The impacts of climate change and fossil fuel extraction are the probably the most pressing environmental and human issue facing this planet. Yet, for all the work that has been done on energy conservation and sustainability, little real progress has been made. At the root of this crisis is a powerful force: major corporations, particularly fossil fuel companies and their investors dedicated to preserving the status quo to generate short-term profits. In order to limit and mitigate the consequences of climate change and resource extraction, and build a more sustainable and just world, it is imperative that we challenge the fossil fuel companies and the model of investing that allows them and other bad corporate actors to flourish.

The Fossil Free campaign at colleges and universities aims to challenge this status quo by activating the millions of college students on campuses around the country and $400 billion in theoretically mission-related college endowments to take on the fossil fuel industry and change the way colleges invest their money.

Yet, we know that the approximately $40 billion that universities have invested in the energy sector is not enough to have a meaningful impact on the energy sector, by itself.

Instead, divestment from fossil fuels and reinvestment in new economy solutions is a strategy to raise the issue of the impacts of the fossil fuel industry to the level of a moral issue and use the influence and power of colleges and universities to make a statement with our money. We believe that we can create real and long-term change not primarily through harming the industry in dollars moved but in the substantially broader impacts of this campaign:

- Helping a generation understand the impacts of the fossil fuel industry and prepare them to confront the industry and its power directly
- Create a national conversation around fossil fuels extraction and burning, and through raising the issue demand real policy change
- Through the act of divestment and other changes lead the investment industry away from fossil fuels, thereby increasing the industry’s costs of doing business and making it more difficult for them to operate with impunity
- Move endowment dollars towards places they can have a real impact including energy efficiency, community investment and sustainability, and other impact/sustainable investments
- Drive long-term change in the way that endowments and investments are moved towards building a sustainable and socially just economy
- Train students and the broader community about the importance of the way that money moves and the role endowments and institutional investors have to play in it
- Help build a broader and more diverse movement for social and environmental justice
1960’s Faith communities begin pushing for divestment from companies invested in South Africa when other methods of engagement fail.

1972: Dow Chemical shareholder resolution to protest the manufacturing of napalm during the Vietnam War.

1973: Created the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility which advocates for corporate responsibility and shareholder engagement.

1977: Hampshire University becomes the first university to divest from apartheid

1977: General Motors develops the Sullivan Principles. The principles demanded the equal treatment of employees regardless of their race both within and outside of the workplace, demands which directly conflicted with the official South African policies of racial segregation and unequal rights. More than 125 corporations adopted the principles, but by the early 1980’s the creator of the Principles agreed that they were not enough to make the change needed.

1984: 53 Universities divested (Tactics: Sit ins, occupations, shanty towns many focused on getting national media attention.)

1986: The Comprehensive Anti-Apartheid Act: imposed sanctions against South Africa and stated five preconditions for lifting the sanctions, including establishing a timetable for the elimination of apartheid laws and the release of political prisoner Nelson Mandela.

1987: 128 universities divested

1988: 155 universities divested.

1989: 26 states, 22 counties and over 90 cities had taken some form of binding economic action against companies doing business in South Africa (Tactics: Sit ins, occupations, media, shanty towns)

2004: Sudan divestment campaign launched at Harvard

2004: 5 college students founded network of student endowment action (would become REC). Within a few months, the founders assembled a coalition of 40 schools with combined endowments of more than 102 billion dollars.

2005: BDS campaign launched

2007: President Bush signs the Sudan Accountability and Divestment Act

2007: Macalester University moves $500,000 into community banks

2008: HEI campaign launched on campuses http://www.heiworksrising.org/?p=250

2008: 61 campuses divested from Sudan

2009: After pressure from Bard College students, McDonald’s Corporation has agreed to formally survey and promote best practices in pesticide use reduction within its American potato supply chain.

2010: Swarthmore students launch first fossil fuel divestment campaign

2010: Loyola University of Chicago achieves victory on MTR financing from JP Morgan Chase.

2011: Roughly 20 campuses working on fossil fuel divestment campaigns

2012: Case Western Reserve is currently an example of multi sector community investing and they are working with community partners in Cleveland to provide high speed internet to residents, create jobs through various partnerships that include universities laundry services. Investing nearly $850 million into NE Ohio

2012: As of December 2012, 192 universities have begun advocating for divestment from the fossil fuel industry.
HANDOUT: CAMPAIGN GOALS

Campaign goals are **specific**, **realistic** and **measurable**.

*Specific* means that there’s an endpoint – a point where the group can declare victory and have a party!

*Realistic* means that the goals are possible to achieve by the group in some reasonable amount of time (six-months, a year, two years). Realistic does not mean that the group already has the resources to win that goal. Goals that require the group to stretch and grow can be better than those that can be achieved with its current capacity.

*Measurable* means you have something to work for, and you’ll know when you’ve achieved your goal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>When picking campaign goals, you may decide to pick campaign goals that:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>● Make the most difference in peoples’ lives.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Appeal to a diverse crowd of supporters and allies.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Have been decided by or in coordination with the people who are most impacted by the problem.</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Increase people’s decision-making power or ability to control decisions (e.g. give students greater power over their own schools).</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Naturally lead people to see how society could be different (e.g., winning suggests a logical next step which people will want to take).</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Raise people’s consciousness (i.e., help people see through the veil of lies of the current society).</td>
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<tr>
<td>● Build people’s confidence and capability so that they can make future wins (e.g. choosing an easy goal that is quickly winnable so our group/movement can increase its morale, its size, and its awareness of its own power).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>● Take into account your financial and people resources. It’s great to choose a campaign goal that will require raising money and finding more people – that’s part of campaigning – but be realistic too!</td>
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</table>
Every campaign is different. But based on experience, there are important steps that every campaign has to take. The group begins by framing their issue and then goes into the following stages, approximately in this order:

### CAMPAIGN TERMINOLOGY

**GOALS:** What is it that we want to get?

**TARGET:** The person or entity that can give us what we want.

**STRATEGY:** The style in which, the plan, or way we’ll get there.

**TACTICS:** The individual actions we take to implement the strategy to force the target to give us what we want (our goal).

**AFFECTED COMMUNITIES:** The people impacted by this issue.

**ALLIES:** The people who will be down to help.

1. **Investigate/gather information:** Get the facts. Clear up any possible misunderstanding right at the start. If an injustice clearly has been done, be equally certain exactly who or what is to blame for it. The complexity of society today requires patient investigation to accurately determine responsibility for a particular injustice. The ability to explain facts rather than just relying on rhetoric will win support and prevent misunderstandings.

2. **Educate/Outreach:** Keep campaign participants and supporters well-informed about the issues, and spread the word to the public. Education also requires facing issues of oppression and internalized oppression that may face the group. Tactics may include leaflets, street theater, training, informal street speaking, door-to-door personal visits, phone calls and press releases. Always stick to the facts, avoid exaggeration, be brief and show good will.

3. **Increase motivation and personal commitment for the struggle ahead:** Prepare your group to commit itself to nonviolent action. This includes getting ready to face backlash or possible repression for some of the actions necessary to establish justice.

4. **Negotiate with target:** Meet with opponents and put the case to them. A solution may be worked out at this point. It is possible that your opponents have a grievance which you didn’t know about. Now is the time to find out. If no solution is possible, let your opponents know that you intend to stand firm to establish justice.

5. **Direct action:** Engage in tactics to resist the unjust system. Some of these may be legal strategies while others may be outside of the law, such as the use of civil disobedience.

6. **Create new relationship with opponent which reflects the new power reality:** King referred to this stage as “reconciliation” – not losing relationships because of nonviolent action but building stronger, more respectful relationships.

HANDOUT: CAMPAIGNING FOR SOCIAL CHANGE: BEYOND JUST PROTESTING FOR IT!

For groups looking for more strategic models and tools to use, here's a time-tested model for effective social change work. It's a tool that's inherently democratic and builds resources for the movement by winning specific goals. And, as an added bonus this tool is sizeable to local as well as national contexts. The tool? It's one used throughout history by large and small social movements for everything from overthrowing dictators to getting recycling in a city. So here's to a reminder of a powerful tool: campaigns!

WHAT ARE CAMPAIGNS?
In a nutshell, campaigns are sustained efforts at a specific social justice goal. Campaigns are a powerful way of strategically building the capacity, developing experience, and laying the groundwork for future movements. Simultaneously, campaigns win solid victories for social justice.

Campaigns have a goal. Campaigns are defined by their objectives: winning a particular housing reform; overthrowing a dictator; convincing the city council to undo a repressive ordinance, or getting sweatshop multinationals to allow unionization in their factories.

Goals require having someone or a group of someones who are "targets" – the people who can make that change. This is different from a future vision of "economic justice" in which no single individual or group of individuals can make the vision come true. Campaigns take a piece of those large visions and demand implementation. So a campaign goal under economic justice might be "universal health care" (and the target would be the national government). In a local context it might be “five new affordable housing developments in an area” – the target would be the private developers, or the government which gives out housing contracts.

Campaigns have an attainable goal. Some goals are also more useful than others. Unattainable goals aren't as useful as attainable goals (it doesn't build the movement to set ourselves up for failure!). To be attainable, the goals need to consider the group's capacity (a local group would, before a national movement shows up, take on a local-sized goal, though it might be a goal with national/international implication).

To combat sweatshops, United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) used students' schools as the location to wage local campaigns. In schools across the country, students forced their administration to sign contracts requiring full disclosure of where the various products were made. With that information in hand, students could make and get others to make visits to the sweatshops to inquire about human rights violations, the ability of workers to unionize, wages and other notorious conditions (like no bathroom breaks). Workers in sweatshops in Indonesia, China, Haiti and territories of the United States would no longer be fired in secret.
Nike and other apparel companies said information about their factories was a “trade secret” and could not be shared without ruining business. After months of organizing on dozens of campuses, the campaign paid off with the largest apparel leader – Nike – doing partial and then ultimately full disclosure of their factory sites. Other apparel industries followed suit.

So that gives a glimpse of another aspect of goals: Goals that have more meaning and impact on people’s lives can be more useful than goals that have less impact. For example, a speaking tour during the USAS campaign profiled a union organizer named Haryanto, who had been fired for passing out Nike’s Code of Conduct in a factory. Because of the pressure mounting against Nike for full disclosure, when his factory got exposed to the public, he became the first union organizer in a Nike sweatshop to be reinstated through international pressure.

Goals that set up the movement for future wins are more useful than goals that prove to be dead-ends. (Does that new achievement encourage more activism? Does it lead to a practical next step?). In the case of full disclosure of sweatshops, it led naturally to a campaign to create and get campuses to endorse using a monitoring organization, now called the Workers Right Consortium.

Campaigns may be made up of many different tactics. Blockades, sit-ins, strikes, marches, street speak-outs are all tactics that might show up in campaigns. In the case of the USAS, all of those tactics were used, plus many creative ones like the sweatshop-in (sewing all night and day in a public square).

In campaigns, the tactics are designed to keep the pressure on. Throughout the campaign the pressure on the target keeps being applied until they accept or can no longer oppose.

Otpor, the student movement organization in Yugoslavia, understood this when they built their successful campaign to oust the brutal dictator Slobodan Milosevic. They picked tactics that kept escalating the pressure on Milosevic. They started with creative forms of popular education and guerilla theatre, and moved to illegal public protests combined with other tactics. (One highly effective tactic was “stalking police officers” – getting the names of police officers who brutalised students on the streets, and then showing up in their neighborhoods with signs saying, “This police officer beats up peaceful protestors.” It was so effective at shaming police officers in front of their neighbors/families, that Milosevic could no longer count on them to follow orders.) As the public pressure mounted, Otpor eventually shut down the capital city, literally stormed the parliament building, and forced Milosevic into exile.

Different tactics are used to do education and outreach to specific allies/ally groups. Petitions and marches mobilize support and show power, and build towards mass noncooperation with the system (like boycotting campus sweatshop apparel).

Campaigns take time to build. In this way, they differ from one-time actions. They are sustained and involve building pressure over time. While a one-time march might scare the politicians, they want to know if they can
"stay cool till the heat blows over." Campaigns make sure the temperature on politicians (or whoever the targets are) stays hot. They keep escalating tactics until a win is gained.

This also distinguishes campaigns. They have an end-point: when the campaign wins. Campaign groups can clap their hands, celebrate, and then tie off a checkmark on that campaign! (In some cases, like that of USAS, there may be a need for monitoring to protect the win from rollback.)

WHY DO CAMPAIGNS WORK?
The movement needs leadership and experience at the grassroots: In order to carry out effective national campaigns, we cannot rely solely on national or international leadership. King, Gandhi and Che may be great: but the real power of social change lies in the grassroots.

Campaigns build local capacity and local leadership in a natural, decentralized way. With local victories come increased self-confidence and readiness to take on more and more. With experience, groups make smarter and more sophisticated decisions.

Campaigns are also radicalizing processes: people who get deep into one issue are likely to learn – not at a book-reading level but via personal experience – the ways issues connect. When campaigning about local housing issues, for example, people naturally run into environmental, economic, and political issues, too. As local activists get smarter and more experienced, they are less caught up in useless political skirmishes or sidetracked by negotiated settlements with the opposition (bargaining for higher wages but breaking the union). Reflected upon experience creates wisdom, which is a pool we will have to draw from again and again.

Local campaigns can be replicable: As local organizations explore issues and try out new tactics, they are more likely to run across tactics that are replicable. The national sit-in movement, for example, began with four students in Greensboro, NC who decided to take on their local Woolworth. They popularized the tactic we now know as the sit-in.

The innovation was the tactic – and the implicit campaign goal. It was local, so it could happen in hundreds of other locations. Out of one local action came a national movement. So even while the national/international organizations and coalitions argue out details, we can change the agenda by our combined local actions.

A more recent example of that occurred in the struggle against the US's domestic war on Muslims, Arabs and other marginalized groups. Hundreds of cities passed city council resolutions against the so-called USA PATRIOT Act. For a long time this growing movement went unnoticed by the mainstream until a New York Times reporter in Flagstaff, Arizona, (a fairly conservative city) found that the city passed a resolution against the USA PATRIOT Act. Thinking it was a fluke, he investigated, and broke the story that dozens of cities had passed such resolutions! Some of the resolutions were symbolic statements, while others pushed the envelope and constrained local officers to not be involved in any USA PATRIOT Act-related round-up.
Though each resolution resulted from a local campaign, the impact of so many cities passing such resolutions amounts to a groundswell of opposition to the PATRIOT Act. In fact, resistance was so high that just recently John Ashcroft tried to take back the offensive by launching a major publicity campaign and doing speaking tours on the PATRIOT Act around the country. The campaign has provided communities with a voice: they don’t have to act powerless in the face of oppression. In fact, it has resulted in a major scaling back of plans to launch a PATRIOT Act II. (Senators who authored the document recently claimed they had never even heard of it!).

Campaigns take the offensive: As in the case of the PATRIOT Act, campaigns reclaim the initiative. It puts the oppressors in the mode they should stay in: defensive.

Protests often keep us on the defensive: responding to the last war, bemoaning the most recent destroyed housing, attacking the latest action by our mayor/Senator/Governor, or doing mass actions when and where power-holders meet. Campaigns are about achieving goals – and therefore are inherently on the offense. We set the goal and we push for that goal. Local sit-ins put those who would enforce the Jim Crow laws on the defensive. Campaigns pull the foundation of society – the grassroots – out from underneath the structure of oppression. As more campaigns win, more and more people are ready to resist and non-cooperate with the oppressive patterns of society. A building cannot support itself without its foundations.

Campaigns bring in new energy and form new allies: Many of us work towards a meaningful social revolution with a new paradigm. We are not content with single isolated victories.

Campaigns mobilize new constituencies. People like winning, and people like being part of a movement that is headed somewhere. "What’s your goal?” people so often want to know. By being in a campaign, you can bring in people interested in achieving meaningful goals, but who are not yet ready for the revolution (unlike trying to convert them to Marxism, and then tell them to protest the war). New people provide new energy and help radicalize stale organizations.

Furthermore, in a campaign you may be able to engage passive allies. While some political allies may not be ready to sign up for a lifetime of activism, more are ready to work for a specific campaign (which has a limited duration). Campaigns can be key radicalizing processes for such potential armchair activists or isolated allies.

Ultimately, campaigns are strategic in that they are headed somewhere. They are a series of tactics, headed toward an attainable goal, which build skills for resistance and grassroots leadership. They can bring in new allies and activate others that have become passive….So: let's wage campaigns for social justice, not just protest for it!

Activism is about using your power and voice to make change. Organizing is about that, too, but it’s also about activating and empowering others. It helps to think in terms of groups. Successful movement-building hinges on being able to see a society in terms of specific blocs or networks, some of which are institutions (unions, churches, schools), others of which are less visible or cohesive, like youth subcultures or demographic groupings.

Analyzing your spectrum of allies can help you to identify and mobilize the networks around you. A spectrum-of-allies analysis can be used to map out a local campaign or to strategize for a whole social movement.

Here’s how a spectrum-of-allies analysis works: in each wedge you can place different individuals (be specific: name them!), groups, or institutions. Moving from left to right, identify your active allies: people who agree with you and are fighting alongside you; your passive allies: folks who agree with you but aren’t doing anything about it; neutrals: fence-sitters, the unengaged; passive opposition: people who disagree with you but aren’t trying to stop you; and finally your active opposition.

Some activist groups only speak or work with those in the first wedge (active allies), building insular, self-referential, marginal subcultures that are incomprehensible to everyone else. Others behave as if everyone is in the last wedge (active opposition), playing out the “story of the righteous few,” acting as if the whole world is against them. Yet movements win not by overpowering their active opposition, but by shifting the support out from under them.

For example, in 1964, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC), a major driver of the civil rights movement in the U.S. South, conducted a “spectrum-of-allies style” analysis. They determined that they had a lot of passive allies who were students in the North: these students were sympathetic, but had no entry point into the movement. They didn’t need to be “educated” or convinced, they needed an invitation to enter.

To shift these allies from “passive” to “active,” SNCC sent buses north to bring folks down to participate in the struggle under the banner “Freedom Summer.” Students came in droves, and many were deeply radicalized in the process, witnessing lynching, violent police abuse, and angry white mobs, all simply as a result of black people trying to vote.
Many wrote letters home to their parents, who suddenly had a personal connection to the struggle. This triggered another shift: their families became passive allies, often bringing their workplaces and social networks with them. The students, meanwhile, went back to school in the fall and proceeded to organize their campuses. More shifts. The result: a profound transformation of the political landscape of the U.S. This cascading shift of support, it’s important to emphasize, wasn’t spontaneous; it was part of a deliberate movement strategy that, to this day, carries profound lessons for other movements.

Here is an account from SNCC organizer, Bernard Lafayette, who describes identifying allies in their efforts to register voters in Selma, Alabama, in 1965:

We tried to get people around the city to come, but it was slow. So we went out in the rural [areas]. The people out there are close to the earth, they’re very religious and warm and friendly. And mostly they’re unafraid. They own most of their own property and their little stores. So we got these people to go and try to register to vote. Then we used this as a leverage to try to embarrass many of the people in the city. City folks are sometimes critical and skeptical about country people. So we pointed that these people were really getting ahead. When these city people began to go down it was really sort of a birth of a movement. (Story from Candie Carawan, ed., Sing for Freedom: the story of the Civil Rights Movement through its songs)

In this case, going after a group that was easier to reach (rural folks) made it more possible to mobilize a harder group (city folks). At other times, one might choose to reach out to harder-to-mobilize groups first.

Remember: in most social change campaigns it’s not necessary to win the active opponents over to your point of view, even if the opponent is the target. It’s only necessary to move each of the pie wedges one step in your direction. If you can make your passive allies become active, and the neutrals become your passive allies, and the passive opponents act neutrally – you can win.

### HANDOUT: FOUR ROLES RELATING TO CHANGE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Helper</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Believes charity can handle social problems, or that helping individuals can change social structures</td>
<td>Assists people in ways that affirm their dignity and respect</td>
<td>Shares skills and brings clients into decision-making roles</td>
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<tr>
<td>Focuses on casualties and refuses to see who benefits from victimization</td>
<td>Educates about the larger social system</td>
<td>Encourages experiments in service delivery which support liberation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Provides services like job training which simply give some people a competitive edge over other people, without challenging the scarcity which gives rise to competition</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rebel</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Promotes anti-American, anti-authority, anti-organization rules and structure</td>
<td>Protests: says “no!” to violations of positive American values</td>
<td>Employs nonviolent direct action and attitude, including civil disobedience</td>
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<tr>
<td>Identifies as a lonely voice on society’s fringe; attached to that identity</td>
<td>Targets power-holders and institutions</td>
<td>Puts problems and policies in public spotlight</td>
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<tr>
<td>Promotes change by “any means necessary” – uses tactics without realistic strategy</td>
<td>Uses strategy as well as tactics</td>
<td>Uses strategy as well as tactics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has victim attitude and behavior: angry, judgmental, dogmatic</td>
<td>Does work that is courageous, exciting, risky</td>
<td>Does work that is courageous, exciting, risky</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses rhetoric of self righteousness, absolute truth, moral superiority</td>
<td>Shows in behavior the moral superiority of movement values</td>
<td>Shows in behavior the moral superiority of movement values</td>
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<tr>
<td>Can be strident: personal upset more important than movement’s needs</td>
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<tr>
<th>Advocate</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
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<tr>
<td>Uses mainstream institutions like courts, city hall and legislatures to get new goals and values adopted</td>
<td>“Realistic politics”: promotes minor reforms acceptable to power-holders</td>
<td>Promotes domination by professional advocacy groups that are top-down, patriarchal and are more concerned about organization’s status than the goal of their social movement. (Such agencies can undermine democracy in movements and disempower the grassroots.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses lobbying, lawsuits, elite networking/coalition building for clearly-stated demands, often backed by research</td>
<td>Identifies more with power-holders than with grassroots</td>
<td>Identifies more with power-holders than with grassroots</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monitors successes to make sure they are implemented</td>
<td>Does not like paradigm shifts</td>
<td>Does not like paradigm shifts</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organizer</th>
<th>Ineffective</th>
<th>Effective</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Has tunnel vision: advocates single approach while opposing those doing all others</td>
<td>Believes in people power: builds mass-based grassroots groups and networks</td>
<td>Nurtures growth of natural leaders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes patriarchal leadership styles</td>
<td>Chooses strategies for long-term movement development rather than focusing only on immediate demands</td>
<td>Choose strategies for long-term movement development rather than focusing only on immediate demands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes only minor reform</td>
<td>Uses training to build skills, democratize decisions, diversify and broaden organizations and coalitions</td>
<td>Uses training to build skills, democratize decisions, diversify and broaden organizations and coalitions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stifles emergence of diversity and ignores needs of activists</td>
<td>Promotes visions of perfection cut off from practical political and social struggle</td>
<td>Promotes visions of perfection cut off from practical political and social struggle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Handout by George Lakey (Training for Change) with thanks to movement strategist Bill Moyer.
Bringing in new members or volunteers is essential to any local group that wants to grow in size and capacity. However, attracting or recruiting new people to your group is only the first step. Getting them to stick around can be a much bigger challenge! The good news is that there are tried and true methods you can use to plug new members and volunteers into tasks and roles that will build their investment and leadership in the group, and will increase what your group is capable of achieving.

1. **Schedule one-on-one intake interviews.**

When someone says they’re interested in finding out more or getting involved in your group, don’t just invite them to come to your next meeting. Even the most welcoming and inclusive groups tend to develop their own meeting culture that can unintentionally make new folks feel like outsiders. To increase your new member retention rates, schedule one-on-one intake interviews with new folks before they come to a group meeting. Get to know the person. Find out about what attracted them to the group, what kinds of tasks they enjoy or are good at, and how much time they have. Then tell them more about the group and discuss with them what their involvement could look like. You can use and adapt the questions on side two of this sheet. While this level of orientation requires more time in the short-term, it saves time in the long-term; people tend to plug into the work faster and stick around longer. It may make sense for one or two members of your group to take on orienting new folks as an ongoing role.

2. **Accommodate multiple levels of participation.**

In short, some people can give a lot of time, and some can give a little. Organizers with more time on their hands should avoid projecting this as an expectation onto others. A foolproof way to drive new folks away from your group is to consistently ask them to give more time than they are able. Instead learn what kind of time commitment is realistic and sustainable for them. Help them plug into tasks and roles that suit their availability. Check in with them about how it’s going. Are they feeling overextended, or would they like to take on more? Take responsibility for helping new folks avoid over-commitment and burnout.

3. **Make people feel valued and appreciated.**

If you want to inspire people to stick with your group for the long haul, you’ll need to make them feel valued and appreciated. It’s basic. People like to be around people who respect them, and who are nice! If social movement groups want to compete with the myriad of often more appealing options for people’s free time, then we have to treat each other well and take care of each other. Notice and acknowledge new folks’ contributions, however small. Make time to check in with them outside of meetings. Ask their opinions often: What did they think about the meeting? the event? the action? Bounce your ideas off of them and ask for their feedback.
Intake Interview Template

Below is a basic intake interview template to help you orient new members and volunteers to your group. Add questions or adapt these according to what information is most useful to your group. An intake interview is as much about relationship building as it is about information gathering. For this reason it’s better for the “interviewer” in your group to fill out the form, rather than to just hand it to the new person.

Meet over coffee or lunch or whatever is most comfortable or convenient. Schedule an hour, and spend the first half asking the new member/volunteer about herself or himself. Start with the basic getting-to-know-you stuff (are they from the area? in school? working? involved in other causes or groups?) before moving into the more formal questions below. Spend the second half of the meeting telling them more about the group and discussing with them possible ways they may want to plug in.

Enter the information into your member database and keep it safe.

Name: ___________________________ Email: ___________________________

Phone: __________________________ Address: _____________________________

1. How did you find out about this group?

2. What attracted you to the group?

3. Are you interested in volunteering time? If so, what is a realistic and sustainable amount of time you would like to commit (a number of hours per week or per month)?

4. Are there specific days or times when you could be regularly available?

5. Do you have skills that may be useful to the group (e.g. finance, bookkeeping, fundraising, design, photography, public speaking, writing, management, facilitation, mediation, DJing, performance, other)?

6. Are there areas of work that you are particularly interested in helping with?

7. Are you interested in skills and leadership development opportunities?

8. Is there anything else you would like to add?
HANDOUT: FACILITATOR NEVER EVERS

• Never ever forget that individuals at the workshop are unique, with needs, interests, and experiences particular to them. Adults have a strong sense of self and bring all life experiences – past and present, personal and professional – to bear on new learning (Brookfield, 1986). Each adult in the session has a different reason for attending and will be pleased and inspired by and learn from different activities and workshop experiences (Merriam, 1989). Accommodate various learning styles by using a variety of instructional strategies such as small group discussions, lectures, simulations, reading, writing, and using media.

• Never ever require individuals to participate in an activity. Many participants are eager to share and try new ideas in a workshop, but some are uncomfortable and feel foolish. When suggesting activities, make it clear that participation is optional; those who prefer to watch will learn from the activity in their own way.

• Never ever talk to participants as if they are children. Adults are not 2nd graders and should not be treated as such. Incorporate specific adult-oriented presentation, communication, and facilitation skills into the workshop and consider the particular needs of participants.

• Never ever ridicule participants or their experiences. Acknowledge the expertise and experience of the participants. It is inappropriate to put people in the position of feeling uncomfortable about what they do not know or something they have or have not done.

• Never ever neglect the participants’ personal needs. Participants have basic physical needs that must be met if learning is to occur. Give participants ample breaks and make it clear that you understand they may need to get up at times other than the break. Provide refreshments for breaks and tables and chairs appropriately sized for adults.

• Never ever say that you are going to rush through and compress material in order to complete what is usually a longer workshop in a shorter length of time. Develop a plan for the workshop. Cut it thoughtfully so the workshop stands on its own. Participants deserve to attend a session developed just for them. Give participants all you can in the time provided without referring to what they’re missing.

• Never ever go past the scheduled time. Participants want a full workshop, but they want it to end on time. Going beyond the scheduled time creates anxiety, and participants will spend more time worrying about when the facilitator will close than considering what is being shared (Pike, 1989). Stop at or a few moments before the scheduled ending time even if you were unable to share all that you wanted. Those who are truly interested can talk with you privately after the session.

• Never ever forget that you have an audience. Workshop facilitation is collaborative in that the facilitator and participants work together during the workshop (Brookfield, 1986). Walk among and talk with the participants. Standing at the front for too long creates an artificial boundary between you and the participants and makes an atmosphere of collegial collaboration difficult to attain.

• Never ever take the workshop so seriously that everyone (including the facilitator) cannot have fun. While the content of the workshop is important, don’t forget to “lighten up” and insert some humor and levity into the day. Use humor that fits naturally and logically into the workshop to make a point and help everyone feel at ease.

Adapted from: Peggy A. Sharp (2000) National Staff Development Council,
http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/DTT/dtt_plan_01_1.htm
INTROS
• I messed up: mistakes should be celebrated, practice applauding when people mess up.
• Standing ovations: applause should always be big and loud for everyone
• Walk around- Name: write your name with leg/shoulder/eyelash etc.
• Circle name game: names are said along with an adjective or fruit that starts with the same letter as their name and a movement which everyone repeats.

OPENINGS
• 13 joints warm up: everyone moves each joint around
• 5 4 3 2 1: in a circle, everyone shakes out their left arm, right arm, left leg then right leg to a count of 5 4 3 2 1 for each limb, then repeats all four limbs with 4, 3, 2, 1, each, then 3, 2, 1 and so on until it gets down to 1.
• Find your sphere/ balance: people take personal space, and explore that space – they can pretend they are in an egg about to hatch.
• Opening meditation: everyone is invited to take 5 breaths with their eyes closed.

CLOSINGS
• Evaluation: people call out what they liked, what they want more of, what they want less of.
• Thank you circle: everyone says one appreciation to the person on their left either simultaneously or one at a time so everyone can hear.
• I am somebody!: you say loudly “I am somebody”, they repeat, you say “I am _______!” fill with some nice adjective, ie courageous, everyone repeats. Then it goes around the circle, each participant chooses a different adj. to fill in, and then everyone repeats them. Close when it gets back to you with “I am somebody!” 3X.

QUICK WARM UPS
• Move around: slow, fast, high, low, in water/wind etc.
• Move around: freeze as flower/bird/person who ate too much etc. …tag for secret thoughts
• Stage picture: walk around, when you call out “Stage Picture” they freeze facing you wherever you are so that each of them can be seen by you, the audience.
• Bugs: teacher is a child eating bug, so everyone has to pretend they are anything but a child or they will get eaten.
• Yes Lets: walking around, people take turns calling out what they want people to do “Lets climb a tree” then everyone says “Yes lets!” and pretends to climb a tree.
• True about me: like musical chairs, they move if the statement of the person up is true for them.
● Guess the feeling: take turns in a circle having a feeling and people guess what it is.
● Circle work: pass the clap/sound/movement/imaginary object/ball/ pencil (that becomes something else around the circle.
● Silly sound and movements: do some really ridiculous words, sounds, movements etc. that everyone copies simultaneously while standing in a circle.
● Word association: in a circle, say a word to someone on your left, then they pass on the first word that pops into their head after hearing the word that was passed to them, then the next person passes on whatever pops in their head. ie. frog, pond, dragonfly, cloud, fly, bird…. etc.
● What are you doing?: two people are “on stage” A asks B, “what are you doing?” B responds with an action, ie. “I’m flying a kite, what are you doing?” A then has to instantly start pantomiming the action, in this case flying a kite while responding by saying they are doing something totally different, which B then has to do and so on, back and forth until their brains freeze. Objective game: in two facing lines, the people at the end of the line face come together and one person tries to get something from the other (can be an object or something more abstract) after the objective is established they go to the end of the line, and the next pair are on.

LONGER WARM UPS/GAMES/SKILL BUILDING

For Individuals
● Character hot seat: one person takes a seat in front of everyone else and answers questions in character. or several characters can be interviewed together like a talk show.
● Character profile: each person chooses a character they want to play, and then decide for that character; name, age, family, friends, want, fear, habit, most important being, if they are part of the problem or part of the solution, how s/he reacts when something good or bad happens, what kind of music they listen to, how do they walk, move etc.then hot-seat the characters. Variation: after these characters are established, have people profile themselves.

For Pairs
● Hypnosis: partners take turns moving around, following their partners hand with their nose.
● Mirrors: in pairs people mirror each other, switch leaders/ both lead.
● Dialogue with ball: no talking, dialogue happens through how the ball is shared, not shared, thrown etc.
● Dialogue –“yes” “no”: person A says “yes” only, person B says “no” only, then switch.
● Complete the Image: pair makes an image, then one person gets out of it and makes a new image, using the image of the frozen body, then that person gets out and makes a new image and so on.
● Blind walk with sound: one person leads the blind other by a sound which they become familiar with before they start.
● Blind walk with textures: one person leads the blind other by holding their hand and guiding them around the room, taking them to different textures, smells, etc. then you switch.
● Blind walk with photos: same as blind walk with textures, except you add the ability for the guider to tell the blind person to open and close their eyes, taking a momentary “picture” of something in front of their
• Blind handshake: participants shake hands, then close their eyes and really get to know the other hand. Then they walk either a few steps back then forward, or walk around the room, then at your signal start trying to find each other again, but with their eyes closed.
• Dyad storytelling: each person takes a turn telling their partner a story, real or not, with a beginning, middle, and end. Anyone who wants to can share their story to the group.
• Tour guide: each person takes a minute to think about where their story takes place, with a lot of detail, and then takes their partner on a tour of that place.
• Projection: using a short script for two people, pairs get on opposite sides of the room and practice their scene 20 feet away from each other. They can only say their line after they have heard the other person say theirs. For less noise, have the pairs perform one at a time.

For Small Groups
• Alphabet soup: in groups of 3, take turns thinking up all the words that start with a letter you give them, while the other two mime out their ideas to help.

For Half of the Group (can also be whole group)
• Bus driver: as people get on a bus, everyone else on the bus adopts the new persons crazy personality.
• Party guest: someone is hosting a party, everyone else is a guest at the party with a secret identity/occupation that the host has to guess.
• Environment: one person walks on stage doing something that gives clues to everyone else about a place, then when people think they know where the 1st person is (in the rain, at a circus etc.) they join in.
• Power chair: everyone is labeled with a secret number on their backs. A number is called out, and people are told that the person with this specific number has everything in the world that you most want, but you can’t talk or touch them. Numbers are switched often. The only thing in the space is a single chair.

For the Whole Group in a Circle
• Machine: people create a machine by adding a repetitive movement and sound one by one to the middle of the circle.
• Find your mother: in a circle, the person to your left is your mother, the (on person to your right is your child. Each person makes a sound that their own personal mother must memorize- then the group breaks off and blindly tries to find their family.
• Switch: one person in the middle of the circle, who wants to join the circle. People make eye contact with each other around the circle in order to silently signal a switching of places while the person in the middle attempts to take one of the now empty spaces. If the middle person succeeds, the person left is now in the middle.
• Elephant: the group learns how to model an elephant using three people in the circle. One person in the middle points to someone who becomes the elephant trunk while her/his neighbors become the ears. If they succeed they stay, if they mess up, the person who messes up goes in the middle. Then add a rabbit,
horse, wizard etc.

- Pattern Game: someone steps to the center of the circle and holds up an object (pen) another person comes in and holds the pen, then another, after everyone has held the pen, repeat with the exact same order of people holding the pen. Practice again, then say a color to someone, who says a different color to someone else who says it to someone else creating a second pattern, practice that pattern once, then combine the first two patterns together. Keep adding new patterns until it becomes impossible (you can add animal types, sounds, ball tossing etc.).

- Sound of the Movement: a volunteer starts a repetitive movement in the middle of the circle and adds a sound to it, everyone on the outside copies. That person then moves to face someone in the circle who replaces his or her place in the middle. This new person continues copying the first person’s sound and movement, and then slowly starts adding their own flavor to it, eventually morphing into a totally different sound and movement, meanwhile everyone is still copying, after the new sound and movement are established they move over to another person who replaces them.

For Whole Group Filling the Space

- Flocking: the group is a flock that always follows whoever is in the front who does some movements, ending with turning the flock to face a new person.

- Grouping: moving around, people are asked to group according to shirt color, pants, shoes, height, etc. then asked at the count of three to say the one thing they have in common.

- Dancing serpent: everyone gets in a line facing towards the head of the serpent, and following the movements of the person in front who moves to the tail after 10 seconds.

- Enemy Protector: walking around the space, everyone secretly chooses one person to be their enemy, and one person to be their protector, who they must try to keep constantly between them and their enemy.

- Walk, Stop, Run, Sit: after walking around, some people stop every once in a while, then run every once in a while, then sit, then lie down etc. but all of the previous instructions must still be happening by at least a few people simultaneously.

- Greek Chorus: balance in the round –1-1/1-2/1-6 etc.

- Chorus: group divides into 3 or more different sounds. Someone conducts them changes speed, volume, quality of sound for each group.

- Swamp: one blindfolded person tries to walk through a swamp without stepping on any puddles (represented by sweatshirts/backpacks etc.) with the help of verbal directions from the rest of the group.

Handout by Levana Saxon and Joshua Kahn Russell.
A meeting held in a culturally diverse environment is anything but business as usual. In fact, meetings can be the arena where differences in cultural programming show themselves most clearly...or confusingly, as the case may be.

- Have you ever felt frustrated when you throw a question out to the group and all you get are polite smiles, or people who won't look you in the eye?
- Are you irritated when you expect a lively discussion of the pros and cons of a plan you are considering, and you get no discussion at all?
- When voices get raised and it seems that the discussion is turning contentious and angry, do you wonder what went wrong?

**Maybe it's cultural**

While the behaviors you expect are second nature to you, they might not be to someone born in a different country or socialized in a different culture. Think about your group. What different nationalities, ethnicities, and cultures are represented in your meetings? Then take a look at the behaviors you value and expect of people at those meetings. These might include:

- speaking out
- making suggestions
- disagreeing with someone in an authority role
- stating an opinion
- taking "no" for an answer
- giving criticism
- asking questions
- speaking in a moderate, conversational tone
- seeing other points of view
- making presentations
- accepting praise

Which of these bother you when they're absent? Could it be they're not happening because they're discouraged in some cultures?

For example, in many cultures, people in authority roles (bosses, teachers, group leaders, elders) are seen as the ones with the answers. Making a suggestion to one of these people might be seen as disrespectful, causing him/her to lose face. Asking questions or requesting clarification might seem to imply that the person is unable to
make him/herself clear or doesn’t know what he/she is talking about.

Different cultures also have different ideas about what constitutes a normal, civil discussion. Raised voices and vehement tones may be interpreted very differently by different people. What one person would see as a normal, if spirited conversation, another might perceive as an angry argument. On the other hand, a person who expects more feeling and fervor in a discussion might mistake a restrained or soft-spoken delivery as a lack of enthusiasm.

Another source of misunderstandings is a difference in attitudes about “the rules.” American majority culture values structure and holds that there are many unwavering rules and limits that apply to everyone. In some other cultures, the expectation is that just about anything is negotiable. An initial “no” is seen as just an opening argument, not a final pronouncement. This can leave one party irritated because his/her credibility is being questioned, and one baffled by the other’s rigid refusal to engage in negotiations.

It’s important to understand that none of these ways of behaving and looking at the world is right, or better than the others—**they’re just different.** People with diverse backgrounds can work well together and come to appreciate each other’s cultures, as long as they make the effort to understand and accommodate their differing values and points of view.

Here are some things that you as a leader can do to help:

**1. Examine expectations**

Get the group to talk about what they want from each other in meetings, and what each person feels able to give. Encourage them to give each other feedback and to confirm that they’re really understanding what someone is saying, and why. If people have different styles or ways of seeing the same behavior, encourage them to talk it through and try to understand the other’s point of view. See what accommodations and compromises people can make for each other. Just exploring unspoken assumptions and learning what’s behind another person’s attitudes and behavior can clear up many misunderstandings.

People may be willing to go against some of their cultural norms, but it should be their choice, and one they are reasonably comfortable with. Be realistic about what you can expect people to change. For example, someone raised in a culture where singling out and praising an individual in front of others is taboo may always respond to public compliments with a certain amount of discomfort. You may need to find other ways to let that person know that he/she is valued and appreciated.

**2. Create a comfortable tone**

No matter how good a relationship you have with your members, the communication dynamics change in a more formal setting. Meetings intimidate some people; no one wants to look foolish in front of their peers. Cultural
programming just complicates the matter. Setting a nonthreatening, comfortable tone should be first on your agenda.

You can reduce anxiety and increase participation by starting with a warmup activity that breaks the ice and gets everyone participating right away. There are several techniques that may help.

- Ask open-ended questions like "So your biggest concern about this plan is..." or "The pros and cons of this system is..." or "If you could make just one change in this project, it would be..."
- Ask for a simple numerical evaluation such as "On a scale of 1 to 5, rate the effectiveness of this new procedure."

3. Use small groups to get participation without violating cultural norms.

One of the laws of group dynamics is that the smaller the group, the greater the safety; therefore, the more the participation. The use of small groups can be your ally in working around cultural norms that may discourage people from speaking up and standing out from the whole group.

Let’s take a look at how this works. Say you’re planning an event and trying to put together an action plan and a timeline. You want to encourage people to look for potential problems and unrealistic expectations, so you can refine the plan now. One way to respect cultural "rules" and still get the input you need is to break people up into small groups where they can collectively list the possible glitches in your plan. Then no one individual has to be responsible for the criticism and not everyone has to speak before the whole group.

4. Write down the meeting content

In a multilingual arena, giving people two ways to absorb the information increases your effectiveness as a communicator. Many people for whom English is a second language have an easier time understanding written English than hearing it spoken.

Use handouts, flipcharts, chalkboards, whiteboards, even butcher paper taped to the wall to get your message across. Write down the agenda and the major points of the discussion. This allows people to integrate the information at their own pace.

This handout adapted from "How to Make Meetings Work in a Culturally Diverse Group" by Lee Gardenswartz, Ph.D. and Anita Rowe, Ph.D., originally published in Working World magazine.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANT</th>
<th>BEHAVIOR</th>
<th>HOW TO DEAL WITH THEM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Overenthusiastic</td>
<td>• Rushes to answer. Talkative.</td>
<td>• Note verbally to the group that you want to hear from everyone in the room, and you are noticing that there are many people who are staying quiet.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participator</td>
<td>• Does not allow room for others to participate.</td>
<td>• Deal with them directly; affirm their enthusiasm, but ask them to make room for others to participate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• An “eager beaver”</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May have a lot of info or personal experience with the issue.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Often doesn’t intend to be disruptive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hostile or Aggressive</td>
<td>• Criticizes the workshop, the politics, you, or other participants.</td>
<td>• Don’t allow their hostility or aggressiveness take over the workshop.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Could have a political disagreement or just be in a bad mood.</td>
<td>• Encourage them to stick with the process, if it seems appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Know It All</td>
<td>• Feels that they are the ultimate authority.</td>
<td>• If it comes to it, acknowledge that this may be the wrong space for them and invite them to leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Can be or cannot be knowledgeable about the topic.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does not make room for others to participate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• May be rude or disrespectful to others’ participation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Wet Blanket</td>
<td>• Expresses negativity (“Things won’t ever change”, or “It won’t work”).</td>
<td>• If they aren’t being rude, verbally encourage everyone to make space for each other to participate, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Puts a damper on the group.</td>
<td>• If they aren’t being rude, thank them for their knowledge but acknowledge that there are other people in the room we also want to hear from.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• If they’re rude, remind them of the group agreements and ask them to please hold their thoughts until later.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Complainer</td>
<td>• Often complains about things that cannot be changed.</td>
<td>• Give concrete examples of things that have worked in the past.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Cannot be pleased.</td>
<td>• Encourage them to stick with it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Put it to the group, and allow others to respond.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• If it gets disruptive, acknowledge that this may be the wrong space for them and invite them to leave.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| The Silent Type | The Silent Type
| --- | --- |
| • Polite and participates in activities, but does not speak up.  
• Not overtly hostile, just quiet. | • Try to draw them in through eye contact so they don’t feel on the spot.  
• Acknowledge that their participation is important and encourage them to speak up.  
• Look for non-verbal signals that they are participating (nodding head, etc.) and try to draw them out through those signals. |

| The Joker | The Joker
| --- | --- |
| • Constantly makes jokes or commentary throughout the training.  
• Does not pay attention to your requests to settle down.  
• Doesn’t pay attention to facilitation. | • Return to the ground rules, and remind him/her of the ground rule of respect.  
• Remind the group of what you are trying to accomplish and the importance of focus.  
• If nothing else works, take a break, take the person aside and sternly ask for their help in moving on. |

| Deadwood | Deadwood
| --- | --- |
| • Not overtly hostile, but does not verbally participate or participate in activities.  
• May sit on the sidelines, physically or otherwise.  
• Is disinterested and does not make an effort to get engaged.  
• May look around the room, be texting, pull out a magazine, etc. | • Make an active effort to try to draw them in. But if they don’t go for it, don’t push it.  
• Acknowledge that their participation is important and encourage them to speak up.  
• If it’s not disruptive and you’ve tried to draw them in, you could let it go.  
• If it’s disruptive and other strategies don’t work, ask them directly to stay focused (put away the magazine, etc.). |

| Cross Talkers | Cross Talkers
| --- | --- |
| • May or not be related to the subject or may be personal  
• Distracts members of the group and the facilitator | • Stop facilitating until they stop talking. When they stop, remind them of the agreements (respect, one mic, etc.) .  
• Without pausing the workshop, use subtle actions or gestures (such as walking towards them) to signal that you are aware they aren’t being respectful.  
• During a break, quietly ask them to refocus and stop their conversation.  
• If the quiet intervention does not work, ask them in... |
| **Wrong Subject** | • Not purposely disruptive.  
• Participates fully, but just on another topic.  
• Repeatedly makes comments that are loosely connected or connected only in the person’s mind.  
• May share personal stories or experiences that are not really connected or at inappropriate times (“that reminds me of this time I was hanging out with my cousin...”). | • Affirm their willingness to participate.  
• If there is any way to, try to connect their comment (even if it is loosely) to the topic at hand.  
• If there is no way that the comment can be connected to the topic at hand, thank them for the comment but acknowledge that it is a little off topic. Go straight back into the topic. |
| **Rambler** | • Goes on and on, related to the topic.  
• Does not have a sense that they are rambling.  
• Inhibits others participation by taking up too much room or by boring other participants. | • Respectfully cut them off.  
• Acknowledge to the group that we want to create a space where everyone can participate.  
• Ask for their help in allowing space for everyone to participate. |
| **The Inarticulate Participator** | • Is making an honest effort to participate.  
• Can’t seem to find the words to explain what s/he thinks or feels | • Don’t embarrass them.  
• Ask for permission to restate what you heard them say.  
• Ask if your restatement is correct.  
• Try to move on. |

*This handout comes from Soul School of Unity & Liberation (soul@schoolofunityandliberation.org).*
HANDOUT: YOUR MEDIA PLAN AND TOOLBOX

TIMELINE

To really maximize your coverage: lay out a timeline so that you don’t miss any opportunities. Here, you will learn the basics of a good media timeline and also the basics of writing press advisories and releases.

Getting the media to cover your story is an art – but anyone can do it – and there is a simple and important formula to follow.

- **Continuously** -- build relationships with reporters, bloggers and editors by keeping them in the loop about what is going on, pitching only stories they might conceivably want to cover, and keeping up to date on what they’ve covered in the past.
- **5-7 days before** – send media advisory by email; include info on interesting spokespeople able to do interviews by phone or in-person.
- **3 days before** – follow up with a phone call to pitch the story and make sure they received the advisory.
- **1 day before** – Re-send advisory, follow up by phone with confirm calls.
- **Day of** – confirm they are coming!
- **Next day** — send your press release!

**Reminder!** Do not call reporters to ask if they got your release. They do not have time to respond to every release they receive. Instead, call them to pitch the news and remind them about the release. Be prepared to send another if the first one was misplaced.

MEDIA ADVISORIES

Media advisories inform the media about an upcoming event, like a march or rally: think of it as an invitation. Just like an invitation, the goal of an advisory is to grab the reader’s interest and make them want to come.

What’s the hook that makes this the do-not-miss event? No need to get caught up in long descriptions, this is more of a teaser: it is sent about a week before your event. Follow it up with a phone call to really sell your event.

**It should include:**

- Who is organizing the event/activity, including what makes them interesting.
- What the event or activity is, including your hook. (i.e. puppets! Street theatre! Students and elderly people riding bikes together! Etc.)
- Where the event is, just the name and address is great.
- When it is, basically just the date and time.
Why it’s newsworthy. (Re-state hook, why it matters, brief background of why now)

Below is a sample media advisory for an event:

MEDIA ADVISORY
January 9, 2012
Contact: Jamie Henn, jamie@350.org, 415-601-9337

Over 100 Harvard Students Will Surround President’s Office to Demand Divestment from Fossil Fuels

Part of a nationwide movement that has spread to over 210 campuses across the country

CAMBRIDGE -- Over 100 Harvard students will surround President Faust’s office this afternoon to demand that the University divest its endowment from the fossil fuel industry. The event is the largest rally yet in the ongoing divestment campaign.

Who: Over 100 students and faculty members supporting the divestment campaign; campaign leaders and spokespeople. The event is being organized by the student group Students for a Sustainable Future.

What: Students will hold hands to form a giant circle around the office building; three different speakers will address the crowd; student leaders will present the President with a giant petition signed by members of the Harvard community.

Where: Harvard Administration Office; 123 Main St, Cambridge, MA 02140

When: 1:00pm-3:00pm, Thursday, January 10

Why: The extreme weather of the last year is a stark reminder of the devastating impacts of climate change. This climate disruption is being caused by the carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases being poured into the atmosphere. The fossil fuel industry is a rogue industry, committed to releasing more pollution and blocking clean energy solutions. Students at Harvard have joined a nationwide campaign to push colleges and universities to divest from the 200 fossil fuel companies that hold the vast majority of the world’s oil, coal and gas reserves.

###

1. For more information, please visit: gofossilfree.org

__________________________
1 Only put primary media contact unless that person will be unavailable at certain points or overwhelmed with media requests
2 Specific and catchy headline that contains the key information about the event that’s happening
3 Use a second headline to provide additional context (optional)
4 Short and clear description of the event and why it’s important.
5 Put who’s attending, identify the key student groups, put in any prominent spokespeople.
6 Try and give the press an idea of what the event will look like.
7 Provide a few sentences of context for reporters who might not know what you’re doing and why.
8 Use a “###” to mark the end of your release, then put in additional links or footnotes below it.
PRESS RELEASES

Press releases are what your ideal article for an event would look like. The goal is to give reporters all the information they would need to write a story, even if they didn’t show up. Here’s a basic guide to how you can structure your press release.

In an email, the subject line is **RELEASE: Your Headline**. Copy and paste the rest of your release into the body of the email, and bring print copies to your event.

- **Headline**: Include the most important/interesting news, in no more than 7 words. This is your chance to grab attention!
- **Introductory paragraph**: Short, hard hitting. Describe the event, including your hook.
- **Second paragraph**: Focus on the issue.
- **Quotes from key people**: pack in your most interesting information, the punch line, and your most compelling story in miniature to influence the feelings of readers. Make sure to include at least one personal quote, and always a quote by someone from your climate group – preferably the leader.
- **Next, present and explain the solution** – i.e. why you are taking action, and how we will solve the problem.
- **2nd quote**: You can also add a quote at the end of this paragraph.
- **The last paragraph in the press release is your demand**. What are you asking for? What is your goal?

Now you need to put your contact details so that the media can contact you for more information and materials (photos, more facts, etc.). this is also where you include information on speakers available for interviews.

Add ### to the bottom of the press release – this is so that reporters know where the critical information ends.

After the contact details, you add the editors’ notes, which can include: a short paragraph (maximum 5 lines) about 350.org and your local climate group – i.e. who you are, and what you do.

_Sample Press Release_

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 9, 2012
Contact: Jamie Henn, jamie@350.org, 415-601-9337

**Over 100 Harvard Students Surround President’s Office to Demand Divestment from Fossil Fuels**

_Largest protest yet in an escalating campaign on campus_

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9 Put primary contact info.
10 Specific and catchy headline that contains the key information about the event that happened.
11 Use a second headline to provide additional context (optional).
CAMBRIDGE -- Over 100 Harvard students surrounded President Faust's office this afternoon to demand that the University divest its endowment from the fossil fuel industry. The event is the largest rally yet in the ongoing divestment campaign.12

“We don’t want our education being funded by climate destruction,” said Joe McStudent, a senior from Anchorage, Alaska. “Harvard should invest in companies that aren’t wrecking the world we’re going to inherit.”13

At 1:00pm this afternoon, students and faculty marched to the administration offices on campus and joined hands to form a giant circle around the building. After hearing from a number of speakers, organizers delivered a 8ft by 10ft petition to the President demanding divestment.14

The student group Students for a Just and Sustainable Future launched the fossil fuel divestment campaign at Harvard this November. On November 27, Harvard students passed an official resolution supporting divestment with 73% of the vote. To date, the administration has refused to meet with students to discuss the possibility of divestment.15

“The students here on campus have made a compelling argument and it’s high time the administration begin to pay closer attention,” said Prof. Really Important, a professor in the university’s English department. “The majority of students on campus clearly support divestment.”16

At $32 billion, the Harvard University endowment is the largest in the country. Students are requesting that the University immediately freeze new investments in the 200 corporations that hold the largest coal, oil, and gas reserves and then phase out all investments in these corporations over the next five years. The university has not yet divulged what percentage of the endowment is invested in these 200 fossil fuel stocks.17

The divestment campaign is part of a national fossil fuel divestment effort that has quickly spread to over 200 campuses across the country. Two schools, Hampshire College and Unity College, have already committed to divestment. This December, the Mayor of Seattle also pledged to divest city funds from the fossil fuel industry. The current campaign is modeled on the movement to divest from apartheid South Africa in the 1980s.18

“Harvard is clearly a linchpin in this fight,” said Bill McKibben, the environmental author and founder of 350.org, an international climate campaign supporting the divestment effort. “It’s time for the university to do

12 Put the key information about what happened in your first paragraph. Make it short and snappy.
13 Make your 2nd paragraph a quote from your lead spokesperson. Quotes should be catchy, short, and to the point. Don’t try and pack everything in.
14 3rd paragraphs are good to elaborate on some key specifics about the event and what happened.
15 After the 3rd paragraph, things get a bit more freeform. Use a 4th or 5th paragraph to provide background on the campaign. Make sure to give enough info for journalists who may not have followed the campaign.
16 Use 2nd quotes to present an important spokesperson, give an ally a quote, or make another point in your argument. Getting “validators,” like professors, influential people, or frontline communities makes sense.
17 Make sure to include key statistics and “hard facts” that journalists will appreciate.
18 Offer a national perspective that puts your action in context and makes it seem like an important part of a larger movement or campaign.
the right thing and divest.”

# # # #

1. For more information, visit: gofossilfree.org

2. For photos and video of the action visit: gofossilfree.org/video

REVIEW, AND CONNECTING THE DOTS

Take-home points:

- Start by looking at your goals.
- Figure out your story.
- Write your media time line, and appoint a media coordinator to see it through.
- Identify and train your messengers.
- Reach out to new and traditional media reporters to build relationships.
- Use community calendars.
- Leverage twitter, Facebook, and online networking to contact traditional reporters, and promote any traditional media you get through new media to create buzz.
- Send your advisories well in advance with personal emails, and follow up with phone calls.
- Use your spokespeople to promote your event through pre-event interviews.
- Send a catchy press release with a link to photos after the event!

GET ONLINE

The Internet and evolving forms of communicating have made it harder to know what is and isn’t media. For organizing, the definition you want is any media that people read. Anyone who creates content that is read by a number of people on or offline should be considered media, and you should use any and every type of media to amplify your story and event. There are tons of online tools to help you spread the word online from email to facebook, and from twitter to blogs.

In the previous session, you took a few minutes to analyze your audience. When you are thinking about your new media outreach, think about where your audience goes to find out about local news and events. That’s where you want to be!

We feel strongly that the Internet is best used to get people together face-to-face, for action on the ground — using online tools, however cool at times, are not an end in themselves. We see the web as a tool to help save our threatened planet. Tackling global warming is going to require an unprecedented level of collaboration and

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19 Put in a quote from a national spokesperson or a celebrity if you have it. This will add credibility and excitement to your work.

20 Use footnotes below your “# # #” to put more information.

21 Put in a link to photos and videos of the event.
communication at every level of society—and that’s precisely why it’s so vital that we learn to take advantage of the connections that the Internet provides.

The web is just one tool in your toolbox – if you don’t have a compelling strategy, narrative, and action plan, your Facebook group won’t make up for that. So before you start online, make sure all of your outreach is part of your larger strategy. It often takes three or four contacts with a person to get to attend your event, and new media is just one of those opportunities to connect with people! With that in mind…

Use online media to:

● “Crowd-build” for your event
● Attract the attention of traditional media
● Get the attention of elected officials and community leaders
● Amplify your message after your event

When thinking about online tools and media, remember that they are not separate from the offline world. Just like in other mediums, people are more likely to help you out if you meet them in person or talk to them over the phone. Think about including online asks when you talk to people offline. With that in mind, a few tools to help multiply your impact online:

● **Blogs.** A great way to build buzz for your event is to reach out to folks already active and blogging in your community- and get them to write or post about your event! Reaching out to bloggers is similar to reaching out to reporters, try to connect with them by phone or in person if possible, or email them if that is the only contact info you have. Introduce yourself, let them know why you care, and ask them to help promote your event. Try offering to write a guest blog if they are short on time, or give them a ready made flyer that they can easily post.

Want to really get their attention? Make sure to know what they write and care about before you contact them. Bloggers who write on progressive issues, the environment, biking, or even community events are great folks to reach out to.

● **List Managers.** Community organization, online communities, or even informal community groups often have large email lists. Remember the rule above, anyone with a large number of readers or viewers (whether on email, youtube, or a blog) counts as media! Ask folks in control of email lists to send out information about your event.

Remember, you can create your own list as well! Update volunteers and supporters interested in your event regularly by email. When your list of supporters gets too long, think about creating your own listserv! Google Groups are a great way to send emails to large groups of people without risking them getting flagged as junk.
• **Social Networking.** The first rule of organizing is meeting people where they are at: so get online and start meeting people where they are every day — on social networking sites! Create an event or page on Facebook, tweet about it, and consider looking into what other online communities your supporters are a part of. ‘Friend’ new supporters on Facebook and follow them on Twitter to keep them updated on your events and make sure they feel in the loop.

• **Photo sharing.** Uploading your photos online after an event provides a one-stop shop for reporters, bloggers, and supporters to pick up images for articles and to send to their friends. A picture is far more powerful than your words in describing an event, and often will move folks who didn’t make it to your event to cover it after the fact. Remember—you can always send photos to photos@350.org, and they will show up in our Flickr stream automatically.

  Web sites like Flickr [flickr.com] allow you to create centralized online albums of photos and to contribute photos to public “pools,” or groups of photos around an event, a theme, a city, a neighborhood, or anything else you can think of. Make sure that you tag your photos 350ppm and upload the best ones to 350.org as soon as your event is over. You can also send any photos you have to photos@350.org, and they will show up in our Flickr feed automatically. Always upload the highest quality photos your web connection will allow.

• **Video sharing.** There are only a few big players in online video, with the most dominant being YouTube [youtube.com]. After registering on their site, you can easily upload videos and embed any video in your web page or blog. Make sure to tag your videos with 350ppm. If you have a high-quality or very large video you’d like to post, Vimeo is also a good service. Video has the added bonus of making your Facebook page, blog, or website more exciting for visitors, and gives your friends and partners a reason to share your content with their friends.

• **How to become an email guru.** Though it may not be the most exciting tool in the box, email is nonetheless the cyber-activist’s single most powerful weapon. Some tips to writing a compelling email:
  
  ○ **Keep Your Message Focused.** Keep it short and sweet to avoid ending up in the trash. Keep each message focused on one-two action items at the most.
  ○ **Make an ‘ask’.** Make sure every email you send has at least one clear way someone reading can act on the information you give them. While your rate of success in getting people to volunteer or participate will always be astronomically higher when you call or talk to them in person, email is still a great way to layer your asks, remind people of what needs to be done, and every once in awhile get a few extra volunteers!
    ○ Examples of clear asks: Come make calls with us on Tuesday at 6pm; sign up to table with us on Saturday between 9am and 1pm; join our next planning meeting Thursday at
Action Strategy
a how-to guide
Actions can empower a generation, catapult an issue onto the international stage, and force political change. Yet, actions can also be poorly executed or harmful to your group and goals. This handout is here to help you design a strategic action.

The Ruckus Society defines direct action as the strategic use of immediately effective acts to achieve a political or social end and challenge an unjust power dynamic.

The Power of Social Movements

 Usually, actions take place within campaigns, and campaigns take place within social movements. A social movement is made up of different groups, networks, and individuals moving toward similar systemic goals. Social movements are powerful because their impact is greater than the sum of their parts. If your actions and campaigns synergize and align with others, it can create exponential change. Smart actions and campaign strategies complement the campaigns other groups are working on and amplify impact. Remember, no campaign operates in a vacuum, and your work or actions will impact and be impacted by the work of many others.

Many campaigns start with investigating the problem and setting goals. Education, such as hosting workshops, often comes next. Early on, campaigns also engage in organization building, forming alliances with new allies, establishing a group, and recruiting members. Groups often negotiate with the target in the hope of easily reaching an agreement. Campaigns then tend to start using low-level confrontational tactics, such as speaking at city meetings or wheat pasting. High-level confrontational tactics and resource intensive actions follow, such as rallies, lawsuits, and civil disobedience. Campaigns usually subside when a group negotiate a deal with the target, although it’s common for groups to reapply pressure to ensure the agreement is implemented. This handout is about the confrontational actions that occur in the middle of a campaign.

Campaign Basics

Vision: the way we think the world should be. Visions are big-picture, transformative, compelling, and deep.
E.g., We envision a Canada where First Nations have the right to say “no” to industrial activity on their land.

Campaign goal: what we think we can achieve to solve our problem.
E.g., End unwanted logging by Weyerhaeuser on the territory of the Grassy Narrows First Nation.

Campaign strategy: our plan to get from point A (where we’re at now) to our goal.
E.g., Boycott campaign against Weyerhaeuser.

Action: a tactic taken to execute our strategy. E.g., Protest outside an Office Max store to encourage people to buy elsewhere (as Office Max buys Weyerhaeuser paper).
Here is a tool that guides us through critical questions so we can craft a strategic action. Move around the star from the top, clockwise, refining your action design as you go.

Developed by Beyond the Choir. Adapted by Jessica Bell and Joshua Kahn Russell.
Goals should be SMART, which stands for:

**Specific:** The goal clearly explains the purpose of the campaign. E.g., Stop Arizona’s anti-immigration bill, SB1070, not help support migrant rights.

**Measurable:** We can clearly measure success, quantitatively or qualitatively. E.g., Bill SB1070 was approved by the Arizona legislature. We recruited 15 new members in one month.

**Activating:** There are many ways for people and groups to get involved. The campaign has a place for people who can dedicate time and expertise, as well as new activists, or people with little time.

**Realistic:** The goal is ambitious but achievable. If we run a great campaign we can realistically see ourselves achieving this goal within one month to 10 years. It’s okay if an activist group doesn’t have the capacity to lead a multi-year campaign provided another group is taking the lead, and everyone is collaborating. Groups like the Indigenous Environmental Network frequently partner with smaller groups. If our goal is way too ambitious, it’s useful to identify a sub goal that will move us closer to the big goal. “Ending all war” is not a realistic campaign goal, although it is a beautiful vision. But pressuring the U.S. Military to release Bradley Manning – a U.S. soldier stationed in Iraq and accused-whistle-blower – is realistic and visionary. When we win realistic goals, it shifts the political moment and makes “unrealistic” demands more possible.

**Time-specific:** The goal will make a difference to people’s lives within a set time-frame. It’s easier to recruit and keep members if they can foresee victory and the changes that will result.

When we have SMART goals we can more easily evaluate and re-evaluate our progress and change direction if necessary. SMART goals mean we can be students of our own context, and make our campaigns more strategic as we learn what works and what does not.

**Strategy:** A smart strategy considers the goals, niche, and capacity of your group. For instance, a student group might want to achieve the goal of helping pass legislation to reduce student debt. The group decides their strategy will consist of a series of direct actions targeting elected officials across the state. They decide upon this strategy because a) the group is skilled at organizing actions, b) they want to organize with student groups across the region, and c) other groups in the state are lobbying and taking to the courts to pass the law. This group is embracing its tactical niche.

Smart strategies are consistent and responsive to change. Consistency lets you build upon your efforts. For example, a company boycott grows powerful if a group’s tactics are all about executing the boycott, from sending a letter to a company’s customers to protesting at the retail outlets of one high profile customer. A group’s energy becomes too diffuse if members are running the boycott AND trying to pass legislation. Our actions should be in keeping with our strategy, and the work we and others have done before this time, and intend to do moving forward.

On the other hand, it is critical you continually meet and reassess the effectiveness of a strategy, asking questions like ‘is this the best thing we can do with our time?’ and ‘what new political developments or changes are affecting our work?’

If we don’t have the resources or time to execute a complete strategy, then we can choose to collaborate with other groups and together execute a strategy.
Actions have a target. A **target** is often the group or people who have considerable power over the issue and who are actively opposing you, such as a mining company.

But the actions in your campaigns are not just about pressuring your target; campaigning is also about building **relationships** with other stakeholders affected by or involved in the issue.

The “Spectrum of Allies” diagram (which was created by Training for Change) is a useful aid to help us identify and assess the stakeholders involved in an issue. When identifying stakeholders, be as specific as you can, identifying both groups and influential individuals.

Most groups choose one or two priority stakeholders to “move” in a campaign. It’s a positive thing when a stakeholder moves even a little closer to our side. We might prioritize a stakeholder because they don’t get a lot of attention from other allies, we already have some credibility with or access to them, or we know they’re sympathetic to direct action tactics.

When designing an action, it’s useful to ask how will our action affect and involve these stakeholders? Who are we targeting? Will our action help us do outreach to, recruit or partner with groups that share (or could share) our strategic priorities? Remember, some actions might unintentionally move key groups in the opposite direction.

It is sometimes wise for tactic ideas to be discussed with other groups. It is considered respectful for frontline or impacted communities to have some influence over the goals and tactics of groups working on campaigns that affect their daily lives. For example, some members of the Grassy Narrows First Nation were concerned they would experience greater harassment from residents at the nearby town following a blockade of the TransCanada Highway to draw attention to unwanted logging on their land. As a result, community members asked non-Native allies to be spokespeople at the blockade to divert blame and attention from Native organizers.

**Case Study: SNCC**

In 1964 the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was a major driver of the civil rights movement, and at the time they were registering black voters in the South. SNCC found they had a lot of passive allies who were students in the North: they were sympathetic but had no entryway into the movement. SNCC sent busses up North to bring folks down to participate in the struggle for the summer through organizing and action. It was called Freedom Summer. Locally, SNCC collaborated with other allies in church groups and others to make sure that the influx of outsiders reinforced their work and didn’t jeopardize it. Students came down in droves and for the first time witnessed lynching, violent police abuse, and angry white mobs—all simply for trying to vote. So a shift happened – a large group of passive allies became active allies. Then they wrote letters home to mom and dad, who suddenly had a personal connection to the struggle. So another shift happened: their parents became passive allies. And they brought their workplace and social networks with them. Some of those students went back to school in the fall and proceeded to organize their campuses. More shifts. The cascading waterfall of support helped turn the tide in the struggle, all because of a strategic set of actions. The landscape in the U.S. changed.
An action’s tone heavily influences the message, and our ability to recruit and retain participants and allies. If we aren’t intentional about our tone, we may end up communicating a message we didn’t intend. The annual vigil and civil disobedience undertaken by School of the Americas Watch carries a somber tone that underscores the moral weight of their campaign to stop the US military training mostly Latin American military personnel. Conversely, flash mobs are fun and exciting. The exuberant flash mob in 2009 at a Whole Foods store to protest the CEO’s opposition to public health care was perfect for recruiting young creative activists. The joyous tone also attracted the attention of shoppers (passive allies), instead of alienating them.

Debriefing an action is crucial to learning from our mistakes, regrouping and building a more effective group and strategic campaign. Shortly after the action, it can help to bring the group together and ask questions such as these: What did we do well? What could we improve upon? How did the tactic affect our group, and our relationships with stakeholders and our target? What lessons did we learn from this action that we want to carry with us? What are our next steps?

Celebrating victories or successful actions (even if we haven’t officially won) is a key ingredient of campaigning, and we don’t do it enough. Take the time to organize a celebration – a party, a dinner together – before moving on.

We should take steps to maximize the positive and minimize the negative consequences of direct action. Get training! It is wise to have all members participate in a direct action training so everyone knows what to do and expect. (That’s why Ruckus exists, after all).

Choose actions that people are excited about! Also consider the experience of the group. For leadership and skill-development purposes, it’s sometimes useful to choose actions that are challenging, but not overwhelming. Moving from leafleting on the street to a three-day occupation of a senator’s office, for instance, could lead to burnout as people might not be prepared for the emotional, physical, and psychological consequences. Also consider what skills the group already possesses; if a group is tech savvy it might make sense to do an online action, such as a spoof website; but if a group is skilled at art and prop-making then a creative street-theatre action might be best.

Consider recruitment and organizing goals. If we’re trying to attract non-political neighborhood residents to our cause then we might want to consider hosting an event that allows many people to safely participate, connect with others, and learn more about the issue, such as an educational tour or rally.

Many small groups swallow the pill of urgency-addiction and dedicate their time to doing action, action, action. As a consequence, some groups fail to address group health, address power-imbalances within the group, recruit and train new members, and build friendships. Members then burn out and leave. It’s useful to occasionally ask if doing an action is the best thing the group could be doing right now.
We're more likely to secure media if we associate our actions with a “time” or “event” that is typically reported on. Reporters usually cover yearly events, anniversaries, like Earth Day or the anniversary of the US Invasion of Iraq, Martin Luther King Day, or Halloween. Business and political reporters often cover the events of your opponents, such as the first day of city council or a shareholder meeting.

When timing our actions we should also consider when our targets are vulnerable: for instance, political parties are vulnerable during elections. Forest Ethics brilliantly harnessed the power of timing by targeting Victoria’s Secret retail outlets during the massive Valentine’s Day sales to protest the company’s decision to make its catalogues from endangered forests.

Consider how timing will affect the logistics of organizing the action. Organizing mass outdoor rallies in a snowy winter climate might pose a challenge for recruitment. Could the group pull off an action of similar scope and effectiveness indoors? It’s useful to consider the activities of our allies. Affiliating our action with a planned national day of action, such as those organized by 350, could give our local event a publicity-boost.

Finally, consider the time-frame of the action. Is the action just 10 minutes long? An hour? Two days? Short actions, such as a meeting disruption, are usually exciting, but we often need to do some pre-planning to secure media attention. Perhaps give one journalist advance notice of the action, or do the action where media will already be in attendance? Climate activists secured national media attention by having two campaigners dressed in suits give a fake environmental award to General Motor’s CEO before a slew of journalists at the LA Auto Show. Long actions require us to think about maintaining morale and enthusiasm. Consider music, creative skits, speeches, interactive games, marching, etc. Long actions – such as the Occupy protests - also demand serious planning, as we have to consider food, water, toilet access, sleeping arrangements and so on and on and on.

Resources include time, money, skills, and volunteers. Actions always take more energy and time than we expect so be generous in estimating needs. To gauge the resource-intensiveness of an action, we can call up people who have executed similar actions and get an assessment; Ruckus can help connect people with experienced organizers.

Some tactics are more expensive than others. A banner drop requiring technical-climbing or rappelling requires certain kinds of gear and skill to be safe. Blockades, on the other hand, can be executed with cheap gear (think PVC pipe lock boxes and oil barrels) or with no gear at all.

Think through which costs are fixed, and which costs can be reduced. One strength of being part of a social movement is that we all have tools and resources we can share with one another, such as connections with pro-bono lawyers, press lists, props, bullhorns and sound systems. First Nations solidarity activists in Toronto have used variations of the same massive banner time-and-time again because it’s a media-draw and the prop just needs to be dragged out of someone’s basement, and not constructed from scratch. Fixed costs often include bail and legal costs above and beyond paying the lawyer, such as photocopying (It’s more expensive then you think). Make sure to budget for these!
Our messages should convey our goals, make sense, be easy-to-understand (especially for non-activists!), short, and simple. For example, “George Bush: End the War in Iraq” conveys the campaign goal, problem, and target in one sentence. We don’t need to convey our entire worldview at every event.

Consider how the message will be received by your allies, targets, and other key stakeholders. Will we be seen as credible, upstanding, and powerful? Or disorganized, weak, and easily dismissed? Spokespeople are great at conveying tone and meaning. First Nations grandmothers being arrested while protecting their homeland evokes injustice, sympathy and outrage and tugs on society’s obligations to respect and protect our elders. A Climate change scientist speaking out against climate policy conveys legitimacy. Review the Center for Media Justice handouts and Smart Meme’s “Battle of the Story worksheet” and other exercises if you want to dive deeper into messaging and narrative.

Media will usually cover your actions with a 30 second television clip, a 100 word article, or a photo in the newspaper. Cater to these constraints by having spokespeople ready to share key messages in short one-sentence “soundbites”. It helps when we share our message visually. A classic example of a powerful and simple visual is the banner hung during the WTO protests in Seattle in 1999. Not all of us can hang banners off cranes, but we can certainly make a colorful banner, print images on a t-shirt, and distribute leaflets and press releases to onlookers and reporters.

Effective actions are often located at the point of consumption (such as where products are purchased, like a gas station), the point of production (such as an oil refinery) or the point of decision (such as a Senator’s office or an oil company’s corporate headquarters). When an action’s location is linked to the target it’s easier to visually show the issue, and associate the target with the problem. Protesting the war in Afghanistan at the Pentagon (point of decision) sends a clearer message than protesting the war in Afghanistan on a highway overpass in a small town in Idaho. Protesting at a coal-mining site (point of destruction) will expose individual reporters to the magnitude of the problem.

Think about distance. Media and participants are less likely to attend an action if it’s a long way away or inaccessible via public transit. Consider logistical challenges as well; remote actions require thinking through basic necessities, such as where and how you will access food, water, restrooms, shelter, and transportation. (Yes, police have been known to cut activists off from their food supply.) Is there a closer equivalent target?

Consider accessibility at the action site. It’s harder for both participants and the media to access private property, such as shopping malls or offices. Have a plan for how participants will enter, and how the group will get the message out. Consider embedding a journalist, or having spokespeople available nearby on public property. Relying on getting the message out via internet access, such as live streaming, is another option, but beware of technical hiccups.
Protest

registering your dissent.

- Public Speeches
- Letters of opposition or support
- Signed public statements or declarations
- Group or mass petitions
- Brands, slogans, symbols
- Banners, posters
- Leaflets, pamphlets, reports
- newspapers, journals, books
- Websites, blogs
- Radio, video, online media
- Social media actions
- Skywriting and earthwriting
- Deputations
- Mock awards
- Lobbying
- Picketing
- Mock elections
- Displays of flags, symbols, and symbolic colors
- Prayer and worship
- Delivering symbolic objects
- Destruction of own property
- Displays of portraits
- New slogans, signs and names
- Symbolic rejections
- Banner hangs
- Haunting, bird dogging or taunting officials
- Vigils
- Humorous skits and pranks
- Performances of songs, plays, dances, and music
- Processions
- Street parties
- Marches and parades
- Rallies on bike
- Pilgrimages
- Political mourning
- Mock funerals
- Demonstrative funerals
- Homage at burial places
- Protest meetings
- Teach-ins
- Walk-outs
- Silence
- Witnessing
- Renouncing honors
- Turning one’s back

Non-Cooperation

withdrawing something from the system that makes it difficult to function

- Ostracism
- Student strike
- Social disobedience
- Withdrawal from social institutions
- Consumers’ boycott
- Rent withholding
- Workmen’s boycott
- Withdrawal of bank deposits
- Refusal to pay fees, debts or interest
- Refusal of a government’s money
- Protest or quickie strike
- Industry strike
- Prisoners’ strike
- Sympathetic strike
- Slowdown strike
- Work-to-rule strike
- General strike
- Strike by resignation
- Economic shutdown
- Refusal of public support or allegiance
- Boycott of legislative bodies
- Boycott of elections
- Resignation or boycott of government employment or government agencies
- Withdrawal from government educational institutions
- Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
- Reluctant and slow compliance
- Disguised disobedience
- Refusal to disperse
- Sitdown
- Livein
- Noncooperation with conscription
  and deportation
- Hiding, escape, and false identities
- Civil disobedience of laws
- Whistle-blowing

Solutions or Alternatives

developing alternative systems that challenge an injustice

- Alternative social institutions
- Alternative communication system
- Dual sovereignty and parallel government
- Alternative markets
- Alternative transportation
- Alternative economic institutions

Intervention
directly intervening in the functioning of the system

- The fast
- Reverse trial
- Occupation
- Obstruction
- Blockades
- Tree sits
- Property destruction
- Establishing new social patterns
- Overloading of facilities, systems, or services
- Speak-in or meeting disruption
- Guerrilla theater
- Nonviolent land seizure
- Seizure of assets
- Disrupting industry or government procedure
- Disclosing identities of secret agents
- Seeking imprisonment

Adapted from Gene Sharp’s 198 Actions Handout

Writers, compilers and editors: Jessica Bell, Joshua Kahn Russell, Megan Swoboda, Sharon Lungo, the Ruckus Society, Training for Change, Beyond the Choir, Smart Meme, Gene Sharp, and many others. Design by Cam Fenton.
TAKE ACTION AND CHANGE YOUR WORLD

www.ruckus.org
6pm.

- **Break Up Your Text.** If you absolutely have to convey a lot of information in a single message, make sure to break it up into small chunks. Avoid long, stream-of-consciousness blocks of text. Instead, break down the information using bullet points, underlines, and bold formatting.

- **Nail the Subject.** You get fewer than a dozen words, and you need to make the most of them. Make it catchy, use a hook, and keep it as short as possible!

- **Double Check.** Ask a friend or colleague to proofread if you can, and make sure to re-read it for content, spell checking, and grammar.

- **Make a video.** Consider taking video as a compelling way to get the word out before your event, document your action, and amplify your impact. Make your video stand out:
  - **Make a storyboard** or quick outline of your video before shooting so you know what shots you need to take, archival footage to find, or photos to include.
  - **Focus on what’s fun, funny, or what you’d want to watch.**
  - **Avoid the talking head.** There’s nothing less interesting than watching 3 minutes—or even 30 seconds — of a person talking at their desktop computer’s webcam.
  - **Choose lively locations** for your shoot that are interesting and play up your local angle.
  - **Take steady, easy-to-watch shots** that can be easily spliced with other video.
  - **Keep it simple, and edit quickly.** In the case of documenting an action, making a simple video that you can edit and upload quickly is key – people want to watch that night or in the coming days about the march they just took part in. Don’t worry about being perfect – just get it out!
  - **Add some music** – adding a great song over footage can make a video really come together. Just be sure to credit the artist!
  - **You can always upload videos at** [http://350.org/video](http://350.org/video) **and they will show up on the 350.org vimeo feed.**