Human Banner

Content

1. Aim of Module: making a human banner

The human banner is a technique to transfer a message in a simple, effective and fun way. Use your bodies to form a slogan or a symbol (see picture below). The human banner announces your Big Jump activities, brings your message to the attention of the media, and is a fun group activity that does not take much time or big financial resources.

"Detox our Future" Source: https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcQctnVaxY4XBUIXewGNWcq_Gb7DXIE194r9qCrYkzpjBA02vDnh (3.07.2014)

2. Human banner instructions

Create a Message: You need a good slogan or symbol. Everyone should directly understand your message (see also the module on slogan making in the river action toolbox!).

Choose a Place: Think about there being a place to take the photo from if you don't have a helicopter! A school yard, an embankment, a meadow . . . without a doubt: the better the place fits with your message and the more attractive your picture is, the more widely it will be used.

Find the People: You need people (your action group, friends etc.)! The more people you can gather, the better it is for your banner-making possibilities. You might want to use a music festival, school assembly or other reunion as an opportunity to form your human banner. To refine the message you can ask people to wear clothes of a specific color, provide them with flags or other materials to write the (human) letters of your slogan.

Take a Picture: You need a photographer, and your photographer must be able to fit everyone in the picture; typically this requires taking the photo from above, from a building or a tree, or – if you have the connections – from a helicopter or hot air balloon.

Share your Picture: Once you have the picture make sure that you share it widely within your group, via social media and local newspapers (you can also invite a photographer from the newspaper directly to your event). This is your opportunity to get your message across and to provide further information about your action, water conservation in general and specific issues at your river. Added bonus: you will have a nice souvenir!

3. Task submission

Once you have taken your picture, send it to the Big Jump Challenge team so that it can be widely shared within the community, and also inspire others (Email: info [@] bigjumpchallenge.net)

4. Further ideas and materials

Moving human banners: We have heard of people forming a wild flowing, meandering river with one group, and then using a second group to straighten the river as it often happens where rivers are used for transportation and industry. But we have not yet seen a video of such a truly moving human banner. Will you be the first?

Slogans for small groups: If your group is too small for a human banner, then you can write large letters to hold up and display your message in this way. Below is an example where this technique was used, for a river parliament in Berlin.

"Mein Fluss geht den Bach runter", Source:
http://www.bigjumpchallenge.net/media/images/92/c1/ab/33/image-186.jpg

Example of a famous human banner picture:

Source: http://www.greenpeace.org/new-zealand/Global/new-zealand/image/2007/12/as-part-of-a-global-day-of-act.jpg (July 3, 2014)

Further links: For a very useful introduction to human banners, which we have benefitted from greatly, see Brad Newsham's case: http://beautifultrouble.org/tactic/human-banner/ (July 3, 2014)

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