



# Fact Sheets

Fact sheets or “one-pagers” are brief summaries of key projects, issues, and activities. Elected officials and their staff rarely have the time (or the desire) to read lengthy, detailed reports. Short, clear summaries of your major issues and initiatives can help them understand what you are doing and give them a reference point for the future.

## **When to use them:**

You should prepare a set of fact sheets on all of your major activities or issues ahead of time and update them regularly. Anytime you release a report, make a decision, or release any document to the public, you should prepare a one page fact sheet or summary.

## **How to use them:**

Liberalily distribute fact sheets to elected officials, staff people, and other key contacts at meetings, briefings, and public events. You might also consider making them available on your web site or in some other easily accessible location.

## **Format:**

A good fact sheet will present the basic information about a topic in a clear, direct, and factually accurate way. Although it should be clearly formatted and easy to read, it is not necessary (and sometimes counterproductive) to go overboard with the graphic design.

- Keep it short.
- Use a clear font and plenty of white space.
- Bullet points and “Q&A” formats often work well.
- Clearly identify your organization on the document and include contact information.
- Include references and web sites where the reader can find more information.
- Avoid outrageous claims or excessive self-promotion. Elected officials and staff and staff are very wary of anything that looks like propaganda.
- A few maps, simple graphs, and charts usually help in giving people a quick understanding of an issue.