

Chapter 2: Develop a Campaign Plan

Introduction

There are lots of ways to get involved in resisting genetic engineering, many ways to educate your community about the issue, and any number of activities that a new group can plunge into when they decide to start taking action.

However, rather than pouring group energy into short-term projects with no long-term goal in mind, it is important to think about what your group wants to accomplish in the long term and develop campaign plans according to that vision. This will help you select campaigns that are strategic and that will have lasting impact. It will also save the valuable time of your supporters and volunteers and make sure your group has a good chance of securing solid campaign victories. These wins will help progress our movement to move American agriculture away from genetic engineering, and it will empower the people in your community to experience the joy of creating positive change in the place they live.

Thinking about how to plan out a campaign can be an overwhelming prospect. Thankfully, we don't have to re-invent the wheel; citizens have been running campaigns and planning social movements for a long time, and there are some long-standing methods we can draw from when creating campaign plans.

Campaign planning is a powerful process. Remember that there are already a few campaigns included in this toolkit that you can draw from and adapt to your local community. These have already been thought out by other community groups, and it can be a good start for a new group or a good boost for existing groups to take on tried and true strategic, winnable grassroots campaigns.

When discussing campaign development, there are a few terms we will use, and the differences between them are important in planning out your strategies:

- *Goal*: Point toward which to navigate; the longer-term result desired
- *Objective*: Achievable in the near term; helps move us toward our goal
- *Strategy*: A plan and/or method employing tactics to accomplish a goal or objective
- *Tactic*: A small-scale action serving a larger strategy; a specific action carried out with an immediate end in view.

Depending on the campaign you choose, there may already be resource people that can help you with the planning process. Additionally, the local level campaign models provided in the second half of this toolkit already provide some essential components of a campaign plan. This chapter of the toolkit focuses on ways to develop a solid campaign plan for your group to work on

Community Mapping

What is Community Mapping?

Mapping is the process of linking information to place. Community mapping does this in order to support social and economic change on a community level. The central value of a map is that it tells a story about what is happening in our communities. This understanding supports decision-making and consensus-building and translates into improved program design, policy development, organizing, and advocacy. It is a tool that is used by many non-profits and grassroots groups to help them determine which campaigns would be most effective in the circumstances in which they are working.

Why map our community?

Mapping is a great way to collaborate with your group in thinking about the needs and challenges being faced in your community and who is a part of your community. It can be a fun process that helps those doing the mapping to get to know each other. Mapping also helps to identify problems in the context of the actual community we will work within, and it leads the group into the next stage of thinking, “choosing an issue.”

How do we do it?

You can do mapping in a large group or with a few members of your core group who are interested in the process. There are a few steps to doing mapping:

1. Start by drawing a rough map of the geographical/jurisdictional arena you are imagining organizing within (e.g. town, city, county, state)
2. Draw in the following components of that community:
 - a. *Who lives in the community?* Where do they live? What are the demographics of that community (e.g. politically “red” or “blue”, race, age, class, etc.)? Is it an “activist” community? Where are the environmentalists? Where are the farmers?
 - b. *What is special about the community?* Nature, history, tourism, industry, etc. What do you like about your community?
 - c. *Where are the problems facing the community?* Toxics, housing, loss of farmland, poverty, lack of open space, etc. Who/what is affected by those problems?
 - d. *Where do people gather?* How do people find out what’s going on (e.g. media, events, clubs, hang-outs, etc.)?
 - e. *What else do you need to map?* What more is needed in order to have the data to be able to choose your campaign goal, target, and strategy?

You can make your map as detailed or as simple as you like; the main goal is to start thinking about the context in which you will be doing your organizing.

Drawn from Occidental Arts and Ecology Center, www.oaec.org and Californians for GE-Free Agriculture, www.calgefrees.org

Campaign Goals and Objectives

Once you have considered the elements of your community that will affect your work in the mapping exercise, you can start thinking about which campaign goals and objectives are the best fit for your group.

Choosing campaign goals

Begin this process by doing a brainstorm -- what are some goals your group may want to go for? Remember our definition of a goal: the point toward which to navigate; the longer-term result for which you are striving.

The brainstorm can be three-part:

1. *What are some possible long-term goals?* These are the big things you hope to achieve over time, your vision of how your work will impact your community over the long term. Ex: "Transform Sonoma County's culture and economy to be a beacon of ecological agriculture and sustainable food systems."
2. *What are some possible mid-term goals?* These are big steps you can take to help achieve your long-term goals. Ex: "Build new alliances so that the majority of the people and businesses in Sonoma County ally themselves with our long-term goal."
3. *What are some possible short-term goals?* These are the things that we often think of when we think about goals: passing legislation, stopping the release of a particular crop, creating GMO-free zones, etc. Ex: "Create, run, and win the 'GE-Free Sonoma County' ballot initiative."

One way to organize the brainstorm is to give each group member a few strips of paper to write their ideas down on for each of the long-, mid-, and short-term goals. Give everyone a big marker to write with. Then ask group members to start taping their ideas up on a wall. Ask them to try and group similar goals together; feel free to let members keep moving goals around on the wall for a while until they fall into a few main groupings. You can even do this part of the exercise without talking. This can be a fun way to start sorting and prioritizing the goals of the group.

Once everyone's ideas have been posted on the wall, there are a few criteria you can consider to help narrow down the goal options. Will your campaign goal:

- Result in a real improvement in people's lives?
- Give people a sense of their own power?
- Alter the relations of power?
- Be worthwhile?
- Be winnable?
- Be widely felt?
- Be deeply felt?
- Be easy to understand?
- Have a clear target?
- Have a clear timeframe that works for you?
- Be non-divisive?
- Build new alliances?
- Build leadership?
- Set your organization up for the next campaign?

- Raise money?
- Be consistent with your values and mission?

Spend as much time as you need talking about your goals, sorting them through, and coming to a group agreement about which goals feel the most appropriate for your community, and which short- and mid-term goals will truly help you reach your long-term goals.

Choosing campaign objectives

Once you have decided which goals your group wants to go for, begin to think about the objectives (the steps that are “achievable in the near term”) that would be best to take on to move you toward your short-term goal. Remember that because you have already done good strategic thinking about which shorter-term goals can lead you towards your mid- and long-term goals, reaching these short-term goals will bring you towards what you’re ultimately trying to achieve.

Objectives are the basis for making demands of a decision-maker. They should be specific, achievable, and measurable:

Specific: everyone in your group knows and agrees on the goal or objective;

Achievable: it's realistic, or at least it's conceivable that you can win;

Measurable: you can tell whether you've won or lost when the campaign is over.

Don't choose “public education” as a campaign objective

Because genetic engineering is an issue that few Americans still understand, many grassroots genetic engineering groups set “public education” as a campaign objective. However, if your objective is to educate the public, you set your campaign up to fail. This doesn't mean public education isn't important; almost any campaign needs a good public education effort. But it's not a good objective for a community organization:

- *It's not a basis for a demand.* Public education is one of the means to the end, but it's not the end in itself.
- *It's not specific.* It can mean lots of different things to different people, in your group and in your community. What will you educate people about? Who is the "public" you will educate?
- *It's not achievable.* You can't gather the resources to educate everyone your issue.
- *It's not measurable.* A year from now, you won't be able to tell whether you have won or lost. How would you measure whether you have educated the public?

Your objective should be **achievable**, even if that means it isn't everything you want. If you set your sights too high and never win anything, people will drop out of your campaign and your group. On the other hand, if you pick part of what you want as a campaign objective and win it, you've will have momentum to launch a new campaign to get the rest.

Good objectives must be **measurable** if you're going to be able to tell your own members, decision-makers, potential allies, and press what you want. If you want to stop new field trials of genetically engineered crops in your local environment, you can demand that the state government agency that issues permits for release does not grant a permit for that crop. If you simply tell the government you want to stop genetic engineering, what are you specifically asking them to do?

Brainstorming possible objectives to get you towards your goal can be another good group-building process. Allow group members to throw out their ideas. Then begin to sort them through, discuss the options, and narrow down the objectives to the ones that fit as many of the above criteria as possible and that feel the most exciting to your group members.

Example of objectives from Sonoma County, CA campaign:

1. Consult with farmers, scientists, government officials, and allies to write a ballot initiative that we can win and that furthers our mid- and long-term goals (by June 1, 2004);
2. Build a signature gathering campaign and collect 40,000 signatures, secure a place on a 2005 ballot, and build the organizational base to run the ballot campaign (from July 1- Dec 31, 2004);
3. Run a successful election campaign, resulting in a ballot victory in November 2005;
4. Run all stages of our campaign with a clear eye on building an organizational base for the next campaigns that we will run to move us closer to our mid- and long-term goals.

Drawn from the Western Organization of Resource Councils, <http://worc.org/development/howto.html>, the Occidental Arts and Ecology Center, www.oaec.org, and Midwest Academy, www.midwestacademy.com

The Best Political Arena to Work in

Now that your group has determined your goals and objectives, it is time to develop a campaign strategy to achieve your goals. The first step in campaign strategy development is to determine which political arena you want to work in to achieve your campaign objectives. Review the objectives your group has chosen. Which arena(s) could you choose to carry out the components of your campaign? A few examples include:

- State and federal courts
- State regulatory agencies
- The state legislature
- County councils or boards of supervisors
- City or town councils
- Farmer groups
- “The market” (grocery stores, restaurants, etc)
- Universities

Then you can map out which arena is the best fit for your campaign objectives. Make a chart with “arenas” on one axis and “objectives” on the other. Then fill in the chart with how strong of a chance you have to meet your objectives in that arena. For example:

Potential political arena to carry out campaign objectives	Preventing further commercial GE plantings in our state	Preventing any further GE research trials in our state	Establishing an enforceable “right to know” which GE crops are planted in the state and where
Ballot initiative	Little chance	Little chance	Little chance
State and federal courts	Medium chance	Medium chance	Medium chance
State regulatory agencies	Medium chance	Medium chance	Little chance
State legislation	Medium to good chance	Little chance	Medium chance
Local government	Good chance	Medium to good chance	Medium chance
“The Market”	Good chance	Little chance	Little chance
Farmer rejection (ie, farmer and producer associations)	Good chance	Medium to good chance	Little chance
Universities	n/a	Little chance	n/a

Now you can begin to hone in on those arenas where you have the best chance of success. Talk with your group about which of these seem the most effective and exciting to focus on. If you have more than one campaign objective, you can choose more than one arena to work in. The next step is determining who in the political arenas you have selected is able to give you what you’re looking for in your campaign.

Drawn from Californians for GE-Free Agriculture, www.calgefree.org, and Occidental Arts and Ecology Center, www.oaec.org

Choose and Influence a Decision-Maker

Once you have selected the political arena you'd like to work in, the next step in developing your campaign strategy is to decide whom you will focus on as your "target decision-maker." This will be a person or a group of people who are empowered to make the changes you're seeking. Ask yourselves: *"Who can make the decision that gives us what we want?"*

The goal here is to be as specific as possible and to narrow your focus to individual people you can name who have the power to make your objectives reality. For example, if you want to stop a particular GMO crop from being released in your state and the arena you have chosen to work in is the state legislature, rather than choosing "the senate" as your target, think of a powerful committee chair or particularly influential senators who could garner the support you need to meet your objectives.

Choosing your decision-maker could require some research. Be sure you have the facts you need about how decisions are made in your community and in your chosen political arena to select an appropriate campaign target.

Power Mapping your Decision-Maker

In all of our communities, there are webs of relationships that connect people to one another. All of the people we seek to influence in our campaigns, including our campaign target, are a part of this web. Relationships and connections in our communities are critical resources in our work; the more connected we are to the networks in our communities, the more effective our work will be on this issue and in community organizing work in the future.

Power mapping is a tool that can help you think about these connections and networks and how they play into your campaign. This exercise can help your group determine which relationships and networks you have and need to achieve your goals. It will help you figure out who can influence your target decision-maker and whom *you* can actually influence to start the dominoes in motion to reach that decision-maker.

Start by writing your primary target's name in the center of a piece of paper, and draw a circle around it (if you are doing this exercise with your group, put this up on a piece of butcher paper that everyone can see). Then draw lines radiating out of the circle that connect your target to the names of those who you know have an immediate impact on the target. This could be their friends or family members, close colleagues or co-workers, influential constituents or constituent groups, company shareholders, etc.

Once you have thought of everyone you can who has a direct impact on your target, repeat the process with those people; draw lines from each of them to the people you can think of who influence them. Soon you will have something that looks very much like a spider's web, showing the connections that lead to your primary target.

Now you can look over this web and find places where you have influence and power. One of your group members may be friends with someone who influences your target directly; you may see channels or networks you are already a part of that you can use to move your target decision-maker to act. Or you will see individuals, groups, or networks that you should think of ways to influence in order to have an impact on your target. This will help you start planning out concrete steps to take to influence that target person and make your objectives reality. Keep

referring to your power map as you refine the details of your campaign plans. Remember whom you are trying to influence, and keep an eye on the prize!

Secondary Decision-makers: Allies and Opponents

Your target decision-maker is not the only one who will influence your campaign; there are probably powerful individuals or groups in the community you should consider who will influence your target, and who will either be supportive of your campaign or will work to oppose you. It is important to take stock of who these people are and make plans to build your power by bringing them into the movement or working to influence them.

Allies are people who might share your goals or objectives or support your efforts to build a coalition. They are individuals or groups who would add to your power to achieve your objectives.

Opponents are those who stand to lose or will feel threatened by achievement of your goals or objectives. They will actively oppose you.

Make a list of potential allies and potential opponents. Be as specific as possible (again, this might require some research). Rather than write down "environmentalists" as potential allies, list actual people (i.e. "Jane Smith, President of local Sierra Club chapter"); instead of listing "biotech industry" as an opponent, say "Dan Jones, local PR representative for Monsanto."

Many individuals and groups will not yet have a position on this issue or may have conflicting interests and loyalties, and they could end up in either camp. You want to identify potential allies who could help you the most. You want to convert or neutralize as many potential opponents as possible and prepare for those you cannot influence. Be careful when considering your opposition: do not waste your group's precious energy trying to convince opponents who will never agree with or support your position.

This is another opportunity for brainstorming. Here is a list of questions you can use to help identify "secondary targets":

- Who benefits from the problem you seek to address?
- Who suffers from the problem?
- Who are our allies? Who are the allies of our allies?
- Who might be "obstacles" or opponents? Who are the allies of our potential opponents?
- What are the positions of other major sectors of the community that you want to consider (for example, workers, land owners, neighbors, community groups, etc)?

Start thinking about how you will do outreach to these groups and individuals. You may want to bring a presentation to a local parents' group or to a Rotary Club meeting. You may want to set up lunch dates with particularly influential allies or potential opponents. Building these connections will strengthen both your campaign and your community.

Drawn from the Western Organization of Resource Councils, www.worc.org, Occidental Arts and Ecology Center, www.oaec.org, and Californians for GE-Free Agriculture, www.calgeefree.org.

Tactics, Tasks, and Timelines

Tactics are all the things you will do in the campaign: the individual steps along the road. Now that you have your goals, objectives, and targets in mind, it is time to get down to brass tacks and plan your tactics. The most important--and fun--steps to plan are actions: the things you will do to put pressure on the decision-maker to meet your demands. You could write letters, make phone calls, march on City Hall, demonstrate in front of someone's house, hold a press conference, circulate a petition, or hold an accountability session with the decision-maker.

Community organizations plan actions that are non-violent, but the only other limits to the kinds of actions you take are your imagination and what your members decide is appropriate and effective. Try thinking like the decision-maker or like your opponents. What actions would make it harder for the decision-maker to ignore your demands? What can you do that would confuse your opponents, and attract new supporters? Do another brainstorm with your group and throw out a lot of ideas.

Prioritize your tactics

Once you have a list of possible actions and activities, put priorities to the list. Which ideas can you really pull off? Which do you have to do to win? How can you design a campaign that builds your power and the pressure on the decision-maker with each step?

It is usually more effective to start with low-pressure actions like letter writing, and build up to accountability sessions and other high-pressure, high-stakes tactics. You wouldn't normally begin a campaign by chaining yourself to a tree in a decision-maker's front yard. Most people are not comfortable with such strong actions until their more polite approaches have been rejected. A strong tactic is more effective when the decision-maker has learned about your group and your demand under more conventional circumstances.

Divvy up tasks and put into a timeline

You have made a list of tactics, and you have set priorities. Who will do the research, produce materials and obtain resources, and plan the actions?

Make a list of each individual task, and decide with your group, given the roles that you have established, who will do each and by when. You can put this information into a table (see template in this section) for each campaign objective you are working on.

Then, put these tasks on a master calendar. Add in the dates of public meetings, hearings, meetings of your group and of allies and opponents, and important local events (county fairs, elections, etc). If you are working on more than one campaign objective at once, make sure to put all your campaign events and deadlines up on the calendar so you can be sure you are not loading too many activities in any one period of time. Help protect the energy of your group and your volunteers by being realistic about timelines and duties for each of your members.

Drawn from the Western Organization of Resource Councils, www.worc.org