenda 2003-2004

U.S. CHAMBER OF COMMERCE PRIORITY ISSUES SURVEY

I. POLICY PRIORITIES

Please indicate the level of priority you believe the U.S. Chamber should place on the following policy issues:

Tax/Economic Policy

	Extremely High	Very High	High	Somewhat High	Low	No Opinion
1. Permanently repeal the estate and gift tax	○	○	○	○	○	○
2. Increase the small business expensing allowance	○	○	○	○	○	○
3. Reform the S-corporation tax rules	○	○	○	○	○	○
4. Repeal/reduce the corporate and individual Alternative Minimum Tax (AMT)	○	○	○	○	○	○
5. Repeal/reduce the corporate and individual capital gains tax	○	○	○	○	○	○
6. Simplify/clarify the worker classification rules (employee vs. independent contractor)	○	○	○	○	○	○
7. Replace/reform the current federal tax system	○	○	○	○	○	○
8. Reform the process the Joint Tax Committee uses to evaluate tax proposals	○	○	○	○	○	○
9. Strengthen Federal Government Programs that provide small business access to capital	○	○	○	○	○	○
10. Expand government contracting opportunities	○	○	○	○	○	○

Legal Reform

	Extremely High	Very High	High	Somewhat High	Low	No Opinion
11. Stop government lawsuits against industries that are legal (e.g., tobacco and gun manufacturing)	○	○	○	○	○	○
12. Stop excessive punitive damages	○	○	○	○	○	○
13. Support efforts to preserve the availability of alternative dispute resolution	○	○	○	○	○	○
14. Ensure that the same rules apply to all parties in litigation, including the government	○	○	○	○	○	○
15. Preserve the principle of "sanctity of contract" so agreements are fully enforceable	○	○	○	○	○	○
16. Reform product and service liability laws so parties are only responsible for harms they actually caused	○	○	○	○	○	○
17. Reform class action laws to limit the number and scope of lawsuits filed by plaintiffs' trial lawyers	○	○	○	○	○	○
18. Reform the current system dealing with company liability for asbestos exposure	○	○	○	○	○	○
19. Support efforts to reform securities litigation to limit the number and scope of securities class action lawsuits	○	○	○	○	○	○
20. Support reforms that limit attorneys fees	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Regulatory Reform & Environmental Policy

	Extremely High	Very High	High	Somewhat High	Low	No Opinion
21. Ensure that regulatory agencies use sound science to support new rules	○	○	○	○	○	○
22. Ensure information that agencies disseminate is accurate and objective	○	○	○	○	○	○
23. Ensure that federal agencies periodically review existing regulations to determine whether they should be repealed or modified	○	○	○	○	○	○
24. Ensure that regulatory agencies focus on the particular harm caused to small business by agency regulations	○	○	○	○	○	○
25. Ensure that environmental regulations are cost-effective	○	○	○	○	○	○
26. Ensure that environmental regulations are more market-oriented	○	○	○	○	○	○
27. Reform the Endangered Species Act by balancing all interests when managing property on which endangered species live	○	○	○	○	○	○
28. Oppose labeling of food containing genetically modified ingredients	○	○	○	○	○	○

International Policy

	Extremely High	Very High	High	Somewhat High	Low	No Opinion
29. Open foreign markets multilaterally through the World Trade Organization and bilaterally with non-WTO member countries	○	○	○	○	○	○
30. Make the World Bank and International Monetary Fund programs more market-oriented	○	○	○	○	○	○
31. Prevent access to the U.S. markets of subsidized foreign exports	○	○	○	○	○	○
32. Increase U.S. access to foreign markets by countering foreign governments' subsidized export finance, investment and aid programs	○	○	○	○	○	○
33. Eliminate economic sanctions against other countries imposed solely by the United States, but not by our friends and allies	○	○	○	○	○	○
34. Eliminate the double-taxation of Americans working overseas	○	○	○	○	○	○
35. Enhance America's trade negotiating ability by passing "fast track" trade negotiating authority for American Presidents	○	○	○	○	○	○
36. Improve global protection of intellectual property rights	○	○	○	○	○	○
37. Accelerate the negotiation of a Free Trade Area of the Americas	○	○	○	○	○	○
38. Eliminate foreign tariff and non-tariff barriers to American exports	○	○	○	○	○	○
39. Prevent attempts to politicize international standard-setting processes that are supposed to be based on science (e.g., precautionary principle and Codex Alimentarius)	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Transportation Infrastructure

	Extremely High	Very High	High	Somewhat High	Low	No Opinion
40. Support alternative funding sources for transportation programs (e.g., public/private partnerships, innovative financing)	○	○	○	○	○	○
41. Accelerate delivery of transportation projects	○	○	○	○	○	○
42. Support efforts to increase airport capacity	○	○	○	○	○	○
43. Support efforts to improve our national intermodal transportation network	○	○	○	○	○	○

II. MEMBER OPINIONS

After each question, fill in the circle that best reflects your views. The answers should reflect your opinion on the issue regardless of how important the issue is to you.

Labor/Employee Benefits

	Definitely Yes	Generally Yes	Generally No	Definitely No	No Opinion
1. Should the use of unemployment compensation funds to pay workers on family leave be opposed?	○	○	○	○	○
2. Should an increase in the federal minimum wage be opposed?	○	○	○	○	○
3. Should federal labor laws allow employers to offer employees the option of paid compensatory time for overtime worked?	○	○	○	○	○
4. Should the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) be amended to address technical issues concerning compliance?	○	○	○	○	○
5. Should the power of unions to collect mandatory dues from workers for political purposes be restricted?	○	○	○	○	○
6. Consistent with national security, should immigration laws be changed to ease worker shortages?	○	○	○	○	○
7. Does the complexity of pension laws deter employers from providing retirement plans to their employees?	○	○	○	○	○
8. Should alternatives to employer-based health insurance be developed so workers can own individual health plans to which employers can opt to make contributions?	○	○	○	○	○
9. Should any expansion of liability for health plans be opposed?	○	○	○	○	○

Other Federal Government Regulations

10. Should businesses continue to have access to federal lands for logging, mining, cattle grazing, and oil and natural gas production?	○	○	○	○	○
11. Should the federal government continue to provide aid to farmers?	○	○	○	○	○
12. Should Congress exercise greater oversight over proposed and current rules by regulatory agencies?	○	○	○	○	○
13. Should the Social Security System be reformed for the 21st Century?	○	○	○	○	○
14. Should the federal government establish Internet restrictions or regulations?	○	○	○	○	○
15. Should retailers who collect marketing information off-line be subject to the same standards as those retailers who collect marketing information on-line?	○	○	○	○	○
16. Should government food safety functions be consolidated into a single federal agency?	○	○	○	○	○
17. Should people take personal responsibility for their own food and nutrition choices, and additional government regulation be opposed?	○	○	○	○	○

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III. ABOUT YOUR COMPANY

1. Industry or field (please mark only one)

- O Communication
- O Construction
- O Distribution
- O Electric/Gas
- O Finance/Insurance/Real Estate
- O Food/Agribusiness
- O Health Care
- O Information/Technology
- O Internet/E-commerce
- O Manufacturing
- O Mining
- O Retail
- O Services
- O Trade Association
- O Transportation
- O Other

2. Number of employees: O Under 10 O 10 to 49 O 50 to 99 O 100 to 249 O 250 to 499 O 500 to 4,999 O 5,000 and over

3. How many of your employees are in the National Guard? ☐ , ☐☐☐

4. Percentage of your business that is unionized: O None O 1% to 25% O 26% to 50% O 51% to 75% O 76% to 100%

5. Is your company involved in international business? O Yes O No

5a. If YES, please indicate which type(s):
O Import O Export O Overseas operation O Joint international venture O Represent overseas company

6. Is your company involved in government contracting? O Yes O No

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Company

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Fax - -

Note: Your membership number is printed above your name on your uschamber.com mailing label.

Thank you for supporting the U.S. Chamber of Commerce

Please return your completed survey by September 22, 2002

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The Effective Employers' Organization

Guide One **Governance**

Guide Two **Strategy**

Guide Three **Advocacy**

Guide Four **Revenue Building**

The **Effective Employers' Organization** package is designed to help executives, directors and managers in employers' organizations to build and run their organizations more strategically and more effectively.
It is aimed primarily at those setting up, building and managing national level employers' organizations in less developed countries and economies in transition.
It will however provide a wealth of advice for regional and sectoral organizations that exist to represent the interests of employers, and to national level employers' organizations in developed countries. This will be the case particularly where organizations are considering or undertaking a strategic review of the way they currently operate.

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