THE ASSOCIATION PROFESSIONAL

Balance between content, process and relationship

Jeroen Pepers, Arjen van Gijssel and Adriaan Vonk

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Colophon

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Preface

We want to help the Association Professionals (AP's) in their development. As writers of this book, we have years of experience in the field of associations, in different roles and at different associations. Therefore, we write about our personal experiences. That is the power of our story: knowledge and expertise, with practical, real experience.

However, we do not pretend to know everything. We hope to learn from the experiences of others as well. Take a look at our website: www.theassociationprofessional.weebly.com. Sharing=multiplying. Especially among AP's! On our website you will also find the digital version of the tools in this book (part III).

We would like to thank a number of people for their valuable assistance in publishing this book: Peter Breyer for his beautiful illustrations. Our critical readers Ilona Azar de Vlieger, Eline Penders, Yvonne Witter, Nicole Teeuwen, David Wijnperle and Lilian van Zandbrink for their comments. In this context, special thanks go to Hanneke Nagtzaam, Margriet Pflug, Pluup Bataille for their editorial work. By translating our book in English we owe many thanks to Leslie Dibble and Sanderijn Baanders for their comments and their editorial work.

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1 Introduction

The Netherlands is a country of associations. We count some 115.000 associations in our country.

We are therefore quite unique in the world in terms of numbers. There are many different types of associations: associations of which people are members as individuals, associations of organizations, associations of which both individuals and organizations can be members and - inevitably - the association of associations.

The association is an organizational form that requires special attention. An association has a structure and a democratic principle in which members are in charge. At the same time, the members are also the 'client' of the organization. In addition, an association has many formal and informal bodies in which members participate, and it operates in a broad social 'field' with countless stakeholders. The external relationships and relationships within an association provide a specific dynamic in which an association professional must operate.

Associations often work with volunteers. This applies, for example, to the local football club. If the tasks become more comprehensive and the budget more substantial, then usually professionals get involved. Associations representing sectors, interest groups or professional groups - and there are hundreds in the Netherlands - are almost always a mix of volunteers and professionals. Those professionals work on the 'staff' or in the 'office' of the association.

This book focuses on the association professionals at a branch or trade association, professional group or interest group. So, when we talk about 'the association' later on in this book, we mean associations representing either a branch or trade, a group of professionals or an interest group.

Of course, there are a lot of books on the market about the existence, management and operation of associations. But, strangely enough, they hardly cover what it is like to work as a professional within associations. We believe it is fairly unique work. We believe we can contribute to develop professionalism, but also deliver tips and tricks for day to day business. For us, learning and developing starts with focus. Asking questions like: what will really work, depending on which situation, and who and what will play a role? We believe that this focus will help the professional develop his knowledge and his skills.

The Purpose of this Book

When being curious, you always ask yourself questions. The starting professional is no different from the experienced professional. They both encounter challenging questions in their work as an association professional. Some examples from practice:

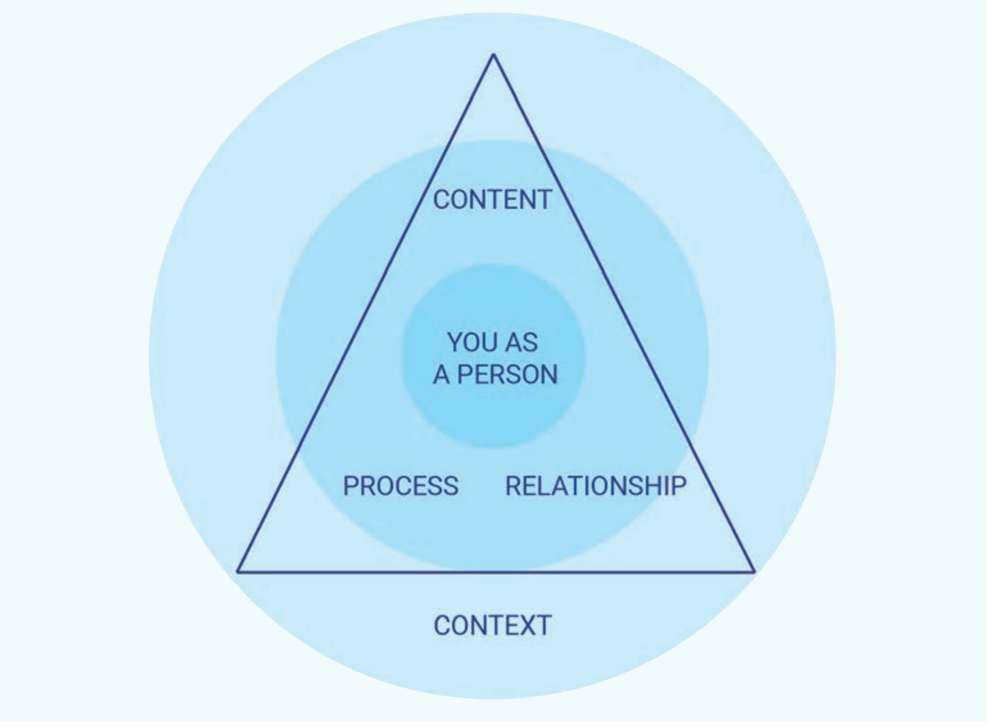
- How do you set up a successful lobby when a new law or measure is unfavorable towards members?
- How do you get members to support an idea to deal with a certain change in legislature?
- How do you deal with frontrunners, majority and laggards and get impact when you have to design a knowledge and innovation program for members?

- How do you encourage innovation and new solutions in your sector in collaboration with your members?
- Which services are you going to provide to members?
- What do you do when there is a joint strategic vision and some mebers go their own way and don't embrace it?

This book helps you to ask these and other questions about your profession as an AP and to answer them. For the starting professional it is a good introduction, for the master it is a confirmation: the way you're doing it, is the right way. In addition, this book can also be used as a reference guide when you get stuck in your work and you encounter issues.

The Structure of this Book

We have built our story from the core of the association profession. Here the professional stands in the center. As a person and professional with his or her own personality, experience, knowledge and skills. The professional thereby switches between content, relationship management and process skills. The professional does all of this within a certain context: his or her association.



The figure is a variation to the content-process-relationship communication model and has similarities to the RPR Triangle (results process relationships modell of the Interaction Institute). There are however also substantial differences (i.e. individual vs teamfocus, focus in conversations vs areas where skills and competences are needed).

The association is the biotope that determines the roles and the way in which a professional can fulfill them. We have depicted this in the figure above: the person at the center, with knowledge and skills in terms of content, process and relationship.

Reading Guide

This book consists of three parts. Part I starts with the basics. In what context does the professional work, what does this require of his or her personality and professional attitude and what basic knowledge and skills does he need in terms of content, process and relationship? Part II deepens this basic knowledge and skills in four areas: lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development, services and communication. After Parts I and II we conclude with a summary of the core of our story. Finally, in Part III we provide a number of practical tools that you (and your colleagues) can use to get started.

Part I The Basics

We start in Chapter 2 with the special characteristics of the context : the world of associations. Associations come in all shapes and sizes. We outline the common threads to help the professional with such questions as: What kind of association is my association? What core tasks do the members want me to act upon? What kind of development do associations go through and how do they deal with this? What are trends and developments that affect my association? We help the professional to describe their own context, the world in which they function as a professional.

In Chapter 3, we look at you as a professional, the person. What is asked of the AP in terms of attitude and motivations? How can you grow as a person and professional on the road to mastery? As a professional you are your own “instrument”. We discuss the art of balancing between the various tasks, the self-knowledge that is required, the pitfalls and blind spots and how one can remain open to the insights and opinions of others.

Then in Chapter 4 we discuss the basic knowledge for every AP. What does the AP basically need to know and be able to do when he or she works at an association? We will discuss the change story (content), the management of processes (process) and the involvement of relationships: the members and stakeholders (relationships). These aspects are relevant for every AP and in every role in the organization.

Part II In-Depth: Deeping Professionalism

In Chapters 5 up to and including 8 we deepen that basic knowledge and skills on four association tasks: lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development, services and communication.

We start with lobby and advocacy. In Chapter 5, we focus on lobbying in the political arenas of the nation’s capital and in Brussels. Then we paint a picture of the world of the ministries. How do they work and how can you deal with them? In this chapter we also discuss the representation of interests when negotiating for collective labor agreements. Chapter 6 is about sector-wide development, innovation and improvement. We provide insight into the course of the triple creation-application-upscaling and we outline a short introduction about how people learn.

Chapter 7 explains how to provide services at an association. What does an advisory role require from the AP? What if the association starts to change and deliver commercial products and services? We offer an assessment framework for dealing with the question whether or not to offer products or services to the members.

Chapter 8 is about communication. How does one reach the different target groups? What is framing a lobby message? How does one get members enthusiastic about innovation, what is the 'call to action'? How does one offer a platform to the members? We also discuss marketing. How can the association be divided into types of members? Does that help the professional to put his or her services "on the market"?

In chapter 9 we summarize the core of our story from Part I and II. We conclude with a top ten recommendations for the AP. In these recommendations, we state the storyline, the essentials, of this book.

Part III #How: Tools and Working Materials

Part III contains tools and concrete action frameworks to get started: an association scan, recommendations on how one can reflect on his or her profession, ingredients for a lobby plan and classification of stake holders. There is a complete overview at the beginning of Part III.

Part I
The Basics

Working at the heart of an association

2 The Context

What kind of wonderful world is my association? Maybe you sometimes ask yourself that. We certainly do. It is a world with special features and characteristics. We want to help you to understand this 'biotope'.

We start with ideas about the development of associations. Some of them are "old school" for the insiders, but - certainly for new professionals - good to know. Of course we also discuss more "modern" visions of association work. After this short overview of theory and models, we consider trends and developments in society that have an impact on associations. Then we look at the governance and procedures at an association. Finally, we conclude with how the AP can use these concepts.

The Dutch Association of Associations: DNA

The Netherlands has an association of associations. The Dutch National Association (DNA) unites Dutch industry, professional and interest groups, federations, funds and unions. There are around 115,000 associations in the Netherlands, of which around 3000-3500 are branch associations. Most of them have no professionals or a maximum of 1 to 3 employees. So there are many small associations. There are around 25-50 branch associations with more than 50 fulltime employees. In November 2014, a number of enthusiasts set up the Dutch Association of Associations (DNA). These association professionals had been to the ASAE 2014 in the United States, a congress with hundreds of learning labs. Many association professionals came to gather and bring information about the profession with great pride. On the return journey the question arose: why don't we organize this in the Netherlands too? Half a year later DNA was established. The aim of DNA is to unite all relevant players in civil society by providing a platform for knowledge, learning, inspiration and meeting.

2.1 Functions of an Association

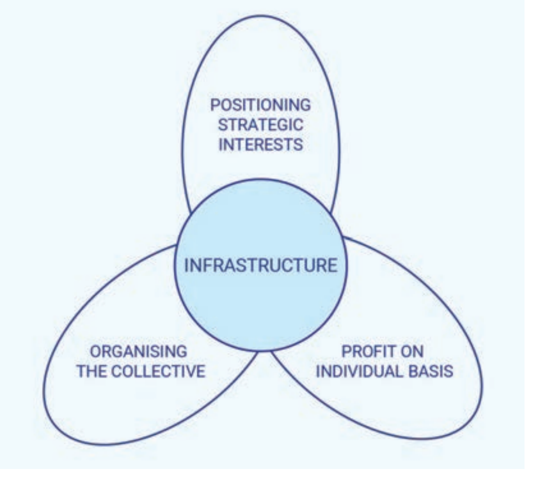
Each association is of course unique with its own combination of members, association expectations and the world in which the association operates. Still, if one looks from a distance, one sees that associations are very similar in what they do. There are a number of theories that describe the basic tasks / functions of an association in this way.

2.1.1 From Old School...

Associations are often described on the basis of a number of basic tasks / functions. Fairly 'old school' is the so-called propeller model (Tack, 2001). We call it 'old school' because it has been around for a quite some time. However, the model continues to provide a good basis for answering the question of what an association actually does. The Tack model recognizes three tasks of an association: positioning strategic interests (lobby and advocacy), collective organization (sector-wide development) and individual benefit (services). The three propellers must reinforce each other ('get turning') through the cooperation of professionals and members via the infrastructure and internal communication of the association.

There are also other models that describe the same reality but with a different clustering. For the purpose of this book, the actual activities are more important than the clustering. After all, those activities say something about the work that the AP will perform. We therefore choose not to cover all models here.

When positioning the strategic interests, it exerts influence on regulators, supervisors or administrators of a public duty. The positioning of strategic interests focuses on protecting interests, lobbying, positioning and profiling, with the focus on binding decisions of others ('all about the rules and the money'). Often it is about the 'legislative framework' or the 'level playing field' in which the members operate. The association wants those conditions to be as optimal as possible.



The model of Tack

In the collective organization (sector-wide development), the association helps members deal with collective changes (to organize innovation and develop the industry or profession). It considers tasks such as a quality policy, research, innovations, training, the labor market, image, big data and benchmarking. In fact, it is everything aimed at improving the industry and ensuring that the industry or profession is ready for the new developments and changes in the world.
In the individual profit (services), the association provides advice, offers specific education and training, purchases contracts which realize individual benefit by pooling capacity (sort of shared services) or organizes purchasing benefits due to the size of the association's total membership size.

The overlapping task of an association is the community, social network function. That function is the heart of the propeller (infrastructure), or in some models it is even an extra "propeller blade" (Kuperus, 2012). The community function is often a substantive part of meetings and internal communication at the association. These are important moments of (renewed) acquaintance and networking, the informal sharing of mutualities, of each other's successes and concerns.

The social function is not just about exchanging success stories. It is also a 'moral compass' of a sector, especially when it comes to abuses or failures by certain members. The association is the forum to discuss common norms and values. Sometimes they are fixed in codes and quality marks. This is about the collective professional honor or pride about what you stand for as a sector. In the society of the association the member celebrates his successes, but also addresses each others failures.

Coherence and Balance Between Tasks

A coherence and balance is needed between the various tasks of the association. Members themselves will not immediately make a distinction between the tasks and other external stakeholders will also see an undivided organization. But within the organization of work, there will often be some form of specialization (often within separate departments or teams). As a professional you will then be involved in a part of the tasks. Then it is important to continue to see the connection and coherence. After all, as said, the association is one, undivided organization in the eyes of the members.

It is our experience that activities really go to great heights when there is a connection and coherence between the tasks. Advocacy leads to sector-wide development and sector-wide development contributes to services. For example, if you are working on a certification of expertise at a professional association and you have a collective training program for that, it is also easier to lobby for legal protection for those certified professionals. So it is best when the propellers 'start turning', when all tasks reinforce each other. It makes your position and profile to the outside stronger and provides added value for your members. Keeping the connection, coherence and balance is a collective task for the organization. The management is at the forefront for this, but the professional also plays a role.

Guidelines at KNMP

An association professional at the pharmacists' organization KNMP draws up evidence and practice-based guidelines on quality assurance for pharmacists. It sounds like sector-wide development, but he still works in the lobby and advocacy department. That is because those standards determine the healthcare that health insurers must purchase. The NZA regulator links the quality standards to 'care performance'. What exactly these services are, and at what price, is up to negotiations between insurers, professional groups and regulators. The association professional is also involved in these negotiations on behalf of the KNMP. A quality standard therefore directly affects the business model.

2.1.2 To an Association 3.0.

In addition to the interpretation of the basic tasks, you can also outline the development and existence of associations in a model 3.0.

The model of the association 3.0 distinguishes phases of development. In the association 3.0 model, developed by the Dutch Van Spaendonck BrancheAdvies, the association is shifting from being a collective of members to being a forerunner in the realization of innovation and renewal. This affects all layers of the organization. Take a look in the diagram below to see the role of the employee of the office: from being a secretary to being a connector. That requires quite different skills. A development from an association 1.0 to an association 3.0 therefore has a major impact on the professional.

Incidentally, we would like to emphasize that it is not said that the association 3.0 is the pinnacle of perfection. Members can legitimately choose for the association 1.0. If there are mainly 'interests to be represented'. In practice we see mixes of characteristics of 1.0, 2.0 and 3.0 among associations.

Model association 3.0

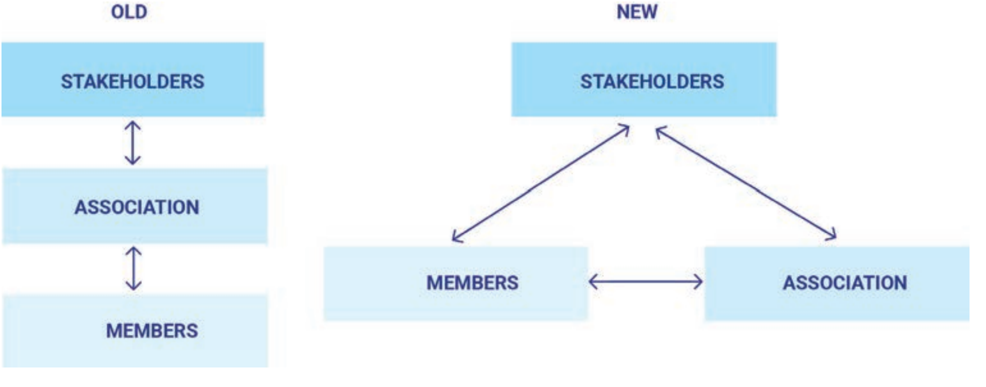
	ASSOCIATION 1.0	ASSOCIATION 2.0	ASSOCIATION 3.0
Focus	Organizing the association	The members	The sector, market, society
Important task	Lobby/advocacy	Lobby/advocacy	Sector-wide development, innovation/renewal of the sector
Bussines model	Association fee	Association fee and services	Hybrid: association fees, retribution and project finance
Slogan	Support of the collective	From offer to demand	Leading the innovation of the sector
Instruments	Meetings and service network	Member surveys and social media	Co-creation with stakeholders
Profile board	Pioneers of the collective	Good representation of the members	Innovators
Role bureau	Secretary	Policy preparation and services	Connect with members and society

2.2 Trends and Developments

Societal trends and developments naturally affect associations. We are not going to give an exhaustive description. It is important to realize that every social trend and development potentially also has an effect on the association and its members and thus may affect the role of an association professional. We do however mention a number of major trends and developments here, because they strongly affect the work of every association professional.

2.2.1 New Relationships

The classical association represents its members at a national level in influencing national stakeholders (including politicians and media). There was no actual relationship between those stakeholders and the individual members. Conversely, the classical association was not active at the local level, since this is the domain of the individual member. We see these relationships changing at both levels.



The relationships are now moving more in the direction of a triangular relationship in which stakeholders, individual members and the association connect themselves between the various tiers of government.

Currently, the central government does not need the association anymore as an information portal to a branch, professional or interest group. Moreover, the decentralization of central government tasks to the municipal level and vice versa also has an impact on the triangular relationship in many sectors. Companies and social organizations have direct contact with the municipality. This changes the representative role of an association and the necessity and need of the (then municipal) government to do business with a national representative. Unless the 'national representative' responds to this by expanding his working domain towards the regional, towards the partial interests under the national umbrella.

The Liquid Society

In his book Liquid Modernity (Bauman, 2000), Zygmunt Bauman, Polish-British sociologist, sketches a "modern liquid age and a modern liquid society." Liquid due to the fragile and superficial nature of relationships between people. This has everything to do with the increase in communication options through the internet, smartphones and smart apps. The interdependence due to scarcity of access to relationships, knowledge, information, is decreasing, and possibilities for new combinations are increasing. The impact of this development affects all organizations, including associations. The speed at which information and media flows has increased enormously. Local issues can thus quickly become a national issue. Because of this, there are also opportunities for the association: the increase of information (speed) leads to a greater need among members to get a clear and relevant picture. Here the association can present itself as a 'scout' of social developments (towards members), but also as a trend spotter for the sector (towards the government).

Associations therefore have to 'deal' with the increased information speed. Associations were once umbrella organizations, strongholds with almost monopolistic access to knowledge, information and relationships. They were in close relationship with the government, almost a sort of co-legislator, organizing the sector. They acted like a strict principal. That is no longer the case. Access to knowledge, information and relationships has irreversibly changed.

We believe that its impact can be sketched in various phases. In the old situation, phase 0, the association was the already mentioned umbrella organization. There was a strong unilateral flow of communication from the branch organization to the member organization. In phase 1 it became a two-way stream. The increased possibilities gave members the opportunity to ask their questions, express their wishes and views more strongly with the organization. The relationship with the government became looser: from co-legislator to advocate. In phase 2, the new communication options were used to facilitate the social traffic between member organizations. But the sector was still the exclusive communication channel towards the government. In phase 3, the relationships of stakeholders/partners are added. This facilitates traffic around societal issues and tasks, not around sole interests. The association becomes more and more a platform, a network organization. A platform that involves various levels of networks, around societal issues, with only members participating or a mix of members and other stakeholders/third parties. The members participate on their "own" platform, but can also be "stakeholder" on platforms from other branches.

LHV and Developments in Healthcare

An association professional at the National Association of General Practitioners notices that more and more multidisciplinary care groups are emerging around diseases (such as diabetes). These care groups make agreements with insurers on, for example, funding, the traditional field of the LHV. And from those agreements, the care groups also think about lobbying and services. It requires good mutual coordination and consultation in the short term, but it also forces the professional to think about the future: should this not be cast in a much more structural form of cooperation?

2.2.2 Members in Transition, Value Proposition in Transition

An important trend is the rise of the purpose economy (Hurst, 2017). Players in the economy need to add meaning to society. Companies, institutions and social organizations therefore need a meaning, a value proposition, for society. This is not only the case with public or social institutions, but also with companies.
This trend affects associations in two ways. First, the increased importance of formulating a good, valid value proposition as an association. Companies and institutions, but also professionals, are challenged to give their value to society. Do you know what the added value of your members is for society? What is the license to operate? For example, it is no longer sufficient for the transport sector to "just want to make money from transporting goods". The question now is what the transport sector adds to society. Their significance for society then becomes "we ensure that goods are transported from A to B efficiently and sustainably". That seems blasé, but it isn't. It is precisely the significance for society that stakeholders and politicians are prepared to commit to and change their decisions and solutions for your members. To stay in our example: stakeholders and politicians are not going to help the transport companies to earn more money, but they do want to help to ensure that goods can be moved sustainably from A to B.

Sector Council Practical Education

The Dutch Sector Council Practical Education is an association to which all 175 schools for practical education are affiliated. The schools for practical education did not feel sufficiently represented by the traditional organizations because they are at the cutting edge of secondary and vocational education. The association assessed the social performance of their members and when searching for partners/stakeholders they researchedit was investigated who could help them to enhance their performance. The document, Strategic Vision Practical Education, that offers young people in a vulnerable position a perspective on work, was prepared. Based on this vision, a joint work agenda with the partners has been drawn up and action lines have been set out. The added social value of the member organizations was therefore looked into, with a vision for the future formulated. Partners were invited to contribute to social performance and vision for the future of the schools. Subsequently, the concrete interpretation of the way in which contributions can be made was discussed with the partners. This also left room for the partners and prevented them from being forced into it, so connecting on purpose and giving room to the way in which contributions are made.

In addition, the impact comes from the members of the association. If the value proposition of the members changes, then the proposition of the association also changes. The sum of the individual value propositions of the members logically means something for the association. This can lead to a wider or narrower scope of the association. For example, if the proposition of the members of Bouwend Nederland (Building Holland), now the association of builders and contractors, changes to the entire construction chain, from design to the complete furnishing of houses, then the national social value proposition for Bouwend Nederland extends to: "we take care of housing". Formulating a value proposition for the association is therefore important and not easy. This applies to both commercial and non-profit sectors. Commercial sectors logically clash in their formulation with the commercial, economic interests of their members. If you formulate the proposition more broadly, can other players also register as a member? If the Dutch taxi industry is concerned with "transporting people", can the Dutch Railways or - even more complicated - Uber join in? Similar issues play a role in non-profit sectors. Questions about the social value proposition of a sector can quickly lead to a political discussion about the structure of a system. So it is important but not easy to do.

The Value Proposition of NVZ

In a period of ten years, the world of 120 members of the Dutch Association of Hospitals has changed. First, their world was about revenue and scale increase, through a model of mutual competition and specialization. The sector should perhaps reduce to 40 hospitals. The proposition was: we ensure 'efficient care'. But over the years, partly on the basis of external investigations, there was a growing awareness among hospitals and health insurers that quantity cannot be maintained. Nowadays, hospitals must prevent patients from staying too long. The patient is only briefly in the hospital. It's all about self-management at home, with the hospital as a kind of network hub. Hospitals must work together in this model, ensuring a comprehensive network where healthcare can be scaled up quickly. The proposition has been changed from market competition to a collaborative market with 'care in the right place'.

Despite the tensions that may arise with such a reformulation of the value proposition, it is essential that associations do it. It is the cornerstone of action, the license to operate. What is it that unites the members? Why does one unite with others? The proposition gives you identity: the stronger the value proposition, the stronger the position towards stakeholders.

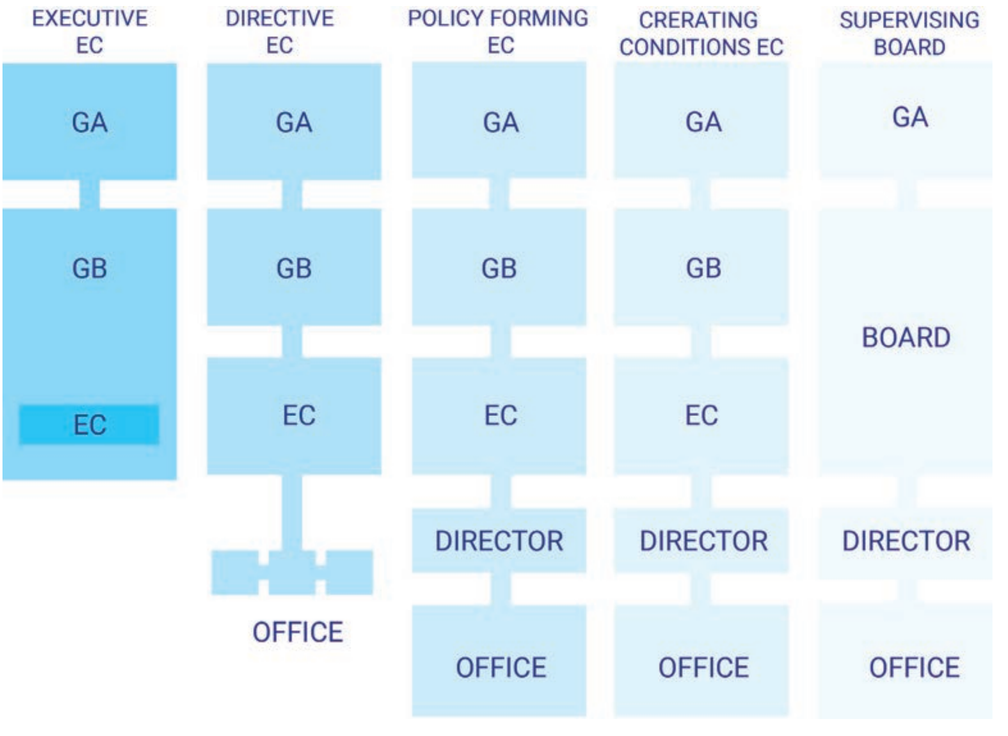
2.3 Governing Associations

An association has its own way of formal and informal governance. In this section we start with the model by Huizenga and Tack (Huizenga/Tack, 2011) that focuses strongly on the governance of the association and the phases that can be distinguished. Subsequently we discuss the procedures within an association and the impact of social developments on the governance of associations.

The Huizenga and Tack Model

Huizenga and Tack have five phases of governance development: executive, directive, policy-making, conditional and supervisory. Huizenga and Tack therefore link these phases mainly to the way in which the association is managed, the governance model and the role of members in it. In the role of members, they distinguish: approval, strategy and supervision and the policy implementation. For executive directors, the strategy and supervision and approval lie with the general assembly, while the policy implementation lies with general and daily management. Those directors roll up their sleeves, possibly supported by the office. In the case of directives, the day-to-day management does the implementation in collaboration with an agency. In the policy-making phase, the general assembly concerns itslef with approval. The strategy and supervision belong with the general management. The day-to-day management and management together ensure the policy implementation. In a condition-creating phase, day-to-day management shifts more to strategy role and supervision and management itself a more policy-making role. In the case of a supervisory board, there is another member council that ensures the approval of the association processes at a high level. The board formulates the main course and strategy, but all policy-making and implementation lies with the management and the agency. Huizenga and Tack also formulate a slightly normative judgment with these phases by finding the executive phase less professional than the phase with a supervisory board.

The professionalization model by Huizenga and Tack



The association needs a collective awareness of the governance model in use. It is crucial to know and recognize each other's roles and responsibilities to prevent the arising of 'double responsibilities' and tasks being carried out twice or not properly. When governance becomes foggy, it also affects the performance of the professional. Whom should you go to for a decision? Who decides what course to take?

There is a special relationship in this area between a board and the staff, and more specifically between a director and a chairman of an association. It is important that the board and organization complement each other by making clear agreements about the vision and strategy of the association, and about who is responsible for what. Certainly the director and the chairman must be 'in tandem' together; they must head in the same direction together. Coordination about the course requires continuous attention and mutual conversation.

Be Part of the Association Procedures

The internal rules within the organization are of great importance for the AP. Not only the governance discussed above, but also the procedures of the association. Who has which authority? What are the frameworks, what is the room for maneuver? Where does the professional gets his or her mandate? When does one perform well and who assesses that?

Knowledge of the important procedures within the association is necessary basic knowledge to function properly. We cannot outline the exact procedures of each association. How the professional deals with the board and with the members differs per association. We can however mention a few recurring elements: the statutes and internal rules, the association democracy and the annual cycle.

Statute and Internal Rules of Procedure

The association is a legal entity and as such has an statute and internal rules. In the statute you will find the purpose of the association and the formal organs. It therefore gives a good picture of who can decide what. It helps a professional to submit a decision to the right people. The internal regulations often contain elaborations of the articles of the statutes. This is because articles of statute are legally deposited and describe the formal effect. External parties can hold the association accountable for proper compliance with their own statutes. Changing the articles of the statute requires legal action (and costs). That is the reason for many associations to lay down some agreements in internal rules.

The association democracy relevant to the professional is often stated in the statute. Formal organs such as a members' meeting, congress and the administration are described therein, with the corresponding powers and decision-making process. But many associations have a more extensive association democracy than just the formal organs. Members are involved in decision-making processes via participation groups, committees or consultation meetings. This often concerns non-formal bodies or meetings, the impact of which can be very significant on the decision-making of the association. They have no formal power, but informal power or influence.

The governance and procedures of an association therefore have an effect on you as an association professional. It not only determines to whom you are accountable, when, and in what way but also determines whom you can appeal to in order to influence decision making within the association.

Impact of Information Speed and Network Society on Governance

The increased speed of information and the network society have placed pressure on the governance of an association. Association structures that work with policy plans and annual plans do not do justice to the fact that there is a "strategy in the making". In addition, the simple fact that members' opinions can be quickly assessed raises the question of when and how the association wants to use this opportunity. For example, as association only digitally processing the budget and the annual report, but seeking live contact in meetings on topical issues. In fact, we see the same development in the government and the relationship with its citizens. In this context there is also pressure on traditional forms of participation.

The dynamics in sectors provide a need and opportunity for installing temporary structures. Structures that focus on complex issues, issues often referred to as wicked problems. Organizations look for new solutions in collaboration with others, for the duration of a current complex issue.

This often concerns issues that cross sector boundaries. For example, the social issue of sheltering the homeless. It requires cooperation between shelter organizations, municipalities and housing associations. This creates a need for the fast, good and wide-ranging organization of a network around such an issue. Such a network requires the right people, the right knowledge, the right influence, all at the right time. Internet and digitization also make it easier for members to bring these networks together and organize it themselves. However, they will allways first look at the association to see if it shows the required flexibility. Does the association picks up our (partial) interest? They look to the association not just from a sense of loyalty but also because it simply takes time and energy to organize these things. If the association acts upon the need, it also gets a cachet, opening doors at regulatory authorities. It is this "network approach", this temporary nature, the changing issues and the cross-border focus that puts strong pressure on the role of associations.

2.4 Lessons Learned

The context of your work is constantly changing. Consequently, a new biotope is created for every association professional. The professional will have to adapt in order continue to add value.

We believe that it is best to 'embrace' those changes. The developments offer opportunities for associations as well as opportunities for professionals. These opportunities can be the unique selling points for the AP. Do not resist new possibilities for the members to unite. Instead the professional should accommodate and facilitate them! This way they can add a professional value to new forms of "uniting": in terms of content, relationship and processes.

The "liquid society" ensures that the dynamics increase, where people can solve issues independently and conect more easily. The focus of associations is shifting from relatively simple problems to more wicked problems. Members solve simple problems themselves via access to knowledge online. Incidentally, this leads to a paradoxical development: a shift to wicked problems reduces transferability through knowledge sharing. Where knowledge sharing is quite the fundamental characteristic of what associations do to make the sector 'ready for the future'. After all, the 'wickedness' can be found in the contextual details of the problem, and they can be difficult to copy.

The role of members changes in all this. Co-creation is the key word for an association. This role has a direct relationship with the wicked problems point: members act in a specific context and are therefore an important part of the solution in that context. For this one needs directly involved members.

3 Professionalism and Personal Mastery

Where does the AP stand as his 'own instrument'? Our answer is: in the middle of the coherence and tension between content, relationships, and process. The professional is at the heart of the matter. An association stands or falls with a good club of AP's.

Working in an association is working with people. The professional is their own 'instrument' in that regard. And their best instrument too. Their dedication, knowledge and skills determine their success. Professional growth is, by definition, working on improving ourselves.

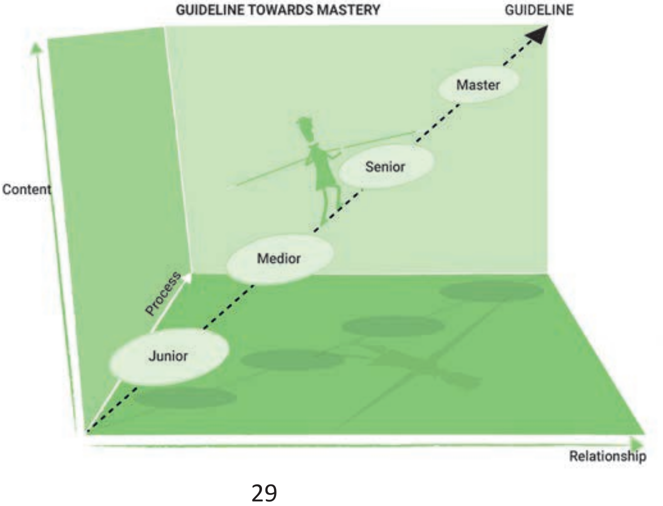
What qualities does an AP need? There are of course some things that the professional can naturally do well. Are you good at thinking outside the box, are you creative? Are you an analyst and a thinker? Are you someone looking for control and structure. Someone who can listen well? Someone who can formulate well and who is good with language? The diversity and differences between people are beautiful. We believe that everyone can grow into personal mastery in their work. Many professionals are confronted with themselves, at times reinventing themselves. Everyone is looking for ways to develop, for their own 'growth path'.

In this chapter we offer the profesional four things for their own development: a guideline and growthpath, the criticality principle for their attitude, the professional values and norms for their behavior and finally a sketch of common pitfalls in the field of associations.

3.1 Guideline and Growth Path: The Balancing Art

The 'guideline' provides a picture of the balancing art that is required of the AP. It is the essential and basic quality that is expected of them. When the AP is good at content, process and relationships and they can balance between them, they are on the growth patjh to become the perfect AP. Developing from a starting professional (junior) to the level of mastery one becomes better at balancing. That is about knowledge and skill, but it is also about personality. Transformation requires the will to take steps on that growth path and learn to balance.

Growth path on three axes



The figure above is our representation of the growth path to mastery of an AP. A growth path where the professional develops himself in terms of content, process and relationship in a proportionate manner (visually the 45-degree axis) to an increasingly higher level.
We believe that all AP's should be on or near the growth path, so around the 45-degree axis. This means that they shows growth from junior to medior, medior to senior and from senior to mastery, because they are increasingly better at balancing on the line that holds the middle between content, process, and relationship. Having only specific content expertise, or purely relationship management or only process expertise, is not sufficient to develop to a master level of an association professional. Within 'content', as the mastery grows, the specific expertise (from academic studies) is used less and less, as the focus thifts to general intellectual skills: quick analysis (what is going on here) and drawing concepts from it (what is necessary). The professional grows from specific knowledge to generalism. And they will have to show development and the art of balancing to grow in the profession in all three areas of content, process and relationship.

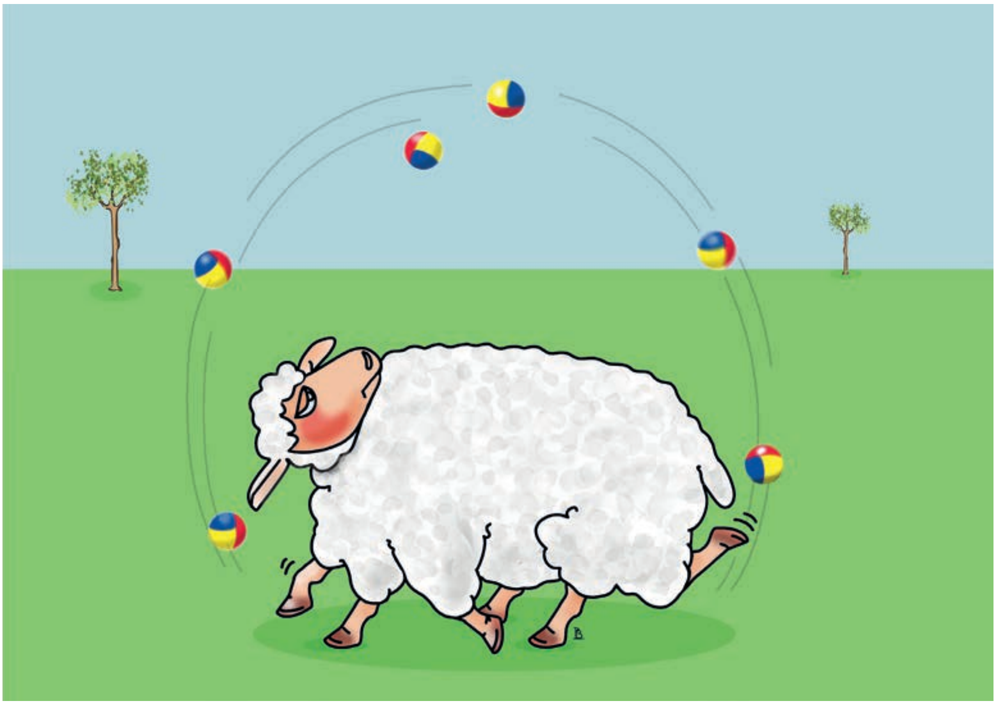
So it's about being able to balance. Or commute, if you want. That is asking quite a lot. As an AP you must be equally skilled in content, process, and relationship. The ideal goal is to master all three 'skills'. You grow because you have an increasingly balancing ability to organize ever more complex material in more complex processes with members, political stakeholders and other stakeholders.

AP's who develop themselves too far from the growth path will quickly start to feel unhappy. A 'process man or woman' at heart will experience that their environment as always 'shifting into the content of the matter'. A content-driven specialist will be driven mad by all that attention to processes (and little to content!). A 'relationship man or woman' experiences that they are good at making contact, but without it adding value. The professional who can basically stay in the middle between the three axes, on the guideline of the growth path, is the ideal professional for any association.

What does this look like in reality? How does a professional 'dive' into the content, then into the process and then into relationships? An example of momentarily diving in depth in terms of content is performing a client role with content experts 'at a knowledgeable level'. For example, if the professional supervises an external study, then they know how to quickly assess and comment on the findings of the expert (an expert from the scientific or consultancy world) and also make adjustments (the 'content dive '). Just as commenting on the expert report, the professional knows how to introduce that report to members and organize support for it (the 'process dive') or organize a drink with the network involved to celebrate the launch of the report (the 'relationship dive'). Another example: the professional is involved in collective bargaining for labor agreements on the employer side. Negotiations have come to a standstill and strikes are imminent. The travel expenses fee is the hot issue in the negotiations. The professional learns that some members tell their staff members publicly that they don't understand their employer association either. A peat fire in the association can result in negative effects at the negotiation table. The professional interacts with the delegation and the first negotiator calls the CEO's of the member organizations involved (the ' process dive'). The professional has created a standard message for them so that the content of the message about the travel expenses fee is correct (the 'content dive'). The professional then uses their network of HR-managers to check whether the tone of voice of the relevant managers has actually changed and to check whether the intervention has been received well (the 'relationship dive').

3.2 High Expectations: The Six-legged Sheep

The growth path is steep. Expectations about the knowledge and skills of AP's are high. This can be seen in texts of job offers or in the competence profiles of positions.



The six-legged sheep

The association professional in Belgium

In March 2019, the Belgian sister organization of DNA (BSAE, 2019) laid down in a charter which competences an association professional must meet. Here too we see the attention we have given to content, process and relationship, based on one's own personality (style).

We provide an outline of the charter here:

- Does the professional think about himself or herself more like a professional in an association, or an association professional (AP)
- The AP is a professional.
- The AP is aware that lifelong learning is necessary.
- The AP gives priority to organizing collective actions whereby as many members as possible can be reached, complementary with more personalized services that together serve the collective ambition of the organization.
- The AP goes further than bringing members together in a network. They work on a real community feeling in which giving meaning takes precedence over a fun experience and belonging to connecting.
- The AP maintains a balanced relationship with the directors.
- The AP is not only output-driven (doing things cost-efficient) but also results-oriented and outcome-driven (doing the right things effectively).

- The AP is a future worker. They are at all times alert to events and trends that may have an impact on members.
- The AP pays the necessary attention to reflecting on their actions and role within the organization.
- The AP also considers it important to be an active part of their professional group (eg through membership at BSAE).
- The AP acts ethically, with integrity and assumes their social responsibility.

The full profile is on the BSAE website.

The competence profile from Belgium clearly shows how broad and deep the requested competences reach. They do not even ask for a five-legged sheep but sooner for a "six-legged sheep". How can you deal with this as a professional? Can you meet all these high expectations? The answer lies in the sketched growth path. The professional concentrates his development on broadening and enriching his expertise in three areas: content, process and relationship, and balancing around the line. Growing in content, process and relationship, and learning to balance leads the professional to mastery. In this book the professional will find a foundation and enhancement for the content, process and relationship. One learns to balance by reflecting with self-reflection, coaching and introspection (see Part III for a handy method for self-reflection).

3.3 Critical Professional: The Necessary Attitude

Developing yourself on the growth path, learning to balance better, gets you on the right track. But more is needed. It is also about the professional attitude, how the professional operates in their environment with their personality. To work on that professional attitude, the professional needs to act as a critical professional (Barnett, R. 1997).

This 'criticality' principle is about the whole self: critical reasoning, so a critical attitude towards (your own) formal knowledge, critical self-reflection, which is a critical attitude towards the own personality and critical action, the critical attitude in dealing with social issues. A critical professional is not someone who simply solves problems by applying knowledge, but a person who is capable of handling mutually contradictory schemes based on a fairly openly defined moral compass ('I want to bring something value-free forward', 'I want to make a difference'). It leads to playing chess in different fields and, above all, to dare to make moves, with an idea of self-justification.

Being a critical AP is not easy due to the dynamics in today's society. As an AP you get more and more involved with what Roel In 't Veld calls 'clashing rationalities' (In' t Veld et al., 2012). Complex issues where their own logical reality clashes with other realities with different logics. One situation clearly requires a logical intervention, another situation appears and also requires a logical intervention but, unfortunately, different intervention. What to do as a professional? The English philosopher Ron Barnett calls this situation 'super complexity'. He defines it as "a state in which our conceptual frameworks, our action perspective and the anchors for our personal identity are constantly under discussion". What you have learned in the classroom no longer works. You are thrown upon your own resources. It is not just that the professional needs to be able to deal with these super complexities, but they should take pleasure in wanting to pursue criticality in these changing interactions (Barnett, R. 1997).

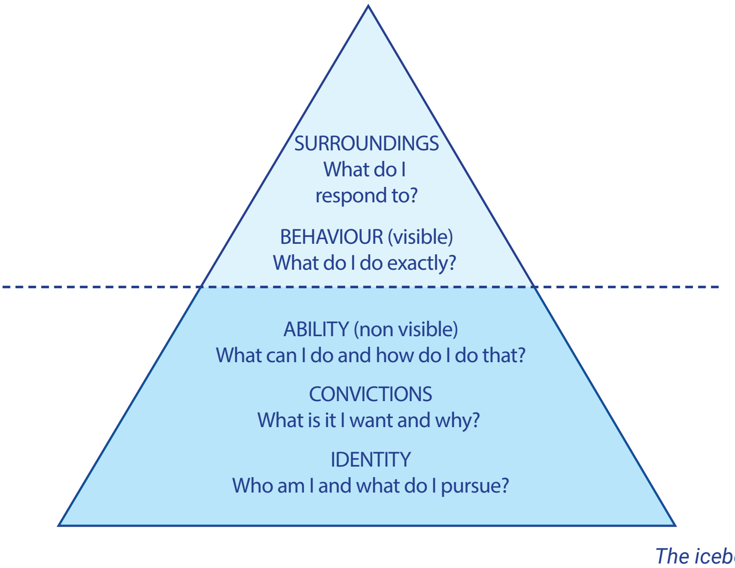
All this requires the clear will to be a critical professional. It means: acting without the truth being clearly determined in advance. And also the ability to act without knowing in advance what the outcome of actions will be. You always ask yourself (often with your colleagues): is my intervention helpful to the (group) process advocated with members? Can I move forward with the stakeholder? Is it working towards our (clearly defined or not) end result? Do I dare to evaluate myself critically? Or with colleagues?

This all shows that working as an AP is not a beaten path to travel, nor is it acting in a secure environment. It is quite the opposite; you will act in uncertainty.

3.4 Professional Values

Values are also important, in addition to the experience, the expertise and the balancing skills (growth path) and attitude and behavior (being a critical professional). Everyone has different values, including values used for work, for your profession. We will discuss these in more detail in this section.

We start here with a simple, well-known model: the Iceberg (McClelland, 1987). See the illustration below. This overview is called the iceberg because - just like an iceberg - most of a personality can be found under the water / the dotted line. To get to know oneself better as a professional, one has to dare to see the iceberg below the surface. This is where your personal values, norms and beliefs can be found. It is challenging because here, below the surface of the water, there are your views about how a professional should behave, about what you want to contribute to society, to your association, to your work and about how you want to do that. For the record: we discussed the expectations about professionalism from a general view. Here we are talking about how you personally think this should be implemented. Remember: behavior is trainable. You can work on you abilities (for example the way you show your empathy), but what about your beliefs and identity? They are yours and remain fairly constant throughout your life. It is these values, norms and beliefs that also determine performance. Our message is here: know yourself ... and know your professional values. That self-knowledge takes you further in your development.



The iceberg of McClelland

Test Yourself

There is an enormous amount of knowledge and expertise available when it comes to people's personalities. We are not going to copy every psychology books. There are personality tests that give a general picture of people their personalities. And there are tests and theories that focus more on sub-aspects, such as communication styles or roles in groups. The tests and associated theories simplify reality. Every good theory simplifies practice. That does not mean that they do not have any value. On the contrary, they provide language and interpretation and help the professional to better understand and interpret themselves, their preferences and motives. That is valuable in itself. It can help the professional to explain why he or she is looking for certain situations or trying to avoid them (for example, do you like networking drinks or not at all? Do you want to keep control in every situation or can you let go easily?). Learn from the different tests and use it to your own advantage.

Styles and Approach

At a trade association, a game is held among the association professionals during lunch. Case: the association must change radically because of the new reality of a completely changed law. All core tasks are affected; the lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development and services (including communication) must be turned upside down. The objective is to tackle this 'assignment' in teams with completely different styles:

white - ENTERPRENEURIAL APPROACH. Unorganized, commercial, averse to rules, a small Gideons gang who sees and wants to seize the (remaining) opportunities. The participants share on inspiration and companionship, all focused on success and profit.

green - HIKING TOGETHER. Aimed at the joint and communal adventure to comply with the law, seeking connection with each other, with emphasis on 'everyone taking part'. The road is leading, not the precise final destination.

red - WHO HAS THE POWER. Focused on influence, who is actually in charge here, what do they think, which coalitions can be forged internally and externally, how do we reverse the (given) context and where do we blend in?

blue - PERFORM AS A PROJECT. There is simply an issue of implementation. Cut the adjustment process into clear steps over time, where a predetermined number of participants perform clear (sub) tasks and achieve strict goals.

The overall result: it was noticeable that the association professionals, despite their own preferred styles, can adjust themselves very convincingly and with pleasure on the completely differentiated approaches. The lessons learned are: 1) style flexibility is a great asset, 2) preferred styles do help, but: 3) there is no unique path that is perfect 4) take pleasure in being able to apply the different styles.

3.5 Pitfalls and Blind Spots

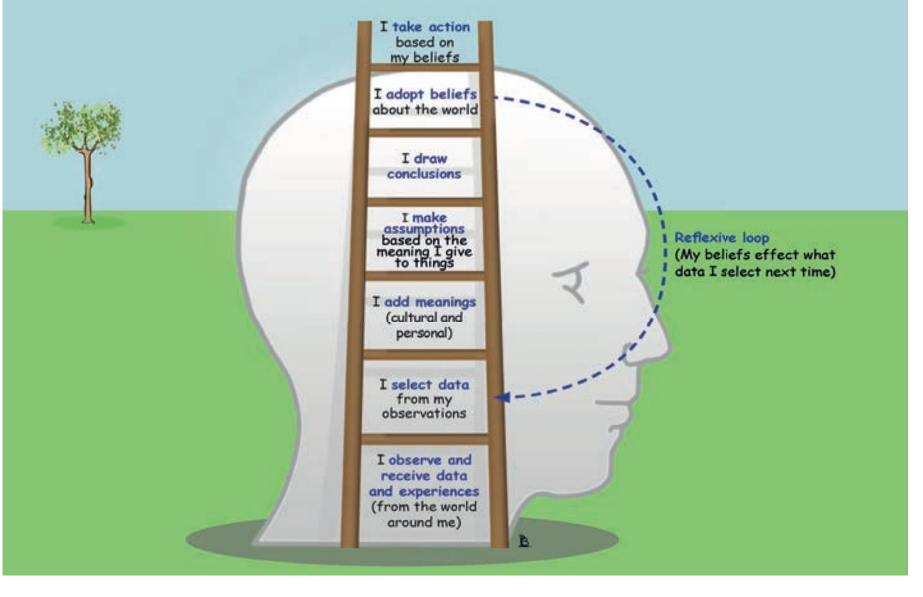
As a professional you know and acknowledge both your strengths and your own pitfalls and blind spots. We will elaborate on some of these. We have collected a few based on our own experiences. It has not become an exhaustive list, but a list of pitfalls and blind spots that we come across often. We look at the following situations: the tendency to be careless in perception, to take perspectives into account insufficiently, the self-serving bias, the risk of becoming king of an island, forgetting your relationship with your members, and the pressure of the today's issues.

3.5.1 The Art of Perception and The Blind Spot

To assess the content, process or relationships of situations you need to be able to properly observe the situation. In the words of Johan Cruijff: “You will only see it when you understand it.” Only when the professional properly observes what happens in a sector, in an organization or with a member, do they begin to recognize patterns. You can then interpret people’s behavior and discover opportunities for change. Being able to observe properly is therefore essential for an AP. So how does that work? We have identified the two basic elements of proper perception: stay away from judgment and view any issue from different angles. That is not as simple as it sounds.

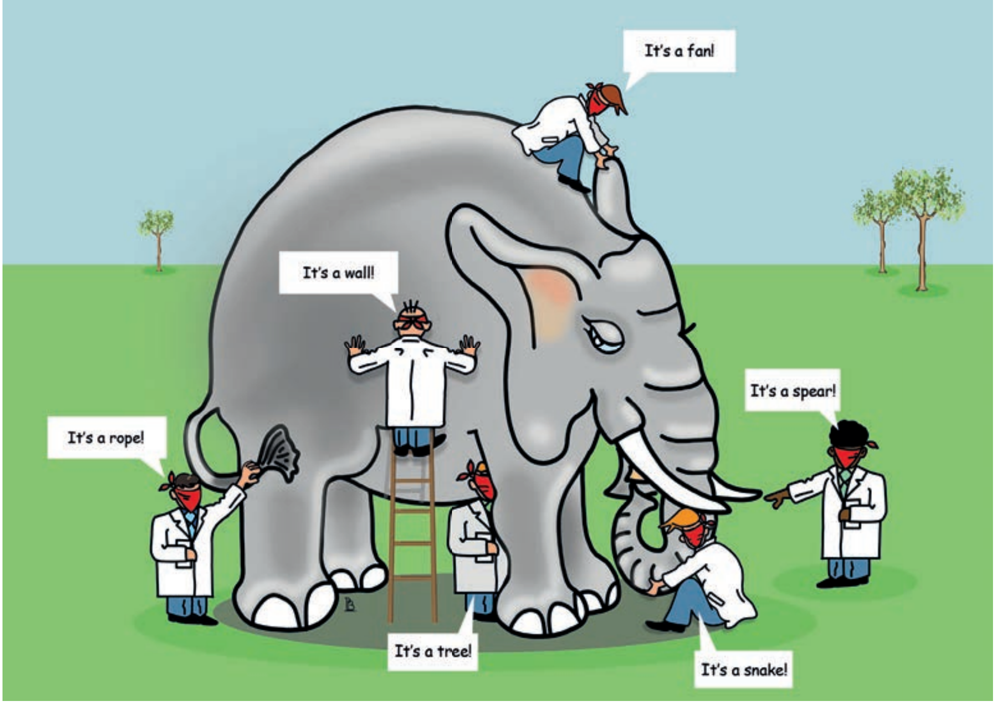
The Ladder of Inference

Drawing conclusions and acting on that basis is a strong reflex in people. It is wise not to do this too quickly. Postpone your judgment. That is actually what the ladder of inference (Argyris, 1990) shows us: an opportunity to see the inference/conclusion as different phases.
The professional starts by observing data and experiences, they select data from it, give meaning to that data (culturally and personally). The professional makes assumptions, draws conclusions, forms convictions and finally acts on the basis of those convictions. It’s a long way from the first observation to acting on convictions. This gives the possibility to make these steps consciously and reflect on them: why do I choose this data to base my judgment on? Am I not coloring my observations too much because of my background? It is not about making inferences, we all do that. But have we sufficiently tested our conclusions and our assumptions? Observing well is important. Not observing properly leads to blind spots. Therefore, as a professional, avoid “going up the ladder” too quickly. The easiest step to improve this is to ask colleagues to take a look, to observe. Not by asking if the colleagues agree with your prejudice, but what they perceive when they look at the data and experiences. Please note: there may be prejudices that are embedded in the organization. Involving people “from the outside” then becomes important.



Ladder of inference

An observation can also start incorrectly because only a part of the whole picture has been shown. With the best intentions and using the ladder of inference, that can nevertheless lead to a wrong conviction.



3.5.2 Pitfalls at Associations

The self-serving bias is a pitfall that can easily occur in an association. People will attribute success to their own abilities, while mistakes or failures are attributed to circumstances or to others. A well-known example of this is the healthcare provider. For healthcare providers, they may attribute a cure to their approach, intervention, or attribute treatment failure due to circumstances beyond their control. A directly related example is the care recipient. In disabled care, it can happen that a client feels very capable, even stating that hey no longer needs any help, while in fact an entire client system is kept in full force to make them feel this way.

The AP also deals with self-serving bias in their relationship with their members. This can be similar the two examples mentioned: (a) the association professional attributes a successful outcome only to his or her own interventions (and not to the input or contribution of the members) or (b) the member thinks they managed everything themselves while the professional has worked hard for the result. The difference between a and b is of course that the AP has to prove their added value while the member does not. The AP will therefore have to look more critical at their own self-serving bias than the association members.

King of an Island

Another pitfall as a professional is the risk of becoming the king of an island. The professional is working at a national/state level and is smart at connecting developments and arguing the usefulness and necessity of issues. Do they use that primarily for their own issues? It is not difficult to find proponents within the association to put/keep an issue on the agenda, but is that really necessary? We have regularly seen association professionals who were working on non-current dossiers, holding on to the (based on their own beliefs) solutions of yesterday. This requires a need for self-cleaning and critical capacity on projects and issues. The chance of "hobbyhorses" is too large if one does not apply the self-cleaning on time. Critical peer review and daring to be vulnerable are really very important in this respect.

We are the Members, but you are the Association

As an AP you service the club, the members. The association consists of its members, not its professionals. Nevertheless, as a professional you will quickly become the personification of the association. How does the professional deal with that? The professional quickly becomes an ambassador, interpreter of positions, guardian of association agreements, stimulator of cooperation between members, source of information on everything that happens in the political capital. It is good to realize that you have all these roles as a professional. As a professional you are always working. There is no such thing as a casual chat at the bar late at night with a member or an innocent question from a member of parliament "what do you think about ..."

All this puts pressure on the professional. They have to be alert, sensitive about where they are, who one talks to, what their agenda can be, who they might know. It traces back to the well-known circle of involvement and circle of influence (Covey, 2017). The professional observes what is happening, he or she may also have an opinion (content) and emotion (involvement), but they are not always in a position to do something about it or to decide (influence). It may be that the association, the board or the general assembly, chooses another path. The professional then has insights but no influence. In the end the professional will still have to defend the point of view of the board, or a statement the members have made at the general assembly.

The AP has to deal with multiple commissioning: the general assembly gives assignments, but other parties such as the national board, the executive director, a sector council or a provincial board can also have specific wishes or needs. This can cause contradictions and conflicting partial interests in which the professional must keep balance. Should members grumble about thins decided by 'the association', you can carefully remind them of their attendance at general assemblies. As members, they are the primary decision makers and also have their role to play. Keep in mind that members can often be temporarily disappointed: a decision by the general assembly is now unfavorable to them or not to their liking. But, next time the tables can be turned.

The professional works for all members, the collective, not for a specific individual member. The members are the association and they decide on the course. You work for the staff that helps the association to be an association. You also often work together with his members by, for example, jointly promoting the interests in the political arena. That gives a somewhat diffuse separation between the professional employed by the association and the association member. The extent to which this becomes apparent to you, as a professional, depends on the characteristics of the association.

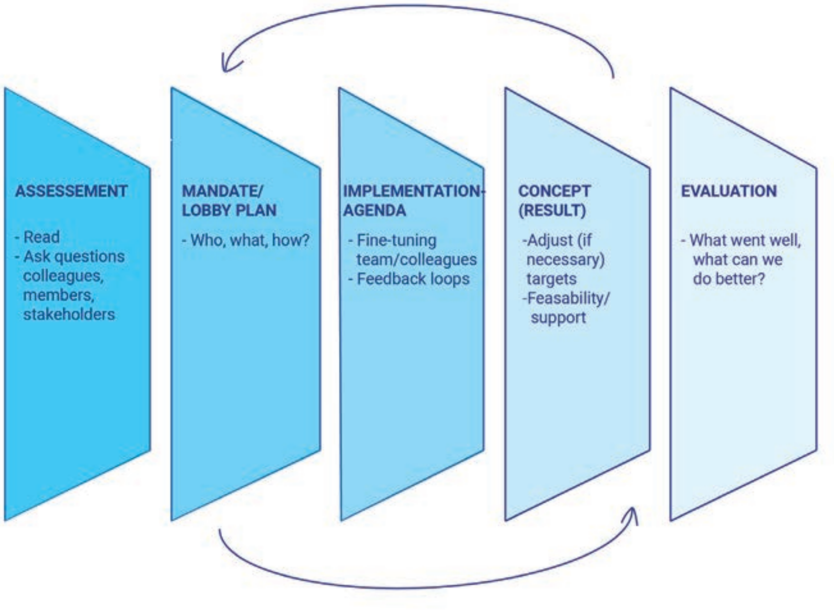
The Everyday Pressure

We see many colleagues struggle with the tension between the frameworks (annual plans, project plans) that are set and everyday pressure. Setting the framework often follows an ideal-typical structure. This works in the following way. After an inventory, the professional writes a plan of action, which is implemented after approval in the management team (MT). Interim reports, via MT and - if necessary - the General Board, must keep the implementation of the plan on track.

It is good to know the mandate of the assignment. It determines the framework for action. That sounds very organized and clear. But, the everyday pressure and issues are stronger than the clearest framework. If your topics are in the public eye a lot, with daily opinions and developments coming at you from all sides, including from your members, your time can be consumed by current issues, interpreting news for your own board and members, publishing responses on the website, and answering media questions.

Today's issues reign. That is a typical characteristic of many associations. The art is then to create a framework of action as a professional in order to achieve a balance between short-term work and the long-term. A balance between acting reactively and showing initiative by putting the association's issues on the agenda. This balance is a professional masterpiece within almost every association that you will find yourself in the middle of.

(Starting) association professionals can often find it difficult to switch between all these conflicting issues. How do you prioritize? What is important, what is not? Are urgent matters always



Framework in ideal situation

important? Do members questions or questions from the press always come first? Mailboxes and voicemails overflow, a promised note does not arrive on time or requires you to work a nightshift, there is work stress and sometimes a feeling of 'being lost' in a hectic environment.

Responding with equal enthusiasm and conscientiousness to everything, will burn you out. What helps is to be honest and transparent about what you can handle and what you encounter. We have all experienced it and still have to deal with it. People quite often understand the fact that it is difficult to find your way in a world of ideas, facts, opinions, interests, innovations and services. The solution is as simple as it is obvious: dare to say no, dare to make mistakes. Asking for help is a must. That can be with the manager, but also an assigned 'mentor', a colleague who will help the professional on his way. Or with the question: "How would you approach that issue?" In some departments, brainstorming about how to handle things is a weekly routine.

3.6 Expecting Something in Return

We have already written a lot about what a professional must be able to do in the biotope of the association. Can the professional also expect something in return from the association? Yes, a good association is an environment where employees can develop themselves. It starts with a good introduction file when you first start as an employee. It requires the attention of their manager for a swift introduction to the organization. They take a coaching position, has an open door policy. They express that the professional can always come along with any questions and doubts. Maybe he assigns a colleague as a buddy or mentor. They have a range of courses (on content or process) internally and externally, which the professional can quickly enroll if he and she wishes so. He/she is patient, sees mistakes as an opportunity to learn. They radiate trust and offer safety to grow. Because the organization speaks a common language - in which this book can be helpful - the new professional knows where to develop. Our growth path can ensure that management and/or your buddies can teach the necessary tricks on the various axes.

3.7 Lessons Learned

In summary, you have a major influence on the success of your development. Have confidence. Will you succeed in balancing on the growth path? Can you grow on content, process and relationship; and manage to keep that in balance with each other? Do you have the right attitude as a critical professional to be able to deal with the unpredictability and contradictions in your work? Do you know yourself, your personality, with your professional values, norms and beliefs and your pitfalls and blind spots? If so, then you can grow from junior to master level as a professional.


PRODUC
idea
Brainstorm

4 Content, Process and Relationship: *The Basics*

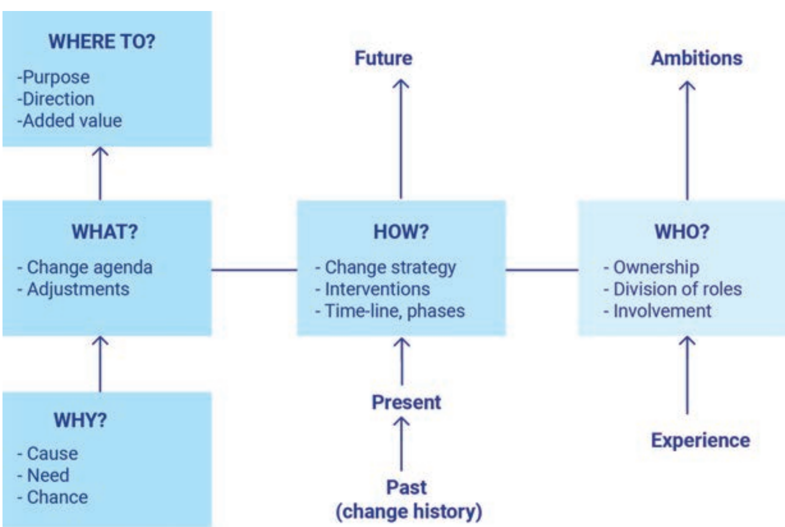
As an AP, you constantly manage change as the world is constantly changing. You may ask yourself, "How am I going to lobby for change in legislation, inform members about the consequences of new government policy, advise members on collective labor agreement changes and stimulate innovations in my sector?"

Dealing with changes is the core of your work: realizing, adjusting, enabling, accelerating, frustrating, slowing down or reverting changes. It's about changes that you, your members or politicians want to achieve. Or about changes you actually don't want Changes you want to counteract, mitigate the effects of, or block completely?

We start this chapter with the content: the change story. We unravel the change and help build the content story, to clarify the aim and approach of the change, and keep focus. There is a checklist to see if alle aspects are involved.We then switch to process management, working with members and stakeholders. After that, we look at relationship management. With these three, the change story, process management and relationship management, we touch upon the very essence of the skills and competences of the AP.

4.1 Content: Drafting the Change Story

A successful change approach starts with a good change story. This story answers basic questions: what is happening, what is my goal and what am I going to do? These three questions form the core of the response to a change. The answers to these questions are the building blocks of a story that the professional uses to involve others in the change, to entice them to participate or to deliver them. A change story is a good instrument to properly build the story and to ensure that the storyline is correct. See the figure below.



Bennebroek Gravenhorst (2015)

The change story comes from a change management approach and is elaborated by Killian Bennebroek Gravenhorst (Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 2015). It consists of a number of basic questions that show the different aspects of a change. It has different parts. Why does the change (reason, necessity, opportunity) arise, what do you want to change (interventions) and where do you want to go (goal, direction, added value)? In addition, the reasoning for change has a part that describes how to take concrete measures and when to do so. Finally, we cover a part that adresses the people involved and the roles they have.

It is important that all these aspects are included in your change reasoning. The order of the aspects can vary. The 'Why-Where to-What' part can often be used as the start of the reasoning, but the parts with the concrete steps and the people involved are also essential for the success of the change approach. The AP can start a good change story with either one of these aspects. You may therefore also start by identifying the proponents that will tackle the issue, how this will happen, what changes are needed, where that should lead to and why you actually initiated the change approach in the first place. We emphasize this flexibility of order as going over the change reasoning in reverse can help to check whether the story is balanced. It may very well be the case that some concrete steps are far too difficult or too flimsy, compared to the objective. Or that the wrong group of people is involved. So always check if the approach, timetable and the people involved match with the analysis.

Of course dealing with the association will make the reasoning for change more complex. You can read more about that in the section on process management where we transform the change story of the individual professional into a collective change story of the entire association.

The "Why" Question

The 'Why' question is about the reason. Why should we actually pay attention, invest time or make money available? What are the opportunities and threats that we can exploit or prevent? Here is an illustration. In 2018, Horeca Nederland, the association for hotels, restaurants and bars in the Netherlands, launched the Book Dinners app. It allows people to book a table at a restaurant. The reason for launching this app was that members of Horeca Nederland had to pay a large part of their margin to comparable, but commercial apps like the Fork. This triggered them to think about possible countersteps against this, which eventually led to building their own app.

Another example of the 'Why' question are policy notes, which often start with an introduction explaining "the reason" for writing the note.

The "What" Question

The 'What' question is about the 'desired' change, that which you actually want to be changed. It is not about a specific action. That is the difference with the 'How' question: specific actions are connected to the 'How' question. Another example to illustrate this. We note that houses emit too much CO2 (the 'Why') and we want to reduce these emissions (the 'Where to'). We then formulate - as an intervention - that we want to reduce the heat loss per home (the 'What'). The heat loss can be reduced by e.g. insulating the houses with glass wool (the 'How').

For other reasons it is also useful to make a distinction between the 'What' and the 'How'. The more concrete a solution, the smaller the group of proponents will be. Or in other words: the more concrete the solution, the greater the possible resistance will be. To go back to the example about heat loss: it goes without saying that flax wool producers will be in favor of insulating, but will oppose the concrete solution of insulating with glass wool. If you as an AP want support for your change approach, you will need to stay away of concrete solutions in the early stage. This may result in a higher abstraction level when drawing up the change reasoning on that point. More about that later.

The “Where to” Question

What do you actually want to achieve? The answer to the “Where to” question describes the goal that you want to achieve. This is an important part of the change reasoning because this answer helps the AP determine the focus and direction of their actions. In addition, having an objective also helps to mobilize people to engage themselves. A well-defined ‘Where to’ seduces people. There are many roads that lead to Rome, but it is the desire to be in Rome that will actually make you go and leave your home. So, wording is very important here. It must fit the reason, the ‘Why’. For example: when there is a problem with traffic jams (reason) and in the analysis the intervention is proposed to let more people travel by public transport (the ‘What’). In that case an objective “all commuters on the train” is unrealistic and will repel rather than connect. The objective must therefore be appropriate: neither too large nor too small. To stay with the example: a better objective would be that all commuters can travel to work without delay. In short, to make people enthusiastic about the objective the answer to the ‘Where to’ question must be appropriate for the reason.

The ‘Where to’ question is about the art of temptation. “If you want to build a ship, don’t gather people to collect wood and don’t assign them tasks or work. Rather, teach them to long for the endless immensity of the sea.” This quote, the origin of which is not entirely clear, but which is often attributed to Antoine de Saint-Exupéry, touches on the core of the power to seduce people. It also closely resembles Simon Sinek’s message with his Start with the Why: do not start with technology but start with the ‘Where to’, with your goal. This ensures that people will engage with your goal, that people want to contribute to a solution. If you start with “wood and nails” you will start a discussion about how to actually build a ship. This is the ‘Where to’ in the change story: it tempts people to contribute and work on the solution or its realization. So, make sure people long for the sea.

As an AP you can apply the power of seduction to various areas. In the lobby it can be applied to including other stakeholders in your objective, in sector development as a call to action to contribute to innovation and renewal, in services to outlining the products and services as part of something greater. And: it can be used in improving the public image of the sector and association. It also affects the social added value of your sector. As mentioned earlier in chapter 2, the association Transport and Logistics Netherlands, for example, cannot seduce its stakeholders by saying that they want to earn money by transporting goods. Arguing that society will come to a standstill if goods are not transported makes a different impact. People want to make a contribution to help the Dutch economy staying in motion.

The “How” Question

Answering the ‘How’ question is about which concrete action should be taken. Preferably with a time and place indication: where and when. As stated earlier, the degree of concreteness is difficult in the process. The professional needs to make clear how they are going to deliver cash on the barrel, but at the same time the concreteness also could repel people. People could agree with a desired change, but disagree with the chosen solution. We will return to this at the process management section. This is about gaining support for the solution. Ensuring the feasibility of the chosen solution and about at what stage in the process this will be realized.

It can be tempting to want to skip the 'How' question. In our opinion this is not a smart move. It has to do with the reality of the members and the connection with their environment. It's in this concreteness that bottlenecks or opportunities emerge from the practice. They are important in determining the objective or interventions. It thus also forms the connection with the common practice of the members. This is essential for the acceptance and appreciation of the change story among the members. It is therefore a straightforward dilemma in that respect. Naming concrete actions will ensure recognizability among your members and also tests whether the change approach is feasible. But it can also cause resistance and incomprehension with the risk of losing support for the actions.

The "Who" Question

Other people are needed for most change approaches. They could be colleagues, but they could also be other stakeholders. They may be officials at a ministry who need to change certain regulations or the staff HR consultants who can help make a labor agreement become a success. It is therefore essential that the 'Who' question is answered in the change reasoning. Who does the professional need to reach their goal? Who can actually make the desired change happen?

This concerns specific people. Do not talk about authorities or institutions, but use names of people who work at those authorities. Mention official "Jane Doe" - just a fictitious name - from the ministry of Economic Affairs, instead of "the ministry". After all, the entire ministry isn't involved in the subject. Moreover, there are often different opinions within a ministry about any subject and it is important to involve the right people.

The people involved can differ in the various phases of the change process. It is also logical to expect that you need some people for one part of the process and others for other parts. The relationships can also be given a different role or function and thus become more or less important for the success of your change. Recognizing and acknowledging the people involved in the change approach requires continuous attention and care by the AP.

The Change Story Can Change

The change reasoning is a tool, a thinking exercise that the professional can use to make their approach transparent. However, the change story is not static: the answers to the various questions will be answered differently at various times. For example, it may be that some new innovative products have been devised that immediately label the answer to the 'How' question as old-fashioned. Or that the professional identified a number of people involved in the 'Who' question who are changing jobs. So check the story regularly and adjust it accordingly. This also leads to a dilemma within an association: as an individual the professional cannot simply unilaterally adjust the collective change story.

In the Change Story of Someone Else

Previously, we set out the change story as an approach where the professional is in control. That does not, of course, always have to be the case. It may be that others want to realize a change and involve the professional in their approach. At that moment the professional is in the change story of someone else. They are then part of the answer to the 'Who' question. An example: the ministry of Social Affairs and Employment wants to remove all asbestos roofs from the sheds of farmers in the Netherlands by 2024. In the process of this regulation, they ask an employee of LTO Nederland, the association of agricultural entrepreneurs, to participate in a participation group. That employee is therefore part of the ministry's change reasoning, the 'Who'-question.

The AP has a choice. We think there are basically three options for them: supporting the change story of the ministry, wanting to adjust it or frustrating it. The AP can support the change reasoning of the other person by fully adopting it. This is more common than one might think. It is clear in those cases where the interests are entirely in line with those of the other, but more often if it has a limited impact or is just logical given the situation.

It's different if the change reasoning of the other (the ministry in our example) does not entirely match that from the professional. In that case the professional will want to influence the process. In our example, the professional will then be part of the participation group of the ministry. He will want to change parts of the policy or regulations in such a way that the impact for his members becomes more favorable. This happens often. The professional participates and cooperates and ensures support from his members, and in return the negative effects of the regulations must be removed and the consequences for his supporters must be mitigated.

It may also be that the professional does not like the other person's reasoning for change. An undesirable direction, undesirable steps. In that case the professional can use the change reasoning for his actions. By difficulting or differentiating for each component. Refering back to the example of the asbestos roofs: why should those roofs be removed? What are the risks involved? Has it been properly investigated? Why choose 2024 and not 2030? Why is roof removal the first thing to do? What about other asbestos applications? There are not enough Dutch companies to remove that asbestos in time; is it unrealistic? Why are these people in this participation group? Do they represent relevant supporters? The professional can formulate different answers to each part of the change reasoning and put them on the table. He has to be careful with this approach; only use it when it is a crucial topic. Otherwise, there's a chance that the ministry officials will no longer ask him to participate in other, new situations.

4.2 Process: Managing Processes at an Association

How do you apply the change story within an association? How do you ensure that your change story becomes the collective change story with support and commitment from your members? You do this by organizing your members' control, influence and participation in answering the 'Why', ' What ', 'Where to', 'How' and 'Who' questions.
This interaction with members is complicated and requires careful management of processes. To help the professional with this, we use some concepts and models from Titus Bekkering and Jaap Walter (Walter / Bekkering, 2015). Both have devised a number of useful models and provided insights in the field of process management.

The core of their theory is the management of ideas. They use the so-called 'diamond': diverging, converging and consolidating. A process starts with a wish, a desire, an idea. The AP is instructed to 'do something about this'.

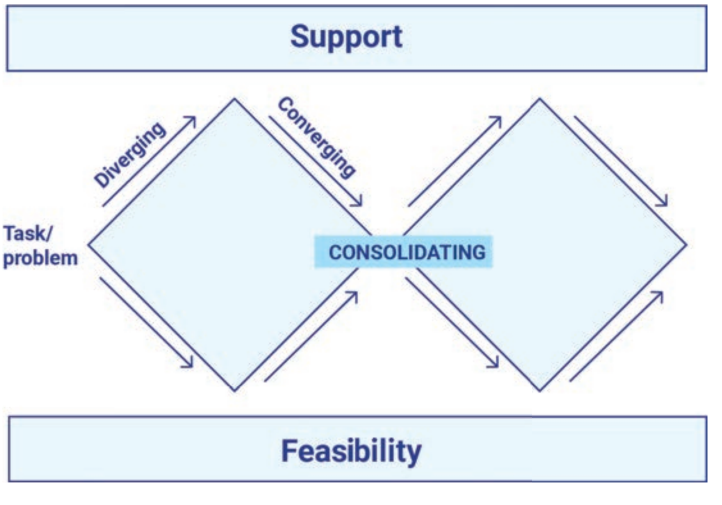
Process Management as a Common Language

At an association, all AP's take a course in process management based on the ideas of Bekkering and Walter. Why? Because management is convinced that most are involved in a form of 'idea management'. 'Bringing ideas to another level' does not lend itself to a strict project approach, but also neither too much improvisation. Why involve everyone at the association? Because common language makes it easier to compare, coordinate and request feedback.

It is therefore important. A typical AP manages a process: it is slightly more structured than the noble 'flair' of the classical lobbyist, but again less organized than the work of the project administrator. Bekkering and Walter distinguish between a routine, project-based, process-based and improvising approach. With a routine approach, the way of thinking is focused on known products and services. It's about standardizing a method and is focused on efficiency. A project-based approach involves desired partial and intermediate results. We have a phased approach and instruments focus on decision-making. A process-based approach involves the intentions of those involved, diverging (getting information) and converging (summarizing) and instruments focusing on consolidation (enriched ideas, as interim conclusions). In an approach based on improvisation, fantasies and creativity are used as instruments for reaching objectives that are not clear-cut.

It is precisely the linking of the intentions of those involved and ensuring that interested parties get involved with the idea that make the process-based approach very suitable for associations. After the course, the association professionals can reflect in common language on their specific topics: "What exactly is your starting idea?", "Are you diverging or converging here?

In such a case, it is advisable to start writing down the idea. Often this will be nothing more than a paragraph full of reasons, the 'Why', linked to a first 'Where to'. Bekkering and Walter argue that if it really wants to be a success, the idea must be 'enriched', both in necessary support from members and in its consequences on legislation of policy making. The enrichment process runs along a number of diamonds. You diverge at the start of a diamond by gathering as many facts, ideas and opinions as possible, knowing who is dealing with it and who is having influence on it. Then there is a moment to converge. If the outlines of the problem, the actors and their opinions are clear, then one can work towards establishing a new, enriched and supported idea. The idea is then provisionally consolidated.



This process of diverging and converging takes place through continuous interventions from the professional as a process manager. Interventions take place along two axes: the axis of 'support' and the axis of 'feasibility'. With regard to support, this is about influence and decision making power. Is there support for the idea among those who have power and influence? When feasibility is about facts and knowledge, focusing on problem identification, understanding, solubility and practicality.
When transforming the change story into the collective change story, the professional uses interventions to ensure both support and feasibility. They are both needed, intertwined, one results from the other. In general assemblies or board meetings the professional will therefore diverge, converge and consolidate on the elements of the change story ('Why', 'Where to', etc). In the change story, the AP also provides elements that contribute to the support of the members or offers certainty that the feasibility has been properly tested. To make it very practical: after a divergence and consolidation phase, the original paragraph text has been made more concrete, enriched with the insights.

The 7T's

Managing a change story in this way, by allowing members to contribute with ideas and directions, suggests that it can diverge in all directions. That is only partly true, because in the textual adventure there is indeed an organization of the process. Walter and Bekkering (2015) handle the 7T's: Theme, Timing, Tempo, Ticket, Theater, Tone and Toll. As an association professional you can use those aspects as a kind of checklist while managing the process. The Theme here is about having the subject in focus, within a framework. Did you define the subject well? That will be the case with the use of the change reasoning. Timing is choosing the right moments (grabbing the momentum). At which moment your members are receptive to your story? Tempo is about the speed of the process (if you don't keep giving impulses, nothing happens for weeks). Ticket is about the participating parties (the Who-question: There cannot be too many free thinkers, but also not too few people involved). With many associations, the answer to the question of who has access is often fixed. There are committees, a general assembly or a board. Yet there is often room for you as an AP to make choices. Theater is about the setting within which the process takes place, the venue: for example, the choice for a certain type of meeting location. De Tone is about the right communication and language use. It is the tone that makes the music. If you call the wrong tune in your communication about your change story to your members, it is difficult to have a constructive conversation about the theme. Last but not least: the Toll. The Toll is about the contribution that a contributor is willing to make (the guideline here is: only those who pay toll, really committ with action, can participate)

The extent to which process management must be applied differs per topic and phase. For example, determining and collecting the financial contribution can very well be routine. In that case, an extensive discussion has often already taken place at an earlier stage about the total of the fee. Moreover, there can also be a mix of approaches: a process management-like approach that has a project-based approach in parts. Sometimes an idea enriched through process management leads to the implementation of a certain project. Perhaps the lobby to improve the business model of individual members results in the desire for a tool in which one can determine that. Creating such a tool is a project and requires a project approach. In short, the professional can organize his work in a different way. But when it comes to gaining support and testing feasibility, working with process management is the best and logical choice in our opinion.

This may sound a bit abstract. Let's translate these models into practice based cases.

Case I: Getting Rid of Data Hunger

Just as in other sectors (care, education), there is a complaint among social housing companies that the supervisory authorities are very ‘hungry for data’. Companies must account for their actions in great detail. They have to provide a lot of data and are visited by many officials. The initial ‘idea’ was: “As a sector, we have no influence on this data hunger from external parties, but we do suffer from it. As data providers, we would like to get more control. The start of the first diamond: an idea.
The ideal situation is to decide for yourself what information you provide. The world does not work that way, at the moment, given laws and regulators. The professional decided to first explore the thoughts of the members. He decided to diverge through two interventions: 1) (feasibility) to form a vision with a group of members about how data management and ICT will develop in the near future. What are the trends? That group looked at which management information the members actually use to manage their own housing company. The idea that such information should in fact also offer sufficient comfort to external parties. It is a kind of guideline to counteract the much larger external data hunger. 2) (feasibility / support) an external investigation in which all supervisory parties involved in data retrieval were interviewed about how they want to deal with data, now and in the future. What do they ‘dream’ about? The external report was not just determined, but discussed in draft with the interviewees. It resulted in a ‘supported’ recommendation. The report led to a convergence of ideas. The central recommendation was: come to a management agreement between the most involved parties that in the future less but better data should be used.

That idea was the start of a second diamond. The idea to be enriched: “let the sector participate in that administrative covenant to be drawn up, in which the sector influence and data reduction are guaranteed”. A second phase of research and feasibility, i.e divergence, followed. The process manager gathered input from members such as factual information about the feasibility of a substantial percentage of data reduction (the minimum necessary steering information from the first diamond proved useful), and a lobby with the upcoming covenant parties (how do we arrange a steering group, which models are conceivable). So there was again a feasibility and support phase. A covenant was discussed between the sector, the ministry, the regulator and the data processor.

After the research phase in the second diamond, it became clear. A trade-off between sector and data requesters seem possible. If the sector arranges high-quality information via a uniform channel, then the users need less data. Eventually this process converged to a draft covenant for which the association congress granted approval. Existing data requests are now reduced by 10% per year in 5 years. From now on, additional data requests will be discussed in a steering committee in which Aedes, association of social housing companies, has a seat. The start of the process was ‘no control’ over the ‘data hunger’. After two completed diamonds, we came to a substantial reduction in costs and co-control by the sector.

Case II: Evaluation of the Housing Act

The Ministry of the Interior wanted to evaluate the new Housing Act (2015). The department itself advocated a simple check on law objectives and enforcement. Much less an evaluation of the outcomes of the law for social issues nor the question whether this law is future-proof.
The ‘idea’ in the Aedes trade association was: “How do we prevent the butcher from inspecting their own meat, judging the law solely on legal goals and much less on his social (future) outcomes?”

The first diamond was started. Interventions in terms of support and feasibility were used. Support: establishment of an external Commission with political heavyweights. Feasibility: the Commission launched an independent investigation process into the operation of the law, in particular its social consequences. To this end, the Commission set out a number of sub-studies and essays with experts in the sector (feasibility, divergence). The Commission prepared a final report (convergence) for the Aedes board in just a few months.
What role did the AP's play? They proposed this process, formed the secretariat of the Commission and guided the request to the external experts.The Commission's final report was submitted to the Aedes Congress via the board, where it was welcomed (support). The Aedes-report became public just before the publication of the department's evaluation report and generated a great deal of publicity and (positive) social responses.

A second diamond was started. Aim: to ensure that the report has effect on concrete improvement of the Housing Act. Interventions in terms of support and feasibility were again simultaneously needed in this phase. Support: the professionals visited a number of stakeholders, such as Woonbond (the association of tenants), and VNG (association of municipalities), to receive support for the report. Feasibility: the professionals visited the department to study together where technical legislative changes were possible. Due to the support and preparatory work, the department addressed the broader scope of the Commission evaluation in its own evaluation. A large number of these recommendations have since been adopted by the department.

Thanks to process management, the association thus gained influence on the scope of the evaluation, and was able to organize support by stakeholders and politicians in order to implement the necessary changes in the restrictive law for the sector.

4.3 Relationship: Managing Relationship of Members and Stakeholders

In order to involve people (the members and stakeholders) in the change reasoning and the process management around it, it is important that people are willing to listen to the change story. This requires that the professional already has a connection to those parties. Find a benevolent, listening ear based on trust is important. Relationship management is essential. Know the members (internal) and the stakeholders (external) and let them know you as a professional.

Again, it is important to know 'people', not 'organizations'. Organizations cannot be involved, enthusiastic, or be supportive. Only people can do that.

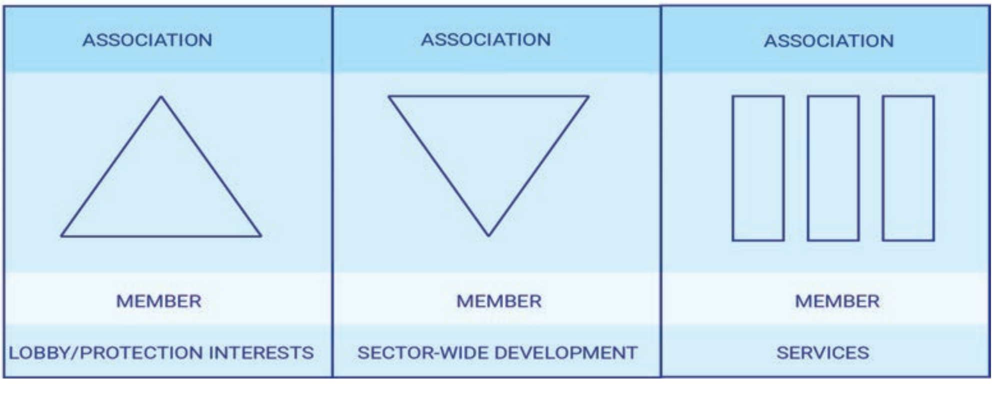
In this section we will discuss the importance of the relationship management and differences in the nature and focus of the contacts with relationships. What does it mean for the relationship itself to be approached by you as a professional, what should you look for when looking for the right person and how do you maintain the relationship, even if there is no urgent and important matter at hand?

4.3.1 About Inverted Pyramids: Nature and Focus of Contact

We have previously discussed lobby and advocacy, sector development and services as the main tasks for an association. In this section we want to elaborate on the difference in involving or excluding members and stakeholders in these three tasks. That is determined by the difference in the purpose and focus of involving the member or stakeholder. In lobby and advocacy, there is a difference in nature and momentum of contact between members and external stakeholders. In fact, the stakeholders are not involved in the internal decision-making of the association. The position is determined internally. Of course there may be informal contact (if that is useful) with stakeholders, but formally they do not play a role in determining the position and expressing this position to the outside world. The assumption is still that the association speaks with one voice. Internal decision-making focuses on seeking the common denominator within the association about an issue. Then the “frontman” of the association (often the chairman or the general manager) then pronounces the position to the outside world. This process forms a sort of classic pyramid, bottom-up and point-up where the position is pronounced.

This is completely different for sector-wide development. That is not about a common denominator and a common position. It is also not about excluding external parties, it is about a desired change, an achievement for which we want to include as many parties as possible. The assignment is leading and we include everyone who can contribute to solving that assignment. A focal point is not the chairman or general manager as a figurehead, but rather the individual member. The efforts jointly focus on the concrete task, in the member’s reality, and on how that can be solved or how a contribution can be made from the light of a bigger picture. You could picture this as an inverted pyramid, where the point is at the bottom and focuses on the member. We are not looking for a common denominator, but for new ideas and methods. If we were to look for the common denominator, the supported decision-making of a majority, we would get yesterday’s solutions. Innovation and renewal are all about the ‘uncommon’ denominator, the outsider ideas. This applies to members, even to everyone that can contribute. Ideas do not stop at the members of the association, not at the boundaries of the sector. By working with an ‘inverted pyramid’ the professional works task-oriented.

In the case of services, the pyramid is, in fact, completely missing and there are rather loose lines, loose customer / client relationships between the association as service provider and the individual member. After all, the assessment is individual. There is no common denominator but only the divisor of d = 1, the member on a common platform, the association.
If we visualize this, it looks rather like this:



4.3.2 Member of The Club, Never Just a Member

Members already have a direct relationship with the AP. They are members of the club and the professional works for them. This awareness forms the basis of their relationship, but should not control that relationship. It makes it easy for them to get in touch, but it is not enough for a good working relationship.

It is important to know that the professional relationship consists of an association part and a part that reflects your specific role within the association. That association part is meeting the expectation that a member has about his own association. This is about the idea, culture and values of the association. The members are participants of the club because of that idea, that culture and values. It is important that you meet this expectation. If you work for the KNVB, the Dutch association of football, you must be able to live up to that feeling of football culture. The specific role differs based on the position and the tasks of the professional. If the professional is the lawyer of the association, that specific expertise is logically expected in the professional relationship.

Secondly, people are not just or solely members of the association. In addition to that membership, they have all kinds of other networks in which they are active. It's a small world. You can therefore meet people in other capacities. It is also important because of the fact that members can be in networks that can open doors for the professional that are needed in his process management effort. Specifically: a CEO of a member organization can be a university friend of the minister, or be active in his political party. Be aware of that kind of cross-connections.

4.3.3 Member Relationships require Good Maintenance

Maintaining the relationship management with members is essential for an association. A club feeling requires maintenance. That means that the professional should not only approach members when he needs them, or wait until they approach him when they need him. Account management is one of the duties of every association professional. If you are a lawyer, then you know the (influential) lawyers in your network. If you work in the financial domain, you know who is active in it or who has special expertise. If you are a regional representative, you introduce yourself to the newcomers among the regional companies.

Does the professional distinguish between members? That is a moral issue. The safe answer to this is of course "No, all members are equally dear to me". And basically that is also true: every member is entitled to the same attention. At the same time, it can differ to what degree of involvement and participation a member has in a certain process. Many associations have structures that implicitly approve preferences. The KNVB, the Dutch association of football, has an amateur section and a professional football section. It is legitimate for the KNVB not to involve professional football organizations in issues that affect the amateurs and vice versa. They are segments of members who serve a specific target group. In addition, many associations also have other segmentation: large and small, regional distribution, long or short member. These are segmentations that are often sensitive: many topics will be relevant to, for example, both large and small. Certain associations also have an active top-10 approach. This means that the ten largest member organizations receive special attention and are more or less involved in the most important processes. This is of course a sensitive matter for smaller members. The question is whether the professional will use this segmentation or go back to all members being equally important.

The Pyramid of involvement

Even if the professional does not use the usual segmentation within his association, the question remains who is relevant to further assist the approach. Who should participate, who should be involved, who will be content with just being informed? A model that can help you identify and determine the level of involvement is the Pyramid of involvement (Bekkering / Walter, 2015).

Looking at this model, it is clear that trust in the sincerity of the approach is the basis within the association. In the absence of trust, the professional and the entire association, have a more essential problem. Many members will, if all goes well, have this basic trust. For example, the VEH, the Dutch House Owners Association, has around 770,000 members and these individuals are not involved in every decision. Their attitude is based on confidence in the approach.
Members can be confident that an approach is needed, but still agree or disagree about the proposed direction. If members express these different views on the direction, they are more involved. Resistance to a certain proposal is not always something negative. It can, in essence, also be viewed as positive. Resistance indicates a degree of involvement, which the professional should cherish. One step further is showing involvement as members, in terms of support and feasibility (of process management), moving along the steps towards enrichment and realization of the idea. Taking responsibility is the next step in engagement. Members then play a role in implementation: by going to the minister to explain a proposal, by making an active contribution to a meeting or by helping to develop a certain member tool. Finally, members can be extremely involved by actually delivering results that were also envisaged in the change story. For example: the Association of Dutch supermarkets has agreed in a prevention agreement to no longer sell energy drinks at schools. It is important to deliver on this agreement. Members are essential, in this respect.

Determining the degree of involvement of the members in a certain approach is not static. Members may drop out, but there may also be a ripple effect when members want to participate more actively at a given moment. The best thing is when involved members start to act as ambassadors for the idea towards other members. That greatly contributes to the idea that an association is for members and also by members.

Commitment is not a static feature. Commitment requires the professional to continuously inform members about the status of the processes. Sometimes members have to jump on moving trains. When members join in, the train cannot dramatically change its course. On board, the professional has to somewhat reiterate the process management interventions, so as to keep the new people on board. Often, adding members to a process at a later stage means that the professional is once again busy with questions about support and feasibility. This can mean extra work for the professional. There will be a strong tendency to just go further with the members already involved, without expanding the group, avoiding the risk that you as a professional will have to go through the process steps again. That tendency is undesirable. At some times it can be good to take the lead in a process, with the support of a 'Gideonsgang' of members. But in an association it is inevitable that the professional always has to look for broader support. And you have to realize that an association sometimes has to go through the same processes every 3, 4 years, because issues and the chosen course run in a certain cycle. It is then important to share the consolidations with the newcomers in the right way: "We have already gone through those and those steps, those and those conclusions drawn therein regarding support and feasibility, do you agree with that"?

4.3.4 Dealing with Partial Interests in The Association

Members organize themselves. Thanks to the rise of social media and fast communication, people know where to find each other quickly. The drive for change soon leads to the willingness of a group of members to 'put their shoulders to the wheel', to make a 'counter-noise' heard, to sketch a 'new vision'. "Something has to be done and it needs to be done immediately," is the cry of such groups. Our society is increasingly sensitive to 'manifests'.

As an AP, how to deal with such a drive among your members? Such initiatives will often interfere your existing process management. It interferes actions that the association is part of. The main rule is: never cramp. And rule number two: don't fight it. Start the conversation with the initiators quickly and with an open mind. An enthusiastic group of members is a committed group. As a process manager you will always have to include members in previous consolidations. Take the opportunity to explain what you are doing and what the association has done. Be open: where can we reinforce each other? It might appear that positions taken by the association run against convictions of certain member groups. If so, it is important to discuss these matters. Often the actual conflicts of interests are not so bad.
And if it collides anyway, for example, with the core of the association strategy, you should be able to put this on the table: apparently we must discuss our strategy again. But that is something you indicate to the board of your association. It should be taken tot that level, because the initiative clashes clearly with earlier formal decision-making by the association as a whole.

Some member groups have organized themselves structurally within a club on partial interests. This applies, for example, to members seeking cooperation in their area of work. Their connection is their geographical region and the specific issues at stake there. Members can also commit to their own scale. The size and characteristics of the social tasks or the type of business can also unify groups of members. For example, the elderly care physicians within the profession of doctors or the group of owners of organic supermarkets in the supermarket industry.

Ideally, those partial interest groups operate under "the umbrella of" the association, as a characteristic of its diversity. Sometimes the groups operate alongside the association because they value a form of independence. As an AP you have to deal with these groupings, because they are players on your playing field of files/themes. The main rule is to keep them involved, inform them when solicited and unsolicited. This is possible formally, by means of management meetings, but also informally (by e-mail or informal consultation). A divided association is not effective in achieving its goals. Ministries and politicians may know that tere are different opinions within an association. But you wouldn't want them to 'shop' at different subgroups, depending on their own agenda.

Many associations would like to offer support from the organization in promoting the partial interests of members. As long as the partial interests do not conflict with the 'general association interest', but are complementary, that is a very well-functioning model. Advisors then work for that general interest, but also lend part of their capacity to exercise the shareholdings. Such support as a service (based on lobby and advocacy) is particularly appreciated by members. It is a form of à la carte membership: groups of members can make use of a diverse offer, up to the commitment of the lobbyist.

4.3.5 External Stakeholders

Relationship management also extends to the stakeholders. Recall that a professional cannot make many changes on his own, not even with his own members. The industry, the sector, the profession is in the midst of society at large, with which the professional seeks all kinds of common ground. For example, if extraramuralisation takes place in health care, then municipalities immediately notice: how do we place disabled people in the neighborhoods? What does that mean for housing, for healthcare? How do people now living in the neighborhood get involved? What does it do with the increase in nuisance caused by 'confused persons'. Who is (primarily) responsible for it? Who is picking up signals? Who passes them on? Where are the log jams? Who takes action?

Proper Use of Your Relationships

Stakeholder management is all about good maintenance. If a stakeholder is close to the decision maker, then continuous contact is important. So don't start contacting only in the heat of the battle, but do it sooner. That is stakeholder management (tools in Part III). It makes people more accessible to the message, especially when it gets exciting. That will not be easy, the professional must be useful for the other person to establish/maintain contact. The benefit for the other is how the professional can always help them, with the content or expertise the professional has or with the interest they represent.

4.4 Lessons Learned

In this chapter we discussed the basic knowledge of association professionalism: the change story, process management and relationship management. The change reasoning helps the professional to substantiate his change story by answering the 'Why', 'What', 'Where to', 'How' and the 'Who' question. Process management gives the professional the diamond. By diverging, converging and consolidating, we test the support and feasibility of our approach in various phases. Finally, the pyramid of involvement provides a picture of the various forms of involvement of members and stakeholders in an approach. This gives the professional a basis with which he or she can shape the various activities within an association: lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development, services and communication.

Part II
In-depth

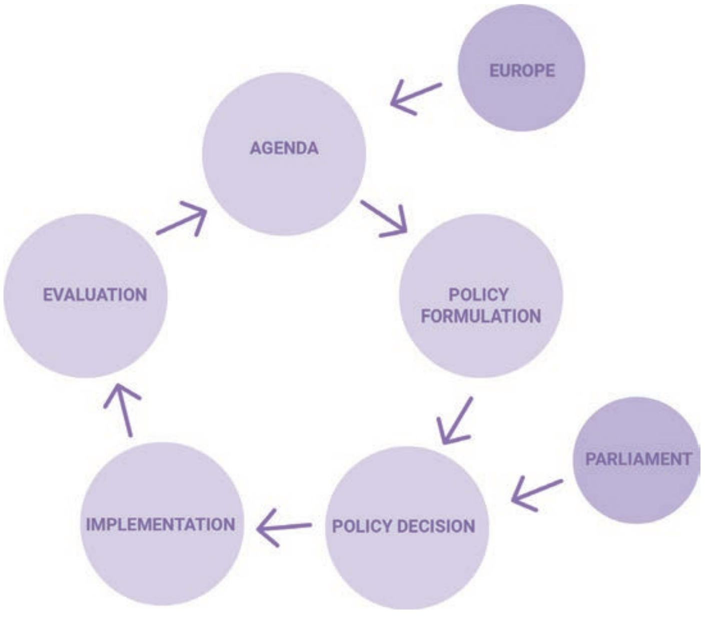
To deepen professionalism on the axes of content, process and relationship

5 Deepen Professionalism: *Lobby and Advocacy*

Lobby and advocacy are the reason many associations exist. Together you stand strong. It's the task members expect a great deal from. This is always apparent from member surveys. That's reason enough to deepen the expertise in this area. Then you, as a professional can really make a difference.

In lobby and advocacy the professional will be challenged in all three domains (content, process, relationship). They will sometimes have to be flexible in negotiations, which will shift the change story. Not only the flexible content but also the large interests ensure that members are extra involved and follow the process or want to be directly involved. The AP needs relationships for the much needed support factor, but this also puts pressure on the professional when he makes choices in deal-making. In this chapter we focus on the process axis, taking into account the necessary aspects of content and relationship. We do this because the process aspect is very dominant when it comes to lobby and advocacy. The deepening of professionalism is largely determined by the specific external setting (such as the decision-making processes of ministries, parliament, the European Union or the negotiating table of labor agreements).

The professional is influencing policy and policy makers. Every 'policy', in every democratic country, follows a policy cycle. Admittedly, sometimes one has to look hard for that cycle, but it is there. The ministries play a central role, and Parliament provide input (in Europe so does Brussels). A social problem is put on the agenda, then included in policy approach at a ministry, proposed by that ministry to parliament and decided upon, implemented by the ministry or implementing bodies and finally (if all goes well) evaluated.



The policy cycle: ministries, including the role of Parliament and Europe

In the agenda stage you will often -in the European Union- come across the phenomenon of Europe. In the decision-making phase there is a leading part for parliament. But beware: Europe and parliament are actually involved in the entire cycle.

In every phase of the policy cycle there are opportunities for influencing policy. Each phase requires different competencies of the professional. Sometimes it's content, sometimes it's process, sometimes it's relationship. Or it can be all competences at once! Each phase also requires different types of interventions: an investigation, a parliamentary question, a manifest, a draft bill or an amendment. In this chapter we will follow the structure of the cycle: representing the interests of the members in the various ministries, lobbying the parliament and lobbying in Brussels. We then discuss a very specific form of advocacy, collective bargaining for labor agreements, that you will find in some associations. These are associations that also fulfill an employer's function. They lead the negotiations (as employers) on collective labor agreements for those who work in the sector.

5.1 Advocacy at Ministries

We start with the policy process within a ministry. As said, policy-making at ministries follows a cycle: agenda-setting through government agreement, policy formulation, decision-making, implementation, evaluation. The time used for this policy process varies per subject. The entire process can take a year or stop (due to a fall of a cabinet, for example) and start several times. Of course, as an association professional you want to be at the forefront of the policy cycle as much as possible. It starts with a blank paper for a new change story/policy. It is most effective if an association at a ministry manages to put a problem on the agenda , which the ministry then develops and resolves. They are looking for help from the association. If the solution can also count on support from members and if it is feasible, the professional scores a full hundred points for his association.

5.1.1 The Agenda of the Ministry: the Coalition Agreement

Unfortunately, reality is more unmanageable and a professional has to work hard for their 'hundred points'. Of course, civil servants do not take new agenda items on board that easily. In the Netherlands, with the coalition cabinets, the Coalition Agreement is usually the leading agenda. So if the AP, as an 'outsider', wants something, he should influence the Coalition Agreement, or see to it that he connects to it.

The establishment of the Coalition Agreement is just as decisive for what a cabinet is going to do, as it is opaque, even for experienced officials. Prior to the coalition negotiations, the associations often submit many studies and advice to the negotiating parties and sometimes receive some specific elaboration requests during the negotiations. But for many parties, civil servants, policy influencers, the media, even those who are well-versed, it is a surprise what comes out in formation agreement texts.

At election time, associations are all very active. They try to get into party programs. They do this in the existing parliament, but also in public opinion. If all goes well, they know which of their members have access to which political parties. Writers of party programs are approached, political congresses are attended, and texts are written for political parties. As an association professional you can service these politcal parties with your pratical expertise and knowledge. Of course, a political party decides for itself which choices they want to make, but you can at least ensure that it does so on the basis of good, valid information about your sector or professional field.

Associations influence the election and coalition by appropriately timing their research efforts. They write either position papers or future agendas, which are handed to the informer. These are often neatly administered by the official staff and can end up on a large pile. The question is whether they play a role in the negotiations. Certainly if the professional only delivers such agendas to the formation table they are actually too late. Doing so would only be putting up a show for the members: "we have explained it to them again". If you want to have real influence, you must ensure that you have had surveys published a year to a year and a half before the elections, through the association or - sometimes better - by independent scientists. At the moment of forming the new cabinet, you can often only exert influence through an urgent and important public hot issue. Such a hot issue also requires preparation and timing, more about this in the Communication chapter.

Most associations do not have direct access to the formation table. That only happens in exceptional situations and will be kept secret. Lobbying is a very sensitive process in this phase. After all, the Coalition Agreement is the moment at which the initiative lies fully with politics itself. There are nevertheless plenty of lobby opportunities for associations. If, as mentioned, the professional is able to put a spotlight on social discomfort (often in public), then politicians would like to use their own 'primacy' to tackle these problems of society.

Immediately after the appearance of the Coalition Agreement, you as an AP will ensure that there is close contact with officials at the ministries. You want to monitor the following: how the Coalition Agreement turns out for us as a sector or profession; how things are for the department; how the texts are interpreted by the officials themselves; which party is behind which text; and which discussion was behind it? Just like the civil servants and the media, everyone is busy interpreting at this important stage. After all, the texts determine what 'The political capital' will be occupied with in the coming four years and where future intervention opportunities for lobbyists lie.

All associations respond publicly to the Coalition Agreement, usually with a positive-critical tone. After all, the trick is to get into a conversation with the new cabinet members. It is not helpful to be known as an adversary of the new politics. The public response is important for the members. They want to be well informed about what possibly awaits them and how their association is doing.

5.1.2 Policy Formulation

This is a crucial phase in influencing policy. Officials start to work out the Coalition Agreement. They can't do that on their own. They want to know what the ideas are in 'the field' and how they think about solutions. Industry and interest groups, in turn, understand that it is hard for politicians to turn beautiful political plans into realistic practice (laws, subsidy schemes, covenants, approaches). This is the phase in which regular relationship management (investing in knowing each other and creating a climate of trust) bears fruit. If the AP is already a reliable conversation partner, he will be involved earlier in this phase.

As an AP you can think along and sometimes respond to confidential ideas and elaborations in the department. Here the professional will be asked for a mix of practical knowledge, conceptuality (seeing practice in a larger context) and content (what pinches, which law must be amended).

If the professional does not have the actual knowledge about a subject, he must organize it discretely with their members, because ministries often only want to disclose their policy intentions once they have passed the cabinet and the advisory organs of State.

Consultation with the ministry takes place at all levels during this phase. As an AP you are the spider in the web. If the chairperson gets to know the new minister, then you submit his introduction file. If the general manager consults with the department in the (often) regular management meetings, then you take part as a secretary. And as an AP you are in contact with the civil servants who have to put it all in writing in policy notes, the documents that precede laws. Make sure you get in touch with the 'writing official', the civil servant who actually writes the documents. Good contact with the 'writing official' is almost more important than that one formal consultation meeting with a minister.

5.1.3 Policy Decision

A department never works alone. If a policy intention (a law, a letter to parliament, a policy plan) is ready for the department, interdepartmental consultation will take place. There are a large number of permanent front portals of the Council of Ministers/Cabinet in which policy documents are coordinated. Ultimately, the Council of Ministers formally determines the policy. This is important because the policy must be supported by the entire coalition. Sometimes, when crucial intentions are involved, preliminary consultations are even taking place with the coalition leaders in parliament.

As a good AP you are aware of this decision-making cycle. The lines of influence then go through their own department, but also through the other departments that can have their say in the government and in the Council of Ministers. In this phase, the more the file from the department becomes 'highly political', the more the association will also respond at the highest level. As an AP you inform your chairman or general manager and prepare them for any last letters or conversations with the department. In this phase a lot of work is done behind the scenes. Publicity can be very disruptive: it should not disturb the process. The professional knows if it is still stuck on -for instance- a percentage or on an exception for specific groups; the battle takes place between policy department and, for example, the ministry of finance. The professional can still make adjustments here and there with conversations. As an AP you try to keep your board and the members up to date on the activities and current discussions in the political capital.

If there is a law, the bill is submitted to the Council of State, a formal advisory board, for advice after the Council of Ministers. It is fairly unusual in the Netherlands to contact the Council of State. After the decision-making in the Council of Ministers, a period of relative silence starts. With the lobbyist in parliament, it is important to start an exploration of how the yet-to-be-published Parliamentary document will be received among the various political parties. And if the Council of State is critical on the same points as the association, the professional holds strong arguments.

As soon as the policy document enters parliament, it is time to respond publicly, via press releases on the site and social media. What does the association think of the law? The first line of communication will be repeated constantly. The reactions from the field are often well read by the media and MPs. The discussion becomes framed (see Communication section). As an AP, you and the communication colleagues have already figured out in a communication plan, which messages you have and how you react to other reactions that you can expect.

5.1.4 Policy Implementation

The law is then approved by parliament (this differs per country: House of Commons, House of Lords, House of Representatives, the Senate) and published in official Government papers. There has been much debate, but now the law is the law and the implementation phase follows. Ministerial regulations or administrative measures follow on the basis of the law. You can anticipate all sorts of problems coming up, like a government service that is not yet ready, or a subsidy scheme that does not work and is delayed. A member discovers an implementation problem in the law. As an AP you are very alert to these early problems and you discuss them with the ministry. Depending on the support of your members for the law, the professional either does this with useful tips for the civil servants, or with public reports that the law does not work, just as was feared.

NVZ A Cool Headline and the Consequences

A headline in a large national daily newspaper, a few years ago: Hospital Fraud Amounts to Eight Billion Euros. The sources? Anonymous. The result was parliamentary questions, many investigations, and reputation damage for hospitals, because it is not pleasant to be portrayed as fraudsters. From those investigations a different picture emerged than was in the headlines. Hospitals appear to have great difficulty in correctly interpreting the complicated funding system. And the supervisor often changes the rules during the game. It leads to a flow of non-intended declarations of around 240 million annually. The NVZ decided not to actively combat the established frame of fraud in the media, but left it to objective third parties, health insurers and the ministry to declare, based on the results, that there is no such fraud. The NVZ professionals, in close collaboration with members and stakeholders. arrived at a system of 'horizontal supervision'. Irregularities are investigated and dealt with directly between the insurer and the hospital.

In this phase, politicians often seem less interested because there are already new laws and plans on the political agenda. But appearances are deceptive. If there is a social uproar, the Parliament will want to be heard again. Parliamentary questions to the minister, often from the opposition, but certainly not exclusively, are a proven instrument in that case. The practice signals and initial problems are proactively gathered from the members, through instruments such as complaints boxes, member surveys and members debate.

5.1.5 Evaluation

Not all policies are properly evaluated. Our politicians often pay less attention to where a policy actually leads to than to new plans. Nevertheless, policy evaluations are very relevant because they can often be a prelude to new or revised policies. If the ministry itself does not come up with this, then the professional can carry out a policy evaluation himself. He can ask members or conduct an independent survey. Everything is intended to encourage the Cabinet/department (with or without the Parliament) to come up with new/changed policy. For you as an AP, the trick is to be able to translate a practical signal into a general problem that can be solved.

Maintenance of Bridges

In 2018, a bridge collapsed in Genoa, Italy sending a big shock around the world. In addition to the regrettable death toll, there has been political noise and damage to an important economic artery. What is the situation in the Netherlands with traffic jams when a bridge cannot be used? Here too there are problems, like the Merwedebrug, a bridge over the Rhine. At the end of

2018, an association professional at Bouwend Nederland, the association of contractors and building companies, conducted an external investigation at Sweco (ex Grontmij). The results show that the government renovation budget must be increased. Connections are quickly made with ANWB, TLN and Evofenedex (all associations in the transport sector). Together they send a powerful message to politicians in mid-2019, which in turn quickly recognize the urgency of the problem. The association professional sets out the research, taps into the external network, ensures coordination with the supporters and ensures that the Bouwend Nederland chairman can present his story with the right facts in media appearances. Preparation, a vast network and political momentum are the factors of success. But actions on process, content and relationship ensure the necessary skills.

To summarize, the AP will be challenged quite a lot. Content, process and relationship run through the entire policy cycle and require varying intensity. In the event of restrictions in implementation, the network of the professional is essential for members. While in the phase of putting issues on the agenda the professional must be a substantive client for an external researcher. It requires a lot of balancing on the growth path. The professional needs skills in terms of content, process and relationship in the ministry lobby.

Policy cycle	Interventions professional
• Agenda	• Research, 'interpretation'
• Policy formulation	• Deliver content, practical experiences
• Policy decision	• Restrictions coalition, power and influence
• Implementation	• Initial problems, issues in practce
• Evaluation	• Research bottlenecks, 'purpose' of the law

Policy cycle and interventions of the association professional

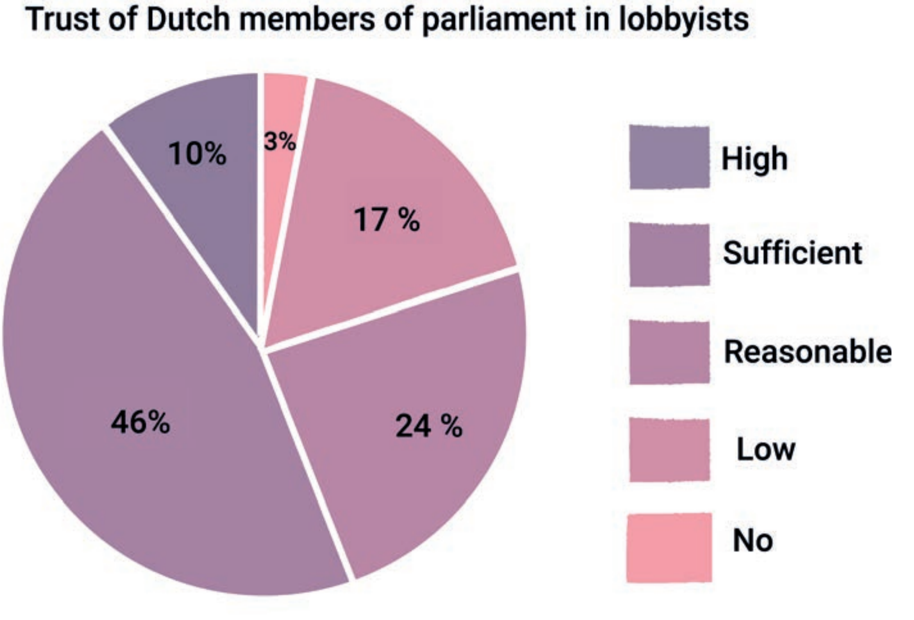
5.2 Parliamentary Lobby

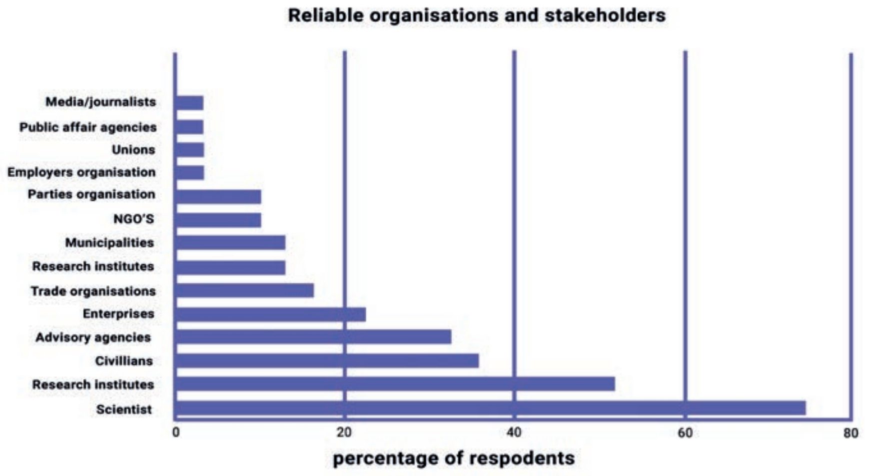
Much attention is given in the media to the relationship between Parliament and the lobbyist. The term lobbyist is a somewhat disputed term of a highly respectable profession. Lobbying, as defined in the dictionary, is "conversations with the aim to influence important decisions". The word lobby comes from the English/American term for corridors or reception room/foyers in hotels, the "lobbies", where politicians spoke informally and were approached by people from society who wanted to influence them. So, as said, it is all about influencing the choices of decision makers, involving them in the impact of their choices on the world, the interests of the members.

It helps that politicians are keen to let society resonate in their voting behavior. We believe that without social input, politicians run a risk. Risk is that everything the ministry provides to the parliament is only true on the square kilometer in the political capital. It is a noble task for associations to bring the social (practical) view to the attention of the decision makers about legislation and conditions. A lobbyist/representative who brings social reality in a targeted and reliable way enriches political decision making. Lobby is therefore an indispensable contribution to a democratic society.

In terms of process management the professional tests the support and feasibility of legislative proposals for the legislator. The figures below show that MPs also appreciate the messages from advocates. They think it is important to know what the issues in practice are, how people think about legislative proposals or evaluations. The lobbyist cannot afford to sell nonsense: MPs quickly get this, often with great reputational damage for the messenger. The change story must therefore be accurate and based on valid facts.

The first figure comes from a study by Public Matters and the University of Leiden (2007). The opinion about 'lobby' turned out to be not as negative for MPs as is often sketched. 56% say they have sufficient to high confidence in the lobbyist. The second picture is about the credibility of different parties (Public Matters 2016). In terms of trust, the trade and interest groups are in fifth place, after science, ministries, individual citizens and companies. The latter prove that MPs want to be able to carry out an objective reality check on the matters that they are presented with by the ministry. The ministry is also trusted itself, but judgments from science and citizens/companies are very relevant. Take scientist, citizens or companies along as a lobbyist and strengthen the collective story with individual examples. Also take MPs on a working visit with your members. Central to all of this is the word TRUST, a bond that the professional has gradually built up. Building trust, doing what is promised, not telling bloated stories.





Trust and Long Term

An association professional at the LHV, the Association of General Practitioners, has to deal with the funding issues of the general practitioners with parliament, ministry, supervisor and ministry health insurers. He note the association is known as the organization that primarily defends the interests of general practitioners. The funding system is not optimal, it is not functioning properly. Sometimes GPs are favored, sometimes severely disadvantaged. Discussions about this with everyone involved at the table are difficult. Because he refrains from short-term gain and invests a lot in relationship. He manages to ensure that the regulator ultimately advocates a system change.

Choose the Right Moment

When does the professional speaks with parliamentarians? If they only give the message for the first time to decision-makers in the corridors of parliament, just before the clock calls to vote, the professional is too late. Crucial in the lobbying process is grabbing momentum: the right message, with the right approach to the right person at the right time. Ideally, the professional should treat a bill with a parliamentarian even before it is back from the Council of State and has been submitted to parliament.

Members know little about the preparatory work, and it is often not easy to indicate what has been done, without it being harmful to the precarious influencing process in which the professional finds himself. (Read about this in Part III, Communication).

Choose the Right Message

How do you get the right message? Before the professional presents his opinion or solution to decision-makers, it's important to include them in 'the greater interest'. In fact, this is the first part of the change reasoning: Why? Where to? The professional makes clear why something is socially an issue and where the association wants to go with the matter at hand. This approach is much better than coming up with solutions immediately.

Wednesday Practice

At the NVB, the Dutch Association of Banks, association professionals can practice with each other on fixed Wednesdays to tell key messages for media appearances. These skills are of course also useful for (lobby) conversations. How do you start the conversation? What wording did you suddenly get stuck on? How can you prevent that in the future?

Choose the Right Approach?

Both the form and the wording are important. MPs have very little time. Make the message clear and concise. Both the form and the wording are important. An A4 is enough, or preferably a page on the tablet, without scrolling. We call it “framing” choosing the right words, the right message. It is the way in which the professional wants the ‘other’ to look at reality in a certain way. MPs like to see concrete examples: what is going on, what is going wrong, where are opportunities for improvement? The lobbyist acts extremely helpful. He feeds the Member of Parliament with information where he or she can manage at that moment. With possible questions for Question Time or Legislative Consultation in Parliament, with positions on what the sector thinks about the minister’s intentions, with elements for motions or legislative proposals. The professional identifies bottlenecks, but they also immediately offer suggestions for a solution, (in the spirit of the party’s positions), instead of coming to the Member of Parliament to explain what he should do in a ‘persuasion mode’.

Choose the Right Person?

In the lobby, the importance of good relationship management, is evident. Know the relevant MPs. Find out where they get what they think is important, who their spouse is, and if they have children. Everything that can provide enough material for a conversation. A “hook” for a talk in which you can immediately leave the lobby message. The Parliament is transparent about who sits on which committee. The professional can quickly get to know the right relations.

Who is the right person in a certain process depends on the moment. Voting conditions in parliament matter. In this respect, members of the coalition may seem “more important” than members of the opposition. But a parliament motion is more likely to be changed when it’s started from the opposition. It is about the decision-making phase (preliminary consultation, hearing, vote for the House of Representatives or the Senate (or other the specific institutions of your country). It may be that the mood in the Senate depends on one person and the professional has to influence this specific person. The professional focuses on the most important players and not forgets other “friends”. After all, it may be that they are desperately needed for other matters.

What is the Right Moment?

Choosing momemtum in parliament is largely determined by the meeting procedures and agreements. The different institutions of parliament have a number of standard processes concerning legislation and policy consultation with the minister. Every phase in the process requires different actions.

Trajectory	Interventions lobbyist
Questiontime Parliament	background information on current events
Hearing	experiences from practice, often with members
Procedure meeting committees	suggestions for procedure
Regular Committe meeting	reaction on agenda items, mostly by letters
Legislative meeting	questions/remarks
Debate	being present for amendments/remarks

The parliamentary meetings are the moments when the professional can set up the lobbying strategy. This list serves as a first guide for every lobbyist. In fact, the professional also follows the cycle of putting agenda items, formulating, determining, implementing and evaluating within the parliament. Just as with the ministries, the contribution of the professional for MPs differs per phase in the cycle.

In part III we explain how the professional can capture these moments in a lobby plan. The lobby plan tries to distinguish in advance in which phase they have conversations, in which phase they ask smart questions, or comes up with specific legislative proposals. A good lobbying strategy consists of eighty percent good internal preparation, and twenty percent execution.

Specialization and Collaboration

That brings us to a point of specialization of work within the association. As an AP you are rarely the one who exclusively maintains all contacts with MPs. For most associations, these contacts go through 'the political lobbyist', the Public Affairs employee or the director. The advantage of such a relationship specialist is that the MPs recognize a familiar face. One stop-shop, if they want to know something about that industry. The lobbyist often involves his fellow association professionals by introducing them to the Member of Parliament if the subject so requires. Sometimes they also take members of the association along, because they can introduce the practice through case studies.

The success factors of the lobbyist will not differ significantly in the different branches (see table).

Success Factors Lobbyist

We will further explain, working with other parties, in Part III Relationship Management. A joint signal from stakeholders is often a very powerful signal for MPs. If tenants and landlords unite, or patients and hospitals, doctors and pharmacists, builders and clients: rest assured this will receive a lot of interest from parliament.

Be on time
Have an image of the force field
Solve the problem of the other (unburden the members of parliament)
Take impartial third parties with you or position them in the debate
Strive towards partnership with other stakeholders/lobbyists

The success factors

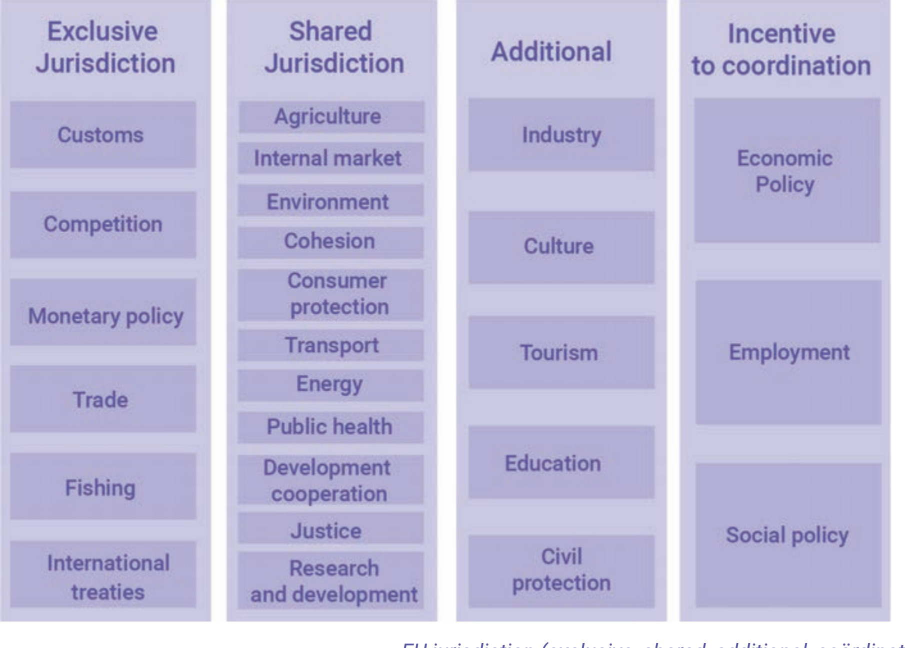
There may still be a considerable gap between lobbyists and 'policy' colleagues. In some associations, the lobbyist works in the staff or the communications department, or they are the general manager himself, while the content experts work in the policy departments. The lobbyist himself of course does not know everything. He must collect the information internally and with the right core and timing. That is often quite a challenge. The more a branch and interest group works with modern professionals as portrayed in this book (as 'growth path' players), the smaller the gap. After all, the process manager knows how to pitch well, is familiar with content and process, knows the necessity of tackling momentum, knows how to reduce complex issues.

5.3 Brussels Lobby

Up to now, we have always referred to the national policy cycle. European policy often seems like a distant affair. But beware: nowadays national policy in Europe often has a European origin through direct or indirect sense. Within the large policy cycle of legislation and regulations, the cycle more and more starts in Brussels on the European agenda.

Is that always true? It also depends on whether the European Union has real powers in the specific policy area. If this is the case, then the professional should follow the EU. But even if the policy area of the members is not specifically mentioned in the European Treaty, the EU can exert certain control. That is confusing, but it works through via general, generic dossiers such as the Internal Market (free movement of goods and services) and through free competition (distortion of competition across borders) there can still be influence from Europe. The professional has to ascertain whether Europe have exclusive or additional powers or if there is a line running via generic files. See the figure.

It may also be that a national court (or a ministry) invokes supranational institutions from within the Member State itself (the European Court of Justice, or the ECHR, European Convention on Human Rights). The court wants to check intended national legislation against international treaties. This often involves very long-term legal processes, in which there is a sudden momentum (an interim ruling, a hearing). An association has to be especially attentive to these things.



EU jurisdiction (exclusive, shared, additional, coördination)

Whether or not a specific policy area is exclusively European, it is important for many associations to follow the European agenda well and ensure they can influence it. Sometimes the influence is via direct membership of an association with a European umbrella organization or via an organized national lobby house. An example is the House of Provinces, the lobby institute of the Dutch provinces in Brussels.

Sometimes an association chooses to be present in person at the EU bodies. Such a representative, just like the lobbyist at the national parliament, is 'our man or woman in Brussels'. Just like the representative at the national capital, this representative will cooperate with an AP to see how to strengthen the goals together. These goals can be:
- bring the added value of the association or sector to the attention of European decision makers;
- monitor and influence the impact of European policy-making on the national system;
- maintain a network with partner organizations so a small organization still has influence;
- involve members and the work organization of the association and inform them about the possibilities of European projects and funds.

No European Agenda, But Still a Cycle

An important difference with the national policy process is that there is no clear coalition agreement at the European level. The European Council, the consultation of European government leaders, sets out the main outlines. On the basis of this strategic agenda from the Council and the dialogue with the European Parliament (the elected representatives of the Member States), the European Commission (the executive committee) determines its priorities for a parliamentary term. This forms the basis for the annual work plans of the European Commission. These plans set out the concrete policy initiatives or legislative proposals that are undertaken in a year. In the absence of a Coalition Agreement, there is a form of European policy cycle. Work is carried out on the initiative of the Commission with successively: a white paper (agenda setting), green paper (policy alternatives), proposal for a directive (legislation that must be implemented nationally) or regulation (lgislation with direct effect in the Member States). Intervention options are the same as the parliamentary lobby.

5.4 Collective Bargaining Negotiations

If the association also is in charge of collective labor agreements, the professional has to organize a specific form of advocacy. This is specialized work, often involving association professionals who perform this specific form full time. Representing the interests at the collective labor agreement table with trade unions is a special process of advocacy. Here too it is about the right moment and the right people, club dynamics and the rules of the game in public and media play a role.
To properly conduct collective bargaining negotiations, we address the importance of the following:
- data and research (pay, trend and developments in the sector)
- correct formal procedures (who has which role in decision-making)
- support (how does a mandate work)
- negotiation skills;
- strike (dealing with members and media).

Usually, the bargaining process starts with insight into the figures: How is the industry doing, in relation to other industries? How many employees does the sector have, What does the level of pay look like, What are the numbers of sick leave? Research on these key figures is particularly important to obtain an image of the course of events over the years and to be able to compare with similar adjacent sectors. The professional can conduct such an investigation himself or have it carried out among his members, but it can also be set out in cooperation with the trade unions. The latter requires substantially more coordination and preparation. Both parties have to agree on the research questions that are asked, so that the results are not multi-interpretable afterwards, and that conclusions can actually be linked to results. The facts, figures and possible solutions obviously play a role in the joint change story that the association professional is trying to build up with trade unions: what problems are there, where do we want to go, what can we change in the labor agreement and how will we formulate it with each other.

The negotiation process consists of four phases: mandate formulation and negotiating delegation composition, negotiations, decision-making and implementation. The roles and tasks in a negotiation process can differ, but below is a description of a fairly common approach:

- Governance: determines the negotiating mandate and negotiating result (What)
- Policy advisory committee (PAC): advises management ofmandate and intended/result ('Where to'));
- Delegation: negotiates with trade unions on behalf of the board (Members and at least one office employee).
- Association Professional: process managers who prepares and elaborates consultations, researches and communicates with members
- Congress / members: approves the negotiating result.

It goes without saying that the separation of tasks and roles must be closely observed by all involved. If unions break up negotiations and (threaten to) strike, the negotiation process comes under great (time) pressure. In employers' associations it can often happen that a (small) proportion of the supporters would rather not have a 'hassle' with employees within their own organization. They tend to call for a quickc collective agreement, at all costs. It is disastrous if individual board members start to exert influence on the negotiation process in that kind of situation, without informing the advisory committee. There is a risk decisions will then be made without a basis of support being checked, which could affect the entire negotiating result.

The mandate with which a negotiating delegation sets off consists of a composite package of pay increases, other secondary conditions and the duration of the collective labor agreement. The mandate is established on the basis of historical agreements, current trends and developments in the market in relation to other sectors, and a forecast for the future. Trade union negotiators work with their own mandate. Of course both parties try to come together in the negotiations, but there may be a gap between the two mandates. This may mean that there will be no collective labor agreement, or that either or both parties will go back to their board to request an extension of the mandate. In order to maintain credibility in the negotiations, this should not happen too often ('a negotiator can't afford to indicate that there really is no room for maneuver too often").

With collective labor agreement negotiations, everything is part of the game. Who is first to make contact? Where do parties meet? What will the agenda items be? Who makes the report? As an AP in the negotiating delegation, you must absolutely bear in mind that all these questions are part of the negotiations, and you must be able to think strategically. It requires being able to read

'between the lines'. Sometimes it is necessary to seek informal contact, outside of formal meetings, to see where there may be room to move. In the formal negotiation process, it is not possible to say everything. By consciously talking 'off the record', both parties can talk more freely about each other's considerations and the dynamics and feasibility of proposals in their own environment.
During the negotiations it is advisable to work with an independent chairman who monitors the planning and time, and ensures that the views of both sides are properly highlighted. It can be smart to coordinate how much time each party wants to take for the process prior to the negotiations. Do we strive for simple agreements and speed up matters, or are the proposals complicated and far-reaching and more time is needed? A negotiation process can be well phased in various steps or meetings. Whether you start with the hot issues, or points where you can easily come to an agreement is again part of the game. The chairperson may suspend the meeting during the negotiations. In practice, this happens a lot so that the parties can consult each other briefly, or so that the parties can meet informally outside the meeting.

The moment one reaches a negotiating agreement, it is important that the members formally ratify the agreement. In that phase the professional has a shared interest with all negotiators at the table. If one of the parties does not accept the deal, they all have a problem. The professional keeps in touch, often through the first negotiators, about the progress of this process. If the negotiating agreement has been converted into a formal agreement, implementation will take place. Collective labor agreements texts must be rewritten and recorded, supporters informed. Here too it is important to coordinate well with the other negotiators. This coordination often happens at the level of the association professionals and administrative delegates do not interfere. But be alert to the possible impact of a certain way of explaining a new scheme. In some cases, that has to be done in very strict and open channels with a line to the administrative members. It's important to prevent a discussion about support and feasibility for the new regulation flaring up within the association.

Negotiations can of course also go wrong. The strike phenomenon has its own dynamic. The trade unions have a duty to inform the employers' association about an imminent strike. This involves scenario making, discussing who does what together. Often a message is also physically conveyed to employers on behalf of the strikers / trade unions during the strike. Make sure to agree with each other on how to arrange the reception, and prepare all the communication thoroughly.

It's important to properly inform supporters about the content and process. In this way members (directors or managers of members) can play their role in informing and communicating with their employees. In the case of a strike, the strength of an employers' stance is often apparent. As an employer organization you are committed to keeping the ranks closed. It does not benefit the negotiation effort if the trade unions receive support from the individual members. If you work as an AP at an employee association, a strike is exciting and frustrating at the same time. It provides a lot of energy for your members but also often drives expectations up to great heights. You want to put maximum pressure on the negotiation process with a strike, but at the same time you don't want to be sent back to the table with an impossible task. In the end, you want to be able to conclude a collective agreement. Impossible demands do not help. In addition, the strike puts pressure on your relationships with negotiators of employee associations. Albeit difficult, it might prove a necessary part of negotiations. In a professional setting both parties will understand this.

5.5 Lessons Learned

In this chapter we have learned more about the skills as a representative of interests/lobbyist. You have learned how and when to influence different stages of the policy cycle at a ministry, parliament and the European Union. This knowledge also can be applied to regional government like Provincial Delegates and States. W have also sketched the process of negotiating collective labor agreements. In part III we give some practical tools.

Lobby, advocacy and the type of interventions of the professional

	Content	Process	Relationship
Lobby and advocacy	- Signaling: Collecting bottle-necks/consequences of (upcoming) legisla-tion and summarize - Analyse: form a multiperspec-tive view, what the 'issue' is Survey the force field. - Combine: what has to change? wat is feasible?	- Differentiate in phases:In lobby at ministries: agenda, policy formulation, decision, implementa-tion and evaluation. - In switching between internal and external: at ministeries (togeth-er with stakeholders) and process within the association - In Parliamentary lobby: questions, legislation, amendments, etc. - In Collective labour agreements: differ-entiate in phases in negotiations with unions and informing members	- Involve members in lobby: inform, participation groups, examples, co-decide, join at visits. - Knowledge of the escalation ladder: what action at what moment.
How to secure the quality of your actions as a professional?	- Via sources: correct data - Via logic-check at collaegues and members - Via formulation and framing in communi-cation	- Timing: signals on time, process steps on time with members and with ministries/ external contacts - Good proportions: Size and duration of diverging and converg-ing, fitting to the issues - Process steps (repeat): make sure there is sup-port at the members	- Know the public servant that is writing the legislation - Timing: when are you involved by your contacts? - Make sure that you are known in the association and by stakeholders


LEVEL 5
CLEARANCE AUTHORIZATION

6 Deepen Professionalism: *Sector-wide Development*

In sector-wide development, members learn to implement innovations and improvements with other members and other parties.

These innovations and improvements concern developing the organizations and the professionals sector-wide. These learning and development processes almost always require cooperation with the outside world. They involve connecting with people and organizations that are not members, such as companies, educational institutions, knowledge and research centers.

Members often experience competition. The competition can make it extra difficult to promote mutual cooperation. Sharing specific knowledge about innovations, for example transparency about performance or financial results, may be sensitive. Sometimes the innovation trend is generic and 'safe', or the members are less affected by competition. Then, the professional can add something. We will show you in this chapter how you can support members with innovations in the sector on the basis of content, process and relationship.

6.1 Content: the Change Story with Innovation and Improvement?

In chapter 4 we discussed the change story and - through process management - making that change story widespread. a story supported by the members. But when is renewal and innovation part of that collective change story? When do they become a task for the association? Members will join in when they see the desired change, the renewal and innovation, as urgent and important and when there is support and added value in a collective approach.

This collective approach can be the spreading of knowledge in the sector. For example, by drawing up an implementation guideline for a legislative amendment and sharing it with others. Or by sharing best practices and organizing information sharing meetings. This is common in many sectors and has practical value. It is almost a form of service. Spreading knowledge is an approach that fits well with relatively simple improvements. We see many associations take this role actively, which matches the demand by their members. Nevertheless, with sector-wide development we see a shift from supporting relatively simple knowledge questions to the initiation and facilitation of more complex change issues. As we discussed in Chapter 2, members have become better at finding solutions for relatively simple problems through their network and via the internet. Only for more complex change that does not work well and they seek support in their bigger network the association.

The AP then not only has the task of sharing knowledge through communication channels and meetings, but also of actively engage in the creation of innovations. As a professional you can play a role in the connecting of parties, adding data insights, organizing testing of prototypes to get rid of initial glitches and scaling up innovation in the sector or profession. These activities demand more of the association in terms of the capacity and resources. It's important that the collective change story demands attention from the What, How and the Who. This shows that it is urgent and important for the association itself to play an active role in complex issues and to find new solutions.

Which more complex issues do we mean? We refer to the so-called wicked problems (see box below).

Wicked problems

We make a distinction between easy changes and wicked problems. A wicked problem is a problem that is difficult to solve because of incomplete, contradictory, and changing requirements that are often difficult to recognize. It refers to and idea or problem that can not be fixed, where there is no single solution to the problem. The use of the term "wicked" here has to come to denote resistance ro resolution, rather than evil. Another definition is "a problem whose social complexity means that is has no determinable stopping point. Moreover because of complex interedependencies, the effort to solve one aspect of a wicked problem may reveal or create other problems. Wicked problems are therefore problems which do not obey proven rational techniques and approaches (Rittel and Webber, 1973). As an association professional in the context of sector development, you will often have to deal with wicked problems. After all, members are more and more capable in solving the easy issues themselves, they do not need any help with that, they find solutions for this together (regionally, in mutual relationships, internet).

How do you recognize these wicked problems? The issues are sometimes described as multi-factor multi-actor problems. Ownership of the issue is unclear: the issue belongs to everyone. Take a current topic such as environmental sustainability, which concerns a great many professionals in almost all areas (municipalities, construction, infrastructure, real estate).

There is often no agreement on the answer to the question of what needs to be done to resolve the issue. And many attempts have already been made to solve it. In short: if you ask yourself as a professional "where on earth do I start?" Or "how do I get a view of this plate of spaghetti?" Then you are probably dealing with a wicked problem.

When members see wicked problems, some turn to their association for help. It may be that they are one of the actors and as a result cannot stand above the issue. Or it could be that there is no overview of the issue, but the risks or the opportunities are coming in fast. Other members experience a problem, but don't know if the association can help. Here the skills of the professional are of great importance. They are going to set up a process that helps members solve a wicked problem, a process that consists actually of two processes.

6.2 Process: Managing two Processes

The purpose of sector-wide development is to learn and innovate. It was about teaching members to implement innovations and improvements with each other and with other parties. In the role as an association professional it is about 1) facilitating this learning process and 2) the creation, application and scaling up of new products, services or methods. It is about learning together and innovating together. With wicked problems, both processes often intertwine: learning itself is a process and developing solutions for the wicked problem is the other process. It is important to distinguish between both processes and to see which process steps are being taken for each process. Both processes have their own course and require specific action from the association professional.

6.2.1 Process 1: Learning from People and Organizations

How do people and organizations learn and what are the consequences for the AP involved? What can you do as an association in (digital) networks, with data information, with meetings, with practice-based stories and other publications?

How Do People and Organizations Learn?

A learning organization starts with learning people. People learn in different ways. Kolb uses a division of learning styles for people (Kolb, 1983): learning by thinking, by applying and experiencing, by experimenting and by reflecting. What we think the professional can learn from these learning styles is that people learn in different ways. This means that if the professional wants members to learn during their meetings or their publications, they must take these differences into account. After all, the professional wants to transfer knowledge. In short: the professional needs to offer activities and communication that match the four different learning styles. Avoid offering one-dimensional content and be as diverse as the learning styles of your members.

In addition to the differences in learning styles, it is good to distinguish the learning processes. We make a distinction between single loop, double loop and third loop learning (Argyris / Schön, 1996).

- Single loop learning is about solving known problems. With single loop learning, solutions are sought within the frameworks and this works best when solving routine problems.
- With double loop learning, there is a question of renewing an encountered situation, or solving previously unknown problems. You thereby question the existing frameworks and compare theories to arrive at a new theory.
- The third loop concerns learning to learn. Learning to learn better through single and double loop learning. Here we learn to better apply the first two forms to situations that arise.

The single loop learning experiences are the easiest to transfer, with the double loop and third loop experiences, learning is often linked to the characteristics of the situation and the wicked problem.

Now that we have identified learning styles and learning processes of individuals, we are also looking at learning processes within organizations. This is in fact about mechanisms in which groups of people learn as a team. The theory about learning organizations is concerned with the learning capacity of organizations and the mechanisms that slow this down or reinforce this. Learning organizations are organizations that are open to learning. And: learning is only successful if a good connection can be made to the practice and reality of the employee. In other words: can theu apply what they have learned in their own action repertoire?

We have already established that individuals have different learning styles and there are also different learning processes (single, double, third loop). The professional builds these elements into his approach for his members. When they are dealing with member organizations, they also have to deal with the concept of learning organizations. In addition to paying attention to the learning of individuals, they will have to pay attention to (the management of) the member organizations to ensure that a culture of learning is created with the necessary preconditions for learning at the workplace. Then the professional can organize an exchange between networks of individuals and member organizations.

How Can the Professional Let Members Learn?

Innovation never spreads by 'rolling out' or imposing it on others. People accept innovation by getting acquainted with new methods, experimenting with them and reflecting on them with others (Vermaak, 2015). Different approaches are needed to ensure that innovative knowledge spreads and that people learn.

A professional can help members learn as a network by focusing on an issue and asking members in the network to use their expertise and knowledge to solve the issue or contribute to a solution. r. A good form to use are the so-called communities of practice (Wenger, 1998). A community of people, with a shared field of expertise, from which they lend and derive identity, want to grow and develop through activities. These communities work well but are difficult to manage. At the same time, as the association is in a positive, good position the association itself is a network, not threatening and often where they derive identity. We could say that an association has a good chance of becoming a community of practice.

The professional can also stimulate the learning process within the association by providing big data information. For instance, benchmarking allows the association to confront members with figures on how they perform compared to others. The results can be a strong trigger to improve internal processes and methods. The association plays a good role as a secure recipient and safe manager of company-sensitive information. As an AP you have to deal with data such as CRM, website financial administration, social media, contacts with members, member information and possibly stakeholder information.

There are also data sources about your sector. For example the governmental supervisor or ministry, or pension fund, salary administration of members (often only a few players in a sector). As an association professional you know which possibilities you have in this area. It helps to answer the 'Why' question when it comes to analysis and the 'What' and 'How' questions by allowing data to act as mirror information so members can learn.

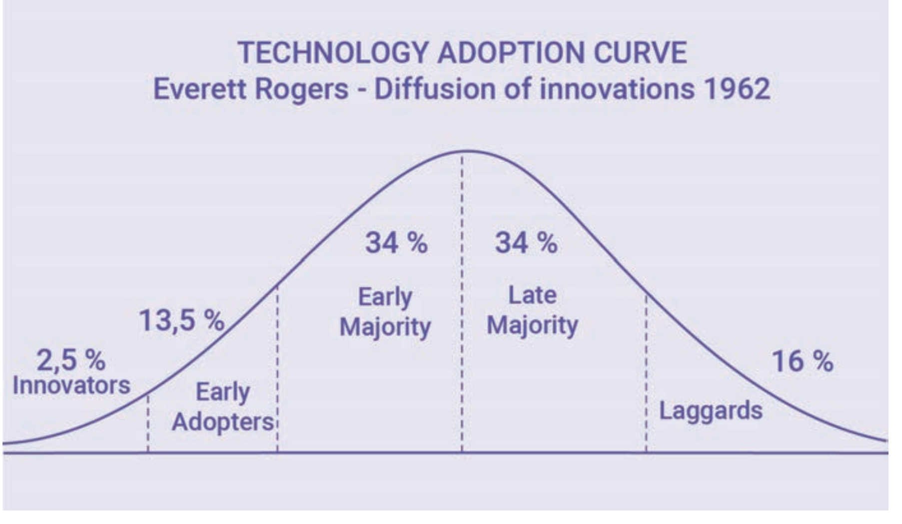
The Aedes-Benchmark

The Association of Housing Associations (Aedes) annually organizes the Aedes benchmark, which compares the performance of the members (social housing companies) on five performance fields (operating costs, tenant judgment, maintenance and improvement, sustainability and affordability and availability of housing). Measuring performance is only really useful if you do something with the results. From measuring and knowing, to learning and improving. To this end, Aedes' association professionals organize a comprehensive benchlearning program, in which corporation employees zoom in on the results and discuss with each other whether they recognize the figures, and in particular learn from each other which approaches and interventions work to improve results. Aedes professionals organize eighty benchlearning meetings on various themes. In addition, Aedes also organizes a 'look-in-the-kitchen' where one of the members opens his doors and tells what is going well, what is not going well, and how they are working on this.

6.2.2 Process 2: Creation, Application and Scaling Up

By looking at innovation within a sector or profession as a linear process, we can distinguish three phases: creation, application and scaling up. The creation phase is about inventions, new combinations and trials. This leads to prototypes or concepts that will be tested in the application phase, or the living labs phase. Teething problems can still be adjusted, improvements can be made to optimally make the connection with practice. Finally, the scaling-up phase starts when the new product or service is distributed. Although reality is never as linear as outlined here, it is good to distinguish these phases because the professional has a different role in each phase, with different process interventions.

The curve of Everett Rogers (Rogers, 1962) shows the course of creation, application and scaling up. Every innovation has a time lapse through innovators, followed by early adopters. Only then does the 'peloton' follow: the majority. Finally, a number of laggards remain who will not apply the innovation. The degree of speed of this time course naturally differs per innovation. For example, the internet existed for decades before it took speed and became mainstream for the university world.



Technology adoption curve

It is important to realize that this is happening. In fact, the actions of the professional are aimed at letting the members go through this Rogers adoption curve faster, without stopping.

Funda & NVM

The history of Funda, a search portal for houses, nicely illustrates how the Association of Brokers (NVM), has consciously focused on the front runners the innovators and early adopters in the market. With the rise of internet, many brokers saw the internet as a threat to their business. They feared the clear overview and offering of properties via a website as competition. Against the will of the majority of the members (who more or less said 'stop the internet!') NVM professionals deployed an innovation process to collectively open up the housing supply online through office automation software and open data standards for data exchange. This enabled NVM to collect and disclose unambiguous information about houses offered for sale on a daily basis. Funda would never existed if the NVM agency had not shown courage, and had not consciously chosen to innovate.

In each of the phases (creation-application-upscaling) the professional can play a role. Assuming that they do not make the inventions themelves or run the pilots, the activities focus more on making the three phases possible. It ensures that the phases have their 'natural' course in the association and in the sector. That sometimes requires some stimulation and intervention.

Innovation in the Pharmacy

The idea of driven beginners is recognized at the KNMP association of the pharmacy organizations. They are accepted or not accepted, but often a small group joins. If one of the five pharmacist collectives subsequently becomes inspired, there is a chance that a quality guideline will be written, after which upscaling will follow. The KNMP professionals, often senior and / or middle management, gauge and guide these types of 'incremental' processes. They can choose from instruments such as context and strength / weakness analyzes, a scientific fund, supervision of dissertations, educational activities in the office, and writing guidelines.

The Phase of Creation

As a professional, you are not connected to every inventor in the world. What focus do you have? How can you make that focus functional for your members?

The focus of the professional in the creative phase is on creating new perspectives on the issue. New perspectives form an important part of the innovations. Parts of existing products or services are often combined into a new product. Such combinations often take place at interfaces between sectors. Between, for example, sports and marketing, housing and care, education and IT. That means that professionals are always on the lookout for things outside their sector, at the boundaries where it matters. This is called boundary tension. It means that professionals sometimes visit a conference that is outside of their focus. Quite often, surprising connections can be made by venturing outside your comfort zone.

There are three ways to create new perspectives as a professional:
1) bring different actors, players, together,
2) make an open inquiry through crowdsourcing
3) provide for innovation financial resources (subsidies).

For the first step it is important to bring the right people together at the right time and let them work on solving the problem. Important points for attention are the following (Vermaak, 2015).

- Involve people who will get the job done, put the issue at the center. That means the professional also involves people outside the member organizations/members. Note that everyone pays toll, spectators that don't contribute to the solution aren't welcome.
- Organize opposition, by involving people in the project with different views. With a multi-actor problem, multi-actors also belong bring the solution.
- Mirror with practice and with external insights. The existing solutions/ approaches can be called into question.
- Ensure learning processes in the change approach. Try to reach the working level and introduce concrete solutions on that level. Different forms of learning ensure that various learning styles are addressed for those involved.

- Give time to grow. It's easy to say after the first attempt: it doesn't work. Protect trial situations, learning moments. gain experience and disseminate this experience through learning networks. Bottom-up, through employees, rather peer-to-peer than top-down (see section on application phase).

For the second step (crowdsourcing) it is important to articulate the issue properly and make it known through the right channels. After all, the professional wants people to put in time and effort to come to a working solution. That can be an exciting, substantive challenge or a monetary reward or a combination. The description of the issue must also be recognizable to people from other sectors or professions, to evoke a different perspective on the issue. Pay attention to this and the communication channels that are used to distribute the call. For example, if one uses the journal of the sector, there will not quickly be new perspectives. There is a good chance that people in the sector already know the issue and have already addressed it. Look outside the world known to you as a professional.

Besides, crowdsourcing has been around for longer than you might think. At the International Mathematics Congress in Paris in 1900, it was stated that there were 23 mathematical challenges that still needed to be solved. Mathematicians around the world were challenged and a sum of $ 1 million per solution was offered. The effect of this was a sort of crowdsourcing avant la lettre where mathematicians worked on the remaining issues around the world. By spreading the knowledge on the issues, in combination with a reward, a focus and solution power was triggered.

The third step, ensuring innovation, is primarily about money. Developing new products and services costs money. This takes place at companies in R&D departments. Is there room or need for a professional to play a role? Not always. But, when members don't have the financial resources to perform the necessary R&D activities, the professional can bundle the available resources within the sector (collecting own collective resources) or through external resources (government grants, EU programs or university programs). It is therefore necessary to have knowledge of these alternative sources of financing.

Phase of Application

The phase of application is about testing in practice. Does the new method, new product, work as we intended during the creation phase? Testing ensures that the early adopters and early majority are "made ready" to accept the application when the testing is done. This is necessary for an acceleration in the scaling up phase.

The phase of application is a phase in which the AP can play a clear role: making use of the power of the network with the members. A prototype or proto method looks for a breeding ground where it can be tested. In this phase it is not about the innovators, the always-enthusiasts for every innovation, but about the interested, practical thinking members. Innovators often don't know those people, but the AP knows them well and can connect both sides as a liaison officer.

As said before: new solutions must be given time to grow. The professional must protect and give time to test situations and learning moments. As a professional you have to take care of that time by lowering expectations and keeping focus on the final goal. The breeding grounds require learning networks from professionals, gathered around the issue. From the association but also from other adjoining fields. You want the prototype types and proto methods to be tested, tried out in practice so that they are improved. This requires working from a variety of perspectives. It is also possible that the test situation clashes with legislation and regulations. In many sectors, new applications/methods lead to questions in relation to rules. This may concern regulations from the government, but it may also concern its own sector or professional rules. In such cases, as an association professional you must ensure that there is room for testing or experimenting in the creation and application phase. The upscaling phase naturally involves more fixed possibilities within the regulations to be able to implement the new product or service.

The Phase of Scaling Up

In the upscaling phase, the distribution of knowledge is very important. After all, there is a developed product or service. Your role as an association professional can be to ensure that this knowledge is disseminated. The members themselves organize the adoption of the change.

The association professional can also help organize the adoption process. This is possible, for example, by organizing a market in which supply and demand are brought together. With this the professional actually organizes collective purchasing (which leads to market power). Hereby the price decreases (compensating for the start-up costs / development costs of the producer via mass) of the new method or product to lead to it being widely distributed upscaling having taken place.

The Starter Engine in the Climate Agreement

Houses need to be disconnected from gas supply in the Netherlands. This calls for different heating sources. In urban environments it is an obvious solution to connect houses to heat networks. How do you create such a network? When a collective question is coordinated and exercised, will heat distributors see it as a viable business case? As an association professional you can bring your members together to see where the first promising connections lie. The second step is negotiating the business case. Who pays the start-up costs, who runs the risk in the business case? The big picture is that knowledge and experience is gained for the whole of the Neteherlands through demand bundling and coordination with distributors, which can promote further upscaling. That is why all this whole process is referred to as a 'starter engine', which will soon have the large motor running.

6.2.3 Combining the Two Processes

As a professional, wicked problems often urge the professional to shape both processes at the same time: the creation-application-upscaling process and the learning process. This is not easy due to the different learning styles of people and the richness of factors and actors in wicked problems. The different learning styles require various forms of transfer of what has been learned (the solutions). The richness of factors and actors makes it difficult to convey this clearly and compactly in such a way that nuances come across. The professional recognizes that the processes are difficult to combine and that They therefore need to pay extra care and attention to building bridges between the two processes.

Aedes Develops Data Standards and Improves Data Quality

What started as a lobbying issue to reduce data hunger by external supervisors (see case I , chapter 4), was continued in sector-wide development as a project to raise the data quality of social housing companies to a higher level. After all, the corporations promise to provide less, but better, data. Association professionals from Aedes have since been working with a large number of members, at all conceivable levels (managers, finance and IT managers, accountants) on a number of data standards (CORA, VERA, RGS). These standards must ensure that annual reports and other supervisory information can be supplied at the touch of a button. In such a file, good process management is indispensable in order to keep the multitude of parties (members, national stakeholders, associations of software users, software suppliers) at the same 'What' and 'What to do' and 'How'. The association professional might not be able to impose anything on the members but he can seduce them. The advantages are great: efficiency gains, better (internal) management information, greater mutual comparability and mutual learning. If operational errors can be avoided by increasing data quality this will greatly contribute to more resources for the social tasks of social housing companies.

6.3 Relationship: Dealing with Differences in Learning and Innovation

In the area of relationship management the professional is challenged to deal with differences in learning and pace of innovation among the members and the external stakeholders. How can the professional deal with these issues? We are also talking about the importance of an agenda or program that legitimizes the activities. But be patient with members: changing is not easy.

Dealing with Differences in Learning and Innovation

The differences between the members reveal themselves in sector development in terms of the adoption curve of Everett Rogers and learning styles.

We have seen that the adoption of an innovation and improvement is different for people. Everett Rogers' curve showed that there are innovators, early adopters, etc. when dealing with an innovation. There will also be similar differences between the members. How does a professional deal with these differences? In addition, we have seen that people have different styles of learning. What does that mean for the relationship management? Everyone will make their views on innovation known to the professional as soon as he gets started. Should the professional join the position of the majority/followers when an innovation occurs? Then innovators will "judge" the professional for doing so. The professional will be accused of missing opportunities, not having a bright vision of the future. Will the professional immediately join the innovators? Then the majority of the members will openly wonder what the professional is doing. Are there no alternative better innovations in the making? Is this really new?

An example of this is the provision of gasless homes with heat pumps. Many people indicate that it is better to wait for hydrogen innovations. Do you as professional keep waiting for new innovation or not? Bear in mind: an innovator in a certain field can very well be lagging behind in another. That requires precise and careful naming of developments by the professional. If you give a lot of positive attention to an innovator in a certain area, make sure to specify that area in the story and do not generalize too quickly. That prevents mistrust from others (who may not be an innovator in that specific area, but perhaps is one in another area).

We have also seen that people learn in different ways. Is the professional going to classify or segment the members accordingly or not? It can be effective for the learning process the professional wants to stimulate, but it can also raise questions and give the feeling of being excluded. Our advice here is to include the various learning styles in the approach, but not to use them openly to segment members. The different forms in which a professional offers the activities will already lead to preferences of members and choices to participate in an activity or not. If a professional offers a lot of information with a long read, people with a do-learn style often fail to engage. The right approach here is to provide the necessary diversity of material and approach that does justice to the diversity of learning styles among your members. You do not want to exclude members.

The Importance of an Innovation Agenda or Program

Your position as an AP in relation to an innovation will always require guidance for your members. This guidance does not originate from support by members or from the feasibility of an innovative application or product. The guidance will have to encompass a broader approach like an innovation agenda or renewal program. Although this is a construct in the association, it is the way to organize support and feasibility, to put a focus on innovation, renewal and improvement. With such an agenda, the association justifies that attention, time and capacity that are being deployed. It is also a method to put competing members in principle under one flag. Those competitors know they're all affected by some development (eg internationalization, internet-of-things), and that an 'objective' party such as the association having an eye for it, is a good thing.

NEVAT

A good example of an association that has worked on its positioning in the field of sector development is the NEVAT. Previously, NEVAT stood for Dutch Association of Automatic Suppliers. A few years ago they changed the name to Network of Ambitious Suppliers. With this name change, they underlined a process in which they have redefined their added value and core tasks. NEVAT thereby made the choice to innovate together with members, to develop products, to market with each other, etc. Not from a traditional association setting, but from a network idea, with open connections between members themselves and with new partners, to arrive at new cross-ideas. That means a completely different approach by the association professional. The association transformed into a network organization. By connecting members and combining knowledge, new commercial products for the market are developed in collaboration with the association. NEVAT professionals initiate, connect members, guide the development and innovation process (for example by helping set up a new company), and 'get out' as soon as innovation or products are ready.

Changing Takes Time, also for the Members

Change management focuses - you guessed it - on changing organizations. Why should it be necessary for an AP to have any knowledge on change management? After all, the professional has no role in implementing the changes in the members' organizations. That is the role of their leadership and management, and they often want full control over the process. Nevertheless, a basic knowledge of change management is relevant. It requires a lot to change an organization. Not only from management, but also from employees. It takes time, it costs money and in many cases things will go wrong. Many changes fail. And this is precisely why it is relevant to know more about the matter. Understandig ensures that the professional can make contact with the change agents, that he understands what they are doing and that it takes time. It also ensures that the professional can make the environment (stakeholders) aware that changes take time. That it's not just a question of application or explanation.

A lot is said and written about change. You can find bookshelves full on the subject, training in all shapes and sizes, seminars and symposia for every week of the year. We therefore do not have the illusion to be able to tell you everything there is about change management.

There are roughly two types of change processes. These differ in the basic focus of change agents in the change processes. This difference in focus is often indicated by “design approach versus development approach”. It is now important that there are change processes that are conceived and “rolled out”. The thinking is at the forefront and involved employees are asked to implement during the rollout. On the other hand, there is a different approach where one develops together with employees. This often concerns programs in which the problems are further clarified with the employees involved and answers are formulated gradually. There is something to be said for both directions. The design approach works well with a clear goal and a lot of time pressure to achieve this goal. The development approach works better if there are uncertainties at the start. In particular, if the direction of the development is known, without the goal or result being exactly described.

Learning in Meetings: the Power of a Good Meeting

Many associations mainly meet their members during collective meetings, like general assemblies and regional meetings. Files related to lobby and protection of interests often require a joint perception, judgment and decision-making. The design of such meetings often follows a fixed pattern and the meeting techniques for this are owell-known. However, good ‘sectoral development meetings ‘ require a different approach. For example, the professional wants to inspire participants, let them learn from each other, and to create new collaborations. The complexity of such meetings is considerable, and they require very thorough preparation, guidance and follow-up. A number of points to take into account when organizing meetings:

- Success is in good preparation. Spend roughly 60% of the time on preparation, 20% on implementation, and 20% on following up a meeting.
- Start the design of a program with a number of key questions: What is the goal of the meeting? When arel you as a professional satisfied? What are the key questions the participants have?
- Build the meeting in phases or blocks.
- Next, design the meeting on the basis of a palette of work forms (The Large Work Forms Book is a good start),
- Think carefully about your role as a professional . Do you present yourself as an expert or process supervisor? As an AP you often facilitate the meeting. This means you cannot act as an expert; leave this role to others, and organize in advance for others to take this role.

It may sound a bit paradoxical, but to stimulate creativity during a meeting one has to provide structure. A brainstorming of ideas works best according to a pre-agreed brainstorming method in which the participants can then think out-of-the-box.

6.4 Quality Assurance

Many associations promote quality by setting up a vehicle where quality is objectively and periodically tested. Examples are the hallmark of the butchers (Keurslagers), the BIG register for physiotherapists and the Dutch Register for Real Estate Appraisers (NRVT). The association, or a separate independent body, sets up requirements and criteria that a member must meet. This way the association profiles itself as a whole in relation to non-members, with a guaranteed and stable level of quality for the customer.

A point of discussion is often who checks quality. Are they representatives from the association itself, or by people ‘from outside’ with a more independent position? Both options are acceptable.

Within the association of architects (BNA) they have been working reasonably successfully for several years with internally trained members who perform collegiate audits. On the other hand, the members of OVAL, service providers in the field of vitality, activation and career are tested by independent certification bodies. Which system the association chooses depends on several factors, such as consumer confidence, mutual trust between members and the perceived maturity and professionalism of the sector.

Innovations can put pressure on the quality assurance system. Certainly disruptive innovations can drastically change certain processes or make them superfluous. So here is a tension for you as a professional. On the one hand, you want to ensure that all members meet the same quality standards. And on the other hand you don't want to be a brake on innovation.

A quality mark can also cause tensions in the relationship with members. After all, it forces those who stay behind to work on their professional development. As an AP you can support members in this by offering training programs, tooling and other tools. Nevertheless, a quality mark can lead to the farewell of members if the criteria are not met.

6.5 Lessons Learned

In this chapter we learned that members tend to ask the association to solve their wicked problems. For simple implementation issues, members can still go to many associations, but the demand is shifting more and more to complex issues. Wicked problems involving multi-actor, multi-factor issues which are for members independently to difficult to resolve. The professional will be challenged on content and process. Often having to manage two processes the learning process of the members involved and the process whereby the wicked problem is provided with solutions through creation-application scaling up. All this requires relationship management. A different approach for innovators, early majority and laggards. That brings different expectations. The different learning styles of people also create a need for differentiation in activities towards members. Will they follow, do they understand that? How do you as AP ensure that you can legitimize the time-consuming commitment to this?

Sector-wide development and the type of interventions of the professional

	Content	Process	Relationship
Sector-wide development	- Recognise and stipulate the wicked problems of the members - Make a change story - Adjust and enrich the change story with stakeholders and members. Build a collective change story	- Recognise processes: - Creation-application-upscaling - Single/double/third loop learning - learning in communities and with reflective data/ information - Creation: bring actors to get, open crowd-sourcing, financial means for innovation - Application: liason officer, organising labs, take away bottlenecks - Upscaling: dissemination of knowledge, collective purchase - Involvement menbers: diverging-converging-consolidating on choices. - Build partnerships with stakeholders - Combine process 1 ande 2: constructing the learning process in steps related to creation-application-upscaling.	- Informing: the members and contacts of the signals and steps taken: - Involvement: the people on basis of innovators/majority and laggards and work across boundaries (of your association) - Disseminate: Inform on steps in process and how one can participate - Sharing outcomes: in the network but also across boundaries of sector/field

How to secure quality of your actions as a professional?	- Valid sources - Check on logic (at collaegues)	- Timing: signale challenge on time, process steps on time in association - Proportion: size and duration diverging and converging fitting to development - Participation: amount of participation members and stakeholders - Transfer: making outcomes towards memberstransferable (and other stakeholders)	- Know the mebers: who is innovative? - Who is being involved and when was the professional involved in the process? - Reach and clarity of the information: explanation of follow-up and involvement partners/members

7 Deepen Professionalism: *Services*

A third core task of associations is service; individual assistance, advice or support to members. Compared to lobby and advocacy and sector development, which requires more collective processes with members, the one-on-one relationship with members is more central in service provision.

7.1 Content: Services Associations Offer

7.1.1 Type of Services

Schmidt et al. describe three different types of services: 1) benefits, 2) support services, and 3) services focused on the primary process (Schmidt et al., 2015).

They define benefits of membership as the purchasing benefits that you can achieve as a collective. Consider, for example, collective purchasing of insurance, software or fuel. In practice a lower price is often achieved, but it's the better quality of the product that often offers real added value for members (for example, through more customization, better continuity in delivery or better conditions). Support services fall into a wide range of:

- Individual advice, for example about legal matters or about a collective agreement, and sometimes via a telephone/chat helpline.
- Website, membership letters and other channels in which relevant information is indicated
- Guidelines, examples for contracts, tools and instruments.

The third kind of services focus on the primary process. Think of strategic advice, benchmarking, a market monitor or matching supply and demand.

Schmidt et al. also distinguish three different motives for offering services; earn, connect (bind) and strengthen. Earning is about making money for the association, this is a commercial motive. This motive can become more important, especially in the case of declining contribution income. Services connect members, especially if the service is unique and only accessible to association members. Finally, services can strengthen the sector and contribute to quality of products or services. Think of the telephone help desk, examples of contracts and benchmark figures (this relates directly to sector development)

Product Development at Aedes

Aedes has a rich tradition in making tools for its members. Recent products include a benchmark center , where members can compare each other on numerous achievements, a sustainability CO2 roadmap. Members can develop a sustainability strategy for their home ownership, and a data privacy guide (the AVG route planner). Corporations can take steps to comply with the General Data Protection Regulation introduced in 2018. More than 90% of the members have used all three tools. The benchmarking tool enabled the sector to remain in control, instead of standardizing supervisors. The sustainability map played a major role in raising awareness of the sustainability theme with members (how do I make my home ownership sustainable?) and in the lobby around the Climate Act (what can the sector handle?). The AVG route planner was a means for many corporations to handle privacy-sensitive information better.

Often, combinations work well. A tool is useful for member development and the lobby because it demonstrates that the sector is taking steps on a current or political theme. A large part of the success when creating the tools is in the working method. For instance, seventy members participated in various rounds in the creation of the Aedes CO2 roadmap. The structure and content of the benchmarking tool was discussed by about one hundred and fifty employees of the associated members in support groups. These contributors not only brought in substantive practical knowledge, but also acted as ambassadors to their colleagues at other corporations.

There is a danger that the range of services will grow and grow over the years. New products and services are created by new questions from members. Many products and services are maintained for a long time. A periodic member survey can help to give input about what to continue and what to stop. Certainly in strategic reconsiderations, where more focus is required on lobby and advocacy and sector development, it's important to remain alert on which services the association should keeps running and which it shouldn't. After all, keeping the services up requires capacity from the organization, while the added value is decreasing or even already zero. You don't want to put effort in matters that only few members still feel are important.

Another approach that can help the professional make choices for certain services is that of Sarah Sladek. In her book *The End of Membership as We Know it* (Sladek, 2013), she recommends expressing the value of membership in the dollars/euros members can save or earn from you. She makes the value of every service very explicit, so that becoming a member becomes a 'no-brainer'. Purely for financial reasons, becoming a member is a rational decision. It gives more profit than is paid in membership fees. This approach can be used to assess the service palette; services that generate less money are less relevant.

If the association wants the members to use their services, they will need to know it's there. A common mistake is that new members are not referred to this basic service. It's so obvious for the organization, it's not mentioned ... A missed opportunity.

Pension Fund as a Successful Service of Associations

The success of Dutch pension funds shows that associations can be successful in offering services. These, like employee insurance, originate from associations of employees who worked collectively on their pensions and insurance policies. The subject matter is often complex and requires the commitment of specific professionals. Over the years, these activities have become detached from the association, and have grown into collective facilities for the whole of the Netherlands. These historical origins of Pension funds are often reflected in an boardroom connection, because employee associations have a right to appoint representatives in the Board of the Pension Fund.

7.1.2 Commercial Services

Over the past two decades, the services provided by associations for their members have changed considerably. In the 80s and 90s, many larger associations still had their own legal assistance service, purchasing packages and telephone help desk. IT and research and advisory services were in the umbrella of the broad sectoral interest and professional organization. That approach is largely behind us. Specialists in the market can often provide the service much better than an association; for legal assistance you go to a legal specialist, not to your association. An association has to consider which services are unique. As a result of declining contribution income, the motive to provide earnings through services becomes more acute. These developments cause the scope of some associations to shift to the provision of services on a commercial fee basis.

Types of Commercial Services

We distinguish three streams of commercial services that associations develop:
1) Paid products for members. A law has just come into existence that the association has been lobbying on, they know all the details. An implementation guide and training course are a logical follow-up. Is payment required, or is the guide and course offered free for marketing contribution.
2) Co-entrepreneurship with members. These are services that support members in the professional execution of their work. For example, an online platform that enables members to better serve their market. The association is then committed to strengthening the match of supply and demand for their members. Consumers' data is also a major additional advantage of having their own matching platform. The association can choose to finance the development costs of such a platform with an additional contribution from members (not from the main contribution). A monthly fee for use seems an obvious choice. This is certainly the case if your alternative platform is cheaper than the platforms outside the association.
3) Products for the market. Here the collective develops a service for the market, which is also provided by individual members. In fact, the association thus competes with individual members. You can see this for example at BOVAG Lease. The Association of Car Dealers (BOVAG) has chosen to offer lease options, while individual members have already done so. This can arise from the joint desire to stand strong against new entrants on the market. The power and reputation of the collective is used to market a service.

BOVAG

BOVAG has a strategy to grow to an income stream of 50-50. This means that 50 percent of the association's income will come from contributions and 50 percent from services. The deployment of association professionals is adjusted accordingly. The 50 percent service consists of a number of services, including an insurance and lease company. The latter is a remarkable: companies establish an association, that association establishes a company that competes with its founders. Why? This has to do with the expected trend in the BOVAG market. BOVAG expects electric cars and the trend of 'mobility as a service' will result in less private car ownership. People then opt for a subscription car . Electric cars require substantially less maintenance than petrol cars. Both developments (less maintenance, fewer owned cars) are a direct threat to the existing business model of car dealers. Thus BOVAG professionals chose to respond to this trend from the collective, with all members as participants, by putting BOVAG lease on the market.

7.1.3 An Assessment Framework

What services or products are offered as an association? When is it decided to develop a new one? To answer these questions, more need to be asked. Is there an obvious need? Can this be done alone, or can other parties do it as well? And how do you ensure they can? Does that happen naturally, or should the association stimulate the product/service? Is it awarded exclusively to one external party or multiple? How does the service relate to tax treatment (VAT exemption)? How is distribution ensured and it's receipt evaluated? The following assessment framework can help answer these questions.

Assessment framework: new and existing products

Intention: force yourself to evaluate whether it is wise to continue
Run through every phase with members starting from step 1
Per step: formulate own criteria go/no go

Step 1: Idea phase

· What's the delimitation? (Which issues are fitting to the strategic agenda of the association?)
· How much impact can the idea reach? (How big is the need among members and the chance for a renewal/breakthrough in the market?)
· What is the idea:?what kind of product /service can we imagine?

→ NO GO

↓ GO

Step 2: Feasability phase

· Does the service or product already exist? (What competition can be expected?)
· What is the standard of competition? (in what way, how many features, by whom)
· How can we distinguish ourselves from the competition?
(if we cannot distnguish ourselves, there is no added value)
· What are the investment costs versus the possible economic gains?
(= check on commercial feasability)
· Do we provide it or engage a third party?
· What's the technical feasibility? (difficulty of obtaining required knowledge?)

→ NO GO

↓ GO

Step 3: Test first concept

· Submit first concept to experts and potential customers

→ NO GO

↓ GO

Step 4: Business case

· Which Target Groups?
· What's the look and feel of the product/service
· What are the implementation costs?
· What's the financial overview (investments, implementation costs, labour costs, feasible price)
· How's the marketing and communication organized?

→ NO GO

↓ GO

Step 5: Development and implementation

· Implementation period:: what are problems and risks?

→ NO GO

Step 6: Evaluation

· Determine success indicators of the service or product
· Monitor results, make adjustments
· When concept is no longer serviced, return Step 1

→ NO GO

7.2 Process: Organizing Services

The provision of services and products is a core task that associations can generally organize well. Good performance contributes members'trust which then enables more complex tasks to be performed. Based on the pyramid of values by Almquist and Senior (2016) we present 'pyramid of complexity' to help with this principle. The pyramid needs to be run through from the bottom up. If for example the member administration is not in order, you will be unable to reach your members. Your information will simply not arrive if the email addresses in your administration are not current.

The same principle goes for the higher steps in the pyramid; In order to be able to add value to lobbying and advocacy, sector-wide development and innovation, it is important to be a reliable partner on services for members. For example, it greatly impairs the credibility and reputation if members are not helped quickly enough with individual questions. It is a real pitfall for an association professional to focus on the larger national issues, and to leave individual questions behind for lack of time. If the professional doesn't get an answer to the members'questions, then why would they still trust and support the association in the lobby? A rule seems to be at hand: always answer questions of members within 24 hours.

The pyramid can help a professional make an analyse of the development of the staff organization. Where are the bottlenecks? What needs to be done to move up to the next level? How are things going on the different 'layers' of the pyramid?

Financing Individual Services Collectively?

Providing individual services to members can often lead to financial tensions.The core of the tension here lies in the individual advantage versus the collective financing. Friction can erupt because of unequal sizes of organizations in the sector. Usually, this in regard to trade associations. Larger organizations often have their own staff and partly organize services themselves. At the same time, they may also pay more membership fees. However, in our experience - in contrast to their own belief- larger parties don't access individual services less than small parties. Often their staff make use of the services, which is not always known at the director's level. The strain between individual and collective frequently result in a fee system and limiting individual advice. As an AP, this could result in working hourly invoices, increasing the conflict between individual and collective work. The professional must consider whether tasks done for an individual member are based on 'collectively paid hours'or 'the user pays'.

In this matrix (Schmidt et al., 2015) the greater the collective interest, the more the activity can be seen as a core activity, and the more logical it is to finance it through membership fees. If it is more a derivative activity, aimed at one or more members, then it makes more sense to fund with a fee based on the user pays principle.

7.3 Relationship: Members or Customers

The danger of providing many commercial services is that the 'sense of being an association' disappears. If the association operates as a company and asks for money for the services offered, what is the basic nature of this association? The provision of commercial services touches on fundamental principles within the association. In these considerations and internal discussions it is necessary to look for balance. In other words: don't shift too easily into commerce and customer thinking, but don't miss opportunities to deliver added value on those points that really matter to members.

ANWB: an Association or a Commercial Company

ANWB, the Dutch car users and motorist association, shows what the development of commercial activities can mean for the profile of your association. Around 1995, in addition to its association of around 4 million members, the ANWB also launched a private limited company. Since then, many commercial activities have been established. In addition to roadside assistance, ANWB is involved in insurance, clothing, golf, shops, and gas stations. A gap results. Is ANWB looking out for members or 'customers'? Is it representing motorists or a company in the mobility sector?

Being able to identify commercial opportunities is an important quality of an association professional. It's necessary to be not only connected with your members, but also with members'customers. Market knowledge is crucial to explain the most important trends members must respond to. Then entrepreneurship translates that market knowledge into the right products/services. There is a trend for commercial companies to turn their customer(fan) into a member. They really try to connect with theri customers through loyalty programs and social media and see their customers as their fan base rather than a group of 'traditional customers'.

The AP as an Advisor

AP's have a lot of contact with their members, and are expected to handle questions from individual members in a good way, often acting as an adviser. Thus, answering member questions is a service. In an association where every opinion counts, delay responses until the issue is looked at in an open manner. However, return the variuous perspectives within the association, side by side, to the member, thereby showing there are multiple views. This is a safer route; the professional must prevent being placed opposite the member.

When solving simple questions like, "Do you have a new login for the member page for me?" the professional can of course act directly. But for the more complex questions such as, "I am reorganizing and working on a strategic reorientation, can you help me?", it's important to first ask additional questions. The 'question behind the question' must be discovered. A useful, well-known technique is 'listening, summarizing, asking questions' (LSA). Listen to the member. Summarizes to find out if the person is understood correctly. Then keep asking questions until the heart of the question is realized. The various elements of the change reasoning ('What', 'How', 'Who') can help with this. After all, the member has his own 'change story' and seeks help to achieve that.

Frequently, a member's questions are not unique. If a question is asked three times, from different members, then it usually touches on a more collective issue. Instead of individual conclusion, a more collective solution is desirable. The professional can make contact between members with the same questions, organize a walk-in, connect the group of members with a third party, or make a FAQ guideline. Sometimes a process approach is sufficient other times the professional can also help members by explaining which steps they should take themselves.

7.4 Lessons Learned

In this chapter we have learned that there are three types of services: 1) benefits, 2) support services, and 3) the primary process. We also distinguish three different motives for offering services: earn, connect and strengthen. There are also three types of commercial services: 1) paid products for members 2) entrepreneurship with members and 3) products for the market. We have provided an assessment framework for the development of new products or services. With regard to the process, based on the pyramid of complexity, we have prioritized what the professional should organize first. We have outlined the dilemmas surrounding individual or collective financing of services.

Finally, in the relationship we explored what a customer perspective can mean for a member association, and we zoomed in on the specific role that the professional has as an advisor to members in answering the questions.

Services and the type of interventions of the professional

	Content	Process	Relationship
Services	- Make a change story for the product or service: Motives: make money, connect or reinforce - Advise on, enrich the individual change story with input from members and/or stakeholders	- Make a collective change story by diverging/converging/ consolidate on prod-uct/service develop-ment. - Assess tension between association fee-based or retribu-tion - Advise on individual case of the individual member	- Inform members on product/ service development. - Accountmanagement: maintain customer relationship with members
How to secure the quality of your actions as a professional?	- Check logic use as-sessment framework - Check (at colleagues) the logic of the business plan: are all aspects sufficiently adressed? - How usable and cor-rect is your advice to a member?	- Take care of timing: is the product or service on time (compared to the need of it)? - Make sure of a good duration and size of the diverging/converg-ing steps in relation to the urgency en needs of customers	- What is the reach: how many people know of the service/ product? - What is the satisfac-tion of the member: are they content with the product or service?

8 Deepen professionalism: *Communication*

”Everything is communication”, communication staff like to say. And there is a lot of truth in that when it comes to an association; communication is the association’s lubricant. What does an AP need to know about communication?

It’s ideal that all association communication supports and reinforces each other like a neat tile roof that fits together nicely. The large messages, to promote the industry reputation, provide the framework for reporting on the individual issues that the professional manages. The blogs of the chairman, which the professional often contributes to, connect with the daily news. The daily news, which is reported on the website and partly indicated by the AP, is in line with information about the activities. Ideal association communication has a good balance between responding and putting issues on the agenda.

As an AP you are an important link in communication. In this chapter we highlight the general task of communication. After, we delve deeper into lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development and indivdual servcies.

8.1 A Joint Responsibility

In most associations, communication is organized by a communication department. Dedicated professionals provide knowledge about which instrument is best for which communication. But the rise of social media has changed the controlled channels of news gathering and distribution. Everyone can have contact with everyone and there is much more openness. A member may discuss directly with the parliament on Twitter. This leads to a sense of loss of control. Th eassociations are no longer the exclusive channel between the sector and politics. Employees have a means of communication in their pocket, 24 hours a day, with which they pick up news and maintain individual contacts they can use to make things public. Communication takes place continuously and no longer at the end of a process.

Everyone communicates. Therefore it’s important the association offers a clear framework, in terms of content and instruments. Communication is a key in all association processes from start to finish. That turns communication staff into full AP’s who should join those association processes. Their task is to make the previously purely ‘content specialists’ within the association more competent in managing communications in their topics.

In this way both old-school groups grow to the growth path. On the growth path, it’s the AP who is a content and communication manager, whether he comes ‘from communication’ or ‘from the policy department’. Communication is a skill that every professional has to master at the basic level. It is conditional for the value proposition, the ‘enriched idea’, the change story.

8.2 Coherent

Communication is providing a general task for an association and the sector. It's basically about keeping a sharp eye on the collective. The professional does this by working on a clear core message, reputation management and member communication.

The Where To

That which binds us together within the association must be expressed in messages. There is also a link to the 'Where to' question, where an association formulates it's objective. Due to the everyday pressures and the dynamics of the moment, this is sometimes forgotten. Some associations tend to focus their messages more on 'how' and 'what' than on 'where to'.

At the top of the communication pyramid is the value proposition or mission statement. This choice of content requires an appealing wording, a mission statement or core message, which is checked by members of that board. It is a kind of umbrella above the issues and themes. In your communication on individual substantive files, the important question is how and to what extent you want the core message to resonate. What do we actually want to say? How does that logically relate to our goals? For what purpose do we publish a message? And for whom is the message intended? Repeatedly asking these questions is necessary to stay close to the core message and intention of the association.

Reputation Management

At the highest level of abstraction, all behavior, activities and communication expressions together determine how a sector or professional group is viewed. If they are not well connected and aligned with each other, it is a hopeless mission anyway. Past and present both play a role, with images from the distant past still are able to resurface stubbornly.

Reputation management is about stimulating a desired change in the reputation image of the sector or profession. It's a long-term commitment, whereby both behavior and the associated communication must be controlled. Part of the art is to highlight and reinforce issues that present themselves as favorable trends for the sector/profession. Invite members to put their practical stories in the spotlight and act as ambassadors for the association.

In many sectors and professional groups, the reputation of the industry among various groups (such as the general public, politics, civil service) is measured regularly. A record is kept of how the sector or professional group gets into the news (citations, positive /negative).

As an AP you work under the broad reputation umbrella. Your files can contribute to a positive image or pose a risk. Be aware of this and enter into a discussion internally at an early stage.

Member Communication

Classically, the association provides a "information provision" service, often highly valued by members. It is communication about precisely those matters that are relevant to the professional environment of the members. They seek focus and interpretation in an ocean of news. The increasingly complex and information-overwhelmed society means that members want to know quickly: is it relevant to me and should I do something with it?

State of the Union/Plans of the Government

A good example is the communication about the State of the Union: the association informs its members what's new in the plans of the government. And stakeholders, including the media and politicians, want to know immediately how 'civil society' responds to the new policy intentions of the government.

It's interesting to see how an event such as this is organized at the association. Is it exclusive the domain of the chairman? Does it run through member panels or participation groups? It's a hectic but tightly directed teamwork (what is our response and do we send a press release about it, what's exactly in which budget?). The first priority is a quick general response to the outside world, which hopefully will be sufficiently interesting for the media. Slightly more time can be taken for further substantive clarification towards members.

Club Magazine

Many associations have a club magazine, physical and/or digital. The quick interpretation on a website or in a membership letter can be enriched with more in-depth information. Transferring information through long stories is no longer the goal; making issues and themes accessible in words and images is. Most try to separate news gathering and opinion. This is reflected in background articles (journalism), interviews (retrieving opinions) and columns (opinions). It's possible for the professional to give tips on new topics and information from behind the scenes (names, background information). The magazine mainly explains what the association stands for and how it comes to its activities and positions. Some editors are deliberately positioned more independent of the association. They are free to choose the subjects and have a certain journalistic free role. The magazine then has more the character of a trade magazine, in which there is room for other perspectives. However, that independence is always relative: it remains the magazine of an association and readers are aware. An editorial team that doesn't take this into account will inevitably collide with the association's board.

8.3 Lobby and Advocacy

The general role of communication and the special aspects of lobby and advocacy are closely intertwined. Two roles in communication strongly related to advocacy involve working with a special spokesperson and framing will be detailed. And there's also a dilemma in communication, silent diplomacy, to address.

Press Information and Spokesperson

In most branches there is a press officer who coordinates contacts with the press. The association professional is shielded and can refer media to the press officer. When approached by the media, it's helpful to immediately call the press officer and provide the necessary information.

The most important reason to bundle all press contacts with one or a few people is to ensure that the organization speaks as one. The press officer does this in close coordination with the director and /or the board chairman, with which he has a direct hotline. Formal messages from the organization always have a major risk of damage. Clumsy speeches can haunt an organization or manager for a long time.

In answers to questions from journalists or in their own press actions, the press officer is good at telling the association's story. This sometimes requires simplifications that hurt experts in terms of content. But if done well, it will result in more attention and effect. Press communication is a specialty. The press officer must constantly think from the story and strategy of the organization. But must also have a great capacity to be in the perspective of the outside world, of which the journalist is the representative. Based on this, the press officer must play 'devil's advocate' and be given the space to do so. If all goes well, the press officer has already asked the 'risky questions' in the preparation phase. Press information is a sophisticated game. The press officer knows how to handle the questions of a journalist. It's the ability to provide concise and usable quotes for the journalist, to provide the correct background information and to know which newspaper is interested in which news.

It's wise to actively involve the press officer in the processes. Together the AP and press officer make 'press outlines' (see example in part III). The AP informs the press officer when subjects come up in parliamentary debates. If the press officer needs information, the AP puts down their other work and gives priority to the news. Attention from the media is also a chance to advocate your point of view.

Framing

Frits Bolkestein, the former Dutch leader of the liberal party, stated that 'the person who controls the form is the master of the content'. When lobbying, it's not just the content of the lobby message that matters, but also the wording of the message and the way it's delivered. This is called framing, a technique to influence the reader's opinion on the content. For example, abortion supporters state women are the boss of their own bellies. But those who are against abortion, pro-life, stand up for the rights of the unborn child. These statements do not say anaything substantive, yet create a connotation with a different feeling, judgement, or frame of mind.

How do you set up a good working frame? A properly working frame requires a number of ingredients. Anyone who frames a subject, must touch people in their hearts. That is not just a catchy one-liner or a metaphor. It's about a bigger picture. A frame contains a certain view of a case, linked to image and language (Korsten, 1988). This involves an explanation of what is going on, who or what has caused the problem, what moral judgment can be given about it and how the situation can be remedied. A successful frame evokes emotions, "lingers" and is repeated (Van Gorp, 2006). The words used are appealing and hook into deeper convictions of people. In the advertising world, a lot of work is done with the 'loss frame': "Prevent wrinkles, use ointment x or y". The fear of loss is then the frame on which the slogan presses. In politics we see such frames around "interference from Brussels" or "the environment is not doing well". People thereby put a new frame on an older, deeper frame of mind. In politics we see two basic patterns: the project frame (thinking in problem-cause solution) and the drama frame (thinking in terms of victims, villains, heroes).

What are the preconditions for using a frame? Be the first to start connecting to the undercurrent in society. What is going on, what is bubbling? Then make sure the association is first. Otherwise you completely miss the mark. Link the frame to values, beliefs and emotions. Then choose the right words and the setting in which the association will use the frame (in the debate, in an interview, article). And make sure the frame is repeated.

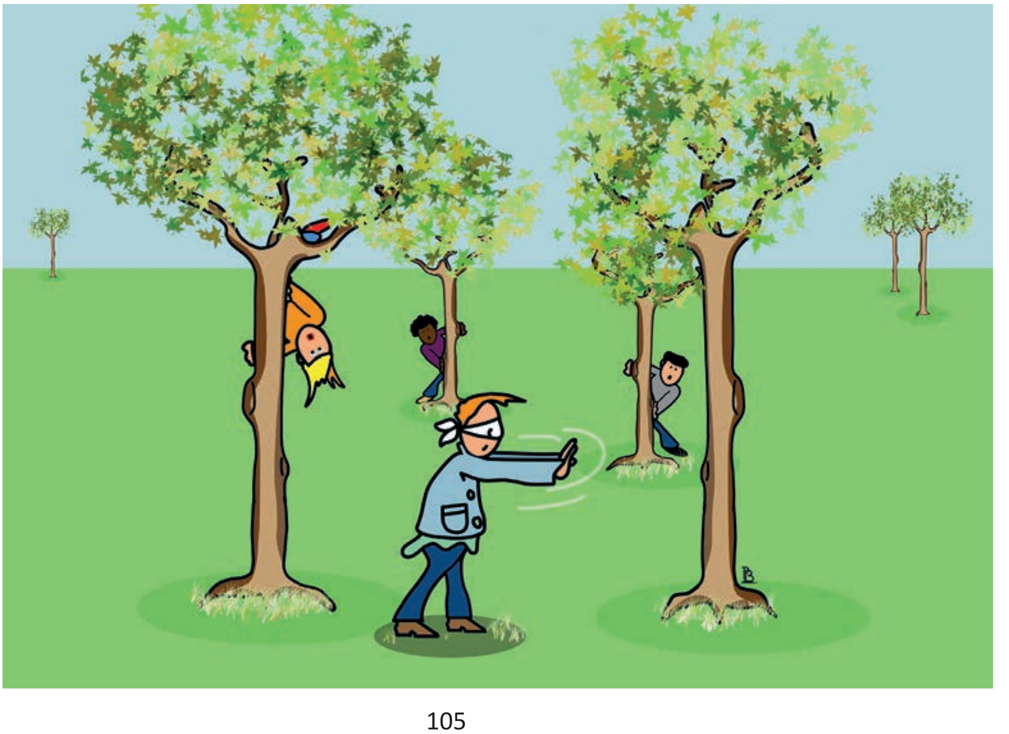
A well-known example of a successful frame is 'the Green Heart' of Holland. Around the Green Heart are the cities of Rotterdam, The Hague, Zoetermeer, Leiden, Haarlem, Amsterdam and Utrecht. There are a number of smaller towns within the Green Heart, but also some medium-sized urban settlements such as Gouda, Alphen aan den Rijn and Woerden. One can certainly argue about whether and to what extent the Green Heart is actually green. And with a lot of imagination the area can be seen as heart-shaped. But the frame works; the Green Heart has such a positive connotation politicians must be crazy if they want to construct a railroad or highway through it.

This shows that it is very difficult to bend when a frame is locked in place. Going against it, arguing with facts and reason, "we'll explain it one more time" doesn't help. According to the Issue Management Institute (Schoonman, 2012), we can only escape from a riveted frame by putting something next to it. Fighting a frame with a new, different frame.

Lobby: Sharing Progress Against Silent Diplomacy

There is often a lot of communication about the public parliamentary treatment of a political theme. Remember that a great deal of work preceded that intense publicity, often for years, sometimes with a European origin. All that commitment has a risk of not being noticed, consciously or not, by the members. When members say "I never hear from my association", they usually mean participation in the public debate. But that says little about the success of the lobbying strategy that has been going on for much longer. In fact, a nice and firm opposition in publicity is not that difficult. It could have even been caused by lobby failures earlier in the process.

As an AP, lobbying is often just like leading a blindfolded person through a forest and preventing him from bumping or tripping. If you remain silent the blindfolded person will declare at the end of the trip: "I didn't bump into anything, what good was done by you walking with me?"



It is difficult for associations to communicate with members about lobbying in the meantime. Frequently the processes are not yet in a stage to communicate publicly about it. Are members told about that partial success at the ministry? But if the professional tells his members, isn't the whole world informed quickly? Does it still work for the association? And what is done if you always get zero result in the lobby? Are you going to tell that to your members?

For fear of harming or forfeiting the relationship with members or stakeholders, there is often no communication. We are making a strong point here to tell as much as possible what you as a professional are doing. After all, a successful lobby is always a member-experienced lobby, not necessarily a lobby with great results. A lobby defeat shared with everyone is appreciated by members. "We have taken the fight together, we have lost it, but at least we have all done our best."

Many lobbying initiatives also have a phase in which it's useful for members to establish their own local, regional contacts. The lobby bottom up is well tested. It adds weight when ministry and /or MPs are told from all walks of life how things should be different and better. An AP encourages and directs that.

The professional therefore takes the position to tell as much as he can during the process, without losing his information position with those with whom he collaborates or who he is influencing. In fact, circles of communication can be formed: for the board (background information lobby: content and process), for the members (more general process information, not public) and for the general public (website).

8.4 Sector-wide Development

Sector development is about learning and developing together. That is an open, two-way contact in which both sides have a share and role. A versatile contact with all the members. This is also necessary because sector development has as its basis practiced- based experience and knowledge of the workplace. Good communication can make a major contribution to linking practical experiences to theoretical knowledge and then to broader sharing of this cross-experience. We focus on inciting co-creation, focusing on innovation activities , the call to action in participation or the purchase and use of knowledge tools/products/education, transfer in learning processes (tranfser of knowledge), or digital communities for the exchange of knowledge and experience (across sector boundaries and with partners).

Co-creation

In communication terms, inciting co-creation requires naming the urgent question and avoiding the answer. The professional communicates on the issue: the "Why", "What" and "Where to". In the beginning he avoids the 'How'. That gives the conversation partner room to come up with solutions, to think along with the issue. The professional wants to tap into practical knowledge from the sector. Naming, describing or depicting the 'Why', 'What' and 'Where to' requires close connection with the world of the target group with which the professional wants to co-create. They have to recognize it and don't take the effort to translate the story into their own reality. Many people cannot do this and block it. That's not what the professional wants. In that sense, it is even more important to stay away from the 'How', the solution. As soon as the professional starts telling members how to deal with an urgent issue, he divides the target group into supporters and opponents of a solution. In process terms the professional is fully diverging here on the 'How'.

The renewal activities in the sector or renewal in the profession of members therefore requires delicate communication. We discussed earlier it can work well to have a list of the most urgent issues as a kind of crowdsourcing. It calls for co-creation on the important issues where innovation and renewal are desired. The communication on these "most urgent" goals must be correct in language or images. Only connection to practice ensures recognizability and involvement.

Call-to-action

The call to action to participate is usually one step further in the process. The professional brings attention to a certain solution or approach to the attention and encouraging it. In process terms: the 'How' has already been further specified, now it's about putting it into practice. When communicating about this, it's important for the association to give a personal call to action. They addresses the reader or viewer directly and trigger action. The recipient must already have an idea of "what's in it for me?" This promotion involves actions like registering for a training course and ordering or downloading a tool. An action that ensures that the person is on board.
The tension that the professional experiences is that they become the 'vacuum seller'. By this we mean that in the broader renewal approach or strategy related to sector development the association is engaged in involving the members in an open, divergent manner and now runs the risk that they will be identified with the 'one solution'. That risk is less if the preceding phase, from which the chosen solution emerged, has been clearly visible to members. It's therefore good to indicate the broader framework when pushing a product or tool.

Transfer Practice

The transfer of learning experiences is also a solid communication task. Here too the professional wants to prevent putting the practical lessons as the solution. The person who sees the practical experience from a learning trajectory must be prepared to transfer what he has been learned and experienced, to application. It requires a well-constructed fit in language and image (with a correct representation of case studies in professional jargon and a spot-on question), as well as unravelled experiences. That's often the problem with sharing 'best practices'. The reader gets to see how a certain solution works in a specific context. The practical experience and knowledge lie in the subtleties of the collision between a certain approach and practice. Refinements are needed for the reader to translate into practice. At the same time, a refined description is too detailed and boring for a quick read. The solution can be found in communicating with a 'four-stage rocket'. First, give a picture in general terms of the best practice. Second, deepen the picture for those who want to know more to transfer to their reality. Third, provide a set of practical tips and tricks. Fourth, give a contact name for who want even more details.

Digital Communities

New digital possibilities give the opportunity to work online on co-creation. It requires active community management. The professional has to manage issues submitted and focus to the discussions and exchanges. The community can be kept alive by new issues. The timing must match the urgency for the members. Of course, it's important to have a good mix of people who get news and people who bring new information. That may mean the professional must actively recruit in order to arrive at that good combination. The association must use the digital community's full potential. Otherwise, it runs the risk that it won't unleash available knowledge and skills in the community. Work 'without borders'and open your digital communities to everyone. Even if people want to join the community are from outside of your sector.

The Appropriate Style

Communication for the benefit of the lobby differs in style compared to communication for that for sector development. The lobby benefits from content clarification that leads to clear positions and must express authority. With regard to sector development, inspire about the renewal process. He does not want to declare that he is 100 percent sure, but instead wants to leave room for the opinion of others. A style of accessible communication fits in with this, more with images that appeal instead of text. Because of these style differences, it is extra useful and valuable to work withe a communication resource matrix, in which sharp consideration is given how the diferent target groups are apporached via different channels (which may differ in style).

8.5 Services

Marketing is often unknown territory for an AP. But it's necessary for promoting the commercial services/products and retaining or gaining customers. That's unfortunate because member loyalty, the management of member relationships, clearly has connections with marketing. Sometimes there's no competition and many members have been members for years. When providing services/ selling products, the rerlationship with potential customer is of direct importance. They must be tempted by the communication to purchase. Although the customers are usually members themselves or organizations within a certain sector.

The marketing should be well thought out before the product/service is put out. Consider these questions:

-What is the purpose/added value?
-Who are your expected clients, their composition/preferences?
-Which marketing resources reach the target group?
-Who are competitors? How does this differ from their offers?

Segmentation and Classification

There is an assessment framework for the broad field of the association. But every target group within the membership responds to marketing/communication in different ways. Segmenting the member population is then an option. These can be various types of positions like CEO, managers, executive staff or experts. It can also be based on aspects as indicated below:

Criteria	Aspect
Demographic	Gender - age - religion
Geographic	Region- municipality- city/country
Socio - economic	Education level - position level - profession
Psychological	Lifestyle - personality
Behaviour	Loyalty - usage frequency
Innovation rate	Frontrunners - followers- laggards
Learning styles	Think - experience - experiment - reflect

8.6 Lessons Learned

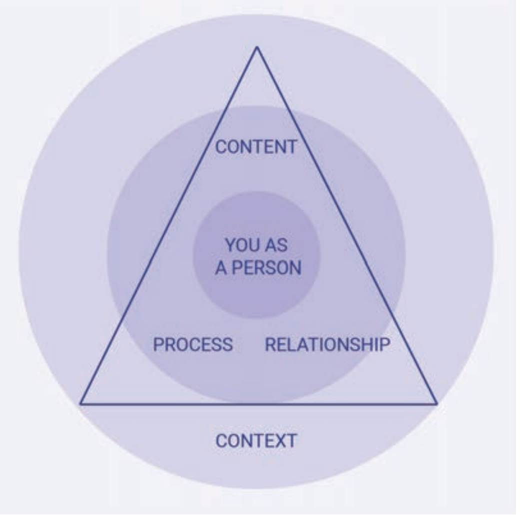
We discussed the joint responsibility for all professionals and the importance of a coherent communication. Lobby and advocacy require clear point of views, good information as well as framing of messages. Sector-wide development requires a finess in encouraging co-creation, giving a call to action and transfering knowledge. Services demand a more marketing approach. Selling products/services with segmentation and classification of member-customers.

Communication and the type of interventions of the professional

	Content	Process	Relationship
Communication	- Guard: integral conecting of the combined stories of the association - Being able to frame the pulic image of the sector	- Diverging and converging on communication/ public immage with members and stake-holders - Diverging and converging with colleagues won application of com-munication matrix in relation to lobby, sector-wide develop-ment and services - Combine the process in the media with the process within asso-ciation (so you have an external platform when you're ready and vice versa)	- Informing members on communication approach and what members can expect - Involve members with general public image of sector - Informing network/ contacts in media (journalists etc) about your approach and next steps
How to secure the quality of your actions as a professional?	- Check (with col-leagues) the logic of the frames in use, spokes man outline and approaches sector-wide develop-ment and services	- Make sure that tim-ing is good to gener-ate desired impact (in the media) - Make sure good duration and size of diverging/converging steps in relation to urgency and need association/office	- Ensure enough reach: are segments of members reached?

9 Summary on the growth path: content, process and relationship

Working at the 'biotope' of an association requires a lot from the AP. We have elaborated on the basis of professionalims in part I and further explored in part II the issues of lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development, services and communication. In this chapter we summarize the previous chapters.



The common thread throughout the book: the presonality of the professional will develop on the growth path of the axis content, process and relationship, with the specific context of the association where you work. We will review these aspects once more and conclude with a top 10 in which we have tried to get to the heart of this book.

9.1 Context: the Association

We have seen that there are many different associations, but the core tasks of an association have a common thread. It is allways about the propellers lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development and providing services. Member infrastructure and communication connect these tasks.

Associations are 'on the move' due to trends and developments in society. It is good to know those trends and developments, so that uou as an AP can move along with the association: a society 'on the move' requires a flexible, learning organization.

9.2 The Professional as a Person

As a professional, YOU are the most important asset. This requires personal development and growth. That development and growth takes place via the growth path. It's the line an association professional must balance on between content, process and relationship. Balancing is the art, the ability to commute between the three axes. Focusing your learning path too much on content, process or relationship diminishes the balance and then affects growth and development of the professional. As the professional develops, increasingly complex files that rely on the 'balancing power' between all axes, are handled better. The AP is open to reflection and feedback, they know themselves, with open perception and a clear view of what is happening. They know where the pitfalls and potential blind spots are.

9.3 Content

An association professional continually deals with change. The basis of your content expertise lies in the ability to create a change story. Legislation causes change; innovation ensures change. It is up to the professional to handle this for the members. You do that: formulating a change story will help. You outline the reason, the goal to work towards, the change you want to achieve, the way you want to do that and the people with whom you want to achieve it. Determine the 'Why', 'Where to', 'What', 'How' and 'Who'. That change story is the backbone of your content reasoning and the basis for your actions.

This change story deepens in the lobby and advocacy giving valid information for discussion with partners. Provide an external investigation and make a synthesis of practical experiences, and then practice to theory can be linked. How could legislation change or how should it change? Message delivery is also important; a frame can reinforce or weaken the change reasoning.

With regard to lobby and advocacy, the 'What' is often about decision-making: decisions made by decision makers about the rules and the money. Decision-makers form the cabinet, the bodies of the European Union or other political leaders of public administration (such as provinces). We also mentioned that there are also trajectories where the association itself makes such choices. Take a collective labor agreement.

Sector development considers social developments and how you respond to them as a sector. Your change story is still open on a number of points. The 'How' is ofte not clearly defined. As a professional, you ensure that you know members, and encourage them to learn how to fill in the 'How' with new innovations or improvements.

With services, your change story is based on products/services that you provide. In fact, you propose a change reasoning on why the association should or should not deliver a certain product/service. If that choice is made in a positive way, the change story is then linked to that product or service.

With communication it is about the general story. The common thread behind every communication lies in the purpose of the association. This translates into a line of speech with framing for lobby, a learning outcome, and call to action for sector development.

9.4 Process

In addition to content, know how to deal with decision-making processes within and outside the association. Process management is the basis for your professionalism. You work with 'diamonds': diverging, converging and consolidating. If you diverge, you give room for points of views and information to test the support of an idea (change story) and the feasibility. Then you start to converge. You work towards a shared, supported and viable position. Consolidating means that you arrive at a common position and decision. You will use such a 'diamond' a few times in the process. This way you ensure that your change reasoning leads to concrete decision-making and action.

In lobby and advocacy, you often have to deal with processes that are determined externally. For example, by the ministry you are dealing with. Ot through Europe, the national cabinet, the parliament. You must then align your internal process management with this external decision-making cycle. The processes of lobby and advocacy can take a long time. A legislative amendment takes at least twelve months, but it can take quite a few years. That duration has an impact on your process management. You will have to repeat the 'diamonds' to test the support and feasibility again.

As for sector-wide development there are two processes that you manage as a professional: the learning process within the sector and the triple creation-application-upscaling. Coordinating both processes requires a lot of balancing from you as a professional. Your activities and communication about them give room for different learning styles. You define the triple creation-application-upscaling as a 'renewal and innovation agenda', to give coherence to your activities.

With services, the process is more focused on individual customers /members. This requires fewer diamonds within your association but puts pressure on your ability to recognizing customer demand. Your customers work with their own change story and seek help from you, in the form of a product or service, to get that story one step further. For example, legal advice provided by you removes an obstacle in the client's individual change story.

As for communication, the process is about connecting media and the association. The processes in the media and the processes within the association. Timing is very important.

9.5 Relationship

When it comes to relationship management, as a professional you have to deal with two types of relationships: your members and your contacts with stakeholders. Both relationships require management. Relationships are essential: they can help you forward or delay you in terms of content and the process. So make sure you regularly do your homework in relationship management: a periodically analysis of stakeholder and members. Reach out, even if there is no urgent reason to. Do you know the right people for your field of work? Do you use them properly? If you don't know them: how are you going to get to know them? Do not forget that good contact is established during quiet times (and is tested during turbulent times).

Relationship management is crucial for lobby and advocacy. You are dealing with decision makers. Do they have the right information about your industry? Have they been properly informed by officials or group assistants? Remember that 70 percent of the lobby is aimed at the officials of the relevant ministry. After all, legislation has a long run-up at the ministry and the expression 'the writer remains' illustrates the importance of getting your message in. Once something is written down in a proposal, it's hard to get it out again. Your relationships within a ministry are therefore just as important as the relationships at parliament or in Brussels.

Such liaisons are very important when negotiating a collective agreement. Often, there is tension during negotiations. Personal contact with negotiators from the other party is the lubricant that prevents you from getting stuck. But you must also invest in contact with the supporters, members employers, for which you do it all. After all, they feel internal pressure in the company when things get tense.

Sector development is allways about leaders, adopters and laggards. That, in turn, differs per development. A member can be very innovative in one area and someone who stays behind in another area. The difficulty with your relationship management then lies in differentiating within it. You want to work full of energy with innovators, but you also have a relationship with others. As a professional you deliver transparency, you share the progress of your tratectory and you maintain excellent relationships with everyone.

For services, knowledge of the 'customer' is especially important. As an AP you have the advantage that you have a warm contact with your members (and therefore easy access). Customer demand is central.

In communication, relationship management is about maintaining the network of journalists, radio/ TV makers and bloggers. And maintaining the network of communication staff of your members.

	Lobby/protection of interest	Sector-wide development	Services
Content	Change story (why, where to, what))	Change story (what/how)	Change story (what/how/who)
Process	Process management (policy cycle ministry/politics/eu)	Process management (Learning process members, trio creation/application/upscaling)	Process management (member questions/businesscase)
Relationship	Members and stakeholders (officials/political/branches/ members(partial interests))	Members/stakeholders (frontrunners/majority followers/ laggards)	Members (know your customer)
Communication	Spokesperson Framing Lobby-updates	Co-creation Call to action Transfer Communities	Segmentation

Summary skills in relation to Tack model

9.6 The Top Ten

We have summarized the core of this book in a top ten. You can use the top ten to check how you develop an those points, alone or with colleagues.

1. Curiosity. The association is a special biotope. Be curious, get to know the development phase and management of your association. Know the general trends and developments that affect associations.
2. Growth path. Continue to work on your skills on the 45-degree axis of content, process, relationship. Balance on the line. You never finish learning. By continuously developing, you achieve mastery as an association professional.
3. Change story. Always work with the principles of your change story: the change reasoning with key questions about the "Why", "What", "Where To", "How" and "Who". Stay stable on your goal ("Where to") and substantiate with valid information.
4. Process management. Know that you work with ideas that you enrich and eventually will lead to actions. Diverge, converge and consolidate, always along the axes of feasibility and support.
5. Sector development. Know how to facilitate innovation and sector development and how to stimulate those changes from the bottom up (creation, application and upscal-ing). Recognize the learning styles of your members, offer customized solutions and know who you can mobilize (innovators, large majority/followers and laggards).
6. Lobby and advocacy. Recognize the policy cycles at ministries, parliament, EU and provinces and know which interventions are most suitable at what time.
7. Stakeholder management. Invest timely in external relationships on time, know which people you need, make segments based on substantive congruence and power / influence.
8. Member Relationship. Know your members, know who you can deploy at what time in a representative manner. Be of service; but part of the contact with members is also that you dare to mirror them from your helicopter view.
9. Communication. Know that communication is a key activity in all your work. Recognize the principles of member information (interpretation and lobby information) yourself, and dare to include your members in your lobbying process behind the scenes.
10. Services. Carefully consider when and how you offer services to the individual mem ber and how far you go. Work with tools such as assessment framework, business cases and marketing plans. Pay attention to customer demand, provide quick feedback to questions and respond to signals from the customer /member.

Part III

#How?

Tools and Working Materials

#How? Tools and Working Materials

In part I and II we have introduced the growth of the AP in terms of content, process and relationship, within the context of the association. We have shared insightes and knowledge about being able to interpret and characterize your association, the knowledge that come to you as a person during the growth path of your development and basic insights and knowledge, enriched with levels of lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development, services and communication.

In this part III, “Tools and Working Materials”, we want to add something more. The aim is to assist in applying all the knowledge from part I and II in your work. In this way, you will be on a steep learning curve towards mastery as an AP.

This third part of the book follows the layout of parts I and II: first the context, then you as a professional. Then we will introduce working material on the work areas lobby and advocacy, sector development, services and communication. The material consists of roadmaps, scans, descriptions of working methods or descriptions of example cases. We respond to earlier theoretical and practical insights.

A Context
A1 Scan “Where does my association stand?”

B You as a Professional
B1 Reflect: tips for reflection

C Basic Knowledge and Skills
C1 Making a collective change story with process management

D Lobby and Advocacy:
D1 Drafting a lobby plan
D2 Stakeholder management

E Sector-wide Development
E1 Roadmap for member segmentation
E2 Dealing with leaders, followers/majority and laggards
E3 Checklist for the organization of a (member) meeting
E4 How to deal with group dynamics: storming, forming, norming

F Services
F1 Prepare a business case
F2 Marketingplan

G Communication
G1 Communication resources matrix for associations
G2 Lobby update: example
G3 Format issue calendar
G4 Format spokesperson outline

A Tools and Working Material for Your Context

A1 Scan: ‘Where Does My Association Stand?’

Five themes are considered to aid in determining the context: lobby and advocacy, services, sector-wide development, communication and association in general. The scan is used to make a diagnosis for each theme. The tool’s purpose isn’t to provide definitive answers; it establishes a subjective starting point for good conversation in the organization, and possibly members or the board.

There are 10 aspects for each theme. If, on the same part, one person scores 2 and anaother 8, then there’s reason to start a conversation and ask more questions. What do you/I see? What is learned from that? How can the various components be compeared? How are we performing?

For each number, indicate ‘yes’or ‘no’. The attribute one point for every ‘yes’. Add up the score for yes or no and then the total score, per theme, in the table.

Suggestion! Take a sheet of scratch paper and write down your answer to the questions ....

Lobby and Advocacy		
Questions	**Yes**	**No**
1. Are lobby plans made proactively and lobby files actively discussed?		
2. Do you closely follow Parliament decosion-making?		
3. Does the association have a seperate position for a lobby-ist at the Parliament?		
4. Are there weekly contacts with one or more ministries?		
5. Do you engage allies (other parties or associations) in the lobby at the political capital?		
6. Do you actively involve members in the lobby (participa-tion groups and ministry discussion)?		
7. Do you encourage members to invite MP’s, ministers and officials on working visits?		
8. Do you put issues on the agenda in the political capital?		
9. If in the EU, are you active in Brussels?		
10. Do you inform members periodically about lobby results?		
Total		

Sector-wide Development		
Questions	**Yes**	**No**
1. Is the association a knowledge hub for members?		
2. Collect best practices in the sector and share among members?		
3. Members involved as co-creators of products/ services?		
4. Digital communities for professional networks/ colleagues?		
5. Provide data insights (for example benchmark data) to members?		
6. Advance learning capacity of professionals in the sector, (intervision or learning networks)?		
7. Organize scaling up of best practices?		
8. Collaborate with external parties in projects?		
9. Broad innovation agenda in partnership with those inside and outside the sector?		
10. Provide a platform for start-ups (organize innovation meet-ups or challenges)?		
Total		

Services		
Questions	**Yes**	**No**
1. Offer collective benefits, like purchasing?		
2. Offer support, such as legal advice?		
3. Support members'primary proces?		
4. Paid services (retribution)?		
5. Seperate functions at the service bureau, such as advisers?		
6. Available by mail, telepohone, online?		
7. Services on location (at the location of your members)?		
8. Marketed by professional marketeers?		
9. Business-cases for commercial products being created?		
10. Organizational 'entrepeneurs' developing new services/products?		
Total		

Communication		
Questions	**Yes**	**No**
1. Goals and strategy (distinct for lobby and advocacy, sector-wide development and services)?		
2. Different between member communication and external communication?		
3. Segment among member communication?		
4. Choose appropriate means for target groups?		
5. Create a public image of industry/profession?		
6. Use outlines for spokesperson(s)?		
7. Weekly newsletter?		
8. On social media?		
9. Have network with journalists/media?		
10. Monitor effects of communication activities?		
Total		

Association in General		
Questions	**Yes**	**No**
1. Supported and clear seperation of tasks and responsibilities?		
2. Independent chairman?		
3. Make decisions via the formal association democracy?		
4. Work with member segmentation?		
5. Conduct general member survey periodically?		
6. Structurally measure member appreciation at meetings and other activities?		
7. Financially sound?		
8. Little concern about the number of members?		
9. Clear strategy to reach future goals?		
10. Form of relationship/member management?		
Total		

B Tools and Working Material You as a Professional

B1 Reflect

Reflecting on your professional actions, and your professional identity as an AP is a critical success factor. Reading a book like this is one thing, applying and continuing to apply it is another. Reflecting in this context means investigating how you reacted to a situation. What did you do/not do? How did you respond to others?

Reflect in these areas:
- *Commitment*. Where does your commitment lie? Did you act in the best interest of members, the association, society in general, or yourself?
- *Combine knowledge and practice.* Do you combine theory and knowledge with own ideas and principles? Do you read professional literature? How do you deal with knowledge in practice? Do you dare to ask critical questions to practice or literature?
- *Specialist set of skills, practices and behaviors.* Do you really apply your technical skills such as the change story, process management, member/relationship management? What is your status as a sector developer with your knowledge about change management, innovation and renewal and the learning styles of people and organizations? And what is your knowledge of lobbying and framing? How well do you know the current market?
- *Organized approach to learning and experience.* Are you able to link new knowledge to practice. How do you keep learning as a professional? Do you make an active contribution to your colleagues? Are you building a learning community of peers? How do you maintain a professional network?

We all reflect in our own way but these tips may make for a more impactful reflection. Take time, by yourself, but also with others. Being glued to your cell phne or laptop does not work. Hold the moment and ponder what happened in specific situations. Take notes and after thinking on it, share your thoughts with others, people whose judgement and opinions you respect. There are other ways to look at things. And practice. Reflection is something you can learn to do well.

If you apply these preconditions, you can start reflecting on the above points (commitment, coherent whole) whether or not you have acted professionally in a case. With regard to intervision, you discuss your own actions in specific situations with colleagues or intervision peers. This is possible through various intervision techniques. Examples are the ten-step method, feedback via a carousel of A4 pages where peer-to-peer colleagues continue where the predecessor has gone. Many forms are available. Too many to list here.
It is important to always consistently apply two things in every form: the case-contributor is in charge and make sure you stay factual. To be in charge as the case inserter is important because he or she is responsible for its own questions. They must judge for themselves whether they benefit from the feedback and reflection from others. You also prevent a case-contributor from being confronted with all sorts of forced opinions and views of others.

They usually have nothing to do with it and it doesn't take them any further. In addition, it is therefore important to remain factual: what actually happened? What were your ideas or feelings at the time? What do you think about that now? If others reflect on you or vice versa, stay away from judging. In terms of the ladder of inference (chapter 3) you therefore stay at the bottom of the ladder. Ask questions, reflect on what if it would happen to you or what would happen to you if you were in such a situation. But do not say whether it is good or bad or whatever. These are judgments and they do not help the reflection process. Also examples of how you yourself have solved or entered into such situations, do not help for the case-contributor. Stay with his or her facts.

C Tools and Working Material at Basic Knowledge

C1 Making a Collective Change Story?

The change story is about 'Why', 'Where to', 'Who', 'How' and 'What' and the process management about the support and feasibility of an initiative. How is that done? By making an assumption. The assumption is that the process develops linearly: from idea to implementation. In many cases this will not actually be the case. Sometimes, the idea has to be adjusted so you actually go 'back to start'. Or it's like the Echternach procession: three steps forward, two steps back.. If you have to take steps back due to circumstances, you can just do so and go through the process management phases again.

The idea (Blank/suggestable)

It starts of course with the idea, from yourself, someone else or your board.There is a trigger. At that moment start a one-page sketch of the change story. Ask, "Is this development or event the start of a process, do we have to act on this and is it an opportunity or a threat? Immediately look for support and feasibility. In fact, test and enrich the change story in the process phases by going through a 'diamond' per phase.

When making a sketch of the change story, there will be imperfections. The story could be too vague, too general, and unfocused. With no clear head and tail, the reason and the goal may not fit together (Bennebroek Gravenhorst 2015). These imperfections are important. On those points, sharpen your story, add more depth with facts and figures.

Phase		Support base: towards the initiative the people are.....	Feasibility: The initiatieve is..
1	Abstract idea	Blank	Suggestable
2		Interested	Tenable
3		Involved	Feasible
4		Investing	Practicable
5	Concretely worked out	Realising	Usable

The ‘Why’ and ‘Where to’ must have been worked out well. The ‘Why’ and ‘Where to’ questions relate to the beginning and the end of the change story. With strong reasoning, the answers to the ‘Why’ question and the ‘Where to’ question lie outside the association. This is therefore “from outside to inside” thinking. The ‘Why’ is triggered within the social value and the ‘Where to’ wants to contribute to that social value. For the first version, the sketch of the change story and your own individual answers are what matter. By testing with your colleagues/ management, the change story enriches collectively. A real test of support and feasibility lies of course with members.

The ‘What’ is about what happens, what you’re working on during the approach. On the one hand, it is important that the answer to the ‘What’ be short and powerful (otherwise people drop out during the story) but on the other hand, evokes a clear image (Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 2015) As the collective ‘diamond’ shows gaps and defects in the change story, there is more clarity through members’questions and comments by ensuring a better ‘from-to -reasoning’ (Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 2015).

You have now sketched your change story, with a deeper elaboration on the content side: the ‘Why’, the ‘What’ and the ‘Where To’. The ‘How’ and the ‘Who’ are formulated more openly, filled in and refined during the process phases.

Interest/Tenable
After there is interest in the initiative and the idea is sustainable, go through a similar ‘diamond’ in this phase. Test and enrich your first change story. Do people share the substantive analysis? The urgency and the necessity to take it up and work it out as an association?

Start with the strategic decision makers within your association. That can be an advisory committee or participation group, but it can also be the board. It depends on the organisation of your association and the size and impact of your change story. With a high impact, the board will want to be informed immediately. At the same time, sufficient member involvement and attention is required. A participation group or advisory committee often has more time on the agenda and can thus provide the necessary input.

But it’s up to the strategic decision makers. It may be that your association also has networks or communities of a more tactical and operational level. The timing to involve them is important. Too early can lead to unnecessary resistance, too late can lead to you being unable to estimate whether the approach works in practice. At the end of the ‘diamond’, you’ll know whether you can continue with your change approach within the association.

Involved and Feasible
The balance at the ‘Who’ shifts from strategic to tactical/operational. Active involvement leads to ownership which is important for the change to take place in reality. As you determine who to involve in further elaboration, the following points for attention can be used (Bennebroek Gravenhorst, 2015):

1) Are there networks of professional groups or communities within your association? Do you know people there or do your colleagues know people there?
2) Find out who has what involvement and how those people view the change. Who is useful and handy for “joining in”? Make sure that you do not exclude strong actors. It is better to involve people early than to be fully resisted later.

3) Make sure that the people who are actively involved (and therefore give shape to the change through their own actions) are a good reflection of the variety of views in the association. Avoid involving a group that is too homogeneous.

Involve the chosen group of people with your 'diamond'. This is possible in a physical meeting but also via a digital community / mail group.

Repeat with the tactical/operational level the collective reasoning around the 'What' question.

Investing and Practicable
The 'How' question is elaborated after this phase and the 'Who' involves a high level of tactical/ operational involvement. In fact, after this 'diamond', you decide whether capacity and/or money is invested in it.

Realise and Usable
After the 'diamond', there is a working idea that can be used. The 'Who' in this phase are people of the operational level, those actually doing it or using it. Communication and evaluation are vital here. This phase explains the concrete, new working method. Do people know what they can use, how they should apply it? The people at the operational level are probably a much larger group than has been involved in the process so far. They may be confronted with the change for the first time and have views on it. Where can they go with suggestions, comments and ideas for improvement? It is important to organize that in the process. The acceptance invreases and -with the improvement suggestions- there is a good chance that the change approach will also improve.

D Tools and Working Material for Lobby and Advocacy

D1 Drafting a Lobby Plan

A lobby plan starts with the purpose of the change story. The lobby stems from the long-term course of the association, or the strategic plan based on it. It is important to start by explaining that connection. Next, it is important to formulate a lobby goal. That goal may well be technical, but it must be clear to the inner circle. Continue with a powerful sentence/message, which immediately also makes clear to the uninitiated what you want to achieve and why it is logical and right that you want to achieve that (concise, reliable, positive). You then determine the force field around this lobby goal to be achieved. Who are the (external) players and what is their position/view. You then describe with which steps you want to reach the lobby goal. These are the interventions on feasibility and support that you have learned from process management.

You then enter your activities in a calendar, often around the internal and external decision moments in time. Internally, this concerns: mandate in the board, feedback moments for the board and members, (method of) participation groups with members, but also active involvement /participation of members in the lobby (example letters /examples from practice). And externally, for example: activities related to the advice of an official working group, government agenda, legislative process, parliament treatments.

This is followed by a section on the communication moments, but sometimes that is already part of the large activity calendar. Separate attention to communication is necessary, because you often have to differentiate to different target groups: ministry, room, stakeholders, general public. A very important paragraph is about the team; who is in it with which role/focus area, which financial resources are needed. A good lobby plan concludes with a risk analysis (what can go wrong and what will we do if it goes wrong) and a section that indicates how the lobby goal relates to other goals.

Paragraphs of a Lobby Plan

- change story ('Where to'): make a link with course / strategy
- lobby goal
- lobby message(s)
- external force field
- process management interventions
- activity calendar (external and internal)
- team composition and budget
- communication (to target groups)
- risk analysis
- coherence with other lobbies

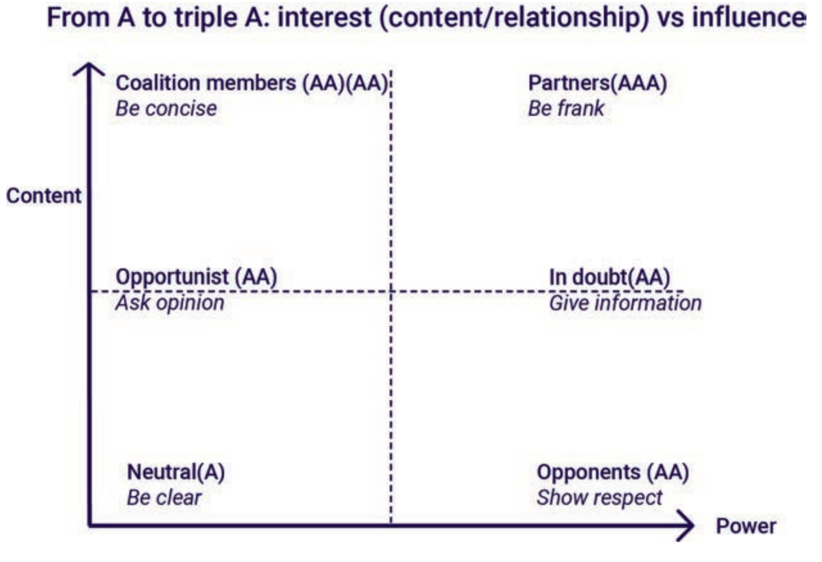
Experience shows that after approval, lobby plans quickly sink into the issues of everyday life. Tip: keep it close to hand in team meetings. Stay steady on the big process and the goal. Then be flexible on the exact path towards the goal, with the planned activities. In practice, neither the outside world nor your own association follow exactly what was planned. Lobbying is simply knowing where the 'momentum' is and responding to it by being able to accelerate and decelerate. At that level of activity, an association professional must have as much freedom as possible to act. So in principle, do not go back to the board or management on activities.

But what if at some point the lobby goal completely disappears? Then see if there is a plan B, a fallback option that was already reviewed in the risk section. It's a good idea to clarify with management and administration quickly do determine if they agree to change the mandate and go for a changed goal? The lobby plan is actually your mandate or framework within the association. It creates space for yourself and your colleagues and clarity for your superiors.

Remember, even without major lobbying plans, you can lobby anyway. The reasons for working without a structured plan can be different. Sometimes a sudden emerging file requires a very fast response. There's no time for a team or a 'long line lobby'. You can still request a mandate, but then stick to a negotiation effort: what are we in, and what are we trying to achieve. In some associations, separate forums (sometimes called Issue consultations) have been set up for this type of situation, whereby the chairman of the board briefly interacts with the management and the parliament lobbyist. There may also be a less 'large' file that requires a response, that can be solved from your experience and common sense as an AP (in the spirit of the strategic themes of the association).

D1 Stakeholder Management

Stakeholder management is the structured building, improvement and management of relationships with various stakeholders. These are external parties that have an influence or experience influence from your association. You build that relationship to ultimately achieve your goals. This concerns lobbying objectives on specific files, but also in general the sector reputation, the 'License to operate' of the sector. Also think about being able to make connections quickly, should there be a crisis. But entering into or maintaining that relationship is not about those goals at all. You want to get in touch. Stakeholder management therefore requires, in addition to a piece of content (you must know and convey the broad story of the sector), especially the ability to establish relationships: with what reason and how do I make contact, how do I relate to the other person and his organization, how do people think here, what 'language' do they speak, how do I respond to this?



Stakeholders differ. In the figure above a classification is made along the axes in terms of content and influence/power (free from Van Venezia and Liege, 2012).

This makes it possible to segment stakeholders:

- Much substantive agreement / major influence: partnership (a TripleA relationship).
- Much substantive agreement / little influence: coalition partner (a DoubleA relationship).
- Little substantive agreement / major influence: opponent (a DoubleA relationship).
- Little substantive agreement / little influence: neutral (a SingleA relationship).

The reason for segmentation is that each relationship requires a different aspect in relationship management. The relationship management by your association is not determined by an individual employee, general manager or director, but by the organisation. And it is not determined by the moment, but determined in advance for a longer period.

The AAA stakeholders are your partners. It is advisable to involve them in selecting the strategic objectives. They will usually want to make an active contribution and not just remain passive. Characteristics of this stakeholder relationship are: major influence, solicited/unsolicited relationship, mandatory cooperation from the law, accountability relationship, or multiple issues. Within AA you approach an opponent other than a coalition partner. It may even be that you give an opponent who has a lot of power, a AAA treatment (a lot of attention), because you still really need that opponent.

Therefore, your association should choose in which organisations it sees partners, coalition partners, opponents and neutrals. Then select the appropriate relationship agreement set.

It is a good idea to indicate a top 25 of AAA partners, within sectors:

- government (national-regional), such as ministries
- political/ MPs / scientific paragencies
- fellow trade associations or professional associations
- knowledge institutions
- consulting or advising world
- media, i.e.newspapers, broadcasters

With AAA, a distinct professional manages each partner relationship. They oversee the progress on administrative/management consultations and, if there are none, ensures that there are so-called informal consultations at least twice a year. These consultations have a free agenda, with free exchange. The organizations are engaged and, apart from the urgent issues, look ahead.

With AA there is a contact person for each partner. Keep track of who has contacted them and for what purpose in the client registration system. These people receive all kinds of association communication, receive invitations to activities such as seminars meetings, etc.

E Tools and Working Material for Sector-wide Development

E1 Roadmap for Member Segmentation

Segmentation of members is quite a sensitive issue. Every member has equal right to attention from their association. In general, members do not like being classified or segmented. Large or small, innovative or following, critical or loyal, urban or rural, every member is just as important. Yet, sometimes it helps to organize members in groups. This tool does not provide a comprehensive method, but gives a number of considerations to determine whether to segment and how.

Step 1 Think before you start

- Better no classification, than one based on half / non-current information. So make sure you check the quality of your current information data, how it can be maintained and possibly improve it.
- Always make classifications as distinctive as possible, using axis and quadrants.
- Apply consistent segmentation. Otherwise, it soon becomes a 'nice to know', without application or added value.
- Determine if it's about the member, the organisation or the general manager? A director is not always representative of the employees in the organisation. If you're only involved with the CEO, the more logical it is to rely on a CEO classification. But that's usually not the case.
- Decide if the segmentation is public, i.e. known to members, or a tool for internal use. In general, given the sensitivity, avoid public segmentations.

Step 2 Motive for member segmentation

Why do you want to segment. That can differ per propeller.

A Lobby and advocacy
- · Find out what factions/members think of a common lobby
- · See what partial interests play within the association
- · Create a participation group and select it in a representative manner
- · Ascertain who has the power to 'make or break' decisions
- · Figure out where white spots are (members that don't participate in association activities).

B Sector-wide development
- · Look for members who can / want to be co-producers
- · Know, in the context of innovation policy, who are the front runners / the adopters / and the ones that stay behind

C Services
- · Market product and service offerings
- · Know potential customers are and how you approach them differently.

D Communication
- · Approach different target groups in a targeted manner.

Step 3 Forms of segmentation
Based on the motives from step 2, look at some well-known segmentations in step 3 with practical examples.

B : Critical member, Enterprising/professional	A : Loyal and enterprising/ professional
D: Not close to the association, follower in developments	C: Loyal member, follower in developments

Aedes A/B/C/D
For years, Aedes used an (internal) membership classification along two axes: the horizontal, degree of involvement in the association; and vertical degree of being entrepreneurial/ pioneering. Ihis classification was unknown to the members themselves. It was intended for a broad commitment to lobby and advocacy, communication and sector-wide development. It required a lot of investment. The segmentation was to serve as a common language. But sometimes, it wasn't clear whether members really were approached differently with regards to communication or if it was used for an indication of support in lobby processes or not?

However, it was unclear if the characteristics depended on the general manager's personality or said something about the organisation. If a director was a B (critical / entrepreneurial), then that did not always apply to the management below (eg in loyalty to the association). The information added value (also due to mobility of people) and the broad applicability (theory versus practice) led to this segmentation eventually being abandoned.

Representativeness
When compiling participation groups, strive for diverse representativeness, a sample group matching what the association thinks about something as a whole. Members themselves often critically look at the size, geographical distribution and equality of problems /assignments. Then it's obvious to classify the members in different classes:
- Large / small
- Geographically (eg north /west /east /south)
- City / countryside
- Type of statements /characteristic product
- Sub-associations / factions

Decision Making / Follow-up
Every association is driven by a complex game of power and influence. The support sought from external policy-makers must certainly also be obtained internally. This isn't just about what the majority decides at a Congress. It concerns who's on the General Board, who consults the participation groups, how the regional factions think, and knowing who the active contributors and motion submitters are at the general congresses.

The chairman and the board members will actively approach the different segments of members. Voting rights do matter. Therefore, associations often have a policy of meeting the top 20 of influential, active participants: they receive individual attention. But there are also participant contacts not seen at conferences. This group should also be visited, for example to find out why there is no participation in the activities of the association. The large middle group, the vast majority of members, is then reached through general communication, congress participation and group meetings.

BOVAG

BOVAG works with knowledge/product groups (bicycle makers, car dealers, etc) in which themes are dealt with. It is a logical layout and also a disadvantage. They divide the association into partial interests, that could hamper the association. An association professional will not easily get rid of that segmentation that can complicate common lobbies.

Consumers/Producers

To know which of the members want to actively participate, segmenting doesn't have to start immediately. You already know many members and you can simply ask for help. But, all innovative parties can't be bound to you. It's important t get a good information position around members. Ask them for names of innovative partners in certain themes/dossiers. Via a digital member registration management system, find out wh is in contact with whom. It can still be useful to make a classification (such as a dichotomy). This way you can distinguish between members who are innovative and those who are more following. You can use this dichotomy to check, for example, whether the active members also always sign up for club activities. As an association, you also want to work bottom-up: lifting local inventiveness to the national level. Remember: those members who do beautiful things locally do not always have the time or motive to demonstrate on a 'national level'. So approach them personally.

Survey Members Aedes

Berenschot Consultancy conducted a survey for Aedes about member satisfaction. Berenschot saw a clear distinction between 'strategic partners' and 'consumers' in their perception and judgment about the functioning of the trade association. The strategic partners were often the larger members, with their own staff apparatus. They looked beyond the boundaries of their own company and formed an opinion on how things could be done differently, also in terms of legislation and regulations. "Involve us, do not enter into lobbies without consulting us and being able to reflect on it," was the motto for this segment. The smaller members regularly had difficulty interpreting and following up on these laws and regulations. "Help us to understand and implement the complex reality of changes made," was their motto. Good communication and practical guidelines for applying legislation is highly valued by this group. Classifying members according to 'strategic partner' or 'consumer' gives a picture of the group size. This clarifies what needs to be done per group in order to increase member satisfaction..

Communication

Do members of your association form a homogeneous group? Although the outside world sees a sector (for instance farmers, entrepreneurs, builders), the association professional knows better. There are endless different colours both in terms of types of organizations and types of general managers. Because communication is becoming increasingly personal, there is a trend towards working with so-called 'personas' in communications. This involves customer classification according to people types.It's clear that communication with a treasurer or customer manager is different from communication with a general manager. For sector development, if you mainly speak with general managers and not with operational managers, then communication is adjusted accordingly. Does that mean to start segmenting? We cannot assess that. However, be reluctant to go too quickly to 'market surveys' that precede such classifications.

KNLTC

KNLTC, the Dutch association of tennis players, distinguishes seven types of tennis players from 'tennis families', ' neighborhood kids', ' luxury players' to 'concerned seniors'. The intention is to inform affiliated tennis associations of the dominant subgroup among their members. Of course, communication and the deployment of activities can differ for each type of target group.

Future/Seniors

Many associations pay special attention to newcomers in the sector. A welcome program is often offered to new managers If an association ages, it may be useful to segment by seniority of the director. It is useful to know those who represent the future of the association. Many associations pay special attention to newcomers and a welcome program is offered to new managers. Yet, senior and experienced members are also needed and they can even prove useful after retirement for interim assignments.

E2 Dealing with Leaders, Followers and Laggards?

When working on sector development, it's important to create movement. Commitment and energy from leaders is essential. What are the working mechanisms for a certain innovation or improvement? What makes the new approach work? In many cases, that is difficult to explain. It helps if you can immediately see what is happening, ask questions and reflect on what is happening. But, that may not be practically feasible. Yet it's the association's goal that innovation/ improvement processes convey the acquired knowledge/ experiences so members can learn and start applying it. That is, after all, the reason why "the collective" devotes time, money, attention and capacity to innovation and improvement. Some practical steps are formulated here but your approach must fit the situation, context.

INRetail

INRetail, the Dutch association of retailers, explicitly focuses on the 10 percent frontrunners and accepts the chance that 30 percent of those left behind can fall off the bandwagon.

We formulate some practical steps here. You can go through it, but make sure that you do not do this "blindly". Your approach must fit the situation, your context.

Working Method Leaders, Followers and Laggards

It's not always clear who is involved with innovations and who can be a leader, but it helps to get an initial overview. Use these steps to do an inventory:

1. Grab a large sheet of paper and put your idea, initiative, or goal in the middle. Briefly describe it.
2. Name the different perspectives from which you can look at the idea, initiative, or goal. Think of organisations, interests.
3. Put concrete names of people at the starting points. It is important to name people, not organisations as contact is with people. (Also consider competencies and perspectives, instead of interests and resources.)
4. Prepare a list of all the actors involved, based on suggestions from the team. Ideally, aim for a mix of so-called regime actors (resource holders) and niche actors (innovators)
   a. Expand the list by asking: who is directly interested? who is affected? who has internal/external influence? who shows an innovative input?
   b. After establishing the list, cluster it based on:
      -type of power (classical, innovative, transformative)
      -organizational background
      -competencies (able to think originally and open to other ideas))

Pilot projects

Keep in mind pilot projects take at least 6-12 months.

1. Make a change story without the ‘How’ and the ‘Who’. With this, indicate what needs to change and its urgency. During the pilots, connect to three elements, the ‘Why’, ‘Where to’, and ‘What’. The pilot projects will provide an answer to the ‘How’ and ‘Who’.
2. Select the pilot projects based on innovative strength and perseverance. The pilot projects are working towards an end. That end can be a successful conclusion, but it can also be not achieving the intended goal. Both are interesting in the learning process.
3. Ensure commitment within the hierarchical manager. This prevents an enthusiast from saying, “yes”, and then failing to get actual support from the organization. Commitment with financial contribution is of course the best.
4. Organize different meetings for the pilot group, highly interested members and laggards. Start with pilot-project leaders, then immediately afterwards, highly interested members. Meetings must be accompanied by a process supervisor. What do you encounter? How do you deal with that? Look for learning moments and working mechanisms at every meeting. Keep a log with well-described meetings. (Don’t do this later, it’s not about the common threads but about details!)
5. Ensure the association stays abreast of the pilot progress.
6. Organize a final meeting. Invite the rest of the association. This is a transfer moment for the entire association.
7. Make a final publication with lessons learned from pilot-projects and a description of the working mechanisms. That is for the laggards.

E3 How to Organize a Meeting?

Guideline for organizing an interactive meeting. This guide serves as a checklist for organizing a successful meeting with members. It indicates what you should remember in which phase.

Phase 1: who prepares? Coordinators
It is wise to shape the meeting together with (a part of) the participants or co-initiators of the meeting. In this way you have the needs and wishes of the participants at the table, and you create support for the design, goals and intended results of the meeting.
You are already working as a facilitator on a collective awareness and a collective approach.
To determine who you just want to have this design, it can help to determine what change you just envision from the meeting, and who you are there to help, or who that ownership or ask a contribution.
Incidentally, this first step requires more time and effort than you would think it all out on your own. However, the adage 'you go faster alone, you move forward together' is fully applicable here. Positively formulated; if you deliberately slow down and involve other participants or co-owners in devising and shaping the meeting, you will see that you can accelerate enormously during the meeting.

Whom to involve, and what role does that person play, and what is his / her contribution before, during or after the meeting?

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

For good coordination, it is useful to plan timely consultation and preparation moments. Check together if there is sufficient preparation time at all. Also consider together who sends the invitation to the meeting.

Phase 2: Objectives. Reason/pupose/intended results

The first key question that you must answer together is about the cause and purpose of the meeting.

What is the reason for the meeting?

What is the purpose of the meeting?

What are the intended results? When is the meeting successful, and what do you see?

It helps to break down your core goal into a number of smaller manageable core questions. Adjust these key questions with 'the preparation group'.

The key questions for the meeting are:

1.
2.
3.
4.
5.

Phase 3: The Structure of the Meeting

Every meeting consists of 3 steps: the start, the floor, and the conclusion.
Via these 3 steps you get started with your key questions. Explore together which methods are suitable for answering the key questions. Use for example the Large Work Forms Book, in which more than 50 work forms are listed, classified by purpose of the meeting.

Which key questions do you want to answer at the start and which working method fits in with that?

Which key questions do you want to answer during the deepening and which working method fits in with that?

Which key questions do you want to answer at the conclusion and which working method is appropriate?

Phase 4: The Follow-up

It is important that the meeting receives proper follow-up. If common conclusions have been drawn, then it is obvious to record these and share them afterwards, for example. The question here is; who does what? Do the participants in the meeting take control of the follow-up themselves, do you do that as a facilitator yourself or is it perhaps a mix? You will discuss this together at the end of the meeting.

Phase 5: An Exploration of the Participants

What interest do the participants have in this meeting? Why would they come to this meeting/ not? And what does participation provide them with?

Where are possible difficulties or dilemmas for the participants?

Are there related subjects, activities or current events with which you can make a useful connection? If so how?

Where are possible obstacles in the follow-up? What would help the participants to really get started with the results?

How can you help them with follow-up?

Phase 6: The Organization

In this final phase you determine how long the meeting and the various components (approximately) last, and what you need for practical implementation.

Duration meeting:
Duration start:
Duration deepening:
Duration closure:

What conditions must the location meet? What is desirable here?

E4 How to Deal with Group Dynamics: Storming, Forming, Norming?

Many general assembly's involve conditioned behavior. There is a certain collective agreement about how the people present interact with each other during the meeting. The chairman leads the meeting and often the agenda is handled sequentially (although we all know exceptions to this rule).
In workshops, masterclasses or learning networks there is often a certain freedom of form. With a specific structure and the use of different creative powers can be released. But it also ensures that you as an organizer have to deal with group dynamics more than usual. How can you as an organizer deal with this dynamic to steer it in the right direction?

A well-known model about group dynamics was created by Bruce Tuckman (Mulder, 2013). It outlines stages of group development over time. Tuckman distinguishes five phases: form, storm, norm, performance, and farewell. These phases always take place in groups, regardless if people already know each other or not. If the form and structure of the meeting is too open, concrete conclusions may be more difficult to achieve.

Phase 1 The Forming Phase

First, the group focuses on orientation. They behave independently, but also require direction and clarity. It's important to bring the group together to ensure trust and safety. The leader of the group can be directive and clear about goals. Clarify the purpose of the meeting and commit those present to that purpose.

Phase 2 The Storming Phase

If there is trust and direction, group members are more willing to actively participate. They will speak out about the way of working, roles and tasks. The motivation of members to behave in this way differs; some don't want to conform to the group too quickly, others don't want to fall outside the group. The leader is clearly the supervisor of this phase. Let people speak out and compliment them ("good that you name it and state what you want"). Allow conflicts to happen but don't resolve them. Let the group do it themselves. Such conflicts won't usually occur for a one time meeting. But with groups, such as learning networks, that work with each other for a longer period of time, this happens regularly.

Phase 3 The Norming Phase

After the storm phase, the group can talk about cooperation in a more constructive way. The nature of the collaboration is of course different at a workshop than at a participation group. So the phase always happens, but the impact and duration of it varies due to the nature of the group. Talking about cooperation and setting standards in that area increases people's motivation. The group, and the group cooperation, gets a better, clearer profile and therefore seems to succeed. As a group supervisor, participate in setting the standards, but don't prescribe them unilaterally. As a workshop supervisor put this question on the table.

Phase 4 The Performance Phase

Now that the mutual agreements are clear, a framework has been outlined. Everyone can fall back on this framework. Working together is easy and straightforward. As a workshop leader, focus less on the internal process, act less as a 'police officer' and focus more on the learning process of the group (everyone participates, everyone remains involved).

Phase 5 The Farewell Phase

When the end is approaching, group members are already moving away from the group. As a professional it is good to pay attention to this, to motivate members to really contribute to the end. It helps to have a closing event (drinks, symposium, dinner).

It's not easy to properly supervise group dynamics. Preparation helps. Check who has registered; contact those who can be a support when others may be disruptive due to their strong personality. People recognize the patterns of group dynamics and will help steer things in the right direction. Remember that they have taken time and effort to be present and also want it to be a success.
Many members' meetings involve conditioned behavior. That is strongest at a meeting: there is a certain collective agreement about how the people present interact with each other during the meeting. The chairman leads the meeting and often the agenda is handled sequentially (although we all know the exceptions to this rule).

Reflect on the different phases of the group. If you give a workshop, you can do so afterwards (with or without a part of those present). With a learning network reflection is possible between meetings. Has the group already gone through all the phases? Are there still uncertainties in the mutual agreements within the group that hinder the (learning) process? Obviously also take a critical look at your own role: have you indicated sufficient direction and specified the objective (s)? Have you given space and attention to the group process? Have you taken enough time for the farewell phase?

F Tools and Working Material Services

F1 Prepare a Business Case

Performing commercial activities is a completely different profession than lobby, sector development or the more 'traditional' services (paid through normal contribution). There is less of a professional-member relationship, and more of a professional-customer relationship. At the start (or during evaluation or closing), it is advisable to prepare a business case. A business case answers the questions: Why should we do it as an association? What do we want to achieve? What are the deliverables? What kind of investments does it require? When preparing a business case, it is good to include the following aspects:

1 Identify the Reasons for starting it

This is not about deciding to start a certain commercial activity, but about the potential opportunities for the business. What is the need, why is it there, and so forth. Often, commercial activities are born out of an emergency. If the traditional contribution income decreases, due to falling membership, this can be a trigger to investigate other earning models. Is this the right motive for starting commercial activities? In any case, be aware of the risks (as described under 5).

2 Ensure it lines up with Association Objectives

This is about the scope of your organization. Not only must it be possible according to the association statutes, but also suitable for supporters. An association could start selling office furniture, but does that suit them? It seems more logical that an association provide services. Consider the provision of commercial training on employment conditions, which is close to the expertise for collective bargaining processes. Or the collectivity of an association to organize collective purchasing processes or insurance for the collective.

3 Consider Other Options

Explore different options. Don't make this decision overnight. Put different scenarios next to each other, with an elaboration of the pros and cons for each scenario.

4 Estimate Added Value

To ascertain whether there is a need for commercial services, make clear the added value. If the customer will pay money for the service, they need to understand and see it's worth.

5 Determine Possible Risks

There are not only opportunities associated with the various options, but also risks. The chances of the various options (by reason and potential added value) must be weighed against their risks. For example, providing legal services may also result in the risk of legal claims. Danger can also lie within the association. Services can have the wrong appearance (offshore banking for the association of banks) or be competitive with the services of your members.

6 A Cost-Benefit Analysis.

Services must be profitable. Provide proof that the forecasted returns are greater than the investment

7 Plan and Design Implementation (made SMART)

Identify what is needed and the planning to achieve this in concrete terms. Set out the activities in time and make them specific and measurable. Be realistic about the possibilities and only list activities that are acceptable to all involved.

F2 Drawing of a Marketingplan: the 7P's

A marketing plan consists of a number of resources from the marketing matrix. The McCarthy matrix (McCarthy, 1960) consists of 7 Ps: Product, Price, Place, Promotion, Personnel, Process and Physical. Questions relating to these Ps need to be pondered.

1. Product-what is delivered to the member or external customer, the goods or service. How do you describe it? What's it's function/characteristics and what service/guarantee will be provided?

2. Price-competitive pricing. What is the best price of the product considering cost and profit desired? Do members get a discount?

3. Place-location. Where and will the product be distributed? Will it be at the association office or 'in house' and along which distribution channels? Are stocks held? What market coverage is being aimed for?

4. Promotion-advertising, publicity, and interaction. By which means will you advertise (video, radio commercial, promotion team)? Will advertising only be in association channels (website, magazine, meetings) or beyond? Do you collaborate with others and if so who are potential partners?

5. Personnel-people who offer the product. What skills and attitude are needed? What values and norms are important?

6. Process-the customer journey. What steps does the customer go through to get the product/service? How smooth is the process? What actions must a customer do before ordering the product (for example on the website)? What are the delivery times? What's the complaints procedure?
   *It goes without saying that the customer journey at an association is extra sensitive. Pay attention to the lead times and the complaints procedure, otherwise complaints may come through association channels.

7. Physical-design of the sales environment. How do you decorate the building? Are there separate parts/shops or do the general association part and the sales part intertwine?

G Tools and Working Material Communication

G1 Communication Matrix

The matrix contains a list of all instruments the association possesses. It specifies what instrument can be used for which purpose and target group and the instrument's frequency of use. It also indicates, if identifiable, the sender.

Instruments-matrix communication

Mail	Purpose	Salutation	Sender	Subjects	Image	Timing	Style	Target group
Member letter	To share current news articles suited for members	no	Association, no specific sender	Current articles	Yes, catchy photo in the header	Every two weeks	Like the website	Members
Nieuwsbrief	To share current news of the sector	no	Association, no specific sender	Current articles	Yes, catchy photo in the header	Weekly basis	Like the website	Members, stakeholders, people interested in your sector/profession
Alert	To inform on specific subject	no	Expert from office	File/theme related topics	Picture expert	As soon as the article is published	Like the website	Everyone who has logged in for the file/theme
Update	To inform in lobby activities of last week	no	Association, no specific sender	Lobby/ political topics	No pictures	Every monday 8.00 pm, weekly	Brief and concise with "we"	Members
Manager mail	Message from the general manager	Dear	Kind regards, name general manager;	Lobby/ political topics Sectorwide development issues	Picture general manager	Depends on current events	Formal	Members
Chairman Mail	Message from the chairman	Dear	Kind regards, name chairman	Lobby/ political topics	Picture chairman	Depends on current events	Formal	General-managers or members

G2 Format Issue and Media Calendar

An issue and media calendar helps get an overview of the media moments and the association's commitment about the approach to those moments. It's a simple format.

Datum	Issue	Topic	Approach - message

The strength of the format lies in keeping the various moments well tracked. This way you set the clocks periodically (preferably weekly) between, for example, your outside spokesperson, lobbyist, management and policy advisor. Experience shows that there is considerable dynamism in the calendar. It may be a parliament meeting changes, a customer's petition is offered later, a strike action changes or there is a media shift. Of course it's difficult to take this into account for media messages at a current affair or meeting, but often this is the case with a less 'burning' subject. Then the journal has no time on date X and they suggest paying attention to your topic a week later. There are also issue calendars in the media; used to look at how to make beautiful, current broadcasts or publications. Again, with a strong issue you can't do anything with it, but in many cases it may be wise to cooperate with a later moment. If it's a sector-friendly medium that wants to pay attention to your subject and offers a platform for a message, that's also a good opportunity.

Fix the date of the media moment; then the story with your message comes out. In the 'issue' box formulate briefly the theme that the media moment is about and state the specific reason for the subject. That can be a parliament vote with a bill or an investigation your association brings out. Under approach and message, indicate the message and if it's publicized by press release, vlog or a Radio X spokesperson performance. That way, readers of the calendar can see the date, the issue it touches, the topic, the approach and message that comes up with it. They can not only take note of it, but also think about the content, to see if the form is aligned with the message.

G3 Format Spokesperson Outline

If a lobbying file gets high attention in the media, it's wise that the spokesperson and process manager agree on a spokesperson line together. That moment may have already been provided in the lobby plan, but now that the news is 'hot', the consultation is useful. This often happens while awaiting an important media moment (such as the appearance of an investigation, a parliamentary document, or a government position).

Such a communication approach cannot be easily pressed into a format. It has a high 'customization' content. Nevertheless, patterns can be observed; we attempt to describe below.

Communication approach file x

Reason

Where does the file come from? Briefly describe the earlier context of decision making.

Strategy

A statement about the question: Communicate reactively or proactively? State the most important moment for spokesperson and the moments of support for communication of the spokesperson line. Explain how sensitive the issue is.

Spokesperson file X

Describe the message in 3- 4 short bullets, presented in the form of a logical argument/story. Q&A

Any questions and answers that may be expected from the media and / or members. Also consider whether they are being actively placed (e.g. on the website, for members), or if the media is used as a response to the questions.

Previous communication

Short description of previously brought messages.

G4 Lobby Update

In the Lobby Update, every Monday morning, members are informed by personal mail (director level)what the most important progress has been in the past week on the important lobby and advocacy themes. Relevant articles in the media are put together. And the most important events for the sector in the coming week, for example parliament meetings, are listed. The update provides some behind the scenes insight(see the considerations in part II), but is written in such a way that no sensitive information is disclosed. Often the Lobby Update is an extract from the 'Management Information', (a weekly personal mail from the board to members about the backgrounds of the current lobbying issues). Twice a year, members receive a list of lobby results that have been booked. In this, attention is also paid to the lobbies that have not succeeded

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Working as an association professional: that's far from easy. You represent the interests of your affiliated members and bring their problems to the attention of policy makers and politicians - European, national and local. You attempt to professionalize and innovate your sector. You offer special services and products to your members, while at the same time communicating with a great deal of attention for the reputation of the members. You are not a five-legged sheep, you're a six-legged one!

What does the world of an association professional actually look like? When do you do the right things? What knowledge and skills do you need and what can you rely on? How do you use your personal qualities, and how do you develop your personal skills? How can you grow to 'personal mastery'? This book helps you answer these questions and provides guidance to help you grow in your profession.

This book has been written for practicioners by practicioners. The authors have experienced the same struggles that you are dealing with now. They talk about the problems they are facing - until this very day - and the current trends in the field of associations. It's a book with many practical tips and tools, taken from the numerous management theories about associations. With one difference: the authors discuss only those theories that in their experience are really useful in practice, and show you how to use it in a directly manageable way.

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