
E 6 | TIPS FOR ORGANISING ACTION TRAINING SESSIONS

Skills for Action has a website and an email address that people can use to find out more information and to book training sessions. However, the following sets out a number of points that regularly come up and the have proven useful for organisers of training sessions; different points may be relevant in other countries.

Announcing a training workshop

- Before publicising a workshop, contact the trainer to make sure that the information you are providing is correct and that expectations can be met; this also helps ensure that organisers and trainers do not face repression.
- It is particularly important to clearly state how long the workshop will last for. Doing so enables participants to ensure that they can stay for the entire training session. There are several reasons why it does not make sense to participate in a small section of a workshop, or to arrive late or leave early. This should be made clear when publicising the event.

Space and materials

- Workshops need suitable spaces. The space needs to be large enough to accommodate the expected number of participants, as well as the practical exercises. In addition to seating, please ensure that you have the necessary floor space or an area that can be cleared so that the practical exercises can take place.
- If the temperature and weather conditions permit, the practical aspects of the workshop (and perhaps the entire training session) can be carried out outdoors, such as in a quiet park.
- Flipcharts and pin boards are useful, but not essential if posters and notes can be hung up in the room.
- If organisers are unsure about the suitability of a particular location, they should ask the trainers.

Duration and content

- Depending on the content, workshops can last from between three hours to several days. The short version of basic action training provides an introduction to blockades and lasts for between 3 and 4 hours; the more detailed version lasts for between 5 and 6 hours. Certain content can either be dealt with in an in-depth manner or left out completely depending on the length of a particular workshop.
- As a rule, we do not conduct training sessions that take less than 3 hours. It is very difficult to share experiences, convey relevant content and conduct practical exercises in a shorter period.
- We are happy to adapt our workshops to the organisers' needs and contexts. However, trainers must have been clearly informed about any special requests, needs or expectations in advance.
- Basic action training is not aimed at providing information about a particular action or issue. Moreover, it is not, and cannot replace the need for, detailed legal training. However, up and coming actions can be dealt with during training sessions if it makes

sense to do so within a particular framework. At the same time, it is important to present and discuss agreements that have been made about such actions (the action consensus, the structure of the spokesperson’s council, etc.) during the training.

- We view training courses as protected spaces, and the media are not permitted to report from within our workshops. If organisers would like to involve the media, work with the trainer to find a suitable way of doing so (see module A 6 | Dealing with media coverage of training sessions).

Travel expenses and fees

- It is important for us at Skills for Action to ensure that training workshops can be carried out despite a lack of funding. However, organisers should – at the very least – reimburse trainers’ travel costs.
- The trainers and the Skills for Action network are happy to receive fees/reimbursement of expenses. Our rates may also depend on the organisers’ financial situation. We ask organisers with better levels of resources for a fee, but we can help small self-organised groups to apply for funding or provide them with free workshops if necessary. Fees are negotiated individually, and depend on what is customary locally.

Text for announcing a introductory training working (template)

Action training ‘Dealing with police lines & blockading’

Where? xxx

When? xxx

Duration: xxx hours (including breaks).

Please note: it is important to arrive on time and to ensure that you have enough time to take part in the entire workshop. It does not make sense to arrive later or to leave early.

This training workshop provides participants with an opportunity to share experiences, use practical exercises to develop individual and collective capacities, break down fears and to gain new experiences. In the workshop, we will focus on civil disobedience, people’s motivation and goals and their worries and anxieties; affinity groups as the foundation of actions, decision-making in and between affinity groups, blockading techniques using the body, introductions to legal issues and advice on repression and how to deal with it.

Source: Skills for Action, Action Training Manual, <http://www.skills-for-action.de/en>