GATHER THE PEOPLE
Community and Faith-Based Organizing and Development Resources
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GTP ORGANIZER TRAINING

Training Guide #17
Grassroots Organization Campaigns

BASIC PRINCIPLES
1. Win real reforms
2. Give people direct experience of power via action
3. Change power relations
4. Build organizational structure
5. Cultivate allies and develop coalitions
6. Develop and refine organizational processes
7. Immediate organizational goals:
   —Solve a problem
   —Unite and expand membership
   —Develop new leaders
   —Discover resources
8. Interested constituencies:
   —Questions: Whose problem is it? What's their stake? Who benefits from the problem? What's their stake?
   —Which constituencies can be organized—with us and against us?
   —What are the risks of involvement and non-involvement for the various constituencies?
   —How do we get access to the constituencies that we want to move?
   —What are the interests and positions of "third parties" (e.g., media, funding organizations, regulatory agencies, etc.)

ISSUES & TARGETS
1. Select issue (and do research)
2. Identify targets:
   —Find decision-maker(s)
   —Clarify potentials for exerting power to resolve issues
4. Find handle:
   —Means to leverage target's resources (contingencies or ideologies)
   —Information and intelligence about target gives basis or location for action

APPROACHING ALLIES
1. Build a list
2. Prioritize the list (based on those most likely to benefit from future organizing)
3. Get the list approved by the campaign committee
4. Suggested approaches:
   —Phone call followed by personal visit for hot contacts
   —Mailing followed by phone call for others (maybe visit, preferably by member and staff)

5. Ask for:
   —Endorsements (letters and signed statements of support)
   —Money (usually in lieu of actual participation)
   —Turnout of people
   —Referrals

BAREBONES CAMPAIGN MODEL
1. Define goals
2. Define strategy:
   —Chronological development: issue(s), demands, handles and tactics, and timelines
   —Constituency-building method: coalition, grassroots recruitment, mail, and mass media
   —Turnout method: squad leaders , blitz crews, phone trees, and flyering
3. Devise resource strategy
4. Structure campaign actions:
   —Campaign has beginning, middle, and ending, gauged to accomplish a number of functions, based on internal or external "timing indicators" (i.e., points at which resources flow or realities shift)
   —Campaign "theme" is developed to communicate to public through media the major issue and handle
   —Needs to be initial media splash to get attention for building campaign support, consistent and mounting pressure of actions, and well-timed peak toward conclusion
5. Delegate internal decision-making:
   —Timing/pacing/momentum
   —Logistics
   —Labor division
   —Scale of actions
   —Media and visuals

TACTICS
1. Basic principles:
   —Politicians react to publicity
   —Bureaucrats react to disruption
   —Corporations react to loss of product reputation
2. Traditional tactics:
   —Face-to-face confrontations
   —Public hearings
   —Citizen commissions
   —Embarrassment by release of information (e.g., corporate exec's salary, politician's campaign contributions, etc.)
   —Studies and exposes (e.g., unfair tax assessment procedures, patient neglect, etc.)
   —Accountability sessions
   —Legal disruptive tactics (e.g., strikes, pickets, boycotts, etc.)
   —Civil disobedience

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