

# Understanding Advocacy and Advocacy Tools

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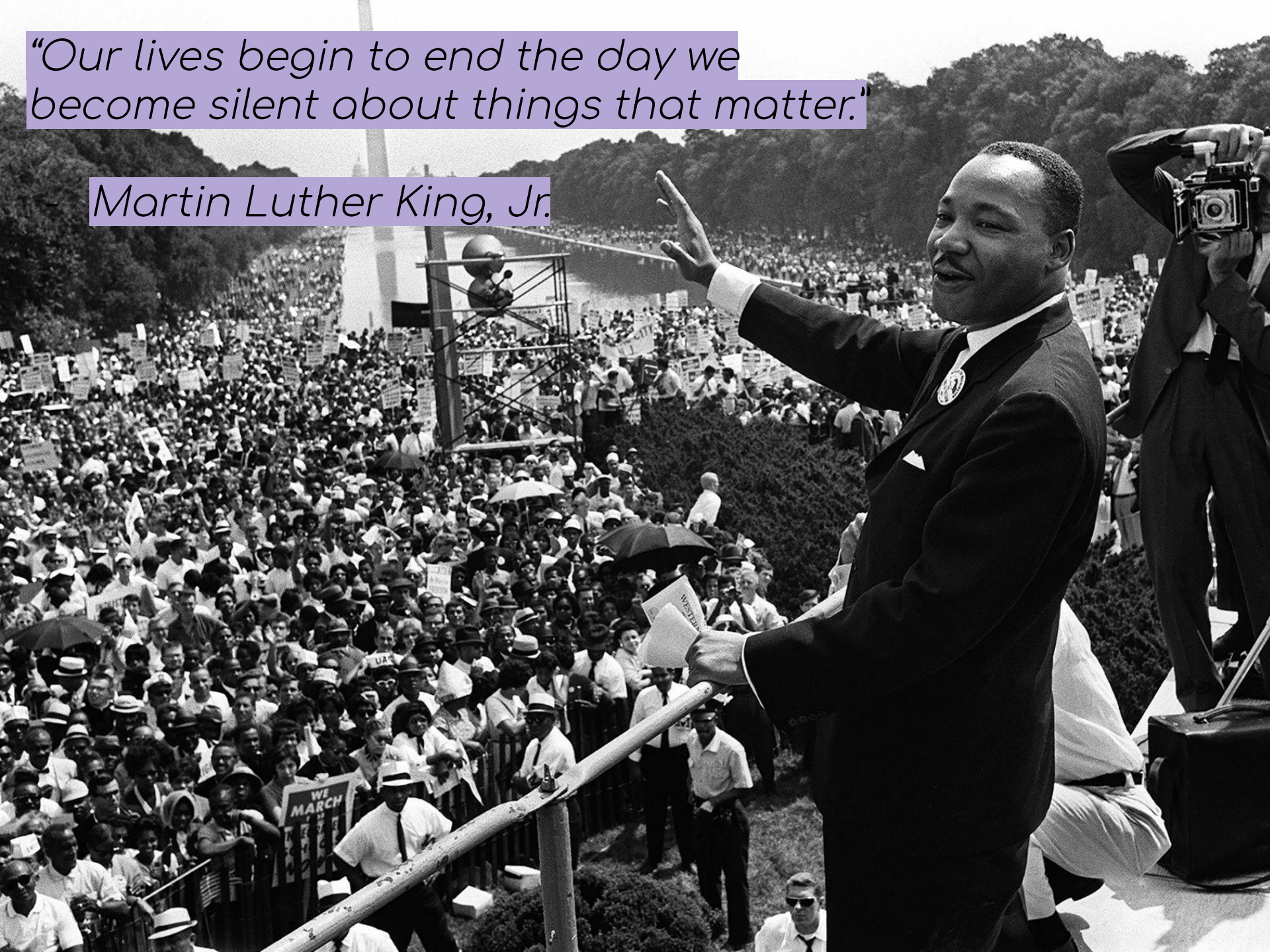


UNIVERSITY OF  
CENTRAL  
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CENTER FOR COMMUNITY &  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

*"Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter."*

*Martin Luther King, Jr.*



# Advocacy Definition

How would YOU define advocacy?

Merriam-Webster defines advocacy as:

**advocacy** noun

*ad·vo·ca·cy*

: the act or process of supporting a cause or proposal : the act or process of advocating something



# What is advocacy?

- Advocacy is about working with people to support them in strengthening their voice on the issues that affect them, then raising awareness of those issues to mobilize others to take action
- Advocacy is important to influence policy development and to evidence the strategy
- Advocacy can help build partnerships and influence those who could support your project

**Advocacy means taking action to create change.**





# ADVOCACY VERSUS LOBBYING

Visit [www.PEDIAA.com](http://www.PEDIAA.com)

## ADVOCACY

Advocacy refers to attempts to bring positive change

Involves raising awareness and informing the public about an idea, cause, or policy, researching new solutions, creating coalitions of like-minded people, and public campaigning

Ex: educating an elected government official about the effects of a policy on your community

## LOBBYING

Lobbying refers to attempts to influence the decisions, actions, or policies of legislators or members of regulatory agencies

Involves contacting or getting the public to contact the policymakers in order to support or oppose certain legislation

Ex: asking an elected governmental official to vote for or against an introduced legislation

# 10 Types of Policy Advocacy

You can find the full report here from Arkansas Advocates for Children and Families here:  
<https://www.aradvocates.org/wp-content/uploads/AACF-10-Types-of-Advocacy.pdf>

## 1. Peer-to-Peer Advocacy

- a. When to use: When you want to activate your friend, family and professional networks to support and take action for your cause.

## 2. Legal Advocacy

- a. When to use: If you want to repeal a current law. If you want to prevent a law from being enacted. If you believe a current law is not being properly implemented or enforced.

## 3. Grassroots Advocacy

- a. When to use: If you wish to engage a large number of people. If you want decision-makers to see the wide support for your issue and solution. If you want decision makers to see the wide opposition for a current law or proposed law. If the problem you want to solve is big.

## 4. Research Advocacy

- a. When to use: If information is not currently available on your issue area. If information in your issue area needs to be updated. If conclusions drawn by current research are inaccurate or the current research itself is inaccurate. If current research is incomplete. If the use of data will help you move your issue forward.

## 5. Financial Advocacy

- a. When to use: To support a candidate or party (not as a nonprofit, only as an individual). To support a cause.

# 10 Types of Policy Advocacy (Continued)

## 6. Legislative Advocacy

- a. When to use: If there is legislation you want proposed. If there is a bill that has been filed that helps your issue. If there is a bill that has been filed that will harm your issue

## 7. Administrative Advocacy

- b. When to use: To ensure that a law best assists the people it is mean to serve. To ensure a bad law doesn't get worse in implementation.

## 8. Election Advocacy

- c. When to use: If your mission and issue are affected by decisions made by elected officials. If you have a large base of supporters you want to engage. If you want to ensure your issue is being discussed by candidates.

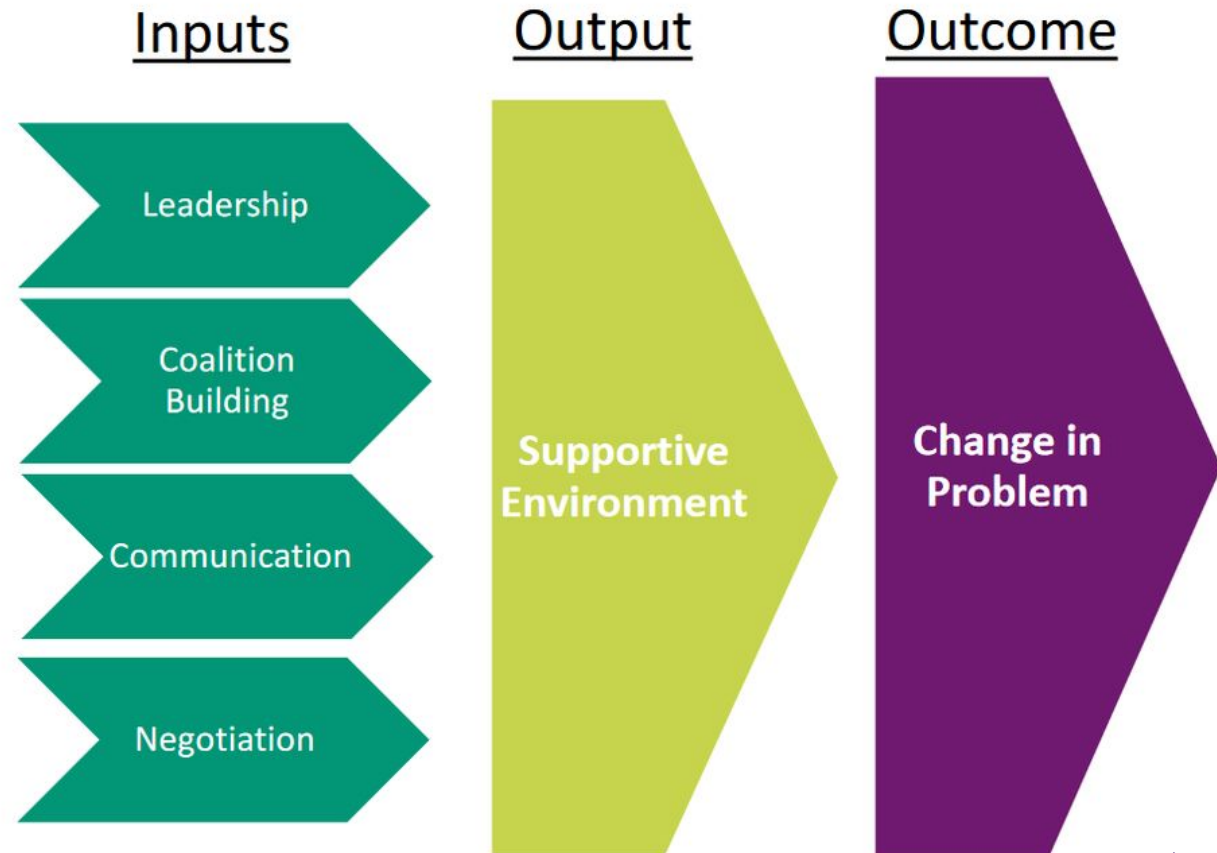
## 9. Media Advocacy

- d. When to use: To educate and activate individuals outside of your current network. To increase the likelihood of your messages being seen by decision makers and community influencers.

## 10. Social Media Advocacy

- e. When to use: To reach a wide audience. To advocate when you have a small budget. To publicly engage with decision makers. To make viral campaigns.

# The Advocacy Process









# Tool: The Story Spine

## THE STORY SPINE

THE STORY SPINE	STRUCTURE	FUNCTION
Once upon a time...	Beginning	The world of the story is introduced and the main character's routine is established.
Every day...		
But, one day...	The Event	The main character breaks the routine .
Because of that...	Middle	There are dire consequences for having broken the routine. It is unclear if the main character will come out alright in the end.
Because of that...		
Because of that...		
Until finally...	The Climax	The main character embarks upon success or failure



Once upon a time, there was a fish named Marlin that was protective of his son, Nemo.

And every day, he warned Nemo that the ocean was full of danger.

Until one day, to rebel against his dad, Nemo ignored the warnings and swam into the sea.

And because of this, he was captured by a diver and ended up in a dentist's fish tank.

And because of this, Marlin enlisted other sea creatures to go and rescue Nemo.

Until finally, he found Nemo and learned that love depends on trust.

# Tool: “After the Hill Meeting”

- Send a personal thank you note
- Send a letter to your local paper
- Sign up for the legislators’ e-newsletter (and/or follow them on social media)
- Post a picture
  - “Thank you!” on Facebook/Twitter/Instagram
- Follow up:
  - Town hall meetings/executive committee meetings - keep the issue alive
  - Continue to inform your audience (staff, organization members, followers, informal advocacy group, friends, etc.)



# Important takeaways:

- “All politics is local.”
  - Public policy is created and changed to satisfy the pushes and pulls of local constituencies - not necessarily majorities, but constituencies
  - Policy development (and makers) relies on effective grassroots efforts built upon networks of motivated, local, allied organizations
- You will never know enough.
  - There is a gap between what you know and what you think you should know creating “information anxiety”
  - Study just enough about an issue to enable you to be proficient; do not feel like you have to know what the experts know before you get involved in an issue
- Become an expert in the problem first.
  - Before you study the solutions, study the problems faced or opportunities missed
- Identify credible, trusted sources of information.
  - Educate yourself!
  - These sources of information should be rooted in research and expertise; they can include formal news sources, organizations, or people/experts in your network
- It needs to be a team approach.
  - Build partnerships with multiple people and organizations
  - Share the information you have with others
  - Empower those around you; lift up their voices

The image shows the iconic dome of the United States Capitol building in Washington, D.C. The dome is illuminated from within, casting a warm glow. The sky is a vibrant mix of pink, orange, and purple, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The top of the dome is topped with the Statue of Freedom. The building's architecture is classical, with many windows and columns visible.

*"We in America, do not have government by the majority, but government by the majority of those who participate."*

*- President Thomas Jefferson*