

Experiences of Social Change

Take some time to reflect on a campaign which aimed to make a change in the world. You might have been involved in this campaign, or its activities. If not, pick one you've observed, or know of from the history of social movements.

What did the campaign aim to achieve? (The campaign goal)

**Who was the power-holder or decision-maker who could deliver the change sought?
(Sometimes this person is known as the campaign target)**

Who were the people most affected by the problem? Who were the people active in the campaign?

What tactics, activities or actions were used in the campaign? What's been tried to win the change?

What story did the campaign tell, or key messages did it spread?

Campaigns, Strategy and Power

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 have an attainable goal.
- Campaigns may be made up by many different tactics.
- Campaigns take time to build.
- Campaigns take the offensive and reclaim the initiative.
- Campaigns bring in new energy and form new allies.

Through campaigns we can involve constituencies who are ready to be moved into action and move those who are merely passive spectators into participants! Rather than waiting for groups to agree with our vision, we can use tactics to engage with them: and in the context of a campaign objective, help them see the reasons why they should support that goal.

Ultimately, campaigns are strategic in that they are headed somewhere. They are a series of tactics, headed toward an attainable objective, which build skills for resistance and grassroots leadership. They can bring in new allies and activate others that have become passive.

Adapted from 'Campaigning for Social Change: beyond just protesting for it!' by Daniel Hunter, October 21, 2003. Training for Change www.trainingforchange.org

Campaigning is about shifting power relationships. We're aiming to shift power from corporations or the government to people. It's a like a set of scales - we aim to get more weight on our side (eg supporters, resources, influence over public opinion and decision-makers) to tip the balance in our favour so we win. When we campaign we build our power and diminish that of the other side to win outcomes. Our campaign strategy is our plan to shift the balance of the scales. In this context power is the ability to get what we want - to reach our goals.

Questions for Guiding Campaign Strategy

1. What do we want? (goals)
2. Who can give it to us? (targets/decision makers)
3. Who can influence them? (audiences)
4. What do those audiences need to hear? (messages)
5. Who do they need to hear it from? (messengers)
6. How do we get them to hear it? (delivery)
7. What will we do to have impact? (tactics)
8. How will we know it's working, or not working? (evaluation)

Modified from the Democracy Centre. See also The Change Agency for strategy tools. <http://www.thechangeagency.org/campaigners-toolkit/training-resources/strategy/>