

# Communicating Liberalism

some advice

Input by Stefan Melnik and Wulf Pabst incorporating comments  
and participants' contributions from the previous two sessions

# Problems with respect to communicating liberal messages

# Preparation

- What is my objective, the message I wish to convey?
- Who's the audience? Adapt accordingly
- The most important points I wish to make (limit number to three or four, maximum)
- The most effective arguments I can use
- Research I need to carry out
- Structure
- Time, rehearse and revise, if necessary

- Listen carefully (your opponent's arguments; points that your listeners might want to make)
- Related to the above, try to predict questions or points people might want to make and prepare appropriate answers (immediate and direct answers require preparation)

# Content and structure

- Introduction > who am I, why am I qualified to speak? (task of the chairperson, if there is one); what to expect (say what I'm going to say)
- Use arguments and clear practical examples that are easy to follow and understand
- Use interesting stories and/or speak in “pictures”
- Use signposts
- Simple structure

# Strategy

- Avoid being on the defensive; stay on the offensive
- Important points at the beginning
- Quotable sound-bites
- Be polite but firm: “from your point of view perhaps, but I must point out that...”
- Give the audience hope, something to look forward to, a mission (enthusiasm is contagious!)
- Make the connect between yourself and the audience: “we”; “our party”, “people like us”

- Similarly, when presenting an idea, present it as my idea: “in my opinion”, “I believe that”... The idea comes across in a more personal manner
- If you are in opposition, use that advantage. (You are not responsible for a government’s failures)
- Don’t raise too many expectations (in the interests of retaining credibility)

# Rhetorics

- Language: use simple language, avoid technical terms wherever possible, talk slowly, use short sentences!
- Sufficient volume, proper enunciation and modulation!

# Body language

- Eye contact (with everyone)
- Upright posture
- Use your hands to underline important points you are trying to make, to emphasise or to signpost your speech
- Don't suggest inaccessibility by, eg, folding your arms
- Be friendly but sincere
- Don't be afraid to show emotion