

How Would Animal Welfare Education Be Effective and Why?

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What is education exactly?

A process that gives new information creating knowledge.

When does education become effective?

- It alters both the existing knowledge and consequently the behaviour of the audience **permanently**.
- It triggers change on the level of the **individual** and/or the society.

Types of education, when & where it happens

- The usual ones:
 - School
 - Courses
 - Conferences, Workshops
- Which are also education:
 - Specific campaigns
 - Direct and indirect information flow
 - Media, books, newspapers, magazines and so on...
 - (Family and social environment)

Why is education so vital in animal welfare & protection?

- All animal welfare issues come from the lack of education, such as:
 - **Abandoned dogs:** unable to handle a dog or falsely evaluated how to keep a dog;
 - **Overpopulation:** importance of neutrening, problems caused by puppy farms;
 - **Unhealthy dogs:** fail to know the biological and mental needs of dogs, effect of puppy farms;
 - **Dogs with behavioural issues:** fail to know how to train and handle a dog;
 - **Abuse, dog fights, dogs as meal, dogs as objects:** the social norm on dogs.

Education as a solution

- What one knows will define how one thinks, acts and behaves
- The more relevant information & knowledge, the fewer animal welfare & protection issues to handle and solve

The biggest challenge

- You cannot really educate those ones who do not want to be educated or has no idea they should be educated.

Challenges in the modern era

- Knowledge is not the new sexy, though we know more than ever before.
- Information source has changed and being unverified.
- Habits and how we get information changed and keeps on changing.
- You can reach a massive number of people anywhere on the globe, but it does not mean your message is going to be received and understood.

How to launch educational activities?

- Take all the disadvantages into consideration
- Plan your educational strategy

How to build up educational strategy

- What is your **main aim** and your **message**?
- **Who** do you want to educate?
- Which communication **channel(s)** will be effective?

The aim & the message

- What is the **problem** you want to educate about?
- Your answer defines the **content**.

Your target group

- Who are **connected** to the problem/solution?
Who do you want „talk“ to?
- The **profile** of the target group(e.g.: gender, age range, social status, level of their knowledge).
- The **tone** of the message you are going to communicate.
- **Where** can you find them?
- How can you **influence** them?

Communication channels

Some examples

■ ONLINE

- Webpage
- Blogs
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Instagram
- Pinterest
- etc

■ OFFLINE

- Courses
- Conference, workshop
- Printed magazine
- Book
- Presence at social events
- TV, radio interview
- etc.

Communiation channels

- Consider the pros and cons and the exact **attributes** of the different channels.
- What sort of information and knowledge can the channel **broadcast**?

The way it works



Forming social norms

- Changing the general thinking and thus the behaviour pattern
- One of the most difficult issues.
- Complex, well-planned and long-running strategy is needed.
- Use of many communication channels.
- Repetitive information.

Summing up

- Education can only be effective when the new knowledge & information are used permanently by the audience.
- Building strategy is important and it is necessary to define:
 - the exact message,
 - the exact audience,
 - the effective communication channels.