



# Youth Activist's Toolkit

BY JULIA RETICKER-FLYNN

ADVOCATES FOR YOUTH 2013

Rights. Respect. Responsibility.

By Julia Reticker-Flynn  
© Advocates for Youth, 2013  
2000 M St NW, Suite 750  
Washington, DC 20036

[www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)  
[www.amplifyyourvoice.org](http://www.amplifyyourvoice.org)

Rights. Respect. Responsibility.

Advocates for Youth is dedicated to creating programs and advocating for policies that help young people make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual and reproductive health. Advocates provides information, training, and strategic assistance to youth-serving organizations, youth activists, policy makers, and the media in the United States and developing nations.

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Dear Activist -

***“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”***

***- Margaret Mead***

During my first year of college, I became involved in a campaign to advocate for living wages for workers on campus. I spent hours every week in meetings and retreats with a small group of students learning organizing tactics and discussing strategies that might move campus administrators to agree to pay campus workers living wages. In the spring of 2005, after years of meeting with campus administration and getting nowhere, we organized a hunger strike. Over 20 students refused to eat until the campus administration agreed to pay living wages to campus workers. Over the next week, we called on everyone we knew: students, workers, labor leaders, professors, our congresswoman, religious leaders, alumni, press, and we turned people out. What started as 10 students in a small classroom transformed into a rally of over 300 people marching to the University President’s office demanding a living wage for campus workers. And we won! The University

President agreed to a just employment policy that increased workers’ wages from \$6.50 to over \$13.00/hour with benefits.

The experience of winning this campaign was transformative. For the first time, I saw how my actions and the actions of my peers could influence and shape the decisions of those in power. I saw how we built community, how we transformed a room of ten into 300, and how we ultimately put enough pressure on campus administrators to win a living wage. Through this experience, I realized that creating change requires more than informing and educating those in power. It also takes a strategy to build power within one’s own community. In other words, I learned what it means to be a community organizer and activist.

This toolkit aims to equip you with the tools and strategies to be a community organizer and to win real change in the lives of your community members, your state, and even your country. As a dedicated young person, you can change the world and this guide will provide you with some of the skills to do it.

Julia Reticker-Flynn  
Associate Director,  
Youth Organizing & Mobilization

# What is Organizing?

**Organizing is the process of building power as a group and using this power to create positive change in our lives.** Throughout history, organizers have played a key role in addressing injustice in our country. From the Civil Rights movement, to the feminist, LGBT and immigrant rights movements, organizers have come together, created strategies and built collective power to win lasting change.

Organizing has everything to do with power and shifting relationships of power. **Power is the ability to control our circumstances and make things happen outside of ourselves.** Everyone has power inside themselves—power to make decisions, to act, to think, to create. However, not everyone has equal power to make things happen outside of our own lives due to inequality of resources and authority. Nevertheless, we can build our own power and the power of our community through organizing. **Collective power is the power that a group has by working together with a shared interest in achieving a goal.**

Sometimes we think that if our cause is right, we will be able to win easily without building power. We might think that if decision makers just understood the problem

then they would act. Unfortunately, in most cases, even if we are right, and those in power know about the issue, they still don't act. This is because they are being pressured by others not to act, such as donors who want school funds to be allocated to sports programs instead of a student health center. Most campaigns will require you to be more than right. You will find that you must build power in order to put pressure on those who can make decisions. Organizing is about figuring out what resources you really need in order to win change. This could mean you need the votes of members of your student council; chatter on social media; the allegiance of a person with power; or it could mean building crowd support to disrupt business as usual with direct action (such as a protest). You must identify what you need and then figure out how you can make it happen.

This guide will serve as a tool you can use to think through how to make change in your community. It will walk you through the steps of developing a campaign strategy that includes setting goals and establishing demands, analyzing key players, building power, and using power to achieve your goals.

## II. Identifying the Change You Want

One of the first steps of identifying the change you want is to develop a shared vision. **A vision is a clear idea of the world you want to create.** It is based on a set of core values that define a group and what they are fighting for.

For example, Advocates for Youth envisions a society that views sexuality as normal and healthy and treats young people with respect.

The core values of *Rights. Respect. Responsibility.*<sup>®</sup> (3Rs) animate this vision:

**RIGHTS:** Youth have the inalienable right to accurate and complete sexual health information, confidential reproductive and sexual health services, and a secure stake in the future.

**RESPECT:** Youth deserve respect. Valuing young people means involving them in the design, implementation and evaluation of programs and policies that affect their health and well-being.

**RESPONSIBILITY:** Society has the responsibility to provide young people with the tools they need to safeguard their sexual health, and young people have the responsibility to protect themselves from unwanted pregnancy, and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) including HIV.

To develop your own shared values, you can use Advocates' vision as a launching point and determine if there are ways you want to adapt it or recreate it to meet the values of your community or group.

At times, Advocates' vision and the sexual health and rights of young people are threatened. For examples, in instances of:

- Violence and discrimination based on race, sexual orientation and/or gender identity
- High rates of STIs and HIV
- Legal and economic barriers to safe abortion care
- Lack of access to condoms and contraception
- High rates of sexual assault
- Barriers to getting the information and resources needed to make informed decisions about sexual and reproductive health
- And this list goes on.

While we must be ambitious and dream big to realize our vision for young people's sexual health and rights in our communities, we also must recognize that we cannot address all of the problems we see at one time. So the first step we must take is to think through what we want to tackle first.

### Here are four key questions to consider when determining what problems to address.

The first two will help you identify if the problem is deeply and widely felt. Questions three and four will help you think through the solution to the problem:

#### 1. What problems are you most angry about?

It is important that you seek to address a problem that impacts people's lives in a direct and significant way. The more deeply we feel an injustice (often through anger), the more likely people will be willing to take action to address the problem.

#### 2. Do other people share your anger and frustration?

The more people that are directly affected by the problem or that

share your concern, the more people you will be able to motivate to take action.

### 3. Can you think of a concrete solution for this problem? Is this solution feasible?

If you cannot name a concrete solution, you will be unable to organize towards a change that will address the problem. It is also important that your solution is possible. The more able you are to convince people that your solution is feasible, the more likely people will commit their time and energy to working toward making change. (For example, sometimes students say that they are really angry about patriarchy, but a clear winnable solution to patriarchy is hard to name. Instead, if we identify sexual violence is a problem on campus, then we can identify solutions such as demanding improvements to the sexual assault policy on campus, or requiring training for all incoming students on sexual assault and consent.)

### 4. Will this solution make a lasting change in people's lives? Does it alter the system that is creating the problem?

It is important to consider if the change you are aiming toward will make a lasting impact in people's lives or will the community go back to how life was before you started this campaign. One way to ensure lasting success is to address underlying **power structures** (who has power in a situation and the systems which reinforce that individual's or group's power).

Once you have answered the four questions above, you likely will have developed a shorter list of problems that you want to address. Your next step is to complete a deeper analysis of the problem which will help you determine how to address it in order to make a lasting change in your community.

## ROOT CAUSE TREE TOOL

The problem tree is a great tool to use with your group to better understand the concerns you see in your community and where you should concentrate your organizing efforts to create lasting change. A deeper

understanding of the problems you see in your community will help you determine a solution that does not simply address the symptoms, but rather the underlying power structures that support the problems.

Complete the chart by filling out the different levels of the problem:

**1. Leaves:** What problems do you see facing the community? Leaves are the visible and tangible parts of the problem. In other words, they are the symptoms. For example, high STI rates, high rates of unintended pregnancies, violence against LGBTQ people, high rates of sexual assault in the community, etc.

**2. Trunk:** What structures, practices and policies create an environment that supports the problems – what's "holding them up"? When answering this question, think about some reasons these problems exist. Is there a policy banning condom access in your school? Does your school teach abstinence-only programming rather than comprehensive sex education? Is there a lack of training for students, professors, and campus police on gender-based violence? Think about what structures are keeping these problems in place and that if they were changed would have a long term impact on your community.

**3. Roots:** What are the underlying historical, social or economic root causes of these problems? Why do these structures or policies (listed under the trunk) exist? Some examples of root causes are racism, classism, homophobia, sexism, ageism, and discomfort with or fear of sexuality.

Your organizing efforts should be focused on challenging the programs, practices and policies you listed under the trunk. If you only address the leaves, you will only create band-aid solutions. It is difficult to address the roots because they are based in a long history of deep rooted injustices. Cutting off the problems at the trunk is your best opportunity to defeat the problems in your community.

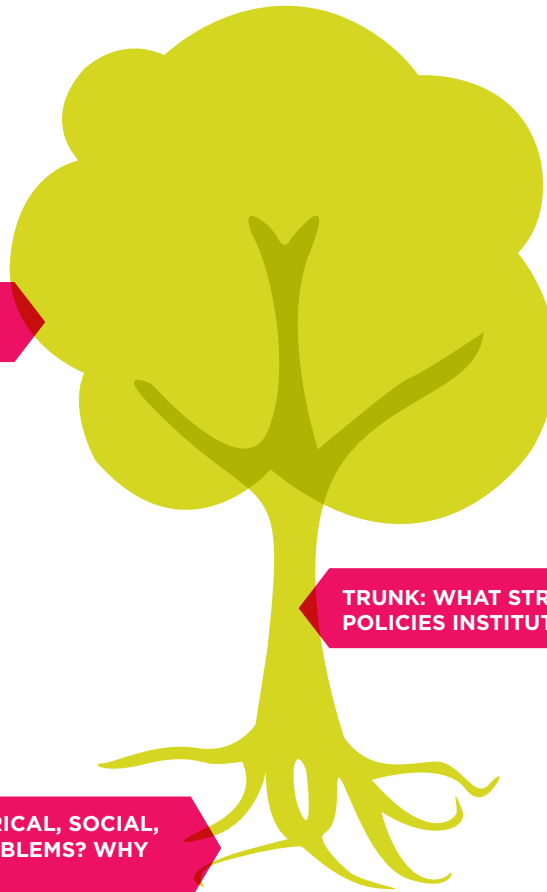


## PROBLEM TREE

**LEAVES: WHAT PROBLEMS DO YOU SEE FACING YOUR COMMUNITY?**

**TRUNK: WHAT STRUCTURES, PRACTICES, AND POLICIES INSTITUTIONALIZE THE PROBLEMS?**

**ROOTS: WHAT ARE THE UNDERLYING HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, OR ECONOMIC ROOT CAUSES OF THESE PROBLEMS? WHY DO THESE STRUCTURES OR POLICIES EXIST?**



See page 36 for a blank worksheet problem tree you can fill out!

### IDENTIFYING YOUR DEMANDS:

Now that you have analyzed the problem and the structures, you are ready to name your solution. Your solution should aim to cut the problem off at the trunk by addressing the policies, practices or structures that are keeping the problem in place. Organizers often refer to their solutions as demands. **A demand is a specific policy change or action that you seek to win from a decision maker.**

One way to ensure you create strong demands is to make them **S.M.A.R.T.** (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Realistic, and Timely)

**Specific:** It is important that your demands are as specific as possible so that you are in control of defining success. For example, if you demand that your student health

center provides free HIV testing, the school could meet your demands by providing free testing one time a year. A more specific demand could be that the student health center should provide free HIV testing twice a week—once before and once during school hours. Creating specific demands requires that you do some research to understand how to best meet the needs of your community, but it ensures you have the most control of defining how the success of your campaign will be implemented.

**Measurable:** It is important that you establish concrete criteria for measuring progress to attaining each demand. Setting measurable benchmarks will help you stay on track and be able to clearly articulate how you are moving toward achieving your demands.

\*This original Blueprint for Social Justice, from which the 'Root Cause/ Problem Tree' is modeled, was developed by the Movement Strategy Center [MSC] for Young People For. This work is a remixed and updated version of the Blueprint for Social Justice Workbook & Curriculum licensed in 2009 to Movement Strategy Center, under the Creative Commons "Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 2.5" License.

**Attainable:** Is your demand something someone can actually agree to? For example, demanding an end to sexual violence in your community is an important vision but not a concrete demand. No one can be held accountable for taking action. Instead a more attainable and specific demand would be to demand your principal take action by implementing and enforcing a specific sexual assault policy, or mandating all students and staff go through sexual assault and consent training. While it is true that neither of those demands alone will end all sexual violence in your community, they are attainable and measurable actions for which someone can be held accountable.

**Realistic:** A demand must be something you are both willing and able to work toward. This does not mean you should think small. In fact, more people are often willing to work towards demands that are harder but will have a greater impact on your community.

**Timely:** Your demands should be grounded within a timeframe. One of the best tactics of decision makers to avoid your demands is to delay them. Instead of rejecting your demands, most decision makers will attempt to calm you by saying they need time to consider, ideally long enough that you stop caring and move on. Therefore, it is extremely important that you state your demands are met by a certain date. This creates a sense of urgency that is crucial for winning.

Creating S.M.A.R.T demands forces organizers to cut the issue in a way that they can design a tangible and winnable campaign. Sometimes this might feel like you are minimizing the problem and not addressing the entire issue. While this is true in some respects, because one campaign cannot erase the deep rooted historical injustices and oppressions demonstrated in the problem tree, creating S.M.A.R.T. demands will set your campaign up for a tangible success that can win real change in people's lives and move your community one step closer to addressing the underlying injustices.

# III. Creating a Strategy

As mentioned, organizing is the process of building power as a group and using this power to create positive change in our lives. To do this, we must have a vision, an understanding of how we can go about working towards creating positive change. In other words, we need a strategy.

**A strategy can be defined as the method of building enough power to influence a decision maker to give you what you want.**

Creating a strategy is essential because it will help you understand how each action you take will move you toward winning your demands. A strategy is different from a plan because it involves power and relationships. For example, if your group is putting on a social event, you don't need a strategy. You just need a plan to execute the event. However, if you want your school to change its non-discrimination policy to be inclusive of sexual orientation and gender identity,

then you will need a strategy, because you will need power to influence a decision maker.

A tool that can help you design an effective strategy is this strategy chart created by Midwest Academy. The chart asks questions that you need to answer in order to plan how to win your campaign. The chart has five columns. Each column addresses one aspect of organizing and allows you to think concretely about what you need to do. Thus far, you have identified your demands and are ready to fill out the first column of the chart. The subsequent chapters will help you to complete the strategy chart by defining targets and key players, providing tips on how to build your power, and by offering suggestions on using your power through employing various tactics.

# STRATEGY CHART

DEMANDS	TARGETS	CURRENT RESOURCES	POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS	TACTICS
<p><b>Demands are specific measurable things we want to WIN!</b></p> <p>1. List the demands of your campaign?</p> <p>2. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward reaching your overall campaign demands?</p> <p><b>How will the campaign:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Win concrete improvements in people's lives?</li> <li>Give people a sense of their own power?</li> <li>Alter the relations of power?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Primary target:</b></p> <p>The person who has the power to give you what you want. (The decision maker) A target is always a person, never an institution.</p> <p><b>Understanding your target:</b></p> <p>What opposing pressure does your target face to not give you what you want?</p> <p><b>Secondary target:</b></p> <p>The person(s) that have power of your target?</p> <p>What power do you have over the secondary target?</p>	<p><b>What we have:</b></p> <p>List the resources that your organization brings to the campaign. Include: skills of group members, connections to student and community organizations, funding.</p> <p><b>What we need:</b></p> <p>List the specific things you need to do to develop the campaign.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expand leadership of group</li> <li>Build membership base</li> <li>Develop media plan</li> <li>Develop campaign strategy</li> <li>Develop media/messaging campaign</li> <li>Develop fundraising plan etc.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Who cares about this issue enough to join or help us?</b></p> <p>Who has the skills that you need to win the campaign?</p> <p><b>How will you reach out to potential supporters?</b></p> <p>(for instance: table on campus, hold membership meetings, host social events, present at other club meetings, canvass the dorms, talk to professors, etc.)</p>	<p>Tactics are actions taken to move your target to give you what you want (your demands).</p> <p><b>Tactics must:</b></p> <p>Demonstrate your power while simultaneously build your power.</p> <p>Be within the comfort zone of your group, but outside comfort zone of your tactic.</p> <p>Be directed toward your primary or secondary target</p> <p>Moves you closer to reaching your demands.</p> <p><b>Example of tactics:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Petitions</li> <li>Public Hearings</li> <li>Negotiations</li> <li>Rallies</li> <li>Marches</li> <li>Sit Ins</li> <li>Strikes</li> </ul>

See page 32 for a blank worksheet you can fill in as your own strategy chart.

# IV. Power Analysis: Identifying key players and determining your strategy

Now that you know what you want, it is time to figure out who has the power to give you what you want. In this section, you will walk through the process of identifying key players in your campaign and mapping everyone's power to help you determine your campaign strategy.

## KEY PLAYERS

The key players in your campaign are those who hold the decision making power to give you what you want, those who can influence the decision maker, and those who could help build your power to influence the decision maker. These include your primary target, secondary target, constituency, allies, and potential allies.

**Primary Target:** Put simply, a **target is the person or people who can give you what you want**. In other words, the target is the decision maker. Sometimes it will take a little investigative research to determine who has the power to make decisions about your issue. It is important that the **target is a person** (or group of people), not an institution (like a college or university). Individuals are far easier to move than any institution. Any institution such as a University, will have fixed policies and ways of making decisions that will resist input from external sources such as you. Nevertheless, institutions are made up of people, who can be influenced to change their decision, thus shifting the policy or practice of the entire institution. For example, your target should not be your school, but rather the president or principal of your school. Similarly, your target should not be the school board, but rather the specific people on the school board.

It is also important to remember that your target is **not your enemy**. Rather he/she is

the person/people that you want to direct your organizing efforts toward in order to move them to make the change you want. Painting your target as your enemy will not necessarily help you win your campaign. Winning will require that your target agree to your demands, which is more likely if they can also look like they won in the end. In other words, if you win, your target doesn't need to lose.

**Secondary Target:** It is also important to identify if there is a secondary target. **A secondary target is a person who has more power over the primary decision maker than you and you have greater influence over this person than over the primary target.** For example, there might be a teacher at your school that is more responsive to the needs of the students or more sympathetic to your cause and might have more power to influence the principal. If you have more power to influence this person, s/he

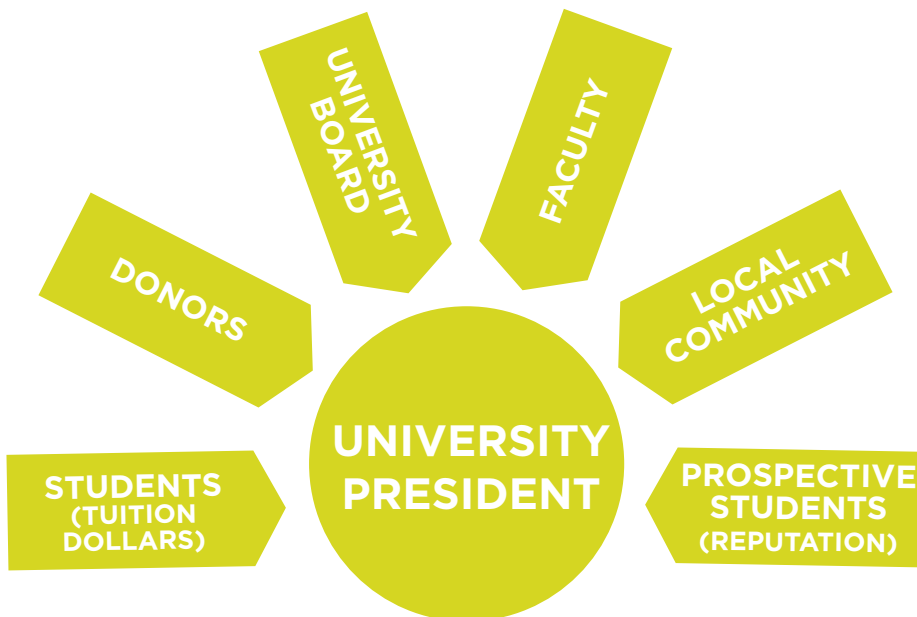
## EXAMPLE

Danny, a high school student from Parma, Ohio, worked for almost two years to get his school to reject abstinence-only education. Over the two years Danny organized in his community and successfully identified the key decision makers who needed to be influenced on this issue. He met with these school board members and other key community members, as well as taking the issue to a larger audience, speaking at a town forum about the status of sex education in schools. Finally the members of the school board agreed to his demands. In order to keep the momentum going and make the changes a reality, Danny and his advocacy group congratulated the leaders of the school board for making the right decision. Danny recognized that the school board members were not the enemy, but rather valuable players in ensuring young people received comprehensive sex

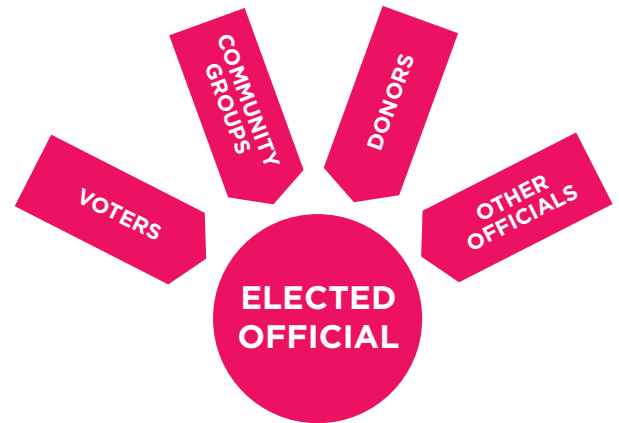
might be a good secondary target. Other secondary targets might be a major donor, a local elected official that supports your efforts, or a respected religious leader in your community, etc. If you think you have a better chance at moving your secondary target to move your primary target to give you what you want, you might want to focus your efforts on this strategy.

**Understanding your primary and secondary targets:** It is important to look at the situation from the perspective of your target to determine potential secondary targets as well as potential supporters who have major influence. You can do this by mapping out some of the people and institutions that influence your target. You will also be able to identify your opposition and be able to start developing a strategy to make sure the pressure you are putting on your target will outweigh that of your opposition.

For example if your target is the president of your University, she will be influenced potentially by the following players:



Or if your target is an elected official, they may be influenced by:



**Constituency: Constituents are the people directly impacted by the issue you are organizing around.** These are your core group of people. Constituents have the most to win if change is achieved. From within this group, it is important to identify trusted leaders who can help shape and lead the campaign, as well as the skills and resources your group can help bring to the campaign.

**Allies: Allies are the people and organizations that can help you get what you want.** Allies are generally supportive of your mission and could be encouraged to advocate publicly on your behalf. Allies could be other student groups, community organizations and leaders, bloggers, religious leaders, politicians, or anyone who could be supportive of your cause. It is important to identify potential allies that have influence over your target that you could move to be more supportive of your cause. It is also helpful to have some unlikely allies, those who might be perceived not to support your cause but come out vocally in support. Having **unlikely allies** can often open the minds of potential new supporters and show how your mission would benefit the entire community, not just the core constituents. For example, the Catholic nuns who came out in support of birth control coverage under health care law were unlikely allies in the fight for access to birth control since historically the religious leaders had opposed contraceptive access.

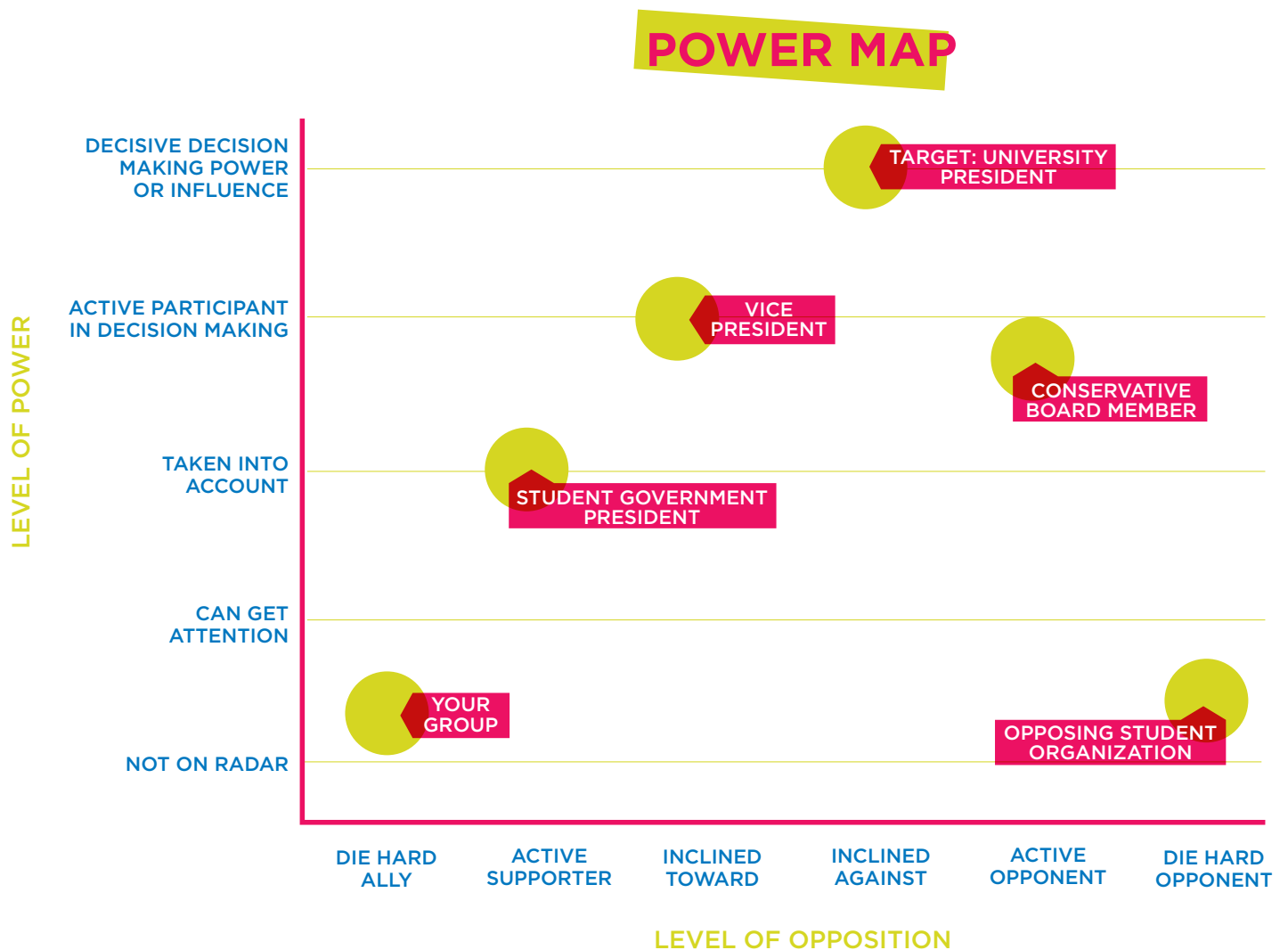
**POWER MAPPING**

Once you have identified the key players, your next objective is to assess their level of support for your demands and the amount of power they have by putting them on a power map. By mapping where people currently stand, you will be able to craft a strategy of moving key players to being more supportive of your demands.

**How this map works:**

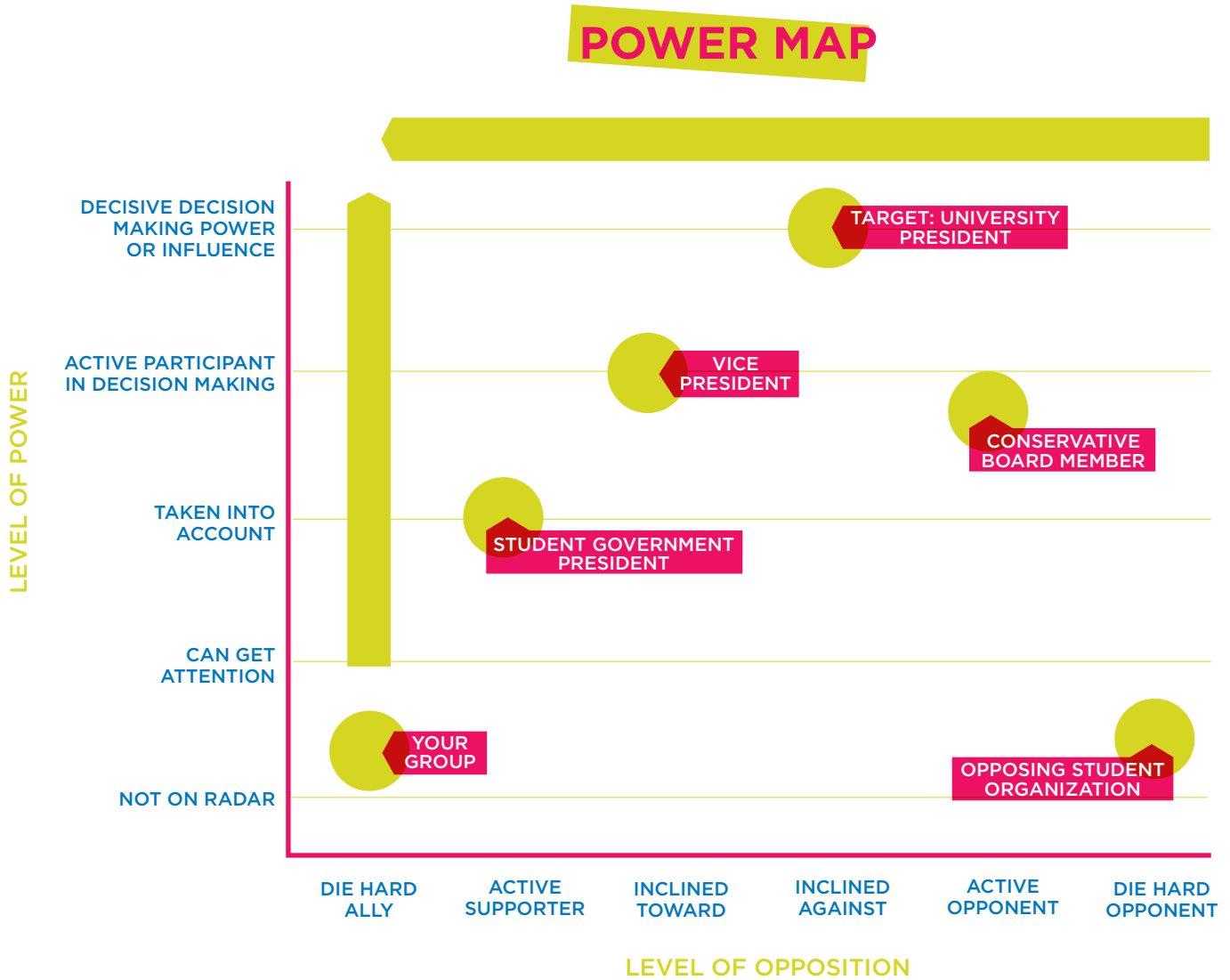
For each key player, you will rate their level of support for you demands on the horizontal axis and their level of decision making power on the vertical axis. For example, if

your campaign were to advocate for free HIV testing on campus, your scenario might look similar to the map below. The University President has the ultimate decision making power, which ranks her high on the y-axis, and she might stand in the middle in terms of her agreement with offering free HIV testing, plotting her in the middle on the x-axis. On the other hand, the vice president (a good secondary target) has less decision making power so she lands a little lower on the y-axis, but is more in agreement with your cause and thus is plotted further to the left on the x-axis. See below for a possible scenario.



Now that you have a sense of where the key players currently stand, you want to devise a strategy to build the power of your supporters and move key decision makers

toward supporting your demands. In other words, on the power map you want to shift people towards agreeing to your demands (left) and build your power (top).





# V. Building Power

Now that you have done a preliminary power analysis to understand your power in relation to the decision makers and begun to map out your campaign strategy, it is time to determine how you can build your own power. As a reminder, power **is the ability to control circumstances and make things happen outside of ourselves**. While not all of us have the economic or decision making power to make change on our own, we can build power to create the changes we want to see in our community. In this section we will discuss the cornerstone of organizing, which is how we build our collective power through engaging others in our fight to create change.

This process of engaging others, often referred to as base building, includes: conducting outreach, following up and building relationships with potential new members, providing new opportunities for members to engage over time, and developing members as leaders themselves.

One helpful way to think of this process is to break down your base into three categories: Leaders, Members, and Supporters

**Leaders:** People in the group who are deeply committed to the success of the goals of the group. They play a key role in planning events or campaigns, making group decisions, recruiting new members, and training new leaders.

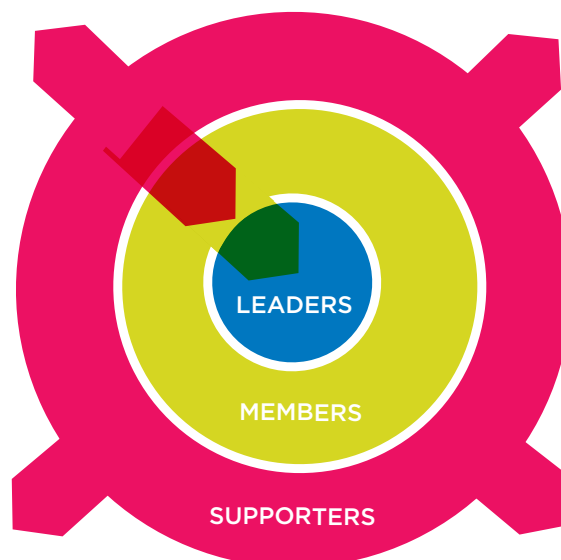
**Members:** People who are active in the group in a more limited way. They attend events and occasionally attend meetings but don't take leadership roles. They are passionate about the issue but have less time to commit to the organization.

**Supporters:** People who occasionally attend events or have signed up for your email list.

This is a key group to keep in touch with via email or phone when you need to turn out larger numbers for a campaign.

**Your goal is to increase your base of supporters while simultaneously moving supporters to be members and members to be leaders. This is the process of base building.** Another way to think about this is that you are trying to build a base that is both wide and deep: wide in the sense that you reach as many people as you can and deep in the sense that you build strong leaders within the group.

As a means of envisioning your own base, fill in the circular diagram with the names of your leaders, members and supporters. On the outside of your diagram, you will want to think of new individuals and groups you could reach out to bring in new supporters and widen your base. Simultaneously, you will want to circle the names of some of your members who you identify as potential leaders.



## STRATEGIES TO WIDEN YOUR BASE: CONDUCTING OUTREACH TO POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS

### Your pitch: Anger → Hope → Action

When reaching out to engage new people in your campaign, you will be most successful if through your conversations, emails, blogs, press pieces etc, you are able to guide people through the emotions you felt when you started the campaign.

**1. Anger** is the first emotion you want to evoke. You can do this best by showing how your vision or values are being threatened. For example, if we return to Advocates' 3Rs vision, we can ask questions which illustrate how that vision is violated such as: Did you know that LGBT students on our campus are more likely to experience violence than straight students? Did you know that our community has one of the highest rates of STIs and HIV in our state? Did you know that our school teaches abstinence-only programming which withholds vital information about condoms and contraception? By asking questions that highlight the problem you are working to solve and sharing information about this problem, you will hopefully evoke a shared frustration about the problem.

**2. Hope** is the second emotion you want to evoke. You want people to believe that change is possible in order for them to get involved. You also want to take the energy away from the problem and focus it on a solution. You can do this by explaining your demands and how they will address the problem. For example:

"We need a staffed LGBT center where staff members will coordinate anti-homophobia trainings for all incoming students and for LGBT students to have a space where they could feel safe on campus."

"We need to change our condom policy on campus so that students can get condoms for free in the dorms and at the health center."

"We need for our school system to adopt a comprehensive sex education curriculum and get rid of the abstinence only programming."

This is also a place to return to your core values and vision and highlight what you are fighting for, young people's right to lead healthy lives and promote their well-being.

**3. Action:** Once you have illustrated your solution, you want to make sure the other person knows they can make a difference by taking action. Your goal at the end of every interaction is for people to take action right then. You could ask them to sign a petition in support of your demands or attend an upcoming event or action. It is important to get an email address and other contact information from the person when they make a commitment so you can follow up with them.

Once you have developed your pitch, you want to think through some ways you can reach out to new people.

### HERE ARE A FEW GENERAL TIPS ON INCREASING THE NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS

1. Build relationships with people by finding out what they care about. What issues are they passionate about? What would they like to see changed in your community?

Many organizers can get so caught up in their talking points that they forget to listen to find out what other people want. The more you know about them, the more you can understand how to plug them into the work you are already doing or get ideas on how to expand your work.

2. Ask people! People won't join your campaign unless you ask them to.

3. Recruit new people to an activity not to a meeting. You want people to first engage by doing the work they believe in, not by talking about it.

4. Don't forget to follow up. Make sure to call or email new supporters and thank them for participating or taking action. Invite them to your next event.

5. Have fun! Choose fun and creative tactics to outreach to new supporters. The more you are having fun, the more people will want to join you.

### SPECIFIC OUTREACH TACTICS TO INCREASE NUMBER OF SUPPORTERS

- **Table in your community:** By setting up a table in a highly trafficked area on your campus or in your community (outside the cafeteria, student union, library, local coffee shop, sporting event), you have the opportunity to engage new supporters. At your table, make sure to bring information about your organization and upcoming events, as well as a petition to collect contact information from people who stop by. Collecting contact information is essential in making sure you can follow up with potential supporters. Tip: bring candy, condoms, buttons or other items you can give away to attract people to stop at your table.
- **Hold regular new member meetings:** Holding new members meeting on a regular basis (once a month) invites people to join your group not only at the beginning of the year, but also throughout your campaign. At the new membership meeting, present an overview of your campaign and the different committees or areas where people can get involved. Encourage all attendees to take action on the spot by signing up to support the campaign.
- **Canvassing:** Create flyers about upcoming actions or events and spread the word by knocking on doors in your community and talking with people about your upcoming events. If no one is there, make sure to leave behind information about the upcoming event and a way for people to get involved.
- **Make public announcements:** Coordinate with your teachers to announce your organization's events during class. Visit other student organization meetings and ask for a few minutes to let them know about your event. Coordinate with your school's radio station to announce your event.
- **Partner with other student or community organizations:** By working directly with other student organizations, you will bring a wider audience to your events and will build your network of supporters.
- **Host social events:** Hold dinner parties, house meetings, dance parties, sporting events to bring new members to your group. Advertise your events on social media and in the student newspaper.
- **Have conversations** with other students in the cafeteria, at the coffee shop, in the library, everywhere!
- Use **social media** to recruit and engage supporters. Set up a Facebook page about your group, event pages about your actions, and get your supporters using the same hashtag on services like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram. For instance, when the Texas legislature worked on sweeping abortion restrictions, activists used #StandwithTXwomen to organize and post updates.
- Identify other **online groups** that are relevant to your goal and share your message to get new supporters.
- Join a campus, community, or interest group on Facebook.
  - Check out a hashtag that's relevant to your cause and use it. Folks who follow that hashtag are good prospects for recruiting. Think creatively – look for hashtags about your community, as well as about your issue.
- **Email** is a universal, easy and free way to communicate with your supporters and further engage them in your campaign. Collecting supporters' email addresses is a must so you can notify them about upcoming meetings, events and actions.
- An individual **phone call** is still one of the most effective ways to engage people in an action or event. Before an action, calling your supporters to confirm their participation will increase the

### EXAMPLE

Carly, a student activist with the 1 in 3 campaign to destigmatize abortion, has hosted over 30 dinner parties with different student organizations where students can get together and talk about abortion issues in a safe and friendly atmosphere.)

likelihood that they show up. For those willing to provide phone numbers, send texts – people are more likely to read texts than email or social media posts.

When using any of the above tactics to outreach to members of your community, be sure to collect the contact information (email and phone number) of the people with whom you interact. This will help you build your list of supporters and enable you to follow up and engage them in new events or campaigns.

### STRATEGIES FOR DEEPENING YOUR BASE: LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

While it is extremely important to bring in new members and supporters, it is also crucial to invest in current supporters and equip them with skills to move from supporters, to active members to new leaders. To do this, you can start by identifying some of the characteristics of a leader that are important for your campaign's success, outlined below.

#### Traits of a leader:

- Understand the vision of the change you want to make and the steps that must be taken to reach the goals.
- Possess different skills than the current leaders. For example, you will want some leaders in your group to be people who are more focused on getting things done and moving the project forward. You will need others who like the process of making decisions and can make people feel good about how things are getting done. It is essential to have both forms of leadership to accomplish your goals and maintain group membership.
- Can build good rapport with the community and will be able to bring people into the fight. This is the key trait of a successful organizer.
- Represent the people and interests of the community.

There may be other skills that you are looking for from your leaders that will help your group reach its core goals. As a group, you will want to continue to develop this list for your campaign.

#### Leadership Development:

Once you have defined what skills are important for your leadership team, you can begin to identify members in your group that could be good leaders. The current leaders should then begin the process of leadership development with these members. One helpful tool to conceptualize the process of leadership development is the ladder of engagement. Your goal is to use different ways to move people up the ladder of engagement with your campaign so you can build strong leaders.

### WAYS TO DEVELOP STRONG LEADERS AND MOVE PEOPLE UP THE LADDER OF ENGAGEMENT:

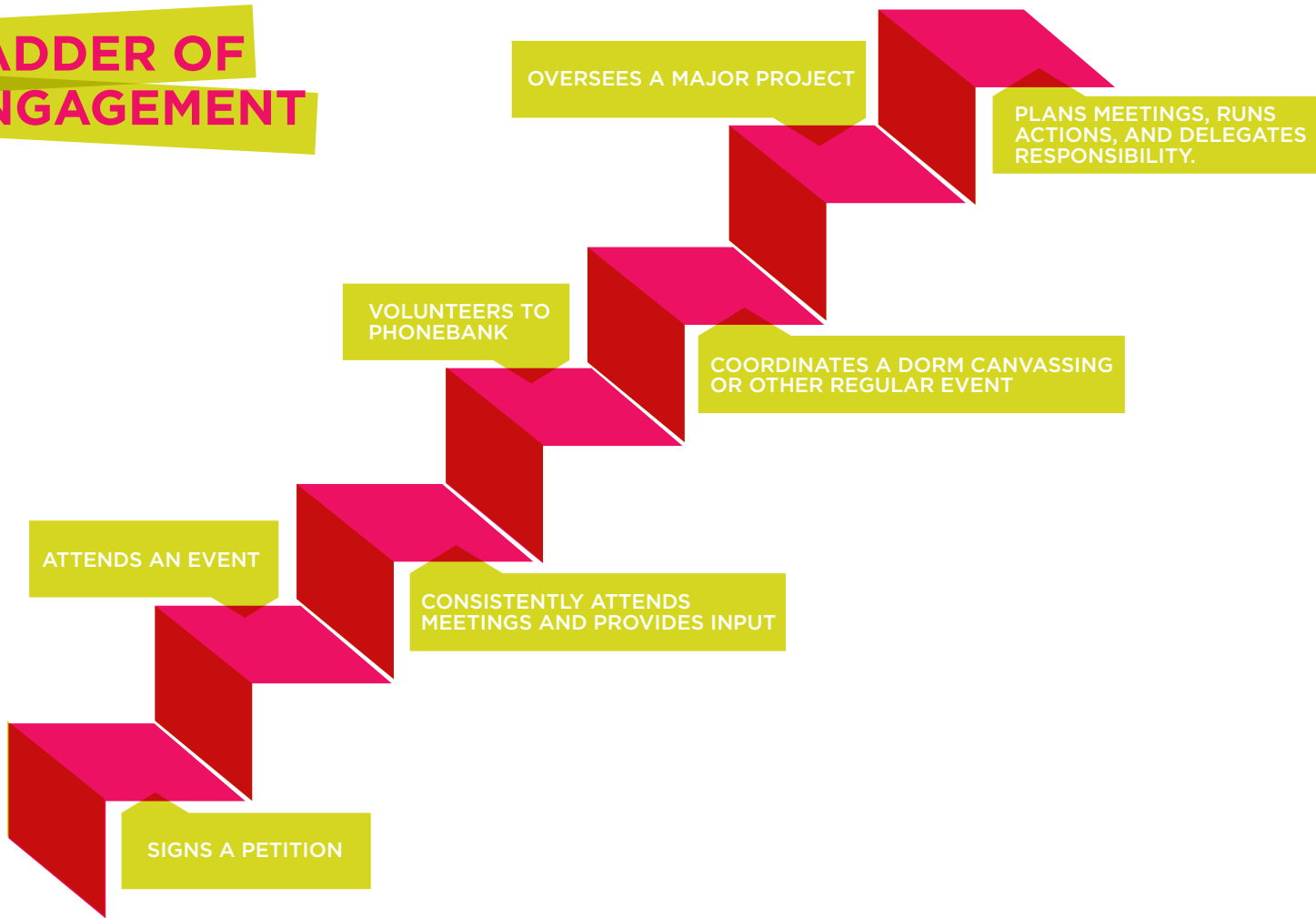
#### One-on-Ones

This is an opportunity for current leaders to engage more deeply with emerging leaders. During a one-on-one meeting, you want to make sure to ask a number of questions of the emerging leader such as:

- What motivates you to be involved with this campaign?
- What is your vision for this campaign?
- What types of projects/aspects of the campaign do you enjoy working on?
- What support or information do you need to take the lead on these aspects of the campaign?

The answers to these questions will help you understand how to best plug the emerging leaders into your campaign, as well as give you ideas of new directions to steer the campaign. It can also help you figure out what type of guidance will help to build the emerging leaders strengths. It is important that current leaders continue

## LADDER OF ENGAGEMENT



to have one-on-ones with emerging leaders throughout the campaign. Having regular check-ins will help foster a mentoring relationship that will enable emerging leaders to become the leaders.

**Leadership retreats:** Leadership retreats should aim to strengthen relationships among current and emerging leaders and thus build community among your leadership. They also serve as a time to dive deeper into the strategy of the campaign. This opportunity will help new leaders develop a better understanding of how to create strategies, and increase their investment in the success of the campaign.

**Shared ownership of aspects of the campaign:** It can also be helpful to partner one

emerging leader with one current leader on each project with the aim that the next time this activity comes up, the emerging leader will take the lead.

Spending time to build strong leaders is essential for you to create the vision for youth sexual and reproductive health in your community. All too often when young leaders leave communities or graduate from school, campaigns and groups fall apart without their leadership. It is essential to continuously build new leaders so the work you care so deeply about continues.

Base building and leadership development is a continuous process that should happen throughout the campaign.

## VII. Using Our Power

As we discussed earlier, organizing is about building power as a group and using that power to create positive change. Now we can move on to some of the most exciting parts of organizing: how to use our power to get what we want.

We can demonstrate our power through collective actions, often referred to as tactics.

**Tactics are actions taken to get someone (your target) to give you what you want (your demands).** Each tactic should fit within your overall strategy to reach your end goal. There are a variety of tactics that you can choose from to achieve your goals. Your aim is to determine which tactic will be most effective at which time to get you what you want.

Here are some basic guidelines that each tactic should meet:

- **Show support for your demands.** Your purpose for showing your power is to show support for your demands. If your action does not clearly demonstrate your demands, it will fail to move toward making lasting change in your community. *For example, if an anti-gay hate crime occurs on campus, you could set up a vigil condemning the violence against the LGBT community. This is an important step to show support for the LGBT community, but simply condemning the violence does not demand the University take action. This action could be improved if participants of the vigil spoke out about what is necessary to address anti-gay violence on campus and demanded the University take action like creating a bias reporting system or mandating an anti-homophobia training for incoming first year students. This refocuses the energy of the action from the problem toward a solution to create lasting change.*
- **Focused on primary or secondary target:** The focus of the action should be on asking your target to do something. *In the case above, it could be directed towards the president of the University who has the power to agree to a bias reporting system or required training of incoming students.*
- **Demonstrate your power, while simultaneously building your power:** It is important that your action not only shows your power to your target, but also brings people in to your campaign. *For example, if you hold a rally in the center of campus, your aim should be to show your power, but also to engage more people in your work. One way to do this is to hand out fliers at the rally or have people canvassing the crowd to sign petitions in support of the demands. By building your power at each action you take, you will be able to continue to escalate your tactics and apply more pressure on your target to win your campaign.*
- **Your action should be outside the comfort zone of your target and within the comfort zone of your group.** Tactics work best when your target is unfamiliar with your action and does not know how to respond. *If there has been a long history of sit-ins on your campus, then it is likely that your University has developed an action plan to respond to a sit-in. However, they might be less familiar with a group of students interrupting a board of directors meeting. They will be forced to act immediately without diligent planning, which may allow you to make more headway on your demands. At the same time you want to pick tactics that members of your group are familiar with so they will be more successful.*

## PRINCIPLE OF ESCALATION

As you are choosing tactics, you must also consider the timing and amount of power you want to demonstrate in each tactic. In a campaign, generally **tactics build on the previous tactic by applying additional pressure on your target**. This is called **escalation**. If you were to jump immediately into a sit-in and this action fails to get you what you want, you cannot then decide to use a petition. Tactics must always increase pressure on the target, or you risk showing your target that your campaign is weakening.

After each action, if your target does not meet your demands, you must discuss how you will escalate your tactics to put additional pressure on your target. The only time you should compromise with your target is if your base is weakening and you cannot continue to build power.

Remember that few campaigns are won overnight. If one tactic doesn't succeed, this does not mean you should lose sight of your end goal. Instead, you will need to regroup and develop a new tactic that will move your target. Ultimately if you continue to build power and stick with it, your target will be unable to ignore you. **Organizing depends on your commitment to stick with the cause longer than the target will continue to resist your efforts.**

There are many different types of tactics. Often we get stuck in using the same tactics because we are not aware of all the ways we could use our power to create change. On the following pages is a list of 198 methods of Nonviolent Action created by Gene Sharp and published in his 1973 piece, *The Politics of Nonviolent Action*. These are meant to inspire you to think outside the box. Remember a good tactic will be outside the experience of your target and within your group's experience, so it's key to put some creativity in your actions.

## CLOSER LOOK AT SOME POPULAR TACTICS

### Using Petitions to Demonstrate Support

It is important to communicate support for your demands. You can do this through

**petitions. A petition usually includes a position statement on the issue, followed by space for signatures and contact information.** Check out the sample petition in the resources section at the end of this toolkit. When people sign the petition, they are agreeing to the demands spelled out in the petition. By gathering petition signatures and delivering them to your target, you are able to demonstrate that there is significant support for your demands. Gathering signatures on a petition is also a great way to educate and activate people on your issue. Petitions help build your base and provide an easy way for people to participate in your campaign.

To get the most signatures, gather them online, as well as in person. To petition in person, identify high traffic areas such as the cafeteria, student union, or outside of the library where you can engage people in a conversation and ask them to sign the petition. Make sure to set a goal for the number of signatures you want to obtain and a date that you will deliver the petitions to your target. You can also create an online petition using any number of sites (Amplify, Credo, MoveOn, or even just a Google doc). Remember to distribute your petition through your email list, listservs, your social media site and your organizations home page.



# 198 METHODS OF NON-VIOLENT ACTION

FROM GENE SHARP, ALBERT EINSTEIN INSTITUTION [www.aeinstein.org](http://www.aeinstein.org)

## FORMAL STATEMENTS

1. Public speeches
2. Letters of opposition or support
3. Declarations by organizations and institutions
4. Signed public declarations
5. Declarations of indictment and intention
6. Group or mass petitions

## COMMUNICATIONS WITH A WIDER AUDIENCE

1. Slogans, caricatures, and symbols
2. Banners, posters, and displayed communications
3. Leaflets, pamphlets, and books
4. Newspapers and journals
5. Records, radio, and television
6. Skywriting and earthwriting

## GROUP REPRESENTATIONS

1. Deputations
2. Mock awards
3. Group lobbying
4. Picketing
5. Mock elections

## SYMBOLIC PUBLIC ACTS

1. Displays of flags and symbolic colours
2. Wearing of symbols
3. Prayer and worship
4. Delivering symbolic objects
5. Protest disrobings
6. Destruction of own property
7. Symbolic lights
8. Displays of portraits
9. Paint as protest
10. New signs and names
11. Symbolic sounds
12. Symbolic reclamations
13. Rude gestures

## PRESSURES ON INDIVIDUALS

1. "Haunting" officials
2. Taunting officials
3. Fraternalization
4. Vigils

## DRAMA AND MUSIC

1. Humorous skits and pranks

2. Performances of plays and music
3. Singing

## PROCESSIONS

1. Marches
2. Parades
3. Religious processions
4. Pilgrimages
5. Motorcades

## HONOURING THE DEAD

1. Political mourning
2. Mock funerals
3. Demonstrative funerals
4. Homage at burial places

## PUBLIC ASSEMBLIES

1. Assemblies of protest or support
2. Protest meetings
3. Camouflaged meetings of protest
4. Teach-ins

## WITHDRAWAL AND RENUNCIATION

1. Walk-outs
2. Silence
3. Renouncing honours
4. Turning one's back

## Social Noncooperation

### OSTRACISM OF PERSONS

1. Social boycott
2. Selective social boycott
3. Lysistratic nonaction
4. Excommunication
5. Interdict

### SOCIAL NONCOOPERATION

1. Suspension of social and sports activities
2. Boycott of social affairs
3. Student strike
4. Social disobedience
5. Withdrawal from social institutions

### WITHDRAWAL FROM THE SOCIAL SYSTEM

1. Stay-at-home
2. Total personal noncooperation
3. "Flight" of workers

4. Sanctuary
5. Collective disappearance
6. Protest emigration (hijrat)

## Economic Noncooperation: Boycotts

### ACTION BY CONSUMERS

1. Consumers' boycott
2. Nonconsumption of boycotted goods
3. Policy of austerity
4. Rent withholding
5. Refusal to rent
6. National consumers' boycott
7. International consumers' boycott

### ACTION BY WORKERS AND PRODUCERS

1. Workers' boycott
2. Producers' boycott

### ACTION BY MIDDLEMEN

3. Suppliers' and handlers' boycott

### ACTION BY OWNERS AND MANAGEMENT

1. Traders' boycott
2. Refusal to let or sell property
3. Lockout
4. Refusal of industrial assistance
5. Merchants' "general strike"

### ACTION BY HOLDERS OF FINANCIAL RESOURCES

1. Withdrawal of bank deposits
2. Refusal to pay fees, dues, and assessments
3. Refusal to pay debts or interest
4. Severance of funds and credit
5. Revenue refusal
6. Refusal of a government's money

### ACTION BY GOVERNMENTS

1. Domestic embargo
2. Blacklisting of traders
3. International sellers' embargo
4. International buyers' embargo
5. International trade embargo



## Economic Noncooperation: Strikes

### SYMBOLIC STRIKES

1. Protest strike
2. Quickie walkout (lightning strike)

### AGRICULTURAL STRIKES

1. Peasant strike
2. Farm workers' strike

### STRIKES BY SPECIAL GROUPS

1. Refusal of impressed labour
2. Prisoners' strike
3. Craft strike
4. Professional strike

### ORDINARY INDUSTRIAL STRIKES

1. Establishment strike
2. Industry strike
3. Sympathy strike

### RESTRICTED STRIKES

4. Detailed strike
1. Bumper strike
2. Slowdown strike
3. Working-to-rule strike
4. Reporting "sick" (sick-in)
5. Strike by resignation
6. Limited strike
7. Selective strike

### MULTI-INDUSTRY STRIKES

1. Generalised strike
2. General strike

### COMBINATION OF STRIKES AND ECONOMIC CLOSURES

1. Hartal
2. Economic shutdown

## Political Noncooperation

### REJECTION OF AUTHORITY

1. Withholding or withdrawal of allegiance
2. Refusal of public support
3. Literature and speeches advocating resistance

### NONCOOPERATION WITH GOVERNMENT

1. Boycott of legislative bodies
2. Boycott of elections
3. Boycott of government employment and positions
4. Boycott of government departments, agencies, and other bodies
5. Withdrawal from governmental

- educational institutions
6. Boycott of government-supported institutions
7. Refusal of assistance to enforcement agents
8. Removal of own signs and placemarks
9. Refusal to accept appointed officials
10. Refusal to dissolve existing institutions

### CITIZENS' ALTERNATIVES TO OBEDIENCE

1. Reluctant and slow compliance
2. Nonobedience in absence of direct supervision
3. Popular nonobedience
4. Disguised disobedience
5. Refusal of an assemblage or meeting to disperse
6. Sitdown
7. Noncooperation with conscription and deportation
8. Hiding, escape, and false identities
9. Civil disobedience of "illegitimate" laws

### ACTION BY GOVERNMENT PERSONNEL

1. Selective refusal of assistance by government aides
2. Blocking of lines of command and information
3. Stalling and obstruction
4. General administrative noncooperation
5. Judicial noncooperation
6. Deliberate inefficiency and selective noncooperation by enforcement agents
7. Mutiny

### DOMESTIC GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

1. Quasi-legal evasions and delays
2. Noncooperation by constituent governmental units

### INTERNATIONAL GOVERNMENTAL ACTION

1. Changes in diplomatic and other representation
2. Delay and cancellation of diplomatic events
3. Withholding of diplomatic recognition
4. Severance of diplomatic relations
5. Withdrawal from international organisations
6. Refusal of membership in international bodies
7. Expulsion from international organisations

## Nonviolent Intervention

### PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION

1. Self-exposure to the elements
2. The fast
3. Fast of moral pressure
4. Hunger strike
5. Satyagrahic fast
6. Reverse trial
7. Nonviolent harassment

### PHYSICAL INTERVENTION

1. Sit-in
2. Stand-in
3. Ride-in
4. Wade-in
5. Mill-in
6. Pray-in
7. Nonviolent raids
8. Nonviolent air raids
9. Nonviolent invasion
10. Nonviolent interjection
11. Nonviolent obstruction
12. Nonviolent occupation

### SOCIAL INTERVENTION

1. Establishing new social patterns
2. Overloading of facilities
3. Stall-in
4. Speak-in
5. Guerrilla theatre
6. Alternative social institutions
7. Alternative communication system

### ECONOMIC INTERVENTION

1. Reverse strike
2. Stay-in strike
3. Nonviolent land seizure
4. Defiance of blockades
5. Politically motivated counterfeiting
6. Preclusive purchasing
7. Seizure of assets
8. Dumping
9. Selective patronage
10. Alternative markets
11. Alternative transportation systems
12. Alternative economic institutions

### POLITICAL INTERVENTION

1. Overloading of administrative systems
2. Disclosing identities of secret agents
3. Seeking imprisonment
4. Civil disobedience of "neutral" laws
5. Work-on without collaboration
6. Dual sovereignty and parallel government

### Communicate your issues to a wider audience

Expand your base continually, and let your target know you're working on the issue, by taking actions that will raise awareness of your issue to large numbers of people.

- Making your demands visible through **banners or interactive displays** is a great way to bring new potential supporters into the conversation. Generally, visual displays will attract attention and, if done well, will spark conversation about your issue. It is also a good idea to bring along **leaflets** to pass out with more information about the campaign and ways people can get involved. Visual displays also serve to remind your target that you are making your demands known to the community. Make sure to think through a strategic location to hang the banner where many people will see it. (You may also have to consider whether you are allowed to hang displays in particular areas in your community.) You will also want to make sure that your banner truly communicates your message to the people who see it. It makes sense to run a couple messages by people who are not engaged in the campaign to see which one resonates more with them. On any printed materials you hand out, also add your social media handles and any relevant hashtags so they can continue to carry your messages online.

Reaching out to **media** can also be a good way to communicate your issue to a wider audience. You can do this by writing **letters to the editor (LTE)**, **Op-Eds**, or **working directly with reporters and bloggers**. There are many ways to communicate your message to the media. Each approach has its advantages, so you'll want to pick the one that best suits your needs. Your campus newspaper, local newspaper, or blogs that speak to your community or topic can all provide great media opportunities.

- **An LTE** is written in response to a newspaper article. Look for the newspaper's LTE guidelines on its website and follow

them carefully. LTEs are usually very short and have to be submitted very soon after an article has been published. They provide an opposing point of view, or shed new light on a topic of an article that has been published.

- The Washington Post ran a profile of programs which provide services to pregnant and parenting teens. Young mom Natasha wrote a letter describing how these kinds of programs had been very helpful to her as a teen mother. The Post appreciated hearing from someone who had been directly affected by the programs, and published her letter – giving even more support to the idea of programs for teen parents.
- An **op-ed** is an opinion piece written by someone who is not newspaper staff. Anyone can submit one; look for the newspaper's guidelines online. An op-ed gives you a longer opportunity to sound off on a topic the newspaper hasn't paid enough attention to. Staying on topic, adding a personal story to help readers connect to the issue, and providing a few key statistics are ways to get your op-ed accepted.
- Kate, a student at Harvard, has started a school-wide conversation about sexual assault on campus. She wrote a series of op-eds in Harvard's newspaper. Her student group combined this tactic with campus forums and events, to pressure the administration to set better policies around sexual assault, and urge the campus community to change the culture that enables sexual assault.
- When possible, work with a **reporter**. Look at local articles and blogs about your issue to identify which reporters and bloggers have covered them, and email these reporters about what's going on. It's that simple. You might not always get a bite – but the more your movement grows, the more interest media is likely to take in your issue.
- Lizzie and Chelsea at Boston College were a part of a student group that distributes condoms – at a campus that doesn't allow condoms. The College's administration threatened them with disciplinary action. The group began a media blitz, contacting reporters at their campus paper and at local and

national papers. They received a huge amount of media coverage, including being profiled in the New York Times. The media attention put the spotlight on the campus' bad policies around condoms and sexual health.

- **Blogging/Vlogging** is a great way for you to report on your own issue and ensure your voice is heard. Blog posts, like articles in newspapers take a more in-depth look at your issue, but tend to be more personal and less formal. Vlogs are great to convey emotion, and give a face to the issue. Either type of post will be stronger if they are engaging and passionate and have an authentic voice and style. Even if you are dealing with a complicated issue, make sure to connect it to people by sharing stories. One person's story moves people more effectively than pages of statistics. Create a username and password at [www.amplifyyourvoice.org](http://www.amplifyyourvoice.org) and start writing.

### Social Media

Social media is an essential tool for communicating about your issue with a larger audience. When your supporters communicate about the campaign on social media, they can reach a wider audience of friends and contacts who already know and trust them, vs. an audience of strangers – making it more likely that your message will be heard and not ignored.

Visuals are ideal for communicating on social media – make them easy and fun to share.

- Connect “memes” or popular pictures with funny or timely captions with issues and events. You can add words to pictures with tools like PowerPoint, Pixlr or Photoshop.
- Post pictures and videos of events to give tangible evidence that people are working hard to create the change you want. (And ask your supporters to tag themselves!)
- Always ask your support to share or retweet (RT) your posts. This will only help your messages go wider and bring more attention and support to your issues.

- In the spring of 2012, Advocates for Youth along with other organizations decided to put pressure on Congress to support birth control coverage under the Affordable Care Act. We utilized a social media strategy asking youth activists to take pictures with Valentines' reading “Congress, listen up or we're breaking up, birth control matters”. These valentines were tweeted at members of congress with the hashtag #bc4us. Over 1600 people took pictures and tweeted them at Congress, to demonstrate young people's support for no cost birth control. The collection of valentines was later compiled in a book and presented to House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi, to further extend the campaign and bring even more attention to the issue. This form of social media pressure on members of congress helped to show them that their constituents were watching and wanted them to take action to ensure birth control coverage under the Affordable Care Act.

### Remember, online actions should connect with on the ground actions, and vice versa.

If you collect petition signatures online, deliver them to your target in person and take a picture that can be posted on Facebook. Try to find ways to integrate social media into all your on-the-ground actions, so those that can't attend can participate. Remember, you won't win your issue because of social media alone, but you can't win without it.

### HERE'S HOW JAMES FROM TEXAS COMBINED SOCIAL MEDIA AND ON THE GROUND ACTION

In 2013, a lawmaker in Texas introduced legislation that would ban funding to LGBT Resource Centers and Women's Centers on college campuses. These centers provide much-needed, even lifesaving resources and support to thousands every year.

James went to work to stop this bill. Naming his campaign, “Get off Our Backpacks,” he collected signatures, both online and in person, asking for the “Zedler Amendment” to be withdrawn.

James assigned the campaign a hashtag, and disseminated it on a shareable graphic for social media.

Working with nonprofit organizations, James disseminated the online petition to a large network of email contacts, and collected signatures in person.

James printed out the online petition signatures and gathered those he collected in person, and delivered 164 pages to the Texas legislature. That same day, the Amendment was withdrawn.

James let his followers know through email and social media that the campaign was successful. He continues to use the hashtag and “Get off our backpack” campaign title to motivate activists whenever issues around LGBT student safety arise.

**Drama or Music:**

Skits, music videos, and signing are also a great creative way to engage people in your issue. Putting your issue to song or a music video will allow you to incorporate humor or satire in a way that other actions do not and might be more successful in getting people on campus to engage with your issue. Check out this video created by Wesleyan students demanding free STI testing. [http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player\\_embedded&v=kiKRLzSsz3M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=player_embedded&v=kiKRLzSsz3M)

**Withdrawal and Renunciation:**

Publically refusing to participate in an event can also be a powerful display of discontent. This can be done by **walking out** or **turning one's back** to the speaker during a major event. Both actions show a clear message that you do not support the speaker and what they are saying without disrupting the event. If this action is done to your target by a large number of people, this can send a clear message to your target that people do not support their actions.

- Students at an event with columnist Dan Savage received national attention when they walked out of the event, feeling that he had insulted their spiritual beliefs. Whether you agree with the students' point of view or not, their action brought their message to the speaker's attention and ultimately to a very wide audience.

**Boycotts**, or refusing to purchase a product or participate in an event, are also a way to show your refusal to participate by withdrawing your money. At colleges and universities this can be especially powerful if alumni refuse to donate until the university meets its demands.

- Until 2013, Facebook's policy on gender-based hate speech was incomplete and the site did not take action against pages and groups which celebrated violence against women. Feminist activist group Women, Action, Media called for action

targeting both Facebook, and companies who advertise on Facebook – threatening a boycott of these companies if the situation didn't change. More than a dozen companies withdrew their advertising from Facebook. Facebook finally agreed to review and change its policies around gender-based hate speech.

**Demonstrate the size and power of your campaign**

**Marches** and **rallies** are two tactics that can be used to demonstrate your campaign's power by bringing people together to voice their support for your demands. A march moves from one location to another, while a rally generally take place in one specific location. Both marches and rallies offer a public venue for voicing your demands, educating the public, energizing supporters, or all of the above. They can increase support for your campaign and demonstrate to your target that you will not remain silent on the issue.

**When doing an in-person action, here are some steps to remember:**

- Choose a location where your supporters can easily get to, and where you can make your presence felt—such as outside your Senators' home offices or in the center of your campus/community.
- Check in early with the local police to see if you need a permit to hold your action in your chosen location. If so, get the permit and also follow all local regulations regarding bull horns, picket signs/posters, unobstructed space for pedestrians, not interfering with traffic, etc.
- Before the action, make sure that you and your supporters have a clear understanding about what you want to achieve through it.
- Let Advocates for Youth know that you're taking doing an action! We might be able to help you with media/social media outreach, feature you on Amplify, or with other resources!

- Have educational materials ready to distribute.
- Notify the media about your event, and prepare someone to be the official media contact. Make sure the press contact is easily identifiable. (The media contact may or may not be the spokesperson, listed next.)
- Make sure you have a spokesperson that is willing and able to talk with the media. Make sure the spokesperson is well prepared with talking points, etc.
- Prepare sheets with at least a few chants to reinforce your message. Identify chant leaders. Be ready to hand the sheets out to supporters.
- Gather supporters beforehand to make posters and picket signs. Think of the visuals you want for photographs or media.
- Organize a short list of four to five speakers for the action. Give each speaker a topic you want her/him to address, with a *very short* time limit on the speech. Choose an emcee that will keep the action on message and on time. The action should not last longer than an hour.
- Define the end of the action! Always have something that people at the action can do right then. Ask them to volunteer to circulate petitions, coordinate phone-banking, or even sign a postcard. Make sure to give everyone the date and time of your next event—this will give people another way to stay involved.
- Follow-up with organizations and members who attended and showed visible support for your issue. Remember to thank organizations for participating.
- Let your target know about your action and how many people showed up, signed petitions, and/or got involved.
- After the action, be sure to let Advocates for Youth know how it went, what you achieved, how many people participated, and if you got media coverage.

### Influencing federal, state and local policy through lobbying:

If you are organizing to change law or policy, lobbying, or meeting with legislators in person, is a key tactic. Face-to-face meetings are the best way to address your issue with a policy maker, and it's easier than you may think to visit policy makers. As a constituent, you can simply call a lawmaker who represents you and ask for a meeting; staff will tell you the procedure for arranging one.

Once you have arranged a meeting, keep these tips in mind:

- **Target Your Efforts.** Examine your goals and determine the policy makers it will be most effective to lobby.
- **Be Gracious and Professional.** Always begin by thanking the policy maker for the opportunity to share your ideas and opinions. Elected officials who support adolescent reproductive and sexual health, in particular, receive a lot of negative attention from the opposition. They will greatly appreciate a sincere “thank you.”
- **Do your Homework and Be Focused.** Stick with one issue. Talking about more than one topic will only confuse the message and dilute your point. Research the policy maker's position on your issue. You can find this position through voting records, speeches, newspaper articles, debates, and from other organizations that work in related areas.
- **Make It Personal.** Elected officials (and their staff) are more likely to remember letters and visits that include real life experiences, so be sure to briefly describe a personal experience that illustrates your point. Also, no matter how insignificant you feel the connection to be, if you have friends, relatives, and/or colleagues in common, let the policy maker know! Especially let the policy maker know if you are a constituent!

- **Consider Yourself an Information Source.** Policy makers have limited time and staff to devote to any one issue. They can't be as informed on all the issues as they would like to be. You can fill the information gap.
- If you can, take the opportunity to show your power to the policy maker. If you've been collecting signatures, bring them. Your personal story is important, but letting them know that hundreds of others are behind you is also vital.
- **Know Your Opposition as well as Who Is on Your Side.** Anticipate who may be in the opposition and tell the policy maker what the opposition arguments are likely to be. Provide clarification and rebuttal. It is also helpful for a policy maker to know what other groups, individuals, state agencies, and/or legislators are working with you on an issue. Providing this information illustrates that your group represents many voters. Bringing coalition members and other youth in on lobbying efforts is important.
- **Tell the Truth and Don't Be Afraid to Admit You Don't Know Something.** Giving false or misleading information will result in your losing credibility. If you don't know something, don't make it up. Explain that you do not know the answer and offer to get the information, and **DO IT!** Be sure to get back to the policy maker promptly with the information you promised.
- **Be Specific in What You Ask for.** If you want a vote, information, answers to a question, a signature on a petition – whatever it is – make sure you say so directly. Make sure you get a response – yes or no – to your request.
- **Follow up.** Send a thank you note immediately following a meeting. Also, find out if the policy maker did what he/she promised. Send a letter in which you restate your position, thank her/him for the supportive action taken, or ask an explanation for unsupportive action.

- **EXAMPLE:** Lucy and Alex, two teens from Colorado, visited their congressional representative's office to educate him on the Real Education for Healthy Youth Act (REHYA), a bill that would help ensure that young people receive comprehensive sex education. Alex described how the sex education he had received did not include information about contraception and condoms – information he needed to protect himself from HIV. Their Congressman had not previously heard of REHYA, and agreed to be a co-sponsor – thanks to Alex and Lucy's visit!

### Methods of Nonviolent Intervention

Nonviolent intervention methods are intended to disrupt the daily operations of your school or business. These are high pressure level tactics and should only be used later in your campaign if necessary – after other tactics have been unsuccessful.

**Sit-In:** To hold a sit-in, people occupy a space by seating themselves in a strategic location (like in a street to block it, in the president's or admission's office of a university, etc.) where they can disrupt the daily routine and force their target to deal with them. Participants will usually remain seated until their demands are met or they are forcibly removed and arrested. Some schools will try to wait you out, while others will arrest you immediately. There is also some risk that the school will use violent tactics to remove you like using pepper spray, which happened at the University of California-Davis. Schools often do not like to arrest students or use force because, if captured by the media, this can create negative publicity and can encourage more people to stand in solidarity with the students and join your fight. Thus, it is important to send a media advisory prior to staging a direct action like a sit-in so you can have media there to capture your actions as well as the actions of school officials. Also, make sure to assign students to videotape, photograph, live tweet and write about the action. It is also important that you win the media battle by making sure your messaging, not the school's, dominates the press coverage of the action.

- In July of 2013, young people in Florida began a sit-in at the State House to call for reform after the verdict in the Trayvon Martin murder case. In August of 2013 they were still there, their protest having lasted a month and counting. Activists and media outlets around the country have publicized their actions. They've made it clear they won't be deterred.

**Overloading of administrative systems:**

Another way to disrupt daily operations is to flood email, phone or fax systems of your target. The goal of this action is to make it impossible for your target to ignore your demands by literally disrupting their means of communication and work flow. This can be done by getting high volumes of people over a scheduled period of time to call the office of your target and flood the phone lines. You can also shut down email systems if you get the correct email address of your target. You must make sure people are sending them from different domains and use a variety of subject lines, to ensure they are not easily blocked by your target. The challenge with this action is that it is harder to fully shut down systems for an extended period of time. The upside is you often have a lower risk of arrest.

Overall, there are a number of tactics to choose from to move your target to meeting your demands. As a group, you will want to consider which makes the most for your campaign strategy to bring you towards your victory.

## VII. Winning

Campaigns are rarely won overnight. Many campaigns last for years and involve the use of a variety of strategies and tactics to ultimately win and create lasting change in one's community. If you do not win at first, do not lose sight of your end goal. You will want to regroup to build more power and develop some new tactics to move you closer to achieving victory. What is essential is that your community remains dedicated to the cause both during the campaign itself, through the victory and throughout the implementation process.

Tips about winning:

- **Don't rub your victory in your opponents' faces.** Remember you are fighting for a cause that will benefit your entire community - you must frame your victory to your community and to the press in terms of how your entire community wins from this change. There should be no losers in the fight for social justice.
- **Celebrate your victories.** You have worked very hard. Take time to acknowledge what you have accomplished.
- **Document your victory.** Get it covered in the press. Publish how your demands were formally accepted by the target. This is key to ensuring a transparent implementation of your demands. It is also helpful to document your entire campaign so you can pass along your strategies, successes and challenges to future organizers.
- **Remember the fight isn't over.** Your target may have agreed to your demands, but you will now have to work with her to ensure the transparent implementation of the demands. You will want to

select leaders from your group to be part of the implementation process. If the person in power starts to slip and the demands are not being implemented, you need someone ready to blow the whistle and put pressure on them to live up to their agreements.

- **Set your next goal:** One of the best results of a campaign is not only the demand being met, but the fact that you have built a dedicated community of folks who are not only passionate but know how to win campaigns. This is a great moment to keep people engaged and start to outline the next set of demands you will work towards.

### That's a Wrap:

We hope this toolkit has sparked some new ideas and provided a clear framework that you can apply to making change in your community. Best of luck as you get started. And remember, you can always reach out to staff at Advocates for Youth to support you and your efforts.





# Resources

**Midwest Academy**

[www.midwestacademy.com](http://www.midwestacademy.com)

The Midwest Academy is a national training institute committed to advancing the struggle for social, economic, and racial justice. From local neighborhood groups to statewide and national organizations, Midwest Academy has trained over twenty-five thousand grassroots activists from hundreds of organizations and coalitions.

**Young People For**

[www.youngpeoplefor.org](http://www.youngpeoplefor.org)

Young People For (YP4) is a long-term leadership development initiative that identifies, engages, and empowers the newest generation of progressive leaders. YP4 focuses on identifying young people who are campus and community leaders today, engaging them in the broader progressive movement, and empowering them with the knowledge, strategies, and skills they can put to work to promote positive, sustainable change in their communities.

**New Organizing Institute**

[www.neworganizing.com](http://www.neworganizing.com)

New Organizing Institute trains organizers by integrating on-the-ground organizing and online organizing. They offer a variety of free tools and support for organizers.

**The 1 in 3 Campaign  
Campus Activist Toolkit**

[www.1in3campaign.org/resources](http://www.1in3campaign.org/resources)

The 1 in 3 toolkit is a great resource for college students interested in doing abortion related activism on their campus. It outlines concrete activities and actions student groups can conduct to work toward destigmatizing abortion and promoting access to abortion services in their communities.

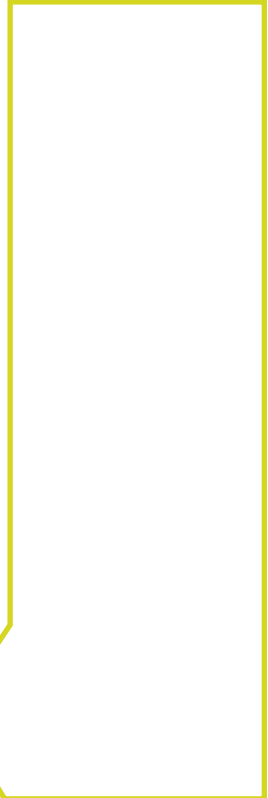
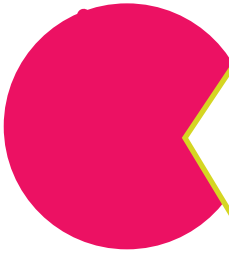
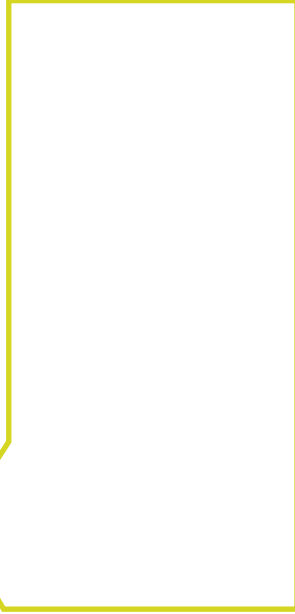
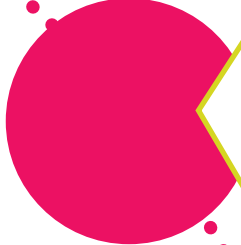
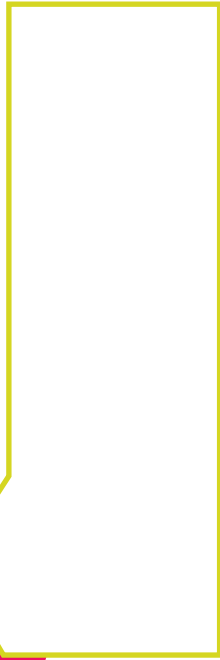
# Worksheets

# STRATEGY CHART

DEMANDS	TARGETS	CURRENT RESOURCES	POTENTIAL SUPPORTERS	TACTICS
<p><b>Demands are specific measurable things we want to WIN!</b></p>	<p><b>Primary target:</b></p> <p><b>Understanding your target:</b></p> <p><b>Secondary target:</b></p>	<p><b>What we have:</b></p> <p><b>What we need:</b></p>	<p><b>Who cares about this issue enough to join or help us?</b></p> <p><b>How will you reach out to potential supporters?</b></p>	<p><b>Tactics are actions taken to move your target to give you what you want (your demands).</b></p>

See page 8 for the full instructions for filling out this chart.

Adapted from Midwest Academy



**ESCALATION  
OF TACTICS**

# My Vision for Sex Education!

I support the **Real Education for Healthy Youth Act**, a sex education vision that outlines what young people truly need. The bill not only authorizes funding for comprehensive sex education directed towards adolescents and college students, but also prioritizes teacher training so that our nation's educators have the tools they need to be effective in the classroom.

Let's work to ensure that our vision of young people receiving the sex education they need in order to lead healthy lives and have healthy relationships. We owe it to them to provide them honest sexual health education. With the Real Education for Healthy Youth Act we can start bringing our vision for sex ed to life!

Pass the Real  
Education  
for Healthy  
Youth Act!

FIRST NAME

LAST NAME

STATE

ZIP

EMAIL

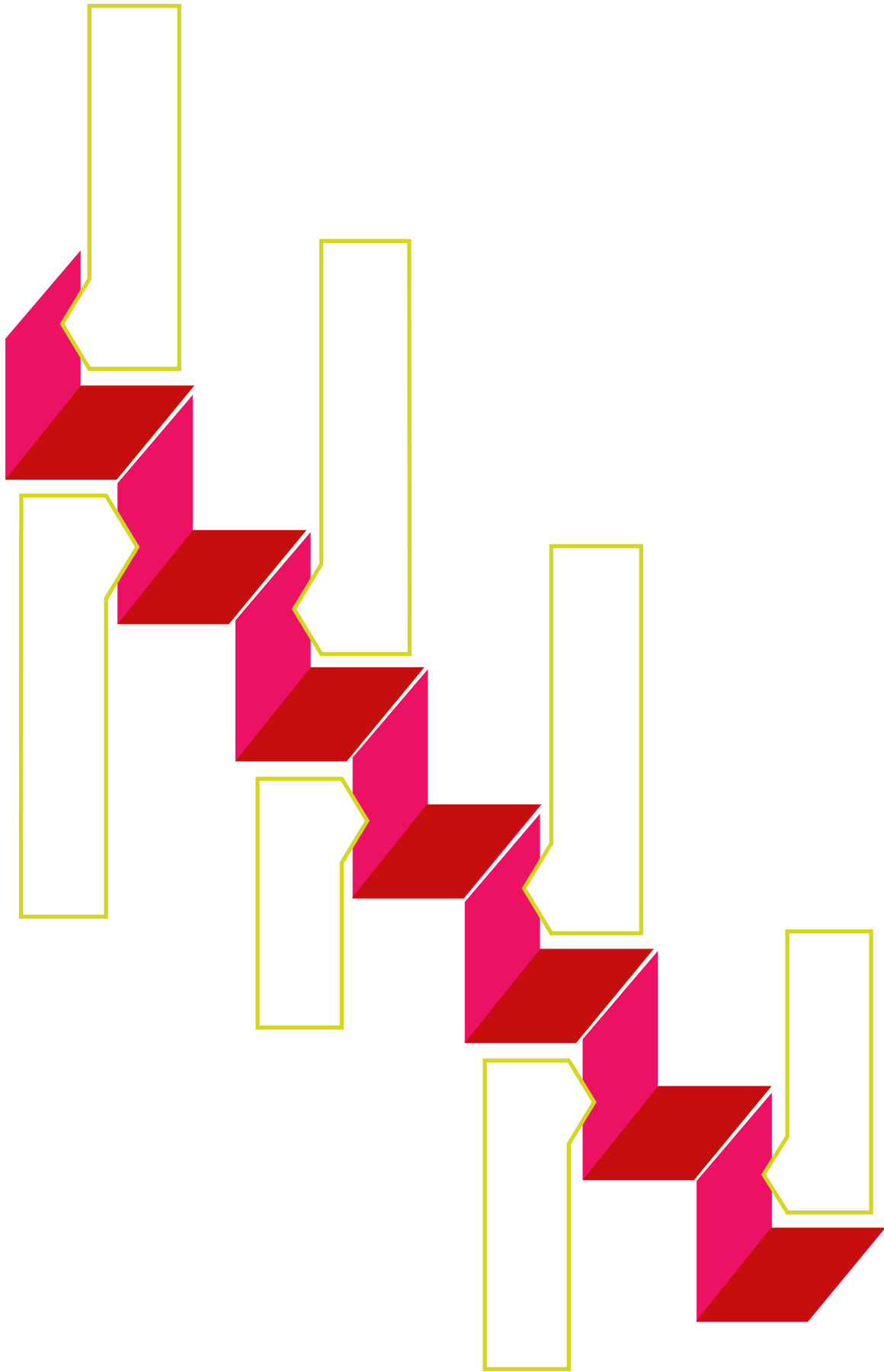
MY VISION IS:


Rights. Respect. Responsibility.

2000 M STREET NW, SUITE 750 WASHINGTON DC 20036 USA  
T: 202.419.3420 F: 202.419.1448 [www.advocatesforyouth.org](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org)



**LADDER OF  
ENGAGEMENT**



# PROBLEM TREE

LEAVES: WHAT PROBLEMS DO YOU SEE FACING YOUR COMMUNITY?

TRUNK: WHAT STRUCTURES, PRACTICES, AND POLICIES INSTITUTIONALIZE THE PROBLEMS?

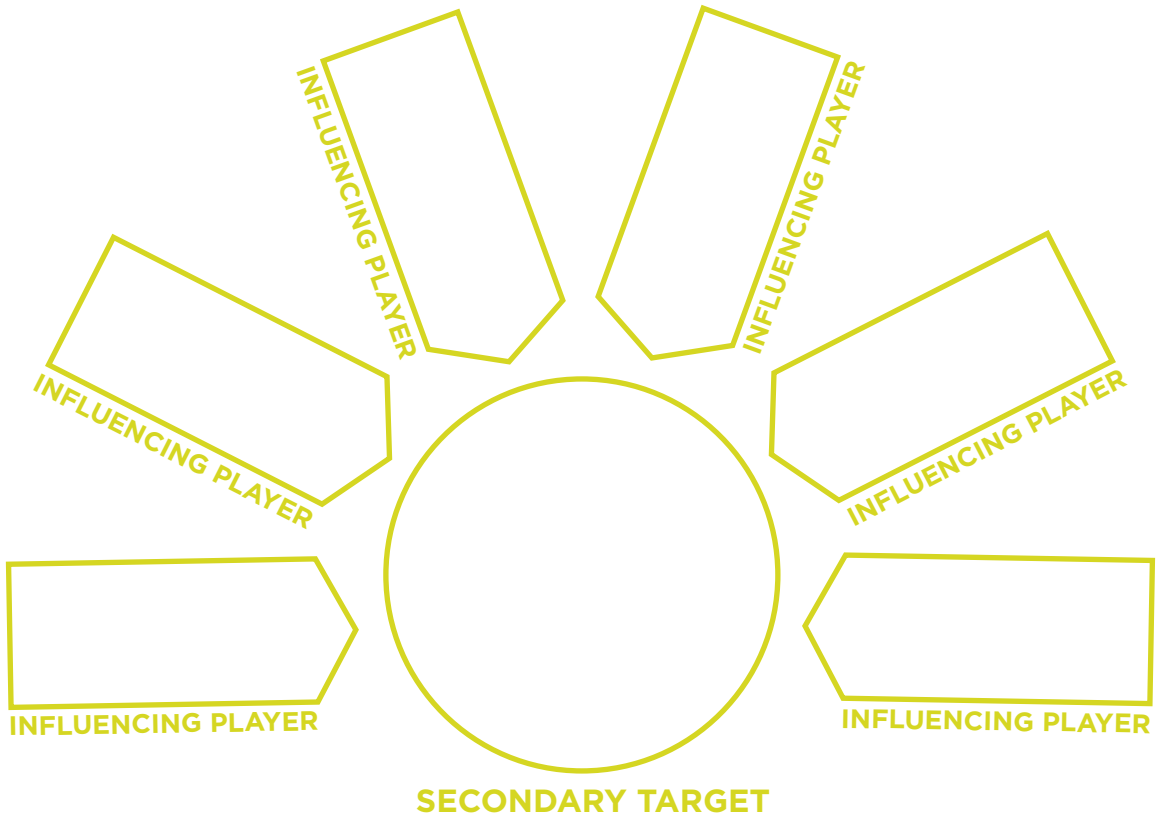
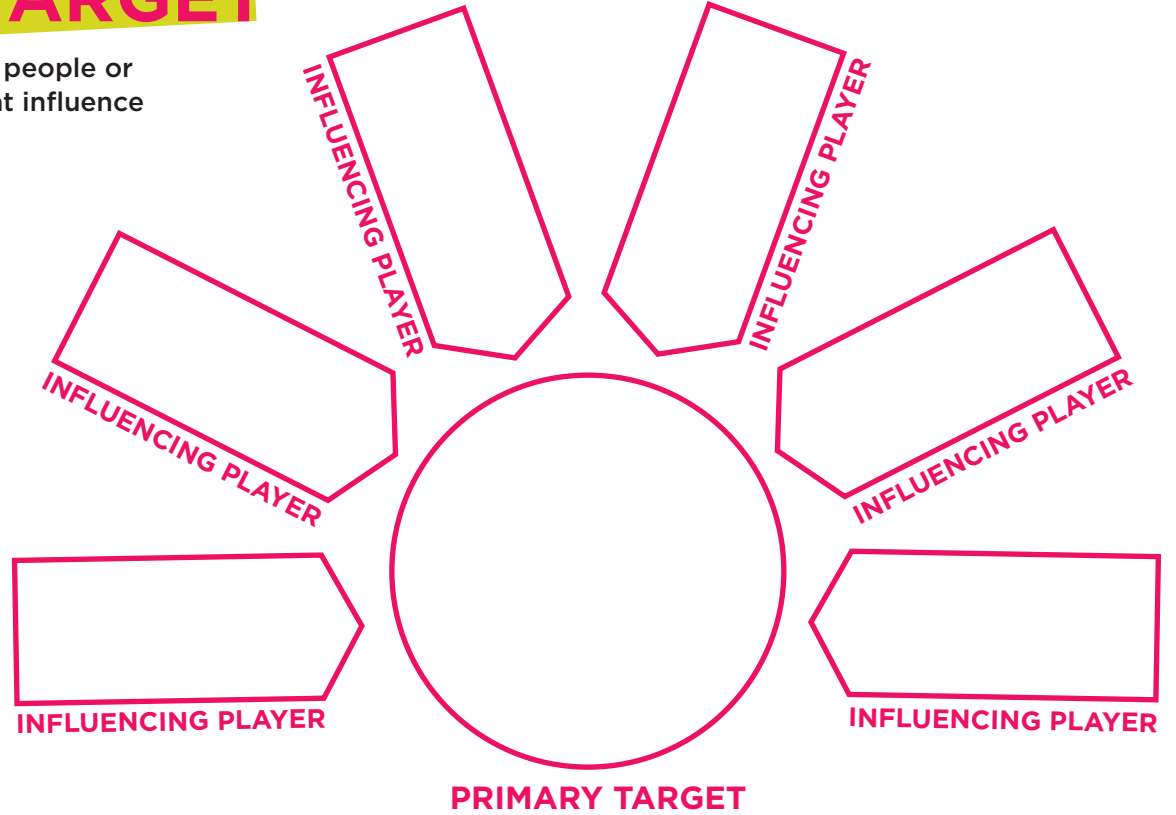
ROOTS: WHAT ARE THE UNDERLYING HISTORICAL, SOCIAL, OR ECONOMIC ROOT CAUSES OF THESE PROBLEMS? WHY DO THESE STRUCTURES OR POLICIES EXIST?

\*This original Blueprint for Social Justice, from which the 'Root Cause/Problem Tree' is modeled, was developed by the Movement Strategy Center [MSC] for Young People For. This work is a remixed and updated version of the Blueprint for Social Justice Workbook & Curriculum licensed in 2009 to Movement Strategy Center, under the Creative Commons "Attribution-Non-Commercial-ShareAlike 2.5" License.



# UNDERSTANDING YOUR TARGET

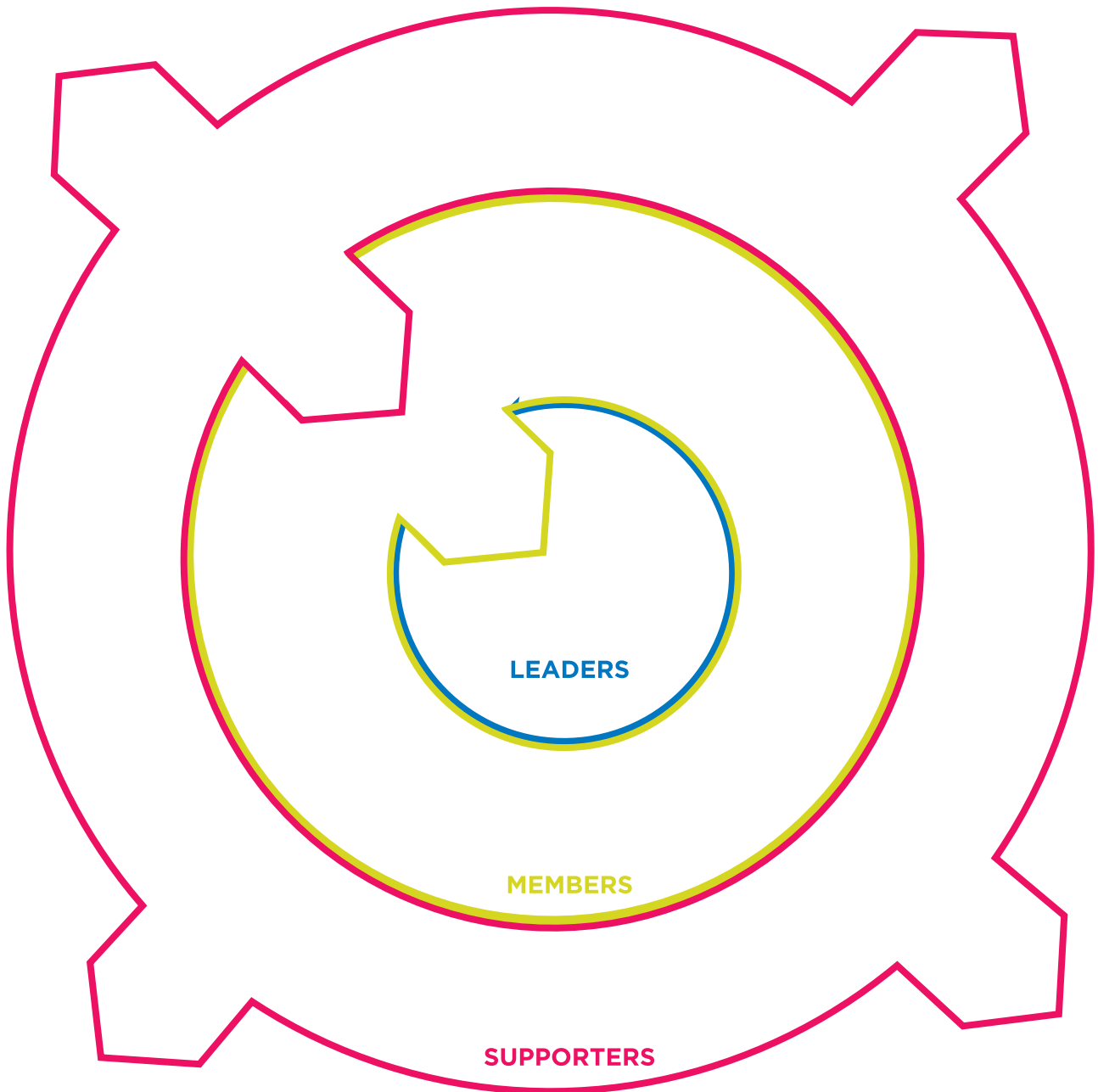
Write in some of the people or groups of people that influence your base.



## BUILDING POWER:

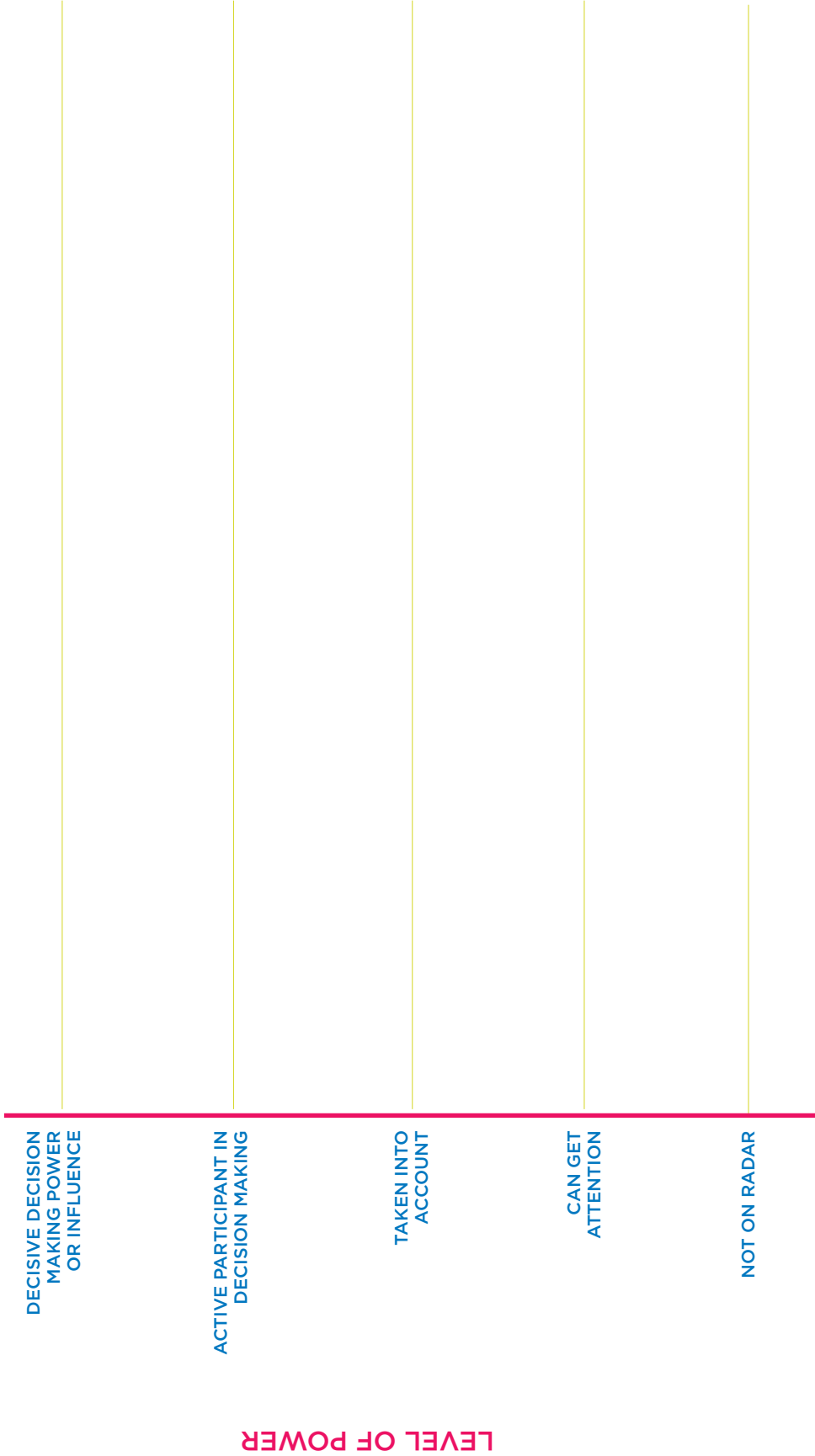
As a means of envisioning your own base, fill in the diagram with the names of your leaders, members, and supporters. On the outside of your diagram, you will want to think of new individuals and groups you could reach out to bring in new supporters and widen your base.

Simultaneously, you will want to circle the names of some of your members who you identify as potential leaders.



# POWER MAP!

For each key player, you will rate their level of support for your demands on the horizontal axis and their level of decision making power on the vertical axis.



LEVEL OF POWER

LEVEL OF OPPOSITION