



# Components of a policy campaign

# Aspects of a Campaign Plan

A winning campaign strategy will have six key components:

- 1 A Big Win!
- 2 A Compelling Message
- 3 A clear target
- 4 A clear assessment of power and the political landscape.
- 5 Coalition & People Power
- 6 Winning and effective tactics





**Who's got the  
power?**

# Who has the power to make the changes you desire?



**Be specific.** Don't just say the state legislature or city council.

Instead ask who has specific power to move or halt legislation? What committee is most likely to oversee it? Who is the chair of that committee? What specific elected officials

do you need to engage? **Who among options is most vulnerable?** (in competitive district or up for re-election).



If you fail to identify  
a clear and  
vulnerable target it  
will be difficult to  
advance your policy  
forward.





# Building a winning campaign



# Campaign Strategy should...

Why you need a strategy, and what should a good strategy do for you.



- Force your target to take action towards your big win.
- Increase your leverage & make use of your target's vulnerability
- Build power & create escalating inflection points for your target

# When We Can't Win

"I never lose either I win or I grow."

– Nelson Mandela



“Imagine a rubber band, stretched between your vision and current reality. When stretched, the rubber band creates tension, representing the tension between vision and current reality. What does tension seek? Resolution or release. There are only two possible ways for the tension to resolve itself: pull reality toward the vision or pull the vision toward reality. Which occurs will depend on whether we hold steady to the vision.”



Excerpt From  
The Fifth Discipline  
Peter M. Senge

<https://books.apple.com/us/book/the-fifth-discipline/id420266006>

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# When We Can't Win

Resist the temptation to lower your Big Goal to the current reality.

- Create Small Wins (Micro-Wins)
- Arrange the Micro-Wins so they build on one another
- Use the Micro-Wins to move strategy or create energy.



# Micro-Wins

Examples of small steps  
you can take on the way  
to victory.

- Increase in show of support
  - (ex. 1000 people to sign-on)
- Change in decision-maker discourse
  - (ex. the mayor uses our talking points in a meeting)
- Getting legislation introduced





# The Path to Victory

The core of your campaign strategy are its tactics. **Tactics are actions you take to advance your issue and achieve your wins.**



# Effective tactics do four key things:



**1**

**Increase your power by growing your base, expanding your coalition, and moving masses along the spectrum of support.**

**2**

**Make use of your target(s)' vulnerability by tapping into things they care about.**

**3**

**Be in context and connected to your issue.**

**4**

**Polarize people by illuminating a clear choice.**



**Wait? Polarize  
people? Why?**

Polarization is a strategy to move people to pick a side. It is about **making people have to make a choice**: the world as it is or the world as it ought to be as envisioned by us.



# Polarization. Not hate.

We often are pushed to choose between right or left. This is a false and shallow dichotomy that creates the hate fueled dynamics we have today in our political sphere.



# **Polarization is how you move people across the spectrum of support.**



Polarization is an opportunity to choose between mutuality and care vs selfishness and self-reliance – working together or being forced to “pull yourself up by your boot straps”

# Polarizing Tactics will...

**Energize** the base.

**Move** the middle.

**Isolate** the opposition.





**What to do when you  
are being ignored?**

We are living in a time when many elected officials are not listening to the people. In this context tactics that rely on shaming and persuading decision-makers will not work.

**We must escalate our tactics.**



The most successful organizing efforts in anti-democratic conditions were those where people could inflict a high degree of **political and economic pain**. We must impose costs.



# Two kinds of Costs

**Disruption costs** are costs that we impose on a target, causing them to lose money or votes.

**Concession costs** are what a target stands to lose if they agree to our demands.



## Example: Disruption Costs

- Sept 17: Disney cancels Jimmy Kimmel's show on ABC in response to pressure from the FCC.
- Public outcry. Subscribers respond by boycotting Disney+ and ABC. Celebrities and influencers join in.
- Estimated 50–60k cancel their subscriptions.
- Disney market value drops by roughly \$5 billion.
- Sept 23: Disney reinstates Kimmel's show.



Disruption Costs



**Movement goal:**

Make the disruption  
costs higher than the  
concession costs



Concession Costs