

Flashmob voting is...

Description: In order to mobilize voters to go to the local elections, we went to different, well visited, public places and held up two posters. They said "voting is ..." and "Not voting is ...". The pedestrians were able to complete the sentences with further prefabricated signs. For the first poster we made right-of-way signs with statements, for the second poster we used stop signs to visualize a clear contrast between positive and negative messages.

Idea/Vision: Our main idea was to make people think. We wanted to give thought-provoking impulses with our posters. It was not important that many people completed our sentences, but that something happens in their minds. Also so that they can ask themselves what voting really is and what consequences non-voting can have. The pedestrians, who then even made their statement publicly, represented the highlight of our campaign.

What is it? – Activity

Why are we doing it? Voter turnout among young and first-time voters is very low, but the general turnout has not been high in recent years either. As a result, many radical parties have been strengthened. That is why we have set ourselves the goal of mobilizing people and making them aware of why voting is important.

Core content areas: Mainly IO3, but also IO1, IO2 to some extent

Target group: people over the age of 18. Mixed groups. For each educational level, but the required language skills are: >B1. The only requirement is that the pedestrians can read, as it involved almost no speaking. Place: Outside, in highly frequented places. There is no maximum number of participants, as there is enough space. The more people join in and give their statement, the better. However, our action is independent of the number of participants.

Material: In the run-up to the event, we made our two posters out of flipchart paper and cardboard. We painted them with watercolours. As a template we printed out our signs, cut them and also stabilized them with cardboard. Then we wrote statements on them with Edding. On site we had a folding table with a banner of our association. No additional material was needed during the activity, because everything was prepared in advance.

Requirements for moderators: We asked pedestrians who seemed to be interested in our posters whether they would like to make a statement as well. In doing so we referred to our prefabricated signs.

program: (More details - See content)

1. construction of our stand
2. put up posters that say "Voting is..."
3. second person stands next to it with a right-of-way sign
4. waiting for reactions from pedestrians, if necessary addressing them directly
5. after approx. 30 minutes change to the next location (all over again starting from 1st)
6. pack up after last station
7. publication of the statements

Table of contents:

1. the introduction was non-verbal. The participants of the activity could read the sign and have their own thoughts about it.
2. short overview: The pedestrians could decide for themselves whether they also wanted to make a statement and take a photo. Others just watched our activity.
3. program points and activity: The action already started at point 2. In a 10-minute change the program points were repeated again and again.
4. wrap-up: Wrap-up were our photos, which we took and then published. With this we could spread the statements even further.
5. follow-up: The "follow-up" was the local elections on 15.03.2020, in which the voter turnout increased compared to the elections before.

Pedagogical approach: Independent learning, interactive learning, outdoor learning, cooperative learning, experimental learning.

Framework activities: No framework activity was necessary in this action, as pedestrians could participate out of their own motivation.

Presentation styles used: group discussion, visual media (posters and signs)

Instructions and recommendations for implementation: First of all you have to make the posters and statement signs. In doing so, you have to consider which statements should be prepared. As this is a political activity in public space, where a stand is in use, the public order office must be informed. This must take place at least 48 hours before the activity, so that the request of an assembly is approved. It is important to note that, depending on the size of the event, a steward needs to be present and all flyers have to have a correct imprint. In addition, one person must be in charge during the activity and always be available for police and the public order office. After a short agreement with the police in advance the activity could take place as planned. However, if one should change to another location during the hike or block roads, the police must remain on site. This was not necessary here. In addition one should change the stations only after 30 minutes instead of 10 minutes.

Background information on this topic: In the last local elections, the turnout was only 48%. That means more than every second person did not take part in the election. Therefore we wanted to remind people with our campaign once again why one should vote.

Latent risks and limits: The posters should be stuck on a big cardboard box. If the cardboard box is glued together, the posters are more likely to tear.

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