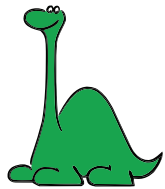


The Environmentalist's Guide to the MEDIA Galaxy



Hnutí Brontosaurus



The booklet “The Environmentalist’s Guide to the MEDIA Galaxy” is a follow-up project of the training course “Media, Communication & Nature” organized by Hnutí Brontosaurus and Youth and Environment Europe.

The training course and the booklet have been funded with support from the European Commission, the Youth in Action Programme. This publication reflects the views only of the author, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein.



Youth in Action is a programme the European Commission has set up for young people. It aims to inspire a sense of active European citizenship, solidarity and tolerance among young Europeans and to involve them in shaping the European Union’s future. It promotes mobility within and beyond the EU’s borders, non-formal learning and intercultural dialogue, and encourages the inclusion of all young people, regardless of their educational, social and cultural background.

Source: <http://ec.europa.eu/youth>

December, 2012



The participants and the organizers of the training course.

Training course “Media, Communication & Nature”

20th–27th July 2012, Czech Republic

The training course organized by Hnutí Brontosaurus and Youth and Environment Europe was focused on youth leaders, youth workers and volunteers from environmental and educational organizations. The main aim was to support them in increasing their impact through training communication skills with media and public. 28 young people and 4 experts from 14 youth organizations (from 12 different countries – Albania, Armenia, TheCzech Republic, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Poland, Portugal, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia and United Kingdom) met in the EcoCenter Paleta Oucmanice in the Czech Republic for 8 days to improve their communication and promotional competences and to get new knowledge about media.

Among the covered issues were:

- ▶ basic journalistic skills,
- ▶ using new media,
- ▶ critical thinking,
- ▶ community-based social marketing,
- ▶ campaigning.

The training course and the booklet have been funded with support from the European Commission, the Youth in Action Programme.

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Orlický deník (local newspaper, page 12).

Zach Weiner, Saturday Morning Breakfast Cereal Comics (www.smbc-comics.com, page 33).

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Introduction

We live in a modern rapidly changing world where 2,267,233,742 of us share a common communication platform. This level of interconnectedness has never before been seen in the history of the Earth. It offers fresh opportunities for humanity, has enabled the change of governments, the spreading of ideas and increased human kind's solidarity in the face of global issues.

In 1997, the world's first social media website was started (sixdegrees.com). This was the same year Greenpeace won an award from the United Nations for inventing a CFC free refrigerator. Nowadays we do not consider this as a technological breakthrough, in a world of smart phones, tablet PC's and MP3 players, the refrigerator seems to be a rather prehistoric development, but one cannot overlook this creation, as it alone wiped the global problem of ozone depletion off the media map.

Environmental organizations need to stay on top of the latest technologies, whether it be renewable energies, more efficient recycling or advances in conservation science. In a world with constantly evolving problems, this fast pace of development and innovation is essential. The role of effective media communication in nature conservation is an area that offers tremendous potential.

This book aims to bring environmental youth NGO's into the 21st century, equipping them with the latest tools and information for mounting effective media communications. There is a section on critical thinking, helping you to understand why and recognize when the media is manipulating you, as well as the basics of using new and emerging online social platforms.

Before setting off on your journey through this book, it is worth equipping yourself with the following facts!

- ▶ *If "Twitter" were a country, it would be the 12th largest country in the world.*
- ▶ *2 new members sign up to "LinkedIn" every second, that's about 150 since you opened this book.*
- ▶ *44% of Europeans now use a smart phone connected with the internet.*
- ▶ *In the UK there are twice as many smart phone users than cigarette smokers.*
- ▶ *20% of all page views from the Internet are on "Facebook".*

Welcome to the future.

Cameron Murphy

On behalf of the "Media, Communication and Nature" editorial team.

01 How to communicate with media?

When you want to communicate with media about your project, action or an important environmental problem, two first questions you have to answer are: What are you trying to achieve? Why are you communicating? We can use the media to spread our message much further than we could alone. It can reach many more people in our surrounding area, furthermore it can do so faster and more efficiently than before.

In the times when there is so much information around and environmental problems start to be so serious, it is important to know how to communicate with media. NGOs need not only DO good work but also let other people KNOW that they do it.

Communication is all about clear messages. If you are clear about what you want to say then you are more likely to succeed. So before you start to write an article, a press release or a pitch for media, ask yourself these basic questions: Who? Where? When? Why? These are basics of all stories.

Don't be intimidated by media. Media could seem intimidating at first but when you have a good story, you help them. Don't hesitate to send them your article or press release.

EXERCISE

In your team, in small groups take small post-its in 2 colors. On the first post-it write down all reasons why you want to communicate with media. On the post-its with the other color write down all types of media that you know. Then discuss it with your team.

RESULTS OF BRAINSTORMING FROM THE TRAINING COURSE

Reasons for communicating: share information, raise public awareness (spreading news faster, making the change), involve more people, get more volunteers, get more members, put emphasis on authorities, lobby, raise donations, promote critical points of view, announce an event, raise funds, attract people who have skills, increase morale (good for volunteers to see that they are appreciated).

Types of media: social networks, newsletters, printed media (newspapers, magazines) – divided into: international, national, local, magazines, websites and digital newsletters, radio, TV, face to face communication, communication with environmental NGOs and various stakeholders.

Press release

The following chapter summarizes in a few points how to write a press release. After you master this know-how, your press release will be so interesting for media that they will not hesitate to publish it!

Communicating with media is good for many reasons – raising awareness, offering to other people opportunities to be involved, fundraising. Through media you can address many people and it costs you nothing. A decent press release is a starting point for your relationship with media.

How to write a good press release

Press release is a short text for media that presents something worth writing about – like an event, a project, an environmental problem.

When creating a press release it is important to remember about the audience and journalists. Press releases should be written in such a way that it will attract the target audience and at the same time is able to interest journalists. This angle makes the difference and may decide about your getting coverage in the end or not.

So before writing a press release itself, you should clearly answer a few basic questions:

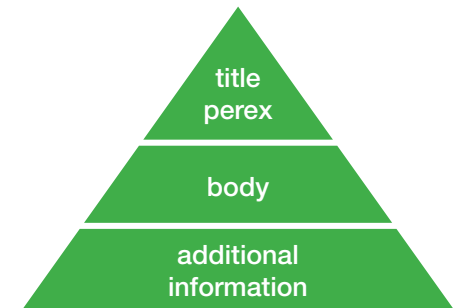
- ▶ *Why do you want publicity?*
- ▶ *What do you, your organisation, your project want to achieve?*
- ▶ *Who will help you to achieve your aims?*
- ▶ *Who is the best audience for your message?*
- ▶ *What messages will they respond to?*

After answering these questions you can adapt the text to your answers.

As for the writing – you should know that a press release has its rules about what it ought to look like.

Trade secret is that most press releases reaching journalists are not very good. Learn the rules and you will have bigger chances to interest journalists.

You can imagine a press release as a **pyramid**.



TITLE

Press release may have a **title** at the very beginning, but it's not essential. The title should make a journalist imagine an article in a newspaper – it should be short and clear but also catchy and interesting. The title should not be misleading or formulated as a question.

Examples of titles

Which one is more catchy and concrete?

- ▶ *“Asbestos may raise risk of non-lung cancers”*
- ▶ *“Asbestos-exposed kids dying of aggressive cancers”*

PEREX

Perex is a very short paragraph (1–2 sentences) with the most important information. From this part journalist should basically know what the whole article is about.

Follow the rule of 5 questions – **Who? What? Where? When? Why?**

Do not use quotes in the perex.

EXERCISE

Dying mobile rule

Imagine that you are a journalist and you are searching for some information for your article. You really need to tell the story to your colleague in the editing office, otherwise the article will not be published. But during your journey the battery of your cell-phone is almost dead and will last for only half a minute of calling. Write down what you could tell your colleague in the time limit. For better illustration take a dictaphone and record it with a stopwatch. You will see, how much information you can communicate. Then review whether you really said the most important things.

While writing a perex, try to follow the rule of a discharged cell-phone.

BODY

In the **body** of the press release you expand the information from perex. Divide your text into several paragraphs. Start with the most important informa-

tion, because editors shorten the text backwards. At the end you can place, for example, more detailed information about your NGO.

In this part use **active words**, check for synonyms (in Thesaurus), but do not take it too far. Make sure it does not become ridiculous or full of pathos.

For added emphasis, when making your **story** describe a problem on a concrete person. It brings you closer to readers and makes the story more vivid which is exactly what journalists want. Think about some nice human story in your topic and then build the press release on it.

Do not use value statements (such as: leading, best, top etc.) or words which describe too many personal feelings. Press releases with words like these might end up looking like an advertisement. However, these words can be used in quotes from people (“I believe that it is the leading organisation”). **Quotes** are very welcome in the body of a press release – they make it juicier. So always try to collect at least a few quotes – from participants, organisers, volunteers and incoming people.

An **interview** is another way to collect quotes. When you are an **interviewer**, ask questions which will bring out the answers you need and will be formulated as full sentences. To get the quote you need, you can ask people direct question with the phrases you required (“Would you say that this training was an enriching and educating experience for you?”) If you change quotes or put together different phrases, ask the person if they agree with the final version.

Many people are not used to giving interviews, so you can help them by asking the same question several times, but in different forms. You can tell the person also what you would like to achieve by doing an interview with them, so that it would be easier for them to give the answer that you need.

The last option is writing down the quote and asking a person, if you can use it in the article as his/her quote (it may work among good friends and colleagues).

When you are **interviewed** by a journalist, prepare yourself – pick one or two concrete things you definitely would like to tell readers (for example about our work in a national park or the problem with funding, etc.). And then try to say it during the interview. Journalists probably will not ask you directly, so you have

to introduce your topic in the answer. And don't forget that the time is usually very short. And it needs practice.

If you had agreed with a journalist on a longer interview, you can ask him/her for questions in advance.

EXERCISE

Interview trial battle

In pairs divide roles – one is an interviewer, one is an interviewee. Each of you have half an hour to prepare questions or messages you would like to say. After that you have 5 minutes to make an interview.

You can also try to play the role of a bad-tempered journalist.



Interview trial battle during the training course.

Photos are a great help (for example, on a sunny day people doing interesting, active things). It is always better to put a nice picture in the press release (minimum format 300 dpi). If there are five similar press releases and there is one with good pictures, it will probably have better chances. If you have pictures from similar events, you can use them as well. But the best option is to use pictures from the event described in the press release.

It is good to have people, especially their faces in the photos.

Notes for editors can be given in bullet points in the bottom of the article as extra information (number of members, where you are situated). This is the information they might need or use additionally when preparing the article.

Typical press releases are quite short: **350–500** words are enough.

Ask somebody to proof-read your text – bad spelling and grammar can kill all the chances to get the story featured.

How to get your press release published

Writing a good press release is just the first half – now you have to persuade a journalist to publish it.

Firstly, pick a press medium according to the topic of your press release – if you have a press release of local importance, do not try to contact a national newspaper. Try to find a local one (daily or weekly news) – you have a much better chance to get the release published.

It is also good to find a concrete journalist – buy all local newspapers a few times and go through them. Try to find out which journalists write about topics similar to what you want to devote your press release to. You can also search on the website of the newspaper.



We wrote a press release during the training course, it was published in a local newspaper.

!Top Secret!

E-mail addresses of journalists usually look like this:

Name.surname@medianame.xx

The part after @ can be found in the newspaper: redaction@medianame.xx

You can also send your press release to a national press agency.

Writing a pitch

Pitch is a short text that you write in the body of the email. It should explain a topic of the press release and why it is interesting or important for readers. The more angles you have got, the better.

Journalists are interested in these attributes, so your press release must have at least a few of them and you should stress them in the **pitch**:

- ▶ **interesting topic**
- ▶ **importance** – for people in the town, how it influences local politics, local community
- ▶ **punctuality** – it is best to send press release at the day of activity – prepare a press release in advance and add only numbers and photos
- ▶ **celebrity** – if it can be connected with the celebrity, mention it
- ▶ **negativity** – media likes it

While sending the email, try to make it more personal, by putting the name of the person you are writing to, because it will make better chances that they will read your email.

Example of a pitch

*Dear Mr. Smith,
in the attachment you can find a press release concerning houses poisoned by asbestos in South London. I think that it is important for citizens of London to be informed about this cause, because they might be in the same situation. We exclusively got the mayors' statement.*

For additional quotes and photos in bigger dpi please contact:

*Dr William Edmund Cooke, Wigan
Infirmary
mail, mobile*

Send a press release as an attachment of the mail. You can also send 1–3 interesting photos.

The best time for sending press release is Monday – Thursday 8–10 a.m. Relatively good time when a journalist will notice your mail is until 2 p.m.

After you send the email, it is good to call the editor to confirm that he/she received your press release. It is better to call after some time – at least one day.

You should know that journalists are not obliged to publish the whole text of a press release – we should take it into account that journalists will modify it and will not ask us for authorisation.

Monitoring media

It is important to know when your text is published in a newspaper for several reasons – you can use it as an argument for funders and it is also good to know how your organisation is presented. It is

not a rule that journalist will contact you to tell you that he/she published an article about you. You have to monitor media.

The cheapest way is to watch daily internet websites of important media (big newspapers and specialized servers). Using Google Alerts is also very effective – emails are sent to you when Google finds new results (such as web pages, newspaper articles or blogs) that match your searched term.

You can also order monitoring in concrete media by a specialized company. You can choose monitoring of concrete topics by key words. Among key words it is good to have the name of your organization and the topic you are connected with. One of organizations which is doing it is Newton Media (www.newtonmedia.eu).

Summary

What to include in a press release:

- ▶ head with contacts (mobile phone, e-mail) to a concrete competent person, web and address of an organisation,
- ▶ date,
- ▶ title,
- ▶ venue (the place which a press release is connected to),
- ▶ interesting and short perex,
- ▶ truthful information,
- ▶ quotes,
- ▶ short sentences.

Example of a press release

Valley school closed after asbestos found

September 14, 2012 – 2:10pm

An elementary school in the Valley was closed on Friday and part of Thursday after workers found asbestos in a wall.

Margo Tait, the superintendent of the Annapolis Valley regional school board, said the discovery was made while employees were patching a hole in the wall at Cambridge and District Elementary School.

“As is our practice, when we find asbestos, of course we remove it,” Tait said. “We have an asbestos abatement contractor in there removing that.”

Tait said the workers only found a few particles of asbestos insulation in the wall, and that no particles were found in the air. The school will have one other room examined.

Tait said there was no evidence to suggest asbestos may be found throughout the school.

“It may be, but if it’s not disturbed, it’s not a hazard,” Tait said.

The school is expected to reopen on Monday.

02 How to use social media?

The world changes fast with the development of technology. We are not passive consumers of information, we do not swim with the flow, but we search for new ways, create new flows. Almost everything is connected with the technology nowadays. Technology is easy. Everybody can create and share information, videos, songs, etc. The problem is that we have too many tools, too many channels now.

Social media is an ocean of potential. In this fast paced technological world we must constantly learn to avoid falling behind the newest trends in communication. In order to use all these new forms of online media efficiently, it is often necessary to use meta tools. The following chapter helps you successfully navigate these troubled waters.



*LISTEN – CREATE – SHARE –
COLLABORATE – PRESENT –
STRATEGIZE – BE SAFE*

Listening is very important

Read, keep yourself updated on the latest online trends by organising your Internet with the following tools.

Google Alerts

These are emails sent to you when Google finds new results such as web pages, newspaper articles, or blogs that match your search term. You can use Google Alerts to monitor anything on the internet, for example news about your organisation or articles on the topics that are interesting for you.

Reddit.com

The website is known for its open nature and diverse user community that create its content. It uses a system of rating where users “upvote” and “downvote” content. Submissions are then sorted by the most popular posts. There are thousands of smaller “subreddits” catering to specific interests.

Social bookmarking

As you make a note or save an interesting page in your book, you can also bookmark internet pages using for example:

- ▶ pearltrees.com
- ▶ delicious.com

Use your creativity, create

The Internet without websites, blogs, comments, texts and audiovisual material would be like a book with empty pages. Internet actually is a book with infinite number of empty pages to be filled with content, our content! Do it yourself and fill the pages with what you like, what you want to promote and be as creative as possible, the sky is the limit. Play with different tools, take pictures, make videos, write! For sharing your content you can try and use:

- ▶ blogger.com
- ▶ wordpress.com
- ▶ posterous.com
- ▶ globalvoices.com

If you have made a video and wish to share it online, you can use the following websites.

Youtube

YouTube was founded in February 2005 and has become the go-to site for video on the web. YouTube says that roughly 60 hours of new videos are uploaded to the site every minute! This massive source of authentic short films made a revolution on the internet. Everybody can upload material there, do it too!

Vimeo

This is another online video channel. It is used more by artists and professionals and is getting more popular, since youtube makes you also watch advertisement before your desired video starts and that is not much appreciated.

Witness.org

is more focused on human rights.



Collaborate, create content together

You can edit and work with documents collaboratively online in real-time using:

Etherpad.org and Titanpad.com

Both of them offer real-time editing and collaboration of plain text. It includes a mini chat room and shows each user's edits with their own color. Another great feature is that you can also save and restore revisions, so you can see how the document is developing. This is very useful when you work on a press release or an article together, it makes the process really fast and easy.

Googledocs are collaborative tools for creating documents, spreadsheets and presentations. They offer good sharing features which means you can collaborate with others in real-time on the same documents.

Wikis

Just like the encyclopaedia's found in libraries across the world, this is an online, user created collection of knowledge. They can cater to specific topics or more general ones like Wikipedia (<http://www.wikipedia.com>). You can create your own Wiki at many sites, try: <http://atwiki.com/>.

Sharing is caring

It is always more fun to share with everyone. Audiovisual content is the best sharing material: videos, images and songs. But it has to look nice! Stories of people are very catchy, regularly posting this type of content is important when building an on-line presence.

If you want to be efficient in sharing you must be:

- ▶ *Visible – use keywords and tags. Keywords are to help readers understand specifics of the topic of the post. The more keywords you use, the easier it is for readers to find information they are looking for.*
- ▶ *Relevant – meaning you are supposed to stick to one topic without mixing topics in one post/message.*
- ▶ *Use headlines with keywords.*
- ▶ *Use hyperlinks. You can directly put the reader to the source of the information.*
- ▶ *Use photo captions and metadata.*

Here are some examples where you can share the best:

Twitter is a social media revolution in 140 characters (one tweet allows you to write maximum 140 characters). During a week people send over a billion tweets! The record by now is 25000 tweets per second! Twitter is for active people to spread information quickly.

You can follow people, you can follow topics and you can be followed.

The basics is getting to know how to use “@” usernames (people) and “#” hashtags (topics, keywords).

*Be a successful sailor
on the sea of social media*

Facebook does not need an introduction. It is a phenomenon that changed our lives online with incredible impact on

our offline lives as well. Interesting point to mention is that it is organized in a way that not all the updates are communicated to the followers of a certain group. Usually it is only 20-30 percent that is communicated, meaning you don't see every post of every page/group you liked posted on the wall. However, the more popular the group gets the more updates will be communicated to its members and it will be shown more. The same algorithm applies to friends which means you receive updates only from the friends you are most often in touch with. Be aware of that.

Facebook and Twitter have different purposes. Facebook is based on friendships and building a profile while Twitter is about following topics, people and trends through real time conversation. Think about which social media best fits your needs before posting something.

Google+. It is not as popular as Facebook, though it is just as efficient for communicating.

LinkedIn is an online platform for sharing CVs with potential employers. It is a professional social network. However, it is still more used by corporations, but also NGO sector finds advantages here.

Foursquare has become also very popular recently. It is a location-based social networking website for smartphones. Users “check in” at venues by selecting from a list of venues the application locates nearby. If there is no place you want, you can create a new one. Like this you can also create events and promote your activities with Check-in, comments and pictures.

Diaspora (joindiaspora.com). This has been long developing platform for sharing data. It is aiming to become an alternative to other forms of increasingly commercialised social networks.

It is necessary to have widgets to a wide variety of social media channels when sharing information so that people can easily “like” it on Facebook without opening their profile in a separate window or tweet it without logging into their twitter account.

To organize social networks you can try out the following applications: Tweetdeck.com or Hootsuite.com. These online platforms connect with your Twitter and Facebook accounts allowing you a more efficient overview of your social media horizons. They also offer you a deeper insight into social media

statistics and can overcome some of the Facebook algorithms previously discussed.

One more great way to share and spread news widely is through **newsletters**.

Mailchimp is an online application that helps create newsletters. Everybody can create an account for free. Each newsletter you send out is known as a “campaign”, these are stored in an archive, complete with statistics about who opened it and the most viewed links. It takes a few easy steps to create a campaign. Once created, it can be sent to a list of contacts (mailing list). Mailchimp is a great way to share news and multimedia content in a personalised efficient manner.



*The session about new media during
the training course “Media, Communication & Nature”.*

You should be careful with sending out newsletters since there is lots of spam sent out regularly. However, newsletters are an effective tool to spread information.

Strategize

You should be aware of what you can do by posting and sharing. If you want to have a proper impact, make a strategy of your posts and messages.

Know your sources: you should trust information you are about to share. Check it.

Friends and relationships online are important for dissemination of information and raising awareness. People are interested in following what somebody shares. This creates different communities in the online world. One of the roles of the community is to share what somebody has shared and thus to reach out to a wider audience. Get to know your community! Using section 5 of the next chapter, define who your target groups are and come up with a social media solution that communicates your message to them the best.

It is important to not always ask for help or warn people about the impending Apocalypse. Every now and again include some light hearted content, like “cat pictures” or satire of a current event relevant to your topic. The media you share with the web should be a well balanced diet of information and also a few media sweets like cat videos.

Be cool in presenting yourself online

Powerpoint is a typical software for preparation of presentations. Many people really do it creatively and are proud on their work and content, so they share it for example using.

SlideShare.com. Here you can find really good presentations and inspiration for your project.

Prezi.com. Another software for preparing presentations. It is more interactive and it uses better graphics than classical slide show software. The main feature of this type of presentation is that you can zoom in on the visual elements and move from one to another.

If you work a lot with scientific studies which contain a lot of dry and boring data, to spice it up why not try creating an infographic using the following website **Infogr.am.**

Be secure online

As there is a lot of danger in the offline world, there is a lot of danger in the online world.

Check guidelines at <https://securityinabox.org/en> to be aware of potential threats and to be able to protect yourself. You can also go to www.onorobot.org where a robot explains you the basics of online security.

03 How to prepare an environmental campaign?

It is important to differentiate between campaigning and education. Campaigns are usually focused on a narrow issue. It lowers the barriers against actions and encourages us to take steps until the desired result is reached. Thus it narrows a complex issue into an action whereas education is a broadening exercise that uses examples to reveal layers of complexity.

It is also important to remember that a campaign is not a single action, it should be well-prepared beforehand but at the same time it cannot just be endless lobbying, debates and discussions as well as never-ending actions that never reach their aim.

When preparing a campaign, one can follow the 12 basic guidelines from <http://www.campaignstrategy.org>.

REALITY CHECK

Ask yourself a question: Do you really need a campaign? Campaigning can not only be fun but also hard, frustrating and unsuccessful work. It is usually done when everything else has failed. It involves persuading people to take an active interest in something that is not normally part of their reality. All the time

the forces of normality will try to shut your campaign down, to put your issue back in its box. So before starting a campaign, think over if you really need to do it and that there are no other options for you.

1. MOTIVATION NOT EDUCATION

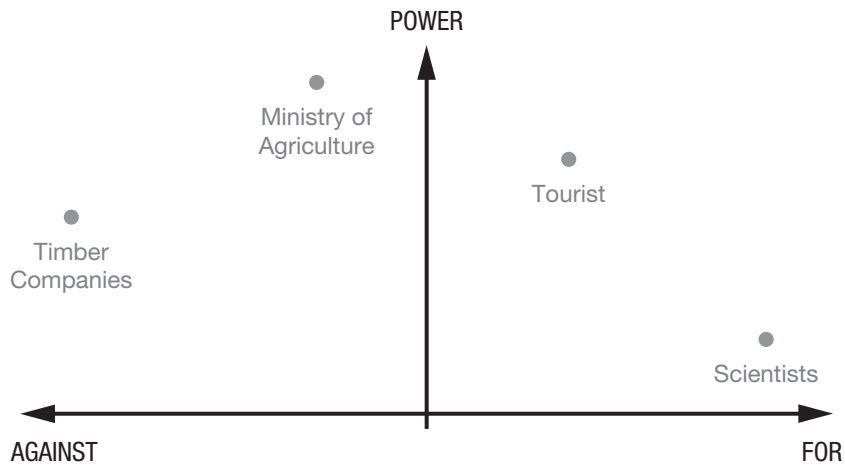
Remember that campaigning focuses on a narrow issue and thus it maximises the motivation of the audience, not their knowledge. The only education that campaigning can provide is by doing and gaining experience, not by giving information and discussing the topic.

2. ANALYSE THE FORCES

You know what you want to change, but why hasn't it changed yet? Think about all the forces for and against your campaign, everyone involved in the issue and decide who can be an ally and an opponent. For each step decide on your target audience.

3. K.I.S.S. (KEEP IT SIMPLE, STUPID)

Campaigns are needed because of the urgent problem and the need for public attention. Therefore, to make the campaign a successful communication you should make it a simple and clear ‘call for action’.



Force analysis – use the simple scheme to analyse the forces. It is important to know who can help you, who is at the opposite side and how powerful the actors are. You can see a small example of the situation concerning logging in the national park in the Czech Republic.

4. RIGHT COMPONENTS – RIGHT ORDER

The campaign involves a deliberate series of revelations or communication exercises to take the ‘audience’ from a state of ignorance, to one of interest and concern (these are the components of awareness), then onto anger and engagement (motivation), and finally into a state of satisfaction or reward. If that happens, the campaign participants or supporters will be ready for more. If the required order is missing then the campaigners will fail to get the needed response. You can try to create a roadmap – a plan with steps to be taken over certain period of time with deadlines.

5. START FROM WHERE THE AUDIENCE IS

Before the campaign, do your research and find out how you can address the issue to the target audience in order to make them interested. Consider

the topic from their point of view. Start with issues people are already aware of. At all costs avoid sounding patronizing. Instead aim to inspire people.

6. CONSTRUCT A CRITICAL PATH

It is important to keep the campaign clear and narrow, because many issues can still seem complex to the public and the complexity demotivates because people feel confused. Do not try to communicate ‘the issue’, however tempting it may be. Communicate your campaign – what you think, the problem as you see it, the solution as you see it, the opportunity as you see it. It is useful to plan a campaign as a series of steps: the completion of one leads to the next one.

7. CAMPAIGN AGAINST THE UNACCEPTABLE

To run a successful campaign you need broader support and to achieve

that you need to narrow the focus. To reach more people, find out what would motivate them to support you. Health damaging behavior, high bills, etc. You need an enemy. The goal of the campaign should be to stop that unacceptable behavior. This automatically puts you on the right side of the public discourse which is more likely to mobilize people for you.

8. MAKE REAL THINGS HAPPEN: EVENTS NOT ARGUMENTS

Don’t argue, take actions. People discuss and pay attention to things that happen, not ideas or arguments. Don’t forget to ask yourself a question from time to time: “What are you doing?” It is often the case when campaigners forget about the practical changes when they are collecting information or passing it to people who already support them. Campaigning is all about activity and action.

9. SAY WHAT YOU MEAN

Everyday we receive many messages which are often ignored or forgotten very quickly. When running a campaign it is important that your message gets heard and remembered. To do this, make your message direct and straightforward. Say what you mean. The name of the campaign should be simple and easy to understand.

10. FIND THE CONFLICT IN EVENTS

Campaigns don’t exist without a conflict, but it doesn’t mean that it should promote confrontation or aggression. Campaigns make the news when they create change, make a difference, or threaten to do so. People care about the ‘outcomes’ of the campaign, how it will affect them, their lives and what will change. Therefore, they will pay more at-

tention or even change their view when there will be some action or event, especially one that makes news. News focuses on conflict because most significant changes are usually opposed. If you have a campaign it will be in conflict with someone, somewhere. That is probably your most newsworthy opportunity.

11. COMMUNICATE IN PICTURES

When thinking about the campaign and actions to take, create sketches of a possible newspaper photo. Think about what should be in a picture and how to achieve it. But it is essential that newspapers make photos and write the headlines – not you. You should make an event that will attract attention and can be communicated in a photo. Pictures are far more powerful than words. Good ones tell the story and the best need no caption. And pictures cannot be interrogated or argued with.

12. DON’T SEND MESSAGES

Remember that a campaign is a conversation with a society. Your message shouldn’t be sent one way, communicate with your target group and get some ideas from them as well. You should listen not only to your supporters but also to people you would like to attract and their view of an issue.

04 How to make a positive environmental change?

Making people change

Now you know how to communicate with journalists, how to use new media effectively and how to prepare environmental campaigns. All these activities have one common goal – to make people change their behaviour. Environmental organizations may target different issues but they all want to make the public behave in a more sustainable way. In this chapter we present you some very effective tools to achieve an actual change of behaviours.

Many environmental projects are kind of **large-scale information campaigns**. They provide people with information (through advertising, flyers, events, etc.) and rely on their smart decision to live more sustainably. However, numerous studies show that providing information alone has little or no effect on changing behaviour. These information campaigns are very useful for creating awareness but they underestimate the complex relationship between knowledge, attitudes and behaviour. People do not behave according to their knowledge and attitudes because there are many different factors that determine behaviour.

Fortunately, there is an attractive alternative to these information campaigns – so called **community-based social**

marketing¹ (CBSM). It is based upon much research in **social psychology** which documents that behavioral change is most effectively achieved at the **community level**. Knowledge from social sciences is combined with highly effective **marketing tools** and together transform the usual approach to environmental campaigns.

Why is CBSM more successful in changing behaviours than other types of programs? CBSM is effective because it uses marketing tools to target people at the community level, decreasing the barriers for participation while increasing the benefits.

If you want to create environmental program according to CBSM, you have to follow these **five steps**:

1. *Carefully selecting which behaviours to target.*
2. *Identifying barriers and benefits to each of the selected behaviours.*
3. *Developing a strategy to target these barriers and benefits.*
4. *Pilot testing the strategy.*
5. *Final implementation of the strategy and its evaluation.*

¹ Social marketing applies marketing techniques to influence target audience behaviours that benefit the society.

1st Step: Selecting behaviours

When you prepare an environmental program, the key questions are “What is our goal? Which behaviour do we want to change?” You have to target a **precise issue** and find out which **exact behaviour** you want to enhance.

There are plenty of behaviours and it is not so easy to pick up “the best one” for a problem you would like to focus on. It is good to begin with assessing the importance of **different sectors and areas** (for example households, young people, heavy industry, etc.) which affect your issue and define how exactly they do this. For each area make a **list of concrete behaviours** that should be non-divisible (it can’t be divided further) and end-state (it is the last step and not just the precursor of behaviour we wish to enhance).

Finally compare these behaviours following these crucial criteria: **the impact** of the behaviour; how many people have already been engaged in the behaviour (**the penetration**); and **the probability** of adopting the behaviour. Rigorous data, surveys, observations or evaluated programs can help you with deciding.

When you consider all these criteria, you can find the ideal behaviour to focus on: it has high impact and probability but simultaneously has low level of penetration. It is also effective to seek for **one-time behaviour** because it is easier to adopt them.

2nd Step: Identifying barriers and benefits

When you want to achieve a real change of behaviour, it is essential to pay attention to barriers and benefits of this behaviour. Many organizations tend



to skip identifying these factors (due to time pressure, financial constraints, etc.) but it is impossible to design an effective strategy without this 2nd step of CBSM.

Note that each of particular behaviours has **its own set of perceived barriers and benefits**, even if these behaviours seem to be similar (such as composting and separating waste). Barriers and benefits also differ for various audiences and areas.

Both barriers and benefits may be **internal** (knowledge, lifestyle, awareness, income, etc.) or **external** (effects of one's environment, such as costs, available alternatives or social norms).

The whole CBSM is based on removing behaviour's barriers and enhancing its benefits, that is why you have to uncover them very carefully. It is useful to follow all of these four tools:

1. **Literature research** including review of relevant articles and reports provides you with verified information.
2. **Direct observation** of people may guarantee the researcher information about the actual behaviour.
3. Use **focus groups** to get in touch with your target audience. Select small groups (6–8 people) and come to them with a set of clearly defined questions that help you identify their barriers and benefits of targeted behaviour.
4. Conduct a **survey**. (It is good to ask someone skilled in development of surveys to make sure it will be effective.)

Identifying barriers and benefits may seem to be a hard and long work but it is definitely worth it. It is crucial to know these factors because they are the keys to your targeted audience. Without these keys in your hands you could not be able to convince your audience to behave more



sustainably. Skipping this step could lead to failing the whole program because of promoting or removing factors which your audience consider being less important.

Example 1 Turn it off: Anti-Idling Project

*This pilot project sought to decrease the frequency and duration of motorists idling their vehicle engines. Approached motorists were provided with an **information card** and **signs** reminding motorists to turn off their engines. The motorists were asked to **make a commitment** to turn off their vehicles engine while idle. To assist the motorist in remembering to turn off their engine they were asked to place a **sticker** on their front windshield. The sticker served both as a **prompt** to turn off their engine and facilitated the development of **community norms** with respect to engine idling.*

This project had three separate conditions. Two groups served as controls and received none of the above materials. In a second condition, four groups received only the signs. Finally, in the third condition, the personal communications, which involved providing an information card and the sticker were used in conjunction with signs.

Note that the signs alone were completely ineffective. However, the combination of signs, stickers and information cards dramatically affected idling. In this condition, there was a 32% reduction in idling and over a 70% reduction in the duration of idling.

http://www.cbsm.com/cases/turn+it+off+antiidling+project+using+commitment+prompts+and+norms_152

3rd Step: Developing a strategy

Now you have already decided about your audience, goal (behaviour you want to change) and its barriers and benefits. It is time to create an effective, smart and catchy strategy. It is important to develop it with carefully identified barriers and benefits in mind. Note that the strategy should focus on overcoming barriers and simultaneously promoting benefits of the chosen behaviour. Here are the most characteristic tools for CBSM:

Commitment

WHY?

When people agree to a small request, they come to view themselves as “the supporter” of this particular activity. They will comply with a much larger request later in order to **behave consistently**. The internal pressure to “be consistent” is so strong that commitment is one of the most effective tools of CBSM.

HOW?

- ▶ Emphasize public and written over private and verbal commitments.
- ▶ Seek group commitments.
- ▶ Actively involve the person.
- ▶ Use existing points of contact to obtain commitments.
- ▶ Help people to view themselves as environmentally concerned.
- ▶ Do not use coercion.

COMMITMENTS IN ACTION

“When asked if they would financially support a recreational facility for the handicapped, 92% made a donation if they had previously **signed a petition** in favour of the facility, compared with 53% for those who had not been asked to sign the petition.”

Prompts

WHY?

People tend to forget things and that is why you should use prompts – visual or auditory aids that **remind us** to perform sustainable behaviour.

HOW?

- ▶ Make the prompt noticeable.
- ▶ The prompt should be self-explanatory and easy to understand.
- ▶ Present the prompt as close in time and space as possible to the targeted behaviour.
- ▶ Use prompts to encourage people to engage in positive behaviour.

PROMPTS IN ACTION

“Litter bins serve as a **visual prompt** for the proper disposal of garbage. Simply making a litter bin more visually interesting was found to double the amount of litter deposited in one study and increase it by 61% in another.”

Social Norms

WHY?

Community norms **guide how we should behave**. Individuals observe the (un/sustainable) behaviour of others and may act alike.

HOW?

- ▶ Make the norm visible and noticeable.
- ▶ Use personal contact to reinforce social norms.
- ▶ Recruit well-known and well-respected people.
- ▶ As with prompts: the norms should be made as close to the targeted behaviour as possible; and should emphasize the positive behaviour.

SOCIAL NORMS IN ACTION

“When Oklahoma City initiated an anti-littering campaign, community norms regarding littering changed substantially. Prior to the campaign, 37% of the community indicated they would **feel guilty** if they littered. Two years following the campaign that figure had risen to 67%. The number of people who believed they would lose the respect of others if they littered nearly tripled in the same time period.”

Communication

WHY?

Communication is a part of every environmental program and its impact upon the targeted behaviour may vary dramatically based upon **how it is developed**.

HOW?

- ▶ Your message should capture attention. Make sure it is vivid, personal, clear, concrete and easy to remember.
- ▶ Know your audience well (their attitudes, beliefs, behaviour, etc.)
- ▶ Use a source that your audience consider to be a credible one.
- ▶ Frame your message to indicate what the individual is losing by not acting, rather than what she/he is saving by acting.
- ▶ Carefully consider threatening messages – they are useful only when there is also a suggestion of an action an individual can take.
- ▶ Provide personal and/or community goals.
- ▶ Provide a feedback about the impact of the concrete sustainable activity.



A presentation of a project based on community-based social marketing during the training course.

COMMUNICATION IN ACTION

“Households, who received a daily **feedback** on the amount of electricity they consumed, lowered energy use by 11 % relative to physically identical households who did not receive feedback.”

Incentives

WHY?

Incentives can be an important component of CBSM strategy, especially when motivation to adopt the targeted behaviour is low.

HOW?

- ▶ Use the incentive to reward positive activity.
- ▶ Closely pair the incentive and the behaviour in both time and space.
- ▶ Try to use creative non-monetary incentives, such as social approval.
- ▶ Pay attention to how people may try to avoid the incentives.

INCENTIVES IN ACTION

“The Capital Regional District in British Columbia began to **charge** households for placing more than one bag or container at the curb. Under this program there was a 21 % reduction in waste going to the landfill and a 527 % increase in recycling capture rates.”

4th Step: Conducting a pilot

Once you have a strategy that should affect behaviour effectively, conduct a pilot. Follow these four steps:

1. Randomly assign at least **two groups of people**: one that receives your developed strategy and another that does not – ensure that

this is the only difference between them.

2. When **evaluating** the effectiveness of your program, focus on **behaviour change** (not on attitudes or awareness).
3. Try to measure behaviour change **directly** and do not rely on self-reports.
4. **Revise** your pilot until it is successful. Then you can finally go straight to **wide implementation!**

5th Step: Implementation and evaluation

Prior to the wide implementation, collect the baseline information about the rate at which people are presently engaging the activity you promote. After the implementation, begin to gather the data again (at different time intervals) and measure the difference.

Example 2 Motivating Community Recycling

Randomly selected residents of New Zealand were asked to participate in a curbside recycling trial. They received the recycling bins with a “Curbside Recycling Kit”. The kit included a letter, a bumper **sticker** that read “Recycle: Show You Care”, and a small sticker for their mailbox that identified them as participants. As well, an **information guide** was included that explained why the participants should recycle, what is recyclable, and how to recycle.

There were three different groups of participants. The first group was simply given the bins and recycling kit. The second group was given the bins, the

recycling kit and was asked for a verbal **commitment**. The third group was given the bins and the recycling kit, asked for a verbal commitment, and asked to mail an \$8.00 **payment** for their bins in a postpaid return envelope.

The verbal commitment groups recycled considerably more than the control group. Only 47 % of the participants in group 3 actually paid for their recycling bins and there was no significant difference in recycling behavior found between those who paid for their bins and those who did not. Overall, the trial demonstrates that emphasis should be placed upon reinforcing verbal commitments because they are an easy, efficient, and cost-effective method of increasing recycling participation.

http://www.cbsm.com/cases/motivating+community+recycling+new+zealand+curbside+trial_126

Summary

If you plan to create an environmental program or campaign focused on changing behaviours, the community-based social marketing (CBSM) is the right choice for you. The CBSM is based on a very good knowledge of audience and precisely defined barriers and benefits of targeted behaviour. It uses tools from marketing which are focused on community level.

The process of CBSM involves five steps: selecting behaviours that have the highest priority (due to its low penetration together with high impact and probability to be adopted); carefully identifying the barriers and benefits of

these behaviours; developing an effective strategy; conducting a pilot test; wide implementation and final evaluation.

Recommended sources

Website about community-based social marketing:

www.cbsm.com

Books:

McKenzie-Mohr, D. et al. (2012). *Social marketing to protect the environment: What works*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

McKenzie-Mohr, D. (2011). *Fostering sustainable behavior. An introduction to community-based social marketing*. New Society Publishers.

05 Critical thinking

Definition

Critical thinking is reasonable reflective thinking focused on deciding what to believe or what to do¹. Critical thinking is a crucial skill for learning and communication. We can describe it in a simplified way as thinking about thinking. More precisely it means evaluating information and our thoughts in a disciplined way and usually refers to a diverse range of intellectual activities: observation, interpretation, analysis, inference, evaluation and explanation.

Critical thinking is not just “thinking a lot”. One can spend a vast amount of time defending a flawed position or pursuing a question that actually needs to be reformulated. Critical thinking allows us to examine possible flaws and biases and it guides us by knowledge and evidence that fits with reality even if it refutes our cherished beliefs.

“Give someone a fish and they will eat for a day. Teach them how to catch a fish and they will never go hungry.”

A part of critical thinking is scepticism. It doesn't mean any indiscriminate rejection of ideas, it refers to doubting and suspending our judgment. Before we accept a claim, first we take the time to understand it, examining the reasoning and possible assumptions and biases behind it. If the claim is shown to be unfounded, not accepting it is an appropriate response.

Truth of factual claims is not determined by the emotion that accompanies them or by the fact that they are believed by certain social groups. Reasoning behind factual claims should be based on sound, consistent logic, not on emotions or social pressure. In other words, the reasoning has to have a logical structure and the conclusion has to be drawn from the premises. Consider these examples:

“Magnets attract iron.” + “This object is made from iron.” => “This object will be attracted to magnets.”

“Magnets attract iron.” + “ This object is attracted to magnets.” => “This object is made from iron.”

¹ There are many ways how to define critical thinking indeed. For other definitions, check Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_thinking. We chose this one due to its clearness and understandability. Source: Ennis, R. H. (1993). Critical Thinking Assessment. *Theory into Practice*, Vol. 32, No. 3, pp. 179-186.



Both of the reasons sound logical, however only one of them is truly logical. Do you know which one and why?² Breaking logical rules is a common way to make an argument sound logical when it isn't. Understanding how premises combine together to form logical conclusions is an efficient way to judge ideas.

Critical thinking means seeing complex issues in a complex way and to be able to tolerate the ambiguity of not knowing. Rushing into uncertain conclusion is about comfort, not about truth and curiosity.

Principles of critical thinking:

- ▶ **Willingness to criticize oneself** – critical thinkers are willing and able to evaluate their own thoughts.
- ▶ **Reflective thought** – critical thinking is based on self-corrective concepts and principles, it can be as-

² Only the first one is a logical conclusion. The second one ignores the fact that there can be other materials attracted by magnet (e.g. nickel). The broken logic is called a logical fallacy.

sociated with the reflective aspect of human reasoning.

- ▶ **Competence** – it is necessary to employ logic and other intellectual criteria, e.g. clarity, credibility, accuracy and fairness.

How can critical thinking help environmentalists?

Critical thinking is a way to think and assess information more comprehensively and it enables us to identify and reject false ideas and ideologies. Improving critical thinking can give us at least three benefits. We will be better able:

1. To construct better argumentation for our issues.
2. To find logical inconsistency or errors in the reasoning of people with different opinions. (If there is inconsistency!)
3. To correct possible flaws and biases in our own thinking and opinions.

If you prepare a campaign or an educational activity without correct reasoning for your claims, it is very easy to dispute it. If there is an opposition to your campaign, it can diminish the results of the activity very substantially, because the confused public would lose interest in the issue very rapidly³. It is crucial to avoid flaws and fallacies in your activities.

It doesn't mean that all parts of your campaign or promotion should use only logical reasoning. Sometimes it is better to use pictures, videos or personal stories because they can grab people's attention easily. The Greek philosopher

³ Psychologists call this kind of confusion **cognitive dissonance**.

Aristotle divided the means of persuasion⁴ into three categories:

- ▶ **Ethos (Credibility)** – convincing by the character of the author, we tend to believe people whom we respect.
- ▶ **Pathos (Emotional)** – convincing by appealing to the emotions, to the audience's sympathies and imagination.
- ▶ **Logos (Logical)** – persuading by the logical consistency and reasoning of your message⁵.

If you intend to conduct a campaign, it is important to have credibility and to grab people's attention using emotive messages. Don't hesitate to use ethos and pathos – at the same time, don't forget that logos is also crucial.

Practical tools

The very first step is to distinguish between the fact and the opinion.

- ▶ **Fact** is something that has really occurred or is actually the case.

⁴ It is worth thinking whether we need to influence or persuade people or not. Be aware that the border between influence and manipulation is very thin. Critical thinking is just a tool and it is possible to misuse it to manipulate people (as almost any other knowledge and communication skills). However, it is unethical and we strongly discourage you from such behavior!

⁵ Modern psychology also confirms different ways of persuasion by the research. **Heuristic-systematic model of information processing** describes two ways of information processing, in a simplified way we can compare systematic processing to Logos and heuristic processing to Ethos and Pathos.

- ▶ **Opinion** is a subjective belief, and is the result of emotion or interpretation of facts. It may be supported by an argument, people may draw opposing opinions from the same set of facts.

Distinguishing between facts and opinions may seem simple and obvious, however the research shows that many young people aren't capable of differentiating them properly.

EXERCISE

Should I believe it?

There are plenty of biased articles, especially on the internet. Choose some of them, divide your participants into groups and give to each group some of these articles. You can give them also some basic materials about manipulation, argumentation and logical fallacies. The task of the groups is to evaluate argumentation and reasoning in the articles and create a poster showing crucial point for evaluation and assessing credibility of information.

The second step is to be aware of (rheto)logical fallacies. A fallacy is usually an error in reasoning due to a misconception or a presumption, they are used quite often unintentionally. We will briefly describe some of the most common fallacies⁶.

⁶ It is possible to find many definitions and taxonomies of (rheto)logical fallacies. The oldest ones were described by philosophers Socrates and Aristotle in Ancient Greek. Our selection draws from the website Information

I. On the Attack

AD HOMINEM

Bypassing the argument by launching an irrelevant attack on the person and not their claim.

Tony wants us to believe that the origin of life was an "accident". Tony is a god-less bastard who has spent more time in jail than in church, so the only information we should consider from him is the best way to make license plates.

STRAW MAN

Creating a distorted or simplified caricature of your opponent's argument, and then arguing against that.

You say Israel should stop building settlements on the West Bank in violation of treaty. So you are saying Israel doesn't have the right to be a nation?

BURDEN OF PROOF

Placing the burden of proof on the wrong side of the argument. I don't need to prove my claim – you must prove it is false.

I maintain long-term solar cycles are the cause of global warming. Show me I'm wrong.

II. Appeal to the Mind

APPEAL TO AUTHORITY

Using an authority as evidence in your argument when the authority is not really

is Beautiful (<http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/rhetological-fallacies/>), some of the descriptions or examples are based also on the book: Bennett, B. (2012). *Logically Falacious: The Ultimate Collection of Over 300 Logical Fallacies*. Sudbury: eBookIt.

an authority on the facts relevant to the argument.

My 5th grade teacher once told me that girls will go crazy for boys if they learn how to dance. Therefore, if you want to make the ladies go crazy for you, learn to dance.

APPEAL TO COMMON BELIEF

When the claim that most or many people in general or of a particular group accept a belief as true is presented as evidence for the claim. Accepting another person's belief, or many people's beliefs, without demanding evidence as to why that person accepts the belief, is lazy thinking and a dangerous way to accept information.

Most people believed that smoking is healthy during the first half of 20th century. Later the statement was shown to be false.

III. Appeal to Emotions

APPEAL TO FEAR

When fear, not based on evidence or reason, is being used as the primary motivator to get others to accept an idea, proposition, or conclusion.

If we don't bail out the big carmakers, the US economy will collapse. Therefore, we need to bail out the carmakers.

APPEAL TO RIDICULE

Presenting the argument in such a way that makes the argument look ridiculous, usually by misrepresenting the argument or the use of exaggeration.

It takes faith to believe in God just like it takes faith to believe in the Easter bunny

– but at least the Easter bunny is based on a creature that actually exists!

IV. Faulty Deduction

ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE

Discounting evidence arrived at by systematic search or testing in favor of a few firsthand stories.

I'm going to carry on smoking. My grandfather smoked 40 a day and he lived until he was 90!

UNREPRESENTATIVE SAMPLE

Drawing a conclusion about a population based on a sample that is biased, or chosen in order to make it appear the population on average is different than it actually is.

Our website poll found that 90 % of internet users oppose online piracy laws.

V. Garbled Cause & Effect

POST HOC ERGO PROPTER HOC

Claiming that because one event followed another, it was also caused by it.

Since the election of the President more people than ever are unemployed. Therefore the President has damaged the economy.

IGNORING A COMMON CAUSE

Claiming one event must have caused the other when a third (unlooked for) event is probably the cause.

In households with more lighters there is also higher probability of lung cancer. Therefore lighters cause lung cancer.

VI. Manipulating Content

SLIPPERY SLOPE

Assuming a relatively small first step will inevitably lead to a chain of related (negative) events.

We cannot unlock our child from the closet because if we do, she will want to then roam the house. If we let her roam the house, she will want to roam the neighborhood. If she roams the neighborhood, she will get picked up by a stranger in a van, who will sell her in a sex slavery ring in some other country. Therefore, we should keep her locked up in the closet.

CONFIRMATION BIAS

Cherry-picking evidence that supports your idea while ignoring contradicting evidence.

It's obvious 9/11 was an American-government led conspiracy to justify war in Iraq and Afghanistan. No plane hit the Pentagon. The Twin Towers collapse was a controlled demolition.

FALSE DILEMMA

Presenting two opposing options as the only two options while hiding alternatives.

We're going to have to cut the education budget or go deeper into debt. We can't afford to go deeper into debt. So we'll have to cut the education budget.

RED HERRING

Introducing irrelevant material to the argument to distract and lead towards a different conclusion.

Mike: *It is morally wrong to cheat on your spouse, why on earth would you have done that?*

Ken: *But what is morality exactly?*

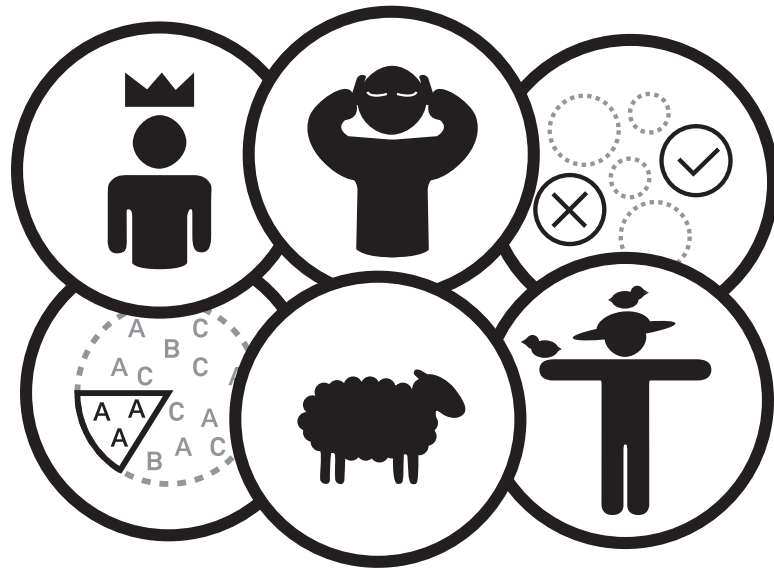
Mike: *It's a code of conduct shared by cultures.*

Ken: *But who creates this code?*

EXERCISE

Training of logical fallacies

You can train directly the logical fallacies. Write each fallacy on a small piece of paper, on another pieces of paper write possible claims (it is not important whether true or false; e.g. our prime minister is the best/worse ever; it should be banned to travel with pets in public transport; it should be banned/allowed to smoke in restaurant; climate changes caused by people are totally nonsense etc.). Divide participants into pairs, each pair chooses one fallacy and one claim and their task is to perform a small talk where they argue for the claim using given fallacy. The rest of the group is guessing which fallacy is shown.



You can find beautiful visual representation of logical fallacies at the website "Information is Beautiful": <http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/rhetological-fallacies/>



Preparation of the campaign "Bring the critical thinking to schools" during the training course.

LIE

Repeating a lie, slogan or deceptive half-truth over and over until people believe it without further proof or evidence.

I did not have sexual relations with that woman.

Media literacy

Media literacy is a repertoire of competences that enable people to analyze, evaluate and create messages in a wide variety of media modes, genres, and forms. A person who is media literate is informed. Media literacy means asking questions about what one watches, hears and reads and being able to create messages using different types of media. The term media literacy usu-

ally refers to the outcomes of media education (mainly at the context of primary and secondary schools). There are many big overlapping areas between critical thinking and media literacy, both cover analyzing and evaluating of information. Media literacy is more connected with different types of media and being able to use them.

There are five key questions we should ask ourselves whenever we received a message from media:

1. **Authorship:** *Who created this message?*
2. **Format:** *What means were used to attract my attention?*
3. **Audience:** *How different people understand this message?*

4. **Content:** *Which lifestyles, values or opinions are represented? Which are omitted?*
5. **Purpose:** *Why was this message created?*

Summary

Critical thinking is the art of analyzing and evaluating thinking with a view to improving it⁷.

A well cultivated critical thinker:

- ▶ *raises important questions and problems, formulating them clearly and precisely,*
- ▶ *gathers and assesses relevant information, using abstract ideas to interpret it effectively,*
- ▶ *comes to well-reasoned conclusions and solutions, testing them against relevant criteria and standards,*
- ▶ *thinks open-mindedly within alternative systems of thought, recognizing and assessing, as need be, their assumptions, implications, and practical consequences,*
- ▶ *communicates effectively with others in figuring out solutions to complex problems, without being unduly influenced by others' thinking on the topic.*

⁷ This splendid definition and the attributes of critical thinker are from the guide to critical thinking: Paul, R. and Elder, L. (2006). *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking: Concepts and Tools*. The Foundation for Critical Thinking.

EXERCISE

Journalist game

You can conduct a journalist game – divide participants into a few groups, each group become an editorial board of a given kind of newspaper (tabloid press, conservative paper, right-wing of left-wing newspaper, etc). They receive a lot of newspapers (can be cut into separate articles) and their task is to create the newspaper of given kind (by sticking the articles on a poster). It is also possible to write their own articles (fictious or based on the training course events). At the end each group present its own newspaper.

Recommended sources

Critical thinking video from QualiaSoup:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6OLPL5p0fMg>

Website "Information is Beautiful":

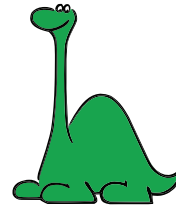
<http://www.informationisbeautiful.net/visualizations/rhetological-fallacies/>

Wikipedia:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Critical_thinking
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fallacy>

Videos and lessons about critical thinking from Australian Government:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSZ3BUru59A>, <https://education.technyou.edu.au/critical-thinking>



Hnutí Brontosaurus

Hnutí Brontosaurus is a youth Czech non-governmental organisation, which main aims are:

1. Nature protection and cultural monuments conservation – ensured by the long-term fieldwork of volunteers in more than 100 localities in our country.
2. Informal experiential education – programmes stimulating the creativity, activity and healthy personal development of young people.
3. Promotion of sustainable development – taking part in solving environmental problems and showing alternatives to consumer lifestyle.

More than 30 years Hnutí Brontosaurus attracts mainly students of high-schools and universities and opens them a way to explore both natural and cultural heritage of our country and their own personality. Hnutí Brontosaurus uses different methods of non-formal and experiential education during its typical volunteering weekends, where youth help to protect nature or cultural heritage and achieve new skills and competences.

www.brontosaurus.cz



Youth and Environment Europe (YEE) is an umbrella organisation uniting European environmental youth non-governmental organisations. Since its foundation in 1983, YEE has been a platform for many organisations that study nature and are active in the field of environmental protection.

The aim of YEE is to provide a platform where these organisations can cooperate and to encourage youth to be involved in environmental protection. YEE creates an opportunity to contact other European organisations, to exchange experiences, ideas and to work together.

www.yeenet.eu



The Environmentalist's Guide to the MEDIA Galaxy

The booklet helps you to be heard in the media and among the public. Learn about the possibilities of social media, how to write press releases and how to get them into the newspapers. If you wish to achieve a positive environmental change, the booklet will help you to prepare campaigns. You can also use community-based social marketing, a few simple steps designed especially to support a sustainable behaviour. Learn more about critical thinking to develop your argumentation skills and to improve your ability to recognize manipulation.

Communication is the most powerful tool we have, so let's use it efficiently!

