**Ask for Change**

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**Step 1: Stakeholder Impacts**

[Insert summary]

Before proceeding, you’ll want to review your initial inquiry and assessment to be sure you have a clear understanding of the entire picture.

* What is the presenting issue, opportunity or problem?
* What is the evidence?
* What has already been done (if anything)?
* Where are the likely roots of the oppression?
* What are the impacts of oppression on the individual or group of people who are directly affected by the concept, technology, system, policy or law?

**Step 2: Research Mission/Purpose and Strengths**

[Insert Mission/Purpose and Strengths]

For the concept, technology, policy, system or law and/or the business, organization or government housing the concept, technology, policy, system or law:

* What is the mission or purpose – What is it intended to do?
* Are there any core beliefs, guiding principles or values you share from which you can build rapport?

**Step 3: Determine the Most Appropriate Decision-Maker(s)**

[Insert Impacts on Stakeholders]

Who is the most appropriate decision-maker for this ask? Whenever possible, we try to speak with the person or decision-making body most closely aligned with the issue, opportunity or problem. For example, a housing issue at a college might be best handled by the Director of Housing Services. An issue with the Police Department might be best handled by the Chief of Police, or the civilian personnel responsible for Police Department oversight. An issue with customer service might be best handled by the department manager at the store.

**Step 4: Determine Method of Ask & Schedule Meeting**

Once you’ve determined the most appropriate person for engagement, it’s time to establish a meeting. First, you’ll want to determine how to make this ask respecting both your time and the time of the decision-maker. However, whenever possible, a face-to-face, in-person meeting can help to build natural rapport.

[Insert schedule meeting time, date and location. If email, schedule the email date and time for sending.]

* Face-to-face meeting
* Phone call
* Email or letter
* Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 5: Preparing and Making the Ask**

It can be helpful to set your intentions and outline your ask before your meeting, phone call or email to ensure you have everything covered.

An empowerment-based, human rights advocacy ask includes these key things

* Builds and establishes rapport by connecting with key strengths
* Summarizes and brings awareness to the presenting issue, opportunity or problem
* Summarizes, bring awareness to, and helps the decision-maker(s) resonate with the impacts on stakeholders
* Affirms all people’s entitlement to human rights, basic human needs and accessibility and inclusion
* Informs decision-makers about the
* Opportunity for creating and making changes, including specific times and actions, and additional resources (if needed and available)
* Seeks a commitment and intent to change within a specific time period

[Insert ask outline.]

***Example:*** *Hi Shawn, thanks for meeting with us. We really like Big Box Store’s mission is to sell the highest quality goods and services at the most competitive prices, and we share Big Box Store’s values of diversity, equity and inclusion. In fact, I have friends who shop here all the time.*

*The reason we asked for this meeting is because we understand that Big Box Store has recently closed all its public restrooms. According to our notes, this is due to an attempt to stop drug use in the restrooms. While we can understand the goal here, we believe that being able to use the restroom in safe, hygienic facilities is a basic human need. Ultimately, this policy is a having a disparate impact on several customers, including pregnant women, aging adults, young children and people with certain continence disabilities. And we have reports that people are experiencing physical pain, emotional distress, shame and embarrassment, and even using the restroom in their pants – which, honestly is a violation of basic human dignity and respect.*

*We believe all people should have the right to access stores and public accommodations such as Bog Box Store, and right now, this new policy is having the effect of Bog Box Store marginalizing and excluding some of our community’s most vulnerable people.*

*Our goal here is for Bix Box Store to reopen the restrooms and ensure accessibility and inclusion for all people, while affording customers basic dignity and respect.*

*We know this can take some time to review, and so we’d like to set-up a follow up appointment with you on February 19th at 2:00pm to see what can or has been done. In addition, we know the local Center for Pregnancy has some resources available that might be available if you would like some additional help in crafting a new policy.*

*Is this something that Bix Box Store would be willing to commit to?*

*Thank you so much for your time.*

**Step 6: Follow Up Actions for Success**

[Insert Date, Deal Breakers, and Clear Milestone for Success]

Prior to and during your engagement, you’ll want to have a clear understanding of the steps you’ll take to follow up depending on the outcome of your initial ask. Set a hard date for follow up(s) and be aware of any deal breakers (i.e. the revised policy creates new hardships or human rights violations for the same or other groups of people).

First, let’s plan for success and define what that means to you and/or the issue stakeholders.

*Example: Success will include receiving a commitment from Big Box Store to revise its policy and ensure accessibility and inclusion for all people in its restroom policies. The new policy will be established and implemented by February 19, 2022.*

Thank You

[Insert Thank You Letter]

Recognizing decision-makers for positive actions is an important part of nurturing relationship and fostering reconciliation and healing. Preparing a “thank you” letter or statement is an important way to close out the advocacy intervention.

*Example: We want to take this opportunity to thank Shawn Stevens, and his team at Big Box Store. A few weeks ago, we were alerted to a policy closing the store’s public restrooms resulting in a negative impact on many people, including pregnant women, young children and people with certain health conditions. Once they were made aware of the issues, Shawn and his team acted quickly and swiftly to ensure accessibility and inclusion for all people. We thank them for their commitment to the community, and looking forward to continuing our relationship with them in the future.*

**Step 6: Follow Up Actions for Unresponsiveness**

You’ll also want to plan out how you will address unresponsiveness to you request. Often, the actions you take may be based on your capacity to address the issue beyond the initial ask. Here, you’ll want to be clear about your role in next steps, and check all the opportunities that may apply.

* Take the ask to highest decision-making body within the organization or institution (i.e. Supervisor, CEO/Owner, Board of Directors, City Council, Etc.)
* Offer to help by proposing or facilitating the creation of human centered policy
* Engage in escalation techniques to gain public support (including press, demonstrations, boycotts, calls-to-action or legislative proposals)
* Refer the plaintiff to another human rights advocate, issue specific advocacy organization, or an attorney.
* Other: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Step 7: Complete and Save**

Once you’ve completed your initial assessment, you may want to refer back to it as you progress through your human rights advocacy intervention. In addition, you may want to keep records of your activities and actions.