

Speakout

(Version 1)

Engagement range	Inform/Consult
Difficulty level	Easy
Cost	Low (up to \$1,000) Medium (\$1,000 to \$10,000)
When might you use it	To develop community capacity To communicate an issue To discover community issues
Number of people required to help to organise	One - three people
Time to organise	Medium (six weeks to six months)
Size of audience	Medium (10-30) Large (over 30)
Issues/resources to think about	Publicity; Venue; Furniture; Catering; Staffing; Moderator/facilitator; audiovisual recording equipment and amplification; Overhead/data projectors and screen; Printed public information materials; Response sheets; Props for working in groups (pens, paper, pins, etc.); Children's requirements
Innovation level	Low to Medium

Description

A speakout is an event where a group of people give testimony about a particular issue. The people speaking can be 'experts' giving factual information to educate the audience and media, or they can be lay people who are personally affected by the issue talking about their lives, or a combination of both.

Speakouts/soapboxes can be organised events or events that are arranged by participants. They are a venue for public comment and debate and are usually informal with a limited agenda. Formally organised Speakouts/soapboxes should be relaxed and should not attempt to steer a discussion and hence set an agenda.

Objective

- To provide people with specific information on an issue.

Desired Outcome

- A wider airing of views, and greater awareness of other people's contributions to a particular process or issue.

Uses/Strengths

- Useful when conflicting viewpoints exist.
- Useful when debate is required to refine understanding of issues.
- Useful when a particular group or individuals are affected by a project.
- Can educate.
- Allows organisers to meet people and develop networks.

Special Considerations/weaknesses

- Can be difficult to direct (often speak outs occur because groups feel their voices are not being heard).
- Popular with activists, and may not have a balance of opinions.
- The discussion may be difficult to incorporate into a formal consultation program.

Step by Step Guide

1. Identify the issue of interest.
2. Book venue and invite experts.
3. Publicise speak out/soapbox.
4. Take care of legal and other responsibilities.
5. Hire facilitator.
6. Organise recorders.
7. Explain time limits to each speaker (five minutes maximum).
8. After the event, prepare statement/report for media and authorities.