



# How to coordinate a campaign for change

Ben Norman

---

# Contents

---



## Introduction - p.3

### Chapter One: Campaign Basics - p.7

What is a campaign?  
What is the difference between campaigning and raising awareness?  
Form and coordinate a campaign group  
Understand the journey of an activist

### Chapter Two: Developing a Campaign Strategy - p.20

Establish your mission statement  
Set yourself winnable goals  
Access if your goals are SMART  
Utilise Campaign Mapping  
Understand the strengths and weaknesses of your campaign  
Internal and External Support

### Chapter Three: Campaign Communication - p.36

Engage your target audience, the public.  
Write and Deliver a successful speech

### Chapter Four: Campaign Marketing – p.53

The importance of marketing  
Marketing theory – Principles of Marketing and Campaign Marketing  
What's in a word? Framing the Argument  
This chapter will then enable you to:  
Put the theory into practise  
Analyse successful marketing

### Chapter Five: Utilising the Media - p.69

Develop a media strategy  
Understand how to use the local, regional and national media to your advantage  
Understand the value of News  
Construct a press release

### Chapter Six: Organising Events – p.82

Coordinate a successful event  
An Action Day  
Hosting a debate  
Organising a March, Demonstration or Rally  
Manage campaign stunts  
Lobby Officials  
Effective Petitioning  
Understand the law

### Utilising political parties by Morys Ireland - p.110

### Conclusion - p.113



## Introduction

“Be the change you want to see in the world”

Mahatma Ghandi

The inspiration for this book has slowly matured during my past four years coordinating campaigns and working alongside campaigning organisations, both during and after my time at University. Many believe that activism and campaigning are the soul preserve of the young and the militant, that to be an activist you have to hold far-fetched notions or buy into political dogma. Nothing could be further from the truth. During the past four years I have worked with a wide variety of campaigners, with a wide variety of aims. From student groups fighting against increasing fees, or for fair trade status to wider groups calling for an end to war, to defend human rights, to protect the environment or to safeguard the weak. All of these people share something, it isn't their aim, nor is it their political persuasion. It isn't their lifestyle or their fashion sense, it's not a desire to be different or to stand apart from society, but rather it is their desire for change, real, positive change. It is the fact that they could identify something wrong in their world and they took the conscious decision to do something about it. Young and old, student and lecturer, college pupil and senior citizen all understand that something can be done and all stand together to achieve that aim.

Many people believe that campaigning is not suitable for everyone and that it is simply something that comes naturally to some activists and that some campaign as a chosen way of life or even as a hobby. Once more nothing could be further from the truth, each campaigner has their own unique story of how they became involved in campaigning and the journey this has taken them on. I myself had little intention of ever getting involved in activism or campaigning. Indeed it was a miserable, cold night outside the Students' Union building where I first met Ryan Cloke a student who had recently helped establish a student campaigning society, Portsmouth Socialist Students. It was by sheer chance that I took a leaflet from Ryan and then attended his first meeting. It was at this moment I that started my journey into the world of campaigning. Over the next three years we coordinated a broad range of campaigns for change both on a local and regional level, but with a national and international focus. These actions started small, first we attended local debates and won before we then started to build our own campaigns, first with a small group of supporters and later forming coalitions with other small student and non-student groups. We organised boycotts of unethical products from our campus, worked to raise awareness of the humanitarian crisis in Palestine, and organised a grass roots student led campaign against increasing tuition fees. We, along with an entire new generation of campaigners, also found ourselves involved in national campaigns such as marching though London calling for an end to the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq or in cities such as Barking campaigning against the rise of fascism. These years not only taught us valuable lessons in campaigning skills but also

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

provided us with an opportunity to research and understand some of the political, ethical and social justice organisations. We ended our years as students and our journey as student campaigners by finding ourselves in the occupied territories of Palestine attempting to discover what life is truly like for people on both sides of the conflict so we in turn could better understand and therefore better communicate their plight to people back home. After University I have worked at that very same Students' Union where I have written and delivered campaign training to student campaigners as well as coordinated local and regional campaigns on issues such as Free Education. I certainly did not know on that cold, dark, miserable night outside the Union that I would dedicate the next few years of my life to campaigns and would eventually write a book on the subject but that just perfectly demonstrates the journey you can take if only you're prepared to seize your opportunities. The fact is that once you realise that you can effect change, and once you realise that change is needed you are in no position to stop campaigning.

As campaigners there is one question that we shall always be asked, either by the media or the apathetic bystander, why bother? Are two or twenty, or two hundred or even two thousand people marching, demonstrating or signing petitions on a drizzly Saturday afternoon really going to stop a war, will they be able to bring troops home? For that matter what about the thousands who marched through London to petition the government to address climate change, do they have a chance? If not what about smaller groups, those concentrating on local issues such as closing hospitals, or proposed motorways, what chance do they have? I must answer that question with a thought of my own. What if we didn't speak out? What would happen if we all fell silent, if we all decided to look away and busy ourselves with our own lives? Whilst this book is written with a clear aim of guiding you to a campaign victory it is not simply the success of a campaign, but the very act of standing up and speaking out which must be judged.

The most vivid example of this can be found in the work of journalist Robert Fisk. In 2002 Fisk interviewed Amira Hass, the daughter of a Holocaust survivor. Hass wrote that in 1944 her mother found herself on a train heading for the Polish concentration camps, one more victim of the Nazi persecution. However, it was not the camps, nor was it the Nazis that her mother remembered most vividly. As Hass states, "When the train pulled into a station my mother saw these German women looking at the prisoners, just looking."<sup>1</sup> It was the sight of these civilian women and how they silently watched the train go that her mother found the most disturbing. The reason for this is as the Holocaust museum in Washington DC states: "Thou shalt not be a victim. Thou shalt not be a perpetrator. Above all, thou shalt not be a bystander". If the German people, living in a Nazi state with its secret police and its state controlled propaganda can be accused of guilt for staying silent during one of the worst atrocities in history then what does that say about us if we can stay silent about an injustice in our free society? Of course to claim that the actions of any current government are comparable to the crimes of the Holocaust would be a distortion of historical fact. Yet the point remains, if

---

<sup>1</sup> Robert Fisk, "*The Great War For Civilisation*", HarperPerennial, (2 Oct 2006)

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

we can choose to become bystanders, if we choose to watch and choose to stay silent then we must also take responsibility for whatever our inaction may bring. If we do this we become the guilty and then we are no better than those who stood on the rail side watching the doomed depart for the gas chambers.

In modern Britain we have the freedom of speech, the freedom to stand up without being shot down, the freedom to shout out without being locked up, yet many people choose to say nothing. They stay silent because they do not know what they can do, because they do not know that the power to be positive agents for change lies in their own hands. This book aims to empower those people, to show them that now is not the time to sit silently, but to stand up for your beliefs, to tackle your injustice, and that this is the time to be counted as someone who refuses to stay silent.

We are of course not short of causes in today's world. Many seasoned or veteran campaigners may like to recall the golden days of activism and campaigns; they recall the peace marches of the 1960's and 1970's, or the anti-poll tax campaigns of the 1980's. Indeed this country has a proud campaigning history and it is because of our history of holding the powerful to account that we have national institutions and achievements such as the National Health Service. However, just because our history is strong does not mean we are any weaker in comparison. In 2003 between two and three million people ranging from war veterans to school children marched together on the streets of London, they stood together for the sake of their conscience and so that history would know that they stood against a war. Similarly during the G8 summit at Gleneagles in 2007 thousands of people flocked to Scotland to campaign against global injustices, to call for human rights, for world leaders to defend the weak and aid the suffering. The world is clearly not a perfect place, but there are people who are prepared to stand up and call for change.

The challenge faced by many thousands of potential campaigners who stand against these injustices is that they do not know what they are campaigning for. They may know what they are trying to protect, or defend and they can be clear about what they are campaigning against but the idea of an alternative can often allude them and this can clearly be seen by the messages they carry and the way they campaign. The media isn't short of images of people who are "anti-war", "anti-capitalist" or "anti-fascist", but it is only the minority of people who know what they are actually for. This is an important consideration for any campaign group, indeed the need for positive campaigning, the need to show that real alternatives do exist and the importance of showing what you are for as well as what you are against is an important topic that I will be discussing in-depth in later chapters of this book.

The single most important lesson that I have gleaned both from my experiences and through the people I have worked with is the need to think globally but act locally. Campaigning is not only about the global issues; it is about the local concerns. It is about injustices that affect an entire community as well as people's everyday lives. At the time of writing there are several such campaigns in my hometown of Portsmouth. Local elderly residents have

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

formed campaign groups to lobby their MP's and to whip up local support in order to save a local fire station and a hospital, both of which are vital to the community. Before these closures were proposed none of these people had any campaign experience, they did not see themselves as the sort of people who would brandish placards, write to MP's or argue their cause on national television, and yet they have done all of those things and much more because they knew it was the right thing to do.

As campaigners and as agents for change it is our responsibility to question, to ask why and to work for real, positive, change. It is my sincerest hope that this book can act as your guide, from the moment you identify an injustice or something you want to change, to the moment you establish and coordinate your campaign, right up until you achieve your goal. This will be achieved by guiding you through six key steps of campaigning theory. This theory has been built up over the past few years both through my work and affiliation to many organisations. I have analysed their ethos and values and noted their best practises in order to bring you a comprehensive yet straightforward and engaging guide to coordinating your campaign, regardless of how big or small your goal may be.

Throughout this book you will hear from experienced campaigners who herald from a board range of organisations and who have a vast array of views and just as varied goals. From the environmentalists who succeeded in achieving fair trade status for their local institution to the student group who brought their local politicians to account. From the man who used his life experiences to establish and lead a network for humanitarian justice to the woman who waged a one person war against plastic bags in her town, and won. Their inspirational testimonies will demonstrate that the theory, draw together from their experiences as well as my own, do not only sound feasible on paper but actually work to achieve real, positive change.

It would be wrong for me to suggest that campaigning is an easy activity. Reaching your campaign goal may require a lot of time, effort and patience, indeed one of the reasons I am now in a position to write this book is due to the lessons I have learnt from my mistakes as well as my successes. However, if you seriously plan your campaign, if you set your mind upon a specific goal and are prepared to work towards it, if you are prepared to refuse to fall to disillusionment and are prepared to motivate and inspire people even when your own confidence is shaking then you will achieve your campaign goal and this book will guide you through it all. As citizens we have great power, we have the power to think, to reason, to understand and to judge. Therefore at times we must also be the conscience of the nation, and the conscience of our community. We must be the people who are prepared to lead others and change our world. Ignorance and silence may go hand in hand, but to know and to be silent is an unacceptable crime. So stand up, be prepared to be counted for what you believe to be right, be prepared to shout out against injustices at the top of your voice, and be prepared to make a real difference.

## Chapter One: Campaign Basics

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

Margaret Mead

This chapter will ask:

- What is a campaign?
- What is the difference between campaigning and raising awareness?

This chapter will enable you to:

- Form and coordinate a campaign group
- Understand the journey of an activist

### What is a campaign and who is an activist?

The words campaign and activist are words that can instantly conjure up images of scruffy students wielding homemade placards clothed in well worn Che Guevara t-shirts. Whilst it would be untrue to suggest these people do not exist they certainly don't have the monopoly over the phrases. Before this book takes you on to the first step of coordinating an effective campaign it is essential that we put these stereotypes to bed and clearly define what a campaign is and who can be regarded as an activist. Both phrases can be defined in a single word: Change. An activist is simply someone who chooses to become an advocate and an agent of change, somebody who recognises an injustice or a problem in the world or in their local community and resolves themselves to play a part in the solution. Being an activist does not entail political affiliation, nor is it the soul intellectual property of any political persuasion, it isn't a lifestyle choice or a fashion statement it is the conscious choice to change, to make a difference. Similarly the word campaign can simply be defined as a coordinated effort by a team of campaigners, with a set goal and a set strategy it is the process through which an activist can achieve the aim of real, positive change.

There are of course a wide variety of activists and a plethora of campaigns with a range of goals from affecting political change, to saving a hospital, standing against a political decision, to advocating environmental change, indeed your own goals, and the goal of your campaign can be highly personal, completely dependent upon the circumstances in which you find yourself. There are however some constants, factors which hold true regardless of your

goals such as the need for a strategy, the need for effective organisation, the need to put your campaign on the map and in the local consciousness. These are the factors which the following chapters will seek to cover, these are the black holes in your knowledge which this book will fill, enabling you to coordinate your campaign to its full potential to ensure you swiftly achieve your goal.

### The difference between campaigning and raising awareness?

If you ever ask an activist what is the aim of their campaign they will invariably answer “to raise awareness of ...” before talking about their cause. Simply put raising awareness is not a campaign. A campaign is a coordinated effort for a tangible objective: change. If you’re not aiming to change something then you’re not campaigning. This is not to say that raising awareness is not a worthwhile exercise, indeed it can be a vital activity within your campaign but it is not a campaign objective onto itself, merely a means to achieving an end.

### Forming a campaign group

The start of everybody’s journey into campaigning is different; some people seek out injustices while others have injustice thrust upon them. Your own journey is going to depend entirely on the person you are, your background, and the goals you set yourself. The first step is choosing your cause; clearly this is a highly personal choice and will also be dependent on your circumstances. The first thing for you to consider is, does your campaign centre around a local issue, such as the closure of a hospital, a proposed motorway or even a local election? Or alternatively does your campaign stretch across a regional, or even national level? If it is a national or international concern then there is a strong chance that there may already be an organisation or large campaigning group for you to join. If so you could consider setting up a local branch or helping to build upon what already exists. If no such group exists, or you are perhaps the first to identify the injustice then the task of founding a group may fall to you.

It is inevitable that any group you establish will start small, perhaps you will have only one or two friends and supporters to begin with, but it will grow as you progress with your campaign. It’s vitally important not to become disillusioned early on if vast throngs of people don’t instantly appear to support your cause. Building an effective campaign group can take time, but remember a small group of people can achieve great things. For proof of this you need look no further than *Amnesty International*. In 1961 British lawyer Peter Benneson penned an article entitled “The forgotten prisoners” calling for the freedom of political prisoners in Portugal. Within months Benenson had turned his publicity stunt into a movement and founded *Amnesty International*. Today the organisation has over 1.8 million members in 150 countries across the globe<sup>2</sup>. Since 1961 the organisation has lobbied governments and the

---

<sup>2</sup> *Amnesty international*, UK 2005 (<http://www.amnesty.org.uk/>)

United Nations to broker international human rights treaties and has secured the release of hundreds of political prisoners. One man started all this, simply by identifying an injustice and choosing to do something about it. Who's to say your group couldn't be just as successful?

<p>If you can talk to just six people, Who talk to six people ... Who talk to six people ... By the end you've reached ... 279936 people</p>
---

### The journey from apathy

Before you consider the logistics of actually setting up a group it is important to consider how someone can go from being apathetic, to being a campaigner. Whilst the notion of apathy is itself a debatable term we should define it here as being "indolent of mind", someone who is unaware and disinclined to join a campaign group. It is reasonable to assume that we all start this way, but there are four stages a person must go through before becoming an "activist."

#### 1. Experience

The first step is experience, something that occurs or an understanding a person has of an event. For the sake of clarity we'll use the example of a closing leisure centre. The initial step is the experience someone has of that leisure centre and their understanding of the role it plays in the local community.

#### 2. Injustice

The next stage is the sense of injustice related to the experience. In our leisure centre example it would be the sudden announcement that the local council are drawing up plans to close the centre and replace it with new homes. Ideally you'll wish to recruit people who have reached this second stage, people who share the same experience as you and who feel the same sense of injustice. If your campaign focuses on a leisure centre or a hospital then who else has used these facilities and recognises its importance? Or if your campaign is centred on a new construction site, such as a motorway, who else will be effected by it? At this stage people may be angry, but they lack leadership or any avenue to channel their anger. As your campaign grows and as you start recruiting new activists you will have to instil this sense of injustice by sharing your experience. This will be addressed in more depth in the Campaign Communication chapter.

### 3. Organisation

The penultimate step provides the infrastructure and leadership people need if they are to transform their sense of injustice and anger into some practical, positive action. When establishing a group this is the stage you will start off at. At this stage an organisation is formed which allows people who have been through the previous stages to work together to coordinate their efforts

### 4. Action

Action is the final outcome of the previous steps. Once people have shared experiences, have a shared sense of injustice and have come together in a group or organisation they can start to do something about it, they can take action. This is the final stage and is when somebody is deemed to be an “activist” or a campaigner.

This progression is often best described as an “apathy staircase”<sup>3</sup>, as it represents four steps that a person will travel, taking them from being “apathetic”, to being an “activist.” It is highly likely that you will have gone through this process yourself if you are considering joining or actively establishing a campaign group. This progression is important to consider from the outset, as you will have to recognise where your potential activists are on this scale and what you’ll have to do to take them the rest of the way.

### Structure of a new group

Whilst every campaign group is slightly different there are a few set roles that have to be filled if it is to be coordinated effectively. These central roles should be run by a small committee who form the administrative hub of the group. When you first establish your group it is likely that you will only have enough activists to form a small committee. However, as your campaign grows and attracts new members the structure of your group should grow accordingly to ensure that the campaign can be effectively managed. A well managed group of activists are better organised, better motivated and therefore more likely to achieve their goals.

- The Committee

Every campaign group should have a central committee who fill the following roles. This is not a definitive list, you should consider adding more committee positions as the campaign grows and the amount of activists grows accordingly.

### Chairman

The chairman is usually the founder of the group but this can also be an elected position. This person is responsible for the overall coordination of the committee. However, it is not wise to place total responsibility into the hands

---

<sup>3</sup> The Apathy Staircase, *National Union of Students*, 2008

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

of one individual, it is more effective to run your group democratically, this will be elaborated later. On a day-to-day basis the chairman chairs meetings of the committee and also acts as the group's main representative to external bodies such as the media.

### Secretary

The secretary's main responsibility is to coordinate the committee and wider group meetings. The secretary will take minutes to ensure any decisions made are recorded and may organise an up to date contact list of campaigners and wider contacts. This will involve collecting contact details from activists who join your group. The Secretary plays an integral role in coordinating communication between members, ensuring that all activists are kept informed of developments.

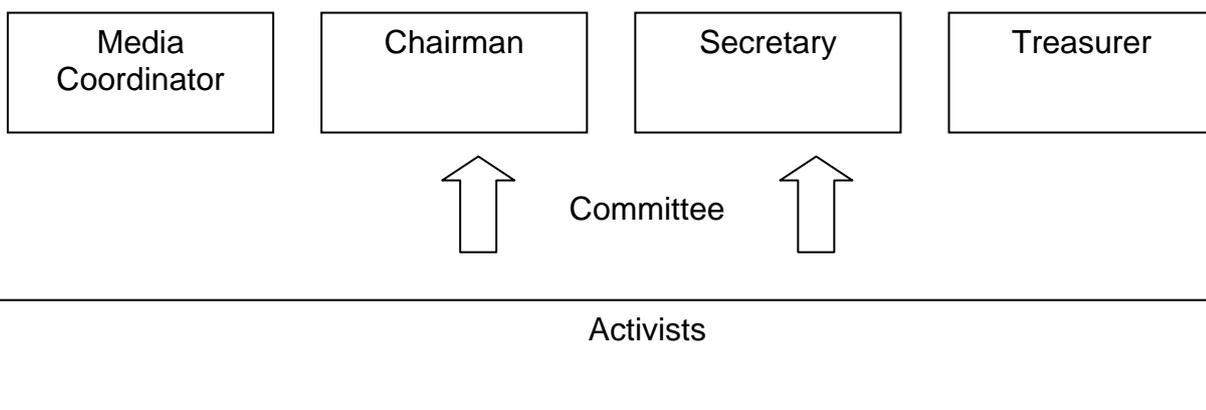
### Treasurer

The treasurer has one of the more challenging, but fundamentally important roles of the campaign team, responsibility for the groups' finances. This may include organising fund raising drives and ensuring that budgets are created and upheld when organising campaign events and activities.

### Media Coordinator

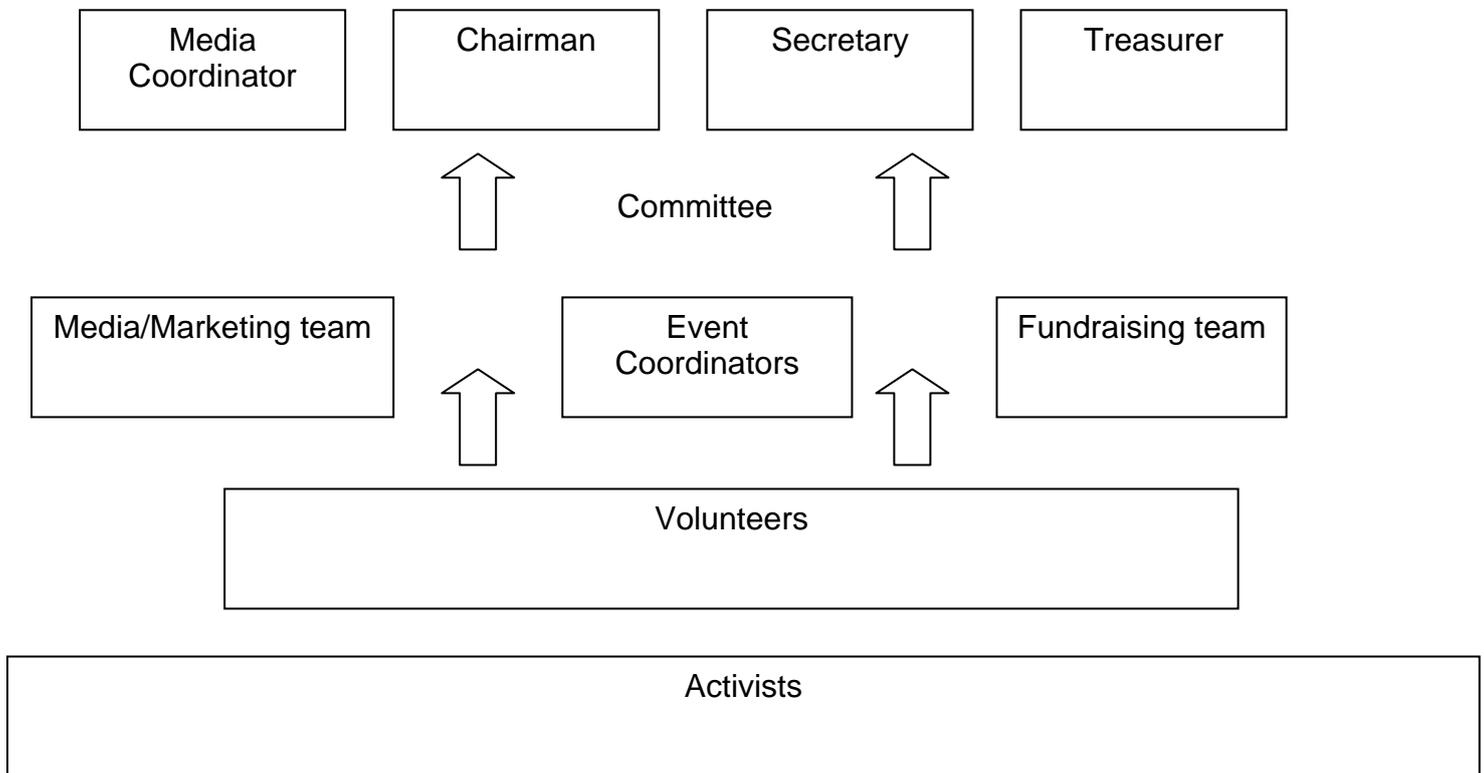
The media coordinator plays a vital role and may take the lead in organising a media strategy or managing a marketing team, both of which are described in later chapters. The media coordinator takes responsibility, potentially along with the secretary, for coordinating all communication, not only between the committee and campaigners but also between the group and external bodies such as the media. They may also manage any websites or newsletters run by the campaign group.

You may wish to consider adding an event coordinator, or even a social secretary who may be responsible for keeping team moral high. This can be significant to ensure activists do not become disillusioned over time. If your campaign is multi-faceted then you may wish to delegate specific areas of it to smaller teams who feed up to the central committee. For example, you may wish to add a student element to your campaign team if you're based in an area with a large University. As your campaign committee grow it may start to look like this:



## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

As your campaign grows and your structure grows to accommodate it you may aim for a structure like this:



In this model you have specific teams of activists dedicated to activities within the group, such as a fundraising team and a media team. These teams work with their specified committee member who reports back at campaign meetings. Under these teams you have volunteers, these activists are not assigned to specific areas but are involved in logistically organising various events and actions the campaign group may undertake. Under these you have general activists and supporters who may make up the bulk of your support base but may also only turn up on the day of rallies, marches or action days rather than for the organisational meetings. Ideally this structure will allow the activists to dedicate their efforts according to their strengths. It also provides a sound model for transparent accountability and democracy, which should be two fundamental values of your campaign group as well as being key mechanisms for its management.

### Democracy

Democracy should be the word on every activist's lips if they were asked to describe the core values of your campaign group. It is integral to the effectiveness of the campaign that it is run along democratic lines. This means that decisions are made by committee and member votes whilst

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

committee positions are also fully elected. In order to ensure that your group is run on democratic lines it is important to regularly consult your activists. This can be achieved by having open campaign meetings which all activists are invited to attend. Regularly consulting your activists and your supporters is the only way to ensure you are running your campaign the right way, if you ignore their opinions then they will vote with their feet!

Perhaps the most important reason why you should run a completely democratic campaign group is to ensure your activists have a strong sense of ownership over the campaign. This is vital to ensure people do not become disillusioned over time and start to drop out. If your activists feel that they have a say, that they have a stake in the organisation and that it is an organisation that they can be proud of then they will feel empowered. If they feel empowered and therefore feel that they have a degree of control over the campaign, then their loyalty and commitment will stay high meaning that they will be motivated and can become amazing agents of change. This is commonly known as a **bottom up** style of management. For a classic example of a **top down** approach you need look no further than the national and local government. As decision making in a government is concentrated at the highest levels regular citizens do not feel any control or ownership over the system. This in turn leads to a sense of disenfranchisement and apathy, one need only research the last general election turn out figures to see proof of this.

### Barriers to participation

In order for your campaign to succeed you are going to have to look for support from across the community, it is therefore crucial that you address the issue of “barriers to participation” at the earliest stage of your campaign, especially when the need for new activists and supporters is at its highest. A barrier to participation is simply a factor that prevents someone from taking part in your campaign, these can occur at a variety of levels such as meetings, communication methods, publicity or social events. The best example is meeting times. If you constantly hold your meetings late at night in a local pub these meetings will not be accessible to parents who have children to care for, religious groups who can not consume alcohol or teetotallers, you will therefore deprive yourself of a lot of potential activists.

Try and remove any potential barriers by:

- Moving your meeting times and venues regularly
- Choosing not to meet in a bar or predominantly alcoholic venue
- Using a wide variety of methods to communicate with members
- Ensuring that all the events you hold are easily accessible

## Organising your Campaign group

### Meetings

Whilst every campaign group may choose to organise itself differently the main format by which you will coordinate your activists is by holding regular meetings. Regardless of whether these meetings are weekly, fortnightly or monthly the regular meetings of your new campaign group will be the mechanism by which your activists come together and work on the campaign. Your regular meetings may aim:

- To discuss and generate campaign ideas
- To agree decision making
- To communicate with your members and your committee
- To monitor and evaluate the progress of your campaign
- To carry out administrative duties
- To organise or evaluate a specific event

There are generally four types of meeting which a campaign group will regularly hold, however these are very dependent on the size of your group and the longevity your campaign.

- **General meetings**

General meetings are the staple, regular meeting open to all activists and supporters. This meeting gives the committee or the main organisers an opportunity to communicate and consult with members regarding new developments, news or upcoming events. These are the meetings that may be used for planning large events or for discussing and debating strategy and goals. It is often wise to vary these meetings to keep them interesting for your activists. This may entail inviting guest speakers who are relevant to the topic or by showing films. If your campaign group is small, it is wise only holding these sort of meetings until you have enough activists for specific teams or an elected committee.

- **Committee meetings**

If you have an elected committee or a central core of campaign coordinators, then it is advisable to hold smaller regular meetings where administrative matters can be discussed and strategy can be debated before being presented to the rest of the campaign group at general meetings. It is important to hold these meetings prior to general meetings to give committee members the opportunity to report any developments to the activists. It is also important to increase the frequency of these meetings in the run up to large events such as a debate, a recruitment drive or an action week.

- **Team meetings**

Depending on the structure of your campaign group you may delegate specific roles to a team of activists, such as a media team. If so it is important that this team meet regularly, with their committee member to lead and organise their area of the campaign. The actions of these meetings can then

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

be reported to the committee and in turn to the assembled activists at general meetings.

- Annual General meetings

An AGM is a large open meeting scheduled once a year and is an opportunity for the committee to report the campaigns progress from across the year and to discuss and debate strategies for the year ahead. This is also an opportunity to hold annual committee elections that should be organised by the secretary and the chairman.

### Conducting a meeting: agendas

An agenda is a simple way to organise your meetings, it gives a clear guide for activists to follow and makes it easier for the secretary to record minutes. An agenda should include the following categories:

- Apologies for absence: Anyone who should be present but could not be.
- Minutes from last meeting: Attached so they can be recognised as a fair and accurate record of the previous meeting.
- Matters arising: This is where any actions decided in the previous meeting should be noted and reviewed to make sure they have been carried out.
- Committee updates: A series of short reports from committee members detailing the progress of their campaign area
- Agenda items: Anything that has been agreed to be discussed at this meeting normally set by the secretary after consultation from committee and opportunity for input by activists.
- Any other business: Open the meeting to the floor, an opportunity for anyone to raise anything that has not already been discussed.
- Date and time of next meeting.

### Your first meeting

The first, inaugural meeting of your campaign group is going to have to inspire and motivate your new activists and so requires a significant level of thought and planning. Your main aims for the first meeting should be to bring your activists together, to empower them and inspire them. This sounds like a tall order but to succeed you need only remember a few simple points.

- Create a welcoming environment

This is one of the golden rules you should bare in mind throughout your campaign. Running a campaign is not like running a company, people will not simply do what you tell them to do, you'll have to persuade them and if people are going to be working together with shared aims and values it certainly helps if they are also friends. A large proportion of your first meeting should be spent getting the activists to know each other, this is especially integral if you are starting with a very small group as you are going to have to rely on each other to keep motivated to avoid becoming disillusioned before you

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

develop into a larger group. Achieving this can be straightforward, get your activists talking to each other, and get them to share their experiences and their thoughts for the campaign. Perhaps even tie in a small social event on the same day.

- Introduce your campaign ideas

It is at this first meeting that you need to introduce yourself, and your campaign ideas. Don't simply stand in front of your group lecturing them, if possible be creative, or at the very least ensure you have a variety of speakers. This links into the first point as you open this discussion up to the entire group, welcoming and encouraging everyone's opinion. It is important for activists to feel that their opinion is worth something to the group and that their suggestions are considered. This gives people a sense of empowerment and inclusion, two vital factors you want to maintain to prevent disillusionment.

- Excite your activists

Make sure that your activists have something to be excited about rather than angry about. Depending on the nature of your campaign you should consider holding a small scale event, such as an action day or a small demonstration. This allows people to feel that they are actually doing something positive for the cause, which turns their anger into action for change. You want your activists to leave your first meeting feeling that they are already building towards something positive and that they have joined the right group to achieve their aims.

- Don't let it end there

Remember that meetings are not an end to themselves but rather a tool to achieving the eventual goal. It is important that you follow up your meeting with something like an e-mail outlining what has been agreed as well as the date and time of next meeting. You want people to keep on coming to these meetings, so don't let them disappear after the first one!

## Recruitment

A recruitment drive should be your number one priority if you are to build and develop your campaign group from a small core of activists to a large, effective organisation as previously described. Assuming that you have started with a small group with a modest budget you are going to have to start with the simple, small but effective methods of telling people you exist. The trick is to focus your attention on people who have been affected by your cause or who are likely to share the same experiences as you. If your campaign is against the closure of a local school, then target houses in that school's catchment area. At this state you do not have the resources or manpower to mount a large marketing campaign, so use what you have sparingly and effectively.

- Action Days

An action day is the cheapest and most effective way of engaging with the public, collecting contact details, advertising your meetings and recruiting new members. All you need is a few motivated activists armed with some leaflets and a petition who are ready to talk to as many strangers as possible! Often an action day will comprise of a few activists setting up a stall in a busy area, such as a high street, or more strategically at an affected area, such as outside a hospital that is soon to close. It is the activist's job to engage the public, explain the cause, collect contact details and invite them to your next meeting. More information on how to engage people during your action day can be found in the Campaign Communication chapter.

- Poster Campaigns & letter drops

If your budget is small ensure that any posters or letters you print are used in the affected area, where people will actually read it, understand it and care. The most important aspect is to include your contact details and the date, time and location of your next meeting.

- Website/Social networking sites

The Internet can be a cheap and effective way of reaching a vast amount of people in very little time. If any of your activists are savvy with computers then get them to create a website domain name and register it to a popular search engine, this way people will be able to find you which is far easier you searching for them.

More information on methods of attracting new members through campaign marketing can be found in Chapter 4.

### Communicating with members

Day to day or week to week communication between yourself, your central campaign team and your activists is the glue which will hold your campaign together. It is essential that you keep all your activists informed of upcoming meetings, items to be discussed at that meeting and any events you may hold. It is fundamental that someone on your campaign team, usually a secretary if you choose to appoint one, is delegated to build up a database of activists contact details including,

- Phone Numbers
- E-mail addresses
- Home address

### Emails

Sending mass messages by email is a swift and effective way of communicating large amounts of information to potentially hundreds of activists. The danger comes if you start to become dependent on email as your only form of communication. If you send them too frequently then someone can easily dispose of them in their “trash” box and will never hear from you again. Try and limit emails to once a week, ideally just before a meeting is due.

- A variety on this theme may be to send an E-Newsletter via email keeping your members fully up to date in an engaging fashion.
- Forms of communication may also include social networking sites and Internet forums. However, remember the barriers to participation it is quite possible that not all of your activists or potential activists have access to the Internet.

### Finances

Financing a campaign group can be one of the most challenging aspects of coordinating a campaign team and it's a straight forward equation, without funds you can't afford to book venues for large meetings, print a large array of propaganda or plan any large scale activities. This is not to say that the situation is hopeless for a small fledging group, it is simply a case of organising within your means. Start small by holding meetings in accessible public venues or even at an activist's house before considering fundraising activities.

It's important to research means of raising funds. For example are there any larger, regional or national organisations that share your aims and your goals? If so you should consider affiliating or forming a partnership to secure support. Never underestimate the power a persuasive letter can make for securing free campaign materials for your group. For example if you are campaigning on human rights or social justice issues then large multi-national organisations such as *Amnesty International* or *War on Want* may be all too pleased to lend support.

It is always worth delegating the roles of managing finance and fundraising to a specific campaign team. This team should consider a wide variety of fundraising activities such as:

- Donations
- Newsletter
- On-line donation
- On-line shop
- Coffee Morning
- Social events such as film showings

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

Depending on the goals and the activities your campaign group will undertake you may wish to consider asking for small donations from activists when they join the group. Whilst this has potential to raise a modest amount of funding quite swiftly it is quite a risky strategy and you will have to ask your self, are your activists going to get value for money if you start charging them what is tantamount to a membership fee? Most large campaign organisations charge activists such fees or even regular subs but this is usually due to expensive overheads that national level organisations have to pay, such as maintaining a head quarters building, costs your group will not have. Often the organisation will give their activists membership cards, subscriptions to their magazine or newsletter and other merchandise. Chances are you're not *Amnesty international* just yet so you are unlikely to be in a position to offer much to your activists, it is therefore advisable to look for donations rather than membership fees.

So far in this chapter we have covered the very basics of understanding campaigning enabling you to form structure and manage a fledgling campaign group. Of course before you can start to work with your new group to achieve your aims you're going to have to work out what those aims really are. You're going to have to set yourselves achievable goals and develop a workable campaign strategy, this we must move onto Chapter Two.

## Chapter Two: Developing a Campaign Strategy

“A goal without a plan is just a wish”

Larry Elder

This chapter will enable you to:

- Establish your mission statement
- Set yourself winnable goals
- Assess if your goals are SMART
- Utilise Campaign Mapping
- Understand the strengths and weaknesses of your campaign
- Internal and External Support

In the previous chapter we analysed how to establish, structure and manage your fledgling campaign group. This second section will guide you through the crucial steps to give your group direction and specific goals. All too often new campaign groups will become bogged down debating the superficial things, such as designing a logo or devising a snappy campaign name, which is all well and good but unless you have a goal for your campaign team to strive for, you will remain without direction, with no real chance of success. This chapter will enable you to prepare and draw up a campaign strategy, a carefully constructed plan which considers the strengths and weaknesses of your campaign, analyse potential targets as well as understand the context in which your campaign exists. Once your goals have been set and your campaign has been planned out, this strategy should act as your campaign constitution, a document which you constantly refer back to throughout your campaigning activities to ensure that you maintain the direction you need to succeed.

### Is your campaigner winnable?

This is perhaps the hardest question for a new campaign team to answer, but it is the most important decision you have to make. Before you set your goals, before you develop a strategy to achieving them, before you even give your campaign group a name, you need to decide if you can win. Obviously the answer to this question will be very dependent on your original intention when setting up the group. For example a campaign group specifically established to save a closing hospital or oppose a motorway construction has a very specific mandate rather than a group established to promote national political change or to campaign for environmental causes.

There are various factors to consider when deciding which goals are winnable, many of these shall be discussed later in this chapter, but the two primary questions to consider are, is your campaign widely felt and is your campaign deeply felt? In other words will you be able to find people in your

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

local community who will support you and do they currently care enough about the issue to act and work alongside you? Again this will depend on the impact your campaign has on the local community. If your campaign is based locally and is focused on an issue such as a closing fire station then the chances are high that the issue will affect people's day to day lives, they will be able to clearly identify how the issue is relevant to them and they will therefore be likely to act. If however your campaign is based around a national or an international issue, such as a boycott of unethical goods or against a government's foreign policy then people may struggle to work out how these issues are relevant to their lives, and so will be reluctant to act. If this is the case then the task before you is slightly harder, but it remains straight forward. You must place these issues on people's agenda, you must raise awareness and you must use effective media and marketing techniques to make your cause both real and relevant.

There are strategy tools which can be used to ensure you have specific, measurable goals and these will be discussed later in this chapter. It is essential, perhaps in your very first meeting, to truthfully and carefully consider how much your group can achieve. For example if you have recently started a branch of *People and Planet*, *Green Peace* or *Socialist Students*, each of which are organisations which have large national and international goals, then you must recognise that issues such as climate change or oppressive economic systems can not simply be tackled by a small group over night. As I discovered during my years as secretary in the Portsmouth Socialist Students society, the revolution is unlikely to be started by four students sitting in a Union bar. This is a tricky issue to navigate as you need to strike a balance; if you set your goal too high and fail to achieve it then your activists will become disillusioned and will eventually give up, however you must continue to believe that you can make a real, positive difference. The best way to strike this balance is to have a large, over arching goal and then smaller goals which you can achieve on the way. The most important thing you need to do as a campaign leader is to deliver a victory, it doesn't matter how small, but you need to be able to hold up something your group have done to prove you are making a difference, to prove that the activists are right to be investing their time in your campaign and to keep both your activists and yourself inspired and motivated. Groups such as *People and Planet* achieve this balance with great success. Overall the group seeks to campaign around world poverty, human rights and the environment but sets its activists on smaller, winnable campaigns which can have a fantastic positive effect, such as lobbying organisations to stock fair trade products and organising various awareness raising activities such as Fair Trade Fashion shows. When I was campaigning against growing student tuition fees I realised that a group of students in one University would struggle to have an impact on a national question, which is debated and decided upon at a high political level. Having realised this it was essential that I gave the activists something real to work towards. Within a few months of campaigning the activists has collected over a thousand signatures from local students, had established connections with other organisations and other Universities in the region, had worked with the Students' Union to bring the universities Vice Chancellor to a public debate on fees and had lobbied the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and

Skills, a story covered on the national media. A relatively small campaign team were able to achieve all of this because they were set realistic, winnable goals whilst forming beneficial partnerships with other organisations.

The best way to achieve a similar synthesis of long and short term aims is to construct a mission statement which defines your overarching, long term objective, but may also outlines smaller victories along the way. A mission statement gives your activists a clearly defined cause to believe in, and a yard stick for you to judge and evaluate the success of your campaign.

## Mission Statement

The first thing you should do to crystallise your aims, objectives and indeed your purpose as a group is to establish your mission statement. To achieve this you will have to consider:

- The aims and objectives of your group
- The vision and values which are core to your group

### What is a Mission Statement?

A Mission statement defines in a paragraph or a sentence any entity's reason for existence. Its task is to embody the philosophies, goals, ambitions and values of a group, thereby providing a simple reference point for members and non members to understand your campaign. Any group that operates without a mission statement runs the risk of lacking direction and purpose. If this happens then you may end up campaigning simply for the sake of campaigning with no specific goal to work for. Campaigning is a means to an end, a method to achieving to a specific goal, not an exercise in itself.

A Mission Statement can therefore be summarised by three key points:

- Purpose
- Values
- Actions

### Points to consider:

Define what your campaign is	Define what the campaign aspires to be
Limited to exclude some ventures if they are not core to the campaign	Broad enough to allow for creative growth
Distinguish the campaign from all others	Serve as framework to evaluate current activities
Ensure it is stated clearly so that it can be understood by all members and potential members	Establish the core values of your campaign

--	--

### Examples of Mission statements

#### Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament:

*“CND campaigns non-violently to rid the world of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction, and to create genuine security for future generations. CND opposes all nuclear and other weapons of mass destruction, their development, manufacture, testing, deployment and use or threatened use by any country.”*

This statement is both specific in the goals it lists as well as holding an overall aim to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

#### Amnesty International:

*“Amnesty’s mission is to undertake research and action focused on preventing and ending grave abuses of the rights to physical and mental integrity, freedom of conscience and expression, and freedom from discrimination--in the context of our work to promote all human rights, as articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.”*

This Mission Statement is also clear in its holistic aim, that being to campaign against human rights abuses. Perhaps the most important aspect of this statement is how it defines the roles of the organization, undertaking research and action, before outlining the goals.

### Creating your Mission Statement

1. Along with your committee write single words which best describe both the purpose and values of your campaign group. This process will work best if you are able to establish at least twenty of these words which should be associated to what your campaign is, and what you aspire it to be.
2. Once you have these key words attempt to divide them into groups. For example you may have group of words associated to democracy. This will help you to identify key themes which your committee believe to be fundamental.

3. Once these themes have been formed it should be possible for you to start creating sentences out of your key words. Once these sentences are starting to come together you will have the start of a mission statement.
4. Once you have this early draft it may be appropriate to consult your members with your ideas to form your final Mission statement.

## Creating a Campaign Strategy

Once you have established your Mission statement and understand the purpose or cause of your campaign it is time to set yourself realistic goals and develop a strategy for achieving those goals. This is achieved by drafting your Campaign Strategy. Throughout this process you will be going thorough six steps which form the principles of action planning.

### Principles of action planning:

- Setting achievable goals

When setting your goals it is important to distinguish between long term goals – those that you ultimately wish to achieve and short term goals – smaller steps along the way.

- Secure the support of your members, and the community.

Its simple really, democracy works. If you are going to achieve success you must first secure the support of your members. As stated in the previous chapter, the simplest way to achieve this is through constant consultation, both through general meetings and alternative means which may include internet forums. It is also important to consider the needs of potential members and barriers to participation they may find. You may also wish to explore links to other organisations in the wider community with whom you can work for mutual benefit.

- Build your group along the way

It should always be your aim to constantly build and develop upon your membership. A large campaign group can achieve more then a small group. You should constantly be considering ways you can build your membership.

- Escalate your activities over time

Start your campaign on the right footing with simple, small steps, if those prove to be a success start to build up the momentum gradually and sustain that success.

- Evaluate

Always take time to step back and objectively assess how successful you are being in achieving your goals. Have your goals proved to be realistic? Are you on track to achieving them or do you need a change of direction?

### Six Steps to Campaign planning.

In order to achieve these principles it is advisable to follow these six simple steps:

1. Brainstorm goals
2. Out-line the decision making process of your target

This will require you to consider how decisions are made and which opportunities you have to influence them. If you are targeting your local council, attend council meetings prior to votes. If you are targeting a company consider which factors will influence their thinking, such as bad publicity or a decline in sales.

3. Power map decision makers and key influences within and without your group
4. Outline strategy for campaign growth
5. Develop a timeline
6. Evaluate your plan and your goals constantly

### Setting Achievable goals

We have already discussed how you have to ensure the goals you set for your campaign are winnable, but to ensure that this is the case you should consider the following factors which make your goals, S.M.A.R.T goals?

<b>S</b>	Specific	Ensure your objectives are clearly defined.
<b>M</b>	Measured	Your goal should be tangible; it should have the ability to be measured.
<b>A</b>	Agreed	All activists need to agree with this goal.
<b>R</b>	Reachable	The goal should be realistic and achievable
<b>T</b>	Time bound	You should be operating within an agreed time frame.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

- **Specific** - A specific goal has a much greater chance of being accomplished than a general goal. To set a specific goal you must answer the six "W" questions:

\*Who: Who is involved?

\*What: What do I want to accomplish?

\*Where: Identify a location.

\*When: Establish a time frame.

\*Which: Identify requirements and constraints.

\*Why: Specific reasons, purpose or benefits of accomplishing the goal.

EXAMPLE: A general goal would be, "recruit new activists," But a specific goal would state, "Coordinate a series of Action days."

- **Measurable** - Establish concrete criteria for measuring progress toward the attainment of each goal you set. When you measure your progress, you stay on track, reach your target dates, and experience the exhilaration of achievement that spurs you on to continued effort required to reach your goal.

To determine if your goal is measurable, ask questions such as.....How much? How many? How will I know when it is accomplished?

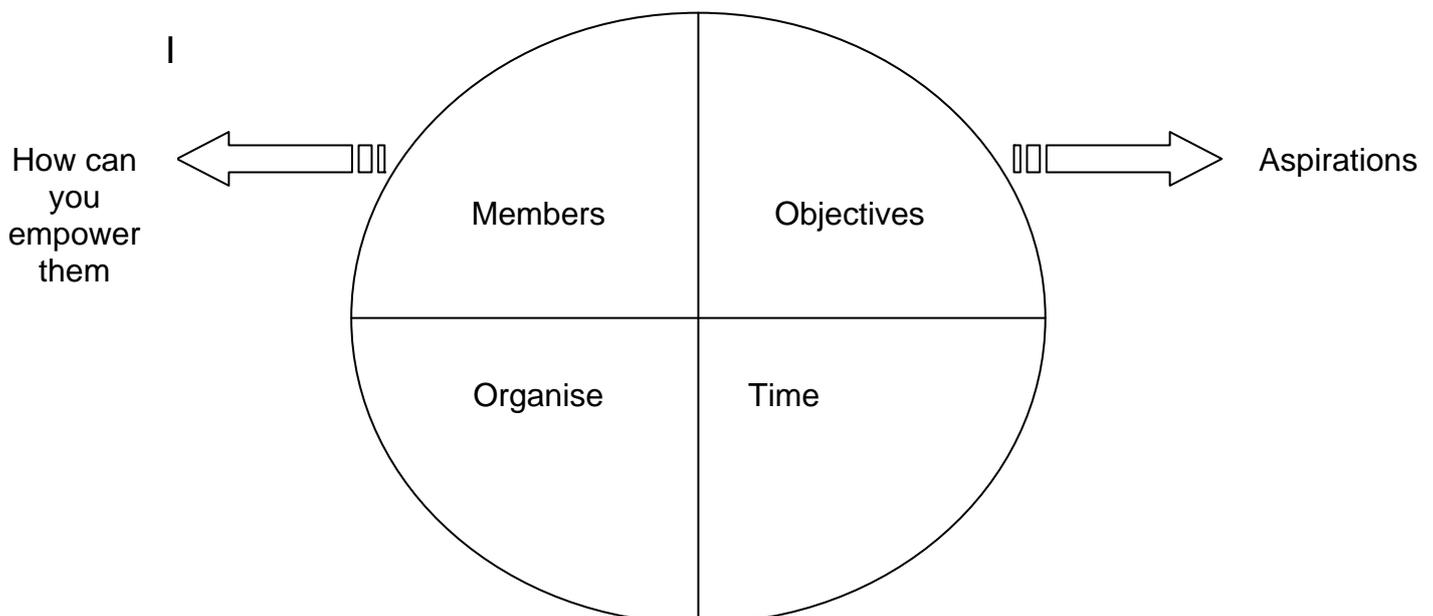
- **Agreed** – It is important that your goals should be agreed upon, not only by yourself and the Campaign committee but by all of your activists. It is unreasonable to expect activists to invest their time and effort into achieving a goal they do not believe. This is where democracy not only becomes a guiding value, but an operational necessity. Constantly consult your activists at general meetings and ensure that all of your activists and supporters have an opportunity to voice their opinions and any concerns they may have.
- **Realistic** - To be realistic, a goal must represent an objective toward which you are both *willing* and *able* to work and take *responsibility* for. A goal can be both high and realistic; you are the only one who can decide just how high your goal should be, but be sure that every goal represents substantial progress.

Once you have identified your goals, you must consider how, and if they are realistic and whether or not they can be achieved. You must assess the attitudes, abilities, skills, and financial capacity of your society to reach them. You can attain most any goal you set when you plan your steps wisely and establish a time frame that allows you to carry out those steps. Goals that may have seemed far away and out of reach eventually move closer and become attainable, not because your goals shrink, but because your campaign grows to match them.

- **Timely** - A goal should be grounded within a time frame. With no time frame tied to it there's no sense of urgency. If your goal is to raise campaign funds then "someday" is not an acceptable timeframe. You need to give yourselves clear and achievable deadlines that should be agreed to and stuck with.

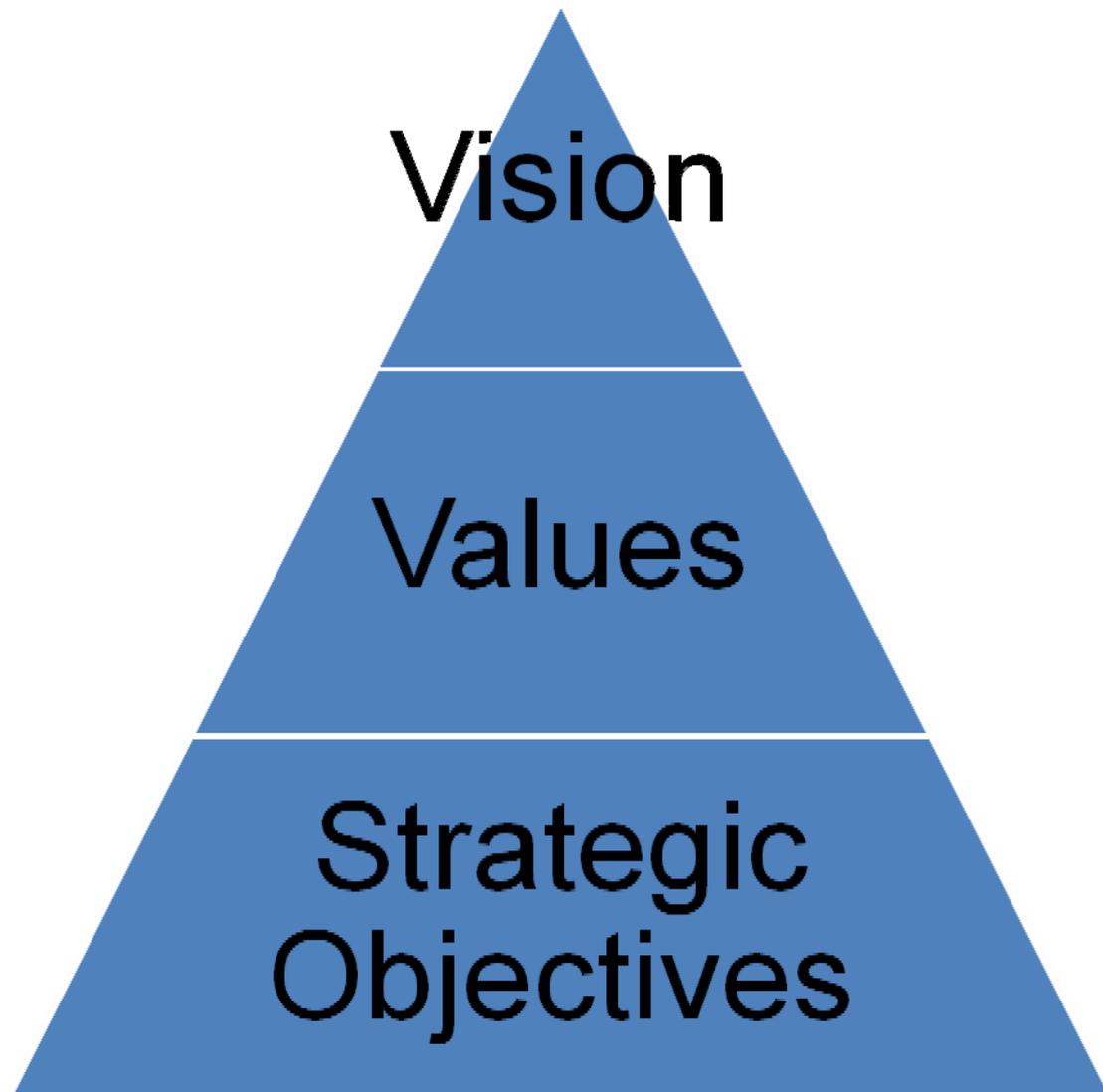
### Campaign Models: The Four Pillars of Campaign Strategy

There are various theory models which demonstrate how a campaign strategy operates and the relationship between the factors. This model shows the four key pillars of a campaign strategy and how they are interconnected and overlap. The pillars are members, objectives, organisation and time. Each of these pillars is dependent on the others and each is necessary if you are to achieve success. If you have the members, yet no objectives to give them, or methods to organise them then your campaign will be directionless and largely meaningless. If you have objectives and set goals but members and thus no need to organise anyone then once again you will be working to no avail. The key to success is to have well organised members, with set goals and objectives which are clearly time bound. There are also two arrows on this diagram which demonstrate how these factors must be built upon. When regarding members you must build your campaign around empowering them. As I stated in the first chapter you must remember that a campaign organisation is not a business or a political party, as a campaign leader your task is not to order and expect results but to educate, motivate, inspire and equip your activists, thus empowering them to become effective agents of change. There is also an arrow extending from the objectives section, this demonstrates that the goals you set for your campaign should not be isolated examples but should be aspiration, you should be setting your campaigners winnable goals which they can achieve on their way to a greater, ultimate victory. For example if you are striving to save a hospital, your first goal may be to lobby or meet with the management, you can then build on this and take the fight to the local government and the key decision makers.



## Campaign Models Campaign Strategy Pyramid

This pyramid model demonstrates the importance and indeed the structure of your campaign strategy. The vision, which should be summarised in your Mission Statement, should be the highest priority of your campaign. It should be the statement by which you all stand and the message which you all proclaim. Underneath this vision you have values; these are also encompassed within your mission statement but are also of operational importance and must be considered throughout any actions you take or objectives you set. The key example in this chapter has been democracy. This is not a value to pay lip service to but to utilise as an operational tool, other examples may include activists empowerment or development. Following this the base of the triangle is comprised of your strategic objectives, the very goals which you set for your campaign and the actions which you take to achieve them. This should makeup the majority of your campaign strategy, after all a campaign strategy is a strategy for direct, concrete action and it is action which will eventually win your campaign.



## Understanding the strengths and weaknesses of your campaign.

When accessing your goals and your strategy it is important to consider the strengths and weaknesses of your campaign. The most effective way of achieving this is to follow the diagram below:



This diagram demonstrates the four central components for evaluating your campaign strategy and how they are dependent upon each other. Access your strengths and how they can be used to overcome your weaknesses.

## Your Opponent.

A crucial factor to bear in mind throughout the strategy process is the role of you opponent. After all if your campaign is such a worthy cause, why hasn't it been achieved already, why does it need a campaign in the first place? Chances are if you're campaigning against the closure of a leisure centre, to save a local wood, to call for fair trade or as a stand against fees you are working against someone's interests; it could be an individual, a local business, a large organisation, a multi-national corporation or even a

government. Throughout your campaign you have to consider the impact you will have on this opponent and the counter-force they may choose to use against you, which may include various barriers they can erect to impede your progress. This is going to be completely dependent on how they perceive you. Typically there are three relationships which a campaign group can have with their opponent organisation:

- **Constructive:** A large organisation such as *Fair Trade* can often convince their opponent that the changes they are proposing will be constructive. If they are a company then adopting fair trade products can be a useful marketing tool which will help drive up sales, whilst if they are a local government or a University which internally adopts fair trade products they could benefit from good publicity. Another example may be an environmental lobby group who can provide expertise which may benefit a company by cutting overhead costs or from the using a “green” status as a marketing tool. This technique turns your opponent into an opportunity; however it relies on the opponent organisation recognising your views as being legitimate whilst being prepared to work constructively with an organisation for mutual benefit. When this approach is adopted your potential opponent will construct far fewer barriers to block your success. This notion of constructive engagement and positive campaigning is addressed in greater detail in Chapter 4: Campaign Marketing.
- **Damaging:** Of course it is not always possible for you to have a constructive relationship with your opponent, especially if your agenda is seemingly irreconcilable. If this is the case then the opponent may view your campaign as something which could seriously damage them. For example, if you are campaigning against the use of child labour in the clothing industry and start protesting outside the store of a large national firm which uses such labour, the company will instantly consider your campaign a danger to their sales and therefore their profit. At this stage two things may happen, your opponent will start a counter campaign, which often means an organisation or a corporation will attempt to run a media campaign to boost its image. The organisation will also erect far more barriers to your campaign such as refusing to meet with you. If this is the scenario then you will either have to cause them more potential damage than they can sustain, or simply keep the pressure up for longer than their counter-campaign can manage. This scenario is far more difficult than a constructive relationship, but there is no doubt that you can be victorious, it is simply a case of staying determined, ensuring that your activists do not become disillusioned over time and keeping to your strategy.

The worst case scenario is simply that you opponent will ignore your campaign altogether. This may be because they do not recognise that you can benefit or threaten them in anyway and therefore cannot make an impact. Alternatively they may simply be underestimating your potential. This false sense of security can be an advantage as your opponent will not bother with any counter measures, nor will they construct any barriers to stop you. If

however they continue this policy then you may have to recognise that they are right to ignore you and you should reconsider your strategy. This is where the constant need for self evaluation remains crucial.

Once you have set your sights on an opponent it is important to consider how they can be reached and what activists will effect them. For this you will have to develop a Campaign Map. Alternatively, more information on lobbying officials can be found in the final theory section, Chapter Six Coordinating your campaign.

### Campaign Mapping

Once you have set yourself these specific smart goals it is time to consider how these will be achieved. The easiest way to start your action plan is to create a map of your ambitions and the key factors which need to be considered. The most straight forward way to achieve this is to draw a mind map which considers the following factors:

- Strengths internal to your Campaign:
  - Skills that your members may have
  - What is unique about your society?
- Strengths external to your Campaign:
  - The strengths, abilities and support you can get from larger organisations which may include affiliations.
  - Allies you have in the local community.
- What resources do you have at your disposal?

This not only includes financial resources, but equipment your activists own and the activists themselves. Do they have any specialist skills? Do they have any connections? It may sound clichéd but your campaigners are your most important resource.

- What is already working well in this area? What related strengths do that reveal?

This is where historical information is becomes paramount. For example if you are campaigning to save a closing leisure centre, have there been any similar campaigns in your area? If so were they successful and could you work with that campaign team?

- The matrix of characters

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

Here you must consider the various personalities involved in your campaign. This not only includes yourself and your team but also your opposition and any other people who can wield some influence, which may include local politicians, business owners or even other campaign teams. You need to assess where the power lies, and what the relationship between these factors is.

- Potential Targets

When assessing potential targets for your campaign it is essential to not only look at who holds the power but also who has the ability to affect change. For example there is very little point in targeting an employee of a company, such as a retail assistant as obviously they have very little control over the company they work for; you have to target the top. When considering how to reach these targets consider both formal and more informal methods. For example, when coordinating a student campaign against tuition fees a campaign team identified their Vice Chancellor as a key target for lobbying as it was with him that the power to affect change lay. They then identified the formal methods of lobbying and contacting such as the meetings he attended, but they also remembered that the Vice-Chancellor attended the student choir, thus giving those students an ideal, informal opportunity to talk to, and hopefully convince him to support the cause.

- Stakeholders

An analysis of stakeholders is a strategy technique which is usually used by businesses or large corporations but can just as effectively be transferred to campaigning. It is the technique by which you must consider which individuals or groups have a stake in your campaign. In a business sense this may be shareholders or affiliated companies but in a campaigning sense it may be anyone who will be affected by your campaign or has an interest in the cause you are working for. For example your stakeholders may include your activists, other campaigning organisations you are working with, your opponent, the local government, and elements of the local community. It is essential that you work out who will be affected and who has an interest in your campaign as you can then consider how they can assist you, or alternatively what they may do against you.

- Environment

In which environment does your campaign inhabit? This not only means the physical environment but also the economic, political landscape. For example if you are fighting against a proposed motorway then you must understand the impact this will have on your environment. Will it mean

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

more traffic than the roads can handle? Will local business be affected? Will scenic land be destroyed or will farmers lose their land? These are both arguments you can use to strengthen your case but also provide opportunities for recruitment.

- Events

These are the methods you will use to reach your targets, to influence your audience, inspire and empower your activists and ultimately achieve your campaign goals. Remember, a campaign is about the action you take. There are far too many campaign groups which simply collect information and then disseminate it to their members, your role is not simply to educate but to act and it is here that you consider which actions you will take. These may include demonstrations and protests, petitioning and action days, lobbying, and public debates, all of which are discussed in Chapter Six.

### Campaign Map Diagram

Below is an example of how a campaign map should be set out and how it should grow:



### Example Campaign Strategy:

The strategy show below is from the Cancer Research UK website and clearly lays out the mission statement and the objectives of the organisation. This includes an overarching objective and also specific areas they will target. The strategy also details the steps they will take to achieve these goals.

#### Cancer Research UK: Campaign strategy

Reduce the Risk is a five year campaign run by Cancer Research UK

##### **Aims and objectives**

The Reduce the Risk campaign aims to:

- Raise public awareness of the avoidable risks of cancer and the importance of early detection
- Address inequalities in cancer information
- Establish Cancer Research UK as a leading supporter of UK research into cancer prevention and risk.

More specifically we are looking at:

- tobacco
- overweight and obesity
- unhealthy diets
- physical inactivity
- UV radiation
- national screening programs
- symptom awareness
- genetic risk

##### **Target audience**

There are large social class and ethnic inequalities in cancer (and in health in general). Cancer incidence and mortality are higher in people from less affluent and certain minority ethnic backgrounds.

The Reduce the Risk campaign therefore targets audiences taken from social classes C2DE and certain ethnic minority groups.

##### **Key campaign elements**

Reduce the Risk is an integrated public health campaign built around the following key elements:

##### **Public communication**

A high profile intensive press and PR program forms the basis of campaign activity. To support press and PR messages we also distribute public information resources to key audiences.

##### **Research**

Reduce the Risk is a research based campaign. National annual tracking surveys (BMRB) monitor the impact and effectiveness of the campaign. Surveys also provide angles and statistics for press stories. In addition, we commission qualitative research to check our resources and messages are appropriate for our target audiences.

##### **Public policy**

The Reduce the Risk team works closely with Cancer Research UK's Public Affairs team. We encourage the government to develop public health policy that supports our campaign aims.

##### **Support for professionals**

Support from professionals working at a local level is key to the success of the Reduce the Risk campaign. We encourage local professionals to include cancer prevention initiatives in their work. We also provide relevant information, training and resources to support their activities.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

This chapter will enable you carefully consider your campaign, to assess how much you can achieve, to set yourself winnable short and long term goals, to develop a strategy to achieve those goals as well as considering the role of your opponent. The strategy that you and your members create should be the foundation stone of your campaign, it is the document which you can use to gauge your success and constantly evaluate your campaign. With a well structured strategy comes a well coordinated campaign.

At the start of this chapter I commented on how campaigners can become lost in debating superficial elements of the campaign such as the name of a group or a logo. It is integral that you form your goals and your strategy before naming a group and so I have left this section until Chapter Four: Campaign Marketing.

Once you have your cause, your goals and your strategy it is time to put them into effect with concrete action. The following chapter focuses on Campaign Communication, and will enable you to take your goals and effectively communicate them to the public.

## Chapter Three: Campaign Communication

“The newest computer can merely compound, at speed, the oldest problem in the relations between human beings, and in the end the communicator will be confronted with the old problem, of what to say and how to say it.”

Edward.R.Murrow

This chapter will enable you to:

- Engage your target audience, the public.
- Write and Deliver a successful speech

So you've found an issue you want to change, you've formed a group, you've set your goals and you're armed with your campaign strategy. At this point communication becomes the single most important factor that will either drive your campaign forward or sink it without a trace. Being able to communicate effectively, clearly and coherently is vital for three reasons. First you will need to ensure your activists and your potential activists are motivated, inspired and truly believe they can make a difference. Secondly you will need to communicate your goals, your values and your message to the general public, to the very people who will support your campaign both in body and with money. Finally, and perhaps ultimately you have to clearly communicate your goals, through effective lobbying, to those who are in a position to effect change. This chapter will introduce the key theory that will enable you to engage the public on a one-to-one basis and to write and deliver an effective speech.

### Public Speaking: Talks and Speeches

For many public speaking, especially in front of a large audience, can be one of the most daunting aspects of running a campaign. Indeed, there are no two words better suited to turning the average person's mind to mush than the phrase “public speaking”. However, if your campaign is ever going to reach enough people to influence any real change then you're going to have to be prepared to stand up and tell the world what you believe in. Instances may include:

- **Speaking at a rally or March.** Whether your campaign is calling for fair trade, an end to fees or to save a closing leisure centre, it is highly likely you are going to want a large group of people to form together outside in that classic display of defiance and support. Of course if you expect people to stand around outside for a few hours at a time you're going to have to motivate and inspire them, other wise you're left with a

miserable, and quite possibly a damp, group of people who don't have the organisation, the will or the ability to do much for your cause. Giving a rallying speech might not gear them up to storm Parliament, but it will keep their spirits up and their motivation focused.

- **Being on a debate panel.** You can only truly test the strength of your arguments and ideas when they are pitted against someone with the opposite view, or are put under scrutiny from a salvo of questions. Obviously, unless you want the ideas and the cause of your campaign to stall you're going to need to argue your case convincingly.
- **An "Action day stall".** This is a stalwart tactic of any campaign, large or small. Taking a small group of activists and setting up stalls in town centres, or outside key buildings. This is the ideal way for you to introduce your ideas to a large amount of people; however, unless you want to look like the clipboard wielding salesman you'd cross the street to avoid you're going to have to be prepared. If you're to be persuasive and if you want support you're going to have to inspire and motivate. Success requires organisation and prepared tactics.
- **Hi-jacking a lecture on campus.** This is an extraordinarily effective way of getting the attention of a large group of people. Whilst we would all wish the lecture room to be a hallowed bastion of education and enlightenment it is more realistic to say that you will have a very captive audience ranging from fifteen to sixty people who are prepared to listen to you intently in order to avoid their lecture.
- **Meetings.** They seem smaller and less important than the other examples but the week-to-week meetings you organise with your campaigners form the very lifeblood of your campaign. Unless you keep your activists impassioned and enthusiastic then you are going to be faced with ever decreasing numbers as your campaign goes on.

### Goats: A Campaigners Mascot

The noble goat, that small, mountain beast holds the key to success.

**G.O.A.T.S = Go. Out. And. Talk to. Students.**

Of course this doesn't only apply to student campaigns, but to the general public. G.O.A.T.S is the number one golden rule. Your campaign may well sound great on paper, and you may well be able to convince your fellow campaigners in a meeting room that it will work, however your campaign won't get anywhere without wider support. This may well sound like a cliché but if you truly want people to understand and engage with your campaign then you're going to have to leave the safe confines of the dingy pub or the meeting room and go out and talk to as many people as you can!

### Engaging the Public one to one.

If you are collecting signatures, attempting to relieve people of their short change or hoping to drum up members then you're going to have to prepare an engaging sales pitch. You can't simply ask some one if they want to sign a petition, a "yes" or "no" style question is very likely to get you a "no" answer. So here are a couple of tips to bear in mind...

- Don't just dive in; make sure you have prepared how you're going to communicate your campaign message to passers by.
- Be proactive and approachable. Don't sit behind a stall looking bored and wait for the public to come to you. They won't. In order to look approachable it is important to smile and be friendly. Don't go overboard with this, you'll appear patronising and people will become suspicious. Instead, just make sure you're not looking militant and angry. You want to engage people, not scare them away.
- Some people are simply argumentative and will see you as a challenge. Don't get frustrated and don't argue back! If someone seems like their about to start an argument stay calm and invite them to your next meeting, alternatively ask for their contact details so you can continue the discussion by e-mail. If the person is being argumentative for the sake of it this essentially calls their bluff, if

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

however they are passionate about the subject understanding their opinion can be invaluable.

- Just as people can look to argue with you many others are shy, they won't want to make eye contact and they won't want to initiate a conversation. They may not be keen to start a conversation but they may well take a leaflet, alternatively they may just be waiting for you to start the conversation.
- It is important not to prejudge the people you meet. Just because people are not aware of an issue doesn't mean they won't care given the opportunity. Often a lack of knowledge will hold someone back from signing your petition or joining your campaign. For example the first time I collected signatures for a petition people would not sign as they had not heard about my campaign on the news and so did not think I was genuine! It is your job as a campaigner to plug the black hole in people's knowledge.

### Being Persuasive even if you don't know all of the answers....

It is of course impossible for you to know everything but there are some things you can do to ensure you appear informed on your topic:

- Focus on one or two key points. Don't let someone who is questioning you lead you off onto a tangent, stay focused on these points and keep reverting back to them.
- Ensure you research one step further than you are going to be asked. So don't just keep to the superficial and the basic, make sure you've done your reading! If possible have some key facts and statistics up your sleeve to add to your argument.
- If you can't answer a question, be honest. Don't attempt to guess, or worse lie, your way out of it, you will lose all credibility if you're found out to be lying. Instead tell the person that you don't know, but you'll look into it. Tell the person about an upcoming meeting or ask if you can have their contact details so you can continue this discussion.
- Avoid using any abbreviations or "campaign jargon", remember that not everyone is familiar with your campaign. This doesn't mean you need to patronise or dumb down your speech, just avoid talking like this:

*"We must implement collectivism in the name of the proletariat in order to defy the counter-revolutionary bourgeois oligarchs."*



As noble as your aims might be, unless you use plain, everyday, accessible English then you're not going to engage, you're not going to inspire and you're certainly not going to motivate. (For a more in-depth look at the use of language in campaigning politics look towards the next chapter.)

- If someone stops to read a sign or pick up a leaflet, keep talking to them to fill in the blanks. Remember to keep smiling and thank them for their time. It sounds like a small thing but people will remember you as the face of your campaign, if you offend them or appear unpleasant then so shall your campaign.
- Similarly never apologise for what you are doing. Don't start a pitch with, "I'm sorry to bother you" or end it with "sorry for taking up so much time". It is important that the person knows your cause is important to you and that you feel passionate about it. After all if you don't show it's important to you why on earth should they make it important for them?
- Some campaigners may be naturals when it comes to talking one on one with strangers, others may struggle finding themselves more comfortable to write your leaflets or articles. Make sure that you keep watch on your activists and see who is successful. If you have enough activists it is ideal to delegate roles in which they can succeed, thereby their confidence will grow and they'll feel more ownership over the campaign.
- Finally, you will always be asked one question, "**Will it make any difference.**" This is the big question, which often leaves activists scratching their heads, or can lead to your campaigners becoming

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

disillusioned over time. It is therefore integral that you have answers for the following key questions:

- 1) What impact will your campaign have? Are you hoping to raise awareness, show solidarity or trying to get someone to activity stop something? Consider your final goal.
- 2) Is the person your targeting in a position to effect change?
- 3) Do you have examples where a similar campaign has succeeded elsewhere?

If all else fails then the one fall back answer should be:

*“One thing is for certain, this might make a difference whilst doing nothing will achieve nothing.”*

### Exercise:

As a group you need to ensure that you're well read on your topic and make sure you're well practised in reasoning and arguing your case.

In meetings building up to action days, try some role-play exercises. If you have enough activists place them into pairs. Have one person playing themselves on the street engaging people and get the other to fire as many questions at them as they can. This way you'll be sure to have covered as many areas as possible.

## Preparing for your public: The Five Second Pitch

When it comes to any form of public speaking 10% of your time should be dedicated to the actual delivery whilst 90% should focus on preparing for it. In order to construct the ideal pitch, which will inspire even the most apathetic soul to the cause it's important to spend time perfecting your technique.

You have to sound positive and remember that you need to get across the fundamental parts of your message in only a few seconds.

Here is an example of a successful pitch:

“Hello there, we're asking people to sign **this letter to the Vice Chancellor** to stop the **raising of tuition fees** which will leave us all in thousands of pounds worth of **debt**. I've got more information on this stall, **would you like to sign.**”

This sentence has achieved several aims:

- What you want the person to do
- Your cause and in this case the target of your letter.
- A clear reason why the person is affected and should sign.
- Invited them to hear more.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

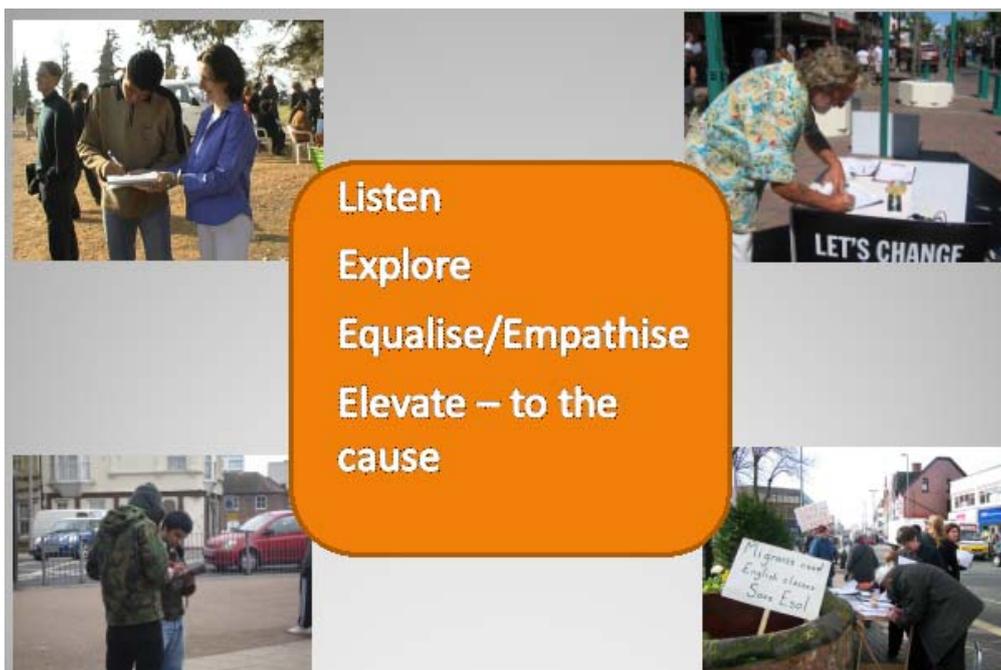
It is important that you focus on and emphasise accessible words that the person will instantly be able to associate with. In this case the key words were fees and debt, something most students should be more than familiar with. There are a myriad of phrases, which, partly due to the mass media, have become lodged in the collective consciousness, these include:

- Third World
- Climate Change
- Developing countries
- HIV/AIDS
- Immigration

If used well these words can get a vast amount of imagery, ideas and injustices into the mind of someone in the space of a couple of seconds. However this process works both ways, whilst climate change is an instantly recognisable phrase associated with impending disaster and the need for change, many phrases can be laden with negative connotations such as immigration. The next stage demonstrates how, once you've hooked someone with your pitch you can engage them with your cause and involve them in your campaign.

### The Four steps of engaging the public

Your aim throughout should be to take the person you meet on the street through four key stages, throughout the four stages I will use the example of a campaign to save a local hospital.



- 1) **Listen:** It is all too easy to simply talk at people, throwing meaningless facts and statistics at them. This is a guaranteed way to instantly lose people. Instead of talking at them **listen to them**. If possible start with a question, “Have you ever used the local hospital?” and allow them to elaborate.
- 2) **Explore:** Once you have your hook, you’ve seized their attention and you’ve got them talking start exploring the topic. Get them to tell you about their experience, continue to gently question so that they tell you more of their own opinion. This way the dialogue will be working two ways and the person will have a sense of empowerment as their experience means something to you.
- 3) **Empathise/Equalise:** Once they have told you their story show that you emphasise by relating your cause to their story. If possible relate their opinion to your own story, for example if they have just told you that they have recently been treated at the hospital relate to this story with a story of you own or someone you know.
- 4) **Elevate:** Once you have found and explored common ground and identified joint injustices start to introduce your campaign. Tell them that you share their opinion and that something can be done about it. Give them a petition/letter to sign so they can feel they have contributed and tell them about any up coming meetings. If possible ask for their contact details so you can add them to a mailing list.

## Public Speaking: Preparing a talk:

When it comes to giving a speech, or a short talk on a public platform it is important that you don't just turn up on the day expecting to be the next Lenin. Unless you're a true genius then you're going to fall flat on your face, leaving people to question both you and your campaign. Just like engaging people on a one-to-one level it is important that you spend 90% of your time preparing your talk.

When writing your speech you need to consider ...

### 1) Who your audience are going to be.

This will hugely affect the contents and style of your talk. For example if you are going to deliver a talk on fair trade to a group of primary school children then this will be very different to a lecture you would give to academic staff.

Depending on your audience you will have to vary your tone of voice, your body language, the contents of your talk, your method to engage an audience and ultimately your objective of the talk.

- Adult learning

When giving a speech to post-university adults you must bare in mind key facts regarding how adults require and retain information. For example adults can generally hold their attention on one subject for twenty minutes whilst the attention span of a child or a student is a lot less. Bare this in mind and vary your style accordingly. If you are using slides ensure that you use plenty of pictures, diagrams or videos in order to keep the attention of the audience.

The **Primary** and **Recency** effects are vital to adult memory retention, this means that people are most likely to remember the first thing and the last thing that you tell them, so ensure you start and end on key points.

### 2) What do you want to achieve?

Is the point of this talk to raise awareness or convince people to become agents of change?

Pick three of four key points to make which will help you achieve this aim. Try and repeat these points in a variety of ways. Repetition is a key tool for any speech writer, trainer or writer to ensure the key points become lodged in the audience's memory.

## How to structure your talk

Once you have your three or four points you'll want to research some impressive facts and statistics. Facts and stats are not sufficient in themselves to prove an argument or make a case, but can be used to build upon your points or to add context to your argument.

## Use of power words

Just like when engaging people on a one-to-one level an effective use of key words will greatly increase the impact your speech will have on an audience.

Use words of significance, words that grasp the mind, words that are associated with positive action or call to action.

- Simple power words include:

Can, Guarantee, You, Today, Money, Easy, Quality, New, Urgent, Opportunity, Win, Success, Change, Positive, Power

Always avoid the cliché or loaded terms such as honour or valour. If you wouldn't say it in an average day's conversation then it isn't appropriate here.

(More information on power words and clichés can be found in the chapter, Campaign Marketing.)

## The rule of three

The rule of three is a marketing trick that can be perfectly utilised for delivering speeches, writing articles and designing marketing materials. The rule simply states that three is the magic number for memory retention. Simply put, if you tell somebody something three times they are more likely to remember it. This manifests itself in various formats and will be found frequently in this book. In the case of speech writing it is no coincidence that many of the worlds most famous speeches contain the rule of three:

"Liberty, Equality, Fraternity"  
French Revolutionaries

"Government of the people, by the people, for the people"  
Abraham Lincoln, Gettysburg Address, 1863

"Friends, Romans, Countrymen"  
William Shakespeare

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

"Blood, sweat and tears"  
Winston Churchill

"Education, Education, Education"  
Tony Blair

When planning your speech try and summarise your cause in three simple points and if possible in a simple, memorable sentence. You might not make history but it will help keep your message in people's minds.

### Involve the audience in the talk

Whilst this is very dependent on your audience you may wish to take an interactive approach. Mixing up your style of presentation can be a sound means of achieving this, but throwing questions out to the audience can be equally as effective. It can be a useful tool in gauging the crowds' reaction to the talk.

### Preparation (Before the day)

- Know exactly where the venue is and ensure you can get there in time. He who is late is punished by life.
- Make sure that you know how long you have to talk, and that your speech fits the time slot. You don't want to be cut short before making your key points.
- Check that the venue will provide any equipment that you may need.

Do you have PowerPoint slides? Would a short film get the point across and save your breath?

- Is there an opportunity to give out any of your own leaflets or literature? Ensure that other members from your campaign team are present to handout leaflets or petitions and can speak to people as they arrive at the venue or before they leave.

### Key points for preparation

Write your speech out and read it though to yourself, ensuring that you become familiar with it. This will ensure that you practise key words and phrases, making them appear natural rather than forced.

Whilst writing your speech out and practising it helps you prepare, make sure you don't simply read from a script on the day. You want your speech to flow,

and to appear natural. Simply put, an audience will simply not find you reading to them an engaging experience.

Finally, jokes. Jokes can be an effective way to get the audience to warm to you and enjoy your talk. Make sure you've practised these jokes or at least tried them out on somebody first, nothing in the world is as awkward as the tumbleweed effect when a joke goes wrong!

### On the Day

- Dress to impress

Superficial as it may seem the way that you dress is the first thing people will notice about you, long before you open your mouth to speak, and like it or not people will make assumptions about your character and your motivations depending on how you look. One clear example, which sticks in my mind, is the National Union of Students conference at Blackpool in 2008. A delegate strove confidently to the podium and delivered an inspirational speech on the value of education and of the campaign to defeat university fees. Sadly the moment she stepped back from the podium she revealed a red t-shirt with "Bolshevik" clearly emblazoned on the front, drawing sighs and the inevitable tuts from the crowd who instantly wrote off a fantastic speech due to their own stereotypical views. This does not mean that you need to throw away the last vestiges of your individuality and don a corporate suit; it simply means you must be mindful of your audience.

If you are talking to a largely post-university adult or elderly audience then a shirt will ensure that you carry a degree of respectability. Shirts and ties are simply what the public associate politicians to be like and they don't often embrace deviations from this theme. Similarly if you are delivering a talk to students or young adults a shirt and tie will make you appear arrogant or patronising. Students are used to lecturers and teachers droning on looking like this, you don't want to be associated with that. You want to appear like a peer, like a friend delivering a message.

Also:

- Arrive at least thirty minutes early

This allows you to familiarise yourself with the venue and to check that any equipment you need is in good working order.

- Use the toilet and Empty your pockets

It is normal for people to be nervous before giving a speech but do your best not to show it. Often playing with the loose change or car keys is a symptom of this nervousness. It is important to remove any potential distractions, as body language is the single most important factor when engaging an audience.

- Don't have more than one drink

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

Dutch courage is one thing but giving a speech under the influence will do little but make you appear unprofessional. Your task is to win the crowd over and inspire them, not cement their scepticism with your slurred words!

- Get someone to stand at the back  
This way you will know if everyone can hear you and if necessary they can be your plant in the audience to ask the right questions.

### Presenting the talk

#### At the start of the talk

- Thank the audience
- Introduce yourself by telling them who you are and what you're going to talk about
- Tell people that they will have an opportunity to ask questions at the end
- Sign post your talk by briefly bullet pointing the areas you are going to cover in your speech.

#### During the talk

- Do not rush your talk; speak slowly so people can fully understand what you are saying. Dramatic pauses in appropriate locations can help with this, but don't go overboard, you want people to listen to your message not nominate you for an Oscar.
- Ensure that you repeat the important parts
- Use the whole stage; feel free to walk across the stage, making sure you don't simply hide behind a podium. You want to engage with your audience, not hide from them.
- Be expressive
- Don't swear, this will simply make you appear unprofessional and can instantly lose you the respect of the audience.
- Don't ramble. If you lose your thread then simply pause to collect your thoughts. The audience would rather you did this than start talking nonsense.

### Ending your talk

In short summarise your points and tie them all together. Finish on an upbeat note, like an inspiring quote or a rally calling to action. Always aim to leave people inspired and motivated with the feeling that something can be done.

***In other words, tell them what you're going to say, say it and then tell them what you've just told them.***

### Hecklers

One of the challenges, which you may often be faced with when delivering a speech, is a heckler. More often than not they simply want attention. You must insure that you are in control of the situation, do not allow the heckler to put themselves in the limelight. Depending on the situation there are a variety of ways you can deal with this.

- If someone heckles you with an argument, pause and tell the audience that you will address the point at the end of the speech.
- Alternatively you can remind them that they are free to leave!
- If you are in a small group then a very effective way of dealing with a heckler is to give them exactly what they want, just not in the way they wanted it. Walk and stand behind the chair where the heckler is sitting and continue with your talk as if nothing has happened. This way the audience keeps its attention on your words and the heckler is put in an awkward position.

### Taking Questions

Taking questions at the end of a speech can be a daunting experience, if your speech has gone well then the crowd should react positively and may ask you to elaborate points. If however the speech hasn't gone as well then the audience may challenge you on key points. The important thing is not to get drawn into any arguments. If a member of the audience looks like they want to get into an argument tell them that you'd be happy to continue your discussion after the talk.

One technique, which many orators draw upon if they do not have an answer, is to turn the question back on the audience. This can be a great way of engaging and interacting with the audience as well as gaining vital feedback for your campaign.

Also don't be afraid to pause and gather your thoughts before answering, a calm and considered response will be far more respected than a swift off the cuff remark.

## An Example: The Boycott Coca-Cola Campaign: Portsmouth

### University 2006-2008

In 2006 I worked with a coalition of campaigners to lobby the Students' Union to boycott all Coca-Cola products from the Union's bars and catering outlets. This was due to alleged human rights abuses in areas such as Columbia and India. I delivered the following short speech to the elected Union Council, the largest student run policy making panel in the Students' union calling for them to support the campaign.

### Speech to Student Council of Portsmouth University Students' Union April 2006

"On the 24<sup>th</sup> of January the Socialist Students presented this council with a resolution calling for an action day to raise awareness of the terrible crimes being perpetrated by the Coca-Cola Corporation in Columbia and India, crimes which have resulted in the deaths of thousands of innocent men, woman and Children.

- Emotive opening lines, succinctly defining the injustice and the cause.

Following this Action day the Student Socialists joined with the Respect party, People and Planet as well as other non-affiliated students to form an Anti-Coke coalition to carry this campaign forward.

- Evidence of student interest and intent. Shows that this issue brings students together.

Portsmouth University has a history of being an ethical university. It's an advocate of fair trade and a recently published report shows that Portsmouth is the only university not to invest money in the arms trade. The crimes that are being committed in Columbia are being carried out with weapons brought from the British government. These weapons are then sold on to the Coca-Cola paid paramilitary's who use them to intimidate and murder the workers and their families. Whilst this university's stance on the arms trade is commendable I'm sure that the university does not intend to make a stand

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

against direct investment in the arms trade only to then invest indirectly by profiting the Coca-Cola Corporation.

- Use of the Union's/University's ethical history to show common ground and historical precedence.

With this in mind we now call for a full boycott of all Coca-cola products as well as those sold by companies affiliated to, or owned by the Coca-cola cooperation. We call for this boycott to be enforced not only in the Union building but throughout the University. We also call for the replacement of Coca-Cola not to be Pepsi Cola. This boycott is an action against multinational corporations and removing profit from one multinational corporation only to pass it on to another is not a vast improvement

Instead, we call for the replacement of Coca Cola products to be purchased from the "Hartridges soft drinks Company" which is based in Hampshire. This would be a move consistent with other Student venues across Portsmouth and would be supporting local industry.

- Clearly defined objectives

- Statistics to back up student interest.

To this effect we present over 1000 student signatures that have been collected by Coalition members throughout the Campaign. These signatures prove that Portsmouth's Students do care about this issue and are calling for action to be taken. In response to the students' concerns, we call for Portsmouth Student Union to give its full commitment, full support and to do everything in its power to act against atrocities perpetrated by the Coca-Cola cooperation and to enforce a full boycott forthwith.

We'd like to acknowledge the Union's support so far in this campaign, support that we are very grateful for. However the Anti-coke campaign does not end here, we plan to continue to raise awareness of the Coca-Cola's crimes for as long as they continue to murder innocent people, be that directly with paramilitary death squads as we've seen in Columbia or be that through unethical and cruel business practises as we have seen in India. To this end the coalition will be putting up a stand at the Society's Carnival where we will continue to raise awareness within the student body."

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

Following this speech the council voted unanimously to support the campaign. This not only gave the campaign official support from the Union but meant that the Union would also lobby for the cause.

### Conclusion

By this point you should have the basics of campaign communication, the ability to successfully engage with the public, both on a one to one basis and during a speech. As communication is such a vital area of any campaign it will reappear frequently in later chapters, such as the section detailing how to successfully lobby officials or chair a debate. However, it is important to realise that communication is not limited to the spoken word alone, in the next chapter we will analyse how to effectively use the media before looking at the role successful marketing can have on your campaign.

## Chapter Four: Campaign Marketing

“During times of universal deceit, telling the truth becomes a revolutionary act.”

George Orwell

This chapter will enable you to understand:

- The importance of marketing
- Marketing theory – Principles of Marketing and Campaign Marketing
- What’s in a word? Framing the Argument

This chapter will then enable you to:

- Put the theory into practise
- Analyse successful marketing

Propaganda. If ever there is a word which conjures up dark images of spin and deceit then this is it. The term was originally coined by the Vatican in 1622 when Pope Gregory XV founded the “*Congregatio de Propaganda Fide*”, the Congregation for the Spreading of the Faith. Now the term is often used as political abuse or refers to distributing false information. Essentially however the term propaganda simply means marketing, the art or science of getting information across to people in such a way as they believe it and act on it. In the marketing industry this can mean persuading consumers to purchase a product or in political terms it can mean ensuring the electorate voting for a specific candidate. However, this process does not have to include manipulation of information, distortion of fact or outright lying, indeed if your campaign is going to be effective it is going to have to be built entirely on fact and truth. Whilst the need for fact needs to be a foundation stone of any campaign marketing there are techniques which will enable you to get your campaign message across. Often campaigning organisations believe that facts alone are enough to convince people to act which is simply not the case, unless the facts are given context and framed by a compelling message or argument then people may simply not understand. This is why it is essential for any campaign group to grasp the basic marketing skills needed to reach their target audience, communicate with them, and elevate them to the cause.

### Marketing theory

As distasteful as it may first appear, being able to successfully promote your cause and your campaign means you will have to apply marketing techniques if you are going to succeed. In the marketing industry the motive is profit and the method is to convince you to buy, this is obviously slightly different to coordinating campaign marketing, you do not want to sell a product, you want to sell an idea. You do not want to persuade people to buy; you want to

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

persuade people to act. There are various instances where you will want to evoke specific marketing, these include:

- Campaign Recruitment
- To advertise Marches, Rallies, Debates and other campaign events
- To raise awareness of specific campaign issues within the local community
- To frame your arguments

As with a media strategy, marketing can cover a variety of mediums. All too frequently campaign groups stick with A4 posters, whilst posters are one avenue of marketing they are extremely passive and should only be used as one facet of a wider marketing campaign. Other avenues include:

Pamphlets	Newspaper Adverts	Websites or a blog
Web-Zines (On line magazine)	Social networking sites	Radio Adverts
Television Commercials	Publicity stunts	T-shirts
News letters	Leafleting	Word of mouth

Of course the methods you choose to utilise will be very dependent on your target audience and your budget. A small campaign group will not be able to afford a television advert, but may utilise a local radio phone in. Websites and blogs are one of the fastest growing mediums of communication and provide activists with an unlimited space and a potentially unlimited audience. However, it is important to consider your target audience, are you trying to appeal to internet users or do your targets use more traditional methods.

Whilst it may appear a cliché the most effective form of marketing is word of mouth, someone is far more likely to trust information they hear from a neighbour or a close friend than something they read in a leaflet. Remember the first chapter, if you talk to six people in the street who in turn talk to six who in turn pass on the message you can create an ever growing chain of people and reach more potential activists than a thousand posters ever could. Whatever form of marketing you embark on it is essential that you constantly consider your overall objectives, your mission statement and your campaign strategy, as with a media strategy you do not want to be investing time and money into marketing as an end to itself, you should have a set, measurable goal you wish to achieve.

### The principles of marketing

There are four central tenants of marketing, know as the “Four P’s”. These are the crucial factors which you have to keep in mind, regardless of whether your selling a product, an idea or in this case a cause.

### **Product**

The most important aspect of a marketing campaign is the product itself. It doesn't matter what that product is, it could be a cheese grater or, as with this case, it could be a campaign. The important factors to consider are how this product relates to the end user or the target audience. Why is the product desirable? Why would they want to buy the product, why would they want to support the cause? In a commercial sense it would require specification and supporting elements of the product including purpose, utility as well as warranties, guarantees, and support. In a campaign sense it refers to the goals and aims of the campaign and the support information equates to the campaign team itself.

### **Pricing**

In a product sense pricing will refer to the financial process of setting a price for the product. However the price need not be monetary, it can simply be what is exchanged for the product or services, such as time, energy, or attention.

### **Promotion**

This includes advertising, sales promotion, publicity, and personal selling, branding and refers to the various methods of promoting the product, brand, or company.

### **Placement**

Refers to how the product gets to the customer. This fourth P has also sometimes been called Place and refers to who the product or campaign is targeting at, which geographic regions, which aspect of the community.

## The principles of campaign marketing

Marketing consultant Peter Blackshaw has built upon these four P's with "Five P's of Campaigning." Blackshaw argues that marketing companies need to learn from campaigning organisations, which classically aim to connect to a large audience with a very sparse budget. Blackshaw, the CMO of *Nielsen BuzzMetrics*, defined five key adjectives that describe great activist marketing.<sup>4</sup> These adjectives are:

---

<sup>4</sup> Peter Blackshaw (2005) <http://notetaker.typepad.com/cgm/>

- 1) **Pure**
- 2) **Passionate**
- 3) **Prophetic**
- 4) **Poor**
- 5) **Paranoid**

### 1) **Pure**

The first adjective is pure, as Blackshaw states “there is an unmistakable purity to the activists' cause” a purity which drives trust, credibility, and believability which are of fundamental importance if the public are to believe in your cause and support you. Marketers stand in strong contrast as their work is often full of disclaimers and fine print. As Blackshaw says, this isn't the case with activists. “We may not agree with them, we may even have reason to despise them. But we always know where they stand.”

### 2) **Passionate**

To put it in purely business terms, passion sells. It sells because unlike a marketing company sounding enthused by a product, a campaigner's passion is usually genuine. Blackshaw argues that the two central driving forces in the recent blogging revolution are passion and authority as people click on, read and trust activist's thoughts.

### 3) **Prophetic**

What Blackshaw truly admired about activists he witnessed during his University time was the fact that they really believed in their cause. They were in no doubt that the University would eventually agree with them and their target would be reached. As Blackshaw states “effective activists stick to their vision and help others to see it and believe in it.” This is where a campaign strategy, a media and marketing strategy become integral.

### 4) **Poor**

Unlike the multi-million pound marketing business a campaign organisation doesn't work for profit and so is unlikely to have a bulging budget. This can be viewed as a strength, as unlike a marketing company which can afford to spend vast amounts of money and fail, activists however have little choice but to use their slim resources in a flexible, creative, agile, and experimental way.

### 5) **Paranoid**

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

Often campaigners are forced to take an "us versus them" mentality as their actions are usually targeting against an organisation which has the ability to fight back with a counter campaign. Blackshaw equates this to the competition within the marketing industry suggesting that "paranoia keeps me on guard, fiercely competitive, and five steps ahead", which ultimately is where you will want to be in your marketing campaign.

Peter Blackshaw put his marketing knowledge into action by creating his own activist blog entitled SaveThePool.com which is dedicated to saving his local community pool. This website shows how a small campaign group, with little to no funding, can build a large web presence as well as a large presence throughout the local community through effective marketing.

### What's in a word? Framing the argument.

In Chapter Three: Campaign Communication, I mentioned the importance of Power words. Words which are loaded with connotations and meanings, words which if used effectively can inject a vast amount of imagery into a person's mind within seconds. When considering your marketing it is imperative that you understand how your message is perceived, this can only be achieved by a very careful consideration of the words you use. All words carry with them deeper meaning, however they can be either neutral or loaded. The word "cat" is a neutral word but saying it or thinking it instantly conjures an image in your mind of what you believe a cat to look like, for example this may be a memory of a cat you owned as a child. Loaded words work in exactly the same fashion, yet for a political or marketing end. Immigration is perhaps the best example of this. The word instantly conjures up images of a stereotypical immigrant as defined by the media and political parties; it is unlikely that the word will conjure a neutral image because such groups and organisations have invested so much time and money associating the word with their cause and their propaganda. Indeed, in the introduction and the first chapter I addressed the words "activist" and "campaign" as these are highly charged, loaded terms which have been used to create a stereotypical mental image. Often the word is associated with militancy, political unorthodoxy and quite possibly violence. However, as this book has demonstrated this is a very misleading frame as the words can just as easily apply to children and parents campaigning to save a local swimming pool, as it can too social justice campaigners calling for Fair trade or local elderly residents protesting against the closure of a local fire station.

It is our choice of words and our use of phrases which construct the methods we as activists use to present both ourselves and our arguments, and so it is these words which we constantly need to re-evaluate. The relationship between words and the political cause is hardly a new development. To prove the point I will refer to three very different analysts and writers, whose agendas are as dissimilar as their points are parallel; George Orwell, Professor Richard Dawkins and Professor George Lakoff.

In 1946 George Orwell wrote his most famous essay “Politics and the English Language”, a brutal denunciation of sloppy and slovenly writing but also a discussion on the relationship between words and politics. Orwell argued both in this essay and in his later masterpiece 1984 that words as a political tool can contain the potential of both enlightenment and of tyranny. Words, Orwell remarked, are often used by politicians to “defend the indefensible”, when villages are bombed and their homes destroyed this is called “*pacification*” whilst a forced exodus of people, such as the Cossacks under Stalin, is dubbed “*population transfer*”. Clearly this is not a million miles away from the clinical phrase “*collateral damage*” that the Pentagon or the Ministry of Defence wheels out to defend modern day acts of military horror. Such words, Orwell argued, can be an empirical or intellectual sheen over indefensible acts. However, this is not the only way in which the choice of language is pivotal to politics. Orwell was not simply writing about slovenly word play as would a sixth form English teacher, but was commenting on the relationship between words and meaning. In 1984, Orwell demonstrated how a party, which narrowed the amount of words in a person’s vocabulary, directly narrowed that person’s ability of thought, thus creating a sense of “protective stupidity”. The same process can happen to a political party, an ideology or in our case a campaign that becomes lost or bogged down in clichéd and tired rhetoric. Orwell was writing in post-war England, in an era when totalitarianism had been defeated at a vast human cost in Germany and Italy, yet continued to thrive in Franco’s Spain and Stalin’s Soviet Union. In the world of Orwell the Cold War was yet in its infancy and due to his premature death in 1950, Orwell did not live to witness the world changing revolutions in both communications and political propaganda. This is not to say that his work is of little value, grounded as it is in the 1940’s. Various writers have, albeit unwittingly, contributed to Orwell’s concept of the relationship between words and political meanings.

Among these is Richard Dawkins, the controversial scientist and writer of the “The God Delusion.” Dawkins, like Orwell is an atheist, however unlike Orwell his work constitutes an educated, articulate and rational assault against God and the perceptions of religion. Orwell’s work constituted a similar assault, yet his target was human totalitarianism. The point is that whilst their causes are different, both writers recognise the huge significance of single words. As Dawkins states, “language is the single most important consciousness raiser.” To make this point Dawkins refers to the Feminist movement and specifically the radical movement of the 1970’s that fought for “feminist pronouns.” It may sound small but this isn’t simply saying “fireperson” instead of “fireman” or “chairperson” instead of “chairman” but using “she” in many of the instances where we have been trained since school days to automatically say “he”. Like Orwell, Dawkins recognised that the words we use define our thoughts and therefore our attitudes and values. Dawkins takes this principle and identifies an area within his own cause, religious pronouns for describing children. Dawkins argues that we should not refer to “Christian children”, but rather “children with Christian parents” as children are not old enough to make a consciousness choice regarding faith. Dawkins argues that this would raise consciousness surrounding religious debate as much as feminist pronouns did for feminism since the 1970’s.

George Lakoff, a professor of linguistics and cognitive science, at Berkeley University in the United States understands the significance of words and the lessons progressives and campaigners must learn. The premise is a simple one, “progressive political groups must struggle to define their principles and values.” Lakoff, who writes for an American audience argues that the Republican party have already learnt the significance of words. He states, “conservatives have spent decades defining their ideas, carefully choosing the language with which to present them, and building an infrastructure to communicate them.” It is these definitions which Lakoff believes to be all important. Just as Orwell identified that words and their meaning have a political relationship, Lakoff talks of “framing words”. Like Orwell and Dawkins, Lakoff argues that words are not merely expressions, they are neural links to metaphors and narratives. Political words are therefore loaded, or “framed”, from a political perspective. To understand the affect of politically framed words in the national, and international consciousness one need only think of the phrase “War on Terror”, which has been the dogged mantra of the American Bush administration since 2001. It is clear that the “War on Terror” is not a politically neutral term, analysed objectively it means very little, it advocates a war against the intangible, against an unempirical notion. Put simply you couldn’t take a photo of the war on terror and put even more simply, you couldn’t put it on a plate. The phrase is a cold slab of rhetoric, however through endless repetition of imagery and its insertion into generic speeches, the phrase has become framed so as to unleash a plethora of values and images. The phrase now conjures horrific images of planes crashing into towers, of fireman pulling lifeless bodies from smouldering wreckage, of down flights in Pennsylvania, of turbaned fanatics wielding Kalashnikovs, of American action heroes with Ray-bans and of old fashioned flag fluttering patriotism. With this comes a necessary willing to support “our boys” and the belief that any deviation from complete loyalty to the cause is both heretical and unpatriotic. For a physical simile of how the framing of words works, simply type “War on Terror” into an image search of Google and the result will be an electronic version of our sub consciousness. The “War on terror” is just one of many national and international phrases which have been politically framed, others include “immigration”, “terrorism”, “free market”, “free trade” and “environment” to name but a few.

To return to Orwell’s essay, with Lakoff’s premise kept firmly in mind we can find clear and present lessons for Socialists. As Orwell states, “many political words are abused. The word *Fascism* has now no meaning except in so far as it signifies “something not desirable”. The words *democracy*, *socialism*, *freedom*, *patriotic*, *realistic*, *justices* have each of them several different meanings which cannot be reconciled with each other.” Here Orwell is also referring to framing, how different political organisations can use the same word, yet frame it in such a way as to ensure its meaning completely changed. “Freedom” and the principle of what is “free” is perhaps the most engaging example of this. When the left speak of being free we may be discussing freedom from tyranny or from exploitation. Of course when a conservative speaks of freedom they may be referring to the free market, or free enterprise, thus giving the principle a vastly different meaning.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

So, we have the theory, both from contemporary analysts and from the hand of Orwell, extending towards us from the 1940's, but what does this mean for campaigners today? It means that when considering the message you want to promote you must bear in mind the words and also the frames you are dealing with. For example, if you are against the "War on Terror" then do not use the phrase as it merely re-enforces the existing frame, which means you are campaigning against yourself. Instead it is important to construct new frames, using key words which are associated to the values and goals of your campaign. For example, if you are campaigning against the proposed building of a new motorway through a forest, then a simple "Keep our Forest Free" would be an ideal frame. With this message you are using the word free, which is associated with freedom. Whilst freedom is an often disputed term, it is a value understood by all. By using the term you are alluding to the idea that this freedom is under threat, which is inherently negative. In another example, if you are campaigning to save a local fire station from closure then a "Save our fire-fighters" will create a very effective frame. The word "save" implies that someone, usually a hero figure has to save something, the victim from somebody else, a villain. Fire-fighters are also usually depicted as heroic figures so a simple three word sentence suddenly implies that the heroes themselves need saving and that whoever is trying to shut down the station is the villain. These are very simple examples but they show how framing works and the logical words, values and imagery which are associated with key words.

The second lesson these writers bring to us is the need for clear, coherent language. Many campaigning organisations or political groups will use words, phrases and quotes which will mean very little to someone outside of the organisation. Left wing groups have been notorious for doing this with words such as "proletariat", "bourgeoisie" and "petit-bourgeoisie", antiquated words which will mean very little to the average person, who after all is your target audience. It is important that you consider the words you are going to use and the effect they will have on your audience. When writing a leaflet, blog an article or for that matter giving a speech, write each line as if you are writing to a friend. If your about to use a phrase which you wouldn't use in everyday conversation then don't use it!

### Putting this into practise.

There is of course a difference between knowing the theory and putting it into practise. The following sections will explain how to name an organisation, how to structure your marketing message and how to analyse successful marketing.

#### Naming an organisation

Campaign marketing should not be considered an isolated area of your campaign, but needs to be built into every aspect of your strategy planning, from the very moment that you name your organisation. This isn't a decision to take lightly, remember that the campaign name is the first thing people will see and is therefore the first thing they will judge you on.

An example of how to name an organisation is provided by Professor Lakoff who put his theory of framing into practise, when he consulted an organisation named “Centre for Disease Control.” The centre was researching “body burden”, a study into how many toxic chemicals the average American consumes and keeps in their body. Initially the group merely released their findings as factual, statistical information without a frame, in the belief that the facts would be strong enough to shock the public into supporting change. Lakoff argues that this was a complete failure because the group was “not taking communication seriously and not taking conceptualization seriously.” Lakoff goes on to tell how he turned the fortunes of this group around through successful framing and a simple marketing exercise:

“They asked me how they should run a campaign on it. I said, "It's very simple. You call your campaign **Be Poison-Free**. Why use the word "poison"? Because the framing of poison has a poisoner. It makes you look at who is doing the poisoning. Everyone knows what poison is - it kills you. Everybody knows that. Now of course you then have to run a serious campaign and have the money to do that and have the public relations support, which is harder, but the first step is understanding how to frame it.”<sup>5</sup>

When considering how to name your group it is crucial to consider what your vision, values and goals are and how they can be summarised into a simple, media and marketing friendly name. Some effective examples of this include “**Ban the Box**”, a campaign against speed camera on British roads which was active in the early 1990's. The clever phrase not only includes alliteration, which makes the phrase catchy, it also ensures that whoever says it is immediately advocating the cause. This phrase was so successful it has since been emulated by a campaign group in the United States who are calling to scrap the tick box on job application forms which enquire about any criminal convictions a candidate may have.

It is important to consider the context you are working in, the people you are trying to write and that you frame the title correctly. For example, if you are campaigning against the renewal of British nuclear weapons a simple “**No to Trident Nuclear Weapons**” may sound right, but are you merely reinforcing an existing framed argument? There has been much debate using the phrase “Trident weapons system” and some may now associate it with defence, and they will associate the word defence as a positive, as defence saves people from attack. In order to avoid such a frame it might be wiser, as CND have repeatedly done, to phrase the campaign name and marketing message as being “**No to Nuclear War**.” There is no doubt that war, especially of the nuclear variety, has a frame of death and destruction. The phrase instantly conjures images of destroyed Japanese cities and Cold War fears. Other examples of well named organisations include:

- *People and Planet*
- *Stop the War*
- *Plane Crazy*

---

<sup>5</sup> George Lakoff, “*Don't think of an Elephant*”

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

Whilst there is no simple formula for developing a name it is advisable that you consult your mission statement, the sentence or passage which contains your core values and aims. You want your campaign name to summarise it in a single phrase.

### Developing your message

Understanding the importance of key words is a fundamental tool for the marketing task, but before you choose your words you have to choose your message. By message I mean a consistent line which stays true throughout your campaign and across your marketing initiatives. The key is to keep your message consistent, frequent repetition is essential for creating frames. Phrases such as “War on Terror” have only developed their politically charged meaning through constant repetition in the mass media and in political speeches.

First off, it is integral for people to understand what your values are, not simply what your policies are. Policies can be divisive and even people who share the same ideology can succumb to sectarianism, values on the other hand are uniting and inclusive. If you can clearly demonstrate the positive values that your campaign stands for you will attract initial attention. Policies and methods are then something that can be discussed and debated later. All too often campaigning organisations “policy silo”, this means they simply present a tick box list of aims and objectives but fail to frame them with values and persuasive arguments. As with facts and statistics, presenting goals and objectives on their own will fail to engage unless they are accompanied by context and explanations.

### Keeping your message simple

It is advisable to channel a complex issue into a smaller, media friendly image. Bombarding the audience with a barrage of facts and statistics will only confuse and alienate potential supporters. Instead choose the three most important aspects of your campaign and condense them into one engaging message. Many campaigners, especially student groups, often attempt to be overly artistic or clever. Remember you aren't aiming to win a marketing award, you want people to engage with your message, so keep it simple, direct and straightforward. It is also integral to remember who your audience are and where they are on the issue. For example, it would be reasonable to assume that students are already fairly well informed about paying University fees so a campaign message could start at an in-depth level. However, in many cases it is best to assume that the general public know little to nothing of your cause. Here a classic campaigning trap presents itself. Often activists can adopt a patronising stance to the general public and assume that it is merely ignorance which prevents the public from knowing and supporting the cause. It is not ignorance; often they have simply not had the opportunity to gain the necessary knowledge. It is a popular idiom to suggest that only students and the retired have the time to lead campaigns, and it must be recognised that if you are campaigning about an issue which is not clearly present in someone's everyday life, such as Columbian trade union rights, or melting Ice caps, they will not have had the time or inclination to research it.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

Don't write these people off, give them the opportunity to learn and empower them to support you.

### Find the unacceptable and look for conflict

When creating a message it is useful to create a "hook", an aspect of the story that will grasp people's attention. Two ways to achieve this is to find the unacceptable and to look for examples of conflict. Finding the unacceptable is putting forward the idea that failure to act will produce an unacceptable situation and that this campaign presents a tipping point. The best contemporary example of this can be found in campaigns against climate change. Often the argument is framed to suggest that failure to act, and a failure to save the environment will result in catastrophe such as melting icecaps, rising sea levels and apocalyptic weather patterns, which will in turn result in death and destruction. Clearly this presents an unacceptable result from inaction, whilst your campaign may not be able to present such a clear case example, you have to consider where the line of acceptability lies with your audience. By finding a conflict scenario you can inject a sense of injustice, which in turn can generate interest. A favoured marketing technique by large companies is to deploy narratives to frame their product. This can often be seen in television adverts when the product is centrally placed within a story. One of the most engaging narratives is one of conflict where there are two protagonists, a victim and an oppressor. If you can use your message to portray your cause as the victim and frame your opponent as the oppressor then you will be framing your campaign message in a known narrative.

Constant evaluation is of paramount importance, you need to objectively assess how effective your message is and if it is achieving the desired results. One key evaluation technique is to consider if your message is real? Often groups will say they are "raising awareness" or "reaching out to the public", which sound all well and good but are they really tangible, real activities which produce tangible and real results? Put simply, could you take a photo of your message? If not, it isn't real.

Finally, consider what you are asking people to do. What is your final objective, what is your end goal? Is your message aimed at recruitment or advertising for an event? Ensure you constantly consider your goals.

### Developing a slogan

The task of developing a marketing slogan, which will be used throughout your campaign marketing, is akin to forming your mission statement and a logical extension to establishing your campaign name. Indeed in the case of "**Ban the Box**" the campaign name is the campaign slogan. Slogans are not only used in your printed material, such as on posters, leaflets and T-shirts, but should also be found on placards and chanted during marches. Since the 1970's political parties have turned to marketing companies to create effective, framed slogans to accompany their propaganda. Three of the most famous examples from British general elections include:

**“New Labour, New Danger”**

1997 Conservative Party poster

**“Labour isn’t working”**

1978 Conservative Party poster

**“Britain deserves better”**

1997 Labour Party Poster

Outside of main stream politics effective campaigning slogans have included:

**“Killer Cola”**

Coca-Cola Boycott Campaign

**“Treat AIDS Now”**

People & Planet Aids Awareness Campaign

As the following diagram shows, a straightforward way of creating an effective slogan is to try and work out how some of your stakeholders perceive your slogan and what they will understand it to mean.



The four key factors which have to be considered are:

- Your goals and how the slogan explains and elaborates upon those. For example the **“Treat AIDS now”** the cause and the goal are both highlighted.
- Your activists are going to be the people on the ground, engaging with the public and ultimately doing the work that will make your campaign a success. Do they engage and agree with the slogan, is it something

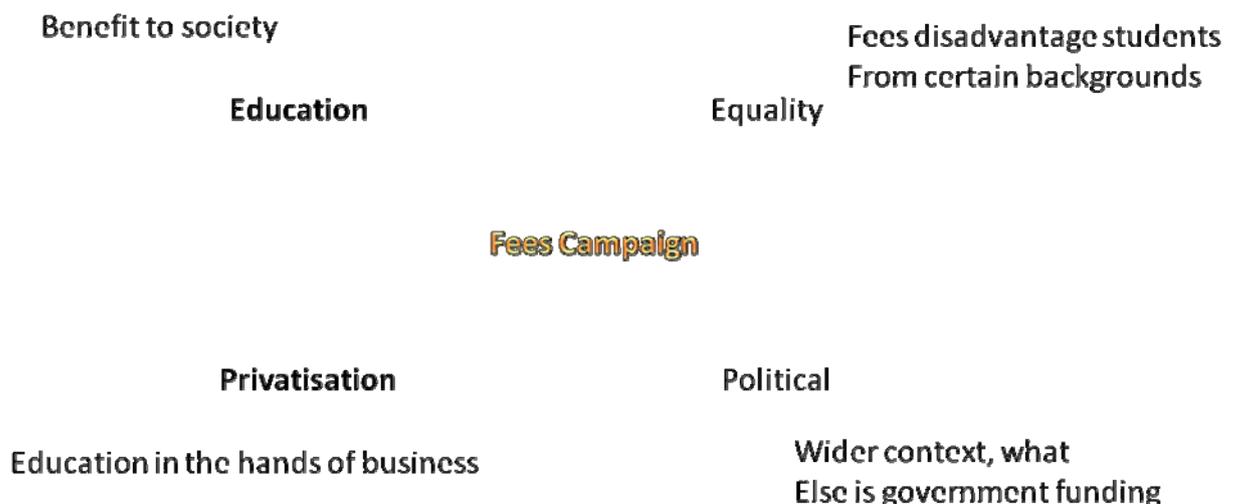
## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

they will be happy to shout and something they can take pride in? Again, consultation is fundamental to this process. Unveil your slogan at a general meeting and take the feedback seriously.

- The community equates not only to the location and environment in which your campaign inhabits, it also include the public who need to engage with and be persuaded by your slogan. For example the “**Labour isn’t working**” slogan was hugely effective in areas which suffered from high unemployment, it wasn’t so successful in affluent areas. Once again, understanding and empathising with your audience is crucial.
- The one person or organisation who you should never leave out in any consideration is your opponent. These are the people you are targeting and the people who you hope to influence to effect change. The important aspect to consider is not only how your opponent engages with your slogan, but also if they can form a counter frame to discredit it. **The Killer Cola** campaign, which was formed in 2003 after alleged human rights abuses, took the famous slogan “*Coca-cola, It’s the real thing*”, and manipulated it to “*Murder, it’s the real thing*” thus using a corporation’s framed, famous slogans against it. Of course this can just as easily be turned against you in a counter campaign.

### Slogan Exercise

A simple word and values association exercise will help you to form your slogan. Place the name or goal of your campaign in the middle of a spider diagram and then choose four to six key words which are associated with this. Next work out which words or values are associated to these words. The diagram will begin to look like this:

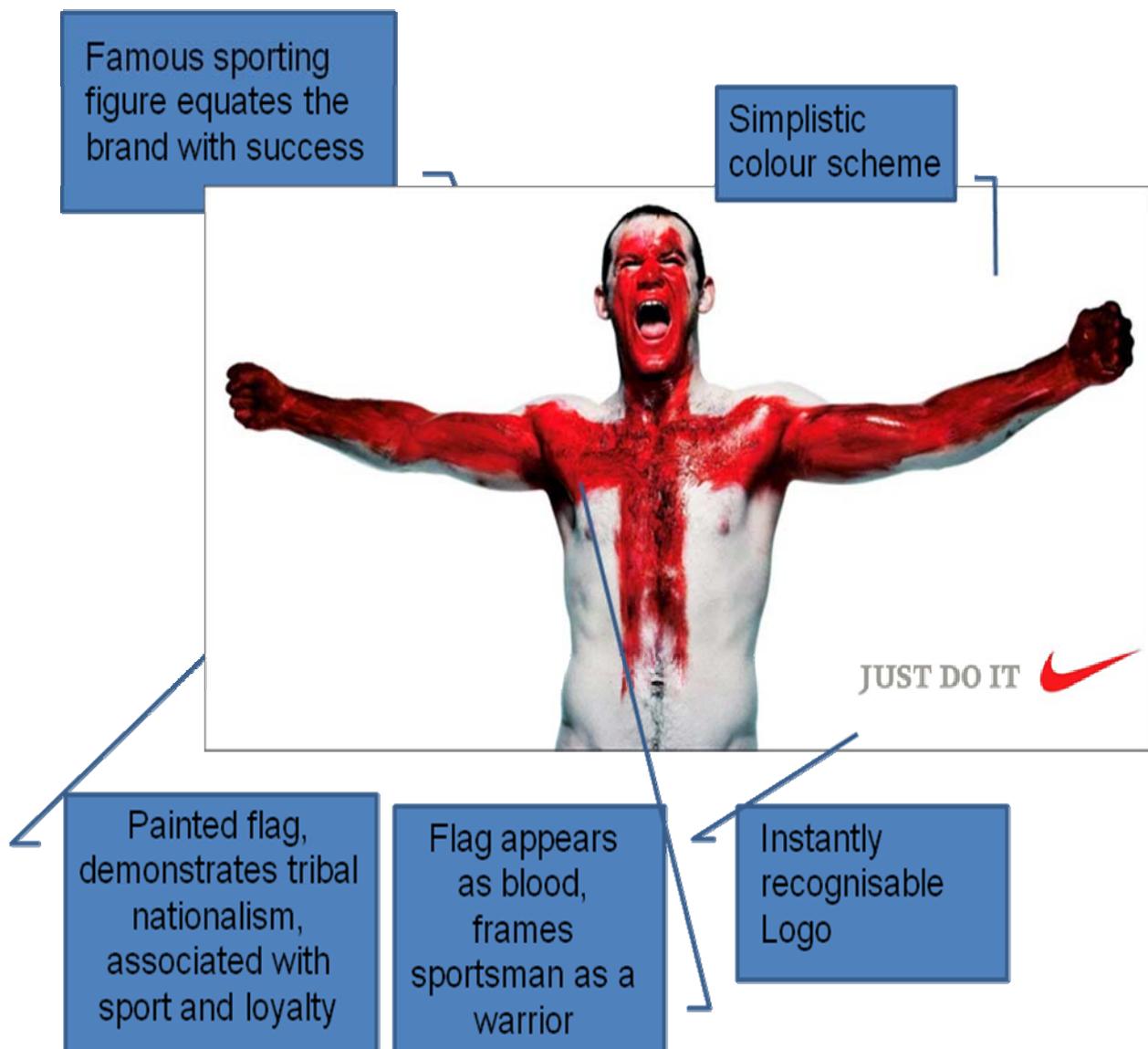


## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

This example is from a Student Union campaign against growing University fees. The final slogan used was **“For a Fairer Education.”** This slogan features the key word “education”, which holistically is what the campaign was striving to defend, whilst also using a key framed word “fairness”. Whilst the term equality can be a politically disputed term, the phrase “fairness” is predominantly agreed with. This slogan therefore implies that the campaign is fighting to keep education fair, which logically suggests that the target of the campaign is striving to make it unfair, which is generally agreed to be a negative term. The success of this slogan could be seen instantly as students from a variety of political back grounds were all happy to march under its banner and use the phrase when engaging the public.

### Analysing Successful Marketing

We may dislike them, indeed we may be campaigning against them but often the multinational corporations can provide examples of marketing which contain framed ideas and values, the aim of the marketing is to utilise these frames to convince you to buy their product. In the example below English footballer Wayne Rooney is depicted in an advertising poster for Nike. This simple image goes beyond the superficial and poses a variety of frames each intended to trigger brand recognition and brand loyalty.



## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

Whilst commercial companies may be the most prolific producer of marketing, large campaign organisations can also provide some working examples. This first example comes from the *Control Arms* campaign which calls for a government regulated control of all fire arms. The campaign is international in its objectives and its “million face” marketing attempts to show the global support for the campaign.

Slogan shows extend, timeframe and goal of the campaign

Simplistic black and white colour scheme

Anti-Gun symbol comprised of people's faces demonstrates collective strength

Use of numbers show how well supported and united the activists are, this shows it is an inclusive campaign



## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

The second example comes from the Presidential election in the United States of America. The poster comes from Democrat candidate Senator Barak Obama and uses frames to portray Obama as a patriotic candidate standing for change.



The poster features three stacked horizontal bars: a blue bar with the word "HOPE." in white, a grey bar with "ACTION." in white, and a red bar with "CHANGE." in white. Below these is the Obama '08 logo, which consists of a stylized "O" with red and blue stripes and the text "Obama'08". At the bottom, a dark blue bar contains the text "Community Kickoff | March 31, 2007" in white, and below that, the website "BarackObama.com" is written in a smaller font.

Rule of three in action for slogans

Use of power words to portray Obama as a dynamic candidate offering positive change

Red, White and Blue design displays patriotism

Campaign logo also resembles American flag

Link to more information subtly placed.

The Obama poster is especially worthy of note because it demonstrates the importance of word framing. The words hope, action and change are value laden phrases which everyone, regardless of political ideology accepts as positive. The poster does not use a slogan, and gives no specific details about the candidate's policies; instead it focuses entirely on values.

### Getting your message to the people

Whilst developing your message is both an art and a science the true challenge comes with delivering that message to your target audience. After all you may have the most engaging, thought provoking, rebel rousing marketing ever produced, but it isn't going to do any good if it ends up sitting in your house gathering dust or being used as a book end.

## Chapter 5: Utilising the media

This chapter will enable you to:

- Develop a media strategy
- Understand how to use the local, regional and national media to your advantage
- Understand the value of News
- Construct a press release

We have established that communication, both between activists and to the general public, is vital to the success of your campaign. However, if you want to make sure that your campaign is not confined to meeting rooms and dingy pubs but is thrust onto a larger stage then you're going to have to learn how to use the media to your advantage. Today we live in an age of glistening mass media where news and views from around the world are available at the click of a mouse or a remote control. Of course the majority of people don't use this to search out injustices and troubles in the world, they're more likely to seek the apathetic embrace of virtual shopping or to check their e-mails. Therefore it is vital that you take your campaign and place it firmly on their agenda. By successfully utilising the media you can achieve a wide variety of aims. If you're lobbying an official such as a local MP or a University Vice Chancellor then unwanted media attention is an effective way of stepping up the pressure. Your campaign is also instantly given a degree of legitimacy if it is covered by a widely known and respected news source such as a local newspaper. This will help you cross the line from being seen as a motley, militant mob to being seen as serious campaigners with a real message. There are of course the tangible benefits of gaining more support, and hopefully more supporters. If you are able to get national coverage, in a newspaper or on the Internet then your campaign can also act as example to inspire others, which may in turn make your group regional or national campaign leaders.

Of course the mass media is not one large, omnipotent force. It is an industry or great variety and complexity staffed by journalists working to tight deadlines with a large side helping of stress. It is therefore crucial that you take time to consider how you are going to attract the right sort of media attention and how you are going to make your campaign something a journalist wants to cover. The key way to achieve this is to draw up a media strategy.

### Developing a media strategy

A media strategy, much like a campaign strategy, is a plan of action for getting your campaign firmly on the map. Coordinating this side of the campaign can certainly be time consuming so it is advisable that you delegate

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

this part of the campaign to a team of activists who will focus purely on this area.

The aim of the strategy is to provide a detailed plan considering who you are going to contact, how they can serve your goals as well as ensuring that your campaign is both newsworthy and of interest to the people tuning in, clicking on or reading through that media source.

**1) Goals:** Forget coverage, think results. It is important that you consider your goals when developing a media strategy. You should not be seeking media attention for the sake of it, but to help you achieve the short and long term goals of the campaign.

- What is your overall goal?
- Do you aim to Influence people to act?
- To attract new supporters?
- Publicise an upcoming event?

**2) Audience:** Once you have set your aim it's importantly to choose your target. Who do you want to reach? Different people will interact with different media sources. For example students may not purchase the local newspaper whilst most people in the wider community will. Similarly does your target audience use the Internet, radio, or trade newspapers?

**3) Media Sources:** Next you must consider the variety of media outlets you can utilise, these include:

Local	Regional	National
Local Newspaper	Regional Press	National Tabloids
Student Publications	Regional Radio	National Radio Stations
Local commercial radio	Local Newspapers from surrounding towns	Independent Media
Volunteer Radio Stations		Activist Networks
		Larger Campaign Organisations

Consider the under exploited mediums, parts of the media which are often over looked:

- Local Radio stations have a large, loyal and trusting listener base.
  - Radio phone-ins are ideal for you to get your point across and get it debated

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

- Trade Press: Does your campaign affect specific people which might have a publication aimed at them. Examples might include a magazine for teachers and lecturers If your campaign is based around education.
- Monday morning papers: Journalists often struggle to fill the middle pages as Sundays tend to be slow news days. Contact your journalist on a Sunday, or hold an event on Monday and your more likely to get good coverage.
- Letters sections are a widely over looked but popular section of both local and national newspapers. The letters section gives anyone the opportunity to put print to their views, exploit that opportunity.

**4) Own Media:** Aside from the wider media it is important to consider information sources members of the Campaign can run themselves.

- Do you have you own website updated? Utilising forums can be a great tool for consulting members.
- Are you affiliated to a wider body, such as your local students' Union, a local political party branch or a parent campaigning organisation?

**5) Targeting journalists:** Once you have set your goals and set your sights on an audience it is important to work out whom you wish to contact from your chosen media source.

- It is important that you tailor your enquires to your campaign goals. A campaign may not instantly grasp the attention of a newspaper editor but may interest specific journalists such as a political, education or environmental correspondent. A newspaper's website is a useful source of information.
- It is also advisable to be familiar with any publication you are approaching. Has the publication run similar article recently? If so who wrote them?
- It is advisable to build up a database of journalists who you've worked with and who are prepared to run with your stories.

## How news works

In order to understand how you can make your campaign an attractive news prospect for a journalist you must first understand how news works and the factors, which give news value. The single most important point is to understand the difference between **news** and **opinion**. Everyone has an opinion, and generally everyone likes to shout about it. However, if you can bring new facts to a subject that's a rarity and thus is worth something to a journalist.

## News Values

News is fresh, unpublished and generally interesting to the readership, but that's not all. There are several key factors that can add extra value to your story. If you can add any of the following to your story then you're mining journalistic gold.

- Subject

What category does the story fall under? The most popular subjects tend to be sports, politics, the environment, celebrity, crime and fashion. The more topics you can cover the more readers will be interested and therefore the more a journalist will want to run it.

- Context

The context of any story is hugely significant. A journalist will not look at your campaign article in isolation but will want to know the background, not just locally but nationally. For example if your campaign is centred on the closing of a hospital. Have similar campaigns been run recently? Is your campaign a response to a government decision? Is this part of a national trend? These are the facts a journalist wants to know.

- Readers

Readership is perhaps the most important news factor of all, and should be highly considered when drawing up your media strategy. Newspapers are a business and they need to sell to readers, a newspaper will therefore tailor its articles to a readers taste. For example a local events magazine will run very different features to that of a political journal. It is crucial that you bare this in mind when approaching a media source; attempt to understand the audience you are writing for.

- News Fashion

There are many subjects which, temporarily at least, grasp the public's attention and dominate the media. Often this takes the form of a moral panic that builds into a media storm before disappearing from our radar. If your story can tap into this, if it can become fashionable news, then its chances of being published go through the roof.

- Development

The value will also go up if you can develop an existing story. Look carefully at previous additions of the publication, has a variant of your story been covered before? Can you build upon it?

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

- Source

The value of any story will rely on the accuracy and reliability of the source. Does the journalist know that he can trust your story? Where have your facts and statistics come from? You can legitimatise your story by adding opinions and quotes from experts such as lecturers, local politicians, or campaigners from well known organisations.

- Knowledge

This factor depends on how many people are already aware of the topic you are covering. If your story relates to a new development only known to you and the journalist you are contacting, then its value vastly grows. If however it is information that has been the public domain for a while then it is danger of becoming “old news”.

- Timing

There are several things in this life that grow more valuable with age such as a fine wine or expensive cheese. News however is not one of these things. The longer your story goes unpublished, or the longer you wait after an event before you send a press release the less the story is worth. Media is a twenty-four hour fast-paced industry that isn't interested in stories from months ago.

## Press releases

A press release is the main form of communication you will use to announce an upcoming event, or the results of your campaign to a journalist. Your aim should be to give a journalist enough information to publicise your event or considering covering it in person.

A press release can be used for a variety of purposes such as:

- News
- Official statements
- Feature promoting
- Up Coming Events
- Background information
- Funded Advertisement

### Constructing a press release

The art of constructing a press release comes by summarising everything about your story into a few simple lines. Ideally the journalist should be given a complete picture of the basics in the opening lines. This is done by sticking to a simple 5 W's formula. In your opening lines you should address:

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

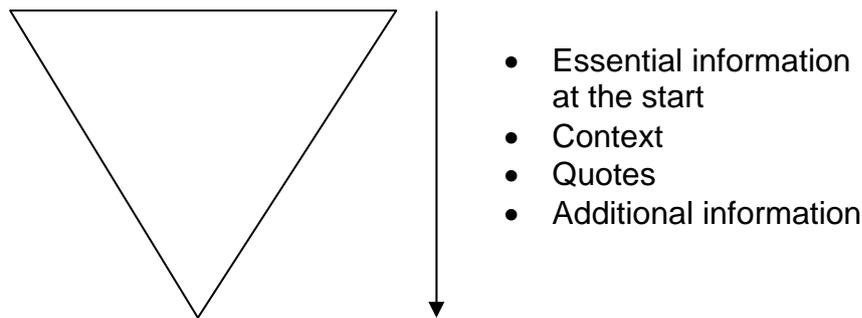
- Who did it?
- When did it happen?
- What happened?
- Where did it happen?
- How should also be added to ensure you've covered all basis.

So as an example your press release may start:

**“Students (Who) at Manchester University (Where) succeeded in getting their University to **withdraw all investment from arms companies** (What) this week (When) following a **campaign** led by the People and Planet Society and **supported by the local MP**. (How)”**

### Structure: The Pyramid

An inverted pyramid is the key tool to constructing your press release. Your story must be top heavy with all the vital information conveyed at the start, this is followed by context, quotes, and any additional information.



### Writing your press release:

Before you start typing your press release you must consider:

- What is the story? Why would the media want to cover this? What is your angle, is it local, does it have a human interest angle?
- Your message: Choose three key points that will get your message across effectively. Many writers make the mistake of believing that the more points they make the better, whilst this might be true of a features article or an essay piece it isn't true of a press release. If you have too many points then the key sections of your release are in danger of becoming lost in a sea of words. Pick three crucial points and build the release around them.
- Remember who your audience is: Readership is the most important news factor or all so it is incredibly important that you tailor your story to fit the readership. Make it clear to the journalist why the audience will want to read about your campaign.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

- How can you make your message as concise and clear as possible?

### Exercise: Adding Value to your Story

It is integral to ask, why should an editor want to publish your story? In order to answer this try and think like a journalist, your job is to inform and to entertain the readers. What can you add to your story that will increase its value?

- Think benefits to the reader, not just the features of your piece.
- Expert Opinions & External experts

If you can get support or at least a quote from someone perceived to be knowledgeable or an authority on a subject this will greatly legitimise your argument. Importantly it only has to be someone **perceived** as being an authority such as a local, respected politician.

- Case histories

Adding historical precedence can also greatly legitimise and add emphasis to your cause. Look for previous campaigns, how successful have they been?

- Surveys

If you are able to add empirical, statistical evidence to your story then this adds reliability to your story.

### Sending your press release out.

- E-mail or faxing your release

Using the contact details that you would have found during your background research make sure that the release gets to the journalist who is likely to be the most interested. Think of how many junk e-mails land in your inbox each day; it's no different for a journalist so make sure it's going to interest them.

If you are attempting to publicise an upcoming event such as a march, a rally or a stunt make sure you send your release out early, ideally giving the journalist a week's notice.

Personalise the e-mail heading or the subject. This becomes especially important as you build up a relationship with key journalists. If they have had good stories from you in the past they are more than likely to use you again.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

- Phone up

It is wise to follow up any sent release with a phone call, just to ensure that the journalist has read it. This is an opportunity for you to give them more information so as to keep their interest. It is also worth calling the day before just to remind them, journalists are people too!

If the press are unable to cover the story but have expressed interest, take some photos yourself and send those in with a new follow up press release.

### Common Errors

There are a few traps that you must avoid so not to taint your entire release.

- Poor use of English  
Make sure that you've fully proof read your release to make sure there are no simple errors that will make you look unprofessional. Also check for grammar and punctuation, you don't want your message to be besmirched by a renegade comma!
- Be consistent with tense, they are not interchangeable

The Campaign **is** (Present)

The Campaign **will** (Future)

The Campaign **was** (Past)

- Avoid any jargon or "campaign speak".  
Remember the Campaign Communication chapter, the same rules apply. There is no reason why you should expect the journalist to be familiar with your campaign buzzwords or abbreviations; it's almost a guarantee that their readers won't be either.

### Headlines

Much like your opening line you want your headline to neatly encapsulate the story as briefly as possible, ideally in ten words or less. It's often easier to write the headline after you've written the main article.

- Keep headlines short: Ten words or less
- Simple: What is your main point
- Short Words
- Include a verb for dramatic effect.

Here is an example of an effective headline which covers all the key points.

*"Local residents (Who) Challenge (Verb) MP to debate (What) injustice of local hospital closure (Why)."*

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

There are of course the more bizarre, and eccentric headlines such as,

*"Super Caley go ballistic, Celtic are atrocious".*

The Sun, February 2000

But of course your headline doesn't have to be a work of art nor does it have to have a stereotypical tabloid pun, it merely has to neatly summarise the key point of your story.

### Format of a Press release

- In order to be effective a press release needs a clear format that an journalist can quickly navigate to find the information they need.
- Ensure that the phrase "Press release" is clearly printed at the top of the page, next to any logo which your campaign may have.
- Clearly state when this story is to be relased. Placing a time embargo on a piece can serve to make it more valuable.
- If you would like a photographer place the phrase "photographers welcome", alternatively if this is a follow up press release then state "photos available."
- Place your contact details at the bottom of the page
- Mark the release with the phrase "ENDS" so the journalist knows there is no more information.
- You may wish to include a "notes" sections. Here you can include any facts and statisitcs, both for context of your story but also so the journalist has something to work with.

Model Press release

Press Release  
For Immediate release (or insert date)

-Headline-

Include the What, Where, When, and the availability of photos

First Paragraph

Second Paragraph

Third Paragraph

Quote

Quote

Photo

Contact Details

END

Notes

## Press Release Example: Save Copnor Fire Station 2007-2008.

The following press release was written and distributed by the Hampshire branch of the Fire fighters Union as they launched the campaign to save a local fire station from being shut down. This release is an excellent example of a campaign press release as it contains the following factors:

Recognisable branding	<p><b>Hampshire Fire Brigades Union</b></p> <p>PRESS RELEASE      PRESS RELEASE      PRESS RELEASE</p> <p>Embargo – For immediate release 26 October 2007</p> <p><b>Public feeling running high opposing the closure of Copnor Fire Station</b></p> <p>Public lobbying groups have joined forces with the FBU opposing the proposed closure of Copnor Fire station. Residents in the Copnor Fire Ground are angry at the proposal by Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service to close their fire station. Local residents, neighbourhood watch schemes and local politicians have all come out in support of the campaign to stop the closure of Copnor Fire Station. These groups are incensed that Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service are resurrecting plans that are in effect 6 years old. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service tried closing this valuable and much needed station 6 years ago; the public were against it then, that opinion has not changed.</p> <p>At the various meetings held with the FBU the message is quite clear the residents of Portsmouth do not want their station to close. They have no faith in the message coming out of Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service that it is not a done deal. The way it is being proposed is that this is the only option and the consultation process is just to inform the public when it will happen.</p> <p>The public are not convinced by the spin Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service give to their response figures. Hampshire Fire and Rescue Service claim that they can respond to anywhere in Portsmouth within eight minutes 80% of the time wherever their engines are. This maybe correct, but presently Copnor have a response time of less then 4 minutes to most of the properties in the area. An 8 minute response is double what they currently receive.</p> <p>“For years fire services have been telling the public ever second counts in a fire. The message appears to be now “its okay we can get there in 8 minutes.”</p> <p>When the Fire Authority met to vote for the consultation on the closure of Copnor Fire Station, it was clear that it was the Conservatives who are in favour of closing the fire station. The public we are meeting are making it quite clear that if this closure goes ahead they will not be voting for the Conservative party in future local and national elections.</p> <p>There is a public meeting Monday 29th October 2007, 7-9 pm at Copnor Parish Church of St Alban, Copnor, Portsmouth. The various support groups will be attending in large numbers and are concerned the venue booked is not big enough to contain all who want to be heard.</p> <p>Contact Details: xxxxxxxxxx</p> <p>Photographers Welcome to attend</p> <p>END</p>
Embargo on the date, giving this release value	
Development of an existing story	
Demonstrating a historical precedent	
Use of facts and statistics to bolster argument	
Fantastic quote to pullout.	
Covers political context	
Suggests that the meeting will be very busy thus alluding to a great public interest. A brilliant hook for a journalist, indeed this became the opening line of the eventual newspaper report.	

The campaign to save Copnor fire station, which at the time of writing has moved into its second year, is a fantastic example of a campaign that has seized the imagination and embedded itself into the local collective consciousness. This was partly achieved by the professional campaign ability of the Union uniting with local support groups such as the neighbourhood watch as well as an effective media strategy. In fact this campaign became such a publicly debated issue, and generated so much interest that the organisers were approached by two of the three main political parties and asked to stand in local elections.

### Giving Interviews

Getting the attention of the media is one thing, but once you have a journalist at your event you need to know how to deal with them.

The most common form of interaction your campaigners will have with a journalist is an interview. In the case of a television journalist advanced preparation is vital. If you have a media coordinator within the campaign team then they may be the best person to field any questions or give any interviews, partly because they will have been the person who made the initial contact with the media. Whilst a newspaper journalist may want to talk to you about your event or your campaign in depth, a journalist from a radio or television station will be looking to fill a news slot which will be thirty seconds long at the very most. Therefore they will be looking for catchy quotes and sound bites that they can use to swiftly summarise your event. Often campaigners who have had little media experience will find this tricky, so here are a few factors which you should bare in mind before agreeing to be interviewed

- Request a list of questions so you know what you will be asked in advance.

If you have been contacted prior to your event and know a journalist or a TV crew will be attending ask for a list of questions in advance. This ensures that your team are well briefed and are likely to give better answers.

- During the interview always give short answers, this ensures that your words are less likely to be taken out of context.
- Just like when talking to the public, giving a speech or writing your press release try and keep to three main points and keep reverting back to these. This will ensure that you get your message across in a simple, straightforward manner and will make it harder for a journalist to take the conversation off on a tangent.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

- Don't be distracted or allow the journalist to take you down tangents. Unless you have seen the questions in advance it is difficult to know which angle a journalist will take when covering your event. Do not allow yourself to be led off topic, stick to your three key points.
- Finally, remember that all contact with the media should fit with your media strategy and your long term goals, if the interview does not fulfil its objective you are free to refuse it. This is especially true if you are concerned that a journalist may distort your words or give you negative publicity.

### Evaluating your campaign

The cliché may state that all publicity is good publicity, but sadly this isn't the case when it comes to campaigning. Many members of the public have a stereotypical view of what an activist is and what a campaign means, often the media will play up to this. To ensure that you don't fall into this trap it is important that you constantly evaluate and if necessary rework your media strategy and the way you approach journalists. You must always consider how you are coming across to the average person; the very people who you need to win over to build up support for your campaign. Are the goals that you seek meaningful to them? Is your campaign relevant to their lives? And perhaps most importantly are you presenting yourself in a way which is engaging to them? If the answer is no then you seriously need to reconsider your strategy. If however the answer is yes, then you will quickly raise the profile of your campaign and its importance to the community, placing you one step closer to your goal.

Over time you may start to forge good relationships with specific journalists who regularly cover your events, these are relationships which you need to foster. Stay loyal to these people and they will continue to work with you. Eventually they may start coming to you for your own views on other stories which relate to the campaign, thereby legitimizing you in the eyes of the readership as an authority on the issue.

In this chapter we have analysed conducting a media strategy, assessed the factors which give news value and have broken down the features of an effective press release. These tools will enable you to effectively understand the media, attract their attention to your campaign and use them to put your campaign on the map. However, getting the attention of a journalist is one thing, giving them something to actually report about is quite another. The next chapter addresses the final theory stage, how to coordinate your team to host events, stunts and activities which will put all the theory into practice.

## Chapter Six: Campaign Events

This chapter will enable you to:

- Coordinate a successful event
  - An Action Day
  - Hosting a debate
  - Organising a March, Demonstration or Rally
- Manage campaign stunts
- Lobby Officials
- Effective Petitioning
- Understand the law

This is the chapter that this book has been building up to, how to coordinate campaign events. Until now this book has dealt with strategy and planning, how to establish a group, how to set your team winnable goals, how to develop a strategy, how to communicate with the public, the media and how to create effective marketing. However, a campaign is about taking action, it is action which will persuade people to support your cause and it is action will make people stand up and take notice of you. Ultimately it is real, concrete, positive actions that will help you achieve your campaign goal and the question of how to coordinate this action shall be dealt with in this chapter.

### Coordinating a successful event

Hosting events are integral to any campaign; events give your activists something to aim and build for and also provides opportunities for people to engage with your campaign. However, in order to be a success your events need to be well planned and well coordinated with specific aims. There are a wide variety of events you could organise, the success of which will be entirely dependent on your

Exhibits/Displays	Film/Documentary Showing	Speakers
Conference/Debate	Talks/Lectures	Demonstrations
Fundraising	Music Night	Poster Campaign
Action day stall	Motion to your local council or Student's union	Petition/E-petition
Postcard campaign E-Postcard campaign	Quiz night	Fashion Show

### Holding an action day

An action day is a stalwart of any campaign as it can be an effective tool for recruitment or awareness raising regardless of how many activists you have available. Put simply an action day normally consists of one, or a series of stalls and stands placed in key areas such as a high street, outside a building your are lobbying, inside a students' union or at a key location where you can find your target audience.

The important aspects to consider are:

- Who are your target audience?

There is little point setting out a stall in an area which doesn't attract people who are affected by, or interested in your cause. It is important to consider the people who are directly or indirectly involved in your campaign. For example if you are campaigning around the closure specific building, such as a school or a fire station then consider the people who live in the catchments area who will be affected. However if you campaign is some what broader, such as a campaign for a national or international issue then you must consider where the largest number of people are likely to be congregated, and when. For example Saturday afternoons in a local shopping centre.

- Give people something to do

Approaching people coldly can be a daunting task for anyone, so make it easier for your activists by giving them a prop, ideally a petition. A petition

gives the activists a spring board to launch the conversation but also all gives people something concrete to do. It also provides you with a straightforward way to get people's contact details. There will be more information about petitioning later in this chapter.

- Setting out your stall

Setting out a campaign stall is something which needs to be carefully considered, for passer by it is the first thing they will notice about your campaign and it may well be the first impression they get, both of you and your cause. Ensure that you have the following carefully organised:

- Campaign Leaflets and other literature or information people can take with them
- Petition or similar method of recording people's contact details
- Engaging items such as campaign badges or postcards
- If you have access to a lap top have a constantly revolving presentation. Visual aids can demonstrate a campaign far more powerfully than telling someone about it.

- Follow up action

It is crucial that any day of action your organise is not an isolated event, but is carefully integrated into a wider campaign plan. You don't want people to simply sign the petition and walk away; you want to engage them and to motivate them into action. Ensure that you have organised a follow up meeting, either on the day or the following day. This meeting should serve to introduce your campaign and your strategy. You should also announce some upcoming events at this meeting so new activists feel that they are already building towards something concrete and constructive.

### Organising a march, demonstration or rally

The march, the rally and the demonstration and iconic campaigning methods which can leave a lasting impact and act as a powerful agent for change. It is the quintessential way of presentation strength of public feeling and support. After all your opponent may be able to ignore one or two people writing letters, they may even feel they can ignore a petition but it is impossible to ignore a large mass of determined activists gathered together. Some of the most iconic campaigns have had marches and rallies at their heart. In 2003 an estimated two million people took to the streets to march against the impending invasion of Iraq, together they achieved the largest demonstration of public opposition ever mounted in British History. Of course the 2003 march

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

is not the only iconic march, throughout the 1960's and 70's such marches' were frequently taking place against the War in Vietnam. Of course you do not need to have millions of people in order to make an impact, a couple of hundred will do just as well, you simply need to ensure your event is well planned and your activists are well prepared.

The following points constitute a check list of factors you must consider if your event is going to have any point to it, or indeed any chance of affecting real change.

### 1. Consider your target

It is crucial to consider who, or what you are marching against. By this I do not only mean the person but also the venue. Are you outside of a company headquarters, a disputed leisure centre or a local council office? Ensure that the people who can actually affect change are there; otherwise your efforts are wasted.

### 2. Consider the date

The date is a crucial factor for two reasons; first it is imperative that your activists can actually attend. So holding it on a week day during work hours is unlikely to be a raging success! Secondly with a little research some dates can have a great significance. Perhaps a crucial vote is taking place or the date falls on a relevant anniversary.

### 3. Consider the route

If you intend to move a large body of people ensure that you have studied the route you intend for them to take. Are there any main roads? Is it private property? Are there any bottle necks or obstacles which will slow down or disrupt the march? Ensure that maps are issued prior to the event and are also available on the day.

### 4. Funding

Finance is a perennially tricky issue for all campaign activities and simply can not be ignored. There is not reason why a march or a rally has to be costly but there may be a variety of costs you should consider:

- Leaflets, posters and propaganda
- Are you providing transportation to the event?
- Will you be creating placards and banners?
- Will you need to pay travel costs of speakers?

Ensure that your campaign treasurer draws up an itemised budget, and then ensure that you stick to it!

### 5. Advertising

Advertising is the single most important aspect of all, it doesn't matter how important the cause is, and unless people are told about the event they won't turn up! It is wise to plan your event weeks or even months in advance and to start your marketing campaign as soon as possible. Remember to re-read chapter four for campaign marketing advice.

### 6. The Media

The media are the people who will ensure that your event leaves a long lasting impact and a bitter taste in the mouths of your opponents. Ensure that you send out numerous press releases before, on and after the date to guarantee coverage. Always request a photographer but if one is not forthcoming take photos yourself and send them with the press release.

### 7. The Police

The law will be dealt with in a later section but it is important that your local force are made aware of any large scale public gathering. This usually ensures your safety, makes the event easier to manage on the day and circumvents any potential legal problems at a later date.

### 8. Stewards

Having volunteers to steward the event is crucial on the day. They not only guide the march, but also keep the activists informed, ensure that the route is clear and that everybody is well behaved. It is crucial that your stewards are easily identifiable to both your activists and the police. It is also crucial that they are well briefed and informed prior to the event so that if there are any problems they can be swiftly dealt with.

### 9. Speakers and keeping the Crowd active

Having hundreds or thousands of people marching or standing around has a huge visual impact but it is important to keep the crowd active and engaged otherwise they may simply go home. There are various methods to keep your activists engaged which include guest speakers, group chanting and singing or coordinating a stunt. It is vital to ensure that if you have speakers then they have a mega-phone and that the rally takes place in a space large enough for people to congregate but sheltered enough so people can hear the speaker.

It is also advisable to coordinate an activity which your event can be centred around, for example the presentation of a petition to an official.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

### 10. Making your point

Finally, it is important that all parties can instantly recognise the point to your event. This can be achieved through stunts but also through placards, banners, posters, leaflets and other visual aids.

The following photos were taken at a march/rally organised by *Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament* against the proposed Trident missile system.



These photos provide a useful visual reference to the aforementioned points.

- Decorative banners gave the protest a distinct visual presence
- Each banner, flag had the name of the campaign marketed clearly. Also, each protester was given a *CND* placard which ensured brand presence.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

- Protesters engaged in a variety of activities such as cycling around the site or singing in a choir. This ensured that they stayed both active and engaged.
- A clear police presence was instrumental in guiding traffic and ensuring the safety of the protesters.

### Campaign Stunts

As your campaign may start small it may be unrealistic to expect you to muster hundreds or thousands of people to a march or a rally. This is not to say that you still can't make a large, and long lasting impact, you simply need to think out side of the box. One of the most effective campaign methods to deploy is a stunt. A stunt is defined as an unusual action which draws attention to the campaign; a stunt is particularly useful for attracting the attention of the media.

### Example stunt: Campaign to twin Portsmouth University with Al-Quds University. 2006-2007

Throughout the 2006/2007 academic year a group of students formed a campaign which sought to twin Portsmouth University with a University in the Palestinian West Bank. The purpose of the campaign was two fold, firstly to bring attention to the long standing conflict with a call towards the importance of education to preventing war. Secondly the campaign sought to petition the University to investigate its investments to ensure student's fees were not indirectly funding the occupation. As the Israel-Palestinian conflict is so complex the campaigners decided to approach and later work along side students from both Israel and Palestine as their testimonies, and varying interpretations would make the issue real and give it a human face. The climax of the campaign came with a stunt that succeeded in attracting attention, raise curiosity around the issue and also secured hundreds of signatures on an ever growing petition. The campaigners decided to build a mock wall across the entrance of the Students' Union, which symbolised the partition wall which cuts across the West Bank and cuts straight through Al-Quds University in East Jerusalem.

The following photos show how the stunt was coordinated:

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change



## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

This stunt was effective for a variety of reasons:

- It was placed at a busy thoroughfare of the University meaning that many students would come into contact with it throughout the course of their day.
- It took place on a Friday, one of the busiest University days, which ensured a large potential audience.
- A team of activists, dressed as soldiers were positioned at various mock checkpoints, armed with petitions, to attract attention and engage the students in discussion.
- The campaign team has been in contact with larger organisations such as *Campaign against the Arms Trade CAAT*, and *War on Want* who provided them with an assortment of leaflets, badges and other materials. These materials gave the campaign a degree of authority whilst also provided the activists with something to give to students so they did not simply forget about the campaign.
- The most visually engaging prop, the wall, was designed to large and decorated to ensure maximum affect.
- The use of both an Israeli and Palestinian flag demonstrated that the campaign did not aim to take sides in the dispute but intended to draw attention to the disaster facing both peoples. They also provided an instantly recognisable symbol which both attracted attention and curiosity.

This stunt was coordinated by around five people, a relatively small central campaign team. This demonstrates that you do not need hundreds of activists to make your point or to make a lasting impression. Indeed images of the stunt were not only printed in the student and local media but have featured on campaign websites across the internet.

The campaign ended with one thousand signatures being handed to the Students' Union officers calling for an investigation into the investments of the University.

### Example Stunt: The Wall of Debt: February 2008

In early 2008 I worked with a group of students to coordinate the Student Union's official campaign for a fair education system, a campaign which sought to make students aware of the increasing fees and to lobby the University, and local government to stand against the impending increase in University tuition fees. The campaign was multi-faceted but the most engaging, and long running, event was the Wall of debt stunt. The strength of which lay in the ability to include a vast amount of students, yet did not call on them to invest a large amount of their time or energy.

Activists spent weeks attending student meetings and holding actions days armed with a camera, a chain, a black board and some chalk. Students were invited to write their expected level of student debt on the black board, whilst wearing the chain around their neck. The photos were then correlated and were used to build a large collage of portraits, which were turned into a wall of debt stricken faces. This wall stood in the main entrance of the Students' Union building but was also used a back drop for a debate held between the Union and the University's Vice Chancellor. The following photos demonstrate the visual impact of the stunt:

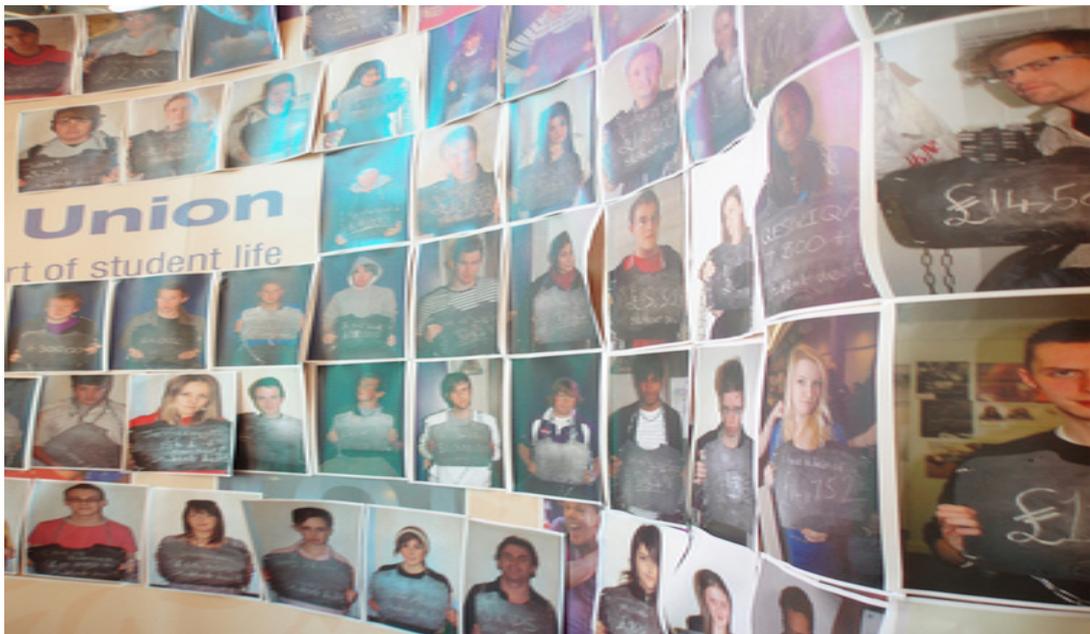


Three of the "chain of debt" portraits showing campaigners and contributors to this book

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change



The Wall of debt



The Wall of debt



The Wall of debt

The strength of this student lay not only in the strong visual impact of the photographs but it was also moveable so could be transported to form a backdrop to speeches, rallies and debates. The photos also

### Hosting a debate

Joining a debate can be an extremely useful way to test your convictions and the strength of your cause; it also provides you with a platform from which to shamelessly plug your campaign. However, often such events are hard to come by so you may be forced to host the event yourself. This opens up a whole new realm of opportunities for advancing your cause. As Morys Ireland states in his article on utilising local political figures, the only thing politicians love more than a captive audience to preach to is other politicians to argue against. So attempt to invite local, and even national political figures to your event. You may find yourself debating against a local council figure but you could just as easily find politicians to debate alongside or with you. A recognisable figure, such as a local MP is an established brand within their own right which brings instant authority as well as a sheen of legitimacy to your arguments.

A well organised debate is one which takes place in a large and accessible venue, preferably one which can provide a stage, a large amount of seating,

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

microphones and a sound system. At the very least you will need three designated tables for the opposing debating teams and the chair person.

The most important role to consider when organising a debate is the role of the Chair person. The chair acts as judge and referee throughout the event and must remain impartial and fair at all times. The main duties of the chair include:

- Ensuring that no speaker is interrupted
- Ensuring that no speaker goes over their time
- All questions and statements are addressed to and through the chair. Meaning that members of the debating teams can not ask their opponents direct questions but must ask them to the chair. Similarly the chair may pose questions to either team and may also take questions from the audience.

### Debating Rules

In order to ensure that your debate remains fair and balanced, rather than simply a series of tirades, it is worth sticking to the following rules.

### Team Debate

- The format for team debates is three speakers to a side with only two teams in each debate.
- Before the debate begins each team must inform the chair of the names of the three speakers and the order in which they shall speak.
- The only people who may speak at the debate are the three speakers for each team as announced by the chair.
- Speaking time for initial speeches is 8 minutes
- Teams shall take it in turn to forward their case in short speeches.
- After all speakers have spoken, the first and second speaker for each side may give a reply speech.
- After all speeches and reply speeches have taken place the debate may open freely, directed through the chair. The chair is charged with ensuring that opinions are respected and that no two people are speaking at once.

### Questions

- Once the speeches and reply speeches have taken place the chair may open the debate up for questions from the audience.
- All questions must be addressed to the chair who will offer both teams the opportunity to reply.
- The time allowed for questions and answers is dictated by the chair

### Judges and Chair

- The outcome of the debate can either be decided by a panel of invited speakers, along with the chair, or by votes from the audience.
- The panel of judges must be objective and can not take sides in the debate.
- The chair of the debate must also remain objective, must not take sides and must ensure that every opinion is respected. It is the task of the chair to make sure that only one person is speaking at a time, so as to control the debate.

## Lobbying Officials

So far in this book we have discussed the importance of analysing your opponent, but how do you convince that person to agree with your cause and adopt the change you seek? The most effective method is through constant lobbying.

### What is lobbying?

Lobbying is about attempting to influence people who have power so that they will support your ideas and your plans. This may entail convincing a politician how to vote or calling for a company to carry out a specific action. Lobbying is the art of persuasion, either through a convincing argument or by demonstrating the strength of public opinion to your cause. For example if you are campaigning to save a local leisure centre then your targets will be the leaders of your local council. If there is one thing that local politicians fear then it is falling out of favour with the public, especially if your campaign coincides with an upcoming election. In this instance it may be possible to win over a local politician and convince them to make your cause an election issue on their manifesto, this way you have gained a crucial ally. It is always desirable to win over your lobbying target but if this isn't possible the demonstration of public support may be enough to shake them into action. It doesn't matter if your target is a politician or a business, neither can afford to lose their customers or their voters.

### Preparation

Crucially lobbying will only be effective if it is well prepared and well presented. There are a few simple steps you must take to ensure you are lobbying the correct target and that your goals can be realised.

#### Step One: Who are you lobbying?

It is important to consider exactly who it is you are lobbying and what power they have to influence events. On the political front your targets could range from your local Member of Parliament, Member of European Parliament to members of the local council. Alternatively you could target the Vice Chancellor of a University or if you are facing a corporate opponent the target may be a local manager or a CEO.

When selecting a target you must consider:

1. Who has the power to help you achieve your campaign goals and will they be willing to do so?
2. Who do you have access to?

This second point is quite crucial, you may wish to consider who you have both informal and formal contact with. For example you may only get to talk to a local politician if you meet them at an event or book an appointment to meet them at their constituency office, this is a formal connection. Informal connections are those people who you know who are in a position to affect change but you know them in another setting. For example students are unlikely to have any contact with the Vice Chancellor who manages the institution. However during a campaign mapping session at my own University one of the group realised that the Vice Chancellor was a member of the student choir at that he would have access to him once a week at choir practise, this is a lucky example of informal access.

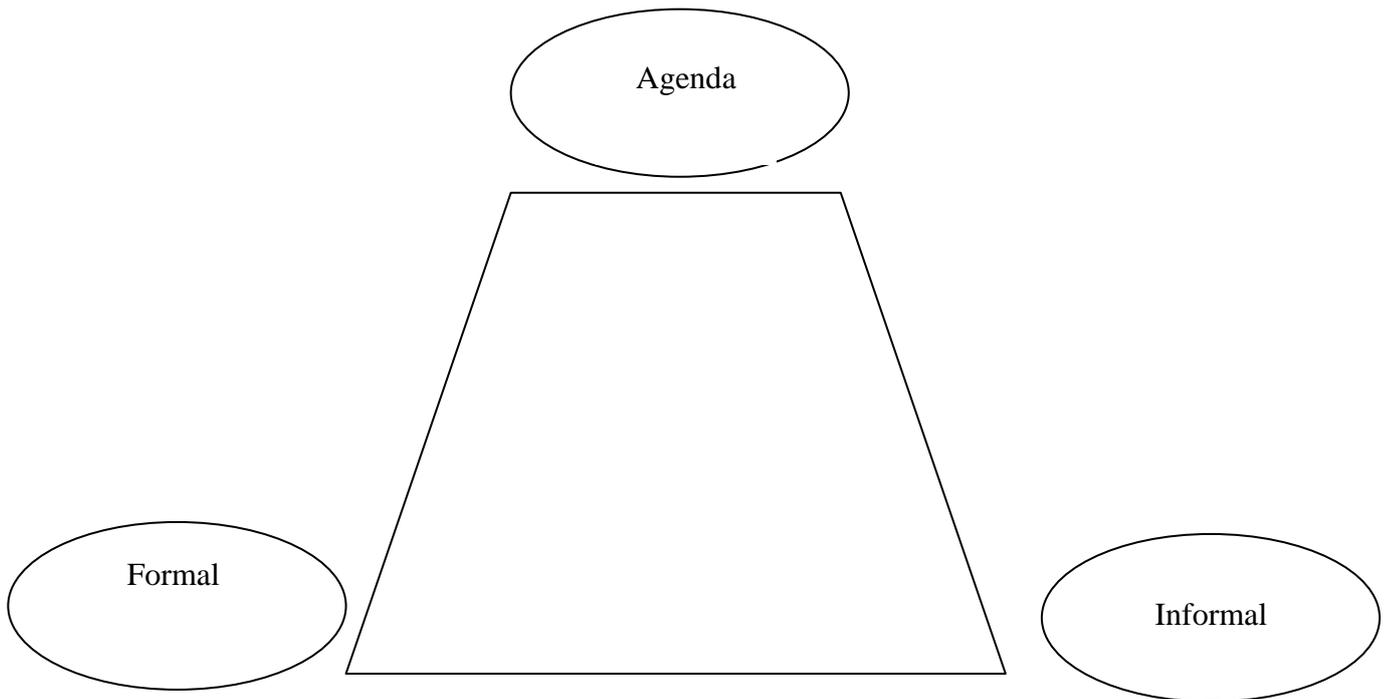
It is also important to remember that not all decisions are made at the top of organisations, especially not the day to day operational decisions. For example if you are campaigning to have fair trade products introduced to a company or an institution then this is unlikely to be a decision that a CEO would take, instead research who the catering manager is and lobby them.

### Targeting Triangle

The diagram below demonstrates the relationship between the three important aspects of effective lobbying. By **agenda** the diagram refers to your campaign cause or your motivation for lobbying. It also refers to the action you wish your target to take. Linked into this are the **formal** and **informal** targets that you may choose to lobby. It is crucial that your target is linked to the agenda, that they can actually have an impact on your cause. For example it is of little worth to lobby a MP on a matter outside of their

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

constituency. If there is a link between your formal and informal targets then this can also generate an opportunity for a more subtle lobbying. For example if you are in contact with someone who knows or works with your target then they can informally talk to them and hopefully influence them. This may also work the other way if you can recruit a politician to lobby your target on your behalf. These methods simply give you added leverage over your target making your campaign harder to ignore.



### Step two: What can your target do?

Once you have selected your target to lobby you must be clear as to what you want them to do about an issue. Do you want them to raise the issue in parliament? Contact a specific ministry or department? Simply attend a meeting and raise the issue? You are more likely to receive a positive reaction if you can define clearly what action you wish your target to take.

### Step Three: What is their stance on the issue?

Regarding politicians it is useful to know where they already stand on your issue, as this will have a great influence on if they are prepared to act on your behalf. One way to achieve this is to use the website "*They work for you*".

<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/>

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

This website keeps the contact details and voting records of every Member of Parliament, Secretary of State and Minister. This historical information can be a vital tool for research before you make contact with a politician. For example if you are campaigning around University tuition fees or against Government investment in renewed Nuclear weapons and your politician has voted against these issues in Parliament then they are far more likely to aid your campaign than if they voted for them.

- You must then ask:

What are they realistically going to do? Is your campaign politically sensitive? If so a politician may be reluctant to publicly campaign for fear of alienating voters. Are there any barriers in place to stop them from helping you? For example if a political party has a specific stance on an issue then your politician may not be able to break that party line without being sent into the political wilderness. Finally you must consider if there are any other groups which can place pressure on your politician.

### How to lobby

There are various tried and tested methods to lobby effectively once you have selected your target.

The first step is to write a letter to your target. The letter should be formally written, should be polite and friendly whilst clearly outlining your cause and exactly what you would like the person to do. An example can be found at the end of this section.

If this is ignored, or you receive a negative reply that you believe is intentionally unhelpful then perhaps you should consider making your letter an open letter, which means you send it to a local newspaper or website to be published and made publicly available.

### Writing an effective lobbying letter

There is not set formula and no concrete format for setting out and phrasing your lobbying letter. Many campaign organisations produce generic letters which you merely have to sign, however, it is quite likely that if a politician or CEO receives hundreds of generic looking letters then they will take far less notice of yours. Your letter will be more likely to stand out if you write it on your own style, and in your own every day language. Do not feel you have to use formal or elaborate phrases, straightforward, polite wording is always acceptable. Use language that is natural to you, and always keep the tone polite. Here are a few suggestions, but do not feel that you have to follow a formula, the best lobbying letters are clearly personalised and will have a far greater affect and feel of authenticity.

### Formatting your letter

- The best lobbying letters are short, factual and polite and come complete with straight to the point facts. There is little point in fluffing up the letter with needless rhetoric, make your points in as simple a manner as possible. Avoid writing in an aggressive or offensive style, remember it is your job to win this person over to your cause and this will not be achieved by alienating them.
- If possible it is wise to avoid mentioning ideology or politics allegiances; these can be divisive whilst you are looking for unity. Instead focus on values and over arching aims. Ensure that you are positive and encouraging throughout the letter, that you present a rational argument and clearly suggest that the person you targeting has the power to affect change.
- It is wise to write a couple of lines about yourself so the reader can understand who you are, are you a constituent? Did you vote for them in the last election? You can mention that you are a member of a wider campaign group or you can write as a concerned individual.
- If you are write to an address abroad, which is a popular activity of *Amnesty International*, then it is best to write your letter in English unless you can get hold of an accurate translation.
- Ensure that you ask for a reply.

### Starting your letter

Usually the best way to start a letter is to identify both your self and your reason for writing. For Example:

*I am writing to you as a member of (insert group name, an organisation which works to (insert cause) and I am writing to you to discuss (insert topic.)*

### Middle: Specifying your aims

The central part of your letter should make a specific request to the person you are writing to.

For example if you are writing a letter as a member of Amnesty International it may have the following aim:

*“Please use your influence and authority to ensure the prompt release of (**name**) because, according to Amnesty International reports, she is a newspaper journalist and has not committed any offence.*

*I am asking you to make sure that (**name**) is charged with an internationally recognisable criminal offence and promptly brought to court or released.”*

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

### Ending your letter

Try to include a phrase in your conclusion that encourages a reply.

Examples:

*I look forward to hearing from you on this important matter.*

*I would be grateful if you could confirm that your government does indeed oppose such practices.*

Make sure your name is clearly legible: printing in capitals helps. *Yours respectfully* or *Yours sincerely* are the best endings

### Example: Lobbying Letter

The Following sample letter is produced by Amnesty International:

<p>Address Address Address</p> <p><i>Subject: As with a press release, attach a brief headline clearly announcing the subject matter.</i></p> <p>Dear <i>(Insert title and name)</i></p> <p>I am writing about the case of <i>(name)</i> who was arrested on <i>(date)</i> and <i>(place)</i>. I understand he is in poor health, and has been held without charge for several months. Please use your influence to ensure that he receives medical treatment and that he is charged with an internationally recognisable criminal offence and promptly brought to court or released. Please could you let me know what medical treatment <i>(name)</i> has received and when, and tell me when he will be charged? I look forward to hearing from you on this important matter</p> <p>Yours faithfully Signature <i>(Insert your name)</i></p>
---

### Face-to-face meeting

The next stage, which is perhaps the most effective for ensuring a clear understanding between your target and your cause, is to arrange a face-to-face meeting. If you are contacting a politician then they may well be obliged to meet you as a constituent, however remember if you are targeting a CEO of a business or a private individual then it is their prerogative to say no. When meeting someone face to face you have the opportunity to clearly outline your goals and specify what you want your target to do. Ensure to re-read the skills outlined in Chapter three: Campaign Communication to brush up on how to introduce someone to your campaign.

### Spreading the word

It is quite possible that your target will agree to help your cause once you have written to or met them; however in the case that they resist your next step is to go public and involve as many people as possible. This can be achieved in a variety of ways including:

- Open meetings

Adverting and hosting a open meeting to discuss the issue and the lobbying can be a useful tool to building up a lobbying movement. Ensure that you have a liberal amount of petitions or lobbying letters which you can hand out to people, this not only serves to include and empower the people who turn up but also means they can take them home and spread the word to their family and friends.

You may even choose to invite the target of your lobbying to the meeting to publicly discuss the issue.

- Photo opportunities & Direct actions

Organising a photo opportunity or a publicity stunt may is a good way to attract immediate attention as well as giving your media a hook with which to attract journalists.

- Petitioning

Petitioning is the most effective way to demonstrate mass support for you campaign. If you send a letter to a politician with only your signature on it then it may be ignored, it is much harder to ignore a letter with a thousand attached signatures. As petitioning is such a valuable tool the next section shall be entirely dedicated to it.

### Petitioning

A petition looks like a simple collection of signatures but is in fact a vital campaign tool which has the potential to fulfil a variety of your goals as it is not only a method of lobbying but is also an engaging way of approaching and empowering your target audience.

Historically petitioning has played a vital part in campaigning, the practise originated in ancient imperial China but has been used to advance the cause of momentous campaigns, most notably throughout the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century. The fight to abolish Atlantic slavery was largely achieved by parliamentary petitions coordinated across the country by William Wilberforce's abolitionists. Similarly the right to petition has been enshrined in both British and American law as a recognised form of protest and request. Today the potential of petitioning has reached new heights with the advances in global

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

communication, such as the internet. Everyday petitions are submitted on-line to local, national and international authorities with millions of signatures. In February 2007 the British Prime Minister's office received an on-line petition signed by 1.8 million people against road pricing.

By presenting a petition to your target you are clearly demonstrating a tangible and measurable public support for your cause. Whilst holding marches, demonstrations and other direct actions may form core parts of your campaign it is far easier to convince one thousand people to sign your petition than it is to convince those same thousand people to brandish a placard on a rainy Sunday afternoon.

### Example: **UPSU Campaign to Defeat Fees**

The following example is a petition created by Portsmouth Students' Union to campaign against increased University tuition fees and for a fairer education system. One thousand signatures were then presented to the Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills. The petition includes the following key information:

- Clear logo and campaign name which clearly identifies the campaign
- A list of goals and values which ensures that people know exactly what they are signing and supporting
- Field of information which not only validates the signatures but also allows you to contact them with follow up information to involve them in the wider cause. This includes student number and course, which validated the signatures as students and e-mail address.



# BUILD THE **CAMPAIGN TO DEFEAT FEES**

**FIGHT FOR FREE EDUCATION**

**No to cuts and closures & no to privatisation**

- ★ NO FEES! For free, high quality, publicly funded education as a right for all
- ★ Write off all student debt
- ★ End the cuts and stop the closures
- ★ For all private profiteers out of education and massive investment into education.
- ★ Build a mass campaign to defeat fees starting with local protests, meetings and demonstrations and democratically involving university and college students, the trade unions and everyone who stands for free education.
- ★ For the NUS to organise and build support for a national demonstration on a weekday

Name	Student Number	Email	Course	I want to help build the campaign to defeat fees	More Info

Please return to the Students' Union

The petition is not only a tool for lobbying but is also a key prop for approaching and engaging people during an action day, and throughout the campaign. By using a petition as a prop it is easier to approach members of the public with a clear purpose. This gives you a clear reason for talk to someone and presents them with something they can actually do to support the cause.

When collecting signatures and engaging the public it is important to remember the lessons of *Chapter Three: Campaign Communication*. Remember the process through which you must guide someone:

1. Listen
2. Explore
3. Empathise
4. Elevate

## Example: The Lobbying Of John Denham February 2008

The “wall of debt” stunt, which formed part of a students’ union campaign for a fair education system. This campaign reached its pinnacle with the lobbying of John Denham, Secretary of State for Innovation, Universities and Skills, whose constituency office was located in a local town.

Activists collected over a thousand signatures over a two month period with an aim of presenting the petition to Mr Denham. The day was a success for a variety of reasons:

- The Campaign team in Portsmouth had regular meetings with similar campaign groups in surrounding towns and cities, thus making the campaign regional as well as local.
- The activists had a well coordinated media strategy which ensured that the story was published in local newspapers. The story was also featured on local radio stations and on the national television news
- The activists were able to secure support from a large organisation, namely the local Students’ Union but also from the national *Campaign Against Fees*
- The lobby was timed to coincide with pending local elections, thus making fees and University debt a campaign issue for local politicians.



The activists from Portsmouth University meeting Mr Denham

# UNI FEES MUST BE FOUGHT!

OVER THE last ten years the bosses' and fat cat' New Labour government has succeeded in making higher education unaffordable to hundreds of thousands of students, condemning them to debt and poverty. The university experience is essentially inaccessible. A decent, debt free, stress free education is a privilege for the rich.

**Matt Dobson**  
Socialist Students  
national organiser

Prime minister Gordon Brown, universities minister John Denham and higher education minister Bill Rammell say there is no other option: students have to pay fees to fund higher education. This is not true. They protect 'big business and the rich while we pay the price'. There are enough resources in society to publicly fund good quality, free education at all levels. But instead of challenging the wealth of the blessed fat cats, the government is raising higher education on the cheap, trying to rob Peter to pay Paul on a pittance. For example, Rammell has cut £100 million from funding for second degree courses. Massive public funding is needed to meet demand. Meritless public money is pumped in to prop up Northern Rock. Education benefits society as a whole. But instead of education being provided as a public service for all, the introduction of fees has shifted the cost onto individual students and their families who are forced into a situation of unmanageable debt and expenses. The average student now piles up record-breaking debts averaging £5,500 a year. This huge debt will have a long-term effect on the living standards of young people. Brown proposes to hand the student loans company to private investors who will want to hike up the interest rates. Graduates who find themselves struggling will have their details passed to credit-checking agencies.



Campaign to Defeat Fees lobby of universities minister John Denham. photo: R. Robinson

Students are being charged off their courses because they cannot afford fees. According to the Times Higher Education magazine (10-16/01/08) Coventry University expelled 445 undergraduates, 2 per cent of its total enrollment, for failing to pay their fees in the last academic year. However, the present NUS leadership is more interested in protecting the New Labour government and their own careers than fighting for students. We campaign for NUS to build a mass campaign, but we won't wait for them to act! The Campaign to Defeat Fees, initiated by Socialist Students, has been set up to make sure that our anger at these attacks is heard. *Fees protest: day of action - see pages 68/7*



Local press coverage of the lobby

## Understanding the Law

It should almost go without saying that you should endeavour to keep all of your campaign activities legal and peaceful. That said it is useful to be aware of the law regarding activism and campaign activities such as the laws of assembly, trespassing and disturbing the peace.

The following legal advice comes from Peter Gray, a campaigner for the environment and also a lawyer who is frequently asked to advise anti-road protesters. More information can be found at his website:

[www.uhc-collective.org.uk/webpages/toolbox](http://www.uhc-collective.org.uk/webpages/toolbox).

Alternatively the "Activist legal project", a not-for-profit collective, have written a comprehensive guide of legal advice for activists, which can be found at:

[www.activistslegalproject.org.uk](http://www.activistslegalproject.org.uk)

The information contained in these guides is not an incitement to break the law, its purpose is merely to explain what the law is and the relationship your campaign will have with the law.

### Demonstrations, Marches and Assemblies

Peter Gray argues that it is important to think very carefully about whether or not it would be a good idea to hold a demonstration. As Gray states “twenty people sitting on a digger looks spectacular and is a great photo-opportunity for the media. Twenty people marching down the street does not look at all spectacular, and if you're not careful it can look a bit silly. Therefore, it may not be a good idea to hold a demonstration unless you are confident about attracting a large number of people.”

In that case that you have decide to hold a demonstration, you should hold it within the terms of sections 11 to 14 of the Public Order Act 1986 (POA). The main points of which are that the organisers must give **6 clear days** notice to the police, in writing, stating the date, time and proposed route of the procession and the name and address of the person proposing to organise it. It is important to remember that you do not need permission from the police to hold a demonstration. However, the police may impose conditions if they reasonably believe that the procession may result in serious public disorder, serious damage to property, serious disruption to the life of the community, or intimidation. "Serious disruption to the life of the community" may include traffic congestion or blocking shopping streets. The conditions imposed by the police must be reasonable: if they are not, they can be challenged in court by judicial review.

In extreme cases the police may ban a procession, but they cannot do this on their own initiative: they must first obtain an order from the local council. There is no requirement to give advance notice of an assembly or meeting, but if you do give advance notice, or the police suspect that an assembly will take place in connection with the procession, they may impose conditions on the assembly, such as restricting the place, duration and number of participants. They can also impose conditions on a procession or assembly on the spot. For legal purposes a "public assembly" means an assembly of 20 or more persons in a public place which is wholly or partly open to the air. If you deliberately fail to comply with any directions given by the police you are almost certainly committing an offence.

The law regarding organising a protest or march links into the second important aspect of the law, trespassing. It is crucial to consider where you are holding your event, in the case of a march trespassing is defined as “an assembly of trespassing persons on private or semi-private land, as opposed to an assembly in a public place.” Therefore it is advisable to organise your demonstration, protest or march on public land.

### Trespassing

To trespass, in the usual sense of the word, means to enter another person's land unlawfully, in other words, without their permission. UK law takes the view that all land belongs to somebody. Usually, the owner of land is the person to whom the land is registered at the Land Registry. If the land is not registered, it belongs to whoever can prove title to the land, and if nobody can

prove title to the land, it belongs to the Crown. Land may also be occupied by tenants or leaseholders who hold a tenancy or lease from the owner. Therefore, if you go on to land without permission, you are trespassing. You may also be trespassing if you have permission to go on land for one purpose, but you use it for another purpose: for example, if you have a right to cross a piece of land, that does not necessarily mean you have right to camp on it.

Unauthorised camping, tree-dwelling, squatting and obstructing work on site are all forms of trespass. Before the Criminal Justice and Public Order Act 1994 (CJA) came into force, these were mainly civil matters between the trespasser and the landowner, which had to be dealt with in the civil courts. However, since the CJA came into force on 3rd November 1994, many more of them have become criminal offences. The most relevant sections of the CJA, namely sections 61 to 69, are reproduced at Appendix 7.

It has always been the case, even before the CJA, that an owner or occupier of land could remove trespassers from his land using reasonable force without the help of the police or a court order. That is still the case today. However, landowners (including the DoT) will nearly always involve the police, or go to court for an order, to remove trespassers, because it is easier and safer for the landowner. If a landowner

If you are in any doubt regarding your rights or the law surrounding your campaign it is highly advisable to seek legal advice from a solicitor. If you plan your events and your campaign carefully and sensibly then the chances of you falling foul of the law are very low indeed. The freedom of speech, the freedom to assemble and the freedom to protest are rights enshrined in British law and so you will face no penalty for using them. However it is advisable to announce your intention to protest or march to the relevant authority just for piece of mind. After all if you are planning a march of a demonstration then a police escort can come in very handy for clearing traffic and for drawing attention to your actions.

### Libel and Defamation of Character

The law does not only have to be kept in mind when coordinating physical events but must also be considering when drafting your marketing message, delivering speeches or writing articles. Here the law is not difficult, merely ensure that everything you say is true and can be proved. Making false accusations against a person or an organisation in print can break libel law or be considering a defamation of character. For a fuller definition of this an ideal work to consult is "*Mcnae's Essential law for Journalists*", which is published by Oxford University Press each year. The following definitions have been taken from this book. Another key source of information on libel can be found on the BBC website.

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

This law exists to protect the reputation of an individual from unfair attack and may be dealt with either as a civil or criminal matter. This law works in a very similar format to that of a physical attack, the individual may claim damages

and reparations for any damage inflicted upon their character. The important difference is that in a case of physical assault the judge will decide the penalty based on legal standards, in a libel or defamation case the jury decide upon the penalty.

This law constitutes the largest threat to a writer or publisher and so must be kept in mind when considering your campaign message. However, whilst it may appear a subjective law it is in fact in place to strike a balance between freedom of speech and the rights of an individual.

It is the duty of the defendant, which is the writer, to prove their accusations and assertions in court. Therefore ensure that everything you claim is not only true, but can be proven with real, tangible evidence. Remember, that whilst libel and defamation laws seem alarming they will be avoided as long as you keep strictly to the truth and the provable.

### The Freedom of Information act

Of course the law is not always there to restrict your campaign efforts at times it can come to your aid and present fantastic opportunities. The Freedom of Information act is a great example of this and has been used to great affect by campaign organisations such as *Campaign Against the Arms Trade* (CAAT).

**The Freedom of Information Act can be found on: [www.foi.gov.uk](http://www.foi.gov.uk)**

Freedom of Information act:

#### **Part 1 - Access to Information held by Public Authorities**

Section 1 - General right of access to information held by public authorities - states: -

- (1) Any person making a request for information to a public authority is entitled :
- (a) To be informed in writing by the public authority whether it holds information of the description specified in the request, and
  - (b) If that is the case, to have that information communicated to him.

#### **Section 17 - Refusal of request - states:**

(1) A public authority which, in relation to any request for information, is to any extent relying on a claim that any provision of Part 2 relating to the duty to confirm or deny is relevant to the request, or on a claim that information is exempt information must, within the time for complying with section 1 (1), give the applicant a notice which -

- (a) states that fact
- (b) specifies the exemption in question, and
- (c) states (if it would not otherwise be apparent) why the exemption applies.

#### **Part 2 - Exempt Information**

Section 43 - Commercial Interests - states:

- (1) Information is exempt information if it constitutes a trade secret
- (2) Information is exempt information if its disclosure under this act would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person (including the public authority holding it).

The Freedom of Information Act 2000 (FOIA) came into existence on the 1st January 2005, and it provides campaigners with a key tool for retrieving information. It has often been used by campaigning organisations to inquire about the investments of public bodies. The act does not only apply to central and local government but also covers universities, colleges, NHS trusts and local authorities.

### Using the Freedom of Information Act

If you have contacted a public body to request information regarding investments and that body does not respond or is deliberately misleading and unhelpful then it is possible to use the act to formally request the information.

It is important to remember that under the Act public bodies:

- Cannot refuse to provide the information requested unless it is exempt
- Must indicate whether they possess the information requested.
- Must assist or advise where it is 'reasonable' to do so.
- Must respond within 20 working days (this may be extended if a body is considering the 'public interest' but this extension must be 'reasonable').

In order to make a FOIA request you merely need to type a standard letter or email and should mention the act clearly and specifically regarding the information you are seeking. In the case that the public body finds your request unclear, or believes that the scope is too wide, they will need to let you know and should advise you on making a new request.

The act presents the campaigner with a legal avenue to information which may prove vital in a campaign. Unfortunately there are some categories of information which are exempt from disclosure. During their *Clean Investment Campaign*, Campaign against the arms trade were often met with "Section 43." This covers 'information which would, or would be likely to, prejudice the commercial interests of any person including the public authority holding it'. However, it is important to remember that a public body cannot just decide that a piece of information is commercially sensitive; all exemptions to the act will have to be justified and supported with evidence. The act clearly outlines that information, accountability and transparency regarding public funds is visibly in the public interest and so this should stand as your main defence against any exemptions a public body attempts to make.

This section of the book aimed to provide you with a very condensed version of the laws you are most likely to deal with whilst coordinating your campaign. This is not to say that you are likely to break them, merely that you must be aware that they exist. This section is not intended to incite you to break any laws but merely aims to arm you with your rights. If you are in any doubt after consulting the mentioned websites or texts it is advisable to contact a solicitor.

## Gaining the support of political organisations

By Morys Ireland

Sometimes organising campaigns or events can feel pretty isolating, especially if you are working alone or with a small group. One way in which you can gain support in many different forms is by involving local or national political organisations. These can include political parties, trade unions, charities, youth groups, community organisations - in fact any organisation that shares common goals or views with your own is a potential source of support.

Most student political groups are relatively small, but even larger groups & societies should make the most out of working with like-minded organisations in the community around them. So what benefits can working with these groups bring? Firstly, whether you're renting a venue, hiring a speaker, buying some banners or just organising a social it all costs money, and when you are running on a limited budget you need to make every penny count. Political organisations can help you with things like this, OK they probably aren't going to donate £1000 to your campaign but they are able to provide financial support in other ways. Many local political parties will have their own printing facilities, particularly in marginal seats (where propaganda is churned out at a far higher rate), and they may be able to print leaflets, posters and flyers for you free of charge or at a below-market rate. There's nothing politicians like to do more than have a room full of people all listening attentively to them, save having another politician in the room to argue with as well. Political parties will often provide you with a speaker for free, especially if they know representatives of other parties are going to be there too. In the run up to either a local or national election parties are even keener to send representatives, making the debate open to the public will entice them even more. Charities, Trade Unions and other similar groups will often send speakers for free, mostly because they are keen to raise awareness about certain issues and see young people as a key target audience.

Political organisations can also be a source of administrative and logistical support, perhaps you've never run a group or a campaign like this before and you don't know where to start. If the advice you get from your student union is not enough why not get in touch with some local organisations, many of the people working or volunteering for these groups will have years of campaigning experience and this could prove invaluable. Political parties will have offices in most constituencies and these can be used as a venue for meetings, often the party will not charge you if they see your organisation as complementary to their own.

At most universities the biggest single recruiting event for your organisation is the fresher's fayre and it is important to make the most of it. If you are a small group or you are lacking material for your stall you can use partner groups within your local area to provide volunteers and printed material. Just like your own group, most politically oriented organisations are always looking to expand their membership and if they think there's a chance of recruiting some people at your fayre they'll be more than happy to help you.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

When it comes to organising events publicity is everything and this is where working with local organisations can really pay off. Simply asking the organisation to publicise your event to its own members can help fill up your venue on the night, providing leaflets and posters to members of that organisation's branch is a good idea too and emailing several local groups at once also saves a great deal of time.

The different types of support outlined above are just a snippet of what political groups can offer, but why would they want to help you in the first place? Believe it or not but the vast majority of people involved in politics in one way or another are there for the right reasons. That is to say, they have a belief system or ideology which inspires them and they want to use that to make some small impact on the world for the better. This means that people may well be willing to offer you advice and support and expect absolutely nothing back in return save the feeling that they've made a difference. When it comes to political parties most of them will be wanting to help you because they may see you and others in your organisation as potential new members, currently young people make up only a tiny percentage of the membership of the big three political parties so you can expect them to be bending over backwards to try to get you on board. Many organisations however will just want to build links with groups like your own, possibly with a view to holding joint events in the future; other organisations may be looking to help you because it is good publicity for them or because they want to publicise something to you. To build up long-term relationships with these organisations you should be prepared to meet at least some of their expectations of you, even if that just means attending a few meetings or delivering some leaflets.

The first step you need to take is to find some suitable local organisations to work with. Larger political parties have what are called 'constituency parties' and a quick internet search should retrieve some contact details for the local constituency party. Smaller political parties are likely to have regional branches rather than constituency parties and these will be based in the larger towns and cities in your region. Trade unions run on a similar set-up and the larger unions have branches all over the UK, to find a particular union go to the Trades Union Congress website ([www.tuc.org.uk](http://www.tuc.org.uk)). It is unlikely that you will not find a political party, however small, sympathetic to the views of your student organisation, however political parties are not the only groups out there to work with and you should try to build links with other politically oriented entities. Larger charities will have regional branches and there are many small local charities out there too. Also look at think tanks and campaign groups like Compass, the Institute for Public Policy Research and the Fabian Society, many of which have active local branches - these types of organisations are able to provide really good speakers for your debates and events. Many organisations have a youth or student wing and making contact with these groups is a key source of support because they are often made up of experienced student campaigners.

Within these organisations the key people to make links with are the local branch secretaries (who will have many contacts within their own and

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

neighbouring branches), the youth/student officer and the campaigns officer. Building up a good relationship with these people will help to ensure your own student campaign or organisation not just survives, but thrives in the next academic year because even if you are leaving university by simply passing on contact details the relationship can continue to exist with your successor.

Finally, when dealing with political organisations work on the philosophy of 'you don't ask, you don't get.' Don't be afraid to ask for those thousand free leaflets or free use of a venue, you have nothing to lose and, potentially, a lot to gain.

As a student at Portsmouth University I have been involved with many different aspects of student politics. Getting students interested in and involved with politics has been the main aim of most of my activities. At Portsmouth I helped to set up and chaired an umbrella organisation of politically active societies that came together to campaign on common issues, pooling resources and members. I re-launched and the Portsmouth Labour Students Club and served as it's Chair for 2007-08, taking the society from nothing to one of the most politically active societies in the Student's Union. By forging links with local parties we were able to put on a public hustings debate during the 2008 local elections attended by representatives of 7 different political parties. We also campaigned in the local elections and in our own student union elections, holding our own hustings debate there too. I have thoroughly enjoyed the activities I've been involved with so far and at the end of the 2007-08 academic years I was honoured to receive a Silver Award from the student union for my part in these activities.

Morys Ireland

Chair of University of Portsmouth Labour Students Club 2007-08

## Conclusion: Think Globally Act Locally

Anyone who has ever had the joy of visiting me in the midst of coordinating a campaign will be able to tell you two things. First, that I consume an obscene amount of tea and secondly that I'm from a strong political background. Sit at my desk and you'll see posters and leaflets denouncing apartheid walls in Palestine, calling for trade union rights in Columbia or supporting humanitarian missions in Burma. Many students have asked about the relevance of these issues, what after all does Pakistani voting rights or the theft of Iraqi oil have to do with a University Fees campaign in Portsmouth or a local hospital closure? The answer is simple. It doesn't matter what you are campaigning for or indeed against, it could be to save a local wood, to stop the closure of a fire station, a call for humanitarian aid or a stand against racism, the important thing to keep in mind is that we are not campaigning in isolation. Just as we struggle with our local issues, so people from across the region, across the nation and indeed across the world are fighting similar struggles and I see a defeat for any of those people as a defeat for us all, whilst a victory for them is a victory for us all. Similarly there are campaigners who look at the bigger picture, who see a problem not only in their immediate lives but in the world at large, they must adopt the same mentality, to think globally but to act locally. To not only focus on the abstract but to concentrate on the measurable, for it is not enough to simply understand and make others understand, the point is to create change.

The previous six chapters have aimed to provide you with the lessons I have learnt during my past few years as an activists. Many of these lessons have been learnt the hard way and many times I have been forced to retreat back to my desk to reevaluate strategies, re-write speeches or re-design posters after being left standing in the rain when less than five people turned up to a rally. For many of these lessons I am indebted to the people I have worked along side, many of whom are featured in this very book. Their belief, passion, determination and the results they have achieved are inspirational.

Through working in a Students' Union I have learnt one other valuable lesson. Student, so the saying goes, are the next generation. Yet they are not only the next generation of leaders but also of workers. So if you save the students, then you save the world. Or, perhaps more importantly, organise the students to save themselves and you save the world. This is the trick to successful campaigning. Bertolt Brecht once said that leadership is the number one element to a campaign and everything else comes second. Here I have the audacity to suggest that he was wrong. Initially leadership is an important factor but the single most important element of any campaign is empowerment. The whole point of a campaign should be to empower and inspire your activists, which encourages them to promote change. That empowerment should not end with the completion of your goal but should be a constant so that they in turn can lead campaigns. This is how one man could establish an organisation such as *Amnesty International*, an undeniably global success.

## How To Coordinate A Campaign For Change

So I ask you all, think globally yet act locally, stand up for what you are *for*, not only what you are against. Stay determined, stay focused and stay truthful to your objectives and clear with your message and you will succeed in achieving the one goal of every campaigner, real, positive, change.