

# Interest groups assignment

Business



The survival of an interest group lies within these key elements: gaining members, effective lobbying, and identifying and solving problems in the most beneficial way. An interest group is “ any group other than a political party that is organized to influence the government” (Coalman 379). The majority of interest groups are large businesses that are looking out for their best interest. With these types of interest groups, only the members of that business or contributors to that interest group benefit. However, there is a smaller category within the interest groups; which is the public good group.

The public good interest groups, unlike the larger business interest groups, “ seek a collective good, [where] the achievement of which will not selectively or materially benefit the membership or activists of the organization” (Coalman 380). In simpler words, an interest group is a group of people that are not affiliated with the government who influence the government to get what they want. These groups influence the government by the act of lobbying. Lobbying is referred to as, “ an attempt to influence public officials by peaking to them directly or by pressuring them through their constituents” (Coalman 379).

Interest groups lobby when they are trying to gain something. For example, Vampires for Justice, the interest group for Twilight, might support a bill that was passed to take another top grossing movie out of theatres. By supporting the bill, Twilights interest group now has more room in the theatre for their wonderful vampire movies and all of their awesome fans. On the contrary, if the bill had been to discard the slushiest at the snack bar, then Vampires for Justice would have opposed the bill because their loyal

Twilight advocates are big fans of slushiest. Therefore, no slushiest leads to less fans, which ends in unhappy members of the Vampires for Justice interest group. There are two different types of lobbying: inside lobbying and outside lobbying. The differences are the way that the interest groups approach the influencing of the government. 80th inside and outside lobbying have the same purpose, to influence the government for the group's benefit. Inside lobbying is somewhat more civil and deals with the interest group dealing directly with the policy makers.

Some of the dealing that is involved includes “ speaking directly with the policy maker, giving them money as a fundraiser, or testifying at a committee hearing’ (Coalman 382). Although inside lobbying is more organized and less dramatic, there still is outside lobbying. Outside Lobbying deals with activities by groups that push policy makers to act towards their cause. Some examples of these activities are “ organizing letter- writing or email campaigns, running advertisements on a policy issue, and leading protests or demonstrations” (Coalman 382).

The larger business interest groups who have money to donate to fundraisers and more of a say with the policy makers practice inside lobbying more often. The public good interest groups are more likely to practice outside lobbying because there is no money to be donated or one specific person benefiting from the issue being argued. Therefore, the people can get together and protest, write emails, or any another example of what outside lobbying consists of. Although inside and outside lobbying are slightly different they are both very effective when used properly at the appropriate time.

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Although lobbying is an important part of interest groups, it only accounts for about 15% of an interest group's success. The other 85% lies within the survival of the interest group. For an interest group to survive it needs to constantly have members. An interest group can gain members many different ways; a few examples are: common beliefs, current hot topics, or simply just by the geographical location of people. Most of the time all three could be the case for members joining an interest group. Let's pretend that the local movie theatre is thinking about not playing any of the Twilight movies on their big screens anymore.

This is a huge current topic for the imaginary town where this is taking place, and all of the locals that cannot live without their Twilight movies are stunned and heartbroken from this talk of no more Twilight. What is the outcome of this scenario? All of the locals that love Twilight decide to join Vampires for Justice to try and do something about this current hot topic. This specific scenario gave three different ways, which were illustrated above, that an interest group could gain members all in an example.

Although this was just an example of how members could be gained, it is very common for interest groups to encounter problems such as the one that was just outlined. Problems for interest groups are very common and come up fairly often. If we take the previous example and examine it more closely, we can point out some of the issues and possible solutions. Once Vampires for Justice has received the dreaded news of the current issues at the movie theatre they address the problem as fast as possible and inform the members of the issue.

The group agrees to all pitch in money, buy signs, and go out and protest against the shutdown of Twilight. However, there are a few members who think that if they do not pitch in money or waste their time protesting while everyone else does, it will be a win-win situation for them because they do not have to sacrifice any of their time or money and still get the outcome they want. This is called the collective-action problem. There are a few different ways to overcome the collective-action problem, all with different approaches and different outcomes.

One way that they could overcome it could be by the process of special donor. This process consists of finding a member of the group who pays for most, if not all, of the cost which in this case would be for the materials for the protest. Even though this approach would buy all of the materials for the protest, it would still be missing actual members to protest so it would not be the best choice of solutions. A similar but different solution would be the entrepreneur choice. The entrepreneur choice consists of finding an individual that does not need incentives to try and accomplish what the group wants.

However, even if the entrepreneur finds a way to fund all of the cost, he would still need members to help protest, therefore, this solution is still not the best solution. Another route to go would be the selective incentive, which consists of a benefit that the group can offer to the participating members. For example the members could get a free shirt for supporting their cause and volunteering some time. This solution would be the best route to choose because the members would be motivated to help because they are personally gaining something on top of the groups' goal.

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Although gaining members, inside and outside lobbying, and finding the most efficient solution to problems are not as easy to accomplish as they sound, they are the important elements for the survival of an interest group. Now that we know what an interest group is and what their goals are, we better understand what must be done for their survival. Along with lobbying and gaining members, efficient problem solving is indubitably one of the major roles in the effectiveness of an interest group. As you saw in the example above, there are always different ways to approach a problem and find a solution.