



# Why Organizing Matters

## Take-Aways

### What is Organizing?

Organizing is ultimately the work of inspiring and empowering individuals to work together toward a shared political objective by using their collective power to influence decision-makers.

**Issue Organizing:** A problem and solution have already been identified by an organization, group or individual. An organizer recruits more and more people to collectively advocate towards that solution

**Community Organizing:** An organizer empowers community leaders with the skills and knowledge to advocate collectively for the solutions that the community has identified.

### Organizing Tactics

Organizing can take many forms, the only limit is your creativity! Organizers select tactics that are aimed at either (1) building your collective power and/or (2) persuading a decision maker.

Organizing requires engaging people. For example, calling a decision maker is not an organizing tactic. However, getting five high-profile leaders in the community and another 100 voters to call a decision maker is an organizing tactic. Some examples of organizing tactics include:

- **Constituency Engagement:** *Sign-on letters, postcards, petition/postcard, phonebanking/calls, turnout*
- **Members of Congress Activities:** *in-district meetings, lobby days, office deliveries / drops, phone calls, bird-dogging, teletown halls, townhalls, Twitter/Facebook*
- **Events:** *Tele-townhall, roundtables, coffees, statewide summit, site tours*
- **Communications:** *message-testing or polling, public-facing poll, develop messaging strategy*
- **Generating Media:** *press events, LTEs, op-eds, editorial board, radio and TV, B-roll*
- **Paid Media:** *Banner and Facebook ads, radio ads, television ads*
- **Report:** *releasing publicly, raise profile of issue, tool for lobby visits, hill briefings*

### Political Power

Organizing is about shifting political power into the hands of citizens and community members at the local, state, national and sometimes international level. The two other major factors that tend heavily influence politics (1) people and (2) money.

#### Who has power in the political process?

- Money (industry, lobbyists, etc.)
- Media
- Policy/Military
- Voters
- Labor
- Consumers

#### How does organizing interact with these interests?

Organizing uses the power of the "people"

- Voters
- Labor
- Consumers
- Leveraging Media

Ultimately the power shift is between...

**Organized People vs. Organized Money**

## Why Does Organizing Matter... Because it Works!

Organizing is the most powerful tool available to the people. Though few may control mechanisms of power like money, the policy, or the military – none could remain power without the assistance of the voters, consumer dollars, or labor of millions and more.

### **Organizing is the most necessary of all ingredients in maintaining a democracy**

Without organizing, women would not have the right to vote, Jim Crow laws would still be in place in the South, children would be working in dangerous factories instead of going to school, the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act would not exist, South African Apartheid would be in place, LGBTQ+ individuals would not be able to get married in the United States, and the list goes on and on.

It is frightening to imagine a world without organizers, and inspiring to know that what ever the challenges of today – ***By unleashing the power of the people through organizing, we can change our reality and build a better world together.***