



Why Organizing Matters

Sam Lockhart
Justin Williams



Introductions!

- Name
- Pronouns
- Location
- Historical land (<https://native-land.ca/>)



Goals for Session

Together we will establish a shared understanding of what organizing is, why it matters and what we can accomplish through effective organizing.



1: Defining of Terms

What does organizing mean to you?

Jamboard Activity





**Inspiring and empowering
individuals to work together
towards a shared political objective
by using their collective power to
influence decision-makers**

Organizing Tactics - Examples

- **Constituency Engagement**
 - *Sign-on letters*
 - *Postcards*
 - *Petition*
 - *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*
- **Mobilization**
 - *Marches*
 - *Rallies*
 - *Banner Drops*
 - *Projection*
 - *Art for Activism*
- **Direct Action**
 - *Sit-In or Die-In*
 - *Blocking Traffic*
 - *Camp-Outs*

Issue Organizing vs. Community Organizing

- **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.

Note: NWF primarily engages in issue organizing, but as we work towards a more equitable conservation movement, this often involves skills and best practices from community organizing as well!



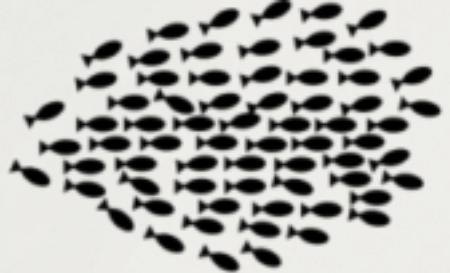
Transactional v. Transformational Relationships

Transactional Relationships are based in quid pro quo, or “this for that.” At best, transactional relationships are a balance of distinct interests between the parties. Often, one party presumes a common interest that does not exist, and is likely to alienate the other as a result.

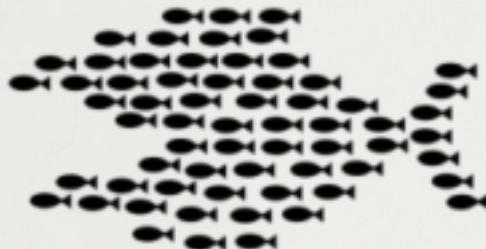
Transformational Relationships are based on an expectation of learning, growth, and change as a result of working together. They are based on trust and openness. As a rule, they are slower to develop, stronger, and more durable than transactional relationships.



2: Building Power



ORGANIZE!



Organizing focuses on power

- who has it?
- who doesn't?
- how to build enough of it to shift the power relationship and bring about change?

What is Power?

Martin Luther King Jr. defined power as “**nothing but the ability to achieve purpose**”

A narrower definition could describe power as “**the ability to get a decision-maker to say yes to you, even though they may not really want to.**”



**Who or what has
power in our society?**

Who has power?

- Industry/Corporations
- Money
- Media/Technology
- Police/Military
- Religion
- Government Institutions
- Elected Officials
- Appointed Officials
- Landowners
- Political donors
- Stockholders
- Voters
- Labor
- Consumers
- Local Communities
- Racial/Ethnic/Gender & other identities

Organizing Shifts The Balance of Power

- Remedies an unjust distribution of power
 - Organized people vs organized wealth
- Building that power helps those organizing for change and justice win against those dedicated to preserving the status quo (or reversing progress)

Two Kinds of Power

Political Power:

- Short-term, policy-driven
- Aimed at a specific policy outcome. Your campaign is designed to achieve that outcome on the fastest possible timeline.
- Operates within (and often reinforces) existing power structures.
- Requires a critical mass of enthusiastically supportive elected officials who will champion a cause
- Victory = incremental progress

People Power:

- Long-term, movement-oriented
- Aimed at building mass popular support and activism for your movement.
- Operates outside existing power structures and seeks to fundamentally shift them.
- Requires a critical mass of engaged people taking continued and sustained action
- Victory = transformation, paradigm shift



3: Why does Organizing Matter?



**Organizing has led to major wins
throughout history...
not without failures along the way.**

Inflation Reduction Act: Federal Climate Legislation in 2022!!

History

- Cap-and-Trade Bill Fails
- Regulatory action on climate through EPA and other agencies
 - Clean Power Plan, Mercury, Methane, etc.
- Defense at the Federal Level
 - Rollbacks to rulemakings
 - Withdrawal from Paris
 - Supreme Court shifts
- Inflation Reduction Act!

Timeline

- **2008:** Climate mentioned 17 times in Democratic party platform
- **2009:** President Obama attempts climate action through cap-and-trade bill which fails
- **2013:** President Obama launches Climate Action Plan
- **2015:** US signs onto Paris Climate Agreement
- **2017:** President Trump announces we will withdraw from Paris and begins rollbacks
- **2020:** Climate mentioned 63 times in Democratic party platform and includes specific policy proposals
- **2022:** Inflation Reduction Act!!



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Overall Goal

- Federal legislation to meaningfully tackle the climate crisis through a variety of policy levers
- President Biden and key Senators are targets

Organizing for Change

- Long-game to build necessary political power to ensure legislative victory by organizing at the state level for years
- Increase the visibility of our movement
- Deep organizing to change the attitudes of the public



Strategy / Tactics

ople's Climate March



- Turn up the volume on the climate crisis through mass mobilization
- Long-term organizing around key Senators and House districts to change attitudes on climate
- Building stronger movement by deepening our relationships and coalitions across conservation, climate, environmental justice, and youth organizers
- Ramping up pressure on Biden Admin and Congressional leaders to prioritize climate
- Closed Door decisions, but we'd already laid the groundwork





4: Reflection

Reflection Questions

- **Think about a time when you employed organizing strategies.**
 - What did it look like?
 - Reflecting on the concepts covered in this session, can you identify why it did or didn't work?
- **Reflecting on this session, is there a time when you wish you'd employed organizing on a campaign?**
 - How might it have changed the power dynamics or politics of the campaign?

