



Part 3

3.3

Advocacy Tool 1

How to formulate enabling environment reforms

Section 3.3:

Assessing the EO's Advocacy Capacity



Purpose

The advocacy capacity audit in some respects is a checklist of things for the EO 'to do' to occupy a policy space effectively and exert influence. This Audit is intended to:

1. Outline current time and resources spent by the EO on the policy area under review.
2. Scope how those resources could be deployed in a different fashion to increase policy impact and what resources the EO may need in order to play a more effective policy role.
3. Assist an EO in making recommendations on its organizational structures.
4. Identify deficiencies or areas to strengthen in the EO's role. This could be a lack of consultation on a policy area of major importance to business. Gaps in information the EO should be providing to its members.
5. Identify issues and enquire on additional relevant information which would help an EO decide whether further action needs to be taken (i.e. could be a deficiency in the EO's role but current situation externally or internally makes it impossible to rectify).



How to use this tool

- The audit should be conducted by an external consultant and consist of interviews with key EO office-bearers such as the Director General/President/Treasurer and senior staff.
- The audit will assist in getting a deeper view of the EO's role in the policy area under review. Alternatively the audit can be used as a self assessment tool by EOs themselves.
- The audit consists of a list of questions to ascertain the EO's engagement in the policy under consideration.

Step 1: Analysis of the EO's Advocacy capacity



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EOs need to generate specific policy recommendations based on a real analysis of the constraints on enterprises; however, actually formulating specific policy responses that can address the issues the EO has identified requires both creativity and expertise in policy analysis.

1.1 Ability to influence

The EO's approach to advocacy is predicated on its desire to change the status quo. It wants government to carry out a policy in a different way. It wants in simple terms change. An EO's ability to effect change will be predicated on its ability to influence change agents.

Policy influencing is the process by which stakeholders make their needs known on key issues prior to action taken by the policy-makers, with the aim of initiating changes in policy, practices, and procedures. To galvanize the needed change, advocates must influence potential change agents.

To influence policy-making, the perception of a wrong is not enough. If public policy is to be a solution, the wrong must be defined as one that policymakers can address.

Effective advocacy, requires a clear vision of the desired outcomes; a thorough understanding of the particular issue being addressed; the ability to prepare evidence-based policy proposals; and the opportunity to meet with and persuade policy-makers of the EO's case.

Methods of influencing consist of:¹

1. **Demonstrating technical expertise;**
Presenting thorough and clearly-researched arguments that make a case for policy change.
2. **Exhibiting professional integrity;**
Demonstrating a professional approach at all times so as to maintain credibility in the eyes of those the EO is seeking to influence.
3. **Using assertive persuasion;**
Having an ability to be a 'persuader for policy change' and possessing the ability to present a case in ways that government can both empathize with and potentially support.
4. **Developing a common vision;**
Bringing together into a collective position all the views – sometimes competing – of the EO's membership into a common vision for a given policy choice.
5. **Using participation and trust;**
By comprehensively testing policy arguments and by respecting relationships that the EO has developed with government in order to use those relationships to push for policy change.
6. **Using tension and anxieties**
When necessary, putting public pressure on government to move towards the EO's position but in such a fashion that seeks to maintain existing relationships.

In these endeavours the EO should:

- Be 100 per cent clear on the policy it wants changed or implemented.
- Comprehend fully the EO's ability to impact and how its proposal will be perceived by government. If the EO is respected as an organization with a track record of presenting empirical arguments – whether the government likes it or not – then it does not have to make a virtue of its research efforts for every proposal – it is assumed.
- Be cognizant that influencing goes both ways: government (or other stakeholders) will want to influence the EO's position.
- Be receptive and open (and be seen to be so) to other points of view and arguments on the given policy the EO wants to affect. Seek areas of common ground – no matter how small – as they help build momentum in other more contentious areas.
- Maintain relationships even where the EO has a very strong argument with those opposed to its proposals; resist the opportunity to embarrass the other stakeholder. The situation may be reversed in the future.

Effective influencing requires a combination of interpersonal, communication, presentation, negotiation and assertiveness techniques. It above all requires the EO to proffer solutions and be a force for positive change.

The starting point for an EO is to assess its position *vis à vis* its principal interlocutor – government. How is it viewed? Is it a serious representative of business interests? The assessment questions below can assist an EO in that analysis.

¹ Kubr, 1993.

EO ADVOCACY CAPACITY AUDIT

<p>Does the EO have a formal position(s)? (e.g., written policy; previous public statement, public letter)</p>	<p>1. Is it well established? 2. How was it arrived at?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consistently expressed as issue for concern from members (member interaction, meetings, phone calls etc.); Yes/No ▪ survey of members; Yes/No ▪ policy committee; Yes/No ▪ guidance from few key members; Yes/No ▪ guidance from others? Yes/No ▪ Reaction to government action/inaction on issue. Yes/No
<p>Is it a priority issue for members?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If so, since when? Yes/No
<p>Is the issue a time-bound one for the EO?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The EO may have been active on the issue for a specific period perhaps in reaction to government action/inaction but is not currently active. ▪ Seek an explanation from the EO, if this was the case, why it was reactive and not proactive in this policy debate.
<p>Does the EO have an appropriate organizational structure to conduct advocacy activities?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is there a special unit in charge that monitors policy developments? ▪ Does the unit report directly to the person in charge of the organization? ▪ Are the advocacy activities properly controlled and evaluated, and how is their success measured? ▪ Are there sufficient resources attributed to advocacy activities, e.g. research budget, etc.?
<p>How engaged has the EO's board been on the issue?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Any particular board members who take a policy lead or champion the issue? ▪ Name (and potential names).
<p>Does the EO have a policy committee of members?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ How often does it meet? ▪ Are the key sectors represented on it? ▪ How often does membership rotate?

<p>What has the EO done to advocate this position?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Actively pushes the issue with government officials. ▪ Raised issue at Ministerial level. ▪ Active media profile. ▪ Conducted surveys. ▪ Developed research papers. ▪ Keeps active in analyzing policy issues and putting in place appropriate and proactive response strategies. ▪ Maintains contacts and provides intellectual inputs into policy discussions. ▪ Provides leadership (and is so recognized) in the given policy space. ▪ Keeps its issues alive in policymakers', legislators', and regulators' minds by regularly inviting them and their staff to attend briefings or roundtable discussions. ▪ Keeps track of legislators' and policy-makers' statements and voting records, and informs them that the EO is doing so. Publishes this information and distributes it to members and to other interested groups. ▪ Keeps track of legislation, knows when it was sent to special committees for discussion, when the debate will occur in plenary session, and so on. Uses this information and contacts with staff members to arrange and send a delegation to observe or participate in the discussions.¹
<p>Government Departments/agencies the EO interacts with</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ List all and the frequency of engagement with them.
<p>Rank the relationship (of each department/agency)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Helpful; ▪ occasionally helpful; ▪ neutral; ▪ adversarial; ▪ occasionally adversarial.
<p>Government Departments/agencies the EO does not interact with and the reasons why.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ List each department or agency and the reasons why.
<p>Scope for increased interaction/Collaboration</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Name specific Ministries/agencies ▪ List any recently increased engagement with Ministries/agencies

² Center for International Private Enterprise: *How to advocate effectively: a guidebook for business associations*, 2006.

<p>Does the EO fully utilize the existing access opportunities to make representations to the government on its policy concerns?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Are its representations to government bodies clearly focused and positioned? ▪ Are its arguments well-structured and supported by convincing evidence? ▪ Do the persons making representations have the necessary status and skills to optimize influence? ▪ Is it necessary to lobby for improved access to the government?
<p>Policy work</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ New position developed, or existing position updated ▪ List the number of policy papers produced (previous 12-18 months) on the issue or related to it.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of direct meetings with Government (last 12-18 months)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Number of submissions to government (last 12-18 months)
<p>What impact has the EO had over last three years?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Outline the possible extent using the following criteria. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A new policy has been introduced. ▪ A law or regulation has changed. ▪ A commitment for a change (policy/regulation) has been given. ▪ The issue has been placed on the political landscape (evidenced by public debate/media engagement etc.).
<p>Number of professional staff working in this policy space.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Estimate the total time each member of staff spends on this policy issue.
<p>What is the time spent by the EO as a whole responding to direct membership queries in this policy space?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very time-consuming; ▪ time-consuming; ▪ increasing in time; ▪ decreasing in time.
<p>What is the time spent by the EO as a whole responding to direct services in this policy space?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Very time-consuming; ▪ time-consuming; ▪ increasing in time; ▪ decreasing in time.

<p>What is the time spent by the EO on policy development?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Researching policy positions; ▪ discussing directly with members; ▪ servicing a policy committee; ▪ engaging with other stakeholders (non-government). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing in time; ▪ no real changes; ▪ decreasing in time.
<p>What is the time spent by the EO on government bodies?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Would include both time spent engaged with national bodies e.g., national Skills Board; ▪ time spent interacting with Government departments and officials (meetings, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increasing in time; ▪ no real changes; ▪ decreasing in time.
<p>Is members' expertise effectively used for policy work?</p>	<p>For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ getting specific information to help with policy work (e.g., ascertaining exactly the pros and cons of a particular government-funded training scheme); ▪ mandating members to play direct roles on national/regional technical bodies, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ List all examples of engagement.
<p>Additional financial resources spent on issue in last 12 months</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A special levy might have been raised from members to fund a special campaign to amend a particular piece of legislation that is seen as of major importance to the business community. 	
<p>Does the EO receive government assistance?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Could be that the government funds a position or work in the EO related to a particular national policy e.g., helps enterprises start up. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is this adding capacity to the EO? ▪ Do members see value?
<p>Is there scope for such funding?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ E.g. the government may have committed in the National Development Plan to roll out specialized training for entrepreneurship and the EO could position itself to play a direct role. 	
<p>Do you receive any regional or international donor assistance?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Could be a project funded or funding for specific work ▪ If yes, is it in line with the EO's strategic objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Is this adding capacity to the EO? Do members see value?
<p>Is there scope for such funding?</p>		

Which partners does the EO work with in this policy space?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business organizations, chambers of industries, manufacturers associations, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration strong and effective; collaboration could be improved; collaboration has improved; collaboration is weak; collaboration is getting weaker;
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Commercial (include monetary implications) For example, commercial consultants used to bolster IR analysis; communication strategies, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration strong and effective; collaboration could be improved; collaboration has improved; collaboration is weak; collaboration is getting weaker.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Trade Unions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration strong and effective; collaboration could be improved; collaboration has improved; collaboration is weak; collaboration is getting weaker.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Others (e.g., academia; research institutions, think-tanks, NGOs) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collaboration strong and effective; collaboration could be improved; collaboration has improved; collaboration is weak; collaboration is getting weaker.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the EO know how to exploit synergies with political parties and other interest groups? 	
Is there scope to deepen partnerships listed above?		
Is there scope for new partnerships?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relationships take time, honesty, and active listening. Getting the EO's message to key decision-makers requires patiently building up its access to them, directly or via their trusted advisors. Has the EO a track record of doing this? 	

What chargeable services does the EO offer?	List all: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Revenue as percentage of overall of income per annum.
In terms of demand are these services?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Increasing;▪ decreasing;▪ staying about the same.
Contact with media contacts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Articles published;▪ press interviews given;▪ press conferences held;▪ other.
Is there scope for an increased EO role in this policy space?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Changes in legislation/policy;▪ forthcoming change in government that may be more receptive to the EO on this issue;▪ new EO president with a particular interest in this area;▪ international/regional impacts (e.g. new trade agreement).