

TOOLS FOR CHANGE
TOOLS FOR CHANGE TO TEACH SOCIAL CHANGE SKILLS TO
TORONTONIANS

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Toronto. The Tools for Change program has launched its 2012/2013 workshop series to provide Torontonians with the skills they need to advance social change.

During the 2012/2013 school year, Tools for Change will host 19 workshops, including trainings on media strategy, meeting facilitation, grassroots fundraising, campaign planning, social media, political writing, research skills, political writing, navigating conflict, direct action, public speaking, and more.

Tools for Change's workshop topics were chosen by surveying past workshop participants, as well as members and volunteers of non-profits and activist groups from across Toronto; the most-requested workshops become part of this year's series.

A project of OPIRG Toronto, Earthroots, and Greenpeace Canada, Tools for Change was founded in April 2010 to provide affordable and quality skills training for volunteers and staff working at activist and non-profit groups. This is the project's third year in operation.

"Confronted with massive social inequality, devastating cuts to public services, and tuition rates that guarantee decades of personal debt, students and young people often struggle to channel their political concerns into concrete action," says Tools for Change coordinator and editor of the Ryerson Free Press, Clare O'Connor. "Our workshops provide an opportunity for students to connect with like-minded people and learn practical skills for change."

"Colleges and universities are great at teaching us what's wrong with the world, but there are very few programs that teach the skills we need to help us create solutions," says Jessica Bell, Tools for Change co-founder and coordinator. "Tools for Change helps people solve problems, and not just complain about them."

“A healthy society and environment depend upon active and effective civic engagement,” says Natalie Caine, volunteer organizer with Greenpeace and coordinator of Tools for Change. “Tools for Change is a pathway that helps people connect with others and take steps to improve the world around them.”

For more information go to <http://www.toolsforchange.net>.

Tools For Change Fall Workshop Schedule

A project of OPIRG Toronto, Earthroots, and Greenpeace Canada, Tools for Change helps you develop skills to advocate for social, economic, and environmental justice.

Payment is based on a sliding scale system from \$10 to \$90. Scholarships available. Community sponsors, University of Toronto students, Greenpeace and Earthroots members can choose to attend the workshops on a free/donation only basis.

All workshops are held in accessible classrooms at the University of Toronto, St George Campus.

Group Decision Making Workshop

<http://www.toolsforchange.net/2012/08/01/group-decision-making-workshop>

Saturday, September 15, 2012 from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

From hierarchy to consensus, choose the decision-making structure that's right for your social change organization. Learn techniques that can help you address some common decision-making problems and bring about organizational change.

Organizing Rallies and Marches

<http://www.toolsforchange.net/2012/08/13/organizing-rallies-and-marches-workshop>

Tuesday, September 18, 2012 from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM.

This workshop will cover the basic steps to organizing a rally or march, show examples of creative innovation in rally design. The workshop will also offer tips on planning routes, roles, marshalling, escalation and de-escalation, promotion, and visuals.

Advanced Meeting Facilitation for Change Makers

<http://www.toolsforchange.net/2012/07/30/advancedmeetingfacilitation>

Sunday, September 30, 2012 from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM

This workshop is for people who have some facilitation experience within social movement groups and organizations. Learn advanced meeting facilitation techniques, practice facilitation and receive critical feedback.

Introduction to Media for Campaigns

<http://www.toolsforchange.net/2012/08/15/introduction-to-media-for-campaigns>

Thursday, October 4, 2012 from 6:00 PM to 10:00 PM

This workshop will help activists understand how the mainstream media works, and how to use it as a tool in your campaigns for social, economic and ecological change. We will cover the basics of how to write compelling press releases, give great interviews, and develop frames and messages that are effective and in line with your goals.

Meeting with Government and Elected Officials

<http://www.toolsforchange.net/2012/08/13/meetingwithgovernment/>

Saturday, October 6, 2012 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM.

Politicians, their staff, and high-ranking government employees hold significant formal power in society, including legislative power. While it is often not useful to exclusively rely on a lobbying strategy, politicians can help us achieve our social, environmental, and economic goals. This workshop will provide you with the tools you need to get the most of your meetings with elected officials. Topics to be covered include: when is it useful to meet with elected officials and when is not useful, what to ask for, who to bring, how to negotiate, how to prepare, and how to best deal with 'friendlies' and 'opponents'.

Introduction to Meeting Facilitation for Change Makers

<http://www.toolsforchange.net/2012/08/16/introduction-to-meeting-facilitation-for-change-makers>

Saturday, October 13, 2012 from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

Learn and practice key tools, techniques and approaches that will help you effectively facilitate meetings within your group. Participants will have the opportunity to practice their facilitation skills and receive critical feedback.

How To Host a Workshop

<http://www.toolsforchange.net/2012/08/15/how-to-host-a-workshop>

Saturday, October 20, 2012 from 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM.

Sharing knowledge is a critical component of social change work. This training will cover the principles of workshop design and delivery including: how to create a comfortable learning environment, manage workshop logistics, and choose content and tools that caters to different learning styles and levels of participation. The workshop will explore strategies to deal with common challenges workshop leaders face. Participants will have the opportunity to create a simple workshop design and get feedback.

Advanced Media Skills

<http://www.toolsforchange.net/2012/08/22/advanced-media-skills-workshop/>

Saturday, November 10, 2012 from 1:00 PM to 4:00 PM

Learn how to develop a media strategy for a long term social change initiative.

The training will also cover framing, story-based narrative analysis, understanding the media story cycle, and building relationships with reporters.