

Political appearances: What does 'good' look like?

Objective: Participants will identify visual tools used by politicians to demonstrate certain values and qualities that may be appealing to the public.

Participant Number: 5 - 20

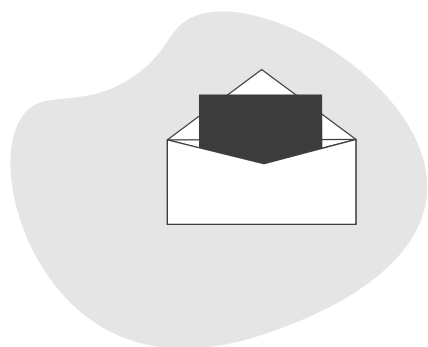
Materials: Aluminium foil

Online Materials: a digital workspace that allows participants to share images and GIFs

Duration: 20 minutes

💡 Preparation:

- Half a metre of aluminium foil per person and a couple of metres spare.
- Online: space to share images and GIFs such as an online whiteboard. Titles for 'good' and 'bad' sections of the board.



✔ Steps for the Offline Activity:

- Online: Divide participants into break out rooms of 3 - 5 participants each.
- Set a timer for 10 minutes.
- Assign half the participants (online: assign half the groups) 'good politician' and the other half 'bad politician.'
- Working individually (online: in their groups) the participants should determine 2 - 5 traits or characteristics of either:
 - **A 'good' politician:** who they would vote for
 - **A 'bad' politician:** who they would not want to vote for
- Using the aluminium foil, participants should create sculptures to visualise these traits. For example, they may make a circle for 'community-oriented' or small coins of foil to represent 'money-driven'.
- Online: the group should find GIFs and memes that visualise the trait, such as an image of a group holding hands for 'community-oriented' or a GIF of a cat wearing expensive jewellery for 'money-driven'.

- After 10 minutes, the participants should present their foil sculptures
(Online: their memes/images/GIF)

🗨 Discussion:

- In this exercise, you had to think about how to visualise or symbolise certain traits.
- Politicians often plan how to present themselves - and symbolise their values - through the way they dress, backdrops for their TV interviews, website designs and social media posts.
- What sort of images and symbols do you think politicians use to demonstrate to the public that they are 'worthy of your vote'?
- What sort of images of political parties do you find off-putting?
- We all have different biases and expectations that politicians may try to pander to in their communications.