

Our Welcome Activity ...

Please complete the following on the wall prior to sitting ...

I am ... [first name]

I serve as ... [professional position]

I reside in ... [home state]

I am attending because ... [your why]

My email ...

Strength and Power Building: Clubs to Fighting Unions

2025 LGBTQ+ Caucus Organizing Track





Anthony

NEA Members and External Audiences

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Honoring This Space

We begin by acknowledging that through a history of colonization and brutality, we are currently on the traditional lands stewarded by generations of indigenous people.

We honor these indigenous people, all elders, past, present, and emerging. We are called to learn and share these learnings about this tribal history, culture, and contributions that have been suppressed in the telling of the story of what we now call the United States of America.



Shout Out Around the Room

Name
Pronoun
Work Location

April 12

Sessions 1-3



- 1. 10:15-11:45**
- 2. 1:45- 3:15**
- 3. 3:30- 5:00**

SESSION OUTCOMES

We will leave this training with a campaign and leadership plan that works for you.

In the process we will discuss:

- Identifying Leaders to Build Power
- Building Structures to Distribute Leadership
- Building Power through Organizing
- Centering Race, Class, and Gender



Logistics to Remember

Questions to Ask
Bathroom
Materials
Food
Room Temperature



Community Agreements Page (2 in the handouts)

Using Self-Awareness and Self-Knowledge

Listening for Understanding

Being Gracious

Staying Engaged

Being Open and Suspend Judgment

Saying “I”- tell your truth

Lean into Discomfort

Reaching Empathy

Expecting Non-Resolution and Non-Closure

*

Adapted from “Embracing equity and inclusion”, Annie E. Casey Foundation



Your World as It Is and
Your Highest Hopes



Ellen



What are your three biggest problems?

IF you had all the power you needed, how would you solve them?

Do you want to build the power of your local?

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Organizing, Power, and Campaigns



Albert

What is organizing? - p. 4

- Organizing is identifying leaders and coordinating them into leadership teams
- Building community and commitment around common goals
- Building power from the resources of that community
- Using that power strategically to make concrete change in the world



**Organizing is about
building power.**



**Who is
powerful?**

**What makes
them
powerful?**

DEFINING POWER

Power is the ability to control, create, and prevent change.

Power is organized people and organized resources (money).

Power is not static, it is either waning or growing.



UNDERSTANDING POWER

Power is neutral

Our values affect the
way we use power



TRUTHS ABOUT BUILDING POWER

- Power has to be consistently built or it is waning
- Not everyone wants us to have power and actively work to take our power away
- Public actions through shared vision, shared purpose, shared resources, shared risk, and unity is how we build power
- The bigger the win you want– the more power you need
- Building power requires leadership



Definition for Campaigns

An issue *campaign* is the process through which the people organize around leaders and structures to use their resources in accomplishing goals that achieve the change they need and want. It is public. It involves risk. It results in the story being about the workers.

From Marshall Ganz

Strength AND Growth

- Achievement of public actions and campaign demands are a show of our strength.
- Issue campaigns ALSO grow **membership, engagement, and leadership experience**. This is a measure of our growth
- We support local leader teams in making campaign plans to ensure these experiences are successful and grow unifying relationships through public, positive actions for members and leaders.

KEY IDEAS



- Issue Campaigns, designed well, result in the ability to achieve wins that make a positive, concrete difference in the lives of people.
- Getting and keeping membership is necessary but not sufficient.
(GROWTH)
- Power is built and used when you do the necessary work of long term campaigns
(STRENGTH)



Three Theories of Change



Grat

3 Theories of Change – pgs. 5-8

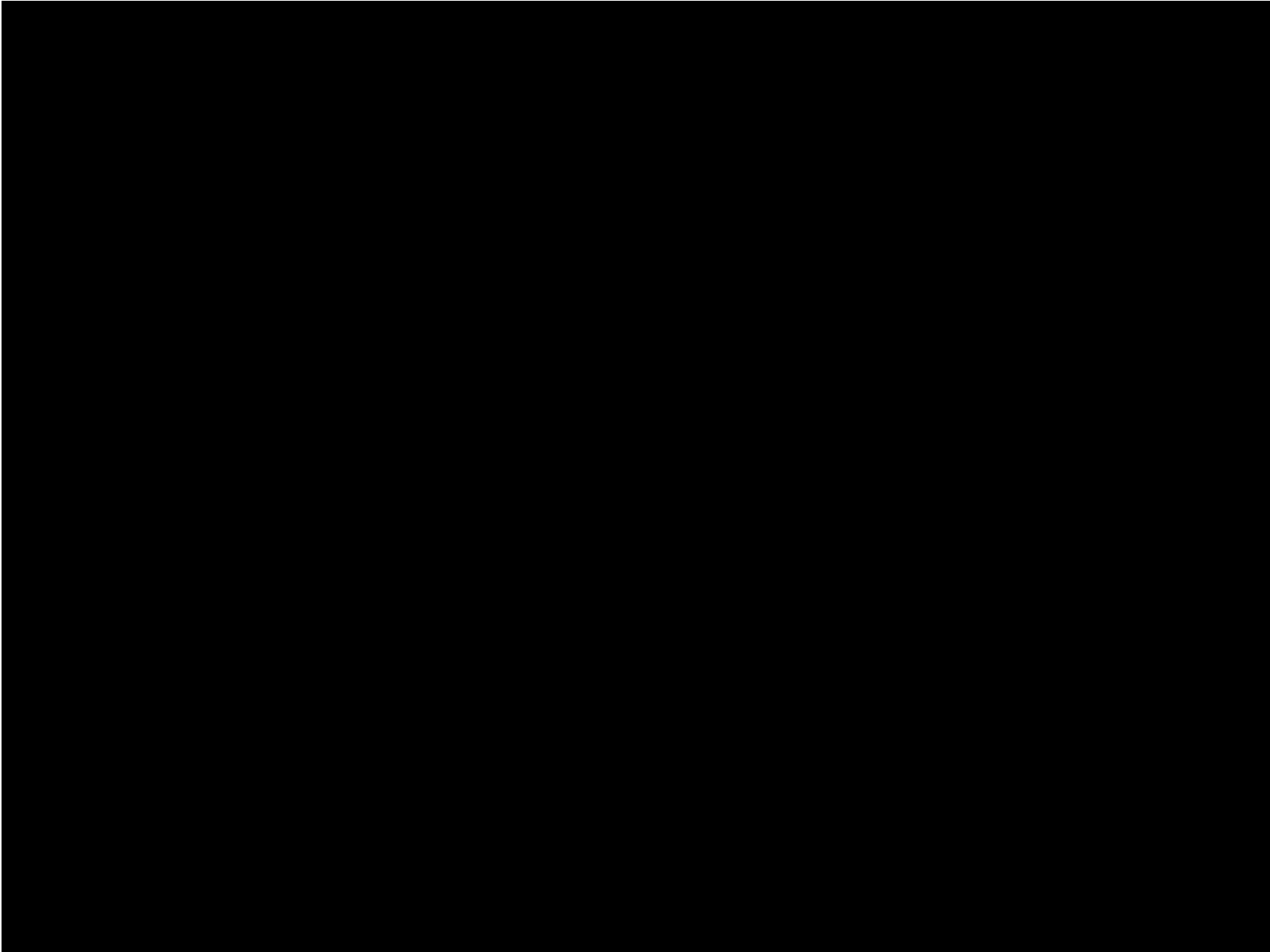
- **Advocacy**
 - “Advocacy is the work of creating change through the actions of professionals or technical experts—lobbyists, pollsters, lawyers, communication specialists, researchers. Advocacy relies on the expertise, status, and know-how of these groups of people to make change. Advocacy usually happens in a closed-door room; ordinary people play a small to nonexistent role in its efficacy. Advocacy has become a dominant strategy for unions and liberals.”
- **Mobilizing**
 - “Mobilizing, by contrast, activates an already-convinced membership. Mobilizing encourages those who already support a cause or a mission to take action to defend their belief—for example, by attending a protest, wearing a button, or signing a petition.”
- **Organizing**
 - “To organize is to build mass support and strength among ordinary people. Organizing draws its power from working people’s biggest strength: our numbers. The work of organizing is systematic and rigorous: It requires connecting with every single worker in a shop, every educator in a building, every building in a district. At its core, it asks people to understand their own agency and to make choices about how they will exercise it.”



As you watch the following videos which is closest to the way you currently do union work?

Advocacy





Mobilizing

Organizing



Team Talk

- Which of these theories do we mostly work in?
- Which of these theories generates the power you need to win the changes you want ?

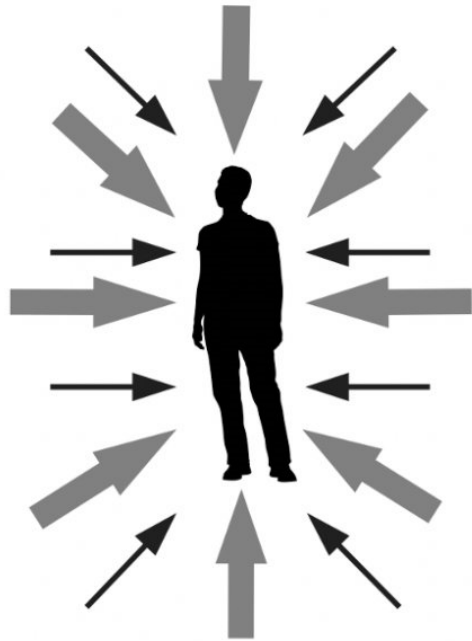
The Right Leadership Begins with You

An illustration of four diverse people (two women and two men) holding a large, curved rainbow banner. The banner is divided into horizontal stripes of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, and purple. The people are shown from the waist up, with their arms resting on the banner. They are wearing various casual clothing items like tank tops, a vest, and a button-down shirt. The background is white, and the overall style is flat and modern.

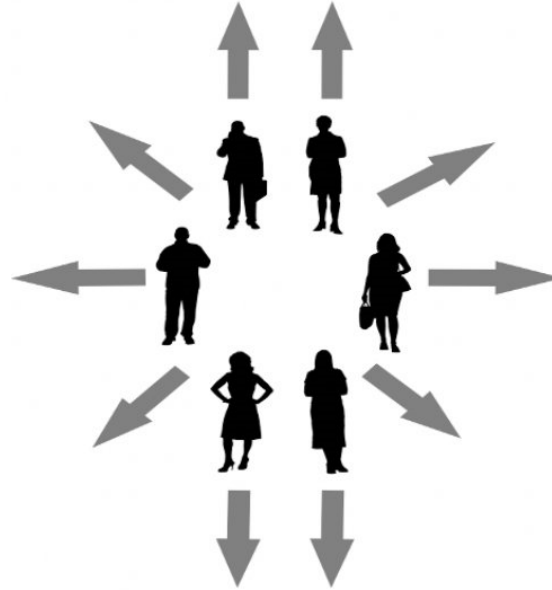
Leaders are those who take responsibility for enabling others to achieve shared purpose in the face of uncertainty

Leaders Across these Theories Page 4, 10-12

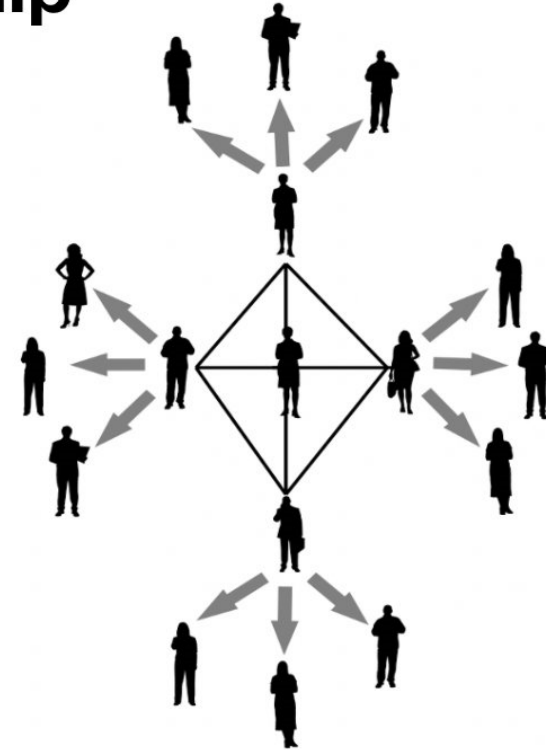
3 kinds of Leadership



"I'm The Leader"



"We're All Leaders"



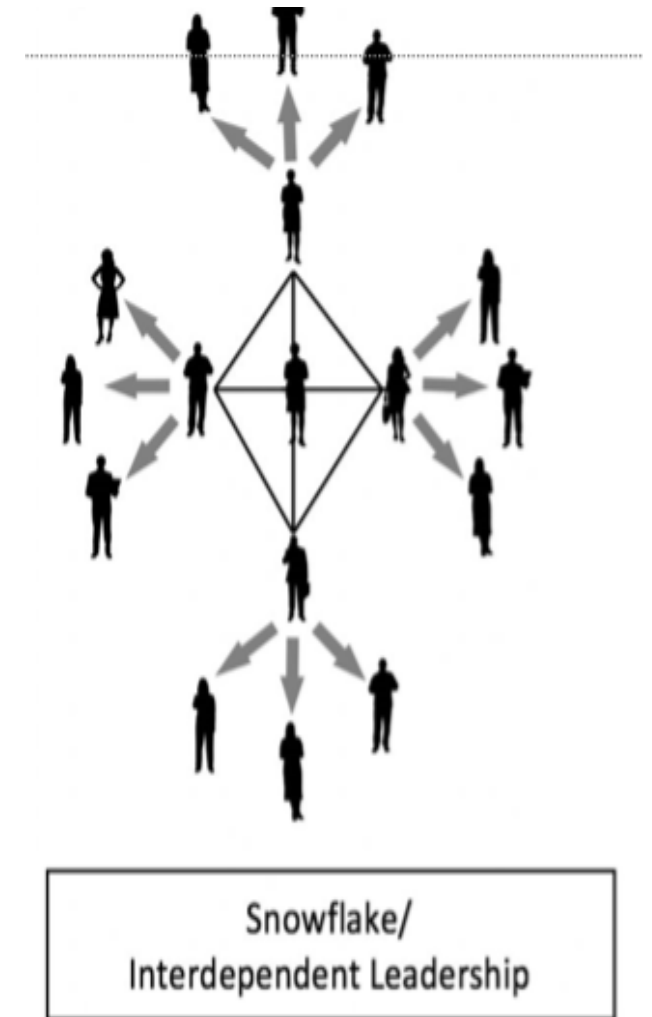
Snowflake/
Interdependent Leadership

*Credits: Marshall Ganz, "People, Power, Change"
Harvard Kennedy School, Spring 2019*

In each of these models, who holds the accountability and responsibility is different.

Remember, we build the most power when the members are accountable to one another and are responsible for the actions necessary to build that power.

If we hold the responsibility and are the only ones held accountable, the members are not building power to address the issues that are important.



Organizing Basic Skills



- ☐ Curious about others issues
- ☐ Asks Good Questions does not Tell Solutions
- ☐ Listen 80%- Talk 20%
- ☐ Be in a positive, public relationship with 75% of the members in your unit

Organizing Basic Methods



- ☐ One on One's
- ☐ Worksite Mapping
- ☐ Worksite Lists with leaders identified
- ☐ Data Collection about who are the leaders
- ☐ Team Coaching that allows others to lead

KEY IDEAS



The skills and methods of organizing are the foundation of an issue campaign.

To move across these theories of change requires a shift in your ownership and leadership of the work in their union.

Issue campaigns build leaders and structures focused on using power.

END OF SESSION 1

Do you want to build the power of your local?

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Recognizing Leadership



Jeny

Who are leaders that build power?

- In the face of uncertainty – they are confronting the person in power – risky!
- Risk builds leadership – AND it requires you allow that risk and support it – NOT DO IT.

Definitions for Today – Pgs. 9-27

- **Leaders** – Trusted and respected by their colleagues in ways that cut across communities of workers- are connected by values and influential relationships with mobilizers, activists, and those not yet part of the work. Get people to move their thinking and take action.
- **Mobilizers** – Are already convinced members, who are already willing to take action. They are connected to the other already convinced.
- **Activists** – Supportive and willing to act if invited but not able to move others.

IF Organizing is...

- identifying leaders and coordinating them into leadership teams,
 - building community and commitment around common goals,
 - building power from the resources of that community, and
- using that power strategically to make concrete change in the world,

THEN

Leadership that builds power is...

- ...taking responsibility for enabling others to achieve shared purpose in the face of uncertainty.
- The members who can lead most successfully are those who already have followers, i.e. people who trust and respect them.



Leaders, Mobilizers, and Activists – Scenarios (pgs. 26-27)



Leaders, Mobilizers, and Activists (pgs. 26-27)



Who is a leader, a mobilizer, and an activist? How do you know?



In what order would you want to invite them into your cause and why?



**We don't make leaders,
we find them by visiting
worksites consistently
and asking who is
Trusted and Respected.**

KEY IDEAS



Leaders are identified by their colleagues not us.

Leaders have followers and can move people.

Our role is to coach activists into relationship with leaders and other colleagues

Our role is to coach mobilizers into taking more risk and leading actions

Our goal is to support our leaders with resources.



Assessing our Structure



Eric J.



**How are we
positioned for
building and
using power?**

Club or Union? Pg. 28 Table Talk

Which of these columns best describes the constituency you're focusing on?
What indicators stand out to you?



Unorganized

Club

Union

Fighting
Union

Levels of Organizing - Pgs. 29-31

Advanced

- Members Lead
- Staff Advise and Coach

Basic

- Member and Staff Partners
- Staff Coach and Build Leader Capacity

Beginning

- Staff Lead
- Staff Focus on Engagement and Leader ID

Survival

- Staff Lead
- Focus on Recruitment and Engagement

Advanced

Basic

Beginning

Survival

Whole Room Idea Sharing

Share strategies for moving the work from staff led to member led to advance your organizing.

Unorganized

Club

Union

Fighting
Union

KEY IDEAS



- Clubs are fixed, are not growing, and do not have enough resources to achieve the wins they want or to move the community to act.
- The best way to transform a community into a constituency is to listen for the shared issues and values in order to invite them to take action for a shared purpose.
- When WE do the work, lead the work, make the change happen – we take the opportunity for growth away from a leader.



Building a Campaign



Eric S.

How do you build a Campaign? Pg. 90

An action plan with a beginning, middle, and end, working towards a specific demand

- Involves a series of **escalating actions** (or tactics) that combine to solve a particular issue
- **Increases pressure** on decision-makers to give what will solve that issue
- **Builds power** by increasing engagement, developing leaders, and building capacity around the values and shared pain of the common issue.
- Throughout the campaign we ***identify milestones*** that indicate we have enough power to try something **more** and something **bigger** and **win!**

Key Parts of an Issue Campaign Pg. 91

1. Problem and Issue
2. Power Analysis
3. Target
4. Demand
5. Strategy and Tactics
6. Escalation



Campaigns are Strategic - pg. 103

Strategy involves asking:

- Who are my people (constituency)?
- What change do they need?
- How could they use their resources to build the power they need to achieve that change ?

Strategy is how to turn what you have” into “what you need” to get “what you want” - how to turn resources into power.

Strategy is an intentional plan

KEY IDEAS



Campaigns involve a large diverse group of people, are member led, and increase power and visibility of their union

END OF SESSION 2



Centering Race, Class, and Gender



Salina

TEAMWORK

Make a list of LGBTQ+ problems workers face in our schools.

What will it take to achieve equity for the people who work and learn in our schools?



How does a Union build and transform their power?

- **Programs (club culture)**
- Build Presence
- Episodic
- Member Recruitment
- Committee/Program Leaders
- Low Risk
- Often Staff Led
- Power in Policy

- **Campaigns (fighting unions)**
 - Public Action and Demands
 - Strategic and Ongoing
 - Continues to Add
 - Base – Mobilizers - Leaders
 - Allies – Partners - Coalitions
- Requires Risk
- Supported by Staff
- Leaders Build and Use Power

Centering Race, Class, and Gender Justice – pg. 40

- Race, class, and gender justice is the systematic fair treatment of people resulting in equitable opportunities and outcomes for all.
- It is not just the absence of discrimination and inequities, but also the presence of **deliberate systems and supports to achieve and sustain race, class, and gender equity through proactive and preventative measures.**

Race, Class, Gender Equity Tools – pgs. 41-43

What they do:

- Proactively seek to both eliminate systemic barriers and advance equity
- Identify clear goals, objectives and measurable outcomes
- Develop mechanisms for successful implementation

What they are:

- *A set of questions used to anticipate, assess, and prevent potential adverse consequences of proposed actions on different race, class, or gender groups.*



Key Points about Equity Tool Success

- Buy in from the organization and its leaders
- Routine and ongoing use of the RET
- Data- driven assessment
- A commitment to making changes
- Tenacity – A commitment to overcoming obstacles to making changes



WE HAVE TO DECIDE TO DO THINGS
DIFFERENTLY AND STICK WITH IT

For each of the answers in step 1, ask these 4 questions.

For each problem ask these questions:

Who is most directly impacted?

Who has been left out?

How can they be directly engaged?

How do our demands advance race, class, or gender justice?

Key Points



- Intentional campaigns, not programs build power.
- Centering race, class, and gender justice in our campaigns increases the people engaged, the number of leaders involved, and the amount of resources we have to win the change we want.
- Power is only built through people with a shared vision, making public commitments to act, to risk their collective resources, for the meaningful change they want.
- If your campaign is not designed from the beginning to include those with the least amount of power, the least amount of privilege, the least amount of resources – there is no way to retool a campaign to include them.



STEP 1: Problem and Issue



Grat

PROBLEM vs. ISSUE pg. 93

A problem is the whole pie. Problems are vast, complex, and entrenched.

When we try to tackle a problem, we reinforce the hopelessness of the situation. We are trying to take on the full pie all at once.



Issues are the pieces of the pie. It's a small chunk of the larger problem that we can make progress on, and in turn we are slowly taking on the full problem over time.

Issue

An *issue* is a slice of the larger problem that is manageable and solvable.



PROBLEM

vs.

ISSUE



EXAMPLES- Problems to Issues + Values

VALUES – Public Schools should be safe, equitable, and inclusive learning and working environments for all people.

PROBLEM -Our school is hostile to LGBTQ+ staff and students

- **Issue Cut** – There are no gender inclusive bathrooms and/or transgender students are forced to use the wrong restroom.

PROBLEM - Our school reinforces racism and the school to prison pipeline

- **Issue Cut**– We need to stop armed security guards from arresting students for minor infractions in our schools.

KEY IDEAS



- Problems are big conditions of injustice
- Issues are the smaller member identified components that make up the problem
- Issues indicate a path to action
- Values build a relatable why across people experiencing the pain of the problem
- We intentionally work to connect members around issues and values to build Solidarity

TEAMWORK – Problems into Issues

Example Problem – We want quality health care for everyone

Values behind wanting to fix this – equity, fairness, dignity

Possible Issues –

Not enough health providers in our rural system

Values – access and equity

Drugs are not affordable

Values – fairness and access

No coverage for home health options

Values – equity and dignity

Cut your problems into issues on your charts.

Assessing Our Issues – Pg. 94

☐ Widely felt and/or deeply felt.

- The pain can be felt by just one, but the injustice of that pain is shared by many.
- The pain AND the injustice of that pain is felt by many.

☐ Winnable.

☐ Builds the union and builds leaders.

☐ Has a connection to students and the public.

Issue Criteria Checklist

pg. 95

Will the Issue...	Issue #1	Issue #2	Issue #3
1. Result in a real improvement in people's lives?			
2. Give people a sense of their own power?			
3. Alter the relations of power?			
4. Be worthwhile?			
5. Be winnable?			
6. Be widely felt?			
7. Be deeply felt?			
8. Be easy to understand?			
9. Have a clear target?			
10. Have a clear timeframe that works for you?			
11. Be non-divisive?			
12. Build leadership?			
13. Set your organization up for the next campaign?			
14. Increase membership?			
15. Be consistent with your values and vision?			
16.			
TOTALS			

TEAMWORK – Assessing our Issues

TIME: 10 Minutes

In your group, spend 10 minutes evaluating an issue you identified from the scenario



STEP 2: Power Analysis



Albert and Eric J.

REMEMBER POWER

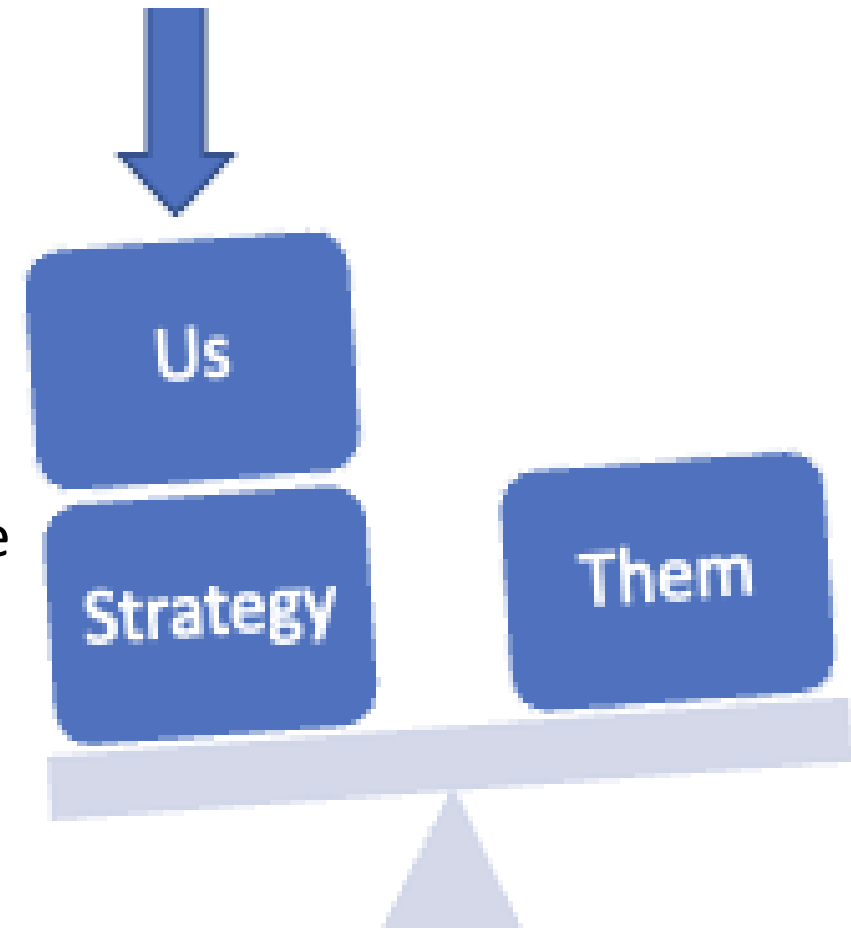
Power is the ability to control, create, and prevent change.

Power is organized people and organized resources (money).



Purpose of Power Analysis

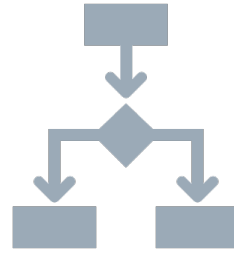
1. Understand how (& by who) power is exercised to cause and maintain the problems & conditions that we seek to change
2. Develop effective strategies for:
 - Permanently altering power relationships in favor of the people suffering from the problems & conditions that we seek to change
 - Grassroots organizing to build power
 - Issue campaigns that BOTH help to build power AND win change
 - Connecting short term activities to LONG TERM goals



Process of Power Analysis



1. Issue
Background



2. System
Landscape



3. Identify &
Analyze
Target(s)

KEY IDEAS

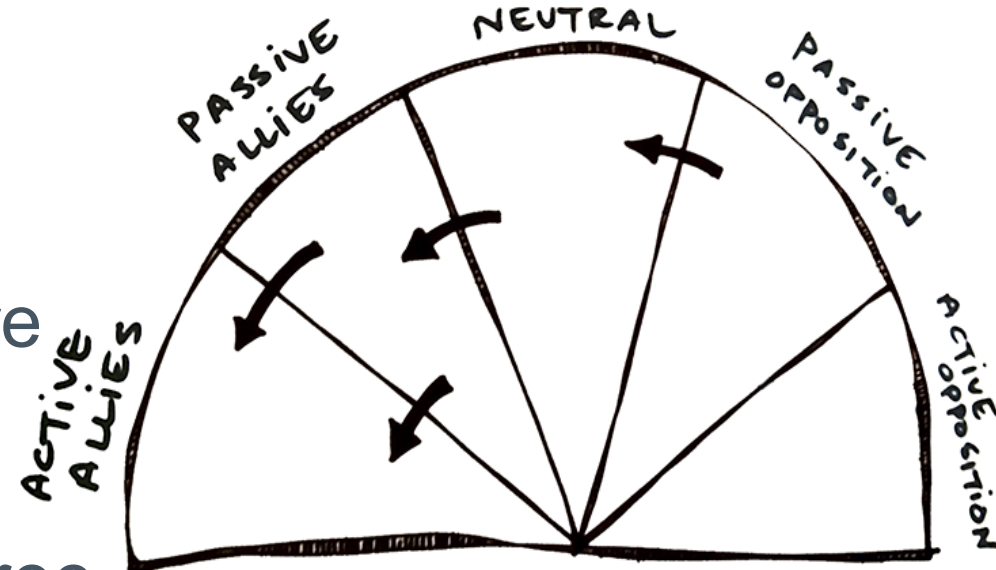


Understanding our own power, or lack thereof, is a necessary starting point

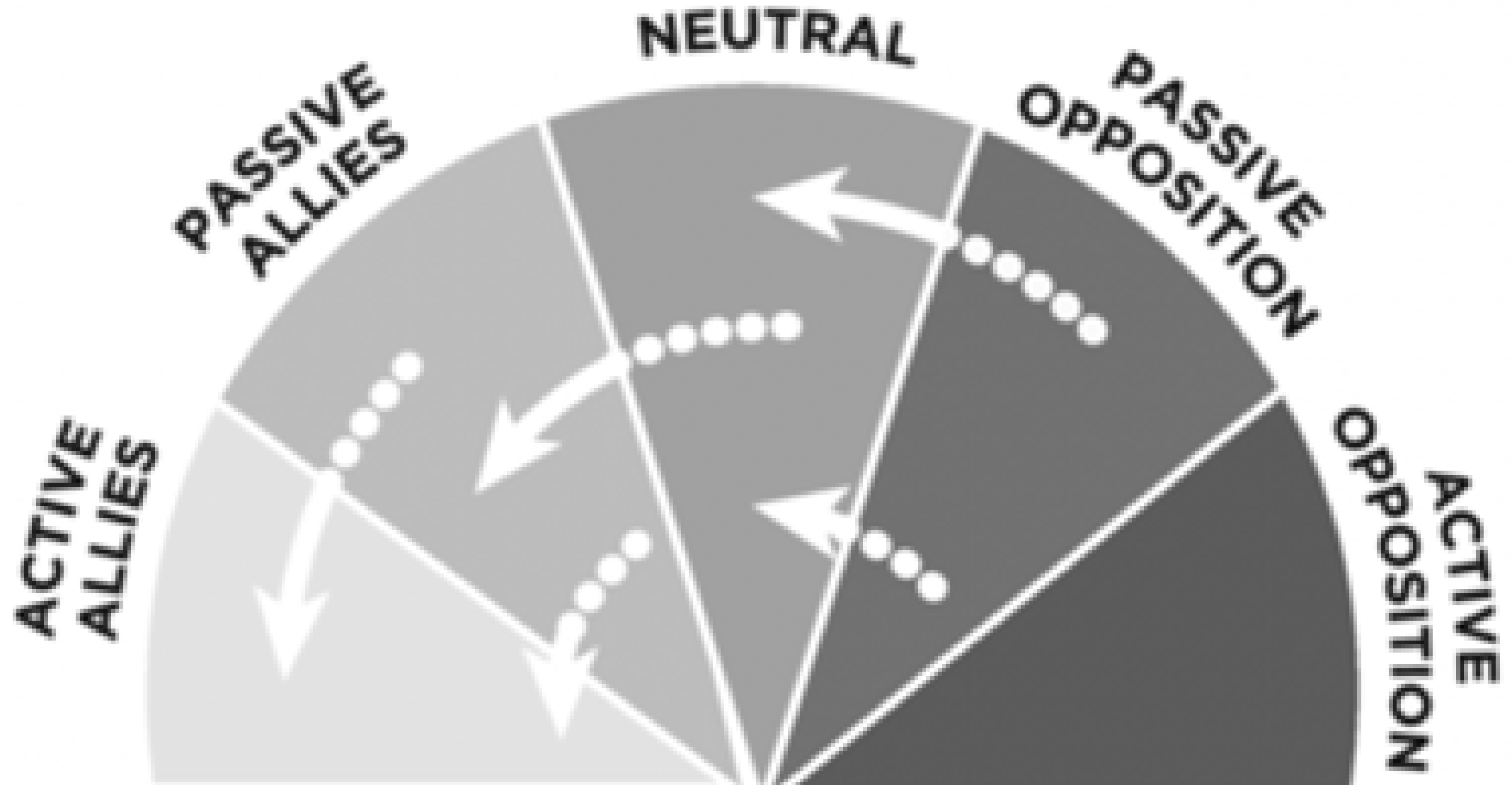
Understanding who has the power to fix the issue is crucial to building a successful campaign

Spectrum of Allies Part 1 Pg. 33

1. Active allies: people who agree with you & are organizing alongside you
2. Passive allies: people who agree but aren't doing anything about it (yet!)
3. Neutrals: people who aren't sure, or are unengaged (they might just not know about you yet)
4. Passive opponents: people who disagree, but aren't trying to stop you
5. Active opponents: people who have done something to prevent you from reaching your goal



Share Out Spectrum of Allies

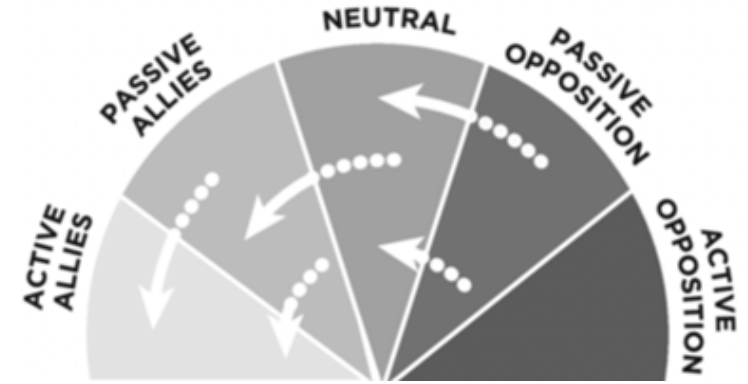


Focusing your tactics matters

Only the Opposition – cynicism

Only the Active Allies – stagnation

Generalizations about Slices – missed opportunities



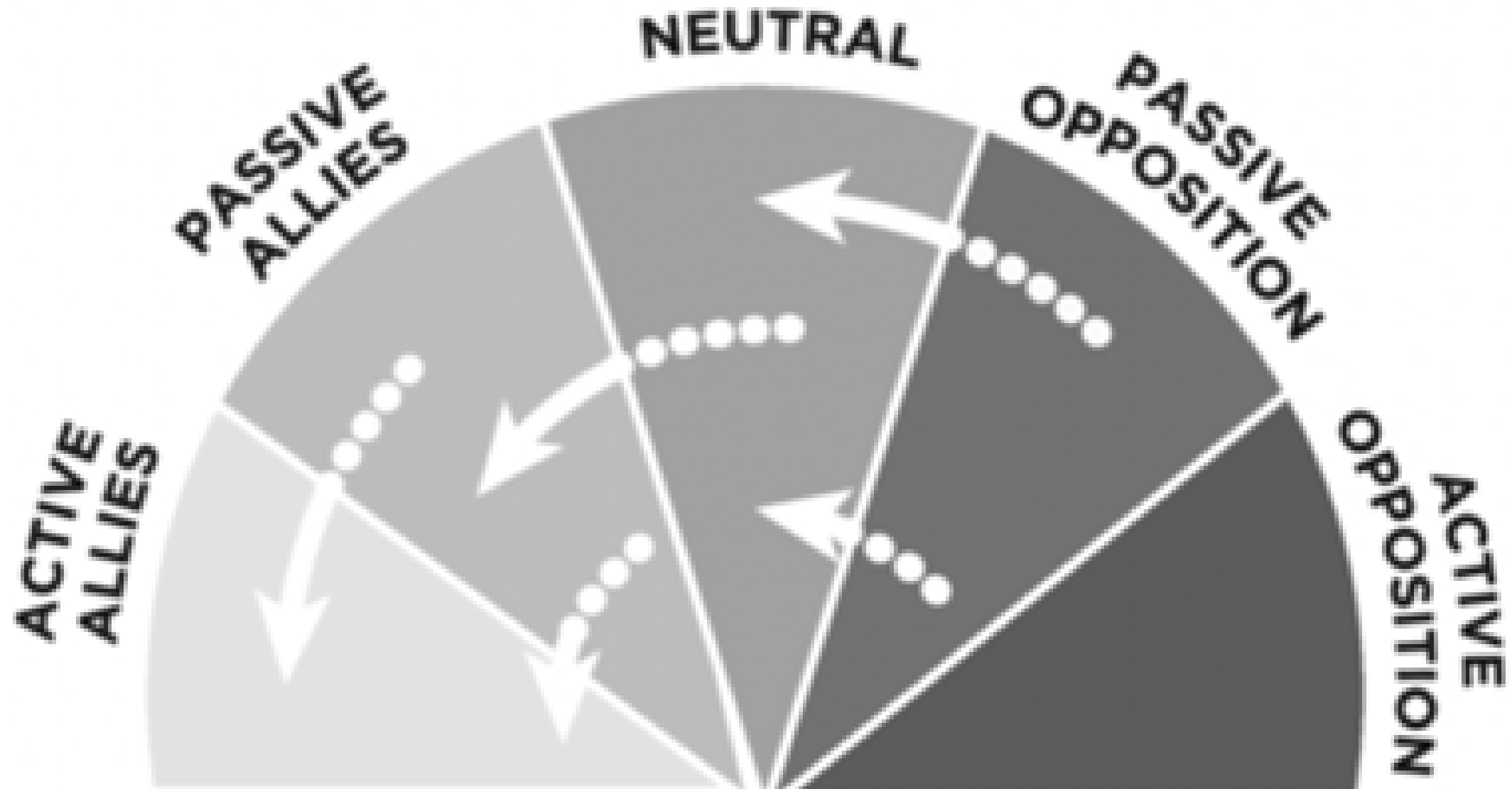
DO FOCUS ON THE PASSIVE ALLIES

- These are folks who know or care about what you're up to, but aren't doing anything about it! Give them a chance to participate and build power with you.

THE GOOD NEWS

- It is only necessary to move some or all of the pie wedges one step in your direction. If we shift each wedge one step, we are likely to win, even if the hardliners on the opponent's side don't budge.

Team Share of Spectrum of Allies



KEY
POINTS

- It is only necessary to move some or all of the pie wedges one step in your direction.
- If we shift each wedge one step, we are likely to win, even if the hardliners on the opponent's side don't budge.

Closing our time together...

**What will you take
with you into your
future work?**



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