



NETCHANGE TRAININGS

Networked Change Campaign Grid

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This worksheet reviews the principles of the directed-network campaigning as presented in the Networked Change Report. Breaking the report principles down into concrete approaches, the grid also shows how other campaigns have implemented them. Now, over to you to design your own directed-network campaign!

4 principles of directed networks



open to
people power



create cross-
movement
network hubs



frame a
compelling
cause



run with
focus +
discipline

Principle: Frame a compelling cause

Organizational loyalty is fast eroding and this has deep implications for nonprofit campaigners. In the past, organizations could count on their membership to follow by reflex when they sent out a call to action. Today's overstimulated potential supporters, especially millennials, adopt causes and not institutions, when they decide to invest their time in social change.



The need to constantly recruit a new follower base puts pressure on campaigners to become highly adept at winning hearts and minds in an information environment that is already greatly crowded with cause appeals. To do this effectively, they must rapidly provide their audiences with a "why should I care?" statement. Great storytelling that taps into values and cultural mythology becomes a crucial skill in this context.

Storytelling and issue framing is the way to convert spectators to supporters rapidly. Compelling stories, however, need to answer to several criteria. They must touch deep primal concerns shared by the audience and also be framed in a simple and believable way, with a path to victory and a role for the participant.

WORKSHEET: FRAMING AND STORYTELLING APPROACHES

Approach	NoKXL ex.	Fightfor15\$ ex.	Your campaign
Do you have an action-worthy problem?	Climate change - media coverage of issue + science + awareness of problem	Lack of living wages in many U.S. districts tied to larger problems of inequality and racial injustice	
Do you have an action-worthy solution ie. Theory of Change?	“Chokepoint” approach – block access to markets for high carbon resources	15\$ and a union for all workers at the low end of the pay scale	
Are you plugging into passions and deeply held values with this?	Fear for the future, global justice for vulnerable populations, anger wrt. fossil fuel lobby	Growing sense of economic inequality + systemic racial injustice deeply tied to wage injustice	
Do you employ oppositional framing ie. Do you have a compelling villain to mobilize against?	TransCanada Corp / Big Oil as the enemy	Walmart and McDonalds make billions and ‘can’t afford’ to raise wages for struggling workers	
Are you set up to align + push across multiple media channels?	Strong mainstream PR leadership, blanket alt media outreach, aligned owned channels across network, strong people powered sharing	Protests on the streets, influencers + top-level PR generating earned media + vast constellation of social media channels + supporter testimonies	

Principle: Cross-movement network hubs



To move the needle on an issue in previous decades, common practice was to create a cause-based organization and to build membership and resources through which pressure could be channeled. The ability to create social change in this model was closely tied to the process of growing an institution. With the new possibilities of rapid collaboration and indeed the benefits of working on an issue as a group rather than a single top-down body, network building has emerged as an attractive and efficient new way to build power. Many of the successful campaigns we studied aligned with larger cause networks and devoted considerable energy towards supporting them.

Various aspects of a network society contribute to lowering the transaction costs of building and maintaining wider alliances. The agility of modern communications, for one, allows for rapid appropriation and repurposing of cause messaging by others. On an individual level, affinity with causes rather than organizations⁶ encourages people to rally around issues regardless of previous institutional loyalties. It is therefore less important for a single group to “own” a cause and more important that the cause itself find wider resonance with allied groups.

Campaigns which have succeeded in connecting a wide range of networks and have directed them to collectively exert power have benefitted from the amazing force amplification that results from this approach. Furthermore, from the perspective of corporate or political targets, the pressure coming simultaneously from a diverse patchwork of constituencies, rather than a single interest group, can be formidable enough to drive rapid concessions.

WORKSHEET: NETWORK-BUILDING APPROACHES

Approach	NoKXL ex.	Fightfor15\$ ex.	Your campaign
Are there parallel networks/movements that will be motivated by this cause?	Ranchers, Native Americans, communities along pipeline route	Remnants of Occupy + Movement for Black Lives	
Is your cause open enough to be adopted by other movements?	It's about the pipeline and its dangers not just about climate change and the environment. Not overly connected to any one brand	Yes. Several groups outside SEIU have picked up the campaign and run it locally	
Do you have a network convening and building plan?	Network infrastructure to convene calls, fill gaps, fund coordination, support rapid response	Within SEIU-affiliated groups, regular calls and briefings, talking point digests and guides for local protests	

Principle: Opening to grassroots power



Judging by the practices of all top innovators in our study group, true grassroots participation in advocacy campaigns is now a non-negotiable success factor. For one thing, it is essential as a sign of popular support, something that demonstrates power to the intended targets of a pressure campaign. Governments and corporations now cringe when they know that a critical mass is mobilized behind demands and mobilizing that mass can certainly be easier in the digital age when the right approaches are applied.

In a network society, campaigns that mobilize grassroots participation also go much further than grassroots campaigns because they tap into widespread cultural expectations, especially among millennials. Today's empowered free agents and individuals, when called to support a cause or movement, quite simply want to contribute more and have more say over how things are done. Campaigns which give supporters an active role and freedom to customize generate a lot more commitment and enthusiasm and often gain precious insights and innovations by tapping into the collective intelligence of their crowd.

WORKSHEET: GRASSROOTS-PARTICIPATION APPROACHES

Approach	NoKXL ex.	Fightfor15\$ ex.	Your campaign
Did you crowdsource the campaign idea/ framing/content from supporters?	Multiple hashtags, social media campaigns, iconic images came from supporters	Local supporters often make up their own slogans and messaging. Supporter voices + testimonies are always put forward first in FF15 communications	
Is there a concrete and tangible role for grassroots supporters? A ladder of engagement? Is there infrastructure in place to support local leadership? (staff, tech)	Always a people-centric campaign. Most key partners had clear engagement models, organizers on staff, appropriate tech. Supporters always in front of the story, not NGO's	Supporters lead local protests, start local chapters and always serve as spokespeople for the movement	
Where do you show your people power to the target?	Joint comment deliveries. Bird-dogging across the US. Large public rallies	Cross-country protests in front of McDonalds, Walmarts etc.	
Are there tools for self-starting actions?	Distributed days of action, hounding political figures at local events, local petitions	Guides for starting local protests available online	

Principle: Running with focus and discipline



Advocacy campaigns are often trying to exert pressure on targets that are much better resourced, often by a factor of 10 and sometimes 100 to 1. When a government or corporation launches a counter-campaign through PR and mass media channels, activists must marshal their staff, budgets and content wisely. When possible, this calls for leadership by seasoned campaigners with a keen sense of timing, relationships and resource management.

Besides field experience, there are now other ways that campaigning organizations can make informed decisions about which advocacy tactics to deploy and when to deploy them. With the right platforms and listening processes, campaigners can now draw on testing, data modeling and product development approaches, often drawn from the world of for-profit technology firms.

Running much like tech startups, data-driven campaigners run small experiments on audience segments to optimize their campaign messaging before launching to a wider audience. They also track performance carefully and learn valuable lessons on timing and campaign growth patterns, constantly improving processes from one deployment to another.

WORKSHEET: EXECUTION AND RESOURCE-MANAGEMENT APPROACHES

Approach	NoKXL ex.	Fightfor15\$ ex.	Your campaign
What are your listening capacities?	350 as core partner, CREDO, Avaaz + others do this regularly	SEIU works with PR firm that conducts constant listening and intelligence on movement across the country	
Do you have ways to test your approach on target audiences?	350 had listening-tracking systems set up and did AB message testing	Fightfor15 digital HQ runs AB 'always better' testing on messages and ad layouts	
Do you know when your moments of truth are?	2012 elections, Presidential veto	April 15th nationwide protests, days of action at low-wage retailers, #Blacklivesmatter protests	
Are you resourced for the fight and committed for the long haul?	Long term funders committed to climate. Campaign lasted 5 years longer than initial plan, but was so successful new funding sources materialized	Started in 2012 and has been running steadily and gaining momentum year after year. Budget bw. 70 and 100 million	