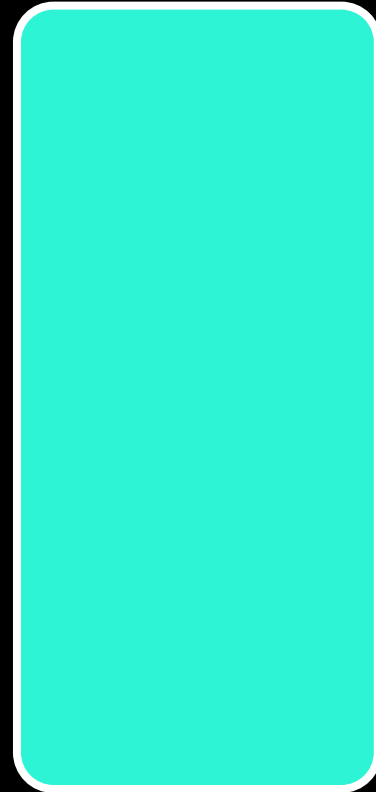
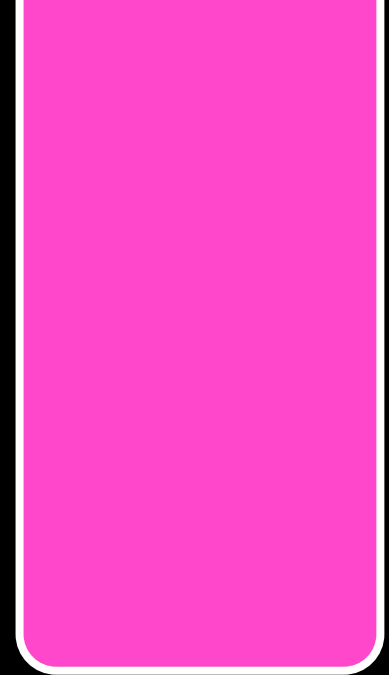
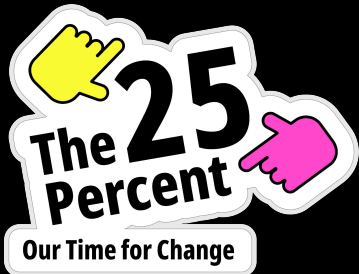


The 25 Percent

A Guide to Change

Your Handbook on activism
Get the knowledge you need to
raise your voice.

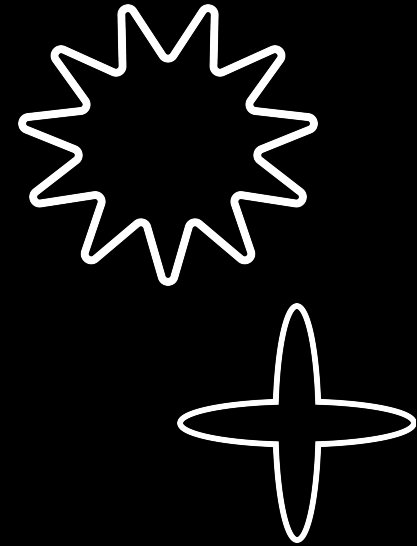


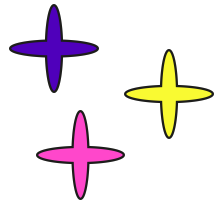
01. Chapter 1

In this chapter, you will learn how to decide what it is you want to campaign on and how to develop your vision for a better world. You'll be challenged to consider your own biases, asked to think about how you can change yourself to change the world, and learn how to understand power.

3

1. The world we're fighting for
2. What can you do to change things?
3. Why do you need to change yourself to change the world?
4. Finding your vision for change
5. Working out what issues you care about
6. Taking individual action for change
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8. Democracy, government and power
9. What is power? An introduction
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11. How does local government work?
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1. Introduction: the world we are fighting for

Welcome to your invitation to dream. Your invitation to imagine a better, fairer, more equal world. Your invitation to take action and start transforming society.

This is your invitation to turn your vision for our future into reality.

It doesn't matter where in Europe you live – we all experience and witness injustice. But we also all have a chance to respond and change society for the better.

That response could be launching a campaign for local community housing to tackle unfairness in your town or city. It might be a campaign for better global health, or for education opportunities for young people around the world.

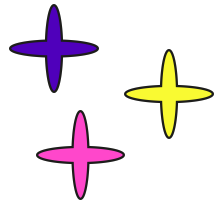
Whatever you do to fight for a fairer society, this is your opportunity to create a future where we all live in dignity and equality.

The good news is, we aren't starting from scratch when we begin to campaign for a fairer world. We live in a beautiful world full of stories and histories of change, transformation and visions of a society where we can all thrive. We are building on a rich history of struggle and resistance – a history we can learn from.

Our world also carries the stories of those in power who have used their might and privilege to oppress and dominate.

We can learn from both sets of histories as together we campaign for change and create a future where everyone can flourish – regardless of their background, race, religion, gender, class or disability.

So, take this invitation. Together we will explore what you can do to change society, learn where power is held now and how to understand it, and understand the wider context to discover how change happens and create a fairer, more equal future for all.



2. What can you do to change things?

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Self development, Individual Action, Collective Action

"If you think you are too small to make a difference, try sleeping with a mosquito."

The Dalai Lama

Let's be honest, there are a lot of problems in the world.

Sometimes it can feel overwhelming. How can I, one individual, possibly make a difference?

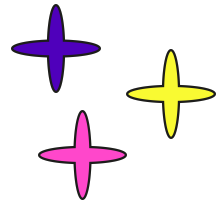
Well, the good news is that you can. We all have the potential to change the world for the better – beginning with making small changes to our daily lives. We can start by taking time to learn and reflect on our own actions and conditioning, and considering how we treat others. From that point of understanding, we can work out what we want to change about the world and take action to do it.

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."

Margaret Mead, Anthropologist

Just like the mosquito in the Dalai Lama's quote, each individual person has the potential to make a big impact.

But when we come together with other people, the potential for change is even greater. That's when we can build movements and transform society. History is full of examples of collaboration and collective action, where groups fought for the rights we now take for granted – from voting to sick pay.



3. Why do you need to change yourself to change the world?

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Self-development, Culture and Values

When it comes to transforming society, we can sometimes think problems with injustice and oppression exist “over there”. It’s tempting to think it’s not our problem or responsibility. We can even fall into the trap of believing that if we could simply change governments and shift power around then our problems would be solved.

Unfortunately, things aren’t so simple.

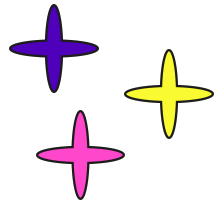
Because we are all products of the society we live in. This means we can, even unintentionally, be the cause of harm to others ourselves. We can find ourselves perpetuating inequalities – often without even realising we’re doing it.

That’s why we all have a responsibility to change ourselves while changing the world. It’s not always easy – but it is a joyful process packed with potential and opportunity.

“If you’ve come here to help me you’re wasting your time. But if your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”

Lilla Watson, Aboriginal activist

For too long, our society has wrongly believed we can dominate nature, animals and other people in different ways. The results of this inequality are currently manifesting in crises of climate, racism and inequality.



The process of liberating our world from these patterns of domination must be collective. It starts with understanding that when a person oppresses others, the oppressor also suffers. These two experiences of oppressed and oppressor are fundamentally interconnected. Through collective liberation we can and will transform both.

Without addressing how our society has shaped us, our ideas for new ways of doing things are likely to perpetuate the same old problems.

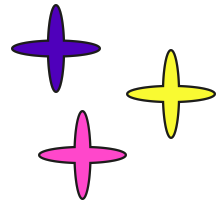
The structures of governments and other institutions are shaped by the forces of the past, meaning they repeat and perpetuate existing inequalities. It's our role to constantly question and hold those in power to account if we are to transform the world and build a more positive future.

The good news is that through reflection and work on ourselves, we can find healthy ways of being and relating with each other, ourselves and the world around us – all while making changes to build a better society.

It is our responsibility to create an alternative system that cares for people and nature, and guarantees harmony on earth for us and all future generations. But it's more than a responsibility. It's an exciting opportunity.

Some questions to consider:

- How would you describe the forces that have shaped the economic system and culture you have grown up in? Do they mean some thrive while others suffer?
- What does your society celebrate and what are its values? How does this show up in your culture - in movies and music for example?
- Can you think of a time you felt out of place in your family, community, or school? Is this linked to something in the culture of your country you would like to change?
- What do healthy values look like to you? How are these different from the values of wider society?



4. Finding your vision for change

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Self-development, Making Change

You're ready to start changing yourself and changing the world. Where do you start? A good place to begin this journey is to think about where you want to end it – to find your destination. Map out how you want to transform the world by imagining your vision of the future.

To help you, try this simple exercise:

Visioning meditation

Find a comfortable, quiet place to sit or lie down. Close your eyes. Notice your breath, feel the ground underneath you, supporting you, and feel into your body. Relax.

Imagine you are looking through a portal 50 years into the future you'd like to see.

When you arrive, walk around and notice what this world is like. What has changed from the way things are today? What problems have been resolved? What feels good? Feel into the difference.

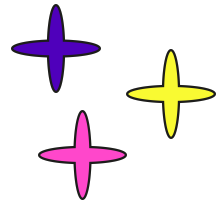
Slowly open your eyes and note down your ideas for a positive vision of the future.

How was it? Could you see your vision for a fairer, more equal future?

Anchoring your social change work in your vision

Your vision tells you where you hope to end up, your destination, so you don't get stuck worrying about how to get there.

This starting point helps you to anchor your work for social change and gives you a goal to move towards. It can inspire and motivate you, as well as those around you. It also reminds you when not to compromise if and when you're offered changes that won't actually succeed in helping you reach the future you want to create.



Living your vision now

Deciding your vision can also help you think about how you live now and how you fight for change. If your vision is for a just, joyful and sustainable world, then look at your life and your activism and ask yourself: how can I bring justice, joy and sustainability into my everyday actions?

We can start living the future we want right now simply by taking notice of the ways we relate to one another and to ourselves.

Chapter 1: The world we're fighting for

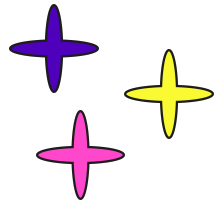
5. Working out what issues you care about and what change you'd like to see

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Making Change, Strategy

Once you have a vision for the world you'd like to create, it's time to take a narrower focus and decide on a specific issue you want to campaign on.

There may be lots of things you care about. But you can't change everything at once. Change takes time and is incremental. To get to where you want to end up, you need to break actions into achievable chunks. Not only does this prevent you feeling overwhelmed, it also means you can celebrate the small wins and track your progress towards your ultimate goal.



What does an issue look like?

Your issue will be something specific.

Most of the time a specific issue fits within a larger, structural problem. For example 'ending injustice' is just too big an issue. But you could break down what you mean by injustice and focus on tackling racism, sexism, inequality and the climate crisis.

Break down your issue so you pick one of these things.

Working out the change you want to see

When you've identified a specific issue, the next thing to do is to think about the change you want to see. What is one thing that could help to solve your issue, and make your life (or the lives of those affected) better? This change won't solve the whole problem. But it will solve enough of it to be worth fighting for.

Examples of broad issues and specific changes:

Issue: Patriarchy / Sexism

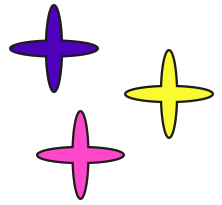
Change you'd like to see: End to street harassment

Issue: Job insecurity for young people.

Change you'd like to see: Ban on unpaid internships.

Issue: Ageism in politics.

Change you'd like to see: Quotas for young people in political parties, the right to vote at 16 years old.



Issue: Youth homelessness.

Change you'd like to see: Access to affordable housing for students.

Issue: Inequality / Poverty

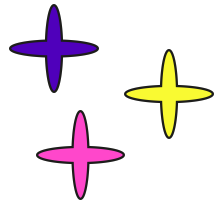
Change you'd like to see: Unionisation for food delivery workers/platform workers.

Issue: Climate emergency

Change you'd like to see: European countries rapidly transitioning away from fossil fuels and compensating countries most affected in the Global South

Ask yourself: is there one issue that:

- You are most passionate about?
- Is the biggest obstacle to your vision of the future?
- Affects your wellbeing or the wellbeing of those you care about the most?
- Whatever issue you choose to focus on, it should be something that makes you feel emotional and inspires you. These feelings will help drive your engagement and make your campaigning more effective.



6. Taking individual action for change

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Individual Action, changemaker stories

You know the importance of reflection and working on yourself in order to change the world. As you campaign for change, remember to keep thinking about your history and how society has shaped your ideas and biases. We all need to maintain that active practice of thinking about how our cultural conditioning impacts on us and what that means for how we treat others.

Once you have decided on your vision for the world you want to create, and identified the issue you want to campaign on, it's time to discover how you can take Individual Action to affect real and transformational change.

Stop and think for a moment. How many people do you see around you who are taking action to change society?

One example might be Greta Thunberg, the climate activist from Sweden. Aged 15, Greta started to sit outside the Swedish Parliament every Friday as part of a school strike for stronger action on climate. She began her resistance on her own, but her actions soon inspired young people around the world to stage similar strikes and the Fridays for Future movement was born.

Another example of how individual action can make a great difference is Max Schrems.

When he was just 24 years old, the law student brought an action against Facebook through the Irish Data Protection Company, arguing the company did not respect his right to privacy. In the years to come, Schrems filed different lawsuits and class actions against tech giants that failed to comply with data protection. In this way, the young lawyer raised significant awareness about the use of personal data by big companies and demanded that citizens are protected against abuse.

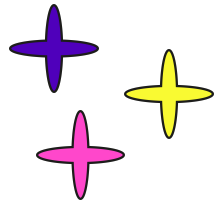
Both Greta and Max started taking action by themselves, but their actions were much more powerful when more people joined in.

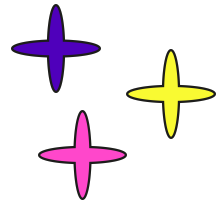
There are easy ways you can take action as an individual. You can add your name to online petitions, write to your local Member of Parliament or local newspaper, or start your own protest like Greta and Max.

At first, taking individual action may be your only option. But always remember the importance of coming together to build collective power and make a bigger impact.

Some questions to consider if you are thinking about taking action:

- What organisations are working on the issue I care most about? Are any focused on the change I would like to see?
- What actions can I take on my own?
- What opportunities are there for me to work with other people and organisations to make the change I would like to see?





7. Unlearning your bias

Reading time: 3.5 min

Tags: Self-development, Equality

In *Why You Need To Change Yourself To Change The World*, you can explore oppression and how our own unconscious biases and behaviours can perpetuate injustice.

But what does discrimination look like? And how do unconscious biases impact on people? The following example from Europe can help us understand discrimination in our own backyard. It challenges us to think about how we can stand with those experiencing it: the racism faced by the Muslim community.

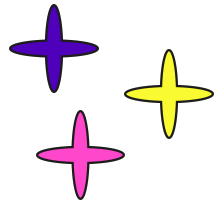
Islam is the second-largest religion in Europe after Christianity, and freedom of religion is a fundamental right protected by the European Union.

Despite this, people who practice Islam face violent attacks and are disproportionately discriminated against across society.

This happens because negative attitudes towards Muslims and islamophobia are very common in Europe.

In 2019, research conducted by the Religion Monitor showed widespread mistrust towards Muslims across the region. In Germany and Switzerland, every second respondent said they perceived Islam as a threat. In Spain and France, about 60% think Islam is incompatible with the 'west'. In Austria, one in three don't want to have Muslim neighbours.

Even though these ideas may be linked to some real experiences, bias arises when we believe that all people belonging to a certain category are inherently bad or less worthy because of their identity.



These prejudices then translate into discrimination and violence by the non-Muslim majority.

Poor people, women, queer people, black people and people of colour, Roma communities, those who live with disabilities and many others are also discriminated against by mainstream society which believes these groups to be less desirable than the 'norm'.

These beliefs are embedded in many of the political and social structures that we live within.

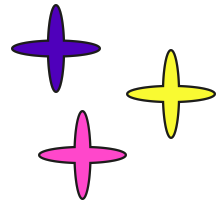
It may be that you also have some irrational fears, bias and distrust of certain groups due to the way you see them presented in the media or you hear people speaking about them.

This is normal. However, we need to remind ourselves that not only are those other people as worthy as us, they also face higher obstacles to participate in society and enjoy fulfilling lives.

Changing this situation starts by changing how we think about others.

Some questions for reflection:

- Have you or those close to you suffered from discrimination overtly (where the bias is explicit) or implicitly (where the bias is embedded, often hidden, in a system or process)? If so, how does it feel to think about this?
- Have you ever treated people differently because of their identities? Can you identify in your own thinking an implicit bias towards certain groups? How does that make you feel?
- Do you have a close friend who is interested in social change, that you could discuss these issues with?



8. Democracy, government and power

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Democracy, Making Change

What is Democracy? How can it work for us? And how do we achieve a meaningful Democracy that creates change for a better world?

Democracy isn't limited to casting your vote every few years so your MPs can represent you in local, national or international governments. It can be so much more. It's protest, petitions, letter-writing, individual and collective action.

This is the kind of democracy that reflects what the word really means: people power. That power can be achieved at many levels.

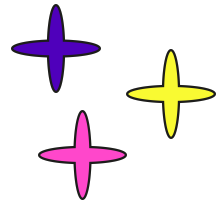
How do you see society? Is it something fixed and immutable? Or is it something humans have the power to change through questioning, challenging norms, democratic participation? Civil society has the power to change our communities, structures and world. The way we do it is through democracy.

Now we invite you to think about power – who has it, who doesn't, and how we can empower those who don't. You'll learn more about the structures of local, national and European governments, and discover how to advocate for democratic change outside of elections and elected officials – as well as how you can work with governments to create change.

Once we understand how power works and where it lies, we can use that knowledge to empower ourselves and others.

Activists and people working for change can often end up feeling demotivated and burnt out when they don't understand who makes decisions and so keep working with no results.

Together we can discover how to be more strategic and impactful – all while taking care of yourself and others as you work for change.



9. What is power?

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Theory, Making Change

Power shapes the world we live in. Those who have power therefore get to shape society to meet their vision and their own needs.

Power is needed for social change. It is, in fact, a powerful tool for change.

There are three ways of thinking about power:

- Power to
- Power over
- Power with

Power to

The 'power to' act is your own sense of agency. It's the feeling you get, and the result of, being able to do something that can affect change.

For example, you might believe that a woman has the right to choose whether or not to have a baby.

What do you have the power to do about your belief?

Well, you have the power to state this belief publicly, on a protest, in print, on social media. You have the power to share your belief to influence others.

Power to act comes from within you. It is rooted in your beliefs, values and your vision for what you want to see. Your power appears in the world when you 'do' something.

Power over

Sometimes your power will be blocked. This is what happens when you are not able to act in the way you want. This happens when a person or institution has 'power over' you.

The dynamic of having 'power over' others is explained in this formula:

'A exercises power over B when A effects B in a manner contrary to B's interests'
(Steven Lukes, *The Three Dimensions of Power*)

Power over others takes many forms.

An example might be the police using force to stop a protest. When the police (A) stop protesters (B) from protesting, A is using its power over B.

Power with

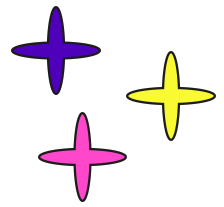
Building 'power with' others is a way of making your own individual power to act stronger and more effective.

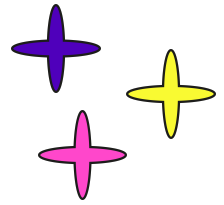
When we join with others, we build our collective power and can create change. For example, you might speak with all your neighbours and find that together you would like to create a community garden in the park at the end of your street. You come together to make a plan and decide what needs to be done and create and maintain the garden.

It is important to remember that different people will have different levels of power depending on where they are born, what gender they are, their ethnicity, their social class, and their access to those in society who have more power than others, such as politicians, journalists, celebrities, and those with great wealth.

Becoming aware of who has more power and who has less can be very useful when it comes to trying to make change – not least as this is often an indicator of where power needs to be built / redistributed or shared.

Even though power is often distributed unequally, everyone has power. And even the most powerful persons can experience 'power over' them. This is especially true when people build collective power or act through the checks and balances of modern democracies.





10. How do national governments work?

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Theory, Democracy

To create change we need to understand how to interact and influence institutions where power is held – and that understanding begins with learning how those institutions work.

Democracy and legislation

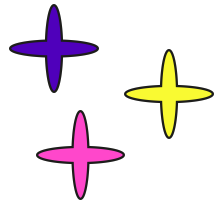
All European Union member states are representative democracies. This means that a country's citizens have the legal right to vote representatives into and out of government. The majority vote decides who is prime minister and creates the government.

Democratic systems work differently in different countries. Some, like Cyprus, elect a President directly to run the country. Others vote for representatives from different political parties and the party with the most votes itself elects its leader.

Whatever your government looks like, their primary responsibility is to apply the laws and enforce them. The Parliament instead can make and amend laws in your country, and hold the government accountable.

Centralised and decentralised power

Most European countries concentrate power in the central Government (unitary states). But Austria, Belgium and Germany are federations, divided into states which share power between them. And other countries devolve a fair bit of power to different regions - for example the 20 regions across Italy.



Your representatives

Whatever system you have, your country will hold national elections every few years.

Elections present a great opportunity to push your campaign forwards.

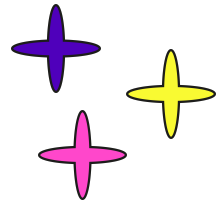
The limits of the ballot and law

Many people think democracy starts and ends with voting. It doesn't. Politicians need to be held to account outside electoral cycles and that requires action and vigilance from campaigners like you.

Of course, convincing your government to change the law in favour of your campaign is a huge win. But getting the law changed is often only the first step. More action is needed to ensure law changes are enforced and to make sure politicians aren't simply saying they want change, while failing to make change happen.

Questions for further research & reflection

- Does your country directly elect a president, or does the majority party elect its leader to run the country following an election?
- Does your country concentrate power at the centre in a unitary state, or devolve power to different areas?
- When are your next national elections? Who would you like to win?
- Do you know the main political parties in your country? And at European level? Have you ever read an electoral programme of a party?



11. How does local governments work?

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Theory, Democracy

Local governments sit underneath the national government and take devolved responsibility for the region where you live.

As with national governments, every country in Europe has a slightly different system. But all of them have local democratically elected representatives – some even have a regional level of government above that.

Your local government may also have directly elected mayors who are elected by the local citizens, as well as local leaders elected by the political party they belong to.

Just like at a national level, your local area will have representatives you can vote for every few years. Your local council or municipality may be controlled by a party different to those in national government, or by a coalition of parties.

Every country will have a slightly different definition of what local governments are responsible for. Most look after activities like town planning, social welfare, social services and education. Understanding what your local government does can help you with your campaigning. For example, if you want to protest a new building development on a local beauty site, you will want to target your local government by writing to your local elected representatives and the people responsible for local planning, rather than targeting the national government – at least in the first instance.

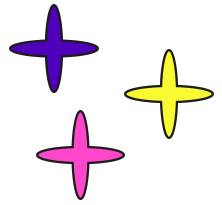
If they share your interest and concerns on a specific issue, your local representatives can be great allies in targeting the national government too.

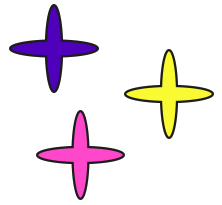
Much that is true for the national government is also true at the local level. Representatives can sit on committees or have responsibilities for particular departments, like housing or policing.

However, remember that local governments cannot make laws and are therefore less powerful than national governments. They are often beholden to national governments when it comes to policy and funding. While they are free to make some of their own decisions, that freedom has limits.

Questions for further research & reflection

- What levels of local government exist in your country?
- What is the local government responsible for where you live?
- Who represents your area in local government? How much did they win by? What do you think of their politics?
- When are your next local elections? Who would you like to win?





12. How does the European Union work?

Reading time: 6 min

Tags: Theory, Democracy, Europe

After the Second World War, the European States agreed that another war in Europe must never happen again.

They put in common the management of carbon and steel (the main raw materials needed to make a war) and to use jointly the funds coming from the Marshall Plan (a package of financial help for reconstruction given by the United States).

The idea of a United Europe was not new in Europe. Many people at the time were federalists and wanted to create the United States of Europe. For others, the idea of a single market without barriers to movement or trade was very appealing.

You are probably familiar with how local and national government works. The European Union system is different, because the division between “government” and “legislative bodies” is more blurred.

There are four main institutions:

The European Council

The European Council is composed of the heads of state and government of European Union members. The prime minister or president of your state will sit on the Council.

The Council meets every three to four months, although they can also call emergency meetings outside of that cycle. Members work together to reach agreements on issues where the maximum political legitimacy is needed – for example, investing in new initiatives, or responding when a member of the Union is acting in a problematic manner. The European Council also plays an important role in showing the direction the Union should take in situations of crisis.

The Council of the EU

This second body is composed of ministries from your own government.

They are grouped into 11 configurations and each one has a specific responsibility. For example, one group is responsible for agriculture, one for finances, one for youth and education etc.

The President of the Council of the EU is given every six months to a different member state and is responsible for coordinating the Council's work. Together with the Parliament, the Council can discuss, amend and approve the European laws. For some pieces of law, the Council alone can decide without the Parliament.

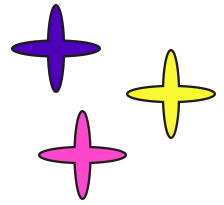
The European Parliament

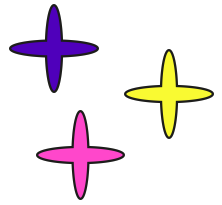
There are 705 MEPs (Members of the European Parliament) from all 28 EU member states. They are directly elected by people in their own countries every five years in the European elections. You can find the MEPs of your country here. They discuss, amend and approve the European laws together with the Council of the EU and keep the Commission accountable.

The European Commission

The European Commission is led by the President of the European Commission, together with a group of Commissioners. Each member state has one commissioner who is independent from a political party and is in charge of a portfolio of policies. The Commission's President is elected by the European Parliament following a proposal put forward by the European Council after having had regard to the results of the European elections. The whole Commission needs to be approved by the European Parliament.

The European Commission puts together the proposals for legislation which are then discussed by the Council of the EU and the European Parliament. It implements EU policies by executing the budget of the European Union.





Political Parties

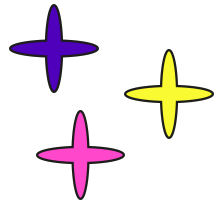
All the parties in your country belong to a European political family.

These are groups which bring a range of parties from different member states together who all share a certain political inspiration.

For example, the center right parties tend to belong to the European People's Party (EPP). The center left political parties are often members of the Party of European Socialists (S&D). Meanwhile, liberal parties tend to belong to the Renew Europe group. Members of the European Parliament are also divided into groups according to their affiliation with their political family. For example, MEPs affiliated with a center-right party belong to the EPP group, the MEPs affiliated with a center-left party belong to the S&D group, the MEPs affiliated with a liberal party are part of the group Renew Europe.

Questions for further research & reflection

- Who is your MEP? How much did they win by? What do you think of their politics? What political group do they sit within in the European Parliament?
- Is a Minister from your country chairing the Council in the coming years and months?
- Who would you like to 'win' the next European election, as the organisation with the most MEPs?



13. Some notes on the European Political System

Reading time: 4.5 min

Tags: Theory, Democracy, Europe

When watching the news or reading a newspaper it is not uncommon to hear sentences like “Brussels has done this and that” or “The European Union has imposed this on us.”

It’s almost presented to us as if “Brussels” and the “European Union” are far away obscure entities who hold all the power.

This is simply not the case. The actions and decisions taken by the European Union involve member states, MEPs, civil society, parties and, of course, voters like you.

Let’s unpack the European Union and see who holds the power.

There are two main things that are to be understood about the European Union:

- It is a system based on consensus.
- It has limited competences.

What does it mean that the EU is a system based on consensus?

Think about the country where you live.

When there is a decision to be taken, the responsible people cast a vote, and the position which is supported by the majority of votes wins.

This is a system based on “majoritarian vote.”

The European Union has, beside majority voting, something that is known as a “unanimity” and “qualified” majority.

Unanimity means that a decision cannot be taken unless all the people involved are in favour. A qualified majority means that a position wins and can be taken only when that majority represents 55% of Member States and 65% of the European population. To pass a law, the EU needs...

- A majority of votes at the European Parliament: A majority is represented by at least 353 votes. Political groups therefore need to agree on a common position, even if they come from different positions and different understandings of the problems, to pass a law.
- Unanimity or Qualified Majority at the Council of the EU: Either every minister of all Member States has to agree to pass a law, or 55% of Council members (including minimum 15 of them) representing at least 65% of the European population needs to agree.

What's more, if four Council members representing 35% of the European population vote against a measure, it cannot be adopted.

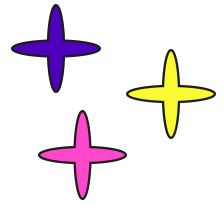
This means that representatives of different governments, different political families, need to agree on a common position.

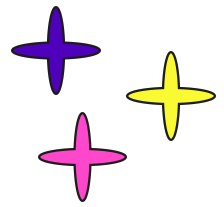
As a result, if a measure does not have broad support across the political spectrum, or if a few states are strongly against it, a measure cannot be adopted.

The European Union is a political system where consensus is key. If Member States do not play along, the European Union cannot act as fast or as strongly as it wishes.

The competences of the European Union

- Exclusive competence: This means Member States cannot legislate on their own, but only within the European framework. This includes legislating on the customs union, competition rules, common commercial policy, international agreements, fisheries, and monetary policy, among other things.





- Shared competence: This is when Member States can legislate on an issue, but only if the EU has not already done so. This can include issues such as cohesion policy, environment, transport, agriculture, internal market, humanitarian aid, certain aspects of social and health policies.
- Supporting competences: This is when the European institutions can support member states at the EU level - on: culture, youth, education, industry, tourism, civil protection, administrative cooperation.

It is very easy to blame the EU if things do not work fine. But in reality, the EU can only do what its Member States allow it to do. Never forget that when watching a TV show or reading a newspaper.

Chapter 1: Democracy, government and power

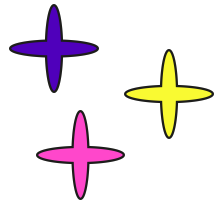
14. Tools for understanding power

Reading time: 2.5 min

Tags: Making Change, activities

Who has power? Do I have power? Why do I/don't I have power? What can I do with the power I have? – these are all questions we may be asking ourselves as we start to take action to change the world.

When working in a group – either one you have started or one you have joined as you can explore in Working Together To Achieve Change – it can be helpful to discuss what you all think about power and who holds it.



The following exercise can be a useful tool to start doing so.

Give your group a sheet of paper with the word 'power' on it (if you have more than six people, you might want to split into two groups with two sheets of paper).

Then give everyone five minutes to do what they like with that power.

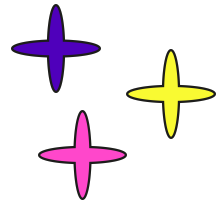
Watch what happens!

Do people rip up the paper, or give it away? Do they start commanding others around them to do as they wish? Do they join their paper with that of others (if you have more than one group) to make more power together?

When the five minutes are up, reflect with the group about what happened.

Some questions you might want to answer together are:

- How do you feel about power?
- What did you notice about how we each responded to being given some power?
- When have you felt like you have had power to act in your life?
- When have you felt like someone has had power over you in your life?
- When have you felt like you have had power with others in your life?
- What would you like power for?
- What else might we need to think about when building power?



15. The wider context

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Culture and Values, Making Change

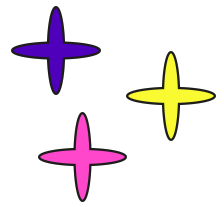
Change doesn't happen in a vacuum. There are long histories and structures in society that shape what change is possible, and how change happens.

If we are to become change-makers in our society, we have to understand our history. Not only does this help motivate us to create a better world, it can inspire us as we reflect on past successes and learn from the triumphs (and failures) of those revolutionary movements that came before. Often it can feel like everything is just the way it is and that it has always been like that. But when we look beneath the surface, we can see just how much has changed and how quickly. That change has been made possible by people just like us coming together to make a difference.

Understanding our history, theories of change and the structures at work in society can give you an understanding of how change happens and has happened before – so we can keep transforming our society for a better tomorrow.

Some questions for reflection and research on how the wider context impacts on the issue you care most about:

- What do you know about the history of your country / your region / your village or town or city in relation to your issue?
- What do you think has shaped that history? How did the society you live in come to be that way?
- What changes have happened there over time regarding your issue?
- How were those changes made?
- Who made them?
- Where do you see the possibility for change on your issue now?



16. Understanding how change can happen

Reading time: 4.5 min

Tags: Culture and Values, Changemaker stories

Throughout history, people just like you who have seen injustice in society have taken action to change the world.

Understanding and remembering the stories and struggles of those who came before us can help us learn from their mistakes and successes, as well as inspire us to build on what they have already achieved.

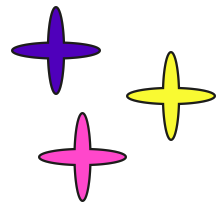
Below are some examples of recent struggles for liberation from across Europe.

Les Gilets Noirs – France

Calling themselves the 'largest collective of undocumented migrants', Les Gilets Noir organises peaceful, large-scale direct actions to raise awareness of the French immigration system, including how it detains more people than anywhere else in Europe. The group makes demands on the French government to change its policies and fights for migrants rights and racial justice.

Disabled People Against the Cuts – UK

DPAC was created in 2010 to protest cuts to social security enacted by the Conservative-led government after the financial crash of 2008. The group organises against government cuts, austerity and erosion of human rights, and demands full rights and equality for disabled people. According to the campaign's website: 'It is for everyone who refuses to stay silent about the injustices delivered by wealthy politicians on ordinary people and their lives.'



Zlarin, a plastic-free island – Croatia

In 2018, a group of young citizens on the Croatian island of Zlarin decided to take action to reduce the use of single-use plastic in their community. They got their local authority on board and started talking to supermarkets, restaurants and bars, convincing them to sign up to the Zlarin Without Plastic Charter. Today all businesses on the island are following the Charter.

Right2Water ECI – Europe

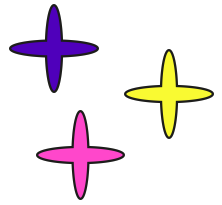
A European Citizens' Initiative (ECI) is an instrument that gives citizens the chance to put a topic on the political agenda of the EU by collecting one million signatures in seven EU Member States. In May 2012, the Right2Water campaign was the first to achieve this goal. Its campaign brought the human right to water and sanitation to the attention of the Commission. In December 2020 the revised Drinking Water Directive of the EU ensured higher quality standards for water intended for human consumption.

Pro-Choice Campaigns – Poland

In response to the Polish constitutional tribunal ruling that would result in a near total ban on abortion, campaigners came together to organise mass protests across the country. The women and their allies blockaded major roads, disrupted church services, as well as organised advice and funding for international travel for women to receive abortions in other countries.

Ban Unpaid Internships – Belgium and Europe

The European Youth Forum lodged a legal complaint on the issue of unpaid internships in Belgium. The complaint sought to challenge and ultimately change Belgian legislation, seeking a legal decision that will set a precedent across Europe and beyond to make this unfair and discriminatory practice illegal.



#MeToo movement – worldwide

in 2017, women responded to the news that movie mogul Harvey Weinstein had been accused of multiple counts of sexual abuse by sharing their own stories using the hashtag #MeToo. It became a global movement and sparked significant change on the policy level. In November 2018, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted its first resolution exclusively dedicated to the fight against sexual harassment. Two years later, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) approved the Violence and Harassment Convention and Recommendation. This established the right of everyone to a world of work free from violence and harassment. The #MeToo movement shows how digital activism can drive change in society.

Chapter 1: The wider context

17. Theories of change: Government policy v wider change

Reading time: 5 min

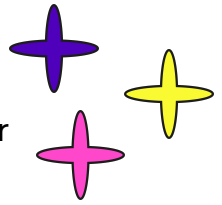
Tags: Theory, Democracy, Making Change

There are two main routes to achieve change and your vision for a better world. The first is through government policy, which can be influenced through advocacy and representation. The second is through wider cultural change. Both use different theories of change to transform society.

Changing Government policy

Campaigning to change government policy is a way of planning and implementing work that can lead to changes in laws, institutions and governance at a local, national or European level. This theory of change works with the mechanisms of state or political institutions – including politicians and government officials – to achieve positive changes for society. It is commonly known as an insider approach to change.

I.e: Through ongoing collective action, women's movements in Europe worked with the state and political institutions to achieve their right to vote. While there are women who still don't enjoy this right in Europe, including migrant and undocumented women, overall this is a policy that has been achieved by women's movements through an insider approach.



Advocacy

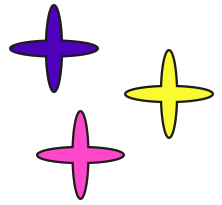
Individual citizens and organised civil society can express their needs and preferences to policy makers. By giving governments information on our situation and by suggesting policies that can solve their problems, we can influence decisions.

Representation

Ensuring minorities and disadvantaged groups are represented in institutional decision-making bodies is very important. Minority voices can speak on behalf of their population and ensure issues impacting on that group are heard and taken seriously. For young people, representation in legislative bodies (e.g. younger Members of Parliaments) or mechanisms of co-decision (e.g. the advisory council on youth of the Council of Europe, where a panel of young people participates in decision-making in youth policy) are very important.

Changing culture

The world is a complicated mechanism. It is governed by the state and political institutions. But it is also powered by people making their own choices outside these official structures.



Taking action for change at the cultural level involves building the power of people to raise the standards of what we believe is possible – not through formal structures like the law, but through our own personal choices and the changes we can make in our collective consciousness. This is commonly known as an outsider approach.

I.e: If we look at the history of the women's movements again, we will find that before voting became a right legislated by governments, women's movements popularised the idea and vision of an equal society where everyone could take part in the government of their country, directly or through freely chosen representatives.

Women's right to vote has not only been legislated for but, it is understood as a moral obligation by most people in society.

Most often, achieving our visions for a transformed society involves taking a combination of insider and outsider approaches. If you do not have much power to make a change when you begin your campaigning, you need to build your power first. This is the stage when you take an outsider approach to win hearts and minds to your cause and change the discourse on the issue you're fighting for.

When you have enough power, you can take an insider approach to influence government policy knowing you have built enough collective power to hold the decision-makers account and ensure the legislation has the effect you are looking for. Over time, movements alternate between these approaches to make progress.

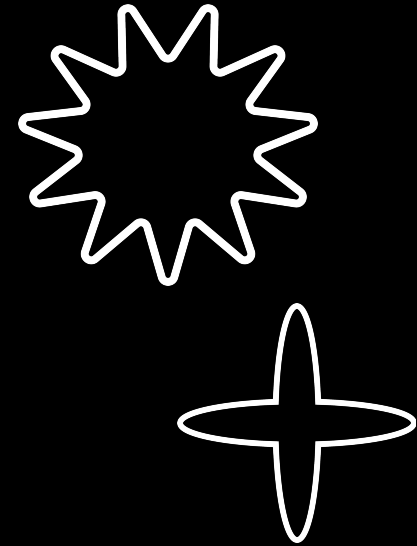
Some questions for reflection:

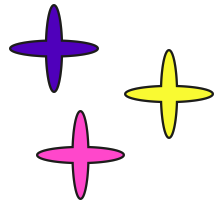
- Think about the changes that have happened in the past on your issue. What have been the role of insider and outsider approaches in making those changes? You may need to do some research!
- What approach do you think is needed now to make progress on your issue?

Chapter 2

In this chapter, you will discover how to inspire people to join your campaign, before discovering the skills you need to work collectively for change. You'll learn how to tell your personal story that will capture the imaginations of fellow campaigners and the wider public – encouraging them to come on this journey towards change with you.

1. Introduction: Why make change together?
2. Who is campaigning on your issue?
3. Telling our stories
4. The story of self, us and now
5. Mapping your community
6. Building relationships
7. Running good meetings
8. Decision making in groups
9. Group culture
10. Self care and collective care





1. Introduction: Why make change together?

“No one is special, and everyone is needed”

Adrienne Maree Brown

You're here to learn the skills you need to dream big to change the world.

How do you make those dreams a reality?

You'll need to learn the skills and gather the tools to:

- Focus in on an issue to campaign on
- Build up a base
- Find your allies
- Understand your opponents
- Build up your power so you can achieve your vision for a better world

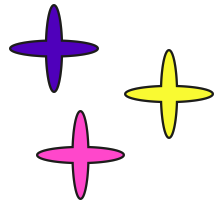
Before you can start campaigning on an issue, you need to get organised and you need to get mobilised. The two are different – but both are vital.

Mobilising

You will need to find the people who already share your passion and determination for change. For example, many people already care about climate change and will readily come out to support the cause of climate justice. You just need to reach out to them and bring them along with you.

Organising

Sadly, not everyone will agree with you on an issue at the very beginning. But through organising by building relationships, and therefore building power, with those people, you can build a greater force for change. You bring those people to your side by telling your stories, building trust, building relationships and joining forces with others in your community. You can't win by preaching to the converted. Organising in this way helps you find new allies to your cause, even in the most unlikely places.



Most campaigns will require a mixture of organising (to come together with others to build power) and mobilising (showing the power you have through symbolic or strategic action).

This chapter is mostly focused on organising. You'll discover how to work with others to build your power base and achieve the change you want to see.

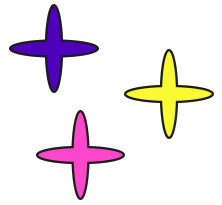
Chapter 2: Working together to achieve change

2. Who is campaigning on your issue?

Reading time: 5 min

Tags: Collective Action

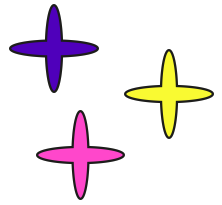
You have decided an issue you want to take action on. And the good news is, you probably aren't alone. It's likely that other individuals or organisations care deeply about your issue too.



Rather than start from scratch and make more work for yourself, look around you and see who else is campaigning on your issue. You can join forces with others in your community to build up your power and influence together. They will be keen to hear your ideas and you will learn from their previous experience so that you are always building towards change – not reinventing the wheel.

There are a number of ways you can connect with other campaigners:

- **Municipalities:** you can often find a list of organisations active in your local area on the website of your municipality (or you can find their leaflets and brochures if you go there in person). If you want to work with and for young people, visit your local youth centre and see what they're up to.
- **National Youth Councils:** each EU Member State and many other European countries have a National Youth Council (NYC). They represent the interests of young people and lobby for their rights. Members of the NYCs are local and national youth organisations. Look up the membership of your NYC to find groups working in your area or on your issue. Most NYCs are members of the European Youth Forum.
- **International Youth Organisations:** there are plenty of IYNGOs (International Youth NGOs) working on different issues, from political participation to climate action, LGBTI rights and much more. You can discover some of them among the membership of the European Youth Forum. Take a look at their websites to see if there are organisations among their members working in your country and/or on your specific issue. Getting involved in a IYNGO member also gives you the opportunity to interact with international volunteers and activists.
- **Social media:** when you have found one or two organisations working on your issue, follow them on social media and see what content they share. They will often re-share content of similar organisations, helping you get to know about more groups working on your issue. Social media is also a great place to look for volunteering or campaigning opportunities.



Talk to people: your community will be packed with people who can help connect you with other campaigners. For example: the local Mosque might know who is active in the area of Palestinian solidarity in your community and put you in touch. If you can't find existing groups active on the issue you want to campaign on, then the next step is to see if there are organisations working on similar issues.

For example, your workplace might not be unionised but there's no union for you to join. See if you can find regional or national branches of other trade unions that can advise you on how to get started with your campaign.

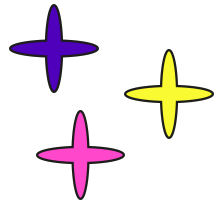
If no one else is working on your issue, or if they are taking an approach that you don't want to take, then it's time to start your own campaign.

This may feel like a big commitment. But if you are passionate about your campaign and if your issue is having a negative impact on people around you, together you can achieve so much in a relatively short space of time.

If you use an organising approach to find others to work with then you won't be campaigning alone. Remember, we are always more powerful when we are pulling together.

To begin your own campaign, start by speaking with people in your community about your ideas, the issues they care about, and how these connect to your campaign.

From there, you will find people eager to bring their skills and explore how they can get involved.



3. Telling our stories

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Organising, Tactics

Why did you decide to campaign on this issue? What challenges have you faced that led you to this campaign? What inspired, upset, enraged or excited you?

Telling your own story about why you care and why you are so determined to achieve your vision for a better world is a powerful way to inspire others to join your campaign.

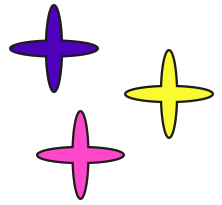
Each of us has a compelling story to tell that can connect us to others and help move them to take action with us.

We tell stories to one another every day. It's how we communicate and make sense of the world. So don't be put off if you think you don't know how to tell your story – you do!

Following this structure, you can try creating your own story:

Challenge: What challenges have you faced that led you to become concerned about the issues you now want to work on? What made it challenging? Why was it your challenge?

Choice: What choices did you make when you faced that challenge? Why did you make a particular choice? Did it take courage? Did it give you hope? How did you feel when you made that choice?



Outcome: What happened when you made your choice? What did this teach you? What can it teach your listeners? What might your story lead others to think and feel? We all have so many stories we can tell. But don't pick one randomly. Tell the story that speaks to your issue and shows others why you care – and why they should care too.

When telling your story it is important to think about who you are speaking to. After all, you are telling this story to inspire others to come on board with your campaign. Ask yourself:

What do I want my listener to think after hearing my story?
How do I want my listener to feel? Sad? Motivated? Angry? Joyful? Determined?
If you don't have a personal success story to tell yet, don't worry. Think about another campaigner who you admire and tell their story to inspire others to join you. You can find some of those stories on our blog.

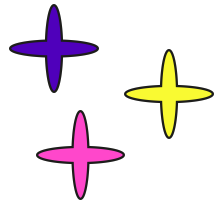
Chapter 2: Working together to achieve change

4. The story of self, us and now

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Organising, Tactics

When we are telling stories to enable people to connect with our vision and values, we often want to inspire people to join us to take some kind of action. Using the structure of the story of self, us and now is a great way to do this in your campaign.



Story of self: This is your personal story about the challenges you have faced, the choices you have made and the outcomes that have occurred.

Works if: People understand your motivation for taking action and connect with it

Story of us: For people to want to get involved in a campaign, they need to understand that an issue affects them, that they have a stake in the issue, and that taking action will improve their lives. They want to feel part of a community that shares the same values. Your story of us will move people to act because they feel part of a wider 'us' – part of a collective, shared effort.

Works if: People feel they share the values that would inspire them to act.

Story of now: This is a way of telling a story that shows the urgency of taking action now. Be specific: what is it about your issue that means we must act now? Your story will inspire people to pay attention by telling them what will happen if nothing changes – and the different future we could see if we take action together.

Works if: People join you in the action.

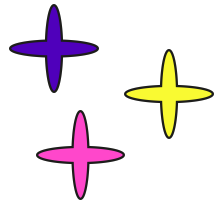
Chapter 2: Working together to achieve change

5. Mapping your community

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Organising, Strategy

You and your group aren't acting alone. You are already part of an ecosystem or a community.



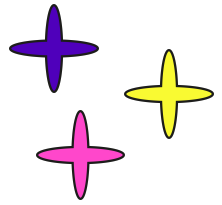
Sometimes that community will be politically active. You can measure this yourself by asking the following questions:

- How many people support the work of my campaign?
- How many people are having conversations about the change we are trying to make?
- How many actions are already being organised in my community?
- An active community is a social movement. This means a collective effort taken by many people and organisations across society working together towards a similar demand or change, i.e: the Black Lives Matter movement or the Climate Justice movement.

When you start campaigning for your vision of a better future, it's important to spend time mapping the community you are already part of. Doing so helps you identify:

- Your potential allies
- Their interests
- The work they are already engaged in
- Their existing power and reach
- Your community will also contain people who are hostile to your vision. Make sure you map those too so that you can work together to minimise their negative impact on your work.

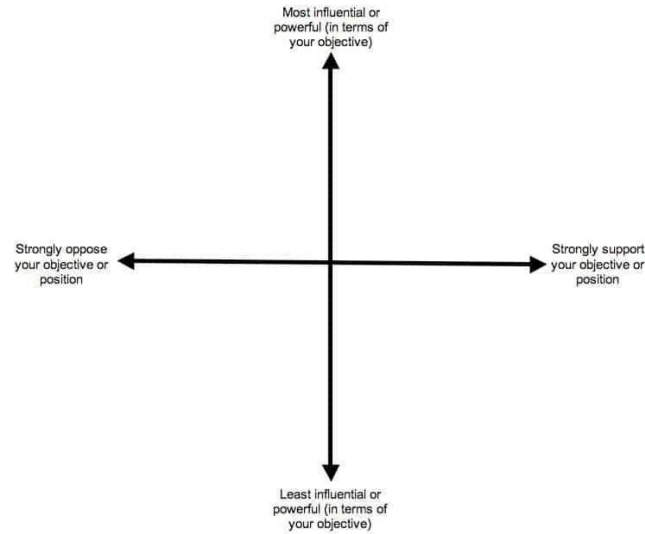
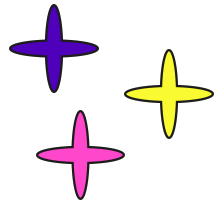
The more people in your community you can involve to do this mapping, the better your mapping will be.



How to map your community

1. Conduct a desk research on your environment: who else is working on your issue? Who takes decisions on your issue? Which communities and groups are affected by your issue? Which groups do not want your issue to change? You can find this information by browsing the web, reading local newspapers and getting familiar with the public narrative around your issue.
2. Divide the actors you identify as either potential allies and potential opponents. You can also map which people you already have a connection with, and those you don't have contact for yet.
3. Draw out a power map like the one shown below and plot out where your allies and opponents sit.
4. In the top right hand corner put the community members who are most influential and most supportive. These are your natural allies and champions
5. In the top centre put community members who are powerful but not yet strongly supportive of your cause. It is important to take them into account in your campaign strategy so as to try to make them see the importance of your issue.
6. In the bottom right hand corner put the community members who are most supportive but not yet powerful – you can think about how to build power with these allies.
7. In the top left hand corner put the community members who are the most powerful and most opposed. Identifying these actors will help you think about how to make sure they do not have a negative impact on your campaign (e.g. by discrediting you or obstructing your actions).

Once you have identified your potential allies, you will need to devise a plan to reach out to them.



Chapter 2: Working together to achieve change

6. Building relationships

Reading time: 4 min

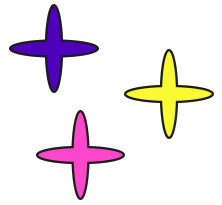
Tags: Organising, Strategy

Campaigns for social change are built on solid relationships.

But to build those solid relationships, you need to develop trust.

After all, organising moves at the speed of trust.

Once you have told your story and mapped out your community, it's time to start meeting your potential allies as together you explore how to work together for change. You can have two types of meetings: one-to-ones and one-to-many.



One-to-ones

A one-to-one involves meeting individually with people that might be interested in making the change you're looking for. Having a chat just the two of you is a great way to start building a relationship ready to take action together.

Good one to ones:

- Are short: half an hour should be enough. You don't want to take too much of the time of a potential ally.
- Are consensual: always be clear about why you want to meet someone and the campaign you're working on, so they can understand and consent to the meeting.
- Are mutual: don't just ask for help. Instead, look for ways to collaborate on something you both want and that benefits you both.
- Share stories: share some of your story during your one-to-one. You can share as much or as little as you feel is appropriate, and remember – don't feel pressured into sharing anything you are not comfortable with. It's important for both of you to set your own boundaries and not overshare.
- Listen to their story: get to know what issues they are working on, what their objectives are, and challenges they are facing.
- Identify a common purpose: this is the core focus of the meeting. Sometimes you won't be able to find a shared purpose and that's fine. If this happens, it simply means this person isn't someone you'll collaborate with at this time. But ideally you will!
- Agree next steps to collaborate: this moves the meeting from talk into action. If you want to work together, start by agreeing on some first steps. They can be big or small, depending on enthusiasm and time.

One-to-many

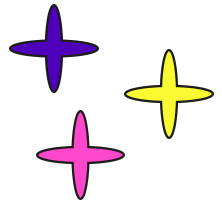
Instead of meeting just one person, you are meeting a group together and addressing them to tell them about your campaign.

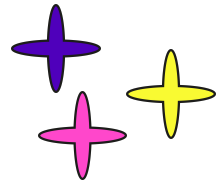
This could be a meeting of your local council, an organisation working on your issue, or a meeting with your student union or your youth council.

Addressing a group can help you learn if that whole gathering is keen to work with you, or it can help you meet new people who want to get on board with your campaign.

Questions to consider

- Who would you like to have a one-to-one with to see if they're interested in collaborating with you on your campaign?
- What group would you like to have a one-to-many meeting with?
- What elements of your story might be appropriate to share in a one-to-one? Is there anything you wouldn't feel comfortable sharing?





7. Running good meetings

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Organising, Strategy, Collective Action

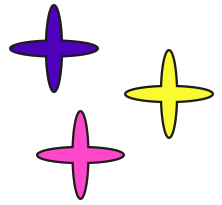
Meeting with colleagues, allies and even opponents are vital in running a campaign. These are times when you work together to delegate jobs and make decisions.

Appoint a facilitator

A facilitator supports the group to have a fruitful and inclusive meeting so make sure you appoint one or two people responsible for facilitating each meeting. Facilitators have three main roles:

- *Making sure you achieve the task:* This includes having an agenda, keeping to time, staying focused on the objective, solving problems and reaching decisions.
- *Making sure everyone is involved and the group works harmoniously together:* This includes engaging people, empowering people to speak, building relationships and a positive group culture, and addressing emerging power dynamics.
- *Ensuring follow-up of the meetings:* This includes circulating minutes so that everyone is informed and making sure that the actions agreed upon are taken.
- *Running meetings online:* The pandemic has meant many meetings have moved to online platforms.

But even when we are through this pandemic and are able to meet in person, you may find online meetings continue to be useful – even preferable. They can increase accessibility, connect you with organisers in other regions or countries, and help people who are time poor or resource poor to take part.



Where possible, it is always worth organising face-to-face meetings or hangouts.

Tips for good online meetings:

- Keep it short (1 hour max).
- Appoint someone to manage the tech – e.g. arranging break out groups and letting people into the meeting.
- Keep presentations short and send things to read in advance if there is a lot of information to share.
- Use break out rooms for pair or smaller group discussions so everyone has a chance speak.
- Experiment with interactive powerpoints or google jam boards so people can do a virtual brainstorm

Accessibility and inclusion

Accessibility means making it possible for disabled and d/Deaf people to participate in a space or event. Making a meeting accessible is also about reducing the barriers that may restrict people's ability to attend – e.g. having to pay to come to the meeting, or hosting the meeting in different language.

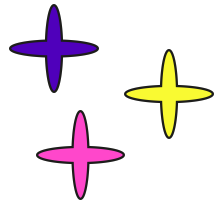
For support on making your meetings inclusive, check out the Diversity and Inclusion Guidelines of the European Youth Forum.

Ask people what they need

The best way to ensure a meeting addresses the needs of everyone attending is simply to ask people what they need. You can do this by sending out an email or survey in advance of the meeting date. People can let you know if they need time for reflection, sign language interpretation, translation, wheelchair accessibility etc.

Questions for reflection

- Have you attended a really bad meeting? For example, have you attended a meeting full of unresolved conflict or that failed to achieve what it set out to do?
- What were the problems with the meeting? How could you address them?
- Have you ever attended a really great meeting; smooth, harmonious and productive? What do you think contributed to it working so well?



8. Decision making in groups

Reading time: 4.5 min

Tags: Organising, Strategy, Collective Action

When it's time to move your campaign from discussion to action means making decisions.

This can be challenging but don't shy away from it. Implement an open decision-making process that balances making decisions by consensus along with smaller decisions being made by individuals leading specific aspects of your campaign.

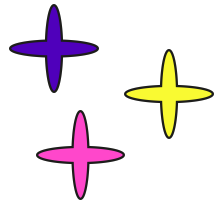
Consensus decision-making happens when a decision is taken only when all people in the group accept it. It helps groups to share power, build a strong community and make better decisions by taking everyone's opinions into account.

When everyone has agreed on a decision and a planned outcome, people are more likely to stay involved with the group.

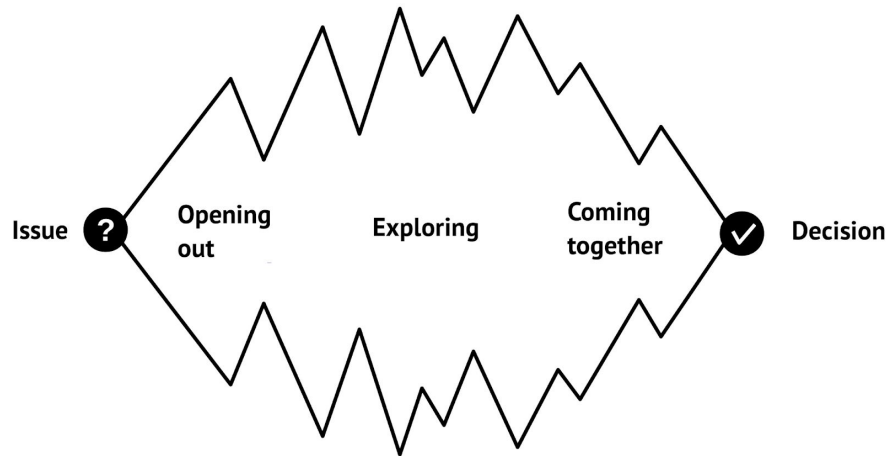
However, there can be downsides to consensus decision making. It is time consuming and, because everyone has to find a position they can agree on, it can result in a more moderate position being taken than what would be optimal for your campaign. If this happens, it can be worth re-opening the debate to make sure your decisions are as strong as they can be.

Majority decision-making is when a decision is taken if the majority of the group agrees with it.

This can be helpful when certain issues are very polarising and controversial. While it is important to try to find a common ground, if a few people with strong opinions are blocking the group from proceeding in their action then deciding by majority can be the right thing to do.



The consensus decision making process



Credit: [Seeds for Change](#)

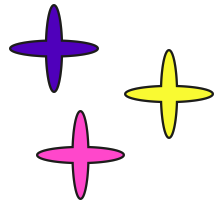
How to reach consensus on a decision

Appoint someone to facilitate the meeting

- Be clear at the start about the issue under discussion and the decision being made
- Create space for people to raise questions, share needs and opinions before trying to solve the problem
- Give everyone a chance to speak
- Explore the pros and cons of different ways you could solve the problem
- Make a proposal about an outcome that appears to meet everyone's needs – amend it if other things are suggested to make it stronger
- Test for agreement – people can vote by putting their hands in the air if they agree, in front of them if they don't agree but don't mind it, down if they disagree and want to block it

It is important for the facilitator to actively listen to what everyone says, and try to make sure their points of view are reflected in what is decided.

Remember: sometimes it will be easy to come to an agreement. Other times you may need to go back to explore the issue again and come up with new proposals before you can agree.

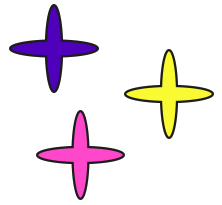


To help you make decisions together, you will need trust. The good news is, if you have already done the work building strong relationships, developing a positive group culture and getting everyone invested in a strong, shared vision, you will have that trust in place ready for when it's time to make decisions.

Questions for reflection

- How do different groups you are part of make decisions? Do you ever make decisions by consensus?
- What other ways are there to make decisions in groups you are part of? What are their advantages and disadvantages?
- What sorts of decisions do you think your campaign group might need to make as consensus? What decisions could be made by individuals?

Further resources: <https://www.seedsforchange.org.uk/shortconsensus>



9. Group culture

Reading time: 2.5 min

Tags: Organising, Culture and Values, Collective Action

“No one is special, and everyone is needed”
Marshall McLuhan

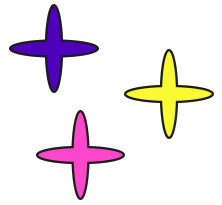
Think about the group you are working within.

- Are you mindful about the ways you work and relate to your allies and colleagues?
- What are your intentions and aspirations as a group? Are they shared?
- What is your “group culture”?

Every group, including families, organisations and collectives has their own dominant culture. Most of the time, people would struggle to articulate what their group culture is. Like the fish in McLuhan quote, we grow and learn to swim in water without it ever being explained to us.

That oblivion is why it is even more important for you and your group to make an effort to understand and identify what kind of group culture you want – and to stop and change direction if you are veering from your aim.

When starting a new group or even within more established groups, take the time to have a conversation with all members to discuss the culture you would like to create.



To facilitate this discussion, you can follow a simple, five step process:

1. Think of an exercise that allows people to arrive in the group space. This might be a game or something fun that helps to break the ice.
2. Ask everyone to think of a time when they felt really welcome and part of a group where they could grow.
3. Bring everyone to a plenary and ask them to share what memories came to mind.
4. Ask people to form small groups and reflect on what was shared. What key principles would you all like the group to follow?
5. Invite people to share how they think the conversation went and agree what your culture should be.

Once you have agreed on what kind of culture you want your group to have, make sure you commit to practice that culture.

Chapter 2: Working together to achieve change

10. Self care and collective care

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Individual Action, Culture and Values, Collective Action

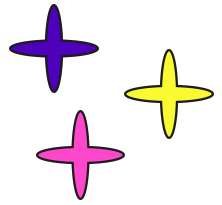
Self care is a part of daily living. It's the daily acts we take to look after our own health, wellbeing, social and psychological needs.

Collective care is when people in a group take care of the wellbeing of others.

For many of us, taking care of ourselves is not always easy. Engaging in collective care when we are not even practising self care can be even harder.

This can be caused by tendencies or logics valued in the system we live under. For example, we can neglect to care for ourselves and others when we place productivity over wellbeing, quantity over quality, urgency over intentional and slow pace, etc.

Activists and social change makers usually end up working too much. One study found that 10-50% of union and peace activists have experienced burnout, and up to 87% of peace activists had quit activism within six years of getting involved.



To make sure you don't burn out or to ensure your group doesn't feel overwhelmed by the tasks they have set themselves, it's important to practice self and collective care.

Use some of these ideas to develop your own self care plan:

- Limit activism hours, and mute all communication channels outside of these hours
- Dedicate an entire hour for lunch break and avoid rushing with it while still working
- Be realistic about the number of tasks on your plate
- Dedicate time to other activities which you enjoy and that can provide you with release and distraction (doing sport, spending time with friends).

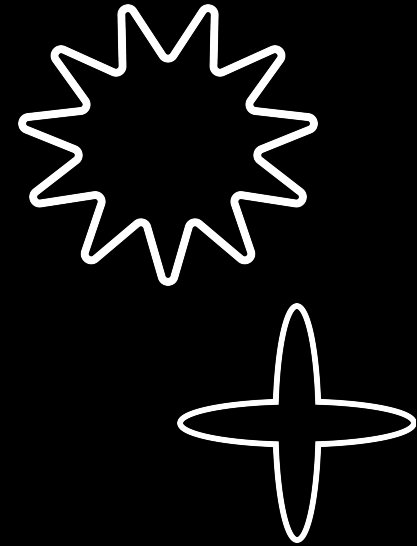
Use some of these ideas to develop your group's collective care plan:

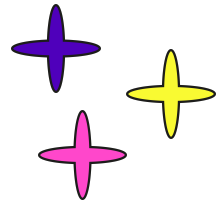
- Be aware of any sensitive issues or subjects that may need a trigger warning
- Be aware of any major issues happening in the personal lives of your colleagues that may require their attention or may impact their lives or work
- Respect when colleagues tell you they need to be offline
- Learn to say no and empower others to flag unreasonable expectations and timelines
- Communicate clearly about any unresolved issues with an individual team member
- Limit channels of communication for work; do not use FB chats and Whatsapp for ongoing work conversations
- Spend 10 minutes at the beginning of a call catching up on life and personal updates with the team member you are speaking to

Chapter 3

Without a strategy, your campaign can risk drifting away from its target. When this happens, you can lose focus and, ultimately, lose support. In this Chapter, you can delve into practical exercises that help you plan your strategy and plot the steps you must take to reach your goal that will change the world.

1. Introduction: Campaign strategy
2. Picking your issue
3. Setting a campaign objective
4. Carrying out a strategic analysis on your campaign
5. Spectrum of support
6. Working out your theory of change
7. Strategy stepping stones





1. Introduction: Campaign Strategy

In order to make a change in the world, you first need to think about what you want to change. Once you have decided that, you need to plan your strategy to achieve that change.

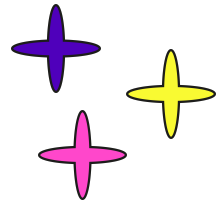
To do this, it can help to break down your campaign into a series of steps that you will take to achieve your goal. Step one might be to hold a protest. Step two might be to get media coverage and then step three to lobby your democratic representatives.

It's unlikely that just doing one of those things will mean you reach your goal. But each step can be a powerful tool when used strategically as part of a bigger plan.

To get started, refer to the strategy cycle below:

- 1. Find your vision**
What does the world look like when your problem is solved?
- 2. Map your power and context**
What are your strengths and weaknesses?
Who has power on your issue?
- 3. Theory of change**
How do you think you can make the change?
- 4. Set your strategy**
Work out your objectives
Make a plan to achieve them
- 5. Act!**
Run your campaign
- 6. Reflect and evaluate**
How did it feel to take the actions you took?
What does any data tell you about the effect you had?

This chapter provides support and advice on how you can use some key strategic tools to develop your campaign. You'll discover how to pick your issue and set your objective, understand the strengths and weaknesses of your group, build more support for your cause, work out your theory of change – and then pull all of these steps together into a strategy.



2. Picking your issue

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Making Change, Strategy

Activism can feel quite overwhelming. This is especially true when you are new to it.

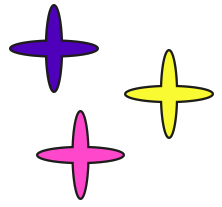
A key cause of feeling overwhelmed is people can often fall into the trap of choosing a target that is simply too big for them to tackle alone. Whenever you start to feel overwhelmed, stop and remember that change takes time. It's not just our individual responsibility to make change happen. Activism is a collective effort.

To prevent you feeling overwhelmed, you and your group need to decide on a campaign issue that is small enough to work on – but big enough to care about, and to inspire others to care too.

Finding this balance can guarantee that you and those in your groups stay involved and motivated in the work.

The following definitions can be helpful for you to remember when picking your issue:

Problems: these are broad, unspecific and unlikely to be solved completely. For example, ageism is a problem embedded in the structures that govern us and in our culture. It would take the work of many, many people over a very long period of time to resolve the systemic issues causing ageism in order to get rid of it all together. Other examples of broad and specific problems are racism or sexism.



Issues: these are specific and targeted. An issue exists within a wider problem and is something that can be changed – for example, an issue within ageism is lack of voting rights for young people; an issue within racism is unfair and discriminatory immigration policies. Issues can be linked to our everyday environment and can have a strong local dimension. For example, the lack of public spaces where young people can gather safely in your city or district, or too few bicycle lanes around the University.

If you think you have an issue in mind that you would like to change, test it using these two questions:

1. What is the underlying problem your issue is trying to address?
2. Can I/we work with others to address this issue?

Once you have identified your issue, find out who else is campaigning around it. You can do that by mapping your community.

Chapter 3: Find the knowledge to take action

3. Setting a campaign objective

Reading time: 5 min

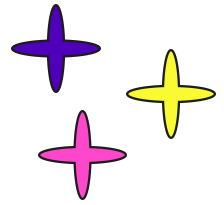
Tags: Campaigning, Theory

Before you start devising your campaign strategy and get set to change the world, there are some useful terms to know that can help you sharpen and focus your planning.

Problem: broad, unspecific and unlikely to be solved completely in the immediate future.
Example: Refugees and migrants face discrimination and injustice

Issue: a specific focus that allows you to campaign for a change within a wider problem that will therefore help to solve a wider problem.

Example: undocumented migrants face obstacles in accessing healthcare, either because they are scared of being reported or because they lack the necessary papers.



Campaign: an organised course of action to address the specific issue.

Example: Organising with migrants without documents and healthcare workers to ensure migrants can access healthcare.

Target: a decision-maker with power to implement change who you want to direct your campaign at. The ultimate and long-term goal of your campaign could be to persuade the decision makers to change policy. Be mindful that policy change is a very long process and in most cases you first need to raise awareness in the general public and create allies among other stakeholders before reaching your goal.

Example: Ministers responsible for health and home affairs.

Aim: the concrete outcome/s your campaign is pushing for – the answer to the question: what do you want to achieve? This could be changing the current situation via a policy change or through informal practices.

Example: Your end objectives could be...

- a) persuading your local health authority to run weekly drop-in clinics where migrant people are safe from immigration scrutiny and where healthcare is provided free of charge
- b) doctors and hospital staff make a pledge to treat people regardless of their immigration status
- c) migrants know how to access healthcare safely and feel protected when doing so

Objectives: intermediate steps that you need to achieve in order to reach your overarching aim.

Example:

- Create a core group of people willing to work on the issue
- Raise awareness among the general population.
- Raise awareness among the migrant community.
- Rally support of healthcare workers and doctors.
- Connect with relevant decision-makers.

Tactics: specific actions you and your group take in order to achieve a clear objective as part of a wider campaign.

Example: get local media coverage of health problems caused by migrants not having access to medical treatment.

Strategy: this is the plan you want to follow, by implementing various tactics, to achieve each of your objectives. Strategies need to be adapted to the aim you want to achieve.

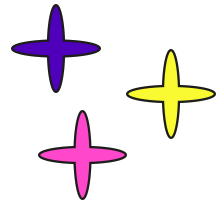
Example: decide to build an organising team of healthcare workers and migrants without documents and together take a series of actions to build power and put pressure on decision-makers including government ministers, while reflecting, evaluating and learning as you go.

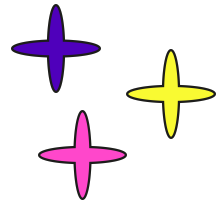
Movement/s: people, groups, or organisations working to address the same problem.

Example: Anti-racist movement, and within that the migrant rights movement.

Now that you understand the terms your strategy will be working within, ask yourself the following questions about your objectives:

- What do you need to achieve in order to solve your issue? Start with the end goal, articulating what you want to achieve.
- What steps do you need to take to get to that goal? Work back from the step needed just before it, then think about what you'd need to achieve for that to happen. These are your smaller objectives to reach your end goal (the Stepping Stones exercise might be helpful here)
- How will you know when you have achieved these objectives? Make them specific and measurable.





4. Carrying out a strategic analysis on your campaign

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Campaigning, Strategy

You have identified the issue you would like to campaign on and what you want to achieve. Having done that, it's time to carry out a SWOT analysis.

A SWOT analysis is a technique you can use to assess your campaign by looking at your:

Strengths

Weaknesses

Opportunities

Threats

Assessing your Strengths

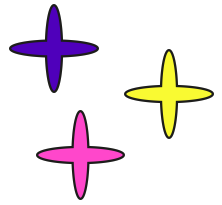
Strengths you can assess including: what experiences and skills do the people in your group bring to the campaign? If you are working in coalition with other groups, what skills and specialisms are those organisations bringing to your campaign? What powers do you already have? What knowledge? What have you already achieved that can now be built upon?

Assessing your Weaknesses

Just as important as understanding your strengths is understanding any weak points. Are there any weaknesses in your group culture? Do you need to resolve any conflicts? What don't you know and you need to find out? What's missing from your team? Or your strategy? Is your goal too big – or too narrow?

Assessing your Opportunities

Once you have analysed what is going on internally, you can then move on to explore the external context. To do this, reflect on the Opportunities available to you. Think through the social movements that are active on your issue. What opportunities do you have for collaboration, or opening up the political space, for finding others who agree with your message?



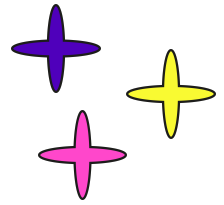
Assessing your Threats

Who are your opponents? What is the political climate towards your issue – is it hostile? Where are the tensions and conflicts?

To help you get started, you can draw the diagram below on a piece of paper or flip chart, (or in a google doc if meeting online) and answer the following questions:

1. What are the strengths and weaknesses of your group?
2. What opportunities and threats are there for your social change work?
3. What would it take to build on the strengths and opportunities you have as a group or coalition internally and externally?
4. How can you neutralise or mitigate the weaknesses and threats you have identified in this analysis?

Internal	
<u>Strengths</u> Build Enhance	<u>Weaknesses</u> Be aware of Resolve Reduce
External	
<u>Opportunities</u> Build on Expand	<u>Threats</u> Avoid Thwart



5. Spectrum of support

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Campaigning, Strategy

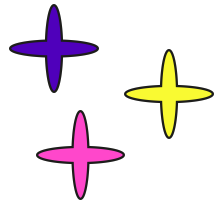
Creating a spectrum of support can help you work out who supports your cause so you can reach out to them and build a coalition determined to change your issue. Crucially, it can also help you understand who your opponents are. Understanding your support and threats can help you decide where to focus your campaigning efforts. You can start to win support from people who may previously have felt neutral – taking them from being a passive supporter into an active one.

Remember, it's unlikely you will turn staunch opponents of your cause into active supporters for change. So focus your efforts on those who are neutral or supportive already. The more you take passive supporters onto a journey into being active supporters, the more public support on your issue will shift with you. If it increases enough, your opponents will start to move towards support, too, without you spending your time and energy targeting them.

Organisers for the cause: the groups and organisations actively organising for your cause or issue. Example: existing climate change organisers include Fridays for Future/ School strikers, Friends of the Earth, or grassroots movements in the Global South. Ideally, organisers work to move others towards greater involvement in campaigning on your issue.

Active supporters: groups of people who are already active on the issue, but not directly organising / leading work.

Example: people who turn out on marches, write letters to local and national governments, and stand in solidarity through donating funds, raising awareness and taking action where they can. These active supporters have the potential to become organisers themselves. How might you invite an active supporter to take more of a leadership role?



These active supporters have the potential to become organisers themselves. How might you invite an active supporter to take more of a leadership role?

Passive supporters: groups of people who care about your issue but are not currently active.

Example: a person who is concerned about climate change and thinks something must be done, but isn't currently taking action themselves.

These passive supporters have the potential to become active. How might you invite a passive supporter to take some kind of action, however small?

Neutrals: people who do not think much about your issue or do not take a position on it.

How might you persuade these people to support your cause? Perhaps through raising awareness / showing how the issue is relevant to their lives?

Passive opponents: people who do not support your cause – they oppose your aim, but are not active in their opposition.

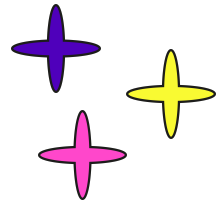
Example: people who think taking action on climate change would force them to change their lifestyle

Active opponents: people who take action against your cause.

Example: voters for a political party that would not take action on climate change or who would continue to support fossil fuels.

Organisers against the cause: groups and organisations that actively lead the opposition to your cause.

Example: organisers against taking action on the climate crisis include fossil fuel companies, workers employed in carbon-intensive industries, regional and local governments in areas relying on fossil fuel extraction.



6. Working out your theory of change

Reading time: 3.5 min

Tags: Making change, Strategy

A theory of change explains how we think change happens. It can show some of the assumptions we make about what creates social change. In this section, we will outline some of the main theories of change so you can use them to help shape your strategy.

Demand the change we want to see!

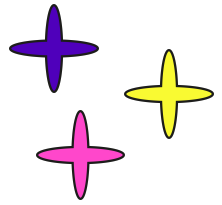
This theory of change understands power to be located in governments, in the hands of decision makers at the local, national and international level, and also in the hands of managers of large organisations – i.e. those who have ‘power over’ others.

To achieve your campaign aims within this theory of change, you need to demand those who hold power take action to make the change you want to see.

You can achieve this by directing your campaigning efforts towards power-holders, asking them to do what you think is right.

Tactics within this theory of change include:

- Voting
- Encouraging others to vote for specific politicians who support your aims
- Withholding resources through boycotts and disinvestment
- Lobbying
- Petitions
- Writing and presenting policy papers or statements
- Engaging with other forms of democratic participation such as initiating a referendum or citizens’ initiative



Build the power we need to create change

This theory of change understands power to be located in relationships between people like us. It means we can have 'power with' each other.

To make change within this understanding, you need to build connections within and across our communities, slowly building our own power to create the changes that we want to see.

This approach involves encouraging people to make decisions collectively about what they need, creating the organisations and groups that bring into being to make change. This could involve setting up a solidarity network of mutual aid and support, creating a community garden or building a new institution.

Change ourselves to change the world

This theory of change understands power to be located within ourselves – our own 'power within'. If we can transform ourselves, our consciousness, our attitudes and actions then wider change will naturally happen. This is especially true if enough people also commit to this inner change.

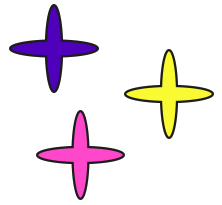
A good place to start is by addressing the prejudices we hold. Once you understand how your own actions, beliefs or biases can negatively impact others, you can start to transform your actions and bring the change you want to see into being.

Tactics include:

- Change your consumer habits to be more sustainable, e.g. giving up flying
- Become more aware of how you interact with others so you don't replicate racism and sexism

Questions for reflection:

- Which of these theories of change appeal to you the most?
- Can you see how elements of all three of them are relevant to your issue?



7. Strategy stepping stones

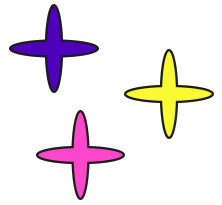
Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Campaigning, Strategy

There are many ways to build a strategy for a campaign. One good method you can use is called “stepping stones”. Unsurprisingly, the stepping stones strategy involves you taking steps towards change.

1. Start by thinking about your goal – what you want to achieve or change. Get to know your issue really well by researching who else is working on it, who is engaged with it, and what other initiatives are happening around you.
2. Now, starting at your goal, work backwards. What needs to happen before you reach the goal? What are the last steps you need to take to achieve it? You can use the tactics in Chapter Four to try and work out the most effective tools to use to achieve your goal.
3. Now ask yourself, what needs to happen just before that? And keep going back until you reach your starting point.

You can use this method to plot your direction from where you are to where you want to be. Then, as you go on your journey, you can use it to check you are on the right track. Stepping stones are a great way to work out what you think needs to happen and in roughly what order. The steps also allow you to reflect on whether the path you are following is moving you towards your goal. If you are heading off course, you can use your stepping stones technique to assess what you might need to change to help you get there.



If this doesn't feel quite real, here's a good example – a campaign to ask the government to include food waste in their recycling.

The steps you might take from this starting point to get to your goal could include:

- Identifying your target – who can change what you want to be changed. For example, is it a national politician or a local government department?
- Lobbying the elected representative / committee which makes the decision
- Raising public awareness about the issue through media campaigns and sharing reliable information on your cause.
- Organising a campaign to demonstrate the level of local support for your issue to your target, like a petition or a letter writing drive
- Organising a protest

Those are your steps. But are they in the right order?

What step would you take first? Why would you choose that order? What happens if you try one tactic before another – and what happens if you change that order?

Try it out and see if the outcomes happen as you expect. If yes – great! Carry on. If not, go back to your stepping stones and re-plot the order.

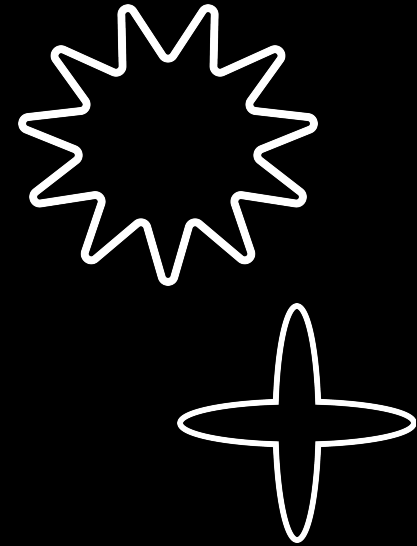
Once you begin taking action, you will quickly start to notice what is working and what isn't, and adapt your campaign plan as you go.

It is likely there will be more than one route to your goal, so use this tool as a living document that you can have to help you reflect on what steps are working, what might need to change and what other routes you can take to change the world.

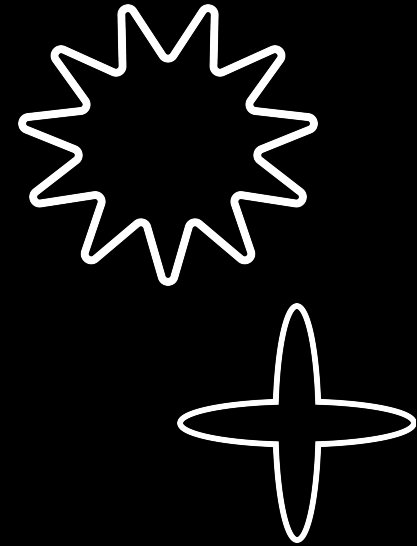
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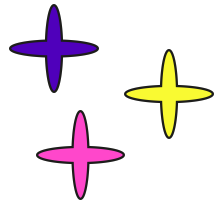
This Chapter will provide you with practical tips on how to attract attention for your campaign actions, including how to engage with the media. Whatever tactics you choose, your campaign to change the world will always be grounded in your own vision for a better future. Your tactics will need to communicate that vision through storytelling and inspiring others.

1. Introduction: Campaign tactics
2. Media Engagement
3. Disinvestment
4. Human Banner
5. Leafleting
6. Postering
7. Storytelling
8. Online Petition
9. Twitter Action
10. Email your elected representatives
11. Lobby Meeting
12. Media Stunt
13. Banner Drop
14. Press Release
15. Flashmob



16. Community Meeting
17. Protest
18. Artivism
19. Noisy Protest
20. Vigils
21. Blockades
22. Electoral Campaigning
23. Political Campaigning
24. Strikes
25. Decentralised Mass Action

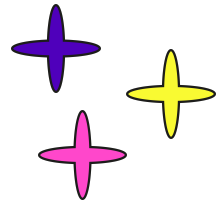




1. Introduction: Campaign tactics

Campaign tactics are the many, many activities you can design and take part as part of your strategy to make change. They range from signing or creating an online petition, to having meetings with decision-makers, to organising a grassroots protest. The tactic(s) you choose to use will depend on the kind of change you want to make and where you are in your campaign strategy.

Remember, your campaign tactics are your way of building and demonstrating your power to change the world.



2. Media Engagement

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action

What is it?

Media engagement involves working with the local, regional or national press to get coverage of your issue. Remember, the bigger the media audience, the harder it will be to get your action covered – so you might want to start local and then build up your engagement and coverage. Your basic objective is to get your action mentioned by journalists in order to create more buzz around your issue, make your campaign more visible and reach other people who may be willing to engage with your cause.

Media engagement can also help you get the attention of policy makers.

How do you do it?

There are three keywords you need to know when engaging with the media.

- “Salience”:

Today’s news is tomorrow’s rubbish – it’s out of date the day after it’s published. To make sure your campaign receives coverage, it needs to be “salient” – so important, timely, or relevant to a bigger context. Don’t think this involves being passive and waiting for your timely moment. You can make an issue salient, by creating the “news” through another campaign action such as a flashmob or poster campaign. Make your issue salient by attracting journalists’ attention!

- “Dialogue”:

If your campaign is not a salient issue, can you get media engagement by being seen as a campaign with something to say about an ongoing debate or discussion? To make sure you are part of the dialogue, keep an eye on the general political context, identify windows of opportunity to be heard, and target the media by presenting yourself as an informed voice on your issue.

- “Channels”:

If you are a respected voice on an issue (because you have expertise) journalists may come to you for a comment. If you are not there yet, consider building your reputation and/or your network. Organise an event and invite some journalists, send them press releases, and send them emails commenting on their articles offering new points of view.

Why and when should you use it?

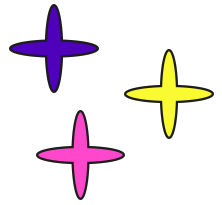
You should use media engagement as a tactic to get visibility for your issue, and potentially to attract the attention of policy makers and the general public.

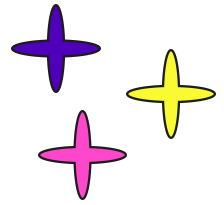
To get visibility, you should wait until your issue has become very salient and your position has a lot of support.

And to get there, it is never too early to start media engagement! Just make sure your message on the issue you are campaigning on, and the change you want to see, are clear and well-articulated so people can learn about you and get involved.

Works best in combination with:

Any well executed communication strategy, along with any technique that can attract attention and curiosity.





3. Disinvestment

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action, Collective Action

What is it?

Disinvestment is the decision to stop investing in a certain business or company – i.e. encouraging investors to to sell their stakes in a company.

Disinvestment is used to pressure a certain sector (e.g. energy producers), a specific company such as Coca-Cola or Lloyds Bank, or a specific country, to change their policies and practices in the direction of your campaign.

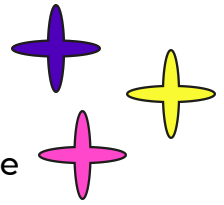
The investment decisions of the government and big institutions such as universities can make a considerable difference for a business. If a government threatens to disinvest in a big company, for example, it can force a company to change its policies or risk losing huge amounts of money and power.

But disinvestment can work on an individual level too. If you don't like the way a company is behaving, you can disinvest by removing your custom. Once you turn your back on a company, you may encourage others to do the same until there's a ripple effect that forces the company to change direction.

How do you do it?

As an individual citizen, you can:

- Inform yourself on how your bank is investing your money. If you don't like what they are doing with your money, switch to an ethical bank.
- Inform yourself on how your pension fund is investing your money and choose one in line with your values.
- Convince family and friends to do the same.



This is a form of individual action that any citizen can take.

A collective of citizens can pressure important institutions to disinvest strategically to trigger change. For example, in the early 1980s, students on college campuses across the U.S. demanded their universities stop investing in companies that conducted business in South Africa, in protest of the apartheid system. Their campaign was hugely successful.

Why and when should you use it?

Disinvestment can target:

- A whole sector:

Example: do not invest in fossil fuel producers so as to push for the adoption of renewable energy.

- A company:

Example: do not invest in a specific clothing brand which does not respect workers' rights.

- A country:

Example: do not invest in businesses of a specific country or trading with a specific country which does not protect human rights.

Disinvestment uses the power of the personal and public purse to force a sector/company/country to change policies.

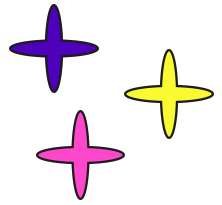
It makes sense to use disinvestment as a tactic when:

- You want to protest against the practices of an economic actor.
- You have a clear demand for change.

Works best in combination with:

Even though being mindful of your own choices when it comes to ethical investment choices are important, businesses will only feel the difference only if a huge amount of investors and/or big investor sell their stakes.

Therefore, disinvestment works in combination with other campaigning, including convincing other citizens to disinvest, and/or pressuring institutions and governments to do so.



4. Human Banner

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action, Collective Action

What is it?

It's you! Taking your message to the streets by tying two billboards to your shoulders so as to have one on your front and one on your back and spreading your message.

How do you do it?

In order to create a human banner, you need:

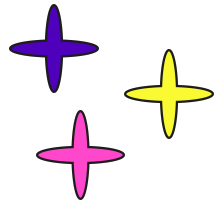
- A campaign name, logo and tagline: condense your issue and the change you want to see in a few visual elements and words.
- Basic design skills to create a visually appealing billboard: always include a website/QR code/social media channels where people can find more information and get in touch with you.
- Money for printing: try and find a local and ethical service, or go online.
- Volunteers: the more human banners there are, the bigger your impact.

Why and when should you use it?

Becoming your own human banner is a great way to give visibility to your campaign and cause. Unlike leafleting and postering, there are no legal problems.

Nonetheless, keep in mind that in certain spaces political symbols and advertisement may be not allowed.

Your human banner should be used to raise public awareness around the issue you want to change.

**Works best in combination with:**

A more extensive information campaign on social media and/or traditional media.

Who sees your banner should be able to find more information on:

- What problem you want to solve
- What are your demands and recommendations
- What they can do to get involved with your campaign

Chapter 4: Tactics

5. Leafleting

Reading time: 2.5 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action, Collective Action

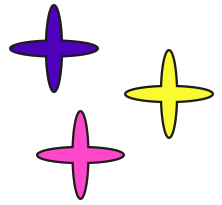
What is it?

Leafleting means distributing information leaflets in a public space. You might do a leafleting action in the streets, in a park, in a shopping mall. You can also post leaflets through people's letterboxes.

How do you do it?

You will need:

- A short but concise text explaining the main issue you are campaigning on. Your should include:
 - A short description of the problem you face
 - A short description of your demands
 - The name of your collective and of your campaign
 - A hashtag, slogan or tagline
 - Your social media contacts or a QR code leading to your social media or website.
- Decent design skills to create a visually appealing and easily readable leaflet
- A print budget
- Volunteers to help distribute the flyers.



Before you start leafleting your city or town at random, ask yourself some planning questions:

- Where do you want to distribute your leaflets?
- Is there an event linked to your issue that you can capitalise on?
- What audience are you targeting?
- Where are they?

Why and when should you use it?

Leafleting can be useful to raise awareness about your issue and spread information about your campaign.

It is especially useful for issues that do not receive much media attention and that are not well known by the public. It is also a quick and easy way to make your collective or campaign more visible.

However, leafleting is not very sustainable and can also result in a lot of littering. Consider these factors when deciding to go for this technique.

Chapter 4: Tactics

6. Postering

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action, Collective Action

What is it?

Postering means simply putting posters up in public spaces. They can convey a message, be provocative and question-setting, or advertise an upcoming campaign event.

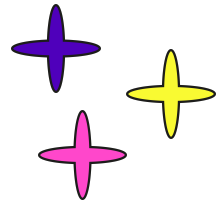
Sometimes campaigners display a suite of images to tell a story.

Have a look at the posters of the artist Guerrilla Spam:

<https://www.guerrillaspam.it/35venezialand.html>

<https://www.guerrillaspam.it/listposter.html>

A good poster campaign should create intrigue and trigger people's curiosity to find out more. So make sure you add a # or a QR code to your poster.



How do you do it?

You need three things to create a great poster campaign:

- An artist who will design something exciting and eye-catching
- Money for printing
- Volunteers who will put the posters up

Then you will need to make sure you aren't inadvertently breaking the law:

- Respect public and private property – make sure you use glue which is easy to remove and that does not spoil the wall. Do not use paint, especially if you are posterizing over an historical or public building.
- Check the local regulations to make sure you are not infringing any law or that you can be sued or called by the police.
- Consider asking permission to the owners of the walls where you would like to put your posters.

Why and when should you use it?

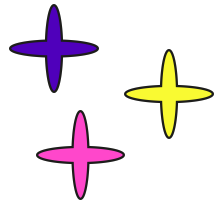
Posterizing is a great tactic when you want to draw people's attention to an issue that perhaps they see or walk past every day, but don't recognise as it's so familiar and normalised.

For example: if next to a garbage bin or a polluted area, you put a drawing of trash with the word "Education" or a drawing of a three eyed fish next to the polluted area, you will provoke a mild-shock, and people may suddenly recognise that that it is not okay to have this horrible pollution next to their homes. You can then capitalise on that shock and awareness to plan your next move in terms of visibility.

Works best in combination with:

If your poster campaign has managed to attract the attention of the press or of people on social media, you will have a multiplier effect.

It could be a good chance to ask a local journalist to cover the story as it is salient and creates dialogue. Media engagement will then reach an even bigger audience and give you a platform from where you can speak at length about your issue.



7. Storytelling

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action

What is it?

Storytelling is the most ancient form of communication humans have engaged with. Well before Instagram stories, people used to come together to tell and hear stories: around the table, around the fire, in a theatre, in a cinema, over the phone.

Through the stories of the other people, we can hear something that speaks about us and the world around us. It is a way of making sense of what is happening on a micro and macro level. When you speak to someone about your day, or tell someone about an experience you had, you are telling that story. You are putting that experience into a framework that helps your listener understand, empathise and interpret.

At the end of the day, we are the stories we tell.

Storytelling appeals to the core of who we are. Therefore, it's a tactic that can really motivate people to take action. A story can be used to set an example, or to allow other people to follow you on the journey you went on to realise there are issues you care about and want to change.

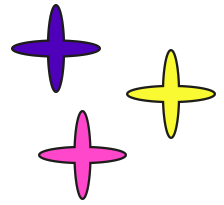
How do you do it?

There are infinite ways to tell a story.

You can tell stories via a video, a post, an exhibition, a performance, a conversation, or a meme.

There are two things to consider when telling a story:

1. What is your story about? Think about who your protagonist is, what sequence of events they followed, how they overcame obstacles, and how their story resolved in a new situation – good or bad
2. Who are you telling your story to? Make sure your audience relate to what you are saying – they need to identify with your character and respond emotionally to the story you have to tell.



Why and when should you use it?

Always!

Telling a story is the most effective way to convey your campaign message.

Storytelling is the quickest and best way to make people understand what you are telling them and why your campaign is important.

Stories cannot work on their own, however. Once you have engaged people emotionally with your story, make sure you have stats and data to persuade people why your solution to your issue works. You can also show examples of how other campaigns have taken similar actions with good results.

Combine data with stories and you have a powerful campaign case.

Works best in combination with:

Everything. It is the basis of engagement with people, so, get your story right!

Chapter 4: Tactics

8. Online Petition

Reading time: 3 min

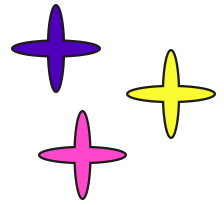
Tags: Tactics, Individual Action

What is it?

An online petition is a tool to help you collect the named support of lots of people for your campaign. It's a great way to demonstrate the strength of support for your issue.

Social movements that have used petitions really effectively include the campaign to abolish the slave trade. The abolition movement demonstrated widespread public support for ending slavery, helping politicians see they could change the law.

Petitions also give you an email list of supporters to keep updated and ask to take further action – so long as you have their consent.



How do you do it?

1. *Decide who you want to target and what you want to ask:* your petition should be aimed at a decision maker/s with a short, clear request for them to make a specific change.
2. *Create your petition:* write a short explanation of your campaign to go with the petition text, including links to relevant news articles or places they can find more information. You can create a free online petition on <https://www.wemove.eu/your-campaign-starts-here> or www.change.org.
3. *Share your petition:* once you have created the petition, you need to publicise it to get as many signatures as possible. You can use social media and ask supportive individuals and organisations to share it.
4. *Follow up with your supporters:* use the emails you gather to ask people to share the petition with their networks, keep them updated with your campaign and take further action.
5. *Deliver your petition:* if you have a huge number of signatures you may want to deliver them in person to the decision-maker(s) you are targeting, so as to make a stronger point in support of your cause. This can encourage media engagement.

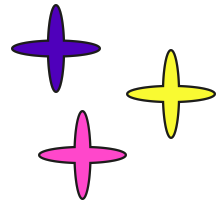
Why and when should you use it?

Petitions are a great tool to use at the start of your campaign to build a supporter base. They can be used strategically with decision-makers in lobby meetings and press releases to demonstrate support for your issue. Petitions help you to show the power you have built for your cause.

This is especially important when lobbying politicians. They will want to know there is popular support for an issue before taking action on it. If you have a million signatures on your petition, then they can't ignore that this is something the wider public care about.

Works best in combination with:

A Twitter action to expand the reach of your petition, and in a lobby meeting, to communicate the strength of support for your issue.



9. Twitter Action

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action

What is it?

Twitter and other social media platforms can be used to share our campaign messages, actions and ideas in a way that helps to build a broader and more powerful base.

Twitter is most commonly used by campaigners but that doesn't mean you should neglect other social media platforms. Facebook, Instagram and Tiktok can also be used to attract attention and win new supporters.

A Twitter action aims to engage as many people as possible, get them to share and interact with your messages – as well as encourage them to act by signing petitions, going to protests, voting differently etc.

How do you do it?

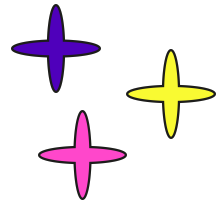
Like any other action, before you launch your Twitter action you want to decide your purpose.

- Do you want to publicise a protest or a stunt?
- Are you asking people to sign a petition?
- Are you using your action to tell a story?
- Are you using a current Twitter trend to draw attention to your campaign?

Once you have identified your purpose, consider the following:

- What are you inviting people to do? Is your call to action clear and directional? Do you have the right links in the message?
- Is your message short and relatable? People follow many accounts on social media so try to balance messages that people can relate to and encourage them to take action!
- Does it feel urgent / appealing to share your message? Think about the kinds of things you would share on social media.

- How will you tell your supporter base about it? Sending emails is an excellent way to drive sharing on Twitter.
- Think about people or organisations who can help to amplify your message. If possible, have a 1-1 with them before. This may be one of many actions you will take together.
- Find hashtags that people already know or create one that people are very likely to use. This will create more traction and get your message shared more widely.



There are many tools that have been designed to help campaigns reach out to more people on social media, like speechifai.

This platform enables you to upload template posts adapted to each social media platform. They can then be edited by supporters before sharing. You can use the platform across Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, Linked In and more.

Works best in combination with:

Whatever action you want to promote, from a petition to a protest.

Chapter 4: Tactics

10. Email your elected representatives

Reading time: 2.5 min

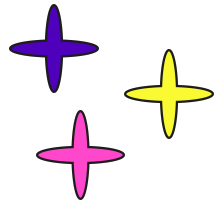
Tags: Tactics, Individual Action, Collective Action

What is it?

Writing an email to your elected representative at the local, national or European level can be a great way to alert them to your issue or campaign. You can use your email to ask them to vote a certain way or push a certain change through.

You can make it easier for people to get involved in a mass-email campaign by creating a template people can copy and paste and send to their MP.

The more emails sent, the more the elected representatives know both about the issue and the number of people it matters to. The more people it matters to, the more likely a politician will be to take action.



How do you do it?

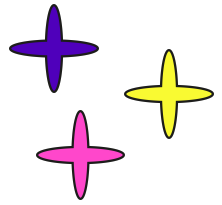
- Find out who your elected representative is and their email address. This will be listed on your local, national or European parliament website.
- Write a short and clear email, explaining who you are, the campaign / issue you care about, why it is important to you, and what you want the elected representative to do about it. Include your full name and postal address so they can see you are a constituent.
- Encourage all the supporters of your campaign to write to their own representatives. If you have the budget, you can make a template email action with a tool like nationbuilder or More Onion's Campaignion to share it with your email list.

Why and when should you use it?

If you are wanting to make a change in policy / law, alerting the lawmakers to your issue is a really important step. It can help identify which elected representatives are supportive to your issue, as well as those who are against you. You can then use this information strategically to map your power and community.

Works best in combination with:

A petition to show depth and breadth of support for your cause. Following up a letter with a lobby meeting can also usefully escalate your campaign.



11. Lobby Meeting

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action

What is it?

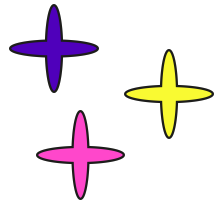
A meeting with a political (or corporate) representative that has the power to make a change you seek.

How do you do it?

Identify the person you want to lobby – e.g. a local MP, a Minister, or a Chief Financial Officer. Once you know who you want to lobby, get hold of their contact details by looking online and call their staff team or send an email.

Political representatives are normally happy to meet constituents, and often have times specifically allotted for this.

- *Have a relevant ask for them:* Can they vote on relevant legislation, lobby the Minister responsible, or commit a budget to your cause? Perhaps they could use their profile to get media coverage?
- *Persuade them:* Use your storytelling tactic, show them the data and demonstrate how many of their constituents or customers care about your issue. Maybe they have some personal connection to your cause? Ask them!
Remember – they're not an expert on your issue but you are! Practice what you want to say with a friend, and go in a group of two or three to support each other.
- *Don't just let them talk – get a commitment:* If you let them, they will talk supportively without making any commitments. Politely interrupt and push them to say what they will actually do.



- *Get a picture:* Take a sign for your campaign and ask them to pose with you to show their support. Ask for permission to use this picture and tag them on social media to make their support for your cause public.
- *Follow up to hold them accountable:* Contact their office after the meeting to confirm the action promised. If they don't act within a month or so, follow this up on social media or in the local press.

When to use it?

This is a good tactic to employ as a first step, to show you are willing to speak with a decision-maker your campaign is targeting.

It can also be useful later on to show the weight of support you have built behind your campaign if they are unwilling to act at first.

Works best with:

A press release to advertise the meeting and their commitment, or Twitter action to hold them to account if they don't follow through on their commitments.

Chapter 4: Tactics

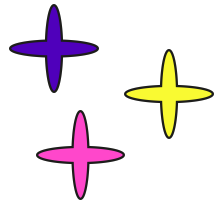
12. Media Stunt

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action

What is it?

A media stunt is an activity designed to attract publicity and attention to your cause by doing something novel and newsworthy. The best media stunts lend themselves to being captured in a memorable photo. A banner drop is a simple example of a media stunt.



How do you do it?

- Get creative

In order to 'sell your story in' to a media organisation and get them to cover it, you need to make your stunt novel, attention grabbing, shocking or fun. It can't be something that's been done 100 times before. For example, campaigners calling for action to regulate tax havens have transformed public spaces into desert islands full of bankers drinking champagne.

- Make sure the picture tells the story

A media stunt should have a photographic moment that creates a memorable image which can be used to illustrate news pieces on future coverage of your issue. For example, imagine if your media stunt was used to illustrate a future news story about a government vote on your issue. Include branding or hashtags in a colourful way to make sure they're not cut.

- Engage as many people as possible

Get people who support your campaign involved and spread the word to people passing through your leafleting tactic.

- Send your press release the night before

Papers and media outlets will want to take their own pictures or video if your stunt is appealing enough. Send a press release the day before and contact any journalists you're friendly with even further ahead.

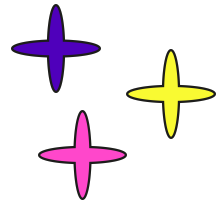
Why and when should you use it?

Media stunts work best at a key strategic moment for your campaign when you want to build public support and pressure decision-makers.

It could be just before decision-makers vote on relevant legislation or discuss your cause in a conference. You could time it to coincide with a company's annual general meeting where you hope to influence shareholders. Alternatively you might want to connect it to another big news story to leverage attention for your cause in relation to it.

Works best in combination with:

A press release to draw the attention of the journalists on the story.



13. Banner Drop

Reading time: 3.5 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action

What is it?

A simple media stunt to get attention for your cause by hanging a large banner somewhere prominent, or taking it on a protest.

How do you do it?

- Work out your message

Your banner should communicate your campaign message in a short and succinct way. It needs to be instantly understood. Humour and satire is always helpful.

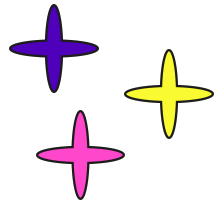
- Pick your location

Decide where your banner will have the greatest impact, while considering the security and safety of the operation.

If you're targeting a business or government, you might want to drop your banner in front of, or on, one of their buildings. Make sure that everything is secure and you do not endanger anyone by your action. For example, a piece of cloth can be removed by the wind and end up on cars or in the street; a wooden sign can drop and hurt people; you could be injured while placing your banner. Be extra careful!

- Research the legality

In most cases, carrying or dropping banners is not against the law. But it's best to check. If your banner harms someone, you will be legally responsible. You might want to get your action approved and potentially buy insurance. You could also consider making your banner with paper and gluing it to the wall you have selected. This is environmentally friendlier and some cities have designated spaces for banners and posters.



- Make your banner

Choose your materials – do you want to use scaffolding mesh and strong spray adhesive to stick on letters, or just paint on cotton cloth?

Make a sketch first with pencil, before you go in with paint or glue.

When making banners to take on a protest, keep it light, attach poles, and cut in small holes so the wind can blow through it, making you more stable.

- Drop your banner

Take plenty of rope and cable ties to attach it, and attach weights to the bottom. These can simply be bottles of water. Weights make sure your banner hangs straight down.

Stay safe – make sure none is walking or is going to walk, drive, bike, stroll etc under the banner itself. If you are not sure about the safety of the operation, consider gluing a paper banner rather than dropping it.

- Take your own pictures

Share them on social media and in your press release.

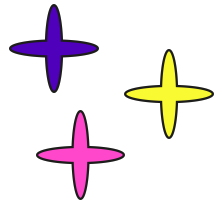
Why and when should you use it?

Banner drops attract attention to your cause at a strategic moment when you want to build public support and pressure decision makers. They can accompany a protest, a vote or act as a visible response to a big news event.

Works best in combination with:

A protest, to get a good clear image of your message, and with a press release to share the picture and your story widely.

14. Press Release



Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Individual Action

What is it?

A press release is a short email you send out to journalists to alert them to:

- An action you are taking
- A campaign win
- A piece of breaking news that relates to your campaign

How do you do it?

Research publications / media organisations and journalists

You'll need to know who you're sending the press release to. This is known as 'selling it in'.

Research the kinds of newspapers, websites, TV or radio stations you think will be interested in your story. Find specific departments and named journalists if you can.

It's best to get friendly journalists on-side first. If you are campaigning on the climate crisis, research who is writing interesting and informed articles on this subject. If you are campaigning locally on a local issue, who is the editor of your local paper? Are there local independent websites you can target?

Make sure your story is newsworthy

Your story needs at least one of the following:

- Real consequences for the lives of the readers/listeners/viewers – nationally or locally depending on the level of media you're looking to attract
- Dramatic conflict, like the plot of a soap opera
- It has just happened, or is just about to happen
- Famous or prominent people

- Novelty – “When a dog bites a man, no one cares. When the man bites back – now that’s a news story.”
- New evidence or research

Writing your release

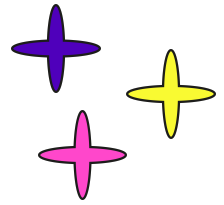
- Headlines should be as short and interesting as possible – put it as the title of your email.
- Write all the information into the body of your email – attachments get ignored
- Summarise your story early on in the release, preferably 25 words by answering ‘who, what, where, when, and why’.
- Use a quote to help tell the story but only from someone available for interview
- Write 250 words maximum
- Add a good picture or two captioned with the photographers name and an explanation of the image
- Say the release is ‘embargoed until x date’ if you don’t want coverage ahead of a certain time
- Include your name and phone number

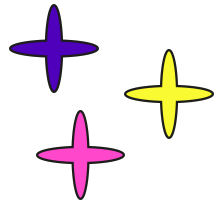
Why and when should you use it?

When you want to get attention for your campaign, ideally to put pressure on a decision-maker, build public support for your cause or both.

Works best in combination with:

Media stunts, banner drops, or lobby meetings that are media worthy.





15. Flashmob

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

During a flashmob, a group of people assemble seemingly spontaneously in a public space such as a square, a shopping mall, or a park.

They then perform an action and just as quickly disperse.

A successful flashmob involves a large number of people and has a strong visual impact. The action itself can be a simple dance routine, people singing a song, or really any out-of-place action. They are disruptive and memorable, while being cheeky, fun and playful – not aggressive.

In recent years flash mobs have often gone viral through social media and have been replicated in other countries and contexts.

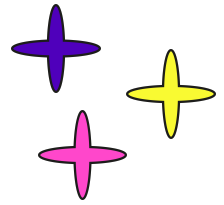
One example is the flash mob organised by Colectivo Las Tesis for the day on the elimination of violence against women in Santiago del Chile (un violador en tu camino). This action was then replicated in many cities in Europe.

How do you do it?

Organising a flash mob requires quite a lot of preparations and planning. You need to:

- Devise your concept/idea.
- Script a simple action that can be performed by anyone.
- Check where to perform it and whether it is legal to do so – this may involve obtaining necessary authorisations.
- Make sure you have a volunteer ready to film your action and put it on social media!

When planning your flashmob, make sure you choose a time and place where lots of people will see you, while being mindful that the location is safe for your participants.



Once you know how and where, it's time to think about who. Assembling your team is probably the most difficult part of doing a flashmob. You will need performers who can all take part in the action – while keeping it a surprise from the public.

You can use internal digital networks to recruit volunteers and plan:

- A mailing list with a restricted number of recipients
- WhatsApp or Telegram groups

Organising a flashmob takes time and requires that you have a network of contacts already. But it has the advantage of making an impact at relatively low-cost.

Why and When should you use it?

Flashmobs do not necessarily need to carry a political or civic message. Lots of the time they're simply a fun performance. But they can be a very effective tool to raise awareness of your specific issue.

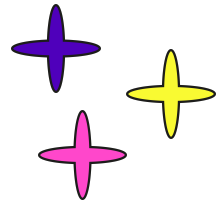
If you manage to catch the attention of the public through your flashmob, make sure that people know who is behind it and what you stand for.

To do this, you'll want your campaign name or #hashtag to be visible during your stunt. You can put them on badges or write them on your clothes.

You'll also want people to be able to get in touch with you after the event so they can get involved in your campaign. You can do this by making sure your social media account is visible and, later on, by sharing your stunt on your social media channels.

Works best in combination with:

Flashmobs are a good strategy to capitalise on the media attention around your action and a plan for possible follow-up actions (e.g. once you have raised public attention you could try to get an interview or write an article on the issue you are campaigning about).



16. Community Meeting

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

A community meeting is a place where you can bring people together, meet, plan and act. There are many different types of communities. One can be geographical – so it is organised based on your location. This might be a local community group engaged on a local project. Another type of community can be based on identity – for example the LGBTIQ community. A further type is one based on interests.

Whatever type you are working with, all communities are a group of people that care about each other and feel they belong together, and/or share a goal.

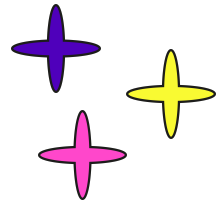
How do you do it?

Before you start, ask yourself why people might want to come to your community meeting. Is it to meet like-minded people? To network? Or to plan a specific action? Make sure you are clear what the meeting is about – you don't want people to arrive to what they think is a networking event when you are instead planning a campaign stunt.

Once you are clear what your meeting is about, consider the following:

- Who is coming to the meeting? Is the group representative of the community you are trying to engage in? If not, consider slowing down this process and having more 1-1s before organising your community meeting. Having a representative group is important to have from the start.
- What are their access needs? Ensure you ask people if they have any access needs such as disability or cultural sensitivities, so you can properly plan for this, in a physical meeting or online.

- How would you like people to feel in the meeting? And what would you like them to get out of it? Think about an agenda, ask people who are coming for their opinions, be flexible and ready to change.



Why and when should you use it?

A community meeting would usually take place after you have had initial one-to-ones with people you want to work with. It is a great tool for people to feel the power of being part of a collective, make decisions together and plan action.

Works best in combination with:

This works best after listening campaigns and one-to-ones, and as a tool to decide what other actions the group may want to take on together.

Chapter 4: Tactics

17. Protest

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

Protests are public gatherings that show power and collective outrage.

People organise protests when they are frustrated with decisions that have been made for them, usually without them.

They can be incredibly inspiring as you feel part of a much bigger collective who are all acting together to make a noise about an issue and demand change.

There are many different types of protest including:

- Noisy protests
- Vigils
- Blockades

How do you do it?

A protest is called when there is a specific target, institution or person you would like to demand something from.

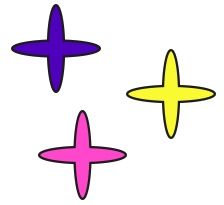
You might have a protest to demand a change of legislation or to call for the resignation of someone who has caused harm. There may have been something in the news about your issue that has caused anger and upset – a protest can be called to raise awareness of the issue and show the world that people care.

For example, in 2017 women were angry that, despite a history of alleged sexual violence, Trump was elected as the US President. They organised global protests to show the world that sexual violence is wrong. In 2015, people angry with the ineffectual response by European governments to the refugee crisis led to mass marches in cities across the region.

There are some things to consider before calling a protest:

- What is your demand and who are you asking?
- Why are you specifically calling this protest, and how do you connect to the groups that are directly affected?
- Is a protest legal in your country / city / town? Sometimes you may need to inform authorities or police to avoid risking arrest for organising it.
- How do you plan to protect people who may be disproportionately targeted by the police? Think about calling legal observers, like the Black & Green Cross in the UK.
- Who else is working on this issue? Have you considered reaching out to them to organise this protest together?
- Where do you want to hold the protest? If the land is privately owned its owners may be able to have protestors removed by police or security.
- Is the location, date and time of the protest accessible? Think about people living with disabilities, working people, single parents.

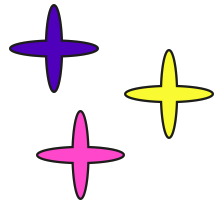
It is important to note that not everyone is treated the same way at protests due to their privilege or lack of it. Black people, people of colour, migrant people are more likely to be targeted by the police during protests. This can lead to distressing and life-changing consequences if they are arrested. So make sure you consider everyone's safety when organising your protest.



Why and when should you use it?

Protest is a great tool to show our collective strength. You should use it once you have a clear demand for a specific target, and you are confident you can attract enough support for your issue.

Protests can also take place as a fast reaction to an event or a political decision that has provoked particular outrage. In this case, the preparation time is usually very short and organisers need to be well-connected and reactive.

**Works best in combination with:**

Lobby meetings which can be used to show you have tried different tactics to affect change, also press releases and community meetings can help you reach out to more people and plan your protest well.

Chapter 4: Tactics

18. Artivism

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

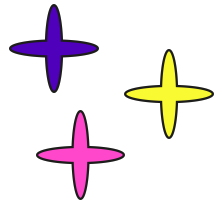
Artivism is a tool that brings together artists and activists fighting against injustice and oppression. It is interested in attracting a broader range of people through actions that are crafted beautifully and carry a powerful message. Activities like graffiti, flashmobs, and street theatre are a few examples of common artivism. At its best, artivism can help educate the public around issues they are not familiar with.

How do you do it?

Key to artivism are artists! Invite artists you have worked with to help you plan an action. Your collaboration should inspire and educate your audience around the issue you are organising around.

Some questions below to consider:

- Who are your audiences? What would you like them to know about the work you are doing?
- Once you have an audience engaged with your activism, do you have other actions they can get involved with? Can you use this action to broaden your base?
- Who else is working on this issue? Have you considered reaching out to them to organise this protest together?
- Is the location, date and time of the activist activity accessible? Think about people with disabilities, working people, single parents, etc.
- How will you record your activism to share the art more widely with your supporters and the media?

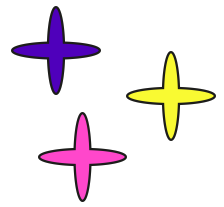


Why and When should you use it?

Activism is a great tool to engage people who are new to activism, to educate people and show them a reality that they may not have access to in their daily lives. Use it when you want to build your base.

Works best in combination with:

One-to-ones to have something to invite people to, community meetings to engage your base, press releases to attract media attention, and online petitions to share with your wider email list of supporters.



19. Noisy Protest

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

Noisy protests are a form of street protest where participants make a lot of noise, either with honks, musical instruments, home-made drums or other tools. In 2020, women's rights activists in Slovakia used wooden spoons and cooking utensils to make a lot of noise at their noisy protest.

How do you do it?

The organisation is similar to that of a protest. Just make sure that participants bring with them some instruments to make noise!

Why and when should you use it?

Noisy protests are very disruptive and get a lot of attention.

They work best in response or protest to very visible events, for example an international conference, a meeting of heads of state and government, a parade on a special occasion.

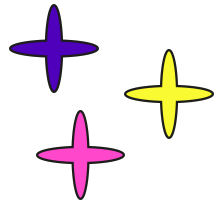
Noisy protests work to show you and your campaign disagree with the message or meaning of that event.

Even though noisy protests can be quite effective in raising awareness of your opposition to a certain issue, there are risks to relying too much on this strategy.

For example, while you may have been granted legal permission to have a protest, excessive noise can be classified as a breach of the public order. This can lead to legal consequences.

Works best in combination with:

Noise itself can be a message, but make sure that your main complaints and demands are articulated too. You can have a banner with your name and tagline, or distribute some leaflets to passers-by.



20. Vigils

Reading time: 3 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

Vigils are deeply connected with mourning. They usually take place to mourn victims or remember traumatic events. It is a form of peaceful protest where people show that they share the pain of those involved in a traumatic event or with victims.

How do you do it?

Respectfully.

There is nothing more insulting than offending the memory of someone who has died, perhaps in horrific or violent circumstances, by associating their names with further violence, bad taste or ridicule.

When you organise your vigil, invite people to gather quietly and peacefully in a public place. The setting may be symbolic or it may be political – for example opposite a parliament building. Often people like to light candles at vigils to show they are emotionally invested and supportive of the victims or in the remembrance of a traumatic experience.

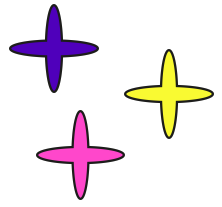
You can launch the idea on social media, or go door-to-door to invite your local community to join the vigil.

Make sure you are clear to attendees of the event's rules so that no one feels disrespected or distressed. It is also important to make sure you have permission to occupy a particular space. This is especially important to avoid a violent or aggressive dispersal.

Why and When should you use it?

They can be used to express solidarity with victims of police violence, terrorist attacks, or silent victims. These are the people who suffer and die everyday outside of the spotlight, such as migrants dying while crossing a sea, children dying of hunger, or people who have no access to clean water or medical facilities.

Animal rights activists have used vigils to educate the public about animal suffering. If you would like to encourage people to think about silent victims you should consider holding a vigil. No matter how many you are, the most important thing is to be there.

**Works best in combination with:**

Powerful messages denouncing the existence of exploitations or inequalities resulting in the death of the people affected by them.

Chapter 4: Tactics

21. Blockades

Reading time: 2.5 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

A blockade means preventing someone from accessing a specific place by creating a physical barrier.

The safest way of staging a blockade is a peaceful sit-in. This means sitting in front of a building, road or development in a way that forces people to walk through your group.

To keep confrontation at a minimum, make sure you leave enough space for the people to pass through, but that the messages you are showing are readable.

Even though this action is peaceful and does not aim at disrupting an essential service, it may be illegal in certain countries or in certain spaces. Do inform yourself carefully before organising a sit-in. Moreover, there have been instances where the police have intervened and arrested demonstrators even though the action was non-violent and not explicitly illegal. Therefore, be very careful at your context and attentively evaluate the risk you are facing, before taking action.

How do you do it?

First you need to identify the site you want to blockade and decide why you have chosen that site.

Once your target is identified, gather with a group of people and stay at the place as long as possible – or until your demands are met. Make sure you take placards and information leaflets so passers-by understand why you are there.

Why and when should you use it?

Blockades have been used several times, usually in relation to protests against infrastructure such as nuclear plants, pipelines, dams. They can also be used to protest about workers' rights.

You should use a blockade when you want to send a clear message.

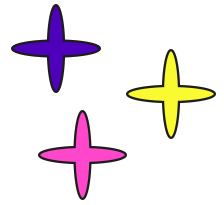
The important thing is not to block access to an area, but to make sure that whoever steps in is aware of the problems connected with that particular area.

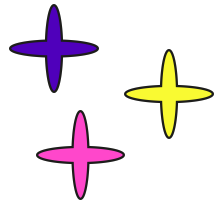
For example: you may be campaigning against the threatened destruction of a beloved forest. You can gather at the entrance to the forest while displaying posters that explain why you are there.

Blockades can bring to life the barriers other people experience in a creative way. For example, blocking certain spaces can help people understand the barriers disabled people face navigating public spaces.

Works best in combination with:

An awareness campaign related to a specific issue that involves a certain specific place.





22. Electoral Campaigning

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action, Individual Action

What is it?

In all countries in Europe, you will have elections. Campaigning in elections means working to elect a politician or party, standing as an electoral candidate in order to win political power, or even participating as a stunt to raise awareness of your issue.

YouTubers Max Fosh and Niko Omilana, did the latter during the London Mayor elections 2021. The stunt helped engage younger voters to register to take part in the elections, as well as tackled ageism by forcing the media to take young people seriously. For example, Niko finally obtained an interview with the BBC, that initially was ignoring him. Then he used it to prank them, but this is another story.

How do you do it?

If you want to support or campaign for a candidate or party, here are some tips...

- Talk to friends and family about why that individual deserves their vote
- Don't preach to the converted and don't put people off
- Get involved in more formal canvassing, such as door-knocking or leafleting
- When your preferred candidate is successful, make sure you keep applying pressure on them to deliver your campaign aims.

If you want to stand up as a candidate, you will generally need to be backed by a political party and selected as their candidate.

Some people like Max and Niko don't have a party behind them – they are independent. They attracted attention to their campaigns, by being fun, engaging, and sending out positive messages about voting and youth participation.

However, their primary profession is to be youtubers, so, they never had the real objective of being elected.

If you do not have the backing of a party, you should try to create an unusual story which is visible, eye-catching and also follows all the rules of campaigning. It will give you more visibility and attract the attention of the general public about the elections. You can use your electoral campaign to raise awareness of your cause, even if you don't win.

Why and when should you use it?

The space for young people in representative politics is very limited.

This is firstly because of ageism, where there is a prejudice that young people are too inexperienced to be elected as politicians. However, some very young people get elected to Parliament – Mhairi Black was only 21 when she was elected to Westminster, Nadia Whittome was 23.

Secondly, the voting age in most countries is 18 years old. This means that the number of voters aged 18-25 is much smaller than in other age brackets which can make it hard for you to cut through.

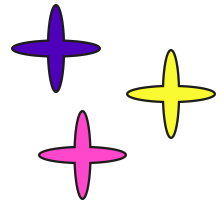
Thirdly, political parties have their own internal culture when it comes to candidates which can make it difficult to emerge as a young candidate.

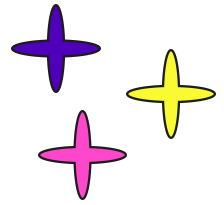
However, to participate in elections, even without the intention to be elected, can provide you a platform to disseminate your messages and inform people about your cause.

Make sure you plan to participate well in advance before the elections and get information at least a couple of years before the election kicks off on how to present your candidacy.

Works best in combination with:

Any PR or Communication Campaign, Hacktivism, Twitter Action, Media Engagement.





23. Political Campaigning

Reading time: 4 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

Political campaigning is when you take action to get politicians to act in a certain way, change laws or influence a vote taking place.

For example, throughout history people have taken political action to ensure the approval of antidiscrimination laws, the establishment of marriages for same sex couples, abortion rights, divorce right, voting rights for women.

People acting on all of these issues engaged in political campaigning in order to influence government and parliamentarians to vote to change laws.

If you are not the elected representative proposing the legislation, you can use your voice in the public space to support or oppose the issue. You have a role to play in taking out stories, data and arguments to win public support and influence politicians to vote for your cause (or against opposition to your cause).

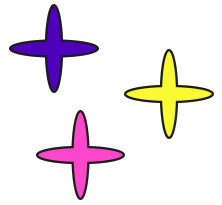
How do you do it?

Political campaigning requires you to use all the techniques at your disposal to get your message across.

That means using social media, door-to-door conversations, or organising an event.

When you engage with political campaigning, you need to be ready with:

- A clear understanding of your issue, including pros and cons arguments.
- Good counterarguments to the most common “cons”.
- Good pro-arguments adapted to the people you are speaking to.



When making your arguments, always consider who you are talking to. For example, if your campaign is about ageism in politics and reducing the voting age, somebody in your age range may be more receptive to a set of arguments. An older person or someone with different life experience could be more receptive to another type of argument.

Why and when should you use it?

You should use political campaigning tactics when there is an ongoing political debate around the issue you are campaigning for.

It is a way to gather more support for the issue and reconnect with the people who have paid attention to you in the past.

Political campaigning could also be the culmination of your work around your issue, if it was you who contributed to bring it to the core of the political debate, whether local, national or international.

Works best in combination with:

Any PR or Communication Campaign, Hacktivism, Twitter Action, Media Engagement.

Chapter 4: Tactics

24. Strikes

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

There are many types of strikes.

It can mean you refuse to work, to eat, to pay rent, to go to school.

Fundamentally, a strike is when you refuse to do something that may be required under normal conditions in order to protest against a decision, to reaffirm rights, or to subvert relations of power.

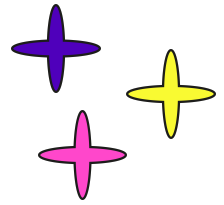
For example, landlords may refuse to do repairs or unreasonably increase the charges, causing a rent strike. Through the strike, tenants can show landlords that without them, there is no income coming from the rent and therefore no landlord.

At this point, landlords may be willing to discuss and settle the matter.

The same principle applies to workers and employers.

In the case of hunger strikes, this is a very extreme form of protest usually used by political prisoners.

A notable strike has been the school strike initiated by Greta Thunberg every Friday, where students refuse to go to school in protest at inaction on the climate crisis.



How do you do it?

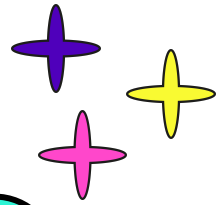
You simply refuse to do the things that you are normally expected to do. It does not matter if you are alone or in a large group. Your strike would educate the stakeholders about the issue you are protesting about.

Why and when should you use it?

Strike when you want to send a powerful message about a situation which is unsustainable anymore, or to draw the attention of people on your issue.

Works best in combination with:

Any PR or Communication Campaign, Hacktivism, Twitter Action, Media Engagement.



25. Decentralised Mass Action

Reading time: 2 min

Tags: Tactics, Collective Action

What is it?

Do you remember during the pandemic all the people singing or applauding the medical staff from their balconies?

They did not gather in the same place. But they all were doing the same thing in an act of solidarity. This is a decentralised mass action.

It's when people do a certain thing, at a certain time, for a certain reason, to send a powerful message. For example, people in Warsaw stop for one minute at 17.00 CET every August 1st to commemorate the beginning of the Warsaw Uprising.

How do you do it?

First of all, you need to understand for what reason you are organising and participating in a decentralised mass action. Then you need to find a way to explain the meaning of this action to people.

You should pick something that is fairly easy to do and does not require a huge investment in time or equipment.

Finally, the challenge is to get the word out. You can use social media, but also reach out to associations, local groups etc. If your protest is salient, use media engagement to encourage people to know what you are planning.

Why and When should you use it?

Decentralised mass action is a good solution if gatherings are forbidden, such as due to coronavirus restrictions, or if you have been denied permission to stage a protest in a public space.

Works best in combination with:

Any PR or Communication Campaign, Hacktivism, Twitter Action, Media Engagement.

The 25 Percent is a project of the European Youth Forum, co-funded by the European Union.

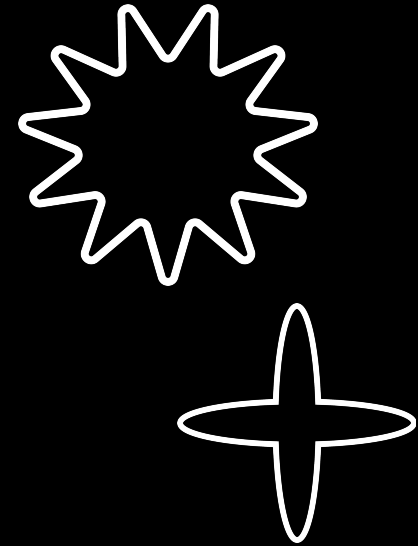
You can find the full handbook at:

<https://the25percent.eu/handbook-to-activism/>

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