



Foundations for Winning Campaigns



NATIONAL
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

Participant Handouts

Organizers will develop the skills and learn the methods of planning and coaching campaigns that win. They will work in teams with colleagues to plan, evaluate, and discuss issue campaigns.

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Community Agreements for Our Time

Awareness and Self-Knowledge

This requires self-knowledge and self-awareness. Self-knowledge allows you to see what causes you pain and conflict and enables you to embrace your contradictions and inconsistencies. It allows the space to work on things about yourself that you are not happy with. In turn, self-knowledge helps to prevent you from projecting your negative aspects onto other people. Bringing your best self also requires that you have a positive attitude, are willing to deeply explore your perspectives and remain open to the perspectives and experiences of others.

Listening for Understanding

Be an active listener. Active listening involves paying full and careful attention to the other person, looking him or her in the eye, avoiding interruptions, reflecting your understanding, clarifying information, summarizing the other person's perspectives and sharing your own. Remember that most people need time to open up and might not be willing to immediately share their personal stories, hopes, fears and/or concerns.

Being Gracious

Being kind is a vital way of bringing meaning to our own lives, as well as the lives of others. Kindness is about caring genuinely for others around you, wanting the best for them and recognizing in them the same wants, needs, aspirations and even fears that you may have. Being kind and generous allows us to communicate better with others, to be more self-compassionate and to be a positive force in other people's lives. We are gracious when we accept and genuinely work to use the pronouns that others ask us to use. Being gracious includes following the COVID protocols that are in place to protect the health of this learning community.

Staying Engaged

Staying engaged requires you to be morally, emotionally, intellectually and socially involved in the conversation. Staying engaged means that you are listening with curiosity and willing to deepen your understanding. Staying engaged might also require you to sustain the conversation even when it gets uncomfortable or diverted. This means a commitment to keeping your electronic communications to a minimum with folks not present in this learning community. This also means being present for all portions of the learning agenda.

Being Open and Suspending Judgment

Listening with an open mind includes being receptive to the influence of others. You can suspend judgment by becoming aware of preconceived notions and listening to everything someone has to say before jumping to conclusions. Most importantly, suspending judgment also means listening to what the speaker has to say for understanding, not just to determine whether the speaker is right or wrong. This means that we recognize each of us will make mistakes and that we have the capacity to grow. We should expect imperfections.

Saying "I" - tell your truth

Speaking your truth in authentic and courageous conversations about race and other issues where experiences/perspectives may differ widely from yours requires a willingness to take risks. It means that you will be absolutely honest and candid about your own thoughts, feelings, experiences and opinions and not just saying what you perceive others want to hear. Speaking your truth will require you to speak from the "first person" and use "I" statements.

Seeking Discomfort

Leaning in to discomfort will require you to let go of understandings and stereotypes that you may be holding onto in order to move forward. Leaning in means that you will avoid pre-judgment and be open to the kernel of wisdom in each individual's experiences. Leaning in to discomfort will require you to sit through moments of embarrassment, confusion, anxiety, and/or fear.

Reaching Empathy

Empathy and compassion allow you to understand the other person's point of view. When you are empathetic, you are more understanding, patient and kind. Expanding your capacity to feel empathy will also allow others to enter your circle of human concern. Sharing, using, and respecting pronouns is a very simple form of empathy.

Expecting Non-Resolution and Non-Closure

Expect and accept that there may not be closure. It is not likely that you will resolve your personal understanding about race or another person's racial experience in a single conversation. The more you talk about race or other issues with another person, the more you learn and the more they will learn. Authentic and productive conversations about race and other issues where experiences/perspectives may differ widely from yours are continuous and always evolving. This means that sometimes we will have unfinished, unexplored, and shortened conversations about some concepts.

**Adapted from "Embracing equity and inclusion", Annie E. Casey Foundation*

What questions do you want to ask about any of the ideas in these agreements?

What additional agreements do you need in order to be a fully participating member of our learning community?

Can you commit to these agreements? IF not, what would it take for you to be able to commit?



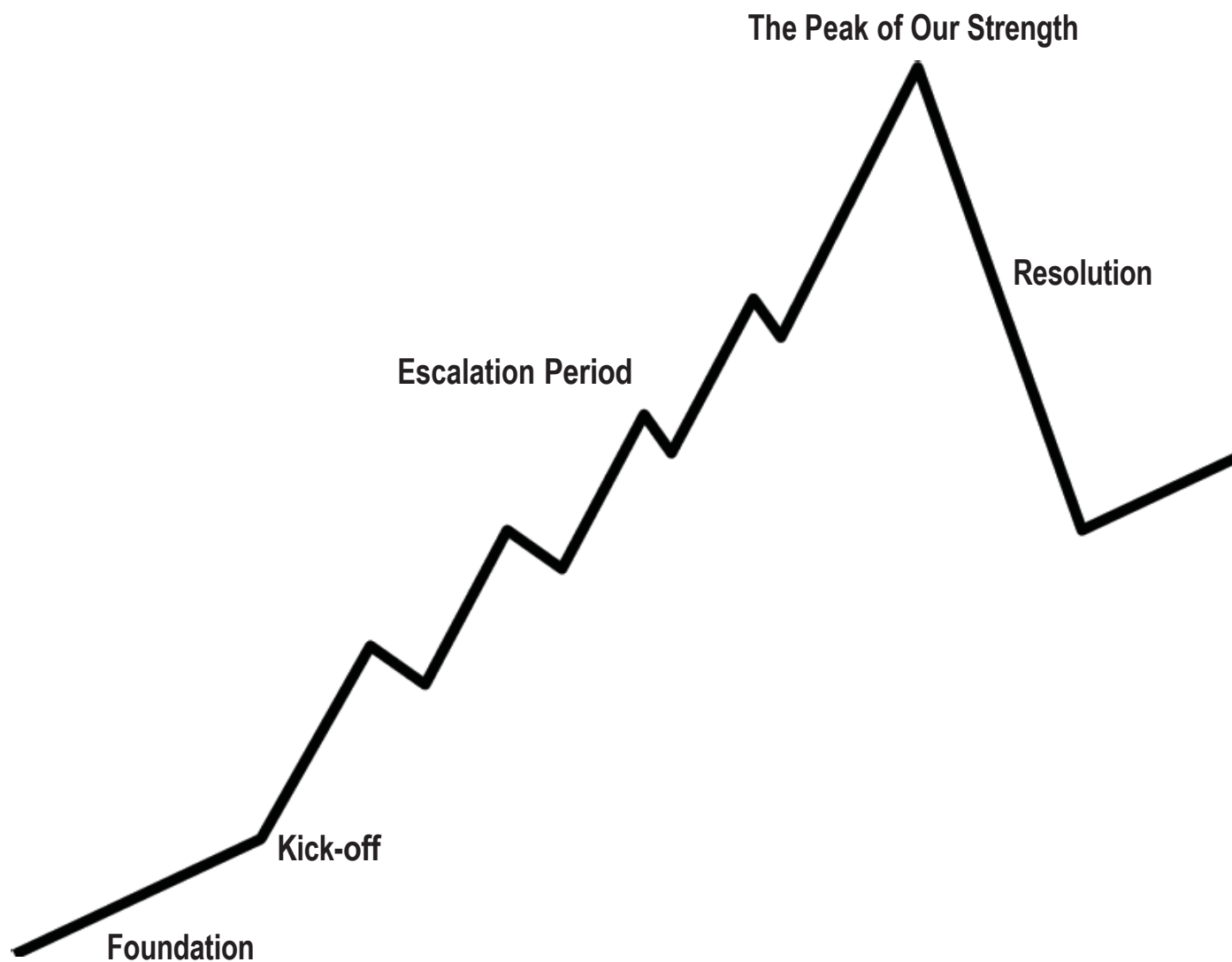
Campaign Planning

Campaign Mountain
Issues
Targets
Demands
Tactics



CAMPAIGN MOUNTAIN

Phases of a Campaign





A GOOD ORGANIZING ISSUE

- **Is widely felt.** How common is the problem? How many workers face this situation? Many people must feel that this is a real problem and agree with the solution you're pursuing.
- **Is deeply felt.** Is this an issue that people feel strongly enough about to actually do something? It's not enough that many people agree, if none are really hot under the collar.
- **Is winnable.** It's hard to know for sure whether you *will* win, but it's possible to have a good idea whether you *can*. Your group should match your demand to the power you've already got.

To win, you'll need to make it harder for the decision-maker to keep saying no than to say yes. The more pressure you can bring to bear, the more issues will become winnable.

- **Builds the union and builds leaders.** Consider how this fight will build your capacity for future fights. Will the issue attract leaders or groups who haven't been very involved? Will it build solidarity between groups? Will it give you the chance to try an action that's one step beyond what you've done before? Will the solution lay the groundwork for future improvements?

Each fight should build off the last. It often happens that we don't win the concrete gain wanted, but we do come out smarter and better organized—which makes it more likely we can win next time.

- **Has a connection to students and the public.** If the issue affects students, parents and community, it grows your potential group of activists and the potential support.



Problems vs. Issues:

Problems are statements of the world as it is. **“There is no respect for educators in this building.”**

Issues are a diagnosis of the problem that almost indicates what the solution is. **“There are no recognized structures in this building that allow educators to be part of decision making.”**

Take some time to first brainstorm the pain and/or problems our people are feeling. Then work to identify the issues within that problem that are causing the pain. Asking, “why do you think this is the way it is?” can move you into an analysis of issues that make up the problem.

Problem/Pain		
Issue	Issue	Issue

Issue Criteria Check List:

Score each Issue from 1 to 3 (1 = No, 2 = Unsure, 3 = Yes) on the specific criteria then total your scores and compare with your team.

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			

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Draft your Demand - What is the win that we want?

What is our demand? How will we know if we've won or not (it needs to be something we can see or touch that makes our lives better)? Remember – it's concrete. The win of this demand will result in visible, significant change in your constituent's daily lives.

1. Is it concrete (measurable)?
2. Does it make a visible impact in people's lives (meaningful)?
3. Does it leverage YOUR resources creatively and make for a good story (motivational)?
4. Must you organize and distribute leadership in order to accomplish?

Ex. LEA wants to secure a fully funded budget by demanding a 1-penny increase in the property tax formula by April 1st 2018.

Our Demand – Our Win is...

Identify the Target – Who can give you what you want?

Who is the target of your campaign efforts? A target has a name, a face, and an address. Who has the power to prevent you from getting your demand?

Our Target – Has the power to give us...

MAKE A GAME PLAN

Once you've identified a good organizing issue, you need a plan of action.

THE THREE BASICS OF A PLAN

1. **What exactly do you want?** It's amazing how far along folks can be in a campaign without having identified what solution they're after, and whether or not it's winnable.
2. **Who has the power to fix the problem?** It's not enough to say "management." Figure out which person in management could say yes to your solution.
3. **Which tactics can work?** Aim your actions to build the pressure on the decision-maker you've identified. Consider how much pressure it will take to win, and where your leverage is.



CAMPAIGN PLANNING TEMPLATE

Our Issue What is our deeply and widely felt issue? What is our demand to fix the problem?	Targets Who has the power to fix the problem?	Tactics What do we think will move our target? Which tactics fit this situation? What tactics do we start with? [warm] What tactics might we move to if necessary? [hot]



DEMANDS

TARGET

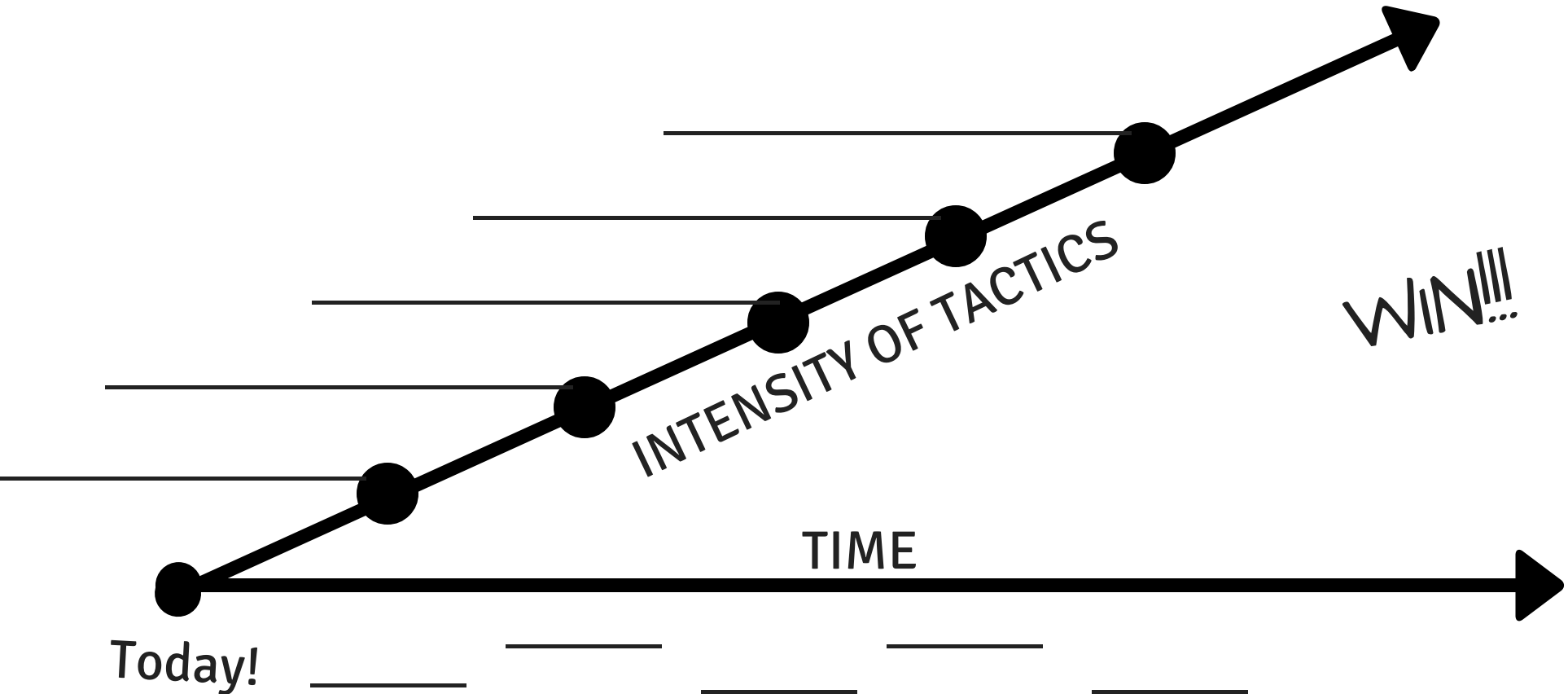
PRESSURE
POINTS

ALLIES
ASSETS

Short

Mid

Long





CHECKLIST: CHOOSE TACTICS THAT FIT

Your escalating campaign is made up of many tactics. A tactic could be mild, like a survey, or militant, like a work slowdown. It could be traditional, like a picket, or it could be a creative stunt a member just dreamed up. When your group is weighing what tactic to try next, here are some factors to consider:

- Does the action relate to your issue?
- Will it increase the pressure on the decision-maker?
- Is it simple?
- Is it visible?
- Is it timed for effect?
- Is it new and different—or tried and true?
- Are enough people ready to do it?
- How will others react?
- Will it unify people?
- How will management react?
- Could it backfire?
- Does it violate the law or the contract?
- If so, are you prepared for the consequences?
- Will it be fun?





TURN UP THE HEAT: ACTION THERMOMETER

Don't bring out your big guns right away. Start with an easy activity and get lots of people to participate. If that doesn't succeed, gradually increase the intensity of your actions, but make sure you don't leave people behind by escalating too quickly.

One way to visualize escalating tactics is to arrange them on a thermometer, with each action "hotter" than the last. For instance, here are the steps a group of New Haven teachers took to solve the mold problem at their school, beginning from the bottom of the thermometer:



14. Walked out of a meeting en masse
13. Spoke to the media
12. Pulled a publicity stunt
11. Called a meeting of supporters
10. Used the result to formulate specific demands, with deadlines
9. Filed an information request
8. Reached out to parents
7. Published a newsletter
6. Formed a grievance committee
5. Developed a communication network
4. Conducted a health survey
3. Gathered signatures on a grievance
2. Defined their issue: air quality
1. Met as a small group

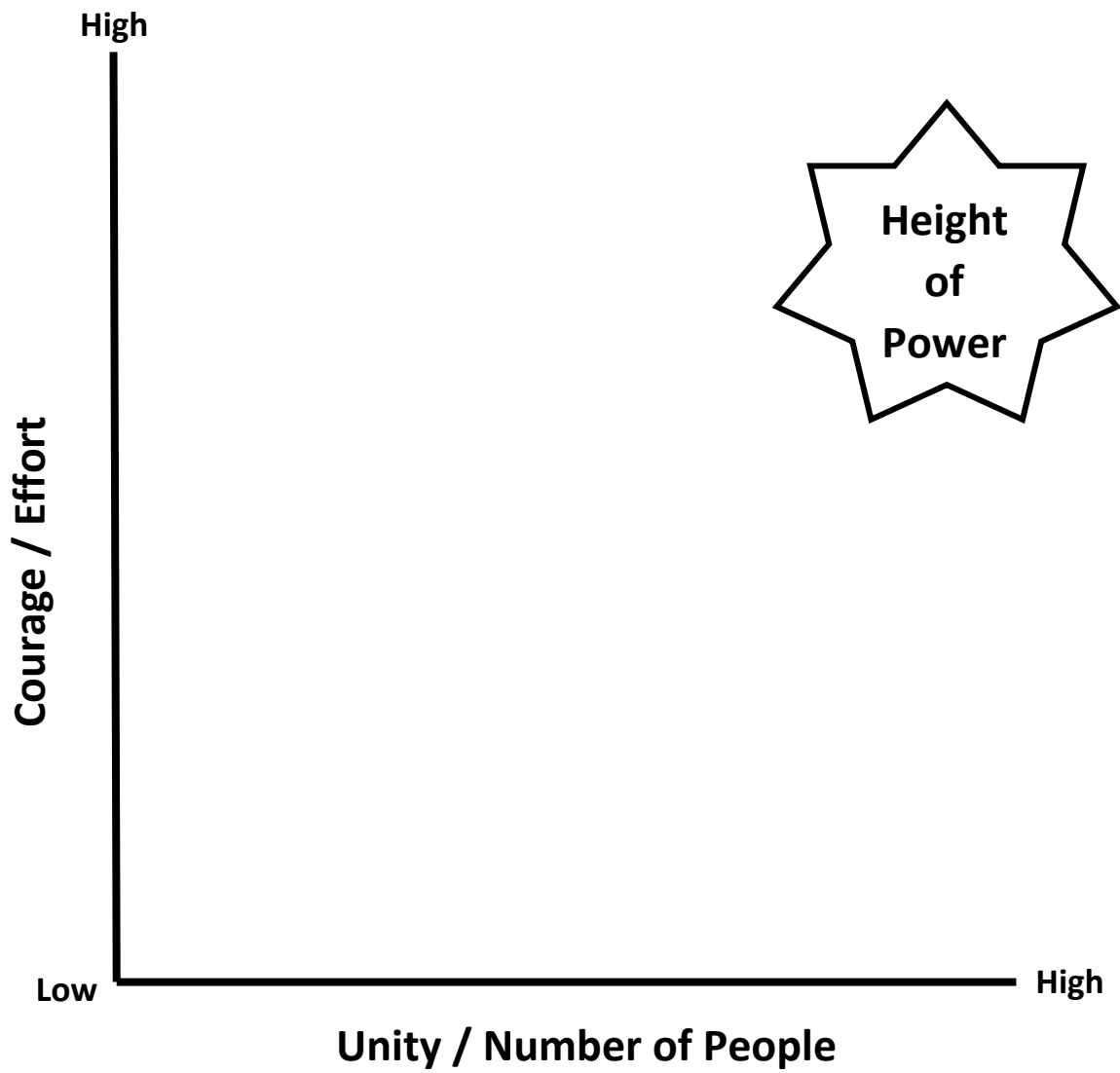




Building Power

Theories of Power
Levels of Readiness
7 Cases

Power as a Function of Unity and Courage



Three Theories of Change

Organizing, Mobilizing, and Advocacy

BY ELENI SCHIRMER

Why have unions gotten so weak, and how can they strengthen? In her book *No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age* (Oxford, 2016), labor organizer and strategist Jane McAlevey argues that a major factor in labor's decline has been that unions have abandoned the work of organizing, relying instead on the more superficial methods of building power, namely mobilizing and advocacy. What are these three different methods of union strength, and what path toward power does each build?

To organize is to build mass support and strength among ordinary people. Organizing draws its power from working people's biggest strength: our numbers. Working people may or may not see themselves as activists or politically active or even in political agreement, but through organizing, they come together to act in common cause. 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. The work of organizing is difficult; ordinary people are seldom confronted by their own agency nor asked to make choices that recognize their own power. As McAlevey notes in her first book, *Raising Expectations (and Raising Hell): My Decade Fighting for the Labor Movement* (Verso, 2012), a memoir of her organizing work: "In the normal course of human events, workers don't expect much from their jobs, government, or unions, because the reality is they don't get much. The job of the organizer is to fundamentally change this." The work of organizing is difficult, but as McAlevey argues, it is essential: There are no shortcuts.

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. Mobilizing is a very important step for building movements, but it is not the same thing as organizing. The crucial difference between mobilizing and organizing is that mobilizing relies on the actions of people who have already been brought on board; organizing is the work bringing ever more people on board, having a stake in the direction and outcomes of the actions (mobilizing can be an important component of organizing). McAlevey distinguishes mobilizing as



BRIAN STAUFFER

relying on the participation of a “self-selecting” group—people who have chosen to participate in something due to personal preferences or beliefs, such as environmental protection groups, the ACLU, or Planned Parenthood. Organizing, by contrast, relies on “structure-based” groups, groups determined by a predefined, often structural, relationship, such as working for the same employer, living in the same housing complex, or attending the same place of worship. Membership in a structure-based group, unlike a self-selecting group, is not a result of personal

affinity. In a structure-based group, the number of possible members—and therefore people to organize—is finite and knowable: the number of workers in a firm, residents in a housing building, or members in a church, for example. Whereas mobilizing relies on participation from a self-selecting group, organizing builds high participation among all eligible individuals.

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. But its efficiency comes at a cost; it disables the masses of ordinary people who have a stake in the issues under scrutiny by advocates.

These three forms of making change do not exist in isolation; a successful campaign may very well rely on all three strategies. Yet organizing, McAlevey argues, is the most fundamental: The base of any campaign should come from its organizational capacity above all. Yet in reality, according to McAlevey, it's often the strategy most avoided or shortchanged. After all, it is often hard, slow work that requires building connections with mass numbers of people. As a result, it's often sidestepped for quicker grabs for power—mobilizing or advocating support, rather than organizing for it.

McAlevey's framework rests on a more fundamental argument about power. In an age of massive inequality, many see power as the province of the elite—the small, powerful minority who run the courts, the banks, and the media in the U.S. and around the world. From this perspective, forging change is the process of altering who occupies those powerful institutions: voting in new leaders, appointing new judges, securing better regulators who can safeguard the system with an eye toward fairness. In McAlevey's words, this belief is little more than replacing one set of elites with another, better set of elites. It relies on advocacy and, to a certain extent, mobilizing to get the job done.

Yet exclusively focusing on the undemocratic hyper-concentration of elites obscures the power of ordinary people. Ordinary people have two major forms of power: our numbers—there are more of us than them—and our ability to withhold our participation in a system that denies us fairness, dignity, and health: They need us to keep working. Organizing, especially organizing with an eye toward building strikes, activates both forms of power. Successful labor movements and social movements often use a combination of advocacy, mobilizing, and organizing. But as McAlevey argues, organizing is the most important of those tasks—yet often the most overlooked. Her work aims to bring the movement back into labor, and winning back into the movement. 📖

Eleni Schirmer reads, writes, and teaches about labor movements and education. She has a PhD in Educational Policy Studies from the University of Wisconsin–Madison.

	ADVOCACY	MOBILIZING	ORGANIZING
Theory of Power	Elite. Advocacy groups tend to seek one-time wins or narrow policy changes, often through courts or backroom negotiations that do not permanently alter the relations of power.	Primarily elites. Staff or activists set goals with low to medium concession costs or, more typically, set an ambitious goal and declare a win, even when the “win” has no, or only weak, enforcement provisions. Backroom, secret deal making by paid professionals is common.	Mass, inclusive, and collective. Organizing groups transform the power structure to favor constituents and diminish the power of their opposition. Specific campaigns fit into a larger power-building strategy. They prioritize power analysis, involve ordinary people in it, and decipher the often hidden relationship between economic, social, and political power. Settlement typically comes from mass negotiations with large numbers involved.
Strategy	Litigation; heavy spending on polling, advertising, and other paid media.	Campaigns, run by professional staff, or volunteer activists with no base of actual, measurable supporters, that prioritize frames and messaging over base power. Staff-selected “authentic messengers” represent the constituency to the media and policymakers, but they have little or no real say in strategy or running the campaign.	Recruitment and involvement of specific, large numbers of people whose power is derived from their ability to withdraw labor or other cooperation from those who rely on them. Majority strikes, sustained and strategic nonviolent direct action, electoral majorities. Frames matter, but the numbers involved are sufficiently compelling to create a significant earned media strategy. Mobilizing is seen as a tactic, not a strategy.
People Focus	None	Grassroots activists. People already committed to the cause, who show up over and over. When they burn out, new, also previously committed activists are recruited. And so on. Social media are over-relied on.	Organic leaders. The base is expanded through developing the skills of organic leaders who are key influencers of the constituency, and who can then, independent of staff, recruit new people never before involved. Individual, face-to-face interactions are key.

Reprinted with permission of Jane McAlevey from her book No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age (Oxford University Press, reprint edition: April 1, 2018).

Club or Union?

	Unorganized	Club	Union	Fighting Union
Budgeting	Little or no local funding	Funding used to recognize activists -- stipends, meals	Funding used to recognize activists and also to reach out to members: stickers, buttons, tee shirts, picket signs.	Funding used to release activists to do work, to communicate with members, and to open opportunities to the newly active. Funding supports coalition work and socially focused issues
Roles	A few officers, risk of vacancy	Proliferation of titles and stipends to Presidential allies	Titles and roles generally tied to actual activities; if there's a treasurer, there is a budget; if there's a newsletter chair, there's actually a newsletter	Titles rotate regularly, or are even dropped when no longer needed
Bargaining	No bargaining, or done by a single expert (UD, President)	Small group of the usual folks on the bargaining team that the president trusts	Team represents all major job categories. Criteria is whether or not the president trusts them and they are recognized by members	Team represents all major job categories; criteria is whether they are trusted by the members
Leaders	Volunteers if any	Tends to be the same small group of folks that populate other teams. Little to no risks are taken.	Elections are regularly held and there are sometimes contested positions. Leaders can move others to act. However, their focus is on activism and mobilizing instead of term organizing.	Are trusted and respected by members, and there is a healthy election process with a number of good candidates. Leaders routinely deliver on persuading large groups to take public collective action; the and actively seeks other trusted and respected leaders. Leaders use their agency to take risks that result in growth.
Advocacy	None, or done by staff and/or local president Used as one of the few justifications to pay dues	Few members may help with advocacy with much support from staff. Advocacy is solely viewed as a service to single members.	Intentional identification and training of member advocates who conduct low-level meetings with support of higher levels from staff. Most advocacy is still viewed as a service to individuals with some understanding that protecting the work standards are in everyone's interest.	Advocacy is primarily viewed as way to build worker solidarity and ways to exercise collective action in response to poor work standards. Issues to organize around.
Activity	None, or led by the union, the staff, or by union members. No ownership.	Programs for individual interest with little risk in participating. Led by one person, and focus of change is on personal practice.	Works to have leaders design and lead the programs. Focus is on change of relationship with the union from rank and file to leader. Mobilizing and activism are the norms focused on traditional worker issues.	Organizing is the norm focused on the solidarity of the group and the work is to apply pressure on a system of oppression. Issues are broad and include social movement thinking.

NEA News

Don't Junk Your Old School Bus, Repurpose it!

A unique school bus renovation project becomes a showcase for the skills and accomplishments available through career tech education.

neaToday

By: Cecil Cahoon Published: 09/03/2019

- Birmingham City Schools Transportation Shop Foreman Anthony Gary with Alabama Education Association UniServ Director LaMonica Harris.



When Birmingham City Schools decommissioned Bus 90-36 after more than 25 years of service, [BCS Transportation Shop](#) Foreman Anthony Gary proposed a new idea.

"Once a bus gets past a certain age, the district would junk it. But we said, 'Let us take it and do something good with it'," Gary recalls. The district agreed, and a unique project got under way, led by Gary and his whole team at the district's transportation shop.

"All the fellows decided to come together and take on this project, to use this bus as a dropout recovery program," he explains. "Everybody's not going to go to college, so we promote [career technology](#). We want to show students that they can do anything they want to do with their hands."

The project plan was simple: to renovate and modify the bus (nicknamed "Shorty") in the various ways that would illustrate the skills and accomplishments available through studies in career technology.

"What we wanted to do is promote career technology, demonstrate to children in the Birmingham schools that there's another option -- if they're not going to college -- besides doing nothing," Gary says.

A video plays on a screen inside the bus, showing the evolution of the bus. "We did it from the inside-out, upside-down, painted it right here -- and did it all for free," he declares. "It didn't cost the board anything. Our vendors got on board because they understood what we were trying to do with career technology."

Among the renovations, the team installed hardwood floors, nearly a dozen flat-screen video monitors, and a state-of-the-art sound system. Every surface, from floor to ceiling, was repainted and polished to a high shine. New LED lighting was mounted on the walls and ceiling, even under the hood and below the engine.

"Shorty" now has hardwood floors, nearly a dozen flat-screen video monitors, and a state-of-the-art sound system.

When Shorty was finished in 2017, district recognized the transportation department's achievement and initiative with a luncheon, and its debut was captured in a published collection of photographs.



"We had a ball," Gary says. "The career tech folks came over, brought the kids. We did a lot of training here in the shop, let them have hands-on opportunities, showed them we need skilled people in this world."

"We show that you can paint if you want to, be a mechanic, lay hardwood flooring, install a sound system, install video equipment and all, if you put your mind to it," he adds.

This year, the team showed Shorty in the "World of Wheels," a regional car show that comes to Birmingham annually.

"We're definitely very proud of Shorty," Gary explains. "We entered Shorty in the show, so we could show everyone what Birmingham City Schools is all about, that we could get together and do something positive for our kids."

When the day's trophies were awarded, Shorty won first place in its category. The trophy now stands in the shop's office, and a sign announcing the award hangs over the office door.

For now, only mechanics are allowed to drive Shorty, in part because its drivers must have CDL licenses. Due to its modifications, the state won't allow it to be used for its original purpose: transporting students. "We chopped the seats, lowered it four inches. But we can carry the bus to schools, set it up, and let students see what they have the opportunity to do if they decide not to go to college.

Offering a tour of Shorty in the center of the shop, Gary opens wide its rear door to reveal a video monitor mounted on the inside, facing rearward.

"Now it's an outdoor classroom," he says. "You can seat 15 or 16 children inside, put more seats outside, and use the USB ports to plug in your technology and show lessons on the video screens if you want."

Students have responded positively. "They love it. They climb in and out of it, look it over, sit down. We're definitely real proud of it."

The district is forward-thinking about preparing students and educators for the digital age.

"[Birmingham City Schools](#) has always been innovative when it comes to advancing educators to the technology age," says [Alabama Education Association](#) President Sherry Tucker. "Our members have learned through technology how to balance and create financial reports, enroll students, create lunch numbers, create class schedules, allow students to take tests on computers and now they have made technology mobile. BSC is a pacesetter and model for all schools in the State of Alabama when advancing technology.

How a diverse coalition in a red state shut down anti-CRT legislation

By Giselle Rhoden, CNN

Published 4:00 AM EDT, Sun April 3, 2022

Protesters carry signs at a rally held in opposition to bills being considered at the Statehouse in Indianapolis, February 16, 2022.

Michael Conroy/AP



CNN —

Parents and teachers were shocked after an Indiana state senator introduced a bill requiring that teachers remain neutral when teaching about Nazism. And in less than two days, a coalition to defeat the bill was born.

“Within 36 hours, we had organized over a dozen community members and partners to testify against the bill,” Jennifer Smith-Margraf, the vice president of the Indiana State Teachers Association, told CNN in March.

Members of the Indiana community spoke at hearings, met with legislators and posted on social media to speak out against [Sen. Scott Baldwin](#)’s support of [Senate Bill 167](#).

The bill was later pulled from the education committee’s schedule in the Senate, however, its successor – [House Bill 1134](#) – created even more of an uproar, not just among Indiana educators, but among a wide range of interest groups in the state.



Mississippi governor signs into law prohibition on schools teaching critical race theory

The bill, which some Republicans called anti-CRT (critical race theory) legislation, prohibited “teachers or other employees to use supplemental learning materials to promote certain concepts regarding sex, race, ethnicity, religion, color, or national origin.”

Supporters said the bill would give parents more say on what their children learn in school, but critics saw it as censorship.

The Indiana bill caught the attention of a diverse group of educators, business owners, parents and community leaders from across the state, and that coalition successfully defeated it in February. However, more than a dozen other red states have passed similar legislation.

Since January 2021, 42 states have introduced bills or taken other steps that would restrict teaching critical race theory or limit how teachers can discuss racism and sexism, [according to an Education Week analysis](#).

Across the country, Republican lawmakers are pushing legislation banning CRT in public schools even though it is not taught in K-12. CRT is an academic concept that is usually offered

in graduate-level courses, but in the past year, it has been conflated with diversity and inclusion efforts as well as with debates on how to teach race and history.

[Last month](#), Mississippi's Republican Gov. Tate Reeves signed into law a bill described as a prohibition on CRT. [Senate Bill 2113](#) prohibits teaching "that any sex, race, ethnicity, religion or national origin is inherently superior or inferior" in public schools. Mississippi became the 15th state to pass legislation limiting how teachers can discuss racism and sexism. The bill does not explicitly mention CRT in its language, but Gov. Reeves said in a statement that CRT was a threat to public school education which inspired him to sign the bill.

[And in South Dakota](#), Gov. Kristi Noem recently signed legislation banning the state's public universities from using training and orientation materials that could cause racially based "discomfort."

A movement grows

Indiana public policy adviser Marshawn Wolley said the coalition to fight HB 1134 was unlike anything Indiana had seen before.

"We had nearly 200 speakers signed up to testify against the bill – members and community partners," Margraf said. "The Senate Education Committee limited testimony on the bill during that hearing to just over 2 hours, so only 20 some of the folks signed up to testify were called to speak."

The coalition represented a variety of views. Wolley, who is a parent, told CNN that he could not imagine letting his son go through a system "where teaching is impartial."

Although the bill did not explicitly mention CRT, Wolley said it attacked the principle of teaching about race in the classroom.

Nationwide, [Black parents have said](#) that their voices and the concerns of their children have been lost in the partisan debate about CRT. So the Indianapolis Urban League, the Indy Black Expo, and African American Coalition of Indianapolis helped devise strategies to bring Black parents to the Senate floor during the hearing.

Keith Gambill, president of the Indiana State Teachers Association, speaks at a rally in opposition to bills being considered at the Statehouse in Indianapolis in February.

Indiana teachers were also on the offensive. Margraf said teachers, having fought lawmakers on [other policies](#), knew what they had to do to advocate against the bill.

"We had been building relationships with legislators before that ... now all of sudden (they're) attacking us about everything we do and everything we believe in," she said.



As an Indiana high school teacher, Margraf said she believes in teaching the truth to her students. She said the bill would have created a barrier for her to do her job as an educator if she was not allowed to teach important concepts on race, sex, ethnicity and religion.

The Indiana business community shared a similar concern, Taylor Hughes, the Indy Chamber's director of strategy, policy and special projects, told CNN. He and other business leaders also spoke out at the legislative hearing.

"It was to respond to an issue that isn't real because we know CRT is not taught in school, but if you create a chilling effect of teachers not teaching the truth ... it's gonna harm us now and in the future."



Hughes said the bill had the potential to disrupt "future talent" in the Indiana workforce. He mentioned the bill disrupted teaching about diversity, equity and inclusion to young people, a lesson he said is important in the workforce. Last month, the bill was shut down in the Senate after the coalition's work.

"We could not be prouder of everyone stepping up and working together and standing up for our children," Margraf said.

Wolley said he expects more bills to appear soon, but he believes the coalition and others like it can use their power to defeat these bills. He said building coalitions is an important part of shutting down more anti-CRT legislation.

[HTTPS://CEA.ORG/WITH-CEA-GRANTS-TEACHERS-TAKE-ON-PROJECTS-TO-ENHANCE-STUDENTS-PRIDE-IN-THEIR-SCHOOLS/](https://cea.org/with-cea-grants-teachers-take-on-projects-to-enhance-students-pride-in-their-schools/)

WITH CEA GRANTS, TEACHERS TAKE ON PROJECTS TO ENHANCE STUDENTS' PRIDE IN THEIR SCHOOLS



From murals and shiny new bulletin boards to power-washed exteriors and flowerbeds, schools around Connecticut will be more welcoming for students and staff this fall, thanks to grants from CEA. Each spring, the CEA Aspiring Educators (CEA AE) Program typically organizes beautification projects at underresourced Connecticut schools. College students who are pre-service educators take on painting, cleaning, and gardening, among other projects, to give schools a brighter, more welcoming feel for students and staff. (In the 2017 photo above right, CEA AE members work to paint murals, posters, and kindness rocks at Langford Elementary School in East Hartford.) Due to COVID restrictions this spring, the CEA AE decided to instead offer grants to CEA members seeking to improve the look of their schools.

The CEA AE initially offered \$3,000 grants to two Connecticut schools in need of sprucing up. When applications came in from CEA members around the state, however, aspiring educators saw that the need was much greater. CEA's Board of Directors stepped up and authorized additional funding so that two second-place winners could receive grants of \$2,500 and 13 third-place winners would receive \$1,000 grants.

One of the first-place winners, Anchor School at Harbor Landing in Stamford, is an alternative school moving into a building of its own for the first time this fall. The school had previously rented space in an office building, and teachers were very limited in their ability to decorate classrooms and modify the space to make it feel welcoming to students.

"Now that we have our own space, we want to make it truly our own," says grant recipient Ryan Perkins, an English teacher at the school. "When I saw the application for the grant from the CEA AE, I saw a unique opportunity to make our environment student-centered."

Anchor School at Harbor Landing serves middle and high school students who have previously struggled in a traditional school setting. The school offers smaller class sizes and a greater focus on social and emotional needs and community than most traditional secondary schools.

Perkins and the other teachers have not yet had a chance to visit their new space. They plan to get a feel for the building and decide after the first few weeks of school how best to use the grant money to enhance students' pride in their space. Ideas include new bulletin boards and painting projects, including working with students on creating murals of their own design.

"Our school is very diverse, and I'd love to use some of the money to allow students to culturally develop the school and make sure they feel represented in the space," Perkins says. "Enhancing their feelings of connectedness to the school will only help them want to come to school and be there every day."

Also receiving a first-place award was Kelly Shea at Enfield's Prudence Crandall Elementary School. Second-place grant awards went to Maureen Curran at West Hartford's Louise Duffy Elementary School and Kevin Arita at Stamford's Davenport Ridge Elementary School. Third-place awards went to schools in the CREC district, Cromwell, Danbury, East Windsor, Enfield, and Stamford.

Photos and descriptions of completed grant projects will be posted to [CEA's blog](#).

Categories: [CEA News](#), [CEAdailyAugust 6, 2021](#)

NEA News

Educators Fight for Clean Water in Jackson, Mississippi

Think clean water isn't an educational issue? Think again. Schools in Jackson, Mississippi, are physically closed (again!) due to the city's water issues, while the Mississippi Association of Educators leads a coalition to find solutions.

Charles A Smith

neaToday

By: Mary Ellen Flannery, Senior Writer

Published: 08/30/2022

**KEY TAKEAWAYS**

- 1. This is a capital city in the United States—and, when schools are open, teachers have to take their students to portapotties. Every day, they lose hours of instructional time to Jackson's water crisis.**
- 2. School cafeteria workers have to boil every drop of water they use. School custodians have to keep schools clean and safe—even when toilets don't flush and water doesn't flow.**
- 3. Clean water is a basic, human right—and Jackson's children and families don't have it. But, by working together, Mississippi Association of Educators is determined that community leaders can find a solution.**

Jackson, Mississippi, is a capital city in the United States—and today, more than 150,000 of its residents can't drink the water that comes out of their taps.

Due to the most recent collapse of the city's water system, not one Jackson student—from pre-K to college—is sitting in a physical classroom. Instead, they're attempting to log into virtual lessons that educators prepared with scant notice. On Monday, the state's governor issued an emergency order whereby the state will be taking over the water plant and the National Guard distributing safe water to Jackson residents.

For weeks, Mississippi Association of Educators leaders have been sounding the alarm about Jackson's increasing lack of safe water, and leading a community effort to find solutions for children and families. "I taught in Jackson Public Schools for 14 years, and in each of those years, there was an issue with water. Maybe it was one day, two days. Now it's weeks," said MAE President Erica Jones.

This past Saturday marked Day 32 of the latest boil-water alert in the city, and also the day that local educators, parents, elected officials, faith leaders, and businesspeople stood up together at the MAE-hosted Rally for Safe Drinking Water. "We're going to work together" to fix the problem, Jones promised.

Clean water is a human right, says Jones—and a "water crisis is an education crisis." Not only does Jackson's failing water system regularly limit students' access to clean tap water, a majority of the city's water pipes also contain dangerous levels of lead and copper, which are proven to cause lifelong learning and behavioral issues.

“Our students deserve better. Our community deserves better,” says Jones. And that’s why MAE is leading the way to make sure its students and schools, as well as Jackson’s homes and families, have clean water.

SAFE WATER = SAFE SCHOOLS

“The other day, someone asked me, ‘Why is MAE, why is JAE, talking about water? What does safe water have to do with education?’ It has everything to do with education,” said George Stewart, a middle-school teacher in Jackson and president of the Jackson Association of Educators, during Saturday’s rally.

Picture this: A Jackson second-grade teacher, like Jones was for 14 years, needs to take her students to the toilet. But the toilet in her part of the school building doesn’t work. “When your toilets don’t flush and you have to take your class to another part of the building to get to a working toilet or drinking fountain, or you have to go outside to a port-a-potty, what would normally be a 10-minute break from instruction becomes a 30-minute, or 45-minute break from instruction,” Jones points out.

Two or three times a day, every day—the wasted time quickly adds up and it has serious consequences for student learning. Sometimes, Jackson public schools simply close.



George Stewart and Erica Jones Credit: Charles A Smith

“If this isn’t an educational issue, I don’t know what is!” said Stewart.

Last year, Stewart and his Whitten Middle School students stayed home for two weeks because of a lack of water, a situation that forced teachers and students “to shift very quickly to remote learning, which we know doesn’t serve every student well,” he added.

Meanwhile, the city’s boil-water alerts have become so common that Jackson residents have had to boil their water for more days this summer than they didn’t, and the number of alerts grows each year. During those times, school cafeteria workers struggle to prepare safe, healthy meals, Jones said. Custodians must work twice as hard to keep schools clean, especially bathrooms.

Educators and students must rely on bottled water, which can be expensive. This past weekend, MAE members and volunteers distributed 22,176 bottles of water to local families and residents.

RALLY FOR SAFE DRINKING WATER!

During this past weekend’s MAE-led rally, guest speakers included Jackson parents, a restaurant owner who has to boil every drop of water used in his kitchen, and a local Millsaps College student, Jakob Heldt, who recalled what it was like to study in Jackson last winter, in the aftermath of ice storms.

“In the weeks leading up to winter, I didn’t realize why everybody was so scared. I didn’t know what people meant when they said the city would be shut down,” he recalled. As a new student, Heldt hadn’t lived in Jackson during the winter storms of 2010, 2014, and 2018, which crashed the water system.

He soon realized. When temps dropped, the system collapsed: water wasn't going into the city's treatment facilities, and it wasn't leaving, either. Tens of thousands of residents—especially those in Jackson's predominantly Black neighborhoods—were left without running water for up to a month.

“For three weeks, we had no water. We had to shovel snow into buckets so that we could flush our toilets with melted snow,” said Heldt. “When the snow was gone, we couldn't flush the toilets at all.”

In the wake of the 2021 storms, state lawmakers pledged a scant \$3 million to the city's water issues, a fraction of the amount necessary. Meanwhile, this year the Biden administration sent \$1.8 billion in American Rescue Plans (ARP) funds to Mississippi. Of that, state officials have allocated a possible \$25 million to Jackson's water system, provided the city applies for it with a comprehensive plan and \$25 million in matching funds. The application period opens in September.

WHAT'S NEXT?

The money is there, say MAE leaders. The need is there, too.

In a recent MAE-led survey of Jackson residents, 93 percent said they experienced issues with their tap water; a stunning 96 percent said they felt their water was unsafe. And yet, every single student—every single person—deserves safe water, says MAE Executive Director Antonio Castañon Luna.

With that in mind, a MAE-led coalition of community, faith, and health organizations are calling on Jackson's mayor to share a fully developed, comprehensive plan to fix Jackson's water system—including costs and a timeline—by September 1.

MAE leaders and their partners also have been meeting with Mississippi's lawmakers, pressing them to allocate more money to Jackson's water system during the 2023 legislative session.

“We are going to stand together for our city, for our children, for our schools—because we believe every kid deserves safe water,” Castañon Luna told rally-goers Saturday.

“Today, we are moving the needle toward a more just future, a future that our children deserve and that our children's children deserve. We are standing together today, saying that the schools our children attend, that our neighbor's children attend, need to be safe.”

Educators Rally Against Gun Violence

Teachers who survived school shootings join NEA Becky Pringle in calling for common sense legislation

Patrick G. Ryan

neaToday

By: Mary Ellen Flannery, Senior Writer

Published: 06/11/2022



KEY TAKEAWAYS

1. Today, more children die in the U.S. from gun violence than any other cause. It doesn't have to be this way.
2. On Saturday, at March for Our Lives, NEA President Becky Pringle called on lawmakers to take action—now—to protect children.
3. Pringle was joined by Columbine teachers, who survived the shooting as students 23 years ago, and by teachers who survived November's school shooting in Oxford, Michigan

[Editor's note: On June 24, after hearing from nearly 60,000 NEA members, Congress passed the bipartisan Safer Communities Act, a bill that includes universal background checks for gun buyers under 21, state funding for extreme risk protection, and funding for mental health services. It's a "good first step," said NEA President Becky Pringle. "The bill will absolutely help save lives, but we cannot stop here."]

Twenty-three years ago, when the violence at Columbine High School began, Zach Martin was a sophomore, sitting in a Columbine math class. In another wing of the building, freshman Cris Welch was in art. Today, Martin and Welch are teachers at the rebuilt Columbine High. They joined NEA President Becky Pringle at Saturday's March for Our Lives, alongside two NEA members who survived November's school shooting in Oxford, Michigan, in demanding more be done to keep students and educators safe from gun violence.

"The time is now. The time is always now. The time is now to stand up for our students. The time is now to hold our legislators accountable," Pringle told the mothers, fathers, grandparents, children, friends, and educators who gathered in front of the Washington Monument on Saturday. "The time is now to tell them that if they don't do their jobs, we're coming for their jobs in November."

Text "NOW" to 48744, or visit nea.org/gunviolence, to get involved with NEA's movement for safe schools.

"WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING."

Columbine was nearly a quarter-century ago. The Sandy Hook massacre, which cost the lives of 20 children and six educators, was more than a decade ago. [Parkland](#)? Five years ago. Oxford? Six months. And [Uvalde](#)? Just 18 days.

"A few weeks ago, when the shooting in Texas happened, I felt nothing but angry. And then I understood that we need to do something about it," said Lauren Rambo, a biology teacher at Oxford High School, where four students were killed in November, including one who had left Rambo's class to use the bathroom.

“After Uvalde, I’m more angry that this keeps happening,” said Melissa Gibbons, an Oxford High teacher and parent, who secured her students behind a double-locked door—and then agonized whether her own children were safe, too.

So many students and educators know the terror of locked doors, of darkened classrooms, of frantic checks of cell phones. Nearly four years ago in California, Saugus High School choir teacher Kaitlin Holt was listening to an audio recording with her students when a group of terrified students burst in. Minutes later, in a small office adjacent to her classroom, Holt was holding a maxipad to a student’s bleeding gunshot wound, while keeping nearly 40 students calm and quiet.

“It was terrifying,” she says.

A CALL TO ACTION



Becky Pringle back stage with Life Camp founder Erica Ford and March for Our Lives co-founder David Hogg .

NEA President Becky Pringle addresses an estimated 40,000 students, educators, and activists at the March for Our Lives.

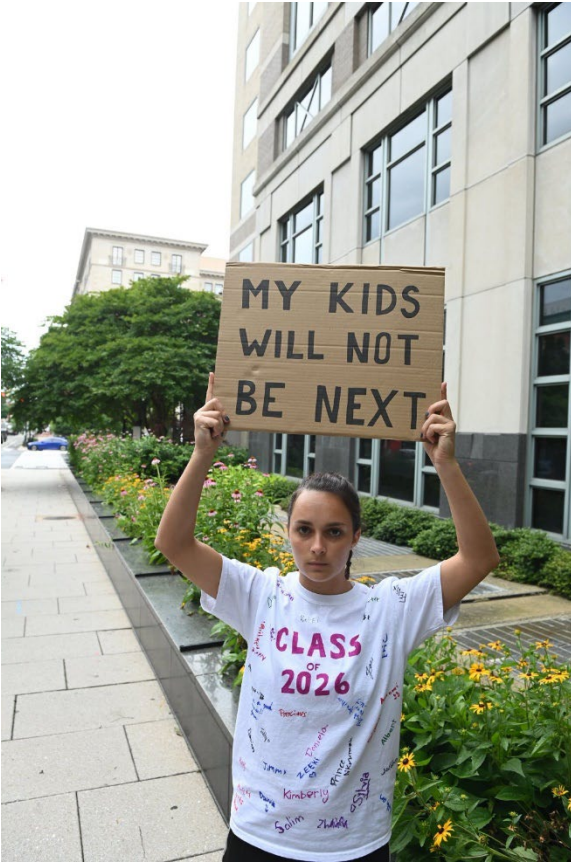
Patrick G. Ryan



Becky Pringle back stage with Life Camp founder Erica Ford and March for Our Lives co-founder David Hogg .

WE NEED COMMON SENSE LEGISLATION NOW

Today, as lawmakers debate legislation on guns, “it’s very frustrating to hear people say, ‘it’s not about the guns,’” says Holt. “This person, the shooter, killed six people on my campus in 16 seconds. Sixteen seconds! ... It’s discouraging to keep hearing these arguments from people who haven’t experienced this. They have no clue. The only thing that will help is less guns.”



Earlier this week, on Wednesday, alongside the mother of 10-year-old Lexi Rubio, a fourth grader murdered in Uvalde, Pringle addressed a House of Representatives committee, urging them to act now to adopt common-sense legislation.

“Every single day that politicians fail to take meaningful action, every single day that politicians ignore the [majority of Americans who want stricter gun laws](#), you are telling our children:

Protecting your lives matters less to us than protecting the status quo,” Pringle said.

The majority of Americans support background checks on gun buyers, a ban on semi-automatic weapons, and raising the purchasing age to 21. Mental-health supports also would be helpful—[educators have been calling for more school counselors and psychologists for many years](#), and have received scant funding from most state legislatures—but mental health is not the only answer.

And arming educators is not the answer at all. “We cannot ask educators, who enter this profession to help children soar, to carry weapons and wear body armor while teaching addition or the Pythagorean Theorem,” Pringle told lawmakers. “Because by the time someone has shown up at the school or the store or the hospital or the house of worship with a military weapon, it is already too late.”

SHOWING UP AND STANDING UP

Every day, in our stores, our streets, our churches, our movie theaters, 111 people are killed by guns. Gun violence affects everyone, but more often it affects Black and Latino communities, where more than two thirds of adults or someone they care for has experienced gun violence.

Ali Iannuci from Whitman Middle School, Fairfax Virginia Credit: Patrick G. Ryan

Today, [more children die in the U.S. from gunshots than any other cause](#).

“As a parent, I feel like I have to do anything I can, everything in my power to make my daughter’s future as safe as possible,” said Welch, who flew from Colorado with his wife Larissa, also a Columbine teacher, and their baby daughter, who turned 1 three days ago. “When deciding to come out to Washington, she was the prime motivating factor. I want her to have a safer environment than I ended up having—and a safer environment than students have today.”

The fight is not over—not even close. Change is possible, said Martin. “After 23 years, there has been some change and some progress, clearly not enough, and I understand how it can be hard for people to maintain hope. For me, March for Our Lives fills me with hope,” he said.

Gibbons had students who told her they might not go to a local march in Oxford this weekend, she said. They didn’t think it would make a difference. But, as lawmakers in D.C., and around the country consider legislative and policy solutions to gun violence, Gibbons believes they need to hear from educators and students.

“I want to show my students that it matters for us to stand up and show up,” she said.

<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/local/silverton/2019/06/19/silverton-teachers-tough-grades-issue-settlement-agreement-district-administrators/1451122001/>

Two Silverton teachers give tough grades, get demoted, win grievance

Christena Brooks



SILVERTON, OR – A fight between high school teachers and administrators that began over low grades and plagiarism in a college-level writing course has ended with a finding against the school district and a settlement agreement.

Former Silverton High School teachers Ben Hynes-Stone and Travis Woodside won't get money from the Silver Falls School District. Rather, the settlement agreement calls for the district to recall letters of reprimand it sent to the state agency that credentials teachers, and to issue them neutral letters of recommendation.

An arbitrator ruled the district was “engaging in a pattern of retaliation and reprisal” against the pair when they filed grievances during the 2017-18 school year.

“Having all of this legally documented with evidence from district administrators’ emails and their own testimony is a tremendous win for teachers and unions across the United States,” Hynes-Stone said.

Grading

Hynes-Stone and Woodside came to the Silver Falls School District in 2014 and 2015, respectively. They began the 2017-18 school year as co-teachers of an advanced writing course for “highly motivated and capable students” wanting to earn college credit, according to their complaint filed with Oregon’s Employment Relation Board last winter.

Not long after classes began, students and parents began to complain to administrators about the low grades awarded in the class, according to public documents. The teachers maintained their academic expectations fit the class description as a college-level course, but tensions over grading mounted as the weeks passed.

Woodside also complained that the high school principal and vice principals pressured him to blunt his response to plagiarism by students who were children of administrators or other parents “well-connected” in the community. In one case, one-third of a student’s paper appeared to have been written by a parent, he said.

As the fall semester drew to a close, Principal Wade Lockett opened an investigation into the pair’s grading practices that pulled in district administrators and union representation and resulted in letters of reprimand being sent to the Oregon Teacher and Standards Practices Commission.

With the union, Hynes-Stone and Woodside filed a grievance, asking that the letters be rescinded. That spring, the district disciplined Hynes-Stone for raising his middle finger in a photo with a student; he responded with another grievance.

Then Lockett didn’t allow an Albany high school’s administrator interested in hiring Hynes-Stone to visit the teacher’s class, and he gave Hynes-Stone’s a poor end-of-the-year evaluation.

When administrators told both teachers they were being transferred to lower-grade schools for 2018-19, they resigned. Since then, they’ve been teaching elsewhere and awaiting the results of arbitration and the settlement processes.

Arbitration

“In this case, there were very little facts that were in dispute,” said Lisa Freily, the district’s attorney. “What was in question was why the actions happened. I don’t think anyone intended that 'because (the teachers) filed a grievance, (we’re) going to give you a penalty.' But, in some cases, intent doesn’t count.”

Administrators’ emails, a teaching evaluation, and the involuntary transfer of both teachers to lower-grade schools at year’s end combined to convince Minnesota-based arbitrator Richard J. Miller, hired jointly by the district and union, that the teachers were penalized for formally disputing the actions of their principal, Wade Lockett, and other administrators.

“(After the grievances were filed) the relationship between them changed so dramatically that it established a pattern by the school district (of) animus and intent to retaliate,” the arbitrator wrote in his 39-page decision.

MORE:[Senate GOP threatens walkout, Gov. Brown responds with threat of state police](#)

Now, in a letter signed by Supt. Andy Bellando and union president Michelle Stadel, administrators and union leaders pledged to participate in joint training about the “appropriate roles and responsibilities for both labor and management.”

“The parties agree that, going forward, both sides will focus on building a more positive relationship and will assume a positive intent until it is demonstrated otherwise,” read the last item in the settlement agreement. “The association and district agree that there must be mutual respect for the rights and obligations of both the union and the employer, and the representatives of each organization.”

Although Hynes-Stone and Woodside are still teaching, both left the district in 2018. Hynes-Stone is now an English teacher at Central High School in Independence, and Woodside is a reading specialist, instructional coach and PE teacher at Eagle Charter School in Salem.

“For me, this decision has been very much a weight off the shoulders in my personal life,” Woodside said. “How we were treated doesn’t sit very well with me. I’m really hoping somebody out there sees this and decides this is something that needs to change.”

<https://www.seiu99.org/2022/03/25/were-fighting-to-pass-sb-830-equitable-funding-of-schools/>

We're Fighting to Pass SB 830 – Equitable Funding of Schools

For over five decades, California has been inequitable in the funding of our public schools, benefiting those in more affluent communities, all while placing those in poorer communities at a disadvantage.



During this time, California has been utilizing the Average Daily Attendance (ADA) method for calculating school funding.

ADA is calculated by taking the total attendance and dividing it by the number of school days in session. Only days in which a student is under the guidance and direction of certificated teachers are counted. ADA is always equal to or less than enrollment because students may be absent (whether excused or unexcused).

This severely impacts schools that serve children from low-income families by financially penalizing schools and it's students for poor attendance. Families in these communities are far more likely to suffer from [health related issues](#), including asthma, dental disease, obesity, and other chronic illnesses that may lead to absences.

Lack of reliable transportation also leads to absenteeism. Instead of helping these schools and students with additional support to address the absentee issues, ADA punishes these students, further holding them back at achieving the kind of life a life a good education can provide.

SEIU Local 99 will be doing more to move legislators and the governor on SB 830. For now, [subscribe to our emails](#) to stay up-to-date on the bill and actions you can take to move it forward.



Campaign Planning Foundations

Strategy and Tactics
Campaign Planning
Roles
Strategy Charts and Power Maps
Case Study
Case Study Worksheet
Staff in a Democratic Union



Strategy

Strategy is introduced by asking three questions: Who are my people (constituency)? What change do they need (goal)? How could they use their resources to build the power they need to achieve that change (theory of change)? Although the answers to these questions, especially the second and third, are developed in dialogue with your constituency, and much of it may change, unless you develop an initial road map of where you want to go and how you hope to get there, a hypothesis, your journey cannot begin.

The challenge is to revisit these questions often, examine your hypothesis in light of your experience, and adapt your strategy to achieve your goals – without looking like your changing the plan at every turn. You have new information: you’ve probed sources of your own values and those of your constituents with your work on story; you’ve learned about resources and interests from relationship building you are doing; and you reexamined the question of shared purpose in forming a leadership team.

- Are you clear about who the people you are organizing are, your constituency, other actors?
- What about the change that is needed? What problem is you’re trying to solve? How would the world look different? What is your strategic goal?
- What about your theory of change? Have you figured out how to turn your constituency’s resources into the power it needs to achieve its goals?
- What about your tactics? What are your principal tactics? Are you adapting them as need be to changing realities, while remaining focused on your goal?
- What about your campaign time line? Are you working toward peaks? Do you need to redefine them?

Strategizing, like story telling, is a way we exercise agency, making purposeful choices in the face of uncertainty. While story telling is a way we can articulate our purpose, strategizing is how we find a pathway to achieving that purpose. Both are natural capabilities. We begin telling stories almost as soon as we begin to speak and we begin to strategize as soon as we can conceive purposes, find that purpose frustrated, and have to figure out how to achieve it. The challenge in learning organizing is to step back a moment from this everyday activity, reflect on it more deeply, and bring greater intentionality to it so that it can become an element of the craft of leadership.

Strategy is how to turn what you have” into “what you need” to get “what you want” - how to turn resources into power, as shown in strategy chart #1. If we think of power as the influence one actor can exercise over another because of an imbalance in interests and resources, as shown in Strategy Chart #2, one way to correct the imbalance is to aggregate more resources. That’s why people form unions, advocacy organizations, or nations. But another way to correct the imbalance is to move the fulcrum on which the balance rests to get more leverage out of the same resources. Good strategists learn to get more leverage from resources that ARE available. Power is thus a matter of resources and



resourcefulness. Because organizers try to create change, they often have to rely on resourcefulness to compensate for a lack of access to resources. Why do you think David was a good strategist? What role did motivation play? What role did resources play? What was the role of imagination?

Chart #1

Strategy and Tactics

Strategizing in a way of imagining, theorizing or hypothesizing. It is the conceptual link we make among the places, the times and the activities with which we mobilize and deploy resources and goals we hope to achieve. It is how we can frame specific choices within a broader framework of purpose. The word strategy comes from Greek for general - strategos. When armies were about to clash on the plane, the general (Strategy Chart #2) went up to the top of the hill and, with the goal of winning the battle, evaluated resources on both sides, reflected on opportunities and constraints imposed by the battle field, and how to deploy troops in ways most likely to achieve his goal. A good strategos not only had a good overview of the field. He also had intimate knowledge of the capacities of his men and those of his opponent, details of streams and bridges, and mastery of both the forest and the trees. Once the battle was underway, however, the best strategos was often back on the battlefield where he could adjust the plan as conditions changed. The taktikas were the individual ranks of soldiers with specific competencies whom the strategos deployed to take specific actions at specific times and places. Tactics are specific actions through which strategy is implemented. Tactics are no less important than strategy, but they are different. A strategos with an excellent overview, but who misjudges the competence of his taktikas would be lost. Getting results, taking initiative successfully, requires developing the capacity for good strategy and good tactics. Strategy is not something "big" and tactics, something "small". In any



setting – whether it is national, state or local or long term, medium term, or short term – in which we commit to a goal, consider our context, and figure how to turn our resources into activities (tactics) through which we can achieve our goal, we are strategizing.

Chart #2

Strategy is Motivated: What's the Problem

We are natural strategists. Although strategy is natural, however, we have to be motivated to strategize by a problem. How many times have you strategized today? We conceive purposes, meet obstacles in achieving those purposes, and we figure out how to overcome those obstacles. But because we are creatures of habit, we only strategize when we have to: when we have a problem, something goes wrong, something forces a change in our plans. That's when we pay attention, take a look around, and decide what we have to do. And just as our emotional understanding inhabits the stories we tell, our cognitive understanding inhabits the strategy we devise. This means we may have to step out of habitual routines, what we are "comfortable" doing, what we know how to do and consider novel pathways. This can be very frightening, even as it can be exhilarating. When we don't strategize, it is often not because we don't know how to, but because it can be very hard. When we strategize we give a voice to the future, enabling it to make claims on the present. This requires the courage to say no to current demands to commit to an uncertain future. When we must make choices about how to invest scarce resources, voices of present constituencies speak loudly, even though they were created by choices in the past. The voices of future constituencies are silent. Our choices may turn out as we wish, but then again, they may not. Trying to shape the future may require choices that could involve substantial risk in the present. The first step in shaping the future, however, is to imagine it... and then to find the courage to act on our imagination.

Strategy is Creative: How Can We Solve the Problem?

Strategy requires that we develop our understanding of why the problem hasn't been solved, as well as a theory of what we could do to solve the problem, a theory of change. And because those who resist change (and who don't have the problem) often have access to greater amounts of resources, those who seek change (and do have the problem) have to be more resourceful. And we have to use our resourcefulness to create the capacity – the power – to get the problem solved. It's not so much about getting "more" resources as it is about using one's resources. Strategy is creative, linking resources to outcomes through intentional choice of tactics.

Strategy is a Verb Strategy is about turning "what you have" into "what you need" to get "what you want" – how to use resources you have to achieve your goals, given constraints and opportunities. It is an ongoing activity, not making a "strategic plan" at the beginning of a campaign that others will implement. Planning (getting an overview of the plan) can help those responsible for a campaign arrive at a common vision of where they want to go, how they hope to get there, and clarify the choices that must be made to begin. But the real action in strategy is, as Alinsky put it, in the reaction – by other actors, the opposition, and the challenges and opportunities that emerge along the way. What makes it "strategy" and not "reaction" is the mindfulness we can bring to bear on our choices relative to what we want to achieve, like a potter interacting with the clay on the wheel, as Mintzberg describes it.

Although our goal remains clear, strategy requires constant adaptation to new information. Something worked better than we expected it to? Something did not work for unforeseen reasons. Things changed. Some people are opposing our efforts so we have to respond to their action. The launching of a strategic

campaign is only the beginning of the work of strategizing. This is one reason it is so important to have a leadership team that reflects the full diversity of skills, information and interested needed to achieve your goal. We call this “strategic capacity.” (2) So strategizing is not a single event, but a process or a loop continuing throughout the life of a project (Strategy Chart #3). We plan, we act, we evaluate the results of our action, we plan some more, we act further, etc. We strategize, as we implement, not prior to it. Strategy is Situated: Connecting the View from the Valley with the View from the Mountain

Strategy unfolds within a specific context, the particularities of which really matter. One of the most challenging aspects of strategizing is that it requires mastery of the details of the “arena” within which it is enacted as well as the ability to go up on the mountain and see things with a view of the whole. The imaginative power of strategizing can be realized only when rooted within an understanding of the trees AND the forest. One way to create the “arena of action” is by mapping the “actors” are that populate

that arena as we did in Week Three. It may be time to revisit that picture. Who is your constituency? Where will your leadership come from? What other actors have an interest in the action as opponents, allies, supporters, and neutrals? In organizing, strategy is about how to influence the choices of other actors so creating a map of these actors, their interests, resources, and relationships can help you imagine the arena of play. But resources are also not always obvious and good strategy often involves discovering resources in unexpected places. You make judgments about constraints and opportunities within your “arena” of action.



Chart #3

Five Strategic Questions

1. Who are my people?

Who really is my constituency - the people with the problem who must be organized to use their resources in new ways to solve the problem. The organizers job is to turn a community – people who share common values or interests – into a constituency – people who can act on behalf of those values or interests. Who really is the leadership? Do you have a real leadership team? Were they recruited from the constituency itself – people who, like you, are also able to “accept responsibility for enabling others to achieve purpose in the face of uncertainty?” Are you enabling them to learn the five organizing practices you are learning: relationship building, storytelling, structuring, strategizing, and action? Are there supporters? People whose interests are not directly or obviously affected may find it to be in their interest to back your work financially, politically, voluntarily, etc. Have you run into any competitors or discovered any collaborators? These are individuals or organizations with which we may share some interests, but not others. They may target the same constituency, the same sources of support, or face the same opposition. Two community groups trying to serve the same constituency may compete or collaborate in their fundraising. And is there any opposition? In pursuing your goals you may find

yourself to be in conflict with interests of other individuals or organizations. At times, however, opposition may not be immediately obvious, emerging clearly only in the course of a campaign. (2.5)

2. What is the change they need? What is the problem you're trying to solve? What would a solution look like? What is your strategic goal?

Now it's time to reexamine the goal you committed to achieving by the end of the semester. To begin putting your resources to work solving your problems you have to decide where to focus: what goal can we work toward that may not solve the whole problem, but that will get us well on the way to solving the problem. No one strategic goal can solve everything, but unless we choose "a" goal to focus on we'll risk wasting our precious resources in ways that just won't add up.

Focus really matters. The Montgomery leadership team, recognizing they had a power problem, decided to focus on desegregating the buses in their community. They could have focused on any one of many challenges: public accommodations, schools, voting, housing, employment, etc. So why did they choose buses? The Federal Government has an interest in transportation which persuaded them that they could use the Federal Courts to order desegregation, as had occurred in *Brown v. Board of Education*. The goal was not only very visible, but it was a site of daily abuse, as Blacks had to pass between rows of Whites to their "place" at the back of the bus, give up their seat to any White who asked for it, and be subject to the authority of an armed bus driver – a microcosm of the whole system. And, as it turned out, they could leverage the resources of their constituency – in the form of feet and bus fare – in a way that not only brought economic pressure to bear on the bus company, but which strengthened the capacity of the constituency to act together. They might have been able to develop similar leverage with another goal, but this was the one they chose, and they stuck with it. Nor did they try to take on everything at once, realizing that winning this victory could create the foundation for many more, as it turned out that it did.

Specifics matter too. The more concrete, imaginable, and specific the goal, the more clearly you -- and others whom you hope to engage -- can focus your creativity on achieving it. So this requires committing to specific outcomes as the only way to bring real focus while, at the same time, remaining flexible as to means.

A laundry list of "what we are going to try" is not a strategy but a list of possible tactics. Three or four pathways, such as fund raising, outreach, and research is not strategy unless anchored to a specific goal to which you have committed. In the Bus Boycott mass meetings, car pools, and walking to work were tactics, not a strategy. The goal was clear, specific, and sustained – desegregating the buses. The tactics were constantly adapted. As Cesar Chavez used to say strategy is not so much about making the right decision as it is about making the decision that you made the right decision. How do we know when we need to adapt, or when we need to "stay the course?"

One of the primary responsibilities of strategic leadership is to manage this tension between commitment and adaptation. And so does motivation. In narrative terms, our strategic goal becomes a critical part of our "story of now": we are faced with an urgent challenge, we look for hope we can meet the challenge, and we commit to a course of action, our strategic goal. Hope inspires not only in terms of the values in which it is rooted, but also suggests pathways of possibility. The vision of American

democracy that Dr. King articulates in his Holt Street Baptist Church talk is a powerful one, as are the values of the faith he evokes, but he also identifies a source of hope for dealing with the problem at hand – the U.S. Supreme Court decision desegregating schools. The hope that is expressed in a story of now is not a picture of “flowers in May”, but of a way forward. A motivating vision, then, articulates a concrete, urgent need for change in moral (Injustice) and strategic (segregated busses) terms. It contrasts this challenge with a source of hope, also articulated in moral (justice) and strategic (desegregated buses) terms.

So in determining your own strategic goal, create a list of the criteria it needs to meet – solve the problem at hand, creative use of constituency resources, visible, develops leadership, etc. You then may want to brainstorm as many possible goals as you can, reflect on them, synthesize them, do it again. Then you must choose. Commit to a goal that you believe most likely to enable you to mobilize your resources (what you have) in as powerful a way as possible (what you need) to achieve that goal (what you want). There is no perfect choice. This is why strategy is hard. As Cesar Chavez used to say, “it’s not so much making the right decision, as it is making the decision you make the right decision. In light of your analysis, consider the criteria that make for a good strategic goal:

1. Focuses resources on a single outcome that may enable you to achieve greater outcomes.
2. Enables your constituency to translate its resources into power, greater capacity.
3. Leverages your constituency’s strength and the weakness of the opposition.
4. Be visible, significant, and important enough to motivate engagement.
5. Be contagious and can be emulated.

Check your goal against these criteria. Consider other options. Don’t be afraid to brainstorm, come up with crazy ideas, or change course. Evaluate your goals against these criteria – or others you consider important.

3. What is your theory of change?

You may have begun with one theory of change, but, as you got into working on your project, realized that things worked differently than you had expected. So what is your current theory of change? How can your constituency can solve the problem? How does your initial theory of change stack up against your experience? Community organizers focus on ways in which the community itself can develop the capacity to solve its problems is because otherwise it is not very likely to remain solved, at last for very long. Unless the community – and the individuals who make up the community – begin to experience agency that they hadn’t experienced before, little is likely to change. The power we are focused on building doesn’t begin somewhere on high, but with the people themselves. It grows out of the ways we can influence on another. If your interest in my resources is greater than my interest in your resources, that gives me power over you – and I can use your resources for my purposes. On the other hand, if we have an equal interest in each other’s resources we can collaborate to create more power with each other to achieve our purposes than we can alone.

The four questions that frame your theory of change

1. What change do WE want?
2. Who has the RESOURCES to create that change?
3. What do THEY want?

4. What resources do WE have that THEY want or need?

So the question is how can your constituency use its resources in new ways that will create the capacity it needs to solve its problems. Then come up with an "if-then sentence", imagining ways your constituents could use their resources to achieve this goal. IF we do this, THEN that will likely happen. Once you're satisfied you are ready to articulate your organizing sentence: "We are organizing WHO to WHAT OUTCOME through HOW by WHEN."

4. What tactics will you use to achieve your strategic goal?

A tactic is a specific activity through which you implement strategy - targeted in specific ways and carried out at specific times. It's the activity through which your strategy becomes real. Strategy without tactics is just a bunch of nice ideas. Tactics without strategy is a waste of resources. So the art of organizing is in the dynamic relationship between strategy and tactics, using the strategy to inform the tactics, and learning from the tactics to adapt strategy. As we work toward our goal we learn from our successes and failures how to adapt our tactics to become more and more effective over time. The Bus Boycotters focused on a "master tactic" of a boycott, but also used litigation, organized a car pool, used contacts with the media, organized outside support, etc. etc. In fact, strategizing involves an ongoing creative stream of tactical innovation and adaptation as circumstances change, opportunities emerge, and reverses are suffered.

One important aspect of tactical decision-making is targeting - figuring out precisely how to focus limited resources on doing what is likely to yield the greatest result. One critical choice is about what problem you want to turn into an "issue" around which to mobilize. California organizer Mike Miller distinguishes between a "topic" such as education, a "problem" such as a lousy school, and an "issue" such as replacing this principal with another one. Topics become problems when they become real within people's experience. They become "issues" when a solution to the problem has been defined. The topic of racial discrimination becomes a problem when "I have to get on the bus at the front, pay my fare, get off, get on again at the back and sit (or stand) in the back even when there are empty seats in the 'white' section." A problem, in turn, becomes an issue when something very specific can be done about it by specific actors; e.g., telling the bus company to integrate the buses (a solution) or face a boycott. A good issue is achievable, yet significant. Another critical choice is about which decision-makers you will hold accountable for taking action on your issue. It can be useful to develop a set of criteria to evaluate your tactics.

Here are a few ideas

1. Make the most of your own resources, as distinct from those of your opponent.
2. Operate with the experience of your constituency, outside that of your opponent.
3. Choose tactics that unify your constituency while dividing your opposition.
4. Choose tactics that are consistent with your values.
5. Choose tactics that are fun, motivational, and simple.

5. What is your campaign plan, when are the peaks, and how are you deploying your tactics over time to build your power?

There are two ways to operate in the world—you can be reactive, as many organizations are, or you can be proactive. In order to be proactive you have to set your own campaign goals and timeline, organizing your tactics so that they build capacity and momentum over time. Timing is about sequencing your activities so as to retain the initiative, enhance your capacity as you move forward, build momentum, and take advantage of particular moments of opportunity. For example, useful initial tactics yield resources that create greater capacity for next steps. A “peak” is a point at which you’ve created a new capacity that enables you to employ new tactics. Most campaigns have to devote an initial chunk of time to recruiting enough volunteers to create the “critical mass” that will allow them to reach out to get supporters on a large enough scale. This is what builds momentum. Like a snowball (not a snowflake), each success contributes resources, which makes the next success more achievable.

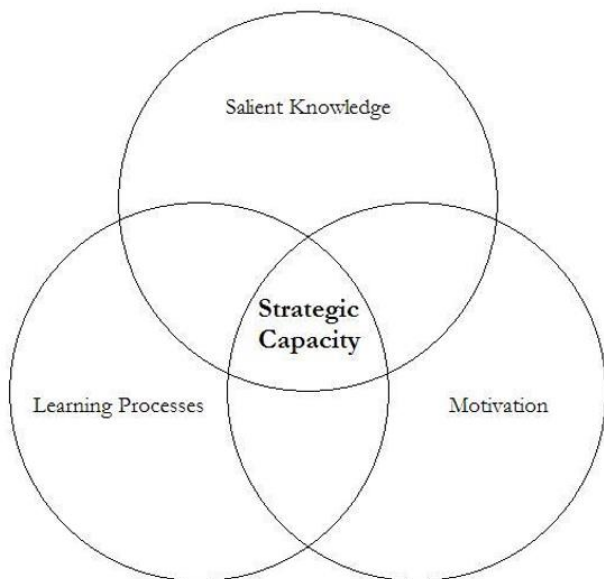
Another timing question is about when to “confront” the opposition or, in a collaborative campaign, when to confront your most difficult challenge. Alinsky also wrote that it was important never to seek a confrontation you cannot “win.” Patiently building the capacity you need to launch a credible challenge to the opposition may avoid the necessity of confrontation - if they become convinced of your power. You keep the initiative by never concluding one activity until it is clear how it will lead to the next one. You also keep the initiative by expecting that every action you take will produce a reaction to which you have already considered how to respond.

A campaign is a way to structure time. As we discussed in week three, the timing of a campaign is structured as an unfolding narrative or story. It begins with a foundation period (prologue), starts crisply with a kick-off (curtain goes up), builds slowly to successive peaks (act one, act two), culminates in a final peak determining the outcome (denouement), and is resolved as we celebrate the outcome (epilogue). Our efforts generate momentum not mysteriously, but as a snowball. As we accomplish each objective we generate new resources that can be applied to achieve the subsequent greater objective. Our motivation grows as each small success persuades us that the subsequent success is achievable - and our commitment grows. A campaign timeline has clear phases, with a peak at the end of each phase—one specific day when your whole organization will test its capacity together. After each peak, your staff, volunteers and members need time to rest, learn, re-train and plan for the next phase. Often organizations say, “we don’t have time for that!” Campaigns that don’t take time to reflect, adjust and re-train end up burning through their human resources and becoming more and more reactionary over time.

Strategic Capacity

Devising good strategy is an ongoing creative process of learning how to achieve one’s goals by adapting to constantly changing circumstances. It is the result of inputs from people with diverse experience – people who have learned the “salient knowledge”, the “nitty-gritty” detail of the situations being strategized, but who have also learned that there is more than one way to look at things. It takes people who have learned what there is to know about the trees, but can also picture the whole forest. It takes people whose life experience, networks, and understanding link them to the diversity of constituencies whose mobilization matters to the success of the enterprise. Strategy is most dynamic when the group responsible for strategy brings diverse experience, background and resources to the

table. A key element in developing good strategy is use of deliberative processes that facilitate learning by hearing different points of view, encouraging dissent, resolving things through negotiation rather than fiat or consensus, etc. Who is responsible for strategizing in your area? How can you increase the diversity (the capacity) of this group to strategize creatively? Does the strategy team deliberate well? (Is



there clear space created for open, creative brainstorming as part of the strategy process, before decisions are made?) Can the strategy team move quickly? (Is there a norm for making decisions in a way that includes everyone and also responds to the urgency of time?) Finally, the more motivated a leadership teams, the more likely they are to come up with creative strategy. Factors encouraging motivation include viewing the work as a “vocation” or calling, participating in the decision making, enjoying the opportunity for some autonomy in acting on the decisions, etc. Although good strategy can be the fruit of a strategic genius, it is more often the result of a good strategic team that a good leader has put together.

Chart #4

Story and Strategy

Organizing is not only about changing the world, nor is it only about changing what people think about the world -- it is about the connection between the two. Organizers argue taking people on a weeklong “reframing” retreat will change very little if they return to the same “structural” setting they left behind. On the other hand, organizers also argue that changing a “structural” setting without changing the people who operate within that setting, will also change very little. Insofar as people change, they may begin to acquire the power to change their circumstances -- and as people acquire the power to change their circumstances, they begin to change.

On the one hand, organizers challenge people to interpret their experience differently. This is the value of the “outsider’s” perspective. Organizers don’t just provide “information” but challenge people to reframe their understanding of themselves and their experience through relationships, new stories (frame transformation), deliberative processes, and action tactics. On the other hand, organizers must also make the world accessible in terms of the frames people have (frame amplification, frame bridging, frame extension). This is the value of the “insider’s perspective. Outsiders don’t “frame” things as insiders do. This is why “reframing” is based not on one party doing a “snow job” on the other, but on a dialogic process between and among them. The work of turning “problems” into “issues” (reframing a problem as actionable) lies between the two. Much of the interpretive work of organizing involves finding ways to put new wine into old bottles. If people find they like it, they may decide to rebottle it. Although story telling is primarily motivational and strategy is primarily analytic, a “credible strategy”

plays an important part in a hopeful narrative. Devising a credible strategy and telling a motivational story go together.

Most effective campaigns have a complementary "story" and "plan." How we can build from resources we have, how we can take advantage of opportunities, why the constraints will not overwhelm us, how each step leads to the next - all of these are elements in a plausible strategy. Just as good strategy gives individual tactics meaning by transforming them from isolated events into steps on the road to our goal, a good story gives our actions meaning by transforming us into participants in a powerful narrative. Analytics can also help us "deconstruct" an old story, on the way to learning to tell a new one. In organizing, our strategy and story are not only how we persuade ourselves that a particular course of action is worth the risk but also how we mobilize others without whose participation there would be no action at all.

Strategic Plan and Tactics

Reviewing your campaign plan means reflecting on the following components routinely with your leadership team.

1. **People:** Clarify exactly who your constituency at this juncture.
2. **Purpose:** What is the change you are seeking to make in the world? Why is the work you do important?
3. **Goal:** Review the strategic goal of your campaign: date, nested goals, measureable numbers of people needed, and outcomes.
4. **Theory of Change:** Restate your theory of change as you understand it now. Has it evolved?
5. **Tactics:** Which are the principal tactics you will use? Tactics are actions through which you turn your resources into outcomes that build capacity, develop leadership, and get you closer to the goal you're hoping to achieve.

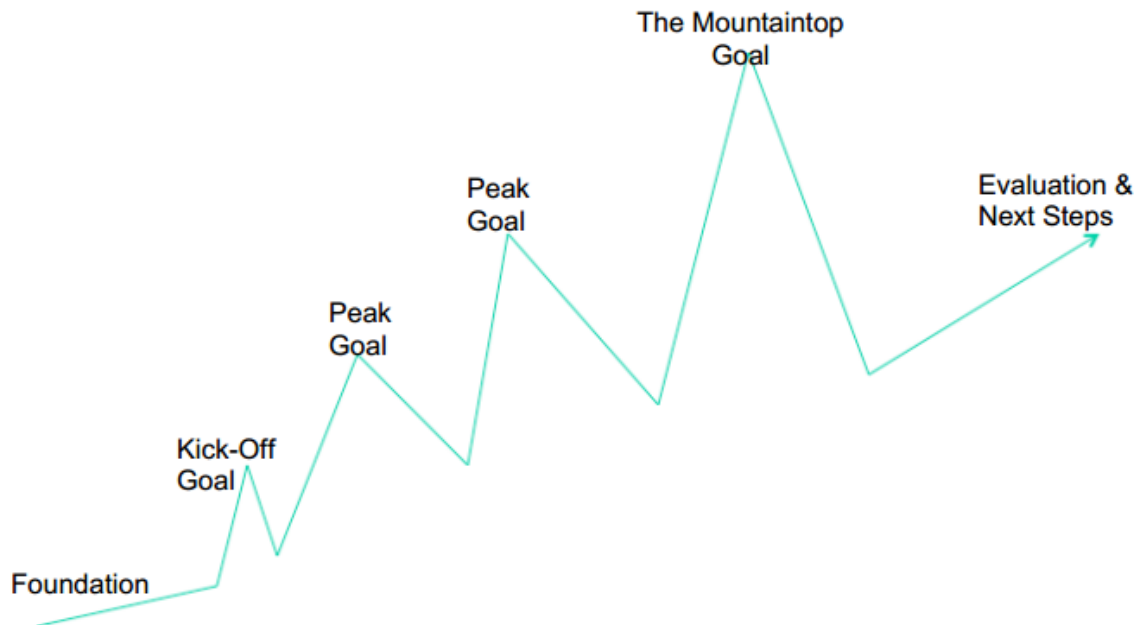
If your theory of change calls for political pressure on a legislator for example, will you do a petition drive in his/her district? Will you mobilize your community leaders to demand a public meeting with him/her to which you will mobilize your people? Will you have a march to his/her local office? Will you picket his/her house?

Good tactics: Use your constituency's resources (time, courage, skill, imagination) well; focus on your opponent's weak points; Are fun, motivational, and simple; and must be consistent with your theory of change.

FOUR CRITERIA for Tactic Evaluation:

1. Will it get you closer to the specific goal you're hoping to achieve? How?
2. Will it use your resources creatively to shift power? How?
3. Will it create organizational capacity? How?
4. Will it develop leadership? How?

6. **Timeline:** What's your timeline? When is the foundation period, the kick-off, each of the peaks and the final peak of the campaign? Why did you choose each peak? What new capacity does each peak create?
 - a. Example: *a march for which you mobilize your constituency for the first time, culminating in a rally at which you announce your campaign goals; a mass meeting in which your constituency comes together to adopt a campaign plan; you mobilize your constituency to join you in delivering the 10,000 signatures you have gathered to the legislator you want to influence. You mobilize your constituency to join you in opening your new neighborhood headquarters.*
7. **Peaks organize time. Tactics organize actions.** One peak may involve several tactics, e.g., a petition, a march, adopting a plan.



8. **Summarize your Organizing Statement:**

We are organizing (who- constituency) _____ to pursue (what – motivating purpose) _____ by (how - theory of change) _____ to achieve (what strategic objective) by (what date) _____.

Power Jujitsu - Creative Tactics from the past

It's important to remember that creative use of resources depends on the particular context we find ourselves in. We must look around and try to understand the current power relationships and develop tactics that allow us to shift those relationships of power. These examples from the past are not likely to be repeated, as today's context is very different. Rather, their creative use of resources can spark our own creative thinking, just like Frida Kahlo looked to Diego Rivera for inspiration and then went out and did her own work.

California Farm Worker Peregrinación, 1966: 51 members of the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA) - precursor to the United Farm Workers (UFW) – undertake a 300 mile march from Delano to Sacramento to bring statewide and national attention to their struggle against Schenley Industries, a national liquor distributor and Delano grape grower with whom the NFWA had been involved in a protracted local dispute. The march, planned to coincide with the Catholic commemoration of Lent, brought renewed energy to a hard fought campaign. The thousands of supporters who showed their support to the marchers made Schenley reconsider their resistance to negotiating with the NFWA. Three days before arriving in Sacramento, Schenley agreed to terms on the first real union contract in California farm workers history. The movement was launched.

Flood the Store (Saul Alinsky): To protest the discriminatory employment policies of a department store, organizers threatened to bus 3000 Black customers in their Sunday best to the store and fill it. The Black customers also kept the clerks busy by asking detailed questions about the merchandise, then an hour before closing, they'd buy everything in sight and ask it to be shipped C.O.D., and upon delivery, they'd refuse it. Because it was credible, the threat itself proved enough to change the store's hiring practices. An important lesson: the threat of a tactic is often more powerful than the tactic itself.

Bathroom Sit-In: Woodlawn Association (Saul Alinsky) In Chicago, to "persuade" authorities to keep their commitments to investment in the Woodlawn ghetto, they arranged for a sit-in at the airport's restrooms. Protesters planned to come with books and newspapers, occupy the stalls and crowd the urinals, and stay there for hours on end. Again, the threat of this tactic, which at the time was completely legal, forced the political establishment to re-commit to the investment in Woodlawn.

Montgomery Bus Boycott: Combination of small individual resource (bus fare) into powerful collective capacity (withholding of all bus fares). A situation in which all the power seemed to be on the side of elite whites, the African-American community found ways to turn their individual powerlessness into collective power and eventually shifted the tides in a landmark campaign for equal rights.

CHAPTER 3: BUILDING A STRIKE OR WALK-OUT CAMPAIGN

Strikes can be a tactic used during a campaign with a lot of careful preparation. Strikes are never the goal, even though our opposition may try to build a narrative asserting the strike was pre-conceived and forced upon members. Strikes are the reaction to the employer or state pushing members to a point of no alternative option other than to withhold their labor and take a stand. Strikes are also a major compression point in an escalation campaign full of smart tactical planning that incentivizes settlement or resolution well before the strike occurs. Any strike buildup should include multiple opportunities for the targets to do the right thing. If they do not respond, then we escalate and move towards a strike.

Our political climate is often unpredictable and thus advice and resources in this chapter are best used with an eye towards flexibility and creativity. Modern communication moves quickly and is far less predictable and controllable than the early strikes of the 1970s and 1980s. This chapter will help you understand what elements help build a successful strike, knowing that in times of urgency, we can also prioritize parts of this chapter to simply do the best we can to achieve a positive outcome for members.

When is a local union ready to take on a strike? An assessment can help staff, local leaders and members better understand the current state of the union, help bolster areas that need to be strengthened, and create a realistic strategy. However, it is important to note that there is no perfect strike scenario. An assessment also allows staff to understand what additional resources may be needed, what pressure points to use with the opposition and what issues to elevate within messaging. Most members rarely face a strike in their career and the prospect of walking off the job may be challenging — this may appear in an early assessment. **A good campaign strategy builds member confidence, resolve, and courage to take more significant action over the course of a campaign, so do not underestimate members' willingness to act early on.**



Internal Operations

Build a Local Crisis Committee

If a committee formed early for campaign preparation, modify the committee's charge to a strike build. It is ideal to begin the final strike preparation work at least two-months ahead of any potential strike date. The crisis committee should work closely with state and sometimes national affiliate staff to build the strike strategy. High-level decision-making such as settlement goals or official union responses to employer tactics should be made by governance. The committee, working with member input, should be empowered to draft a tactical plan, set a timeline, and decide basic pieces necessary to build the plan (e.g. color of t-shirts, button slogans). It can also provide input to governance and the bargaining team, but ultimately on the crisis committee's charge is to design and implement the crisis plan.¹



TIP:

In a smaller union, Area Coordinators are not necessary and crisis committee members from each worksite would be sufficient and may hold another liaison role as well.

In some cases, the committee will rely heavily on staff to help advise and build the campaign. In other places, members may want to take on even more of the responsibilities. In either scenario, work to encourage cohesion between the committee, staff and local governance and then work to define roles and responsibilities. In regional or statewide¹ campaigns, staff, leader and committee cohesion becomes even more paramount to the campaign's success. All successful campaigns require smart, strategic cohesion within the union. Any disunity or division will harm the campaign and the long-term health of the union.

Build the crisis committee² to include:

- ➔ **Representatives.** from every worksite and be intentional to identify underrepresented groups such as new or early career educators and members of color, etc.
 - ➔ **Chair.** A crisis chair that is well-respected and confident. The Chair also serves as the liaison with state or regional governance to keep them informed of real time developments in the campaign and coordinate approval of necessary next steps. The Chair may also serve as the bargaining liaison.
 - ➔ **Members Per Worksite (small to moderate sized unions) or Area (Zone) Coordinators (large union).** Well-respected members because the committee will often These people can also serve as picket captains mentioned below. They should be included when planning and discussing strategies to build a tactical escalation plan.
 - ➔ **Community Outreach Liaison(s) Coordinator(s).** (Members who connect with the community and parents and focus solely on activities which bolster their engagement with the campaign.
- Optional:**
- Community Member Liaison(s).** Members of the community who are strong allies and can provide direct support and coordination with their networks and community organizations.
 - Solidarity Liaison(s).** Members who connect and coordinate with other bargaining unit members, other unions and unorganized employees in the district or university.
 - ➔ **Communications Liaison(s).** Members charged with message development (internal to members and external to the public/media), including the official spokesperson (President or designee) and social media strategy and postings. This team of member should also include a rumor control person who is dedicated to fielding and responding to rumors that emerge.

¹ See Arizona case study in Organizing Success Stories section.

² See the Summary of Strike Organization Roles for Staff and Leaders.doc (with more detailed job descriptions for each role listed below) in the resource section.

Hierarchy of Choices for Campaign Planning



Governance and Staff: Roles and Responsibilities

Local Leaders		Staff		
Responsible	Involved		Responsible	Involved
X		Governance		X
	X	Administration	X	
X		Decides What		X
	X	Decides How	X	
X		Makes Policy		X
	X	Carries Out Policy	X	
X		Sets Strategic Goals		X
	X	Plans Strategic Goals	X	
X		Reviews Strategic Goals		X
	X	Implements Tactical Plans (leaders in action)	X	
X	X	Monitors Progress	X	X

Source: Jefferson County Education Association

Sample Tactics⁵ — To be used by a local union or a regional or statewide campaign with localized actions.

Basic	Moderate	Advanced
➤ Coordinated buttons in the worksite or armbands (cheaper option) ➤ Hand out information at school events ➤ Sign employee petitions ➤ Coordinated visibility (clothing, union shirts, signs in cars or classrooms, etc.) ➤ Basic education with members on bargaining process and unsettled issues via 10 minute meetings, smart and concise written communications, short videos, etc. ➤ #RedforEd Days to repeat coordinated actions and use the color of red – national solidarity color for educators ➤ Regular worksite meetings that are well publicized ➤ Request financial information from employer or state on budget, management salaries and benefits, outside lawyers, etc. ➤ Membership drive to build member density ➤ One on one campaigns to assess member readiness and educate/agitate members to take action ➤ Small member delegations to board meetings or legislative committees to speak to the outstanding issues ➤ Phone bank members and other bargaining unit members to address questions and educate/agitate for solidarity ➤ Power map board members or key regional or state leaders and community to understand their interests and pressure points ➤ Coordinate member postcards or letters to targets (publish their contact information) ➤ Use the #RedForEd hashtag ➤ Encourage members to share photos of actions on their social media platforms	➤ Solidarity buttons in the community ➤ Create songs about our issue ➤ Informational picketing as large groups in public or at specific events with the employer such as bargaining or board meetings, including a “gauntlet” style layout where the employer must walk past members ➤ Votes of no confidence in the employer/decision-maker ➤ Votes of confidence in the union bargaining team ➤ Phone bank and letters to community members and parents to educate/agitate around the issues ➤ Phone bank and letters to fellow NEA members in area who do not work for the employer, other unions and ally organizations. ➤ Flood board members home mailboxes with postcards – one per member with a unified message ➤ Encourage community members to write messages to board members ➤ ArtBuild ➤ Picket sign creation ➤ Hold more frequent press conferences and press worthy events (highly visible activities) ➤ Create a community e-newsletter to send updates ➤ Organize coffee klatches ➤ Post lawn signs in the community ➤ Place ads in the school athletic programs and parent newsletters ➤ Keep track of the employer’s spending on anti-union activities, outside lawyers, etc. and make it public. ➤ Go door to door with leaflets in the community ➤ Consider a boycott of key businesses owned by board members or supporting management. ➤ Larger delegations of members at board members ➤ Organize building-based solidarity events such as walk-ins before work begins ➤ Create a community petition and/or pledge cards ➤ Create community flyers and share them at supportive businesses (on counter) or leaflet popular community events such as farmers’ markets, recycling centers, etc. ➤ Launch social media channels and post regularly to update the community ➤ Put floats in local parades sponsored by the union ➤ Hold press conferences ➤ Create shareable social media graphics ➤ Leaflet large school events like athletic games ➤ Set up informational booths at local events such as fairs, farmers markets, etc. (“truth booths”) ➤ Launch a landing page website ➤ Meet with community organizations with an interest in students ➤ Encourage other unions in the area to picket and act in solidarity ➤ Consider work-to-rule tactics that impact management, but not students. These tactics include leaving or arriving at work when the day begins, resigning from voluntary committees, passive participation in faculty/staff meetings, etc.	➤ Large community or regional or state rallies ➤ Organize and participate in parades ➤ Organize a speakers’ bureau to go to community events ➤ Marches on the employer/decision makers ➤ Occupying a decision-maker meeting ➤ Member and community delegations to speak at board meetings ➤ Show collective resistance at staff meetings through passive participation ➤ Pack up personal property from classrooms and offices ➤ Picket board members’ houses/work ➤ Organize coordinated walk-ins on the same day across a region ➤ Banner drops ➤ Civil disobedience (be sure to consult with your union’s legal counsel) ➤ Take over board meetings ➤ Hold “sleep ins” during bargaining sessions ➤ Hold large membership rally prior to school board meeting, then pack the room ➤ Attend critical bargaining meetings such as mediation or fact finding hearings and make sure board members see/hear us ➤ Find and open a strike HQ ➤ Hold a strike informational meeting for potential striking unit and other employees potentially impacted by a strike ➤ Train picket captains ➤ Ask athletic coaches to suspend games and work if there is a strike ➤ Reach out to area colleges to ask student teachers not to come to work if there is a strike ➤ Phonebank area substitutes to ask them not to take work at the school in the event of a strike ➤ Hold a strike authorization vote ➤ Hold community forums in-person or virtual town halls ➤ Hold neighborhood based meetings with parents and concerned community members ➤ Translate community outreach materials and go to communities with translators to meet with non-English speaking communities ➤ Work with community organizations to develop proactive plans to support vulnerable students in the event of a strike ➤ Consider a Facebook live to update the community on actions.

⁵ See Tactics Manual WEAC.doc in resource section.

When planning more complicated or involved tactics, make sure to do our homework and get enough members involved to handle the logistics. Staff can help, but it creates more member ownership over the larger campaign when members can take a central planning role. Here are some **helpful tips**:

- ➔ **Rallies and Parades⁶.** Research location options (outdoor and indoor), rental costs, speaker systems, etc. well in advance. What are the local ordinances for marches and picketing (permits), contact information for police, best locations for high visibility? For larger scaled efforts, do we need shuttles, a parking plan, logistical support for bathrooms, water, food?
- ➔ **Target's Homes and Places of Work.** For actions at decision-makers' houses or places of employment, what type of tactic fits? What are your members' comfort levels? Consider the size and place of the location. How many members would be effective?
- ➔ **Pickets or High Visibility Events.** Make sure we use the schools and university as a strategic location, to make sure people know this is an education-based issue and then expand out. This includes early informational pickets before a strike date, meeting locations (when possible), and pickets and actions during the strike. For higher education strikes, a campus can have multiple entrances and buildings so determine the best central location possible on campus for any pickets or public events.
- ➔ **Low Turnout.** Be ready to modify our plan if member turn out appears to lower than expected or larger than expected. Do we need a different location? A different approach?
- ➔ **Weather.** Be ready for all types of weather. Generally, weather should not change our plans unless it is an emergency or unsafe. Marching in the rain or snow, standing on informational picket lines, and showing up no matter what builds a stronger message on how committed members are to the issues.
- ➔ **Social Media and Documentation.** Use social media to document our tactics and promote key events and build followers. Document our actions by taking high quality photos and video to make our own media and help build for the next action in the plan.
- ➔ **Dud Tactics.** Don't expect every tactic and action to be successful, especially if this is the first organizing campaign. We learn and adapt to fight another day.
- ➔ **Coordination and Approvals.** Make sure the crisis committee, local or state leaders and staff approve and are on board with every major tactic and action before it takes place. Stay coordinated and work towards consensus on what tactics to try.

To pull together tactical planning, timelines and committee assignments, consider using the Gantt Chart⁷ used by Michigan Education Association for big picture campaign planning. This high-level planning tool gives committees an overview of major parts of a timeline, large tasks and assignments. To track more detailed weekly and daily planning use a calendar or weekly design layout.

The Gantt Chart is a cross between a bar graph and a timeline. It is an invaluable tool for organizing the timeline. It displays when certain activities start and end, and which committee is responsible for each. The chart uses color to give the committee an instant snapshot of this most important *who/what/when* of crisis efforts. It allows the committee chair to monitor progress, keep track of what others are doing, and to make sure that everything is moving according to the plan. The Gantt Chart is set up by simply: a) assigning each activity to a sub-committee, b) deciding where and when it fits into the plan and c) putting the activity on the chart. Please remember that this chart is a living timeline that can be changed by the committee to add or delete activities, or to adjust timelines. However, it should be noted that only the committee has this authority in coordination with local governance and staff to amend it.

⁶ See the Rally Logistics Checklist.docx.

⁷ See a complete Gantt Chart Example MEA.docx in the resource section.

Here's a sample **strike timeline** designed within a 6–8 week build up to the strike:

TIMELINE	TACTIC	ROLE/ASSIGNMENT
PRE-ASSESSMENT	➤ Conduct a pre-assessment of the local union well before a crisis committee is formed. ➤ Form an organizing committee before the strike build up to allow internal capacity building. ➤ Identify available staff to support strike build up.	➤ Staff ➤ Local President/Staff ➤ Staff/Field Manager
WEEK 1	➤ School Board (or University Board of Trustees) Meeting with small member delegation to explain impact of core issues on educators. ➤ Crisis committee forms crisis build up plan, populates it with critical dates in the calendar.	➤ Crisis Committee ➤ Crisis Committee
WEEK 2	➤ Train communications team and refine the message; prep spokesperson. ➤ Launch social media (ongoing) and plan press releases and conferences in line with key actions on timeline. ➤ Organize consistent weekly 10-minute meeting structure for duration of build up with concise information and “asks” for members. ➤ Launch a visibility effort — buttons or t-shirts.	➤ Communications Staff and Crisis Team ➤ Communications Liaisons ➤ Communications Liaisons ➤ Crisis Committee
WEEK 3	➤ Train community outreach team. ➤ Identify potential community allies and begin outreach and meetings (small and large meetings).	➤ Staff Organizer ➤ Crisis Community Outreach Liaison and Staff
WEEK 4	➤ School Board Meeting with full membership in attendance. ➤ Train strike HQ coordinator and relevant staff. ➤ Create picket signs or ArtBuild. ➤ Continue to hold community meetings and go to neighborhoods to engage parents. ➤ Phone bank parents and hold one-on-one conversations.	➤ Crisis Committee ➤ Staff Organizer ➤ Crisis Committee ➤ Crisis Community Outreach Liaisons ➤ Crisis Committee and Community Outreach Liaisons
WEEK 5	➤ Issuance of fact-finding report (if relevant) and member action at fact-finding hearing. ➤ Strike Informational Meeting (with teacher striking unit and ESP for solidarity purposes). ➤ Hold informational pickets . ➤ Continue to hold community meetings and go to neighborhoods to engage parents. Begin to organize contingency plans for vulnerable families and students in the event of a strike. ➤ Reach out to area unions and ask for solidarity actions.	➤ UniServ Director, Bargaining Team and Crisis Committee ➤ Crisis Committee, Staff, Attorney ➤ Crisis Committee ➤ Crisis Committee and Community Outreach Liaisons ➤ Solidarity Liaisons
WEEK 6	➤ Open Strike HQ. ➤ Set up “instant” internal communication tools for peer-to-peer texting and alerts (ex: Hustle). ➤ Train Picket Captains & General(s). ➤ Hold virtual town hall meeting with parents and/or in-person community event(s). ➤ Meet with athletic and extracurricular staff to ask for solidarity. ➤ Hold informational pickets. ➤ Do door-to-door leafleting in community.	➤ Strike HQ Manager and Staff ➤ Communications Liaisons ➤ Staff Organizer ➤ Crisis Committee ➤ Crisis Committee ➤ President/Crisis Chair ➤ Crisis Committee and Communications Liaisons
WEEK 7	➤ Strike authorization membership meeting. ➤ Call Substitutes and notify student teacher programs in area. ➤ Strike loan application office hours (if applicable).	➤ President, Crisis Committee, Staff ➤ Crisis Committee ➤ Crisis Committee Staff
WEEK 8	➤ School Board (or University Board of Trustees) Meeting with full membership and community members in attendance. ➤ Day Before—clear classroom, turn in keys ➤ First Day of Strike.	➤ Crisis Committee and Community Liaisons ➤ Crisis committee ➤ EVERYONE

Short Summary of Strike Organization Roles – Local Leaders and Staff

Every crisis committee will look differently based on the size of the union, scale of the effort (local vs. regional vs. statewide) and local dynamics involved in the strike build up. In general, here is a short overview of recommended roles to plan and run a strike. It is important to work out division of duties, how decisions will be made, and how local leaders and state affiliate staff will work together as early on as possible. See the Strike Manual for more on developing a cohesive team in Chapter 1 and 2 as well as more detailed role and responsibility descriptions for each role listed below in the addendum.

Crisis Committee Chair. A crisis chair that is well-respected, confident, reliable and unflappable. The Chair also serves as the liaison with state or regional governance to keep them informed of real time developments in the campaign and coordinate approval of necessary next steps. The Chair may also serve as the bargaining liaison. The Crisis Committee evolves over the life of the strike build-up and strike to include the following roles depending on the timeline.

Member/Worksite Representatives Per Worksite or Area (Zone) Coordinators or Regional Coordinators (Statewide). Well-respected and unflappable members to serve on the crisis committee because the group will be planning and discussing strategies to build a tactical escalation plan, including targeting the boss, high level decision makers, and what it takes to plan a strike. If the union is large, consider having **Area (Zone) Coordinators** serve on the crisis committee and organize worksite-based subcommittees of members to implement the plan on a local level. These people can also serve as picket captains mentioned below. If the effort is regional or statewide, use **Regional Coordinators**. These Coordinators are assigned local unions to push out organizing strategy and tactics from the region/state. Local unions designate their own local committees to engage local communities, members and employers in the campaign;

Community Outreach Liaison(s). Members who connect with the community and parents and focus solely on activities which bolster their engagement with the campaign. Consider adding a **Community Member Liaison(s)** who is a parent or ally from the community who can provide direct support and coordination with their networks and community organizations. Also include specific members assigned to be **Solidarity Liaison(s)**. These members connect and coordinate with other bargaining unit members, other unions and unorganized employees in the district or university;

Communications Liaison(s). Members charged with message development (internal to members and external to media), including the official **Spokesperson** (President or designee) and social media strategy and postings. This team of member should also include a **Rumor Control** person who is dedicated to fielding and responding to rumors that emerge to try to distract the union from its campaign and the official spokesperson.

Legislative Action/Strategy Liaisons (for Statewide Efforts). Members to work with government relations staff to develop strategy specific to legislative actions.

Logistics Liaison(s). Members tasked with specific things such as being a police liaison for public events, rally logistics for large-scaled actions requiring multiple moving parts, and volunteer coordinators to organize volunteer tasks.

Research Lead. A member to conduct research about the employer or target as needed.

Picket General(s). Leaders of the picket captains who oversee field operations and day-to-day strike operation decision making once on strike. These should be well-respected leaders who can make sound decisions under pressure.

Picket Captains. Captains may or may not serve on the crisis committee given the size of the union. Assemble captains based on worksites with a 1:12 ration of captain to members on a picket team. Assign non-members to picket teams to make sure they are included in strike related communications and requests for action. Captains should be reliable, organized, and confident leaders. For smaller unions, captains may need to serve other crisis committee roles. Also consider organizing picket captains for other bargaining units such as teachers for an ESP strike or professional staff for a university faculty strike, so those employees have an organizational structure in place leading up to a strike.

Strike Headquarters Coordinator. Member charged with finding, outfitting and organizing the strike headquarters space in coordination with staff.

President. Serves as an ex-officio member who is included on all communications, official spokesperson (unless otherwise designated) and in the loop on developing strategy in real-time. Runs all membership meetings and oversees any specific decision-making process as required by local (or state) constitution and bylaws.

Bargaining Liaison. A member dedicated to sharing and summarizing crisis committee planning with the bargaining team and/or Chief Negotiator to keep the team in the loop on developing strategy in real-time. The bargaining team should also inform the liaison and/or crisis chair of developments related to bargaining to notify the crisis committee of new bargaining dates, actions by management, and important developments that may impact the timeline.

Staff Advisors. Staff coordinators assigned to organizing, communications, bargaining and legal issues to work in tandem with the local UniServ Director. Staff advisors should train the appropriate roles on the committee listed above based on their expertise. The training should include role responsibilities, what the road ahead looks like, and how to do their role.

Suggested staff roles include:

- **Strike Organizer.** This staff person is the leader in the field who directs the entire strike operation and works closely with local leaders (Crisis Chair, Strike General, Picket Captains, and President). Conducts supports crisis chair in organizing and running crisis committee meetings and planning the build-up and strike strategy and tactics. Leads staff meetings when on strike and supports Strike Generals in running picket captain meetings and daily debrief meetings. Supervises strike budget and accounts for use of strike funds (unless assigned to other staff person). Makes ultimate decisions when consensus won't work, especially when related to financial decisions for field activities to support the strike. Makes requests for legal assistance and keep attorney informed of developments. Oversees operations of all community outreach efforts, strike headquarters logistics, and membership cohesion.
- **Bargainer (UniServ Director) (Local Strikes) or Several Field Staff (Statewide**

Effort). Staff person who advises and supports bargaining team for a local strike effort. In some cases, the bargainer may serve as the chief negotiator. Serves as the contact person with the mediator if one is involved. Works closely with the Strike Organizer to keep bargaining and field efforts coordinated throughout build up and strike. For statewide efforts, field staff serve as field organizers and liaisons to local leaders in each region to support implementation of the statewide strike strategy.

- **“Shadow” or Assistant Bargainer (Local Strike).** Serves as an advisor for the Bargainer. Attends important bargaining sessions as an observer to provide extra eyes and ears for Bargainer. Helps Bargainer with strategy, tactics and alternatives, including reviewing critical proposals and final tentative agreements to make sure all necessary details are included.
- **Government Relations/Legislative Staff (Statewide Effort).** Work closely with Staff Organizer and Crisis Committee and other local leaders to develop and adapt a legislative strategy during the strike build up and strike.
- **Communications Coordinator.** Staff person supporting the Communications Liaisons in developing and producing internal and external communications. Supports the production of daily strike newsletter (On the Line). Supports the production of internal and external flyers, including arranging printing services. Assists crisis committee and Strike Generals in designing and printing picket signs. Directly works with news media relations. Trains Spokesperson and any other members designated to speak with the media. Assists Communications Liaisons in preparing press releases, organizing and running press conferences and handling all media relations. Handles routine news media contact as backup to Spokesperson. Attends staff/picket captain/area coordinator daily meetings and debriefs.
- **Attorney.** Advises Strike Organizer, Bargainer and Government Relations/Legislative Staff with regard to legal questions and strategy. Handles all legal actions (injunctions, ULP's, etc.). Attorney of record for local or state union. Assists individual members with legal questions when assigned by Strike Organizer or Bargainer. Brings in other legal help as needed. Maintains low profile.
- **Optional: Operational or Administrative Staff.** Supports set up and daily operations of strike headquarters (local) and/or regional offices to support field efforts of the strike. Assists Strike Organizer and local leaders in setting up functional temporary office space (utilities, technology, layout, etc.) and serves as a daily assistant to help the Staff Organizer run the strike.

The Forge

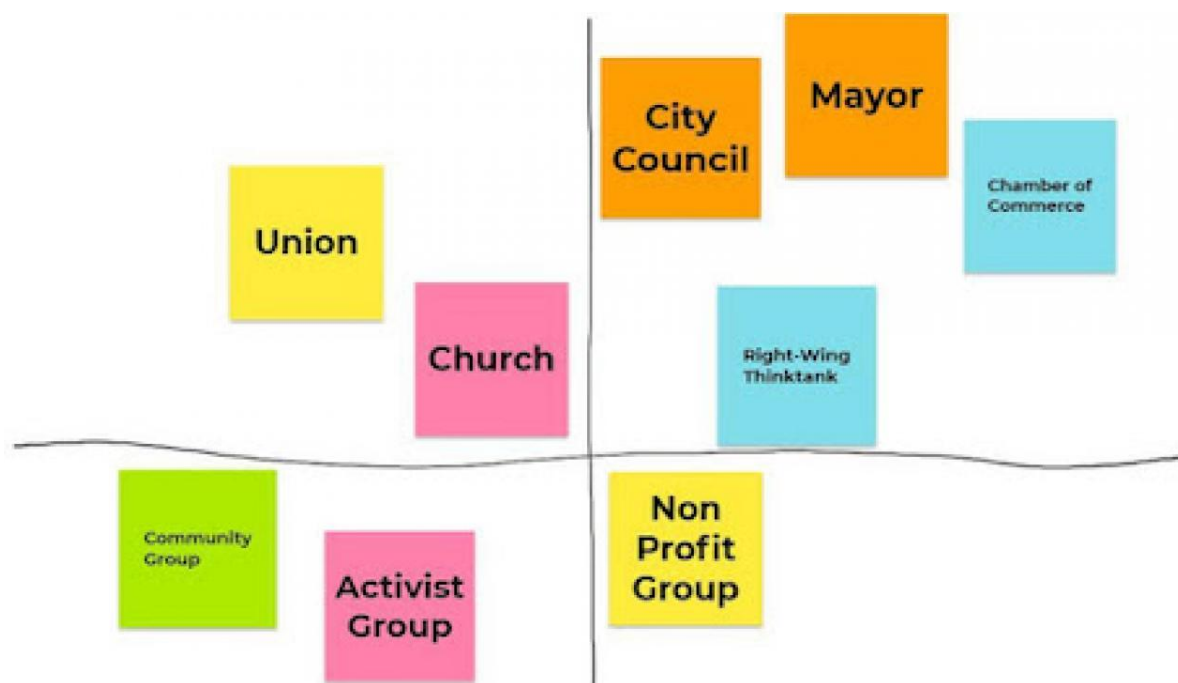


Image courtesy of the author

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Strategy Charts & Power Maps: A User Guide

Eric Dirnbach

Why Do Campaign Strategic Planning?

If your group is brainstorming a campaign to change a public policy or to stop a harmful corporate action, it can often seem overwhelming. Where do you start? For example, a community group wants to stop the development of a luxury condo and have affordable housing instead. Another organization wants to shift funding away from the police budget to social services. Or a coalition wants the state to increase its renewable energy goals. So many factors are involved. What do we do and in what

order? Who are our allies and opponents? Who are the decision makers we have to push? How can we win, and how long will it take?

Campaign strategic planning will help answer these questions. Strategic planning forces a group to take the time to think through the campaign, rather than just launch into activities that group members are familiar with. For instance, without going through a strategy process, a group might decide that they should go hand out flyers about their issue. Maybe they should, but tactics should support strategies, which should support goals. Jumping right to familiar tactics may lead the group to waste time and energy or miss other actions that would be more useful to the campaign. Campaigns can be lost or fizzle out if they are run in an improvised manner and are insufficiently planned. If a campaign might take a year, then it's worth taking a week to carefully think through the strategy and revisit the plan regularly.

Here I move through a process for strategic planning using a series of tools. This list is by no means exhaustive, but includes the strategy guides I've used or heard about. I'll briefly mention some others along the way. I rely mostly on the general framework of the [Midwest Academy](#), some of the tools collected by [Beautiful Trouble](#), and ideas of power and organizing from labor strategist [Jane McAlevey](#).

Some Key Terms

Because words like “strategy” are thrown around in these kinds of discussions, and they often mean different things to people, I'll try to be clear about how I'm using them here.

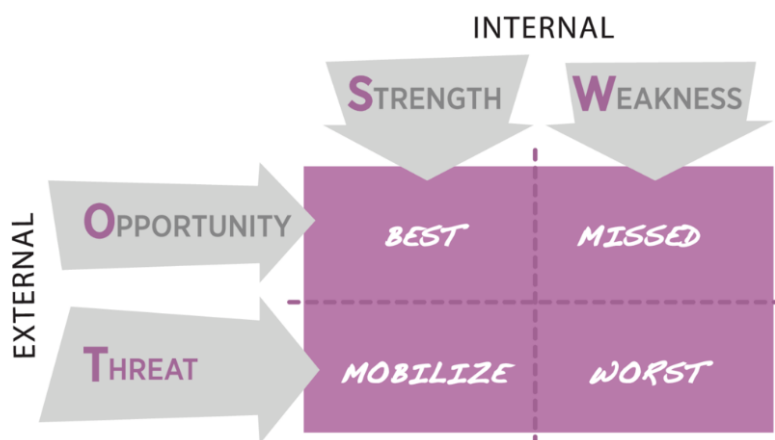
- Goals — the objectives of the campaign, the solution to an Issue
- Issue — the problem to be solved

- Campaign — the set of Strategies to achieve the Goal
- Strategies — plans designed to build Power to move a Target
- Tactics — a set of actions designed to implement a Strategy
- Power — the ability to get what you want from a Target
- Constituents — groups or people who would directly benefit from a Campaign win
- Allies — groups or people who support your Goals
- Opponents — groups or people who oppose your Goals
- Targets — people who can make your Goals happen

Strategic Planning

Here are several frameworks that groups can use to determine their campaign goals and strategies.

SWOT Analysis



This is the classic Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats matrix — SWOT. Often used in the business world, this can also be a useful exercise to help groups clarify their campaign goals — what issues they can win.

The group identifies its own internal strengths and weaknesses while also listing what external threats and opportunities they face. The diagram shown here goes further by looking at what campaign ideas can be generated at the intersection of these categories.

So in this case, all the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats would be listed in the areas where the arrows are. Where these intersect on the chart, you can identify what Beautiful Trouble calls “Best Case,” “Missed Opportunity,” “Mobilization Scenario,” and “Worst Case” campaign options.

From this, the group can identify what issue it is well positioned to possibly win — those that fall in the Best Case box. For example, a Best Case scenario could be when a neighborhood group that’s very active and well known in the area (strength) sees widespread interest in doing something about a large vacant lot that’s been sitting there for years (opportunity). This leads them to take on a campaign to create a community park.

They can then move to the strategy chart to fill in details about the campaign.

Strategy Chart

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies, and Opponents	Targets	Tactics
1. List the long-term objectives of your campaign. 2. State the intermediate goals for this issue campaign. What constitutes victory? <i>How will the campaign</i> • Win concrete improvement in people's lives? • Give people a sense of their own power? • Alter the relations of power? 3. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal?	1. List the resources that your organization brings to the campaign. Include money, number of staff, facilities, reputation, canvass, etc. What is the budget, including in-kind contributions, for this campaign? 2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by this campaign. Fill in numbers for each: • Expand leadership group • Increase experience of existing leadership • Build membership base • Expand into new constituencies • Raise more money 3. List internal problems that have to be considered if the campaign is to succeed.	1. Who cares about this issue enough to join in or help the organization? • Whose problem is it? • What do they gain if they win? • What risks are they taking? • What power do they have over the target? • Into what groups are they organized? 2. Who are your opponents? • What will your victory cost them? • What will they do/spend to oppose you? • How strong are they? • How are they organized?	1. Primary Targets A target is always a person. It is never an institution or elected body. • Who has the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? 2. Secondary Targets • Who has power over the people with the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them?	For each target, list the tactics that each constituent group can best use to make its power felt. Tactics must be • In context. • Flexible and creative. • Directed at a specific target. • Make sense to the membership. • Be backed up by a specific form of power. Tactics include • Media events • Actions for information and demands • Public hearings • Strikes • Voter registration and voter education • Lawsuits • Accountability sessions • Elections • Negotiations

This is the well-known strategy chart from Midwest Academy, a progressive training institute that has worked with activists for 50 years. What I like about this chart is it requires that the group to think carefully about its goals, what resources it brings to the campaign, its constituents, allies and opponents, its campaign targets, and tactics for every target.

For Midwest Academy, all goals should be something concrete that can be won from a target, and they should deal with a specific solution to a problem that the group is trying to fix. This should be something that the group really wants, not a “realistic compromise.”

In this framework, each target is a person who can make a decision to give you what you want and needs a separate strategy to move them. In its [Organizing for Social Change](#) guide, Midwest Academy says that a strategy is “a method of gaining enough power to make a government or corporate official do something in the public’s interest that he or she does not otherwise wish to do.” Thus strategies must always involve building power to get a target to do something.

All the [tactics should support that strategy](#), and we shouldn’t use tactics over and over again if they aren’t working just [because we like them](#). There are a few tools related to tactics that might be useful.

The **Action Star** asks us to carefully think through our actions, which are the tactics we deploy. Furthermore, each action works at a specific **Point of Intervention**, interrupting the functioning of the system.

It's also important to have small wins on the way to the main goal in order to build the confidence, energy, and support of the campaign. This is related to the theory of **campaign escalation**. If a campaign continuously does the same thing month after month, it may fizzle out as people drop away. We want an escalation of activity and power over time.

Other exercises examine targets. A tool for target identification is the **Pillars of Power**, where you identify the key institutions or relationships that your main target depends upon. You may want to develop a strategy for some or all of these. The **Peel the Onion** tool helps better understand targets through identifying their wants and needs.

At the end of the chart process, the group makes a campaign timeline, which is a living document that includes a specific and concrete list of items: WHO will do WHAT by WHEN. The more specific the assignments, the better. Something like a **Gantt Chart** can be useful to map out all campaign elements on a timeline.

SMART Objectives



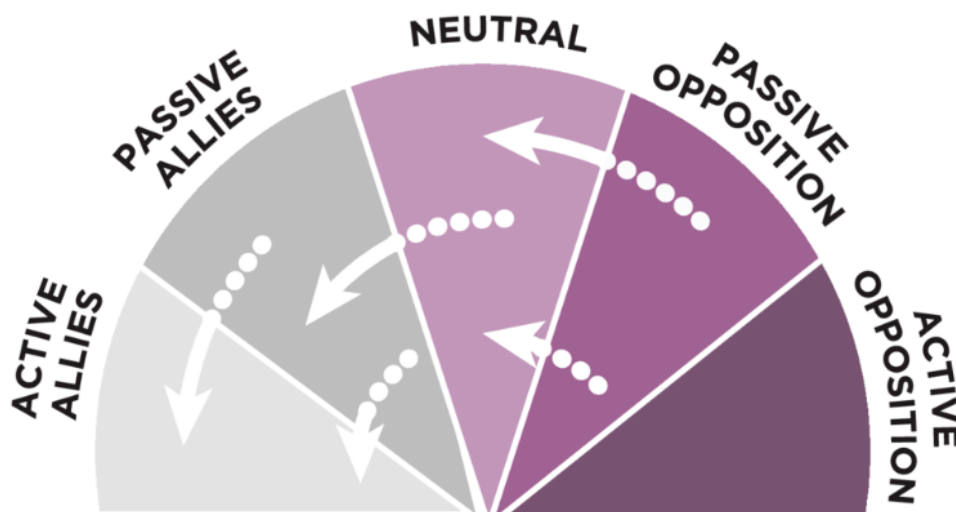
The SMART Objectives framework can be helpful for correctly outlining the key strategies for the campaign. There are **various versions** where the letters stand for slightly different concepts. Each objective should be:

- Specific — A simple and exact definition of what you want to happen
- Measurable — What information are we tracking to know if we are succeeding?
- Achievable — We should choose strategies that we can actually accomplish.
- Relevant — Does this really help the group get to its goal?
- Time-Bound — Set appropriate deadlines to keep the campaign moving.

Power Analysis

These are tools that help groups assess the landscape of support and opposition in their campaigns and are useful to fill out the Constituents, Allies & Opponents part of the strategy chart.

Spectrum of Allies



In this framework, you identify important groups or people that support, are neutral, or oppose your goal and display them visually on a spectrum, from left to right.

To win, it may be necessary to move some of the groups toward the more supportive side of the spectrum. Moving passive allies to active allies could be key for winning the campaign. Moving passive opponents to neutral could be helpful. The campaign can develop strategies and tactics to accomplish that.

An important insight about active opponents is that we list them not because we want to convince them to support our campaign, since they probably never will. Instead, we should consider what they might do to oppose our campaign so that we can figure out how we would respond. Also active opponents generally aren't targets, because they can't give us what we want. So spending a lot of time on them diverts energy from the campaign.

Power Maps



This goes into more detail about allies and opponents. You map both groups in a way that shows how influential they are. Use a two dimensional grid with the horizontal axis a similar Agree/Disagree as the Spectrum of Allies. The vertical axis is the Degree of Influence, with more powerful on the top and less powerful on the bottom.

This requires some honesty about the level of power for groups, especially allies. We should assess them for how they are, not how we want them to be. You can also connect the groups with arrows showing who can influence whom.

The level of influence axis can be useful to inform strategy. It may be good for the campaign to move a powerful neutral toward support since we want to use their power in our coalition. It may be less useful to deploy in certain ways a solid supportive group that has no power.

What About Worker Organizing Campaigns?

Worker organizing, whether to improve conditions at work or to form an officially recognized union and negotiate a contract, can fit into this overall framework.

In this case, the campaign could be conceptually simple since there is often one obvious target — the boss. The workers need a strategy to move the boss to agree to their demands. This strategy can involve a series of **escalating job actions** that organize more coworkers to increase their collective power and could eventually include a strike.

In more complicated versions, we may also need to bring pressure on the boss in other ways, especially if they engage in union-busting activities. A broader “**corporate campaign**” often identifies other targets that have key business relationships with the employer. This is not a substitute for worker action but should be used alongside it.

A common framework in the labor movement is to ask and answer these four questions:

- How does the employer make money?
- How does the employer want to grow in the future?
- Who are the decision makers?
- What are the important business relationships?

The strategy and tactics should try to disrupt the ability of the employer to make money or grow the business, and sever or complicate their important business relationships. A classic and successful example of a corporate campaign would be the **United Farm Workers national grape boycott**. It reduced grape sales and disrupted the grape growers’ relationships with grocery stores significantly. The campaign put enough pressure on the growers to lead to union recognition and a contract. This is perhaps a rare example of a boycott that worked because the UFW put tremendous resources into it and attracted significant solidarity and support nationwide.

The **Labor Notes** Secrets of a Successful Organizer and TroubleMaker's Handbook are great resources for labor organizing campaigns.

Campaigns Must Build the Power of Disruption

What I like about this overall framework is that it's hard-headed and realistic about building power and winning. It correctly assumes that we live in an unjust world that primarily serves the interests of wealthy and powerful people. The vast majority of people only get what they can successfully fight for, usually through social movements.

Winning our campaigns requires more than asking nicely and "speaking truth to power." It's not enough to just "fight the good fight" and not adequate to just have a rally because "we need to do something." Our goal shouldn't be just "educating the public" or "changing the conversation." We won't win just because we think we are right. We won't win just because we have been running a campaign for years and think we deserve to win.

Moreover, campaigns are not simply about the specific solution to a problem; they should also be about building people's power for the next fight. For Midwest Academy, campaign goals should fit three major criteria: (1) win real improvements in people's lives, (2) give people a sense of their own power, and (3) alter the relations of power. A campaign that builds power sets the group up for the next campaign in a stronger position. As Midwest Academy's **Organizing for Social Change** reminds us, "an organization should come out of any campaign stronger than when it went in, even if it loses the issue."

So we want to win actual victories, which requires building power. But what exactly is this power? And how much is enough? Our power requires organizing people to **disrupt normal business as usual** to pressure decision makers to do something we want. When the pressure we apply is greater than the reluctance of the decision makers, then they will move. Political Scientist Francis Fox Piven has long written about the dynamic of **social movement disruption** leading to reforms — that “if a movement succeeds in building a constituency, communicating its issues, and creating sufficient disruption to be a threat, it will create a dynamic in the legislature where politicians start to respond to the movement in order to bring things back to normal.” Moreover, this disruptive power means going beyond rallies and other symbolic demonstrations. Rallies by themselves aren’t disruptive — they may express anger and signal the potential for disruption — but if all we do is rallies, we won’t win because we haven’t disrupted business as usual.

Labor strategist Jane McAlevey, in her book **No Shortcuts**, makes this more concrete with the theory of concession costs and disruption costs. Concession costs are how much it will cost the target to give you what you want. Disruption costs are how much pressure a campaign can create, and this needs to be of the same magnitude as the concession costs. McAlevey fills in what I think is missing from the Midwest Academy framework, which is the question about how much disruption will be required. She argues, “Movement actors can and must reasonably predict the concession costs in advance; otherwise, they enter the fight without knowing which strategies to deploy.” This is why a campaign with only rallies rarely works. We are bringing low disruption costs that do not meet the higher concession costs.

So how do we disrupt for real? For an employer, a union disrupting their business through a strike or boycott could be effective. For a landlord, a tenants’ union disrupting rent payments could work. In both cases we are

disrupting by cutting off the money. These are conceptually easy cases because both involve what McAlevey calls bounded constituencies. This is a group of folks directly subject to an authority figure, but who have potential power over that person if they organize and act collectively.

This gets somewhat more complicated in community organizing. A community could also be considered a bounded constituency that could build potential power over a local decision maker. Often a community group identifies the need for more public funding for something or a change in the law. Thus the group often targets elected officials who have decision-making power over these issues. The disruption in this case could become disrupting the careers of uncooperative elected officials by the threat that they will be voted out. Or it could be disrupting the normal life of the community in order to create a crisis to which elected officials must respond.

So in the example of the vacant lot, local groups could try to pressure the mayor or city council to create a community park. Or they could attempt to occupy the lot, build the park themselves, and then defend it from being seized. They have created a crisis that could be solved through legalizing the park. Likely **both electoral and non-electoral strategies** will be necessary.

McAlevey cautions that campaigns often really do mobilizing rather than actual organizing. These words are often conflated but there is a **crucial distinction**. For McAlevey, mobilizing involves gathering up activists and organization leaders who are already interested in the issue. These are folks who will more naturally turn out for events, and it's tempting for campaigns to rely on them alone. But real power is built through organizing, when we talk with, recruit, and train large numbers of new people who may never describe themselves as activists. Especially important are those people who are unacknowledged, respected leaders

without official positions or titles who have influence and relationships with others.

Do These Tools Work in the Real World?

Most organizers and campaigners I have talked with use some version or combination of these ideas, but rarely do they work through everything outlined here. I don't think I ever have on any campaign I've worked on. That's certainly ok, since the main purpose of these exercises is really to get groups to ask these questions and think carefully about their strategies. And most importantly, we have to ask ourselves, are we building enough power to create enough disruption?

Moreover, these frameworks are necessarily simplified reflections of what actually happens in the real world. For example, the Power Mapping chart is useful, but it leaves out a whole third dimension, which would be how much a particular group will actually do regarding your campaign. We may have an influential group that strongly agrees with the campaign but can't really focus on it and only signs a support petition. Every other tool can also become more complicated when it encounters the real world.

I would be interested to see research on how often groups win their campaigns when they follow this or similar strategic planning processes. If anyone knows of this kind of research, please let me know. Also if anyone has comments on how helpful these tools are, or uses alternatives, please let me know!

The Forge



Courtesy of Jackson Potter

March 4, 2021

The Resurgence of Teachers Unions

Jackson Potter *and* Arlene Inouye

Two members of the Chicago Teachers Union's (CTU) big bargaining team visited Los Angeles in the summer of 2018, months into the United Teachers Los Angeles (UTLA) contract campaign, to share lessons from their historic 2012 strike. Their presentation received a standing ovation. However, the contract demands that garnered the most applause and energy were for green spaces and community gardens at schools, affordable housing for students and their families, and efforts to expand a new union/community model for sustainable community schools with wraparound supports and culturally-relevant curriculum.

A renewed orientation toward social justice unionism has transformed contract bargaining for teachers unions over the past decade. In the five years

leading up to the 2018 contract campaign and subsequent strike, UTLA organizers held thousands of conversations — in person, on the phone, at rallies, in groups, and one on one — with members, allies, and parents. Through this spadework, the union built broad consensus around demands that would have an impact outside the classrooms, as well as inside.

Putting these kinds of common good demands at the core of our bargaining is no small part of the story behind the resurgence of teachers unions over the last decade. No less than twenty teacher strikes in the past eight years have injected hope and momentum into the labor movement's landscape. From Arizona to West Virginia to St. Paul, teachers waged strikes that led to unprecedented victories in school investment, class sizes, staffing formulas, and common good demands after decades of underfunding, privatization, and demonization of public school teachers and staff. In most of these efforts, teachers have won because they've run strong contract campaigns focused on what organizer and author Jane McAlevey has referred to as "structure tests." Organizers engaged every member to take part in escalating actions that advanced a clear set of public good demands.

In this essay, we look at two case studies: the 2019 UTLA and CTU strikes. We hope that by detailing the methods we used to prepare and launch our largely successful contract campaigns, we can help revive a labor movement that has remained largely dormant, even in the midst of historic teacher strikes. Now is the time to build on the grassroots organizing of teachers unions and grow a more militant labor movement across the country.

Los Angeles 2019, by Arlene Inouye

UTLA's six-day strike in January 2019 was only the third strike in our union's fifty-year history. UTLA is the second-largest teachers union in the country, with 35,000 educators in a school district with ninety percent students of color, 85 percent low-income students, and large populations of foster,

homeless, and special needs students. Because there are over 1,000 schools spread across the district, we had to be intentional about each step of our organizing plan. We knew that to win, our members needed to feel connected to each other and to the union and receive clear and consistent information (e.g. infographics on the key issues). We also needed to build union structures that engaged and empowered workers by recruiting leaders at every school and supporting them with UTLA staff.

UTLA was a testing ground for how to build a strong union. In the five years leading up to the strike, a group of progressive leaders had transformed UTLA from a service model with a backlog of 3,000 grievances to an organized, fighting union. We won all officer positions and a majority of the Board of Director positions with a commitment to take on the fundamental issues facing teachers and schools: institutional racism, declining public school funding, the expansion of charter schools, and weak relationships with parents and community organizations.

To accomplish this, we shifted our staffing to support an organizing culture, identified and engaged new member leaders, began organizing parents, students, and community members, and created a research department to support an expanded communications team. We looked at the necessary and sequential steps to gain the confidence and trust of our membership. First, we needed to win a salary increase, as we hadn't had one in eight years; then, we needed to raise dues so we could invest in organizing to become a fighting union; finally, we needed to build school site structures to prepare to strike.

Building School Site Structures

The heart of our organizing program was centered at the school sites. We needed all 34,000 members to receive union information, engage personally on the issues, and take sequential actions that required greater investment

and risk. To do this, we had to build the relationships and structures that could deliver this ambitious program.

Because of the sheer size and spread of our members, our UTLA structure divides the city into eight areas with four elected Board of Directors members and a steering committee from each area responsible for supporting school sites. One of our initial steps was to make it a priority for every school site to have a chapter chair and regular school site meetings. The UTLA area leaders, along with two staff organizers, recruited chapter leaders and trained them in how to have one-on-one conversations and build Chapter Action Teams (CATs).

Ideally, one CAT leader took responsibility for ten members with whom they engaged regularly on union issues, including members who worked at multiple schools, such as counselors, psychologists, therapists, and nurses. The CAT training included how to identify leaders, map your school site, and have difficult one-on-one conversations, including techniques such as redirecting and inoculating members. When the district put out memos saying that our members couldn't talk to parents or that special education teachers couldn't strike, the CAT leaders helped members work through their fear, uncertainty, and doubt (FUD). The CAT leader training also addressed how members could walk each other through FUD. Initially, members would give a million reasons why they couldn't strike. Many of their concerns were compelling, such as, "I'm a single Mom; I can't afford to strike." Members would allay these fears by reminding each other what we were striking for, and how the gains were greater than the risks.

We heard from many new leaders who stepped up to be the chapter leader at their school that, for the first time, they felt that the union needed them. At a citywide meeting for all of our chapter leaders during the winter break in 2018, we had over 1,000 school site chapter leaders — nearly double what we usually had. We passed out picket signs and told the assembled leaders about the latest district roadblocks to keep us from striking. The leaders yelled, "Strike! Strike Strike!" While we weren't able to get CAT leaders at every

school in the district, it is an ongoing and critical effort. Building Chapter Action Teams requires members to take an active role in the union and creates a school culture of accountability and community — essential when organizing for a strike.

Structure Tests

One of the first things we had to do to build an engaged and strike-ready membership was to clean up our data. In past years, we did not have the correct contact information for most members, making the kind of one-on-one organizing we set out to do nearly impossible. To remedy this, we launched a union-wide outreach campaign to secure accurate information from our members through our chapter chairs, CAT teams, and staff. Our new research team designed and created a database with thousands of updated emails and cell phone numbers, which allowed us to track every action members took on our cell phones and computers.

Each action was a structure test to see where we were strong and where we needed to focus our organizing efforts. We started with regional rallies in November 2014 and planned our first citywide rally in February 2015. 15,000 members attended, making it the largest action since the 1989 strike.

A pivotal structure test was the membership-wide union election vote in February 2016. The “Build the Future, Fund the Fight” campaign, including a thirty percent dues increase, was on the ballot. A majority of the UTLA members voted, and a resounding 82 percent voted yes, giving us confidence that the members supported the direction the union was taking. Other structure tests included petitions about members’ willingness to take actions and to put themselves on the line. While effective at first, petitions eventually became routine and less of a gauge of commitment and involvement. These structure tests need to be adapted so they are most effective at any given time.

In another powerful structure test, we called upon UTLA members to wear red on Tuesdays — moving our members to publicly identify with UTLA and sparking conversations with colleagues, parents, and school administration about union issues. The simple act of wearing red affirmed members' identity as part of a union collective and allowed us to see how strong we were at each school site. We then used this information to direct our organizing efforts — recruiting more CAT leaders or offering additional support to existing leaders.

We used social media to publicize all of our organizing efforts as well as members' stories about their working conditions, from having forty students in a class to not having a nurse at the school site. We also had weekly (later daily) videos explaining where we were in contract bargaining so that our members had up-to-date information leading up to the strike. Finally, we featured parents, students, community, and union members as they expressed their solidarity with us, underscoring the broad coalition we were building around our common good demands.

Forging Strong Relationships with Parents and Students

For our strike to be successful, UTLA needed to gain the trust of community, civil rights, and advocacy organizations, some of whom we had strained relationships with. In the past, some community groups disagreed with the union over issues such as seniority, curriculum reform, and suspension and other harsh discipline policies that disproportionately impacted Black and brown students. Other progressive organizations resented UTLA because they never heard from us unless we needed their support.

This changed in 2014 when the new UTLA leadership reached out to progressive organizations across the city to repair the harms of the past and build mutually respectful relationships. We also hired an experienced community organizer to work with rank-and-file educators to build a school-

based infrastructure through which teachers could organize parents and students around broader public education and community challenges.

We started with an educational roundtable with community organizations and advocacy groups. But instead of building unity and consensus, the meetings brought out deep fundamental differences, particularly around the expansion of charter schools. Some of the local progressive groups relied on funding from charter school corporations, making it extremely difficult if not impossible to work together. So we pivoted, forging a coalition modeled after the national AFT and NEA Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools (AROS), which had generated enthusiasm across the country in 2013 and 2014 for its coordinated national fight against corporate educational reform by teachers unions, community organizations, and youth-led networks.

After months of discussion, we formed a new coalition called Reclaim our Schools LA, or ROSLA. The coalition brought together four anchor groups: The Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE), the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), Students Deserve, and UTLA. Together we agreed to build a movement for broad-based education reform that would engage teachers, students, parents, and community members. As **Leigh Dingerson wrote** in a 2019 report on ROSLA, “The cornerstone of the campaign was the agreement by each anchor group on several key practices: the development of a shared analysis, strategy, and platform; a commitment to leadership development and grassroots voice; a systematic and scientific approach to organizing; and bold, escalating action.”

The coalition was key to building for our strike and expanding our set of demands beyond wages, hours, and working conditions. We held regular meetings to discuss the priority issues to take into negotiations, including expanding green space on campus and stopping independent charter schools from co-locating on our public school campuses. The students were most concerned with the demeaning school district policy of wandng students and their belongings for weapons; they wanted to replace the police presence on campus with restorative justice programs and student supports,

such as counselors. We also introduced other issues that we weren't able to get an agreement on, such as repurposing vacant buildings that the district owned as low-income housing. The students mounted their own campaign leading up to the strike, including a button campaign, one-on-one conversations, and Black Lives Matter in Schools events. During the strike, the students were leaders and speakers on the picket line and at rallies. ROSLA also created its own strike school, "La Escuelita de Lideres," where community members learned the latest information about the strike and practiced how to speak to the media. Parents, students, and community members of ROSLA held picketing actions at school board members' homes in the evening and were leaders on the picket line. Each action contributed to the strength and momentum of the strike.

In the end, sixty-to-seventy thousand parents, community members, students, and teachers took to the streets of L.A., demanding not just smaller class sizes, nurses at every school, and more counselors, librarians, special education programs, and ethnic studies programs but also green spaces, an immigrant support fund, an end to the discriminatory practice of wandering, funding for community schools, and support for a statewide legislative charter school accountability measure. The power we built within our schools and the broader community allowed us to make gains in all of these critical areas, not just the narrow wages and working conditions typically negotiated over in union contracts. We have continued to build on these wins over the past two years. For example, the Board of Education recently put forward a resolution funding more green space and community schools.

We won because we systematically built up our union to be a collective power — engaging the public and empowering new and dedicated chapter leaders, who continue to lead us forward today.



Chicago 2019, by Jackson Potter

The Chicago Teachers Union members were inspired by the historic wins in the L.A. contract and UTLA's successful engagement with the public to win green space, class size reductions, sustainable community schools, and affordable housing. Labor's decline since WWII is in no small part a function of our tendency to focus on the thousands of members inside our bargaining units rather than the millions who can benefit from our advocacy outside of them. UTLA's wins made it clear that winning more is both possible and necessary.

A number of people on CTU staff and in the rank and file made regular pilgrimages to L.A. to learn from and expand upon shared tactics, organizational forms, and movement goals. When it was our turn to strike, we had incorporated many of the lessons from their strike, such as:

- **Organizing all leaders of the union on common good demands.** These demands had to be seen as integral to the entire contract package by union leaders and members. In L.A., every speaker repeated these community-based priorities to joyous applause from their member leaders, who clearly had talked about them plenty and integrated them as their own key demands.
- **Tracking member data.** UTLA tracked all organizing conversations, attendance at rallies, mock votes, actual votes, and wear red Fridays. We fortified some of our systems trying to emulate them.
- **Using social media.** UTLA's excellent use of social media and member profiles in explaining key contract demands, bargaining updates, and actions was something we stole hook, line, and sinker.

Slow and Steady Organizing

In the last months of 2018, the Chicago Teachers Union collected hundreds of proposals from our 27,000 members. We intentionally built our big bargaining team to include key member leaders in special education,

bilingual education, early childhood programs, as well as among members who work primarily with homeless students and paraprofessionals (the lowest-paid group in our bargaining unit, school clerks and teacher assistants who are 84 percent Black and Latinx women). This ensured that there were strong advocates within the bargaining process on the key issues identified by members.

In the end, we developed a democratically-determined list of four hundred proposals, which we then whittled down to a more concise and manageable bargaining submission. We demanded that the city prohibit coordination between the school district and ICE in locating or identifying undocumented students and families and called for the dissolution of the city's gang database, which overwhelmingly targeted students of color and perpetuated the school-to-prison pipeline.

We also demanded the school district provide affordable housing for all 18,000 homeless students through a real estate transfer tax, corporate head tax, and/or surplus from the city's ubiquitous tax increment financing program (TIF). TIF dollars are diverted from libraries, schools, and parks, mainly to fund the vanity projects of the rich in downtown Chicago. We were the first group in the city to force the Mayor to release TIF funds back to schools and other taxing bodies. Our ability to fund many of the programs and staff models of all our contracts from 2012 to the present has been dependent on our ability to win new revenue, like that from TIF surpluses, into our schools. Each of our proposals explicitly referenced new revenue, to the chagrin of management.

To popularize these common good demands, we built on a decade of slow and steady organizing. Since 2011, the CTU has run a summer organizing institute. The program provides thirty-to-forty emerging leaders with high-level organizing training, political education, and campaign planning skills. We encourage applications from key groups in the union — that is, members who work in areas that lend themselves to critical struggles, such as special education teachers, clerks and teacher assistants, bilingual educators, and

members working directly with immigrant communities, clinicians, or Black neighborhoods targeted for school closures. This new crop of leaders was able to lead committee work and campaigns that morphed into contract demands relevant to those key areas of work.

Many of the members who attended our organizing institute became new school delegates, members of the union's executive board, and district organizers who, for a small stipend, helped CTU identify and mobilize delegates. They were key presenters and advocates in city-wide trainings CTU hosted to prepare for upcoming fights. Eventually, we innovated our annual delegate workshops to include a weekend version that welcomed any and all members to learn the same skills for mapping their schools, leading building-level campaigns, and identifying key contract issues.

In the buildup to the strike, this wave of new delegates, summer organizing grads, and other emerging leaders was charged with strengthening Contract Action Teams (strike teams) in all five hundred of our buildings, recruiting to key union committees that helped draft contract language and related campaigns, and helping coordinate city-wide actions and coalition work, from wearing red on Fridays to mobilizing downtown.

Prior to the expiration of our contract, we asked delegates and school leaders to assemble a broader group of members, from every department in their buildings, to act as branches of the phone tree as we mobilized towards a strike. Delegates were prodded by the union's governing bodies to recruit new members to existing CAT teams to expand leadership and capacity. Once we went on strike, these teams also led pickets, food and flyer distribution, marches, and afternoon city-wide action mobilizations by getting their school staff to join in union-wide protests downtown and at various places across the city that could illustrate our demands. One afternoon, we sent all 30,000 members to a construction site where the city was subsidizing a luxury residential development with \$1 billion, half of which would otherwise go to schools.

We also held monthly meetings to educate members around the importance of affordable housing demands and sanctuary protections for students of color. Prominent leaders in the Grassroots Collaborative and Grassroots Education Movement (coalitions for educational, racial, and social justice in Chicago, of which CTU is a member) addressed multiple House of Delegates meetings and linked the fight against school closings with the need to advance more affordable housing.

Nevertheless, it was difficult to make these common good positions resonate as contract priorities because most members did not see them as critical for contract settlement. Unlike UTLA, we did not integrate these demands as early in our process. Therefore, we lost precious time helping members connect broader community demands to their own pressing, school-based issues in organizing conversations, summer outreach, and member training. However, once our governing bodies did approve the entire proposal in December 2018, leadership, staff, and key member leaders consistently and systematically lifted up common good areas in every membership meeting, communication, organizing discussion, and officer speech — a necessary level of engagement to elevate proposals that go beyond traditional bargaining experiences and the legal constraints of bargaining law.

Still, there were occasions when members of our own executive board would ask, “Are we just saying these things, or do we mean to implement them?” This is a critical issue, and one we set about addressing in the 2019 contract. Unlike in 2012, the 2019 contract resulted in a robust set of member-led, community-directed committees prioritized by leadership to monitor the implementation of these transformative demands and expand their reach beyond the confines of contract language. In the aftermath of the 2019 strike, the CTU launched committees on housing, environmental justice, sustainable community schools, and racial justice to enact and monitor our progress in these crucial areas.

As this work suggests, common good contract wins require tremendous staffing, organizational resources, and time to implement and enact.

Therefore, we must do a better job of considering the implications of our proposals, the commitments implied, and the ongoing involvement required to properly implement and realize the intent of common good demands, including establishing member committees and hosting trainings to maintain member commitment. Anything less risks creating the dynamic that occurred in our e-board: members see the propagandistic value of common good demands but doubt the intention of the union to follow through. While we did a better job after the 2019 strike than we had in previous years, with the district losing 60,000 students over the last decade from housing displacement and immigration restrictions, our advocacy in these areas will have to exponentially increase in future contract cycles. In fact, I would argue that our primary demands must center around making Chicago a livable city for our students and their families if our union is to continue to flourish.

Once CTU went on strike on October 17th, Chicago Mayor Lori Lightfoot played to our members' concerns, arguing that the contract was not the "appropriate place" to address the needs of homeless students. Lightfoot claimed she would add more social workers and nurses to the school budget but refused to put it in the collective bargaining agreement.

By the end of the strike, we had definitive wins in both areas. For the first time, our contract established a guaranteed staffing formula to put social workers and nurses in all schools as well as a method for school communities to vote out police officers in their buildings. We won dedicated staff and resources for homeless students, case manager positions for diverse learner populations, sanctuary language to protect undocumented students from ICE, and living wages for our lowest-paid paraprofessional members.

Still, we did not secure any additional units of affordable housing. In hindsight, to win on these demands, we would need more robust political education and careful analysis of how our power is intimately linked to student wellbeing and enrollment levels, as many Black and Latinx families leave the city because of insufficient economic opportunity and high levels of

violence. We have to make the case to our members more consistently that their jobs are tied to student enrollment — and the factors that push students and families out of the city — in order for them to fight for housing as a contract priority.

Lightfoot ultimately adopted the majority of our agenda to curry favor with voters who had rejected school closings, undemocratic school boards, and privatization, in no small part due to CTU's advocacy over the preceding ten years. While it eventually took an 11-day strike to force the Mayor to adopt many of those demands, our prior success at broadening the expectations of members, allies, and the public about what a collective bargaining agreement could achieve made gains in common good areas more possible than ever. In particular, CTU's previous district and charter school strikes established a more experienced, strike-ready, and well-organized membership.

Labor Solidarity

Another key to the CTU victory in 2019 was labor solidarity. Chicago teachers struck alongside the 7,000-plus school employees in SEIU local 73, a bargaining unit composed overwhelmingly of Black and Latinx workers who do the custodial, security, and special education assistant work in the schools. The alignment between the two unions was years in the making; the union's leadership change in 2010 created the conditions to go out on strike together for the first time ever in 2018. It was also critical for us to lift up the demands of our paraprofessional members who have much in common with their SEIU counterparts; by bringing the two unions together, we were able to align contract demands for the lowest paid union members for the first time..

Both SEIU and CTU developed differentiated organizing raps and psychometrics to better engage these members and center their interests as key priorities for the entire union. This initially involved a clerks campaign in the immediate aftermath of our 2016 contract fight when the district

attempted to eliminate school clerk positions and force teachers to submit their own timecards. We launched online petitions and social media actions to “Save Our Clerks.” Teacher members submitted letters to their principals to express concern for the district plan and solidarity for our clerk colleagues. We even had a raucous bargaining session where delegates from all over the city laid into the district’s head of labor relations about the clerk plan, to the point that he walked out of the room fuming. This was hugely important in building the confidence of our PSRP (Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel) leaders that the union would fight for them and signaled to the rest of the membership that the demands of these workers would take priority. The result was that we won the biggest salary increase for PSRPs and the members of SEIU 73 of any single cycle in the history of both unions.

In addition, both the CTU and UTLA strikes were preceded by wildly successful, visible, and historic strikes in our charter divisions. The success of the 2019 strike in Chicago required years of campaigning to merge CTU with the Chicago charter school teacher local and to align the 11 charter school contracts with the CTU contracts. The successful merger between the CTU and Chicago ACTS set the stage for the first strike by charter school teachers in U.S. history, when teachers at the United Neighborhood Organization (now called Acero and the largest charter school operator in the state) led a four-day work stoppage during the winter of 2018. The strike allowed CTU members to see charter teachers as strategic partners in stopping the privatization movement. As a result of the strike, for instance, UNO had to pay its teachers more — and was thereby prevented from opening eight additional schools.

To win more, public sector unions must find ways to align with private sector unions and tap into the hopes and dreams of workers who have not yet unionized. Successful private-public sector organizing experiments take considerable time and resources. The charter merger and contract alignment fight in Chicago took almost a decade, with many hits and misses in between. But until we can develop the conditions for these kinds of class-wide contract fights, labor’s victories will eventually meet their limits.

Conclusion

The trajectory of the CTU victory in 2019 was characterized by protracted struggle, punctuated by strikes but continued in between contracts with pitched political fights, charter school organizing, and school closing battles that kept the membership engaged and mobilized. We built upon victories in the first charter school strike in U.S. history, the L.A. teacher strikes, and the Boston teacher contract campaign, which also won language on class size restrictions.

In no small way, both the CTU and UTLA 2019 strikes were connected to a rising movement of teachers who have permanently altered the political and labor landscape across the country. A clear focus on wealth redistribution to address racial and economic disparities in the city and the schools has been absolutely indispensable in creating a vision, organizing raps, public support, and membership commitment to policies that are capable of creating transformational change. Hopefully, we will look back on the 2018-2020 strikes in Arizona, Chicago, West Virginia, Kentucky, Oklahoma, North Carolina, Oakland, Denver, St. Paul, and Los Angeles as the moment when **#RedForEd** began to supplant austerity and corporate education reform with educational equity and investments in our BIPOC school communities. While we are far from matching the school funding received by wealthy white suburban districts, our innovative bargaining approach — centered around common good demands to advance racial justice and halt privatization — has positioned CTU and UTLA to win unprecedented victories.

Read the issue: Debriefing the Resistance

Case Study Investigation

	UTLA	CTU
What was the theory for building power?		
What was the overall strategy?		
What was(were) the unifying issue(s)?		
What were the demands?		
Who was the target?		
What were the wins in this campaign?		
Was this campaign successful? How do you know that?		



Growing Capacity

From Service to Member Agency
Engagement Grid
Structure Tests
Worksite Assessment



Problem Solving: From Good Service to Centering Worker Agency

Building an organizing culture requires centering worker agency throughout the work of the union (ownership), and identifying larger shared purposes to strive for (leadership). In your day to day work, union staff can easily become enmeshed in the numerous worker problems, grievances, and disciplinary matters that demand their attention. These demands can be overt (managers, local leaders, members) or covert (our own fear of letting someone down, our own belief that we are the expert that has to do it, pressure from the established culture).

Staff need to build the persistence to approach their problem solving with an organizing lens and a servicing plan. To build and support an organizing habit for yourself and an organizing culture with leaders, consider reframing your plans for problem solving with members using the following prompts that bring worker agency into the conversation:

1. What does the building rep think?
2. What are other people saying?
3. Who are the leaders in this building and are they aware of this?
4. How can you bring the members into this?
5. Who's the right person to go with the member to the principal?
6. What would it take for you not to be in that meeting?
7. How can this be a story about the members?
8. What new leaders are on your radar?
9. What's your plan for this member?
10. What's the membership plan at this school?

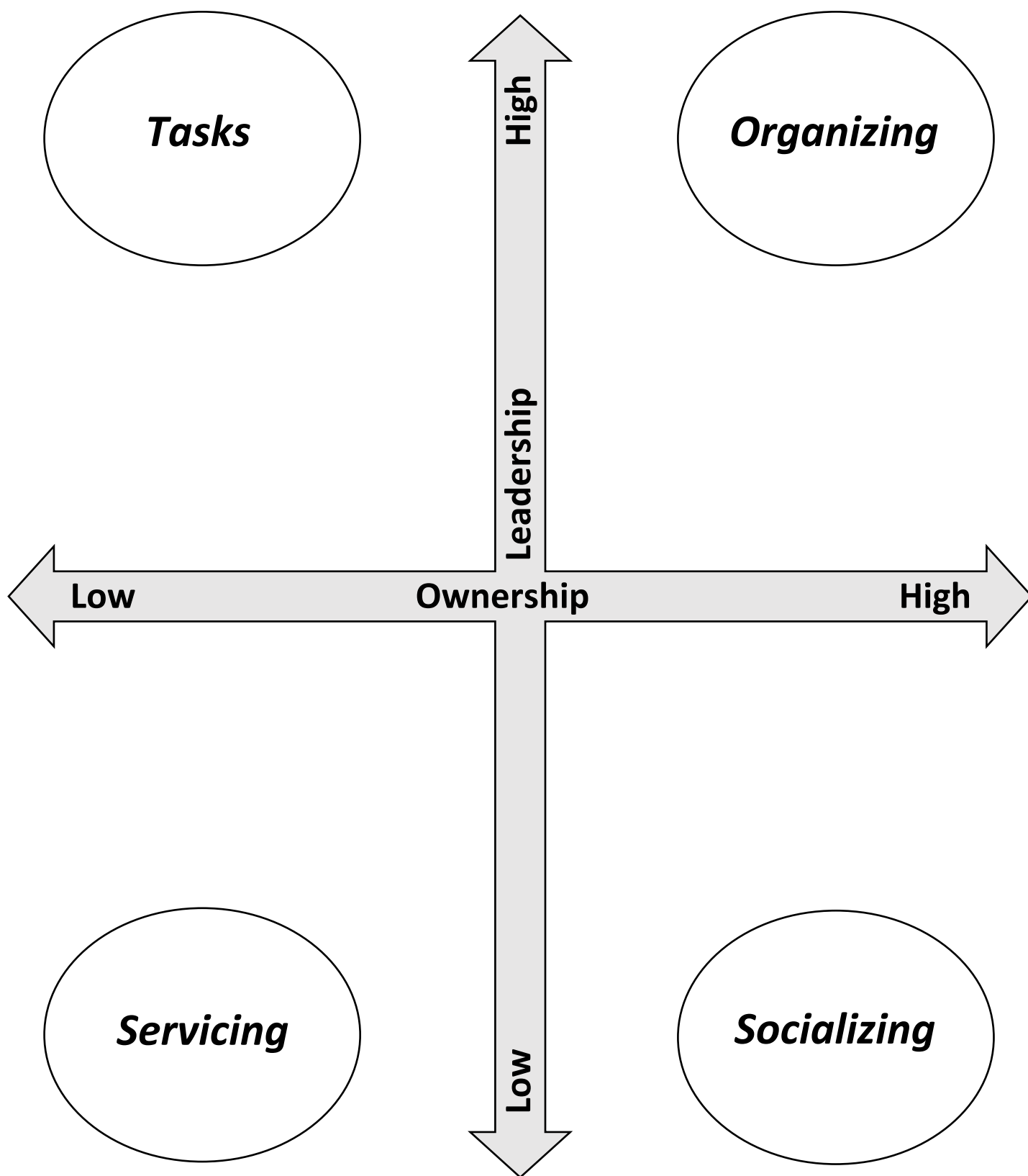
Even a simple question like "What does the building rep think?" can be a powerful shift in your thinking and planning if you are used to dealing primarily with individual members themselves. Over time, you will begin to automatically build in the step of connecting with building reps and soliciting their views into your advocacy plan as a basic expectation.

If you see yourself as an organizer already, add the challenge question to your problem solving, "what would it take for me not to be in that meeting?" Simply asking the question is a powerful reminder of the expectations for incorporating organizing into your advocacy work.

Pivoting your focus from just the individual worker problem, grievance, or disciplinary matter at a school to questions about the state of the union in a particular school or workplace, such as in questions 3, 8, 9 and 10, can be an important reminder that building our power is in fact the central mission of staff.

Engagement Grid

John Donaghy, Organizational Specialist, NEA



Structure Tests

From Jane McAlevey’s *A Collective Bargain: Unions, Organizing, and the Fight for Democracy* (2020). Reprinted with permission from the author. (See Inouye, p. 252 and Schirmer, p. 227.)

UNIONWIDE STRUCTURE TEST	DATE	IMPLEMENTATION OF STRUCTURE TEST
Each of these was done by hand, face-to-face, across 900 schools. They were carried out by teacher leaders under the guidance of staff organizers. Each test helps the leadership understand where they are strong and where they are weak, which helps to prioritize their efforts.		
Regional rallies in the contract that had expired in 2011	November 2014	Used an “I’ll be there” sign-up sheet in the weeks before these smaller regional rallies, as they planned their first big citywide rally set for early 2015. This was the contract the new leadership inherited: the people who lost the election had been negotiating it for more than three years.
Organizing for February 2016 Stand Up citywide rally for the 2011 contract	January 2015	Launched a campaign-commitment card with check boxes of what people were willing to do: school-site picketing, parent outreach, attend a downtown rally in February 2015, boycott faculty meetings, protest testing, and strike if necessary.
Stand Up rally at Grand Park, escalating to citywide	February 2015	15,000 union members attended, making it the largest action since the 1989 strike

The teachers win big, a 10 percent raise (the first raise in 10 years), finally settling the 2011 contract and demonstrating to members that the new methods of organizing work.

UNIONWIDE STRUCTURE TEST	DATE	IMPLEMENTATION OF STRUCTURE TEST
Launch I'll Vote Yes to Build the Future, Fund the Fight	Fall 2015	More than half of the members of the union signed a public petition saying they would vote yes to increase their dues, which they framed as Build the Future, Fund the Fight.
Membership-wide union election to allow the rank-and-file members to vote to increase dues	February 2016	A majority of members actually participate in the ballot, with 83 percent voting yes. Like most union elections, as with most American elections, traditionally only a minority vote. But UTLA was determined to have real union democracy, with an important question going to the members, and they achieved more than 50 percent turnout.
School site-based rallies for health insurance	Fall 2017	Health benefit negotiations took place parallel to the overall contract bargaining (with a coalition of LAUSD unions), because nonteachers and teachers alike negotiate insurance benefits at the same time.
All In launches and ratification of healthcare contract	February 2018	Because the union anticipated that the right wing would prevail in the <i>Janus</i> Supreme Court case, it planned ahead and had the entire membership sign new cards with language the court would stipulate.
4 Questions petition launch	April 2018	This petition asked members about their willingness to take four actions, indicated by hand checks on boxes and their signature.
All-In for Respect rally	May 2018	12,000 members turn out at Grand Park rally
Strike vote	August 2018	84 percent turn out and participate, 98 percent vote yes.
I Will Strike petition	Fall 2018	More than 75 percent sign.

Sample Building Assessment Criteria

We will assess all 31 buildings readiness to take action this fall using the following criteria:

-Membership Density. Does this building have at least 70% membership? (if yes 1, if no 0)

-Does this building have an AR? (if yes 1, if no 0)

-If so, is the AR good? (Do they regularly attend Association meetings? Do they regularly have 10 min meetings with their members? Do they effectively communicate information back and forth between the building and the Association?) (if yes 1, if no 0)

-Leadership Density. Does this building have more 1s and 2s than 3s and 4s? (if yes 1, if no 0)

1 = Member Activist (participates in EA campaigns and projects)

2 = Inactive Member (rarely attends EA meetings and mostly uninformed)

3 = Potential Member (open to discussing EA membership and cares about the issues)

4 = Hostile (will not join and actively works against EA)

-Pink Wednesday. Does at least 50% of membership participate in Pink Wednesdays? (if yes 1, if no 0)

-Pink on the door. Does this building have at least 50% of doors with a pink paper clearly visible to the hallway? (if yes 1, if no 0)

With 6 possible points earned by buildings between now and September, are we prepared to strike? A building will be color coded depending on points:

-Pink! 5-6 points: This building is ready to go!

-Yellow 3-4 points: This building is not ready to go, but is on its way. Needs more attention.

-Blue 0-3 points: This building is cold and definitely not ready to take action. We need to focus most of our attention here.

Example:

School	Membership Density	AR	Good AR	Leadership	Pink Wednesday	Pink Door	Ready to Go?
Centennial High	1	1	0	0	1	0	No
Irving Middle	1	1	1	0	1	1	Yes
East High	0	0	0	0	0	0	No



Leaders

Ganz on Leaders
Trusted and Respected
Leader, Mobilizer, Activist



NATIONAL
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

Organizing Notes

Structuring Leadership*What Is Leadership?*

“Leadership is accepting responsibility for enabling others to achieve shared purpose in the face of uncertainty”

Many of us call to mind historic figures like Dr. Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Jane Addams, Robert Kennedy or President Reagan. In reality, we find leadership everywhere - linking together networks through which we work to achieve common purposes. In every community, church, classroom, and organization hundreds of people are doing the work of leadership without which these efforts would not survive.

So what do leaders do that makes them leaders? They accept the responsibility for working with others to define desired outcomes and achieve them in an uncertain world. When we know what to do, when there are no surprises, no new challenges to face, and we’re following a routine, what need do we have of leadership? It’s when we enter the domain where the rules don’t quite work, where we don’t know which rules apply, where we’re trying to do something that hasn’t been done before – or that we haven’t done before - that’s when leadership enters the picture.

Leadership as Relationship

Relationships are the foundation of organizing, including the exercise of leadership. James McGregor Burns argues leadership relationships emerge through repeated “exchanges” or “transactions” among leaders and followers or constituents.¹ Leaders offer resources constituents need to address their interests and constituents offer resources leaders need to address theirs in turn. These relationships may form between individuals, a team, a group, a community, or even a constituency enabled to work together effectively.

What do we exchange in this kind of relationship? Constituents may get a sense of empowerment, access to resources, help solving a problem, etc. Leaders may get the same things - and they get something that is worth accepting the responsibilities that come with

¹ J. M. Burns (1978). Leadership. (New York, Harper and Row).

leadership. Dr. King describes this as the “drum major instinct” - a desire to be first, to be recognized, and even to be praised. As much as we may not want to admit it, this might sound familiar. Rather than condemn it - it is, after all, part of us - Dr. King argues it can be a good thing, depending on what we do to earn the recognition we seek. He quotes Jesus as saying to James and John, “if you want to be my disciples you not only “can” be first, you must be first - first in love and first in service.”²

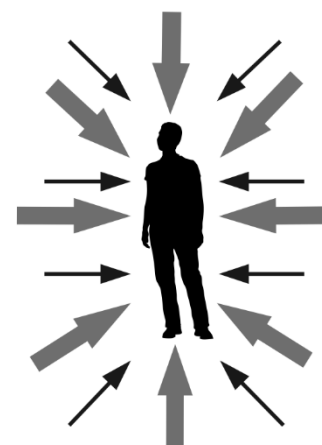
With this view of leadership, who makes leaders? Can they be self-anointed? Can I decide one day that I am a leader? Or must I earn leadership by entering into relationships with those who enable my exercise of it? This makes it easy to recognize. There is a simple test. Is there a constituency? Fine speeches, a wonderful appearance, lovely awards and excellent work aside - no constituency, no leadership.

Leadership and Structure

Many of us may not want to think of ourselves as followers or as leaders for that matter. Often we are told, especially in elite institutions, that we are all leaders...or we should be. Leadership is highly praised, but no one says anything about good constituents, collaborators...or citizens. But organizations that depend on collective action can be effective only if people learn to practice good leadership and followership. Leading and following are not expressions of who we “are” but of what we “do” – in this meeting, committee, project, organization, or institution. We may play a leadership role with respect to one project and followership role with respect to another.

What are the differences in those roles? Most importantly, leaders accept responsibility for a “whole” – a whole team, a whole project, a whole job – while others accept responsibility for a “part” of the whole. Leaders accept responsibility for seeing to the work that a group must do to work together successfully.

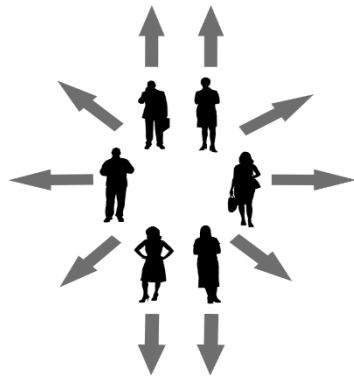
But what type of leader should you be, and what are you looking for in others? Sometimes we think the leader is the person everyone goes to, like this “I’m the leader!” approach.



“I’m The Leader”

² Martin Luther King, J., (1986 (1991)), The Drum-Major Instinct (4 February 1968). A Testament of Hope: The essential writings and speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr., (New York, HarperCollins) 259-267.

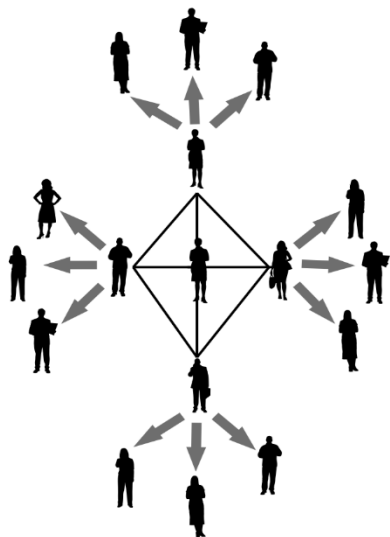
But what does it feel like to be the “leader” in the middle? What does it feel like to be the arrow that can’t get through? What happens if the “leader” in the middle drops out?



“We’re All Leaders”

On the other hand, some of us question the whole concept of leadership. Shouldn’t everyone be considered a leader? Is leadership really necessary? Isn’t it repressively hierarchical? Why do we need this kind of structure at all? Can’t we just “come together”? Sometimes this works. But who’s responsible for coordinating everyone? And who’s responsible for pushing the whole group forward when you can’t reach a decision?

In her *Tyranny of Structurelessness*, feminist sociologist Jo Freeman argues that organization (or collaboration of any kind) simply doesn’t work if we don’t have ways to assign clear responsibilities and hold ourselves accountable for fulfilling them.³ The idea of a structureless group, she writes, “becomes a smokescreen for the strong or the lucky to establish unquestioned hegemony over others.” And, “for everyone to have the opportunity to be involved in a given group and to participate in its activities the structure must be explicit, not implicit.”



Snowflake/
Interdependent Leadership

A third option is an interdependent leadership team in which individuals can bring complementary strengths to bear on solving a common problem. On the one hand, leadership doesn’t rest on one person. On the other hand, it is clear where responsibility for leadership does rest. Effective leadership doesn’t imply domination but rests on interdependence and collaboration to create more “power to,” based on the interests of all parties. Domination is the exercise of “power over,” a relationship that meets interests of the “power wielder” at the expense of everyone else.

An organizer’s job is to reach out and find leadership from within his or her constituency who can recruit and coordinate others. They may not be people others usually see as

³ J. Freeman, (1970), “The Tyranny of Structurelessness.” [Women's liberation movement, USA.](#)

leaders, but they are people committed to change, willing to invite others to join them in the hard work of moving a campaign forward.

These leaders will be the backbone of your organizing campaign. You must be able to trust them to delegate responsibility to other dedicated, reliable people, and to follow through on commitments. You may be the leader in the middle, or part of a leadership team in the middle, guiding others' efforts and being held accountable for outcomes, but you will be deeply reliant on your relationships with others for success.

Leadership and Authority

We are wise to distinguish “authority” from “leadership.” Authority is a “legitimacy” of command usually attached to social positions, offices, or roles - legitimacy supported by cultural beliefs as well as coercive resources. An organization is a way to formalize authority relations among the participants – people’s rights and their obligations. Bureaucracies structure authority as a set of rules according to which manager’s direct subordinates. Markets structure authority as a set of rules according to which people make enforceable contracts based on their individual resources. Civic associations usually structure authority democratically in that leaders are accountable to the constituents whom they serve. Exercising leadership in a civic context can require more skill than other settings because it depends more on persuasion than on command.

Most of us have been in situations in which those with authority have not earned their leadership, but try to compel cooperation based solely on their legitimacy or “power over”. In these circumstances, to what extent do we think our interests are acknowledged and addressed? How does this affect our motivation and performance?

Cultures have institutionalized beliefs about who is “authorized” to lead and who isn’t that can bar certain “kinds” of people from the opportunity to earn leadership. Leaders who develop under these conditions constitute a challenge to conventional ideas of authority. Authority can also be a resource a person can draw upon to earn their leadership. And sometimes leaders find authority has been conferred upon them as a result of their having earned their leadership. But leadership and authority is not the same thing.

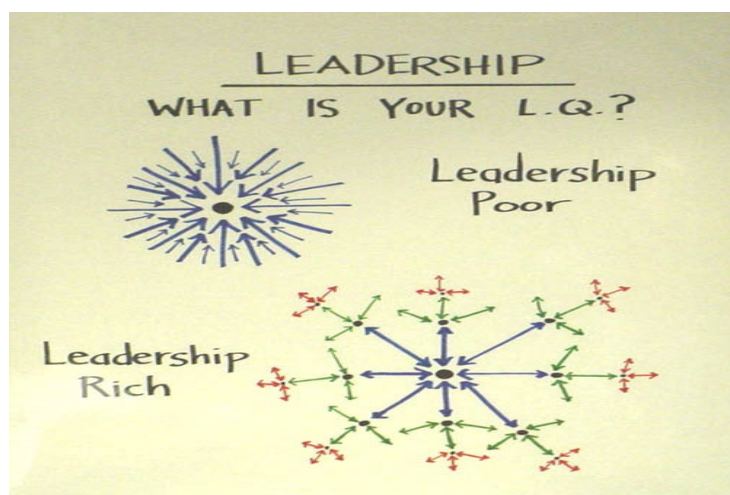
Finally, we can distinguish leaders from “activists.” Hard working activists show up every day to staff the phone bank, pass out leaflets, and put up posters, and make critical contributions to the work of any volunteer organization. This is not the same, however, as engaging others in doing the work of the organization.

Leadership Development Letting Others Lead

So if leadership is so important to organizations, how can organizations make sure they have the leaders needed to accomplish its mission? Organized people empower themselves to make lots of things happen less by the efficiency of their systems than by the depth of their leadership capacity. This is particularly true of civic associations that bring people together, facilitate understanding one another, and enable them to act together on common interests.

Take a look at the “leadership quotient” of your organization. How many leaders do you see doing leadership work? Is there one “leader” with everyone else linked to that leader like spokes to the hub of a wheel? Or are there lots of “leaders” linked with each other and with other members, multiple centers of coordination, inspiration and action. Are some people “followers” in relation to some “leaders” but “leaders” in relation to other “followers”? Or are some people always “leaders” and others always “followers”? Is it “leadership rich” or is it “leadership poor”?

Chart #1



Giving Up Control to Build Power Leadership Team or “Lone Ranger”

So why aren’t “leadership rich” organizations an everyday thing? Why is it that so often we wind up the dot in the middle of all the arrows? How can we build a “leadership rich” organization?

It's not a new problem. As recounted in Exodus, Moses required the intervention of his father-in-law Jethro, who had his own interest in the matter to begin getting the picture.⁴ He was trying to do it all himself, but why? Because he was hungry for the power? Because he needed to keep himself busy? A more likely explanation is that, like many of us, he wanted it done right, and he thought that meant that he had to do it himself. But as long as he was trying to do it all himself, it couldn't be done well, much would not get done at all. The belief that holding onto all the control would ensure all was done well was an illusion. So Jethro offered him a way out. Find the courage to let go of some of the control and risk letting others share in the responsibility for leading. But not just anyone – he urged him to find people with leadership potential, people who were “capable, God-fearing, and honest”.

As important as how we structure our organization is, nothing is more important than coming to terms with this fundamental question: are we willing, and able, to let go of enough control to let others lead? Can we let go of enough control to allow our organization to build the power that can only be achieved by letting it grow leadership rich?

Successful organizers form leadership teams with whom they can work early on in their campaign. Although it can be a mistake to recruit people to act as an "organizing committee" too early - especially if you are not careful to recruit people drawn from the constituency who are not seen as leaders or, at least, potential leaders - organizers more often err in delaying too long. The sooner you have a team of people with whom to work, the sooner the "I" of the organizer becomes the "we" of a new organization. Once you have formed a leadership team you can more easily establish a rhythm of regular meetings, clear decisions and visible accountability that will help make things actually happen. You don't build an organization of 500 people by recruiting them all yourself. You build it by finding people willing and able to commit to help building it with you. If you don't have a leadership team working with you by midterm, it's time to look very closely at why.

Despite the “alpha” mythology, most effective leaders have always led through teams. Moses, Aaron and Miriam, for example, in the Exodus story or Jesus and His twelve disciples in the New Testament, or Martin Luther King, Ralph Abernathy, Rosa Parks, Jo Ann Robinson and E D Nixon during the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

⁴ The Bible, Exodus 18.

Organizing: People, Power, Change

Structuring a leadership team is a way to organize interdependent leadership – individuals working together to achieve a common outcome, like an athletic team, each person responsible for coaching the team on a different activity. Well-designed teams put to productive use the unique talents of the individuals who make up the team.

Structuring a leadership team creates strategic capacity: the ability to strategize creatively together in ways that produce more vibrant, engaging strategy than any individual could create alone. In the Obama campaign, the field structure created multiple layers of leadership teams to engage people creatively and strategically at all levels of the campaign. Each state had a state leadership team that coordinated regional leadership teams (of Regional Directors and Organizers), which coordinated local neighborhood leadership teams of volunteer leaders. At every level the people on leadership teams had a clear mission and could strategize creatively together about how to carry out their mission. This structure created multiple points of entry for volunteers, and multiple opportunities to learn and exercise leadership.

So why don't people always work in teams?

We have all been part of groups that did not work well. They factionalize, alienate each other, or all the work falls on one person. Some aim to keep the pond small so they can feel like big fish. So many of us conclude: I'll just do it on my own; I hate meetings, just tell me what to do; I don't want any responsibility; just give me stamps to lick. For example:

- You are in a team meeting. You find that it's never clear exactly whom you can count on to step up, take responsibility, and get the work done. So two or three people often wind up doing all the work, which means that no matter how hard we work, it still can't get done.
- Whenever we need to make a decision we always seem to be missing some crucial piece of information, skill, or set of relationships.
- We talk and talk and talk, but, when it's all over, we realized that we each had a different idea of the outcome we were talking about.
- When we get stuck, we have nowhere else to turn for help. We help each other as much as we can, we may contact another volunteer leader, but it's not clear where we can go for expert advice.

There's just one problem: we can't become powerful enough to do what we need to do if we can't even work together as a leadership team. But you can create the conditions that will increase the odds your team will work drawing on the craft of team design.

Three Outcomes of an Effective Team

- *The team accomplishes the goals for which it is responsible.*
- *The team is operating in ways that make it better as a performing unit over time*
- *The team contributes the learning and well-being of individual members*

Three Conditions for an Effective Team

These are conditions that you as an organizer are able to create in the way you design your leadership team: who is selected, what is required, what expectations you establish, etc.

- *Your team is bounded.* It is clear who is on the team and who is not on the team. It is clear how new people can join the team and what is expected of those who must leave the team.
- *Your team is stable.* People commit to clear terms of service: regular meetings, length of time, etc. Your team is not a revolving door, never knowing who will show up.
- *Your team is diverse.* Your team has the appropriate diversity of skills, talents, viewpoints, and constituencies that will be needed to do a good job.

Three Steps in Launching an Effective Team

These are three decisions that a leadership team must make at the very beginning to put itself on a constructive path. There are no "right" answers as to what these decisions must be, only that they must be made to give the team the structure it will need to do whatever it wants to do well.

Organizing: People, Power, Change

- *Establish a shared purpose.* You do the work, based on your shared values and the relationships you have formed, to clearly articulate your common purpose as a team. It is clear, challenging, and matters. You have defined your goal, whom you work with, and the kinds of things you will do?
- *Establish clear ground rules or norms.* Your team sets explicit expectations of how you will work together: how you will make decisions, manage your time, and honor your commitments. What are things you will always do and what are the things you will never do. And how will you correct yourselves if you do them. Perhaps your most important norm is how you will make decisions. Steps that can guide effective decision making are: defining the problem, establishing criteria, brainstorming possibilities, synthesizing ideas, formulating options, evaluation options against the criteria, deciding. Some prefer deciding by vote; others, by consensus; others by delegating the decision to an individual.
- *Organize the work into interdependent roles.* Everyone should have responsibility for their own share of the leadership work needed to achieve the goal. Role requirements need to be clearly described. Team members need to assess their strengths and limitations, to the greatest extent possible, matching individual capabilities with role requirements. Because roles are designed to be interdependent, everyone has a stake in everyone else's success. Team members speak up when they need help and get it. No one works in a silo that's secretive to others. The team with diverse identities, experiences and resources brings more to the table than a team that is very homogeneous.

***Leadership Development Cycle:
Identify, Recruit, Develop***

Leadership development work occurs as a cycle, as shown in Chart #6: identifying potential leaders (opportunities for them to emerge), recruiting them into leadership positions (opportunities for leadership to be earned), and creating opportunities for them to develop their capacity (opportunities for leaders to grow) on an ongoing basis. It requires learning how to delegate - and mean it; creating a supportive organizational structure; and providing coaching.

Identifying leadership requires looking for it. Who are people with followers? Who brings others to the meetings? Who encourages others to participate? Who attracts others to work

with them? Who do other people tell you to “look for??” Alinsky writes about community networks knit together by “native” leaders - people who take the responsibility for helping a community do its work out of their homes, small businesses, neighborhood hangouts, etc. They can be found coaching athletic teams, organizing little leagues, serving in their churches, and surfacing in other informal “schools” of leadership. Where would you look for these kinds of leaders around here?

Although leading is a matter of “doing” and not “being” – and people do leadership work in different ways - there are some clues you may want to attend to, especially when looking for people that will make good organizers. It is hard for a person who has not learned to be a *good listener* to become a good organizer. You have to understand the interests of your constituency if you are to help them act on those interests. Listening means learning to attend to feelings - *empathy* - as well as to ideas because the way we feel about things affects our actions more than what we think about them. *Curiosity* helps us see the novel as interesting rather than threatening, enabling us to learn how to face new challenges that are always a part of organizational life. A good *imagination* helps because strategizing is a matter of imagining different futures and possible ways to get to them. A sense of *humor* helps you from taking yourself and your troubles too seriously and helps keep things in perspective. A *healthy ego* is very important. Arrogance and a wish to dominate others are usually signs of a weak ego constantly in need of reassurance. Leadership also requires *courage* - the willingness to take risks, make choices, and accept the consequences.

Recruiting leadership requires giving people an opportunity to earn leadership. Since followers create leaders, they can’t appoint themselves and you can’t appoint them. What you can do is create opportunities for people to accept the responsibilities of leadership and support them in learning how to fulfill these responsibilities. If you have to get the word out for a meeting, you can get three of your friends to help you pass out leaflets in the Yard one day or you can find one or two people in each House who will take responsibility for recruiting 5 people from their House to attend. They earn their leadership by bringing the people to the meeting. What other ways can you think of that you can give people the opportunity to earn leadership?

No matter how careful you are, leadership development requires coming to terms with the fact that it entails risk. Risk small failures early in the life of a project in order to avoid big failures later on. If you take the risks required to learn to delegate, you will learn how to do it and you will learn who “comes through” and who doesn’t. It is important to learn this with a small meeting at stake and not the monster rally of 5000 at which only 50 people show up. One reason to set up quantifiable goals, regular reports, and ongoing evaluation is to detect early failure and

success so they become "learning opportunities" for everyone. "So, Mary, why did that work so well?" "So, Sam, what happened there? What could you have done differently?" Don't assume everyone is going to do everything right from the very beginning because it never happens. Also, it is often not completely clear what the "right" way is at the beginning of a project. Think about how to turn this fact to your advantage. Where can you get the courage to take the risk of letting other people share in the responsibility for outcomes you care about?

We only develop good judgment about whom to select by taking risks, making choices, experiencing success and failures, and learning from this experience - and we will still be surprised. On the other hand, the more experienced we are the better judgment we can begin to develop. There is no "rule book" to go to on this, but if you are afraid to risk making choices, you never learn to make good choices. Here are some questions you might ask yourself. How do you select to whom to delegate? How do you know who the right person is? How can you find out ahead of time? How do you know when a person is ready for a big job? Are you selecting them because they are easily available or because they are the right people for the job? Are you selecting them because they already know what to do because you have worked together before or because they "look as if they can learn what to do" with some good coaching? Or did you select them because you "heard" they were good? Where did you hear that? Who told you? Should you believe them? How do you know?

Developing leadership requires structuring the work of the organization so it affords as many people as possible the opportunity to learn to lead - *delegation*. Distributing the leaflets through House Committees, for example, shares the responsibility for engaging others with many people. It is true organizing the work in this way can be risky. You may delegate to the wrong people; they may let you down; etc. But as Moses learned from Jethro, if you fear delegating, the strength of the community is stifled and can never grow. But you can do things to increase the chances of success. Leadership training sessions help clarify what is expected of leaders in your organization, give people the confidence to accept leadership responsibilities, and express the value your organization places on leadership development.

Developing leaders is not about assigning tasks, but offering responsibility. It is different to ask: "would you make these 50 phone calls telling people about the meeting?" versus "would you take responsibility for getting 10 people to come to the meeting? You will? Great! Here's some things that may help you contact them and get them there -- a list of names and phone numbers of people who said they were interested, 100 leaflets, some posters, and some sign-up sheets you could use to get commits." Do you see the difference? With the "task," the person can become a kind of yo-yo: go do this, come back for what's next, go do that, come back for

what's next. They are "helping" you with your responsibility. With a "responsibility," the person takes it and runs with it, and you can help them meet "their" responsibility. But when looking for someone to take responsibility, don't make the responsibility easier, and easier, and easier...until there's nothing left. The challenge is in learning to motivate people to accept the level of responsibility needed to get the job done. And when a person has accepted responsibility, the motivation work continues. Keeping others motivated, keeping yourself motivated, and getting the work done go together. All are based on real accountability, lots of coaching, and lots of recognition of success.

Responsibility is only real, however, if the person is clearly accountable for the responsibility he or she accepted. Accountability should be regular, specific, and timely. The point of accountability is not to catch someone to punish them, but to learn what kind of results they are getting so everyone can learn from them. If someone is having trouble, we need to learn why so we can figure out what to do about it. If someone is being successful, we need to learn why so we can try the same thing in other places. Without accountability the most important learning we can do in the course of a campaign - systematic reflection on our own experience - is impossible. You cannot expect a person to take responsibility without authority. If you want someone to take the responsibility to get 10 people to a meeting, hold them accountable, provide training, offer support - but give them the authority to do what they've been asked to do. If you see or hear of them making a mistake - or think you can do it better - this means going directly to them, not around them or taking care of it for them. It is really a matter of basic respect.

Chart #2



Leadership as Coaching and Coaching Leadership

Once a person accepts responsibility, it is in your interest to offer her as much support as she wants to ensure her success. The challenge is learning how to offer support without taking back the responsibility. “Oh, you’ll get the ten people to come? Great! Let’s sit down for a few minutes and “role play” just what you’re going to say to them.” Or “give me a call to tell me how it's going - or if you run into problems.” A regular coaching session means you want to meet not because you think they are in trouble, but because you are interested in their work. These sessions can be very useful for learning what's really going on out there as well. And coaching is, of course, one of the best ways to make mentoring real.

The Hackman and Wageman article on team coaching is particularly useful in focusing on how to coach a leadership team, not only individuals, with sensitivity to the timing issues involved in a campaign type of project. Ongoing support for leadership development comes more and more to be in the form of leadership team coaching and teams themselves become more typical of how organizational life is being structured. And as more activity is outcome focused, rather than process focused, the more time issues will become critical. So learning how to coach multiple people within a changing time dynamic is will be critical for your success as an organizer.

Conclusion

Although identifying, recruiting and developing leaders is critical to the capacity - or power - of most organizations, it is the particular focus of organizers whose work is to be leaders of leaders. The primary responsibility of an organizer is to develop the leadership capacities of others and, in this way, of the organizations through which their constituents act on their common interests.



Leader Mobilizer Activist Discussion Activity (Adapted from Jane McAlevey 2021)

Based on what's in the scenario only:

1. Who do you identify as the Leader who has moved people the most? Why?
2. Who is the mobilizer – actively working on the behalf of the union and carrying out actions that get others involved? Why?
3. Who is an activist – a pro-union supporter and may take action if asked? Why?
4. The BIG discussion - In what order should you be building relationships with your choices?

Scenario:

You work for a union representing a small school district that serves all grades from K-12 across three sites: an elementary school (K-6), a middle school (7-8) and a high school (8-12). The elementary and middle schools are located next to each other and the high school operates on its own site about 4 miles from the elementary and middle. Because of a budget shortfall that happened just before the last negotiations nearly three years ago, there were layoffs, class sizes grew, and the raises barely kept up with inflation. Members weren't happy with the contract settlement and there's been the most turnover of staff since that anyone can remember. The local has a new contract to negotiate starting four months from now. You have just been assigned to this local, and you are trying to figure out how to build a strong local before contract negotiations begin. You've just finished meeting with the former union president who left at the end of the last school year to return to university, and here is what you've learned from talking to her, and a couple others, about potential leaders and other workers who wield influence:

Tina Love is a second-grade teacher at the elementary school and has been at the school for seven (7) years. She is well liked and personable. She is always sharing and liking the state affiliate's posts on social media and seems to really like the union. She was recruited to the teaching profession by Teach for America and she still participates in this program as a mentor to incoming teachers who come from the same program. She knows A LOT of teachers through this effort and from the annual incoming cohorts of new teachers she helps mentor. She also regularly organizes well-attended happy hours with teachers from across the three different school sites in the district. She volunteers with a couple of local community organizations and regularly wears her union button on her jackets.

Destiny Jackson is a science teacher at the middle school and has been there for 10 years. Destiny never publicly supported the union, saying unions are for blue collar workers, not professionals. Once Janus passed, she dropped her membership. She was recently appointed by her principal to sit on the school site council with administrators and parents to discuss issues in the school. During a staff meeting Destiny asked that the position be elected and a majority of teachers voted for her to be on the council. Recently, her school's administration decided to change the school bell schedule to have an earlier start time for the next academic year without discussing the change at the school site council. Destiny worked with the parents on the council to hold a town hall meeting with the teachers and parents together to talk about the change and find out if most were in favor of the change. After a majority in the meeting

objected to the change, Destiny got them all to sign a letter objecting to it, and made a plan with others there to get a majority of all the teachers and parents. She then took the letter to the administration and they backed off of the change.

Paul Hammer works as a Math teacher at the high school. He is the most senior teacher and has been teaching at the high school for 14 years. He's always been a union member. He coaches the boys' basketball team. He received a Master Teacher evaluation rating from the school district several years ago and was named "Teacher of the Year" by management last year. Teachers go to Paul to get advice on how to navigate the evaluation system since he was able to achieve the seemingly unattainable rating of Master Teacher. When Destiny pulled together the meeting about the school bell and school start time, she asked Paul to get signatures in his school for the letter. Paul got all but two of the other teachers to sign. When the previous union president asked him to run for president, Paul declined, citing his busy schedule during basketball season, and leading community basketball leagues in his free time.

Ted Nailer works as a Math teacher at the middle school. He was a student teacher with Paul Hammer. He has only been there for four years and was also basketball player on Paul's team. Ted does whatever Paul asks of him as he sees Paul as his mentor in all things. Paul told Ted he needed to join the union to protect his job – and when Ted had been there for two years, he obediently became the building rep when Paul suggested it was a good way to be "in the know." Ted does a good job distributing union information and helps members get connected with the Union staff whenever they have a problem. When Paul asked Ted to run for President, Ted did it knowing that it would be easy to do as it was uncontested. He knows that the local will be bargaining this year, but he is good with spreadsheets and Paul said that the same people do the bargaining all the time. Ted is feeling good about his new role.

Jorge Rivera is the Art teacher at the high school. He's been there 4 years and the students really like him. His colleagues appreciate the fun energy he brings to the classroom and the school. He's always got a smile and something nice to say to people. Jorge is pro-union, and helped Paul get a few of the signatures when Paul was passing the letter about the school bell start time. He is always busy preparing for his own big art shows of his own work and thinks people should just be pro-union and says he can't be bothered with them if they aren't. He values his union membership because it has allowed him to be part of the statewide committee about arts instruction and this provides him with connections to other art teachers from across the state.

Things to Consider When You are Planning to Run a Campaign

Assessing Your Current Worksites:

1. How many people have been identified as trusted and respected by a number of people in the worksite/ local? (Leaders connect mobilizers into structures)
2. How many people are actively working in support of the union and have a group of folks that they influence? (Mobilizers get activists to show up and act)
3. How many people are ready to take pro-union action? (Activists see their relationship with the union as a participatory one)

Trusted and Respected

Seattle's site-based organizing

BY JOHN DONAGHY



KATHERINE STREETER

“**S**hannon—but she doesn’t like the union,” said a 3rd-grade teacher, then a 4th-grade teacher, and then eight more teachers over the course of the day we spent at an elementary school in North Seattle in spring 2014. My partner, a board member of the Seattle Education Association (SEA), and I were on a union listening tour. The question we’d posed to each teacher, after first asking how their year was going and about our upcoming bargaining, was “Who’s trusted and respected here in the building?”

SEA was then two years into an effort to reorganize. We’d visited at least 80 of the District’s 100 schools and spoken with more than half of SEA’s 6,000 teachers and certificated staff, para-educators, and office administrators.

The reorganization would culminate in a seven-day strike in September 2015, led by a 40-member bargaining team of largely first-time bargainers and activists. The action won guaranteed recess time for students, removed any connection between test scores and teacher evaluations, won significant raises, and launched Racial Equity Teams in dozens of schools.

The cornerstone of the reorganization was an effort to identify natural school leaders—educators trusted and respected by their co-workers, regardless of their disposition toward the union—and invite them to engage with and shape the union’s direction.

New Leaders Elected

Recognizing their union was not nearly as powerful as it could be, a new slate of SEA officers and the union’s executive director, Glenn Bafia, looked for a new approach in spring 2012. Membership participation and educator morale were low following the bruising regime of an education reformer as superintendent. The union had eaten a high-profile, though somewhat symbolic concession on teacher evaluations and student testing without much of a fight. The regular monthly meetings of building representatives were contentious and caustic, often focusing on “taking positions” on issues but with little action to back them up. Member engagement lagged well behind other locals in the state. SEA staff were buried in disciplinary hearings, grievance meetings, and evaluation conferences, without a strategy or much time to organize.

SEA’s new president, Jonathan Knapp, was a high school auto-shop teacher who’d just finished a term as vice president. Phyllis Campano, an elementary special education teacher, was the new vice president. They were both on full-time release from their teaching jobs. When I first met them, after I was assigned by the Washington Education Association (WEA) to support local organizing, the two indicated they wanted to meet one-on-one with every SEA member. Across WEA and other NEA state affiliates, local leaders were being asked to sit down with each member for a half hour or so to get to know them. I looked at my watch, pressed a button, and said, “Go!” With only four-year terms, they would need to start right away.

In Aesop’s fable, the strength of a single stick is contrasted with that of a bundle of sticks. A single stick can easily be broken, but wrap together enough of even the flimsiest sticks, and they can’t be broken. This is of course the very premise of unionism. But while Aesop’s fable holds much truth, we know as organizers that rather than members being simply scattered individuals, they have instead already grouped themselves informally around natural leaders. The work of the union, then, is to unite as many of the natural leaders as possible, who then bring along those in their circles of influence.

In unions that regularly and successfully organize unorganized workers, the identification and recruitment of natural leaders is the basis for developing effective campaigns. When the employer fights back hard against the union, either the natural leaders can assure their co-workers that the struggle is worth it, or the campaign is defeated.

The opposite approach, which is more common, puts a premium on activism and affinity for the union over actual leadership. The ticket to getting union roles is simply willingness to do something—lobby, make phone calls, come to a school board meeting—rather than any ability to bring others along. Some who get involved are in fact leaders, but many are not. When activists complain about co-worker apathy, a common refrain, it can be an indicator they simply do not have leadership. I was on a building visit in another local, and my partner there began recruiting someone we’d just met to be a building rep after she told us how big a union supporter she was—even though she also told us that she was new in the building and isolated from everyone else! We had no reason to think this person would influence any of her co-workers; if she did become rep, it was likely to be a frustrating experience for everyone.

SEA’s leaders instead decided to apply a natural leaders approach. Early in the reorganization we were running phone banks for an upcoming school levy vote. Our usual turnout methods—email blasts, announcements at union meetings, etc.—were getting the usual poor turnout. One afternoon we received a call from an elementary teacher, Michael Tamayo, asking for the phone-banking details. A half-dozen or so of Michael’s co-workers had named him among the most trusted and respected educators in his school. A few hours later, he showed up with eight co-workers in tow. Although the union was a bit of a vague idea to him, he cared a lot about the school levy, since it provided more resources to his low-income school and to a program that provided a path for people of color to become teachers. Jonathan and Phyllis continued to seek him out, and he became progressively more involved in SEA, especially around teacher quality and racial equity, and eventually he became SEA’s president in late 2019.

With the understanding that natural leaders exist in every school, our plan was to identify and engage such leaders across Seattle’s 100 schools. That seemed more doable than sitting down individually with 6,000 members! Our theory of change went something like this: “We can reboot the Seattle Education Association by relentlessly identifying natural school leaders, building relationships with them, and inviting them to lend their leadership to a new shared purpose.”

The First Listening Tour

Eager to help the state’s largest local reinvent itself, WEA’s state president and executive director joined the SEA team of staff and local officers in June 2012 for the first listening tours. We broke into teams of two to go from room to room and office to office in our target schools to seek out staff for brief one-on-one conversations. We didn’t announce our visits ahead of time, lest various gatekeepers—principals, office managers, human resources—try to herd us into break rooms or otherwise restrict access.

The teams spoke individually with more than 700 educators in 20 schools over four days. While some union staff feared members would close their doors to us or even be hostile, the opposite occurred. Members were eager to talk with us. If they couldn’t speak when we visited, they’d insist we come find them later in the

day. While some shared criticisms, most were curious about our visits and hopeful that the union could make a difference.

The individual visits were intended to last about 10 minutes. These were not classic one-on-ones, but a survey with an eye toward mapping important relationships in the building. We mostly asked how their year was, what the school was like, and what they thought their union should be focusing on. And then we asked, who would you say is trusted and respected here in the building?

Trust and respect are the main currency in cultivating a following. You can trust someone without respecting them, or vice versa. You might have a colleague you trust enough to share complaints about the principal, but whose teaching doesn't meet your standards. Likewise, you might admire someone's excellent lessons, but you wouldn't share a complaint with them for fear it would get back to the principal. Without a measure of both trust and respect, it's unlikely someone will have much influence with you.

When the Seattle teams returned to the union office, they wrote visit reports, and then, on large posters of each school's roster, placed a colored adhesive dot next to a person's name for each time they were named by someone as trusted and respected. Dozens of educators had five or 10 dots next to their names, and in larger schools some had more than 20! While some of those members (and with union shop in place, nearly all were members) were known to union staff and leaders, others were not. Many were wholly uninvolved in SEA.

As the team looked at the posters, it was inspiring to think of the power educators could wield if these natural leaders were united. In subsequent presentations we've done with other locals, showing leaders and staff one of these charts is enough to set them salivating.

Based on my experience in Seattle and then in other locals around the country, not all team members are immediately successful at asking the "trusted and respected" question. Sometimes they aren't fully committed to the reason for asking (which can result from a less than timely orientation). They may think that the real value of the tour is in showing members their union is active and cares about them. That's a common viewpoint, but unfortunately one that reinforces the idea that the union is a third party. Others may struggle because the question can feel like a non sequitur. It takes a bit of skill to have a 10-minute conversation with someone where you establish enough trust and credibility that you can get up from the table and say, "Great talking with you today. Before we go, who would you say are some of the folks who are really trusted and respected among the staff here at Longwood Elementary?"

In the experience of most tour leaders, members are actually happy to answer that question and recognize some esteemed co-workers. It does tend to be better not to ask them directly who they *themselves* trust and respect; that can feel too personal. But asking them who is generally trusted and respected seems to create the needed personal distance (and in fact often results in the member sharing who they personally trust and respect, saying for example, "She's such a great teacher.") The No. 1 mistake we make is not to give enough time to answer the question. In-

stead of letting the question hang out there while the person mentally goes down the building's roster (or looks at the roster we have), we rephrase the question, most typically into something like "you know, who do people go to?" That's actually a different question, one that tends to result in a skew toward naming people with more access to knowledge or resources, such as department chairs, team leaders, office secretaries, union building reps, or even the principal.

Combating Racism and Implicit Bias

Evidence-based leadership identification and recruiting is an important check on implicit bias. Without it, we are likely to pick people who tend to be like us. At future decision points, SEA leaders would check the name of every potential recruit to a committee, lobbying team, or other union body against what their co-workers indicated. We weren't shy about calling each other out for seeking to elevate someone we personally liked in the absence of evidence of leadership. If none of your co-workers placed you among their most trusted and respected colleagues, it wouldn't make sense for the union to ignore their views and elevate you into a representative role. This created some delicate situations when eager volunteers or longtime activists were turned away. While this could be awkward, officers believed the benefit to the union made it worthwhile.

Officers and staff were keen to discern the leadership of educators of color. On one hand, we had a fairly objective measure, but on the other, it was an overwhelmingly white certificated workforce (paraprofessionals and office staff were much more racially mixed) naming whom they trusted and respected. Although there were in fact many educators of color who were named by their white co-workers as trusted and respected, we chose to bake an assumption of bias into our future recruitment efforts. If you ask a white educator to name colleagues they trust and respect, we assumed that they would be at least somewhat more likely to think of other white people first. So when we were recruiting elementary teachers to a committee, for example, we might build a starting list from all the educators of color who received at least three dots and all white educators who received at least five dots.

While this method supported robust recruitment of educators of color into union roles—membership of color on SEA's 40-member bargaining teams has been at least 40 percent over the last three bargains, far higher than the share of educators of color in the workforce—some wondered whether the chosen educators of color were those who were named more by their white peers than their peers of color and how that might be skewing representation. (No one argued that the leadership of an educator of color who was frequently named by white peers should be discounted, only that we needed to be sure that educators of color were represented by leaders of their choosing as well.) To some degree this concern was met by over-recruiting from schools with higher proportions of educators of color, virtually guaranteeing that the leaders were named by educators of color. SEA has also begun in recent years to enter more data into NEA's new membership database, called NEA 360. This allows the union to note exactly who each member names as those they trust and respect, and thus reports can be generated that

provide some insight into that question. In the meantime, SEA did generate one useful data point on that question: a survey about new graduation requirements asked 1,000 high school staff to name staff they trusted and respected to serve on a bargaining committee with the district. SEA was able to disaggregate responses by race and compare who educators of color and white educators each chose and fine-tune recruitment (although in that survey, at any rate, largely the same educators were chosen by both groups).

Intentional Leadership Recruitment

The issue that led us to Shannon's North Seattle school in 2014 was that we'd gotten almost no signatures from there on a petition to place a class size initiative on the Washington state ballot. The union's building rep told us people were apathetic. We were puzzled, as members at other buildings were collecting signatures like crazy—the first fruits of our efforts to involve more natural leaders over the previous two years. For the first time anyone could remember, SEA was among the state's leaders in participating in a coordinated WEA action.

Members at the school told us that Shannon (not her real name) didn't like the union and had spoken against the initiative at a meeting. It would have been easy to take a pass on initiating contact with Shannon—there were 100 other schools to get signatures from. But not every school has a Shannon, trusted and respected to the virtual exclusion of anyone else. We often find three or four staff taking top billing. If we were going to get any signatures from her school, or probably much support for anything union, we needed to meet Shannon.

Vice President Phyllis Campano stopped by a few days later. As it turned out, Shannon was not anti-union, but rather simply believed the union's priority needed to be compensation, not class size. Phyllis couldn't persuade her our ballot initiative was the right priority, and we never did get many signatures from her school. But a relationship was begun that eventually led to Shannon being a member of the 2015 bargaining team, and then of SEA's executive board. In the years that followed, I can't recall a union event that Shannon attended, and there were many, where she didn't bring along a sizable group of colleagues.

After the initial round of visits in June 2012, SEA visited another 50 schools the following school year. But the follow-up with leaders was slow and not terribly successful. The officers invited identified school leaders to lobby days and other events, but had few takers. SEA's leadership team knew the union wasn't seen as very powerful, and these natural leaders were clearly reluctant to invest time and energy in an uncertain proposition. Also, many of them were already highly engaged both at school and in their personal lives.

One leader at a North Seattle high school was on our radar for several years. Although she always seemed on the edge of getting involved, she never made the leap. She led a vibrant after-school horticulture program, was science department chair, and was in training to be a principal. A few weeks *after* the strike in 2015, however, she walked into the union office and told us she'd stepped down as department chair and wanted to prioritize union activism. It took the success of the

strike for her to believe collective action by educators, and her union, held more potential to make the change she wanted to see. While we were fortunate that not all natural school leaders needed this level of proof, there is a positive feedback loop between organizational success and leadership commitment: More of one spurs more of the other.

The leadership team pivoted in the winter of 2013–14. Instead of recruiting leaders to join the union’s work, which hadn’t borne fruit, we set up a series of meetings that simply brought these leaders together to meet and talk about what was important to them. We approached about 75 of the newly identified leaders, most of whom had little or no union involvement, and more than 60 participated, an astonishing turnout. After a brief welcome from Jonathan and Phyllis, they rotated World Café-style in groups of four for the next hour or so, responding to some open-ended questions. The leaders were excited to have met and to have had rich conversations, and were intrigued by what this convening said about their union.

The meeting did not include an ask, which is something of a sin in organizer circles, but making an ask is what they expected us to do, and we knew we needed these new leaders to join us in figuring out what was worth asking and doing as a union. We never did get around to reconvening these groups, but they provided an important entrée to establish new relationships and signal to these leaders that there was untapped possibility in their union.

Time to Fight Back

SEA’s leaders correctly assessed that there was a significant lack of trust in the union and its leadership. SEA had accepted a concession on testing and evaluation in 2010 and failed to remove it in bargaining in 2013. While the practical impacts of the provision were limited, and the contract settlement was otherwise pretty typical, the contract passed by only a thin margin. Educators at Seattle’s Garfield High School had organized a high-profile and successful boycott of the district’s use of the standardized MAP tests that spring, but the union had failed to leverage that into a robust or successful contract fight over testing and evaluations. Members were understandably reluctant to express approval for a deal that reflected that failure. While the union had tried to organize some pushback in the summer of 2013, it was too little, too late.

In truth, the natural leaders of the workforce were largely on the sidelines as far as the union was concerned and were not responsive to calls to action, such as there were. Most immersed themselves in the work of their individual schools. Some joined Social Equity Educators (SEE), a member caucus, to push the union and Seattle Public Schools toward a more progressive agenda. When natural leaders did choose to become reps, many quickly quit or confined themselves to their buildings. As many confessed to us, they found the monthly Rep Assembly absurdly contentious, and seemingly irrelevant. Indeed, the first Rep Assembly I witnessed featured a lengthy debate over a letter to an elected official of another state. Meanwhile the union’s bargaining team had just begun bargaining and virtually no time was devoted to any meaningful discussion of what was at stake.

Following the 2013 bargain, SEA's leadership team and staff conducted more school visits but also focused on following up with the hundreds of members identified as natural leaders. They found that almost to a person they were angry about education reform, cynical about the district's leadership, and, although wary of SEA, appreciative that union leaders had recognized their leadership and were reaching out to them. Finally feeling some sense that they could turn things around, union leaders were challenged in early 2014 by an announcement from the district that it was going to cut 50 positions due to an unexpected budget shortfall.

With many schools at a loss on how to cope with the coming cuts, they began recommending that schools vote down their budgets.

Union leaders believed the district had enough in reserves to cover the shortfall, but complaining publicly about that in board meetings hadn't stopped such cuts before. So rather than focus on getting a few dozen or even a few hundred people to a school board meeting to protest, leaders devised a strategy to create chaos in the school-by-school budgeting process then underway. It would require schools to vote down their budgets, which by contract would trigger a mediation process facilitated by a central office administrator. Even though the superintendent held final say over each school's budget, such a strategy would have the potential to involve thousands of educators right where they worked.

Successful execution of the strategy would require influential educators in each school to endorse it and validate the union's recommendation to vote no on their school budget, *even if their school was untouched by the cuts*. The SEA Rep Assembly endorsed the strategy somewhat lukewarmly, expressing doubts about the union's analysis and strategy. But SEA's leaders then began reaching out to the school leaders they had been cultivating relationships with to get their thoughts on the strategy. With many schools at a loss on how to cope with the coming cuts, they took a leap of faith and, along with many of the building reps, began recommending that schools vote down their budgets to force central office administrators to come explain themselves.

Within three weeks, nearly 50 schools voted to reject their budgets, with more reporting in each day. After the first school's mediation, and faced with the prospects of dozens more, the district called the union to say they were re-analyzing their budget for ways to avoid the cuts. In a school board meeting shortly thereafter, the district's budget director publicly thanked SEA for pointing out that there was a "fudge factor" that could cover the cuts. District administrators then privately appealed to the union for help in getting new school budgets passed, without the cuts, expressing particular bewilderment about "all these solidarity votes" where even schools without cuts had rejected their schools' budgets.

Following the budget action, SEA began recruiting its team for the upcoming bargaining. While the budget fight had garnered SEA's leadership some credibility,

they still barely won re-election later that spring. The following school year, SEA's leadership team proposed quadrupling the size of its bargaining team. We wanted as many members as possible to know someone on that team who held their trust and respect. The countless hours of relationship-building, the success of the budget fight, and the commitment to open the process to many more people led to a tremendous amount of interest from heretofore inactive leaders in joining the new team.

2015 Bargain and Strike

The 2015 bargaining kicked off a year later as locals up and down the I-5 corridor had been going on one-day strikes against the Washington Legislature. Seattle chose May 19 for its one-day strike, the day *before* bargaining was to start. The march through downtown Seattle was a blocks-long warning shot to the school district; this was not the SEA they had been dealing with in recent years. While everyone from SEA's building reps to district officials expressed doubt that a 40-member team could functionally bargain, as team members walked into bargaining in their red T-shirts, still jubilant from the previous day's action, our power was evident.

Most team members were new to bargaining, and many to being active in the union. Others were seasoned bargainers, and at least five were members of the SEE caucus. SEA's leaders had made a particular effort to recruit natural leaders who were in SEE, including their candidate for vice president in the recent election. SEE members, for their part, made it clear they weren't going to drop their critique of union leadership nor back off from their own progressive advocacy, including guaranteed recess for all students, not a typical union demand (and which was immediately dismissed by the district as outside legal bargaining parameters).

The union officers knew that all on the team, even their critics, were highly credible to their co-workers, and that would lead to a cohesive and effective bargaining team. The team debated and hashed out proposals from recess to teacher quality, from racial equity for students to the pay gap between ESPs and certificated staff, and won on virtually all of them (including recess). When the district brought a late-game takeaway to the table, a raucous meeting of thousands of SEA members gave the team unanimous authority to call a strike. When talks broke down the night before school was to start, our team let the district know that we were now on strike.

Any large strike of any length is a story in itself, and Seattle's seven-day strike is no exception. Almost to a person, the WEA and NEA staff who joined in to support our strike noted how incredibly well organized each school's strike operation was, and how little was needed of them. The natural school leaders were in charge. 📍

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Coaching



NATIONAL
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION

Coaching, Training, Facilitating
Coaching 101
Coaching Scenarios
Consultancy Protocol
Question Stems
Cross Race Coaching

Coaching vs. Mentoring vs. Training vs. Facilitation

<https://www.coach2reach.com/coaching-vs-mentoring-vs-training-vs-facilitation/>

Coaching is often considered a synonym of mentoring and interchangeably misused. Let's take a look at some definition of coaching.

- "Coaching is a less directive style of conversation that encourages people to think and decide for themselves." Brilliant Coaching, 3rd edition by Julie Starr
- "Coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximize their growth." John Whitmore
- "Coaching is unlocking a person's potential to maximize their performance. It is helping them to learn rather than teaching them." Timothy Gallwey

Training, mentoring, and facilitation are usually interchanged incorrectly with coaching, although each of them has a specific purpose." Let's take a look at the difference and similarities among all of these with coaching.

Coaching vs. Training

Training and mentorship are commonly misused interchangeably with coaching. The main difference between training and coaching is that a trainer is an expert on the content, and he/she transfer his/her knowledge to the client. On the other hand, during coaching, knowledge is enhanced by asking powerful questions, and a coach doesn't have to be an expert on the content. Also, training is typically short term; however, coaching is usually a long-term engagement.

Coaching vs. Mentoring

How many times does a coach come across a situation when coachee put a problem in front of the coach and expect a solution? Coaching is an asking mindset, not advising, which is a mentor job. Coach is asking open-ended questions; however, a mentor is giving the direct answer to the solutions. A mentor is an expert on the content, and a coach is an expert in the process, coaching process. Most of the sports coaches are mentors who transfer their experience and expertise to the sportsperson to grow.

Coaching vs. Facilitation

Let's first start with what facilitation is. Here is a definition of a facilitator from Merriam-Webster dictionary "Someone who helps to bring about an outcome (such as learning, productivity, or communication) by providing indirect or unobtrusive assistance." Although both coaching and facilitation are process-related work, a coach is more engaged with the individual than a facilitator. Also, a coach has a higher responsibility for the growth of the person he/she is working with than a facilitator. Although it is possible to coach a team, generally, coaching is done on an individual basis and facilitation on a group. It is essential to understand that sometimes we may need to wear multiple hats depends on the situation, but we may aware that at any particular time which hat we are wearing so we can work better. Here is one diagram that explains the relationship among all of these, except therapy

COACHING 101

“How do I enable others to find purpose in the face of challenge?”



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We welcome your suggestions for improving this guide further for future trainings. We also welcome you to use it and adapt it for your own trainings, subject to the restrictions below.

The coaching framework is from the work of Ruth Wageman and Richard Hackman, and the full framework can be found in Wageman, 2010 "Toward a framework for coaching" Working Paper, Harvard University, and in Hackman and Wageman, (2005). "Toward a theory of team coaching," Academy of Management Review, 30, 269-287. Adapted here by Hope Wood, New Organizing Institute.

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COACHING: FROM EXTERNAL CONTROL TO GROWTH

OBJECTIVES:

By the end of this training, you will...

- Learn a simple diagnostic framework and a 5-step process for coaching others in organizing efforts
- Practice the coaching process through role-plays and reflective discussion
- Learn to build a culture of coaching into your team

Why is coaching an important organizing practice?

Leadership in organizing is about enabling others to achieve purpose in the face of uncertainty. Coaching, put simply, is the act of enabling others.

Organizing campaigns are rich with challenges and learning opportunities, but sometimes we are fish in our own water and we cannot see the challenges we are swimming in. Coaching in organizing helps to alleviate this problem. Coaching helps individuals to overcome motivational, strategic, and informational challenges that might otherwise hinder the progress of the individual, and or the team, and thus the campaign or training.

What is coaching in organizing?

Coaching is a direct intervention in an individual or team's work process to help them improve their effectiveness.

Coaching is a leadership practice that is useful in a variety of contexts in organizing campaigns. Some examples of when coaching skills are necessary:

- Preparing leaders to get over the anxiety that most of us feel when we ask other adults to do tasks that might not be enjoyable.
- Facilitating the goal setting of a leadership team struggling with common understanding of the goals
- Debriefing with a leader who has not kept a commitment
- Helping a leader overcome motivational challenges with managing volunteer teams in the field
- Assisting a leadership team in creating strategy for their organizing campaign

Coaching is useful whenever we are working to enable others to build their own capacity to act, and though the contexts vary, the process is very similar throughout.

Effective Coaching Is	Effective Coaching Is Not
-Showing up and being present to another person's experience and listening, with both your head and heart	- Being so prepared that you figure out all the answers for the coaches before you even hear or observe their challenges
- Helping the coaches explore and make sense of their challenges and successes and what they learned from it all	- False praising of the coaches or only focusing on their strengths because you do not want to hurt their feelings
- Helping the coaches to find solutions to challenges	- Solely criticizing the coaches for their weaknesses
- Asking questions that both support and challenge the person you are coaching.	- Telling the coaches what to do

How do I practice coaching in organizing?

Good coaching requires learning how to identify a person's or team's strengths and weaknesses in order to find ways to help them mobilize their strengths to overcome their weaknesses. People often know what they "should" do, but a fresh set of eyes is helpful in diagnosing the specific challenges they're facing and initiating a brainstorm of solutions to maneuver through them. There are three basic practices of coaching:

Basic Practices of Coaching:

- **Motivational (heart) coaching** is aimed at enhancing *effort*.
- **Strategic (head) coaching** is aimed at helping the team or individual plan, evaluate, or think about its *strategic or structural approach*.
- **Skills-based (hands) coaching** is aimed at helping the team or individual *execute with skill* (and learn from execution).

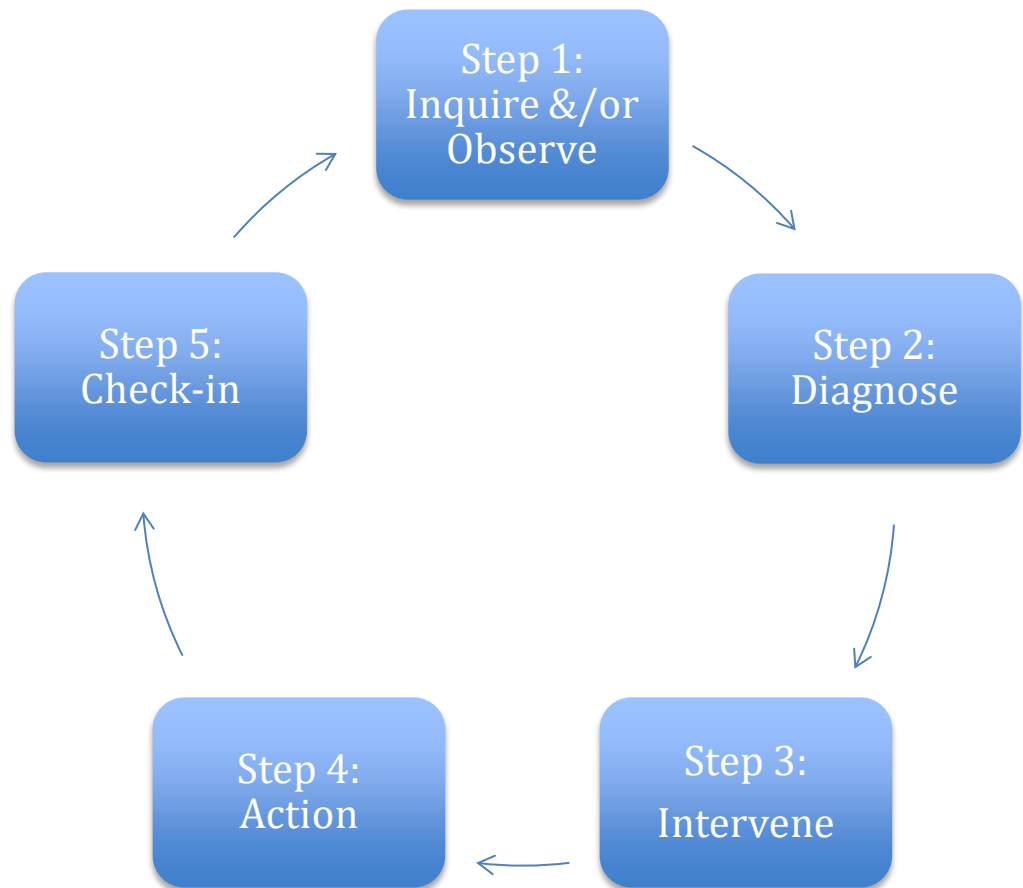
The first part of effective coaching is diagnosing which coaching practice is most needed in any given moment. For example, if an organizer is struggling with strategy but you try using motivational coaching, it is likely to frustrate them further.

As is true for the other practices of leadership, coaching is a practice that only gets honed by DOING, and then reflecting on what works and what doesn't.

Adapted from the working paper 'Toward a Framework for Coaching,' by Ruth Wageman at Harvard University
Modified by Hope Wood at the New Organizing Institute

Following this simple, 5 step coaching process can help you dive in and begin your coaching practice:

5 Step Coaching Process



1. Inquire &/or Observe - What do I see and hear?

When you are observing a person's actions in the field or someone comes to you for help, your first inclination may be to draw conclusions from the initial observations you make. As a coach, you need to take time to dig deeper. Are you seeing all the angles here? What information is missing? Think about the "who, what, why, how, where, when" questions.

- **Motivational (heart):** Is the individual struggling because s/he is not putting forth enough effort? Is she not trying hard enough because she's embarrassed? Is he quitting too soon because of frustration or fear?
- **Strategic (head):** Is the individual struggling because the goals are not achievable? Or because they're not thinking creatively enough about how to use the resources they have to meet goals? Or because the overall strategy doesn't make sense and needs to be clarified or adapted to their situation?
- **Skills-based (hands):** Is the individual struggling because of not being able to muster the behavioral skill to execute effectively? Does he not have the skill in his repertoire? Is he getting interference from other habits and behaviors (like someone well-versed in marketing speak may think that skill set is a substitute for authentic story-telling skills)? Is there something you could model, or that this person that just needs more help practicing and debriefing?

2. Diagnose & 3. Intervene: Which form of coaching does this require? How will I intervene?

		
If your diagnosis is that the individual needs to put in more intense effort, choose a <i>motivational</i> intervention, – for example:	If your diagnosis is that the individual is not <i>understanding</i> the focal practice adequately, or thinking about it appropriately, choose a <i>strategic</i> intervention – for example:	If your diagnosis is that the individual lacks <i>execution skill</i>, choose an <i>educational</i> intervention – for example:
○ Encouragement and enthusiasm—you can do it! ○ Helping the individual understand and confront fear, embarrassment, or other emotions that get in the way of the willingness to try harder or persist in the face of setback ○ Incentivizing, rewarding and praising courage ○ Modeling courage and emotional maturity in your own behavior, confessing fear and explaining how you move toward it rather than away ○ Kick in the pants (offered with love) ○ What else?	○ Asking good questions about how the individual is thinking about the key leadership practice – “Why did you choose to do this and not that?” – Based on where you are now what resources could you draw on to take this story/team/strategy to the next level? ○ Offering your assertions about what you are observing and how you think the individual might fruitfully think about the practice differently – “When you stop at that angry point in the story, I think you may be forgetting that your listeners need a reason to hope in order to be called to action.” ○ Offering the opportunity for silent reflection and self-diagnosis – “Why don’t you take a moment to think through what you believe is working and not working and let’s talk about that?”	○ Model the behavior and invite the coaches to imitate you or work side by side with you to get the “feel” of the activity ○ Break it down into smaller parts and invite the individual to try one at a time ○ Practice, feedback, repeat ○ Offer three or four different practice exercises and observe which ones “take” for that person ○ Repetition, repetition, repetition ○ What else?

4. Action: How can I allow the coaches to develop their leadership skills? What action will they take that would allow them to move forward?

- Avoid the urge to do it for them.
- Allow the coaches to try the intervention.
- Observe them in action and note observations for your debrief.

5. Check-in and Debrief: What do I ask the coaches to help them reflect on their experience?

- What went well?
- What are you challenged by?
- What are some possible solutions?
- What are your goals/next steps?
- Schedule periodic check-ins to support your coaches in integrating this new or revised solution into their regular practice.
- Find out from the coaches how the situation has changed.
- Assess whether the diagnosis and intervention was successful. Celebrate success!

WORKSHEET:

REFLECT ON COACHING

How does this way of COACHING compare with other types of COACHING you have experienced?

What is most challenging and most new or interesting about this way of supporting others' development?

How could this type of coaching be used to help you support other organizers (volunteer and staff) out in the field? What are some of the practices that you will use next time you work with another organizer?

Coaching Cycle Scenarios – For Use with Coaching 101 Package

Below are 4 scenarios, you have been provided enough information for **Step 1: Inquire and/or Observe - What do I see and hear?** of the coaching cycle – and you are free to use a little imagination to round out the scenario. Your task is to determine what kind of coaching they need – **Motivational, Strategic, Skills-based.**

Scenario 1: The context – You are preparing leaders to get over the anxiety that most of us feel when we ask other adults to do tasks that might not be enjoyable.

This is a group of local leaders that have secured member volunteers to run a phone bank asking for campaign contributions for a school board candidate’s campaign. The leaders are scared of hearing no’s from their colleagues on the phones and are a little by the growing “clarifying questions” coming from their volunteers. Ultimately, they feel they should just scrap the whole thing because they are not confident that the volunteers will show up and they are sure they won’t raise much money.

Type of Coaching: _____

Scenario 2: The context – You are facilitating the goal setting of a leadership team struggling with common understanding of what their campaign should be able to achieve.

The team members have a wildly divergent notions of what the outcomes should be and they keep shying away from setting a goal and straying into thinking about “cool” actions they could plan. It appears to you that they may not have run this kind of meeting before and they may not understand how to develop a plan for action.

Type of Coaching: _____

Scenario 3: The context – You are debriefing with a leader who has not kept a commitment.

The leader is relatively new and quite a bit younger than others at the worksite – but has good relationships and is well respected. The commitment was a relatively small one that was dependent on using already established relationships – a.k.a. “ask five friends to...” You get the sense that this leader has not taken this commitment seriously at all.

Type of Coaching: _____

Scenario 4: The context - Helping a leader overcome motivational challenges with managing other members across several worksites who are supposed to be making a face to face contact with each employee in the worksite to update contact information and establish a basic presence in each worksite.

The leader is having difficulty keeping the teams to following the protocol of relationship building – various teams are reverting to – “ place a notice in the mailbox” – send a broadcast email – or are leaving it to one person at the worksite to do alone – or are not doing it at all. The leader has been shy to redirect the teams to the protocol of face to face contact and feels that it is “not their place” to question if other adults have kept up their end of the work.

Type of Coaching: _____

The Consultancy Coaching Protocol

15 mins	What	How
	Opening by Lead Facilitator	<i>Facilitator reviews protocol and adjusts time as desired by presenter or as fits the group. The group may decide to spend more time on the preparation section, or in the discussion. Timing also depends on how many are in the group.</i>
5	Presenter Shares	1. <i>Presenter shares the dilemma—this can be verbally shared or presenter can offer a written document. If a written description is shared, presenter can also verbally add anything he'd like before or after the group reads the document. It's appropriate for the group members to take notes about what they're hearing. Presenter might also share an artifact such as a transcript of a coaching conversation, an email, a plan for a conversation, etc.</i> 2. <i>Presenter can ask for feedback or input in one area or around one key question. Asking for specific feedback or support can help a discussion stay focused and useful.</i>
3	Clarifying Questions NOT Probing	<i>Group asks presenter clarifying questions. Clarifying questions are yes/no or require very short answers.</i> <i>The facilitator needs to interrupt if probing questions are asked and can remind the group that probing questions can be raised during the discussion.</i>
5	Group Fishbowl Discussion	1. <i>Presenter moves his/her chair outside of the circle and can take notes if desired.</i> 2. <i>The presenter can remind the group of the presenter's key question.</i> 3. <i>Group members can raise probing questions, share the insights they gained, and share any other comments or reflections they came up with. The facilitator can open this section by suggesting that each group member briefly (in about one minute) share his/her initial thoughts on the dilemma and the group can whip around so that all can share a thought before opening into a less structured discussion.</i> 4. <i>Group needs to ensure that discussion stays focused on the presenter's dilemma and if requested, on his/her key question. Group may also take actions to ensure equity of participation.</i>
2	Closing	<i>Presenter shares any reactions, insights, feelings about protocol or what was said; he/she doesn't need to respond to questions that were raised in the group discussion. If time permits, group can share reflections on process.</i>

General Coaching Sentence Stems

Active Listening Stems	Nonjudgmental Responses
• So... • In other words... • What I'm hearing, then... Is that correct? • What I hear you saying is... Am I missing anything? • I'm hearing many things... • As I listen to you, I'm hearing... Is there anything else you feel I should know?	• I noticed how when you...the students really... (to identify something that worked and why it worked) • I'm interested in learning (or hearing) more about... • I'd love to hear more about... • Thank you for sharing your thoughts. Can you tell me more about...?
Clarifying Stems	Probing Stems
• Let me see if I understand... • I'd be interested in hearing more about... • It would help me understand if you'd give me an example of... • So, are you saying/suggesting...? • Tell me what you mean when you... • Tell me how that idea is like (or different from)... • To what extent is...? • I'm curious to know more about... • I'm intrigued by... • I'm interested in... • I wonder...	• What's another way you might...? • What would it look like if...? • What do you think would happen if...? • How was...different from (or similar to)...? • What's another way you might...? • What sort of an impact do you think...? • What criteria do you use to...? • When have you done something like...before? • What do you think...? • How did you decide...(come to that conclusion?)? • I'm curious to know more about... • I'm intrigued by... • I'm interested in... • I wonder...



Facilitative & Directive Coaching Stems*

FACILITATIVE	DIRECTIVE
Cathartic Stems - I'm noticing that you're experiencing some feelings. Would it be OK to explore those for a few minutes? - What's coming up for you right now? Would you like to talk about your feelings? - Wow. I imagine I'd have some emotions if that happened to me. Are you experiencing strong feelings?	Informative Stems - There's a useful book on that topic by... - An effective strategy to teach ____ is... - You can contact ____ in ____ department for that resource... - Your principal will be in touch about that. _____ is very effective at teaching that skill; maybe you could observe him.
Catalytic Stems - Tell me about a previous time when you... How did you deal with that? - I hear you're really struggling with... How do you intend to start? - It sounds like you're unsatisfied with... What would you do differently next time? - You've just talked about five different things you want to work on this week. The last thing you mentioned is... How important is this to you? - How do you want your students (or a particular student) to remember you? - How do you want to remember this time or situation in fifteen years? - Who do you want to be in this situation?	Prescriptive Stems - I would like you to discuss this issue with your supervisor. - You need to know that the school's policy is... - Have you talked to ____ about that yet? Last week you said you planned on doing so. - Would it be ok if I share some advice that I think might help you? You're welcome to take it or leave it, of course. - I'd like to suggest...
Supportive Stems - I noticed how when you...the students really... (To identify something that worked and why it worked) - It sounds like you have a number of ideas to try out! It'll be exciting to see which works best for you! - What did you do to make the lesson so successful? - I'm interested in learning (or hearing) more about... - Your commitment is really inspiring to me. - It sounds like you handled that in a very confident way. - You did a great job when you... - I'm confident that you'll be successful.	Confrontational (Interrupting) Stems - Would you be willing to explore your reasoning (or assumptions) about this? - I'd like to ask you about... Is that okay? - What's another way you might...? - What would it look like if...? Is there any other way to see this situation? - What do you think would happen if...? - What sort of an effect do you think...would have? - I'm noticing (some aspect of your behavior)...What do you think is going on? - What criteria do you use to...? - Who do you want to be in this situation? How do you want to show up? - How do you want others to see you in this situation?

* The labels for these categories—cathartic, catalytic, supportive, informative, directive, confrontational—are from the work of John Heron.



3 Strategies for Effective Coaching Across Difference

By Elena Aguilar — April 18, 2018

Elena Aguilar

Elena Aguilar, an experienced K-12 educator, trains individuals and teams to build resilient, just communities. She is the author of *The Art of Coaching*, (2013) *The Art of Coaching Teams*, (2016) and *Onward: Cultivating Emotional Resilience in Educators* (2018). She is also the founder of Bright Morning Consulting (brightmorningteam.com) and is active on social media.

This is part two of a series of blogs written by Noelle Apostol Colin, [Bright Morning Consulting](#) associate.

I've learned a lot since [that moment](#) I froze in front of my African-American client who said, "You wouldn't understand. You're not from this community." I was part of a team of coaches who had time each week to reflect and learn together, which was essential to my growth and commitment. I built up my own emotional intelligence, learned about systemic oppression, resistance, resilience, and developed a bank of strategies that have allowed me to be a more effective coach for my clients of color. While I know I won't be perfect—there is more to learn and more uncomfortable feelings ("done" is a long way off on this journey of undoing 300 years of racial oppression)—I have made progress and I want to share some of the strategies I've learned thus far.

#1: Curiosity and Compassion

In part I of this blog post, I talked about the importance of a curious and compassionate mindset to develop self-awareness. Now I'm suggesting it as a mindset or way of being in conversation with our clients. It's useful to ground our own feelings and thoughts, and it allows us to access expanded choices for responding. When we show up with curiosity and compassion, we help people feel seen, heard and cared for. This is a foundational condition for building trust and deep understanding. Let's go back to my difficult moment with a client and imagine the scenario with a coach grounded in a curious and compassionate mindset:

Client: You wouldn't understand. You're not from this community.

(Coach allows for a pause in the conversation. Within about ten seconds, the coach notices feelings of hurt and insecurity that pop up. Notices the urge to defend herself. Takes three breaths. Wonders what the client is feeling. Reminds herself that the client is most likely experiencing something uncomfortable or painful, too. Reminds herself of the role that schools have played in our 300 years of systemic, racial oppression. Feels sad. Feels empathy for client. Coach wants to connect.)

Coach: No, I'm not. But I really want to be here, working with you and within this community. I care about you. Would you be willing to tell me more about what's coming up for you right now? I'd like to understand.

In this scenario, the coach was guided by a curious and compassionate mindset. This way of being works like a filter that we move input through. It helps create more space inside ourselves and makes it more likely we'll respond in a way that aligns with our values and our purpose.

#2: Develop Your Own Emotional Intelligence

In a recent workshop, a table of white women said, “we noticed all of us felt shame about our whiteness when we thought about our identities and it’s really uncomfortable.” To have these conversations, we have to develop our own emotional intelligence, because they bring up feelings that make us want to turn away or defend ourselves. I told them, “that’s great. Naming the feelings is important. Now find compassion for yourself. Then remember your values.”

If I ever get stuck in guilt or shame about my unearned racial privilege, I take a deep breath and think about compassion and how systemic oppression dehumanizes all of us. Then remember that I value justice and connection. That helps me move through the feeling. Then I can more easily focus my whole being on the work of coaching, transformational change, and dismantling systems of oppression.

I have a [printed chart listing emotions](#) that I look at to help expand my vocabulary and awareness of what I’m feeling in different moments. Try printing this out and looking at it throughout the day and finding language to match your current emotions. It’s great practice and it’s fascinating to notice the range of feelings that we experience throughout a day.

Here’s a mind trick that helped me; the phrase “just feelings.” In moments when I’ve felt, triggered, sad, frustrated, or defensive - I say to myself, “just feelings. This works as a reminder that while feelings are uncomfortable, they can’t really hurt me. I don’t have to give into them, solve an immediate problem, fix anything, push anyone or anything away. “Just feelings.” Breathe. Stay present.

#3: Invite Conversations About Differences

Invite people to tell their stories about who they are, what they value, what makes them proud, what they struggle with, and how they experience the world. Don’t let the differences become the elephant in the room that leads your client to burst out like mine did with, “I shouldn’t be talking to you about this. This is just how it is for women of color in this district.” This client felt it wasn’t safe to share painful parts of her work experience with me, yet the experience was keeping her from becoming the leader she wanted to be. As a transformational coach, this was troubling. What I learned is that you can invite a client to talk, acknowledging differences, with prompts like:

- What do you need me to understand about your identity as your coach?
- What would you like to know about me that would help you to work with me?

- Tell me a story that will help me understand a part of your identity that you feel impacts you at work.
- What might be challenging about us working together? What can I do to support you when those challenges arise?

We can't ever make assumptions about someone's identity and experience. Questions like this let our clients know that we're comfortable acknowledging difference and we affirm who they are.

In writing these two blog posts, I realize there needs to be a Part III, possibly Part IV, and possibly more. There are more strategies I want to share! Please check back for more on this topic soon.

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Trust as a Resource

Building Trust
10 Stages of Trust
When Agreement is not Consent

Building Trust

The Critical Link to a High-Involvement, High-Energy Workplace Begins with a Common Language

Trust has taken a hit lately in all facets of our life. Chalk it up to the combined effects of the economic meltdown, financial mismanagement, and an increasing sense that, in business at least, everyone seems to be in it only for themselves. The result has been dwindling levels of trust in organizations. In fact, a recent poll by Maritz indicates that only seven percent of workers strongly agree that they trust their senior leaders to look out for their best interest.¹ And a survey by MasteryWorks indicated that a lack of trust correlated highly to employee turnover.

Trust is a primary factor in how people work together, listen to one another, and build effective relationships. Yet many people are unaware of the actions that influence trust. Trust is a critical link to all good relationships, both personal and professional.

Studies show that productivity, income, and profits are positively or negatively impacted depending on the level of trust in the work environment. Trust can be created or destroyed through personal perceptions and behaviors. Trust means different things to different people. It's predicated on who we are and how we were raised and is shaped by our experiences and perceptions of other's behavior.

Rebuilding trust has become a top priority for companies that are looking to break out of the negativity that has become pervasive in many organizations. A self-centered, "What's in it for me" attitude robs an organization of the best that employees have to offer. When employees perceive that an organization—or its leaders—are less than forthcoming, employees become unwilling to contribute any discretionary energy or make any commitments to their organization's well-being beyond the absolute minimum.

Lack of trust creates cynicism, doubt, and anxiety that leads to "time off-task" speculation and generally low energy and productivity. When people don't trust their leaders, they don't come toward something; they pull back and withdraw instead. They doubt rather than cooperate.

Often, the result is that employees will stay with the organization and do their job because they need a paycheck, but not much more. It becomes purely a transactional relationship with employees asking themselves, "If the organization does not do right by me, why should I do right by them?" Sometimes employees will even leave an organization where trust is lacking. Blanchard's research with more than 1,000 leaders reinforces this point. Fifty-nine percent of respondents indicated they had left an organization due to trust issues, citing lack of communication and dishonesty as key contributing factors.

The High Cost of Low Trust

- Low morale
- Lower productivity
- People "quit but stay"
- Increased turnover

The Four Elements of Trust

- Able
- Believable
- Connected
- Dependable

Fifty-nine percent of individuals indicated they had left an organization due to trust issues citing lack of communication and dishonesty as key contributing factors.²

The Four Elements of Trust

There are four key elements that leaders need to be aware of when they are looking at building or restoring trust with the people they lead. The four elements are Able, Believable, Connected, and Dependable—the TrustWorks! ABCD Trust Model. By using the TrustWorks! ABCD Trust Model, individuals can create action plans to increase the level of trust in relationships or repair damaged relationships where trust has been broken.

1. **Able is about demonstrating competence.** Do the leaders know how to get the job done? Are they able to produce results? Do they have the skills to make things happen—including knowing the organization and equipping people with the resources and information they need to get their job done?
2. **Believable means acting with integrity.** Leaders have to be honest in their dealings with people. In practical terms, this means creating and following fair processes. People need to feel that they are being treated equitably. It doesn't necessarily mean that everyone has to be treated the same way in all circumstances, but it does mean that people are being treated appropriately and justly based on their own unique circumstances. Believability is also about acting in a consistent, values-driven manner that reassures employees that they can rely on their leaders.
3. **Connected is about demonstrating care and concern for other people.** It means focusing on people and identifying their needs. It is supported by good communication skills. Leaders need to openly share information about the organization and about themselves. This allows the leader to be seen as more of a real person that a direct report can identify with. When people share a little bit of information about themselves, it creates a sense of connection.
4. **Dependable is about reliably following through on what the leaders say that they are going to do.** It means being accountable for their actions and being responsive to the needs of others. If leaders promise something, they must follow through. It also requires being organized and predictable so that people can see that the leaders have things in order and are able to follow through on their promises.

The Leadership Challenge

When people believe that they are working for trustworthy leaders, they are willing to invest their time and talents in making a difference in an organization. People who feel more connected will invest more of themselves in their work. High trust levels lead to a greater sense of self responsibility, greater interpersonal insight, and more collective action toward achieving common goals.

Trustworthy leaders are rewarded by employees who stretch, push their limits, and volunteer to go above and beyond. When leaders create a high trust environment that is consistent over time, collaboration increases and organizations leap forward.

For leaders looking to turn things around in their organization, Blanchard recommends that leaders take a hard look in the mirror and examine their own behaviors. Are they being trustworthy? Is there transparency and honesty with people at all levels of the organization?

2. Blanchard research conducted with more than 1,000 leaders and practitioners.

Trust Busters

- Lack of communication
- Dishonesty
- Breaking confidentiality
- Taking credit for others' work

Trust Builders

- Give Credit
- Listen
- Set Clear Goals
- Be Honest
- Follow Through

Building Leadership Transparency

- Be accessible
- Acknowledge people's concerns
- Follow through

Leaders must think about the four core elements represented in the TrustWorks! ABCD Trust Model and how people in their organization would rate them in these four areas. If they find themselves lacking in a particular area, they need to tackle this head-on. In addition, leaders need to take the time to assess current trust levels in their organizations and if they find trust is lacking, immediately begin a process to resolve the issues.

The key is to exhibit the trust-building behaviors that people look for in their leaders. This is critical, because people need to see trust in action more than they need to hear about it.

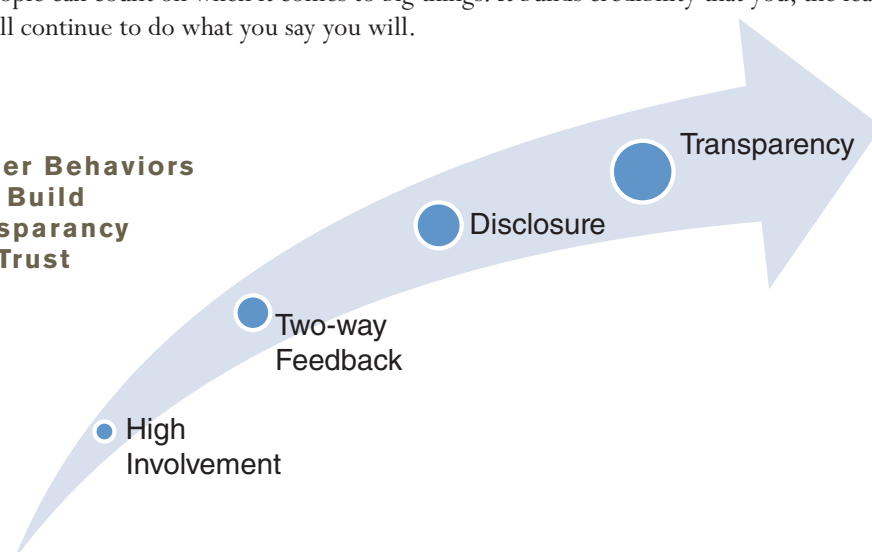
The “Transparency” Challenge

Everyone agrees that leaders should be open and candid in sharing information. But knowing this and acting upon it can be two different things. The challenge with transparency is to identify the behaviors that clearly define the concept. It's important to remember that trust is in the eyes of the beholder. What does transparency mean in your organization? Should employees be getting all of the information? Who should be included in meetings? And if you have been a very tight-lipped organization in the past, you are going to have to be open and candid about what you are going to do to become more ‘transparent’ in that transition before people are really going to trust the new behaviors.

For leaders looking to be more upfront and authentic, three behaviors will help them to get started.

1. **Be accessible.** As a leader, particularly during tumultuous times, it's important to be out in front of the organization sharing plans for the future. Don't hide behind closed doors or delegate the important task of communicating to others. As a leader, employees look to you for information on what's going on. That means you have to be very clear about what the plan is. “What are we going to do?”, “When does it start?”, and “How does it get implemented?” are all questions that will have to be answered.
2. **Acknowledge that people have concerns.** Once you've communicated the vision for the organization, you also need to take the time to listen for concerns and anxieties that people might have. Create opportunities for dialogue. This doesn't mean coddling people, but it does mean making sure that you are listening.
3. **Followthrough.** If you don't know the answer to a question immediately and say that you will get back to the employee, make sure that you do so in the promised amount of time. Keeping your word on small things demonstrates dependability and reliability that people can count on when it comes to big things. It builds credibility that you, the leader, will continue to do what you say you will.

Leader Behaviors That Build Transparency and Trust



The Ripple Effect

Leaders demonstrating trustworthy behaviors set an example for others to follow. Employees who experience this concern for their well-being have an example of how they should be treating others. This creates a ripple effect of trust throughout the organization.

One additional benefit of taking the time to define trust in behavioral terms, such as within the TrustWorks! ABCD Trust Model components, is that it allows everyone to talk about this potentially sensitive subject openly. Now, instead of pointing out people as “untrustworthy,” we can point to the behaviors that are leading to this conclusion instead.

People need to understand how to communicate about the issues of trust, and the only way to do that is by understanding what trust means to each of us individually. That’s where having a common language, e.g., the ABCDs of Trust, can help.

Great leaders personify trust. Knowing the behaviors that generate trustworthy feelings in others can help leaders crack that code to building trust. Once they do, they can begin to make sure that they are acting in ways consistent with trustworthiness. The result is an organization where people assume the best of each other, which, in turn, creates a more trusting atmosphere and ultimately greater performance and satisfaction at work.

Eight Things Your Organization Can Do to Improve Trust

If your organization is looking for ways to evaluate the level of trust currently present in your organization, or is thinking about how to enhance the trust between people in your company, here are eight places to begin.

1. ***Demonstrating Trust***—If you want to create a trusting work environment, you have to begin by demonstrating trust. Establishing rules, policies, and procedures to protect against a few bad apples sends the wrong message to the vast majority of people in your organization who need and deserve to be trusted.
2. ***Sharing Information***—Information is power. One of the best ways to build a sense of trust in people is by sharing information. Sharing information sometimes means disclosing information that is considered privileged, including sensitive and important topics such as the competition’s activities, future business plans and strategies, financial data, industry issues or problem areas, competitor’s best practices, the way group activities contribute to organizational goals, and performance feedback. Providing people with more complete information communicates trust and a sense of “we’re in this together.” It helps people think more broadly about the organization and the inter-relationships of various groups, resources, and goals.
3. ***Telling It Straight***—Study after study has indicated that the number one quality that people want in a leader is integrity. People want to follow someone they trust. Business leaders who tell it straight, who are open and honest even about bad news, develop the trust essential for strong, long-term relationships—inside and outside the company.
4. ***Providing Opportunities for Everyone to Win***—Do you want your people to work together or to compete against each other? When people within an organization are forced to compete against one another, you lose everyone’s trust. Now all people are concerned about is looking out for number one.

5. ***Providing Feedback***—Make sure leaders schedule and hold regular progress-check meetings with their direct reports. This will allow managers to catch problems before they become major issues and significantly increase the chances that a direct report's performance will meet expectations when it's time for their performance review.
6. ***Resolving Concerns Head On***—Resolve concerns head on by putting challenges on the table and giving people an opportunity to influence the process. When leaders expand people's involvement and influence, there is more buy-in because people are less likely to feel they are being controlled. This builds trust and increases the credibility of the leader.
7. ***Admitting Mistakes***—An apology can be an effective way to correct a mistake and restore the trust needed for a good relationship. But in many organizations, employees and managers are conditioned to hide mistakes because it's not acceptable to make them. And that leads to bigger problems. Leaders who admit mistakes when they are wrong are not seen as weak—they are seen as having integrity and being trustworthy.
8. ***Walking the Talk***—A leader, above all, has to be a walking example of the vision and values of the organization. The key to leadership is being able to develop a trusting relationship with others. Without trust, it is impossible for an organization to function effectively. Trust between leaders and the people they lead is essential for working together. If leaders say one thing and do another, people will question their trustworthiness.

Conclusion

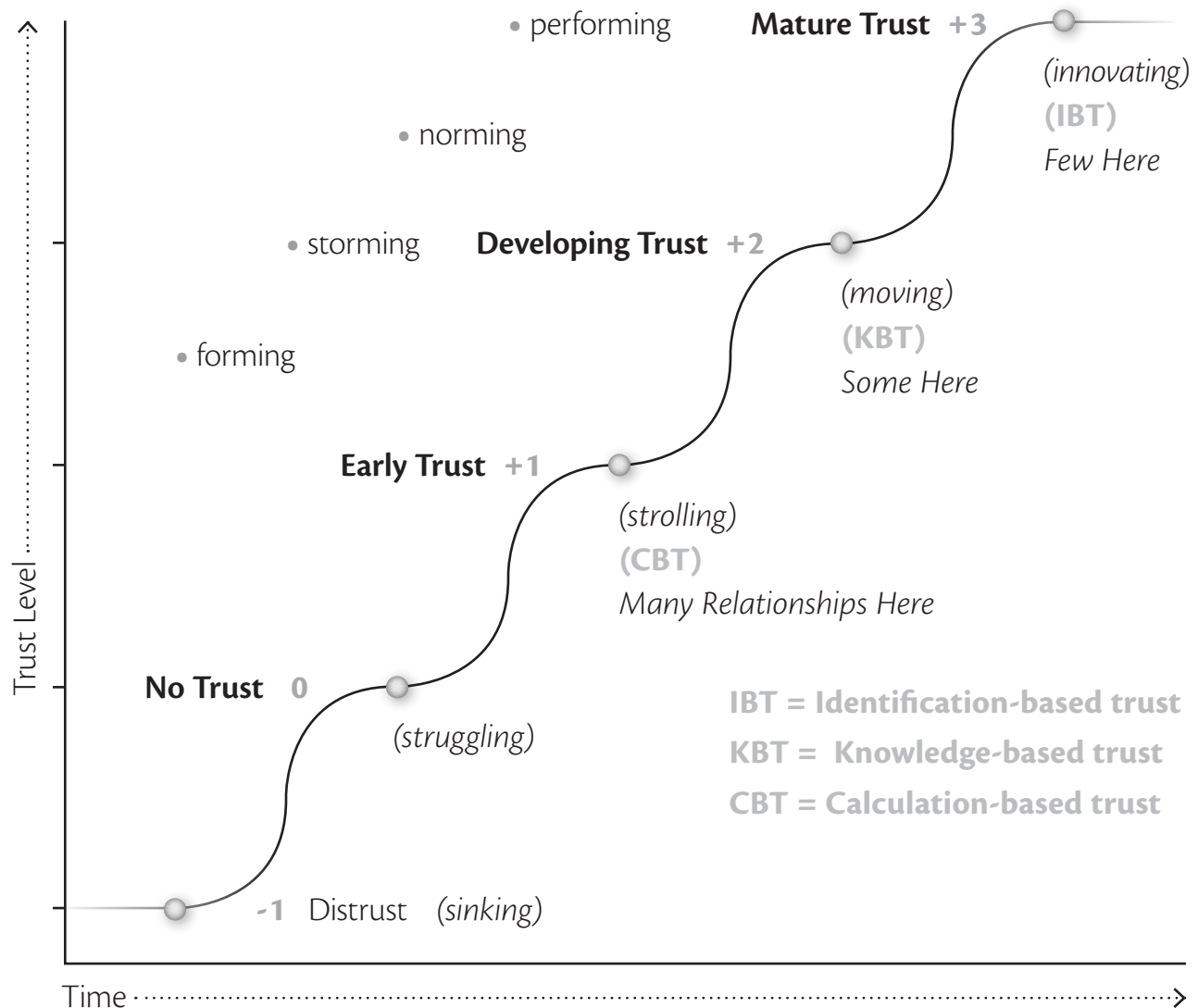
Trust in both personal and professional relationships is delicate. Trust must be treated as precious, highly valued, and a treasured organizational trait. It must be viewed as if it were an egg that when treated roughly could shatter.

Building trust is the foundation of all solid and healthy relationships and actions can speak more loudly than words. Trust can take a long time to build, but at the same time can be destroyed by a single action or misconception.

Trust is an extremely important commodity to any relationship, personally or organizationally. The good news is that if trust has been broken, your professional or personal relationship can recover. It takes hard work to build trust, especially after it has been betrayed, but it can be done. By being aware and using the TrustWorks! ABCD Trust Model and using the guidelines presented in this paper, organizations and individuals can watch for signs that trust is eroding, analyze where the breakdowns are occurring, and work to rebuild high levels of trust.

Stages of Trust and Team Development and School Culture

This graphic represents a synthesis of Lewicki's Stages of Trust, Tuckman's Stages of Team Development, and Stoll and Fink's Five Types of School Culture. Use this chart to start discussions about where your school or group seems to be. Is there a danger of moving backward? What would help the school move upward on the graph?



When Agreement is Not Consent

Appeasement is the trauma response no one is talking about. |

By

[Rae Johnson](#)

and

[Nkem Ndefo](#)

A familiar story of Black people and police officers. On April 30, 2018, in a Southern California suburb, a White woman watched as three Black women, packing suitcases into the trunk of their car, left her neighbor's home. She didn't recognize them and when she waved, they didn't wave back. So she called 911. The Black women were simply leaving an Airbnb rental and quickly found themselves surrounded by seven police cars with a helicopter circling above because, in the words of the Airbnb homeowner, of "their rudeness and lack of good nature" to the neighbor's wave. Unlike many recent incidents of Black people encountering police officers, no one was injured or killed here, but it *was* recorded.

Watching the videos on social media, we see the women laughing, joking, and expressing mild exasperation. The police officers insisted that the incident was indeed friendly, with the police chief stating that body cameras show police "handled the situation with professionalism, dignity, and respect." In telling the story afterward, however, the [women's words](#) belie the levity in the images. "The trauma is real.

I've been angry, frustrated, and sad," said filmmaker Kelly Fyffe-Marshall.



So, what is going on here? How can people experience the same event — with all the laughing and joking — and yet have such different experiences? One frequently overlooked answer is appeasement. The

Black women were appeasing the White officers. And the reason the police were called in the first place was because the Black women had originally failed to appease the White neighbor with the socially requisite deference to Whiteness. To be Black in the United States is to face a racial hierarchy that is very dangerous to challenge, especially when that hierarchy takes the form of an armed police officer. Impulses to overtly defend oneself by fleeing or fighting are suppressed and hidden behind socially acceptable behaviors that defuse the danger, making the appeaser smaller, weaker, and less threatening. These women laughed and joked their way out of danger while their internal traumatic experience was invisible to the officers they appeased.

What do we mean by appeasement, exactly? Simply put, appeasement is any relational behavior designed to pacify interpersonal threat. Although it exists on a larger continuum of strategies that help us get along with others, these behaviors vary according to the amount of perceived power held by the parties involved. For example, when the power imbalance between people is relatively small, both parties might usefully and comfortably employ negotiation to come to a satisfactory resolution to a disagreement. When we have less power than the other person, we might feel forced to engage in some kind of compromise in the face of competing demands — not a win-win, but the next best thing given the circumstances. Only when the power differences are experienced as significant does appeasement come into play. Appeasement asks for nothing from the person holding power except that they do not harm

us. When we have no hope of winning or getting what we want, appeasement is designed to at least let us live to fight another day.

Where does appeasement originate? Appeasement is more than a culturally conditioned response to social hierarchy; its roots stretch deep into our shared biology with other animals, especially mammals. Fight-and-flight defense responses are protective against predators, but they are less useful when the aggressor is a member of your own species or especially when exile or escape from the group can be perilous. Dogs, non-human primates, and even bears have all been studied and shown to display appeasement behavior. It's common to witness [two dogs](#) sizing each other up until one drops to the ground showing its belly in submission to avert a fight.

Subordinate [chimpanzees](#) not only reduce their size to appear less threatening to dominant apes but have been witnessed seeking comfort from their aggressors to avoid provoking further violence. Field observations of [bears](#) show a repertoire of appeasement behaviors to prevent and de-escalate conflict, some of which are so taxing that appeasing bears need extensive rest periods to recover. Although there is little research on the physiological mechanisms involved in appeasement, there is likely a substantial activation of the fight/flight stress systems. However, this system is not externally expressed — in essence, put on hold by a freeze response — as if hitting the gas and brakes at the same time. The metabolic cost of high dual stress system activation may explain bear and other appeasing animals' exhaustion and need for active stress-reducing behaviors.

According to researchers, the social basis for appeasement in humans is not unlike that of our animal kin — the bears, dogs, and chimpanzees. While there is no straight line between animal and human biology, the automatic nature and widespread prevalence of appeasement among social animals hints that underneath social conditioning lies a biological stress response with a potentially heavy energetic cost. The study of animals makes it possible to consider appeasement as a natural part of our human response repertoire, especially when confronted with social situations in which none of the other stress response options are seen as viable.

In other words, we appease when the nature of the relationship makes escape impossible, defensive attack is not prudent, and playing dead is not realistic. More specifically, we appease in situations where the unequal power relationship is embedded in the lifeworld of the victim. Called “traumatic entrapment,” this dynamic is a key feature of childhood sexual abuse, intimate partner violence, schoolyard bullying, and working for a tyrannical boss. In these contexts, it’s fairly easy to see appeasement as a trauma response and survival strategy. So, the appeaser faces a double bind of sorts. If they fully express the defense response, they risk potential violence or exclusion from the group, but if they simultaneously freeze the defense response in an act of appeasement, then they pay the heavy metabolic price of high dual stress system activation. Biology and cultural conditioning influence one another in both the response and the outcome.

Does appeasement extend beyond individual

interactions? We have only recently begun to expand our understanding of trauma to consider how trauma responses like appeasement might play out in social situations beyond one-to-one interactions. For example, what does appeasement look like when these abusive power dynamics extend to whole groups of people, not just individuals? In the narrative above, the Black women were not treated as individuals but instead seen as members of their social group. And although their behavior that Sunday morning was unremarkably benign, it was assumed they were “up to no good,” requiring high-stakes police intervention. Like the women in this event, many members of oppressed social groups deal with these kinds of threats, intimidations, and negative assumptions on an everyday basis. And the impact often goes far beyond feeling hassled or irritated; research demonstrates that daily microaggressions can result in lasting traumatic effects which can include serious physical and mental health consequences. The impact is compounded by the fact that escape is largely impossible; most oppressed people must regularly interact with the dominant social group as a matter of practical survival. To understand what’s going on when a member of a subordinated social group engages in appeasement, it’s critical that we see oppression as continuously traumatic and the abusive inter-group dynamics of oppression (e.g. racism, sexism, ableism, etc.) as social contexts in which traumatic entrapment can be experienced and trauma responses should be expected. Viewed within this larger frame, we argue for a critical appraisal of the role of appeasement in navigating the sociopolitical realities in which we currently live.

What does appeasement look like? In describing appeasement, it's important to distinguish it from another term — fawning — with which it is sometimes used interchangeably. Although the scant literature does not offer a consensus definition, fawning has been posited as the fourth “F” in the fight-flight-freeze sequence of responses to threat. Used mostly in reference to childhood abuse, fawning tends to refer to co-dependent behavior between two people that is suggestive of an inability to set interpersonal boundaries. Although fawning can be understood as a form of appeasement because it functions to defuse threat, not all appeasement is fawning.

Appeasement is most easily recognized in frankly submissive behaviors — making oneself smaller, head bowed, averted gaze — but a closer look shows a much wider range of actions. To defuse a threat, an appeaser may not speak out or may instead take the blame by apologizing. Appeasement can emerge as friendly behavior like the laughing and joking of the Black women in the Airbnb story or as physical touch and sexual advances, the latter of which can also cross over into the submission category.

Grace (pseudonym), a 22-year old photographer, was excited for her date with Aziz Ansari, a celebrated comedic actor known for his insightful and generally enlightened take on relationships in his book *Modern Romance* and Netflix show *Master of None*. She willingly went back to his apartment, but when Ansari became sexually aggressive, she subtly and repeatedly rebuffed him by moving away, not responding to his entreaties and demands, and even asking for him

to slow down. “Most of my discomfort was expressed in me pulling away and mumbling.” At one point, she said, “I don’t want to feel forced because then I’ll hate you, and I’d rather not hate you.” Ansari slowed his pursuit only momentarily and eventually Grace performed oral sex because she felt “really pressured.” Ansari commented that it “doesn’t look like you hate me.” Grace eventually extricated herself, breaking down in tears on the cab ride home. When she shared her feelings of violation with him, Ansari was surprised that he had “misread the situation” and apologized. Her entire experience was chronicled in a much-discussed [Babe article](#) several months later. What was not named though in those ensuing discussions was the explicit role of appeasement in Grace’s experience.

Striking in the #MeToo Movement’s spotlight on survivors’ experiences of sexual violence was the shock of accused perpetrators at how differently survivors interpreted the events in question. Just like Ansari, the accused often reported that the survivor was affable and unbothered in the moment. But as Canadian equine therapist [Sarah Schlote](#) states, “Not all stillness is calm, not all compliance is consent.” And herein lies one of the key features of appeasement: its invisibility to the appeased. While overt capitulation is easy to spot, most appeasement behavior is marked by its superficial invisibility. The display of a seemingly casual smile or a nod of the head can look like consent to the person who holds more power, but the appeaser’s internal experience is dramatically different. By masking their fear and distress, the appeaser avoids calling more attention to the perceived or actual danger of their situation — the threat of physical harm, social

shaming, or economic damage. After the interaction, the divergent perspectives become obvious. The appeased reads that all is clear and fine, business as usual. The appeaser has the dual and conflicting experience of internal distress and outwardly calm acquiescence.

While appeasement is at heart a self-defensive behavior, there can be a sense of shame for not having acted in visible protest. Not being loud enough in their objections may lead the appeaser to question their own distressing experience. It took Grace a long time to validate her experience. “I was debating if this was an awkward sexual experience or sexual assault.” An appeaser’s self-doubt is magnified by the invisibility of their experience to others, especially considering that the appeased holds more power and often defines the narrative privately and publicly. Accepting that dominant narrative forcibly calms the internal tensions of confusion and doubt in the appeaser as they see themselves as wrong in their original self-appraisal and apologizes for having distress. The appeaser is now “fine” with the situation and — in an ultimate act of appeasement — now identifies with the appeased person’s perspective.

What are the implications of appeasement for everyday

life? According to psychology researcher [Dacher Keltner](#),

“Appeasement begins when the conditions of social relations lead one individual to anticipate aggression from others.” For members of oppressed social groups, this means that expressions of modesty, politeness, agreeableness, shyness, uncertainty, or deference may instead be an attempt to deflect or prevent aggression from members

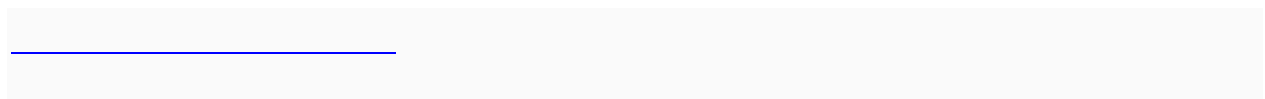
of the dominant social group. When one lives in close and direct contact with members of a dominant social group, appeasing may become so automatic that the appeaser may not even feel distressed in the moment. Instead, the cost comes later — as exhaustion, demoralization, and an erosion of one's sense of dignity and self-worth.

On the other hand, members of dominant social groups may fail to recognize appeasement from others for what it is (an attempt to defuse anticipated aggression) and instead mistake it as sincere and unforced consent. Because the appeasing behavior is not genuine agreement but false agreeableness, not voluntary respect but expected deference, the authenticity of relationships between members of dominant and subordinated social groups is compromised. [Research](#) also suggests that social power can result in a diminished capacity to read the nonverbal cues of dissent or discomfort in those with less power — as appears to have been the case for Aziz Ansari. Conversely, folks who are socialized to expect appeasing behaviors from others may come to view a failure to appease as disrespect, unfriendliness, or insolence — like the White woman in the Airbnb example at the beginning of this article.

So what can we do? To dismantle the mechanisms that perpetuate and enforce abusive social hierarchies, it's not enough to simply become more aware of appeasing behavior. We must act on our awareness. However, when oppressed social groups stop appeasing — individually or en masse — there are real and often dangerous consequences. While these consequences are often worth enduring in

the struggle for liberation, there are some situations where the risks of standing up are too great and the bodymind's decision to appease is the wiser choice. And there are still other contexts where, because of strong social and biological conditioning, we appease even in places where the stakes are low and we actually could object without much consequence.

These calculations are happening in our physiology and psychology simultaneously and are amenable to some conscious control. If we can be more aware (and perhaps more understanding) of our appeasement, we can begin to appraise the usefulness of our defense responses in a given situation. When appeasing is adaptive and protects us from harm, knowing that can relieve the shame and self-doubt of inaction. When appeasing is merely habitual and nonadaptive, we might want to use trauma-informed, body-based approaches to settle any unnecessary defense response. In either case, we are choosing a path to minimize the harm of living in abusive social hierarchies while saving our energy for the bigger battles; those places where we simply won't appease.





Recruiting People to the Work

Don't Third Party the Union
Semantics
Structured Organizing
Conversation
Scenario



NATIONAL
EDUCATION
ASSOCIATION



Don't third-party THE union... make OUR UNION stronger

 thestand.org/2014/04/dont-third-party-the-union-make-our-union-stronger/

David Groves

April 17, 2014

(April 17, 2014) — When was the last time you heard someone ask, “What does the union do for me?”

Pretty recently, I would bet and, if you're like me, it's not a question that makes you feel good about being a union supporter. If that question rubs you the wrong way, there's a good reason for it. Think about what that question assumes:



- 1) The role of a union is to *do things for members*.
- 2) Members judge their union based on what it does for them *as individuals*.
- 3) **Most importantly!** THE union is an outside organization. It isn't the employer, but isn't the workers either. It's a third party in the employment relationship.

This is called “third-partying the union” and it's something that employers love to do. Especially when workers are trying to form a new union, employers will talk about how THE union will make it impossible for workers and employers to speak to each other directly; how THE union just wants to take dues money from workers but can't really help them; and how THE union is really just made up of a bunch of self-interested fat cats who want to support their lavish life styles. Sound familiar?

Here's the rub. When we let *union members* talk about THE union, we're going along with how employers see unions. We're letting union members “third party” their own unions!

And what gets ignored? How about the fact that unions are democratic organizations where being a member means having a voice? How about the fact that unions are the only organizations that give workers equality with the employer in negotiation and enforcement of terms and conditions of employment? How about the fact that unions are often helping organizations that put on food drives and build wheelchair ramps? There are so many ways

in which unions are supporting the quality of working people's lives in some obvious, and some more subtle ways, but you'd never know it when you start hearing people talking about THE union.

So how do we get out of the trap of "third partying" THE union?

Well, first of all, let's talk about replacing the article with a pronoun. It's not THE union — it's OUR UNION. This simple shift in language shrinks the distance between the people and the organization. The members are their unions and we should use language that reflects that.

Second, let's think about analogies. One of the worst analogies for a union is the insurance company. What image does that conjure up? It's a for-profit business that's taking people's money, whether there's a problem or not, and might or might not be there to help if something goes wrong. Who trusts an insurance company? In the relationship between you and your doctor, who gets to decide whether the care that you and your doctor both believe you need is going to get paid for? The insurance company! When you get in to an auto accident, who gets to decide whether you will come through it OK, or end up in bankruptcy without a car? The insurance company!

Why would we want our unions to be thought about in this way? Union contracts are not insurance policies and union dues are not insurance premiums. If you let people think this way, why shouldn't they ask you, "What has THE union done for me lately?" (That's a question I'd like to ask about every insurance company!)

Then what happens when you ask them to step up and be active in support of their union? I bet a reply you would recognize goes, "Isn't that what I pay my dues for, so someone else will do this for me?" And why shouldn't they ask that if they are looking at union representatives and staff as insurance agents? That's no way to build a strong, worker-led, democratic organization.

Here's an alternative analogy for you — the gym membership. You can pay your gym membership month-in and month-out, but if you don't work out, it's not going to do a damn thing for you.

We need active union members who are building powerful collective bodies and minds. We need workers who claim their unions as positive and influential organizations in their lives and their communities — and commit to fixing them when they don't work the way they should.

We don't need THE union — THAT corrupt, ineffectual, politically motivated, out-of-touch organization that just takes our money. We need OUR UNIONS — healthy, strong, and ready to win!

Sarah Laslett is Director of the Washington State Labor Education and Research Center at South Seattle College. Her column — “A Working Education” — is a regular feature of The Stand. Learn more about the Labor Center here.

How We Talk About the Union Matters

Semantics Exercise (Adapted from Jane McAlevey, Strategic Campaign Training)

For this exercise, work as a group and please redo these sentences (common phrases).

You can't use the following words: The union (or union at all), we, us, our, or I.

1. **Bad** = "Thank you."

Better =

2. **Bad** = "Union membership is like insurance; don't you want someone to protect you in case something bad happens?"

Better =

3. **Bad** = "Let me explain what the union does for you."

Better =

4. **Bad** = "The union usually gets us more in pay raises and benefits than we pay in dues so if you do the math it's definitely a good investment!"

Better =

5. **Bad** = "We need all the members to call state elected representatives to oppose this legislation."

Better =

6. **Bad** = "You say you have a good principal now, but sometimes principals change, you never know. What if you end up with a bad boss tomorrow and need the union to stand up for you?"

Better =

7. **Bad** = "That's not actually a grievance so there's nothing we can do for you."

Better =

8. **Bad** = "The union leadership is working hard to make it so you don't have to strike because strikes are really hard and disruptive."

2. **Better** =

Example 6 Step Structured Organizing Conversation- Strong Schools, Strong Community Majority Petition

1) Introduction: (Purpose: introduce yourself, set the context for the conversation)

Hi my name is _____! Have you heard that even though we achieved some increases in staffing for this school year--which our union campaigned for and got the federal COVID relief to our states and districts, the district leadership is already talking about layoffs and larger class sizes next year? We are talking to all staff over two weeks about how we can build enough power to win smaller class sizes, nurses, social workers and much more, in our contract campaign?

2) Issues & Agitation: (Purpose: find out what school changes are most important to them, *don't assume you know their issues!*)

If you could set the rules, what are the 3 most important changes or improvements you'd like to see in your school? What do you think the school district should be doing with its resources, and what do you need to do your job well during the pandemic? Billionaires have collectively grown their wealth by over \$1.2 trillion since the beginning of the pandemic, with a new billionaire every 80 hours in the USA. Does that sound like they can't afford to rebuild great public schools to you?

3) Vision & Education: (Purpose: communicate the 'plan to win' directly connected to the issues they have raised: the only way they can win is by building strength in numbers)

The key step right now to you winning (THEIR ISSUES FROM STEP 2) starts with you joining the majority of educators in our school and signing the petition also. Here's an example of what it will look like (show them an example!). When management knows a super majority of educators (and the parents and students, but that's later) are united on these demands, you and I stand a way better chance of finally restoring joy to teaching and learning.

4) Call the Question: (Purpose: Ask them if they are prepared to take action to win the issues they raised in step two, and to join the Signature Pledge)

Are you ready to fight for [THEIR TOP ISSUE] and add your signature to the petition? The petition will only go public after a majority of your coworkers have added their signature.

5) Inoculation: (Purpose: Ask them how they think the district/administration will respond, and warn them about the kinds of things they will hear from admin)

What do you think the school district will say when they hear that you and your coworkers are collecting pledges to strike for smaller class sizes? The administration will say that they don't have any money, and that the union is being selfish in these challenging times. Why do you think the school district will respond in this way? The administration is scared of the big business lobby who don't want the state to spend money on education and want the state to create more and more big business charter schools! [remember to get to point here which is that management is about control, they want to have it, not empowered educators, students and parents!)

6) Work, Assignment: (Purpose: Make a plan with them to speak with every person in the building and ask them to if they are prepared to take action and join the photo petition)

The first step was you to include signature in the petition. The next step is making sure everyone in your school site adds their signature so you can be strong enough to win on [their issues]. Who do you think you can work with in your school to get a majority of educators agreeing that coming out of a horribly managed pandemic, educators are ready to fight for what students need?

Scenario for 1-on-1 6-step Structured Organizing Conversation

Many schools saw a temporary bump in available finances for the 21-22 school year because of aggressive and successful lobbying for a substantial COVID relief package for the K12 system. Building on claims that things like COVID learning pods worked best at 15 students per pod, and about needing the physical and emotional infrastructure to handle a pandemic and hopefully post pandemic teaching-learning environment, it is past time to get serious about winning the schools students and educators deserve.

You are now into negotiations for your new contract and you want to use the crisis to force a radical reduction on class size, and demand that you will not return to the old normal, but will rebuild a robust public education system coming out of this pandemic!

As you begin the first hints at a strike for your demands, you launch a structure test with a goal of 90% participation school by school.

The three types of resistance to signing the pledge include:

Worker #1

Isn't convinced that there's any way in heck to win these demands and basically has decided if they don't win "enough," they will just quit teaching instead. They don't want to ruffle feathers by signing if they are going to quit if things don't get better.

Worker #2

Agrees wholeheartedly but is terrified of her punishing principal and of being punished. Says she's "with you all the way," but is too scared to sign. "But don't worry, I will strike if everyone does."

Worker #3

They believe in giving their students their all, definitely agree with the demands, but don't think going on strike is any way to solve this crisis.



Team Development

Leadership Teams
Team Purpose
Building Consensus
Team Purpose Worksheet

STRUCTURE: BUILDING A CULTURE OF COMMITMENT & TEAMWORK

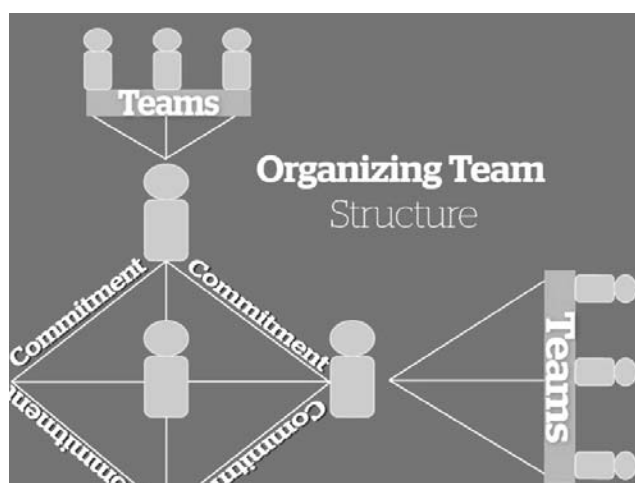
“How can we work together interdependently to achieve shared purpose?”

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the core conditions of successful leadership teams
- Begin practicing building and refining those conditions in your leadership team: developing a shared purpose, clarifying team roles and responsibilities, creating shared norms and practices of coordination

WHY DO ORGANIZING TEAMS MATTER?

The most effective leaders have always created teams to work with them and to lead with them. Take for example Moses, Aaron and Miriam in the story of Exodus, or Jesus and the twelve disciples in the New Testament, or Martin Luther King, Ralph Abernathy, Rosa Parks, Jo Ann Robinson and E.D. Nixon during the Montgomery Bus Boycott or Alice Paul and Lucy Burns in their fight for women’s suffrage.



Leadership teams offer a structural model for working together that fosters interdependent leadership, where individuals can work toward goals together, with each person taking leadership on part of the team’s activity. At their best leadership teams recognize and put to productive use the unique talents of the individuals who make up the team.

WHY DOES TEAM STRUCTURE MATTER?

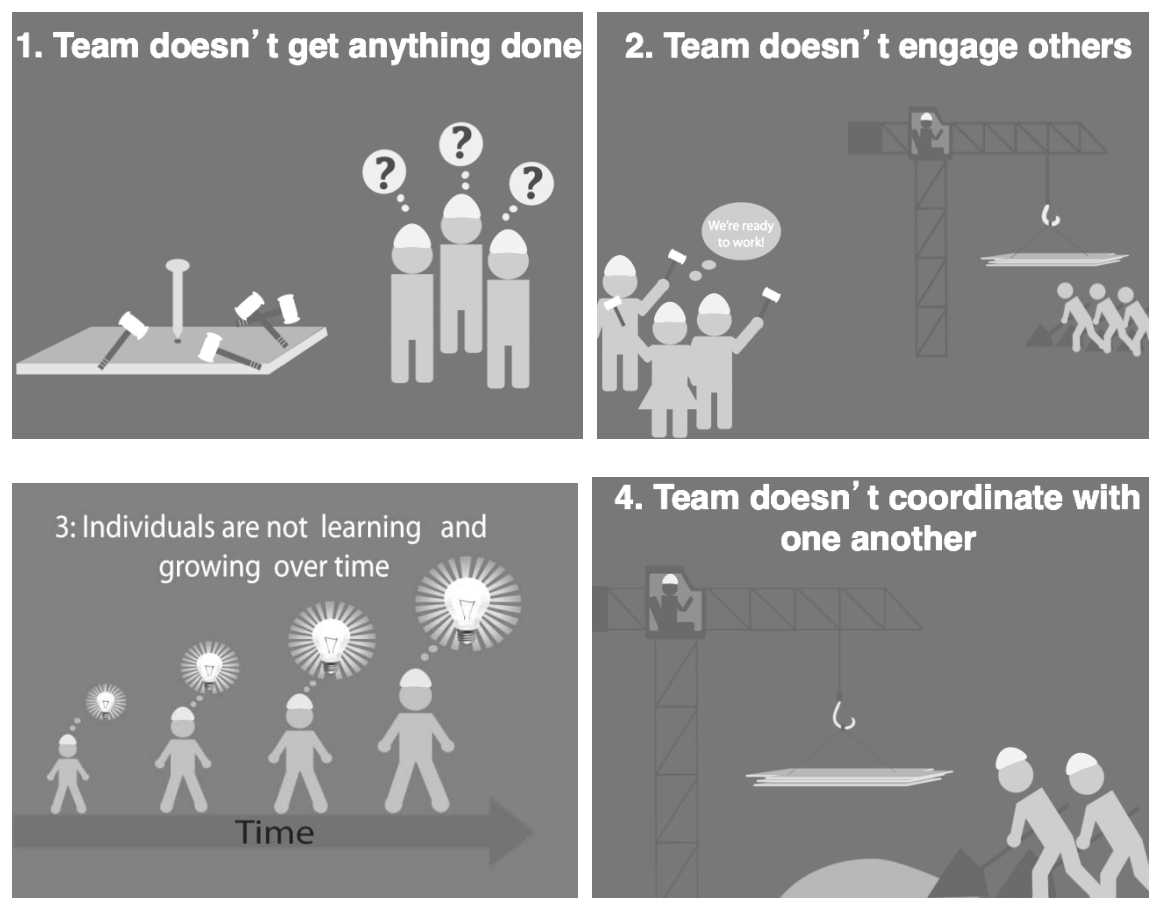
Team structures create strategic capacity—the ability to strategize creatively together in ways that produce more vibrant, engaging strategy than any individual could create alone. Movements are not built on command and control authority structures. But they can also be ineffective beyond the local level if there is no structure for coordination and no venue for creating shared purpose.

Strong movement structures enable local decision-making and strategizing by local leadership teams that are supported by regional or national leadership teams who provide strategic focus, common purpose and shared resources—our snowflake model of interdependent leadership. At every level, leadership teams require a clear mission with clear goals and the ability to strategize creatively together about how to carry out their mission and meet their goals. This

structure creates multiple points of entry for leaders at local, regional, national and international levels, and multiple opportunities to learn and to exercise leadership.

Leadership teams provide a foundation from which an organization can expand its reach. Once a team is formed, systems can be created to establish a rhythm of regular meetings, clear decisions and visible accountability, increasing the organization's effectiveness. An organization of 500 people is not created by one person alone. It is built by finding people willing and able to commit to helping build it, and creating relationships and a solid, transparent structure from which it can be built.

WHY DON'T PEOPLE ALWAYS WORK IN TEAMS?



We have all been part of teams that have not worked well. They fall into factions, they alienate each other, or all the work falls on one person. So many of us come to the conclusion: I'll just do it on my own; I hate meetings, just tell me what to do; I don't want any responsibility; just give me stamps to lick. There's just one problem: we can't become powerful enough to do what we need to do if we can't work together to build campaigns and take action.

The challenge is to create conditions for our leadership teams that are more likely to generate successful collaboration and strategic action. When groups of people come together, conflict is always present. Effective teams are structured to channel that conflict in productive ways, allowing the team to achieve the goals it needs to win.

What do good teams do?

1. Meet goals
2. Engage others
3. Learn and Improve
4. Coordinate

FIVE CONDITIONS FOR TEAM SUCCESS

Strong teams are deliberate about setting up conditions for success from the very beginning. Ruth Wageman and her colleagues at Harvard have studied leadership teams in many settings and have found that strong teams share 5 conditions for success:



Your team is made of diverse people. A highly effective team is made up of people from different economic backgrounds, race, ethnicity, political ideology, skills, and opinions. When there is diversity amongst your team members it can inspire robust conversation during decision-making, pushing your team to better thought-out outcomes. A good team will have a diversity of identities, experiences and opinions, ensuring that everyone is bringing the most possible to the table.



Your shared purpose is clear and it points you in an engaging direction. The work you have to do is readily understood, it's challenging, it matters to your constituency and you know why it matters. Team members should be able to articulate for others the "purpose" of your team. This is a brief statement that includes who the team is, what they do together and how they plan to do it.



Your team is stable, with clear boundaries. You can name the people on it, and they meet regularly. It's not a different, random group of people every time. Highly effective teams have 4 - 8 members. Membership of the team remains constant long enough that the team learns to work together better and better; each member is fully committed to be on the team and commits consistent time and effort to it.

FOUR Clear Roles

Your team works interdependently. Everyone should have a roughly equal share of the work based on the unique skills & resources they bring to the team, understanding that each part is necessary to adequately reach the ultimate goal. Thus, the success or failure of one will have an effect on all. One way to encourage interdependence is to have clear roles based on the work that the team needs to do to succeed. Interdependent teamwork includes: making decisions together, coordinating work together, serving as a consultative team, and sharing information. Good teams will coordinate and help each other accomplish collective goals. Good team members will communicate well when they need assistance. No one is carrying out activity in a silo that is secretive to others.

FIVE Ground Rules

Your team has explicit expectations. Your team sets clear expectations, community agreements or ground rules, for how to govern yourselves in your work together. How will you manage meetings, regularly communicate, make decisions, and maintain commitments? And, most importantly, how will you correct violations of your shared ground rules so they remain real and help you work as a team?

Teams with explicit shared expectations of each other have a much higher likelihood of achieving the results they are aiming for. Some team expectations are operational such as “how often will we meet?” “How will we share and store documents?” “Communicate with others outside the team?” Others address expectations for member interaction with each other. Initial group ground rules guide your team in its early stages as members learn how to work together as a team. They are set by the team, not one person, and can be refined through regular group review of how well the team is doing.

Without being explicit about creating these ground rules, you will find that habitual ways of interacting will form on their own, and it will be much more difficult for your team to address those habits that are not helpful to your team’s effectiveness.

THREE CRITERIA TO MEASURE YOUR TEAM’S EFFECTIVENESS

- **ACTION:** The action work of your team matches the goals you need to meet in order to win on your campaign.
- **CAPACITY:** The team is engaging others outside the team in action. The team’s capacity is growing, as you work better together over time.
- **LEARNING:** Teamwork supports individual growth and learning.

In short, the team is meeting the campaign’s interests by achieving goals, growing the community of people and resources it will take to meet the goals, and meeting each participant’s interests by giving them opportunities and support to learn and develop.

*Note: If your team isn’t meeting these criteria, return to the foundational blocks to re-evaluate and refocus.

Team Purpose Template

#1 – What do you want to change?

In five or six words, write down what meaningful change your team wants to achieve.

#2 – Who are you organizing?

Clarify who your most important constituents are. Who is most likely to join you in achieving the meaningful change you are working towards

#3 - Why are we doing what we do?

In a few words describe why you believe this is important to do.

Use the following template to bring your ideas together into one cohesive purpose statement.

We are organizing _____
to achieve/demand _____
because we believe _____.

Example: *We are organizing all the special education teachers in our district to demand more paid time for lesson planning because it is unfair to ask people to do work without being paid.*

THE MEANING OF CONSENSUS

Everyone in the group supports, agrees to, and can live with the decision

In the end everyone can say, "I believe you understand my point of view. I believe I understand your point of view. Whether or not I prefer this decision above all others, I will support it because it was reached fairly and openly.

-- William Ouchi

HOW TO USE CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING

- No commitment until all agree.
- Agree when you can at least live with the solution.
- If you cannot agree:
 - **EXPLAIN** which interests are not being met
 - **OFFER** alternative solution(s) which meet those interests as well as the interests which are already being met

QUESTIONS FOR REACHING CONSENSUS

- ? What about this solution is acceptable?
- ? What about this solution is unacceptable?
- ? What are your concerns about this solution?
- ? What interests are not being met?
- ? What change would make this option acceptable?
- ? What other option might meet everyone's interests?

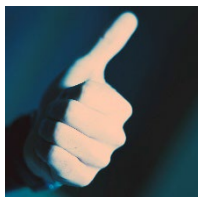
WHEN TO USE CONSENSUS DECISION-MAKING

Consensus is MOST beneficial when...
The decision is important
Diverse interests will be impacted
The decision must be widely understood
Ownership is important
Implementation requires cooperation

Consensus is LEAST beneficial when...
The issue is of little importance
Stakeholders have already identified an alternative process
The value does not outweigh the time required
Speed is critical

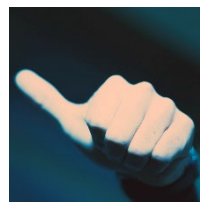
USE OF THUMBS

A way for the group to express commitment to an option is through the use of thumbs:



Thumb up means

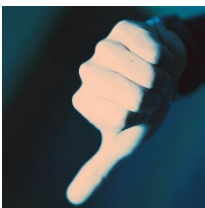
I think this option adequately meets all interests.



Thumb sideways

means

I think this option might work because it may meet all interests, but I have concerns I need to discuss.*



Thumb down means

I think this option does not meet the interests of the parties.

If you put your thumb sideways or down, explain which interests you think the option does not meet. *Note: When checking for consensus and commitment in the final step, a sideways thumb means, "I can live with the decision or solution."*

RECORDING THUMBING

One of the most important aspects of the interest-based process is the transparent recording of each member of the group's commitment to the decision. Each time an option is going to be "thumbed" the recorder will need to create a table that includes a column for options and a column for recording Up Side and Down thumbs. There will also need to be a "thumb counter" whose role is to say, "Show me up" – a count is taken. Then, "Show me side," and a count is taken. Then, "Show me down," and a count is taken. These counts are recorded in the table. We record this "thumbing" to help the group keep moving.

If there are NO thumbs up for an option, then it can be removed from consideration. If all thumbs are up, then there is no need for further discussion or development. If there is a strong mix of Up, Side and Down – then these are the options that require discussion and further work. See the example for recording below. It is based on the premise that there is a group of 25 people thumbing the options. The numbers are recorded in order of Up, Side, and Down.

Options for Interest Statement: Some teachers need additional funds to meet student needs.	Thumbing 1/7/2020
The establishment of a fund accessible by teachers who work in high needs schools and have a documented need for more supplies.	20 4 1
The development of a grant application system that allows any teacher to apply for small grants in the amount of \$250 once a year.	0 5 20

FURTHER THOUGHTS ON CONSENSUS

Consensus decision-making has a better chance of success than other means of decision-making because it ensures that all stakeholders have been heard and that each view is understood before a joint commitment is made to a solution. Therefore, ownership and support for the decision is greater, which then leads to smoother implementation than might be expected using more traditional models of problem solving. Any additional time spent in consensus building will usually be made up during the implementation stage.

In addition, the quality of a consensus decision is usually greater because it was made with the increased knowledge and experience provided by the group. This is one reason why consensus decision-making is the preferred method of high performing teams that strive to utilize each person's talents, knowledge and experience to the fullest.

So why then, would some groups choose not to use the consensus model? Common reasons usually relate to the perceived need to do what is quickest or easiest. Typically, this means taking a vote where the majority "wins" and the minority "loses," or agreeing on the first option that seems to have support, which confuses speed with efficiency. Sometimes groups do not take the time to involve the less vocal members to learn what they think, or discover what creative ideas they may have. And, all too often, group members argue their position without listening to others. They are afraid of looking "weak" if they change their minds.

A consensus approach requires discussion by all, which will allow individuals to remain open to learning from others. In the end, we want participants to be able to say that they feel their interests have been heard, that they understand the other points of view, and that they can support the decision because it was reached fairly and openly and was the best decision for the group at that time.

Questions to Ask When Consensus is Difficult

- 1** Do we have a complete understanding of the problem? Have we adequately explored the causes? Have we tested our assumptions?
- 2** Have we identified all the relevant stakeholders?
- 3** Have we identified the deeper interests of the stakeholders? Have we explored the interdependency of our interests?
- 4** Are there unexpressed interests affecting our evaluation of the options?
- 5** Are we advocating strongly for our interests or are we taking positions about options?
- 6** Are we using the same set of criteria (explicit or unexpressed) for evaluation?
- 7** Have we explored all the possible options for solving the problem? Engaged in lateral thinking? Kept creating while evaluating?
- 8** Are we being proactive and creative? Are we looking for options that meet everyone's interests instead of simply being critical? Have we identified our common ground?
- 9** Are process or relationship issues interfering with our ability to reach consensus?
- 10** Why can't we agree? Go to the balcony and discuss as a group