



# SOLIDARITY SCHOOL

## Facilitator's Guide

Vermont Workers' Center  
294 N. Winooski Avenue, Burlington VT 05401  
[www.workerscenter.org](http://www.workerscenter.org)

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# Day 1 – Facilitator’s Agenda

Exercise	Time	H:m time	Notes
Welcome/Invocation & Introduction of Trainers, Name Introductions, Overview and Agenda Review, Agreements/Ground Rules	20 mins	9:30-9:50	
First interview & introductions	30 mins	9:50-10:20	
What is organizing and where does power come from?	30 mins	10:20-10:50	
Powerful/Less Powerful Chart → Economic Pyramid	15 mins	10:50-11:05	
<i>Break</i>	10 mins	11:05-11:15	
Anatomy of Organizing Conversation: Part I	30 mins	11:15-11:45	
Identifying and Assessing Issues	45 mins	11:45-12:30	
<i>Lunch</i>	30 mins	12:30-1:00	
Move Your Butt / Energizer	10 mins	1:00-1:10	
Anatomy of Organizing Conversation: Parts II-V	60 mins	1:10-2:10	
Waterloo Exercise	45 mins	2:10-2:55	
<i>Break</i>	10 mins	2:55-3:05	
Solidarity in Waterloo	30 mins	3:05-3:35	
Homework Assignment	10 mins	3:35-3:45	
Evaluation	15 mins	3:45-4:00	

## Prepare on Butcher Paper

- Agreements/Ground Rules
- What is Organizing? Chart (to be filled in during discussion)
- Anatomy of an organizing conversation
- Waterloo graphic
- Powerful/Less Powerful chart
- Economic Pyramids (drawn with 3 major categories – subcategories to be added in later)

## Handouts

- VWC Mission & Strategic Orientation
- Participants’ Overview
- Participants’ Agenda – Day One
- Organizing skit readings
- What is Organizing chart handout
- Roles for HCisHR Organizing Conversation Scenarios
- Issue Assessment Chart
- Anatomy of an Organizing Conversation Guide
- Waterloo Description
- Economic Pyramid(s)

# Day 2 – Facilitator’s Agenda

Exercise	Time	H:m time	Notes
Invocation, Check-in, Agenda Review, Re-affirmation of Ground Rules	10 mins	9:30-9:40	
Review the Session One Homework Assignment	20 mins	9:40-10:00	
Introduction to Campaign Goals, Strategies and Tactics	30 mins	10:00-10:30	
<i>Break</i>	10 mins	10:30-10:40	
The Battle of the Story	60 mins	10:40-11:40	
<i>Lunch</i>	30 mins	11:40-12:10	
<i>Energizer</i>	10 mins	12:10-12:20	
Brainstorm and Evaluation of Tactics	60 mins	12:20-1:20	
Creating a Campaign Using Escalating Tactics	90 mins	1:20-2:50	
<i>Break</i>	10 mins	2:50-3:00	
How Do Campaigns Change People’s Relationship to Power?	30 mins	3:00-3:30	
Homework & Evaluation	30 mins	3:30-4:00	

## Prepare on Butcher Paper

- Agreements/Ground Rules
- Battle of the Story matrix

## Give link for:

- CIW Video

## Handouts

- Participants’ Agenda – Day Two
- List of Strategies and Tactics
- Blank Battle of the Story matrixes
- Blank Tactic Stars
- Escalating Tactics scenarios
- *Social Movement Readings*

# Day 3 – Facilitator’s Agenda

Exercise	Time	H:m time	Notes
Invocation, Check-in, Agenda Review, Re-affirmation of Ground Rules	10 mins	9:30-9:40	
Tree of Oppression/Tree of Liberation	20 mins	9:40-10:00	
“Exploitation Game”: Historical Development and Timeline of Patriarchy, Capitalism and White Supremacy	90 mins	10:00-11:30	
<i>Break</i>	10 mins	11:30-11:40	
Survival Strategies	40 mins	11:40-12:20	
<i>Lunch</i>	30 mins	12:20-12:50	
<i>Energizer</i>	10 mins	12:50-1:00	
Hearts	15 mins	1:00-1:15	
Statement exercises: Benefits of being white, Benefits of being male, and “Getting Ahead”	25 mins	1:15-1:40	
Large group discussion of privilege	25 mins	1:40-2:05	
<i>Break</i>	10 mins	2:05-2:15	
Anatomy of a Movement	75 mins	2:15-3:30	
Evaluation	30 mins	3:30-4:00	

## Prepare on Butcher Paper

- Agreements/Ground Rules
- Two trees
- Timeline

## For facilitators:

- Systems of Oppression Chart
- Statements for Being Male, Being White, and Getting Ahead

## Handouts

- Participants’ Agenda – Day Three
- POWER quote
- Definitions Sheet for Systems of Oppression and Capitalism
- *Current HCisHR Campaign Description*
- *Additional Reading/Resources List*

# Notes for Facilitators

- **Origins:** The Workers' Center Solidarity School has been held annually since 2007, and has developed and changed significantly over the years. We are indebted to a variety of grassroots organizations and educators for inspiration, advice and material, including Grassroots Global Justice, Project South, Catalyst Project, smartMeme, Paul Kivel, the United Electrical Workers, Jobs with Justice, Labor Notes, the National Network for Immigrant and Refugee Rights, POWER, and SOUL.
- **Methodology:** Solidarity School is based on the methodology of "Popular Education," meaning that exercises are designed not merely to transmit information from instructor to student, but to create shared learning based on the existing knowledge (both experience and book-learning) of all participants, including the facilitator(s).
- **Intro to Social Justice and Organizing:** Starting in 2011, the Workers' Center will be offering a 2-3 hour "Introduction to Social Justice and Organizing" workshop which will incorporate several components which will be re-visited in Solidarity School (a different version of "What Is Organizing?" and the More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart and Economic Pyramid), so these sections have been re-written as a review, with the idea that most or all folks attending Solidarity School will have first attended the Intro to Social Justice and Organizing workshop.
- **Checking in:** Facilitators should check in with participants via email (or phone for folks without email) one week after each session, to encourage/remind folks about the homework and see if they have any questions.
- **Energizers:** The schedule includes 10 mins after each lunch break for an "energizer," to get people's energy up and blood moving after a meal, and it's a good idea to do short energizers after the short breaks as well. Day 1 has a suggestion for an energizer that has some learning content to it, but it requires a fair amount of mobility (see below). There are a number of suggestions for energizers at the following websites:

<http://www.reproline.jhu.edu/english/5tools/5icebreak/icebreak3.htm>

<http://www.zhaba.cz/index.php?id=95>

- **Varying Levels of Ability:** Many energizers, as well as a few of the exercises, require a fair amount of mobility; facilitators need to be aware of and be able to modify exercises if participants do not all have the ability to move, or move quickly. Similarly, many of the exercises involve visual components; if there are participants with visual impairments then facilitators need to take extra care to verbally describe what they are doing. Finally, facilitators should be sure to be sensitive to (and watch out to make sure other participants are sensitive to) any other disabilities, including hearing impairment.

**Facilitator's Notes**

# Solidarity School Day 1: Organizing 101

## Introductions & Agreements

20 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 9:30-9:50

### Welcome and Invocation

- Welcome participants to Solidarity School, to space.
- Take a minute to think about our connection to the earth and to other workers:
- We are on indigenous land, the land gives us our food, clothing, shelter and energy.
- We think about all the work and workers who made it possible for us to be here today, the folks who built this building, who grow and transport and sell our food, who make and transport our clothing, who mine and process the materials that provide us with energy and technology.

### Introductions

- Trainers introduce themselves
- Explain why we ask for preferred gender pronoun: don't want to make assumptions, there are folks who don't feel they fit into the gender binary of male/female, etc.
- Ask participants to introduce themselves (name & preferred gender pronoun only, we'll do longer intros later)
- Hand out and briefly go over VWC mission statement & strategic orientation (see page 45)

### Overview and Agenda Review

Hand out and go over the "Participants' Overview" (overview of all three days, page 46) and "Participants' Agenda" (agenda for today, page 47)

### Materials Needed:

- VWC Mission Statement and Strategic Orientation
- Participant Overview and Participant Agenda
- Day #1 Agenda and Agreements on butcher-block

### Facilitator's Notes

## Agreements

Put up agreements and go over to make sure everyone understands each of them. Ask if cell phones off rule is OK (some folks might need to be reached for kids, etc.). Ask everyone to make a positive commitment to the ground rules by raising their hand, etc.

- Step Up/Step Back – for folks who often don’t contribute, this is a good time to “step up” and participate. For folks who feel comfortable talking, this is a good place to “step back” and allow others to have some space to be heard.
- Be Aware of Time – we have a lot on the agenda and want to be respectful of people's time by ending on time.
- Oppression Exists – the existence of racism, sexism, homophobia, ableism etc. is not debatable, and we make an agreement with each other to be conscious of their functioning and to confront oppressive behavior.
- Use the “Ouch” – If something is sensitive, please use the “ouch” to interrupt (the person using the “ouch” is not obligated to explain the issue)
- Use the “Whoa” – If you hear something you don’t understand, use the “whoa” to interrupt to get an explanation.
- We All Have Knowledge/We All Have Ignorance – this is a space where we come to learn from each other.
- Cell Phones Off? – generally preferred to ask folks to turn cell phones off, but if there are people who have kids or other dependents who might need to get ahold of them (or other good reasons to keep a cell phone on), then see if you can work out the least disruptive possibility – those folks turn phones to vibrate, agree to only take critically important calls, everyone else turns phones off, etc.

### Facilitator’s Notes



# First Interview

30 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 9:50-10:20

## Purpose

*The interviews allow participants to learn more about each other, do a deeper introduction to the group, and also begin to practice the most basic skill of organizing, having a one-on-one conversation with someone.*

## Flow

Facilitators have participants pair up with someone they don't know. Each interview the other for 5 minutes, finding out:

- their name
- where they live
- what organizing work are they doing
- what skills do they hope to gain
- see if you can find something in common

Facilitator should remind folks: *When interviewing, try to stay focused on the other person.*

When interviews are completed, have each person introduce their partner to the group. Then facilitator should lead a short discussion, asking folks to reflect on whether they had any sense of anything they had in common with their interview partner, and if so, what was it?

Facilitators should listen for the organizable topics/issues that pop up, as opposed to stuff people may mention that isn't organizable (i.e. hemp, building a community garden, etc.). The organizable issues go on sticky notes for a later exercise (Issue Assessment).

## Key Points

- An organizer always needs to be listening and reflecting.
- Taking action is scary – it is easier to do things with someone else, with someone who understands you or who shares something in common.
- It is important for an organizer to develop sense of having something in common to make folks feel safe.

### Facilitator's Notes

# What is Organizing and Where Does Power Come From?

30 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 10:20-10:50

## Purpose

*This exercise is design to help folks think about the difference between charity, advocacy, electoral activity, community/economic development, and organizing, and to present the Workers' Center's vision of what organizing is and where power comes from. There is a similar exercise in the Intro to Social Justice & Organizing workshop.*

## Flow

1. Ask for five volunteers to read parts of a skit. Explain that this skit will be five days in the life of a hungry woman and each volunteer will read about a paragraph describing each day. Pass out scripts (pages 50-54) and put up blank "What Is Organizing?" butcher-block chart (see page 55)
2. Have each volunteer read their script in turn, then fill in the chart using the What Is Organizing handout (page 55) as a guide.
3. Once chart is filled in, ask group to consider the question, *Where does power come from?* in these situations (who has power in each case, where does it come from, how do they exercise it, and is it acknowledged – i.e., do they talk about power explicitly?)
4. Bring power discussion back to VWC Strategic Orientation, then pass out What Is Organizing handout.

## Key Points

- What is power relationship between each organization and hungry person?
- Difference between *power over* (soup kitchen, legal services, politician) and *power with* (community organization)
- Organizing is not the same as charity (providing goods & services for people) or advocacy (helping individuals navigate the system).
- Providing services to meet people's needs, and individual advocacy are important, but they do not challenge the system that creates those needs in the first place.
- Economic development frequently doesn't involve the poor person at all (co-ops being a partial exception)
- Electoral politics misdirects folks to think that power comes from voting, where in reality once individual politicians are elected, they are constrained by the power of corporations and the wealthy (and, in some cases, by the power of community organizing from below)

## Materials Needed:

- What Is Organizing Skits
- Blank butcher-block chart and handouts for What Is Organizing

## Facilitator's Notes

# More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart and Economic Pyramid (or 10 Chairs)

15 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 10:50-11:05

## Purpose

*The More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart is designed to allow participants to explore the lessons of the Waterloo exercise (the bosses' best strategy is to divide us) in ways that recognize how dynamics of gender, race, ableism, immigration, etc. play out between us and obscure our understanding of the economic structure of society. Moving to the Economic Pyramid then makes that economic structure explicit, and is a crucial companion to the More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart. Facilitators should read Paul Kivel's articles "The Power Chart Revisited," and "The Ruling Class and the Buffer Zone," (separate documents) if possible, before facilitating this exercise. This exercise is also included in the Intro to Social Justice & Organizing workshop, so it should be a refresher for most if not all participants, and facilitator should recognize this.*

## Flow

### 1. More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart (5 mins).

- Put up the chart (see page 56) and explain the basic idea, that the groups described on the left-hand side have, on balance, more power in society than the people on the right-hand side.
- Ask folks to spend a minute locating themselves on the chart. See if anyone wants to share any observations.
- Ask if anyone identified completely with one side or the other.
- Go through Key Points (below)

### 2. Economic Pyramid (5 mins). Put up the two economic pyramids (see pages 57-58) (though subdivisions of the working class should be drawn in during discussion)

- Explain that the pyramids represents 100% of the U.S. population and 100% of U.S. wealth respectively.
- Go through each of the three major categories, explaining the percentages and average net worth.
- The sub-divisions of the working class (middle, working, poor/unemployed) are best drawn in later in the discussion, when people ask about the "middle class," where, say, teachers or nurses fit in, etc.

**Or 10 Chairs (5 mins).** Put up economic pyramid as a reference, but do the 10 Chairs exercise to illustrate the distribution of wealth in the United States. This exercise is similar to the Economic Pyramid, but is more visual and participatory.

- Line up 10 chairs across the front of the room facing the participants, and ask for 10 volunteers to stand behind each of the chairs. Explain that each chair represents 10% of all the private wealth in the U.S. and each volunteer represents 10% of the population.

## Facilitator's Notes

- Choose 2 people to represent the wealthiest 20% of the U.S. population, the “upper class,” and give them placards to wear. Announce that they will be playing musical chairs, but the people at the top don't have to play because they actually get 9 of the chairs for themselves. Play the game with music or clapping, with the remaining 8 people finding a way to sit on the one remaining chair when the music stops.
- Explain that as of 2007, 20% of the population held 92% of the wealth, and the other 80% was sharing just 8%. Explain that it actually gets even more unevenly distributed in that top 20%, with 1% of the population holding 42% of all the wealth in the country. Stick a placard that says “Ruling Class” to the arm of one of the people in the upper class and have them stretch their arm across 4 of the chairs.
- For those sharing one chair: How are you feeling? What do you think about sharing less space than that person's arm? How do you feel about each other? Who are you fighting with to stay on the chair? Can you even see the person at the top? Is anyone on the floor? Who do they represent?
- For those in the upper class: How are you feeling? When you look over there at all those stressed out people, do you feel nervous? Why are they all squeezing onto that chair?
- If it hasn't come up yet, suggest to the 9 students that perhaps their condition is their own fault. Maybe if they worked harder, they wouldn't be in this spot. Or ask the poorest person (someone who's gotten off the chair), “don't you think everyone else would be better off if you stopped mooching off welfare?”
- Play musical chairs again, except this time with an equal distribution of wealth. Ask: How are you feeling now? Are you comfortable? How do you feel about the people around you?

**3. Discussion (5 mins).** Open up for questions and reactions, especially asking how folks see the dynamics of the More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart play out in the pyramid, but also make sure to cover Key Points below. At end of exercise, hand out Economic Pyramid handouts.

## Key Points

For More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart:

- We are much more conscious of the ways in which we are less powerful.
- We do not need to think about categories where we are more powerful because they are not important to our survival (best if facilitator uses personal example – e.g., as a white person I can choose when to think about racism, but as a woman I have to pay attention to the gender dynamics all the time).
- We often make up for the abuse/violence we receive from those more powerful than us by taking it out of those who are less powerful (for example, a male worker comes home and makes up for his sense of powerlessness on the job by ordering his wife or kids around, etc.).
- While these categories are set up as binaries for the sake of the chart, they are all, upon closer inspection, much more complicated and intertwined – no one experiences life as just a “person of color,” for example: each person of color has a specific culture (African-American, Filipino-American, etc.), a gender identity, a particular job, a specific set of physical abilities and disabilities, etc.
- The categories also affect each other: for example, the point at which someone is considered “adult” and receives the benefits of adulthood are greatly influenced by class, gender, race and ability.
- Each of these categories is also very specific; they are not all parallel (i.e., racism does not = sexism).

### Facilitator's Notes

For Economic Pyramid / 10 Chairs:

- The top one percent – the ruling class – is overwhelmingly on the “More Powerful” side of the power chart (and while there are women and young people who benefit from the material wealth of being part of the ruling class, they generally don’t exercise power in the way the adult men do).
- The pyramid has not always looked like this – inequality has been increasing in the U.S. for the past three and a half decades – especially in the middle part of the twentieth century, people’s movements forced a significant redistribution of wealth downward (we’ll address this more on Day 3).
- The bottom 80% is what we roughly mean when we talk about the “Working Class” – a class of people whose wealth and income are determined by the labor market (whether they are working in a “middle class” job, working a low-wage job, unemployed, or unable to work because of disability). The people in the Professional/Managerial and Ruling Classes, on the other hand, secure wealth and income by the amount of social *power* (wealth, family and social networks, and cultural capital) that they command.
- Throughout the Professional/Managerial Class and Working Class are a variety of “buffer zone” occupations whose job is to take care of, keep hope alive for, and control, the Working Class. This work – paid and unpaid – is also highly gendered (low-paid women in “helping professions,” unpaid work in the home, male control professions such as cops, the controlling role of father as head of the family, etc.)
- By keeping those of us in the broad working class fighting over the various crumbs we receive (reference back to the Waterloo exercise), we are distracted from the vast inequity of the wealth held by the Ruling and Professional/Managerial Classes.

**Materials Needed:**

- More / Less Powerful Chart on butcher-block
- Economic Pyramid handouts

– *BREAK (10 mins)* –

**Facilitator’s Notes**

# Anatomy of Organizing Conversation (Part I - Issues)

30 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 11:15-11:45

## Purpose

*In this interview, we continue to practice the most basic skill of organizing, having a one-on-one conversation with someone, and also begin to pull out issues, which will be further developed in the next section.*

## Flow

**1. The Anatomy of an Organizing Conversation (5 mins).** Have five steps of the organizing conversation written up on butcher paper:

1. Issues
2. Orientation to Organizing
3. Innoculation
4. The "Ask"
5. Follow-Up

Facilitator reveals ONLY Part I-Issues of "Anatomy of Organizing Conversation" chart (page 59), then briefly goes over the Why and How. Facilitators role-play as an example by asking questions to fully understand the person's issue.

**2. Role Plays (15 mins).** Participants pair up with one person acting as the "Organizer" and one person as "Member of the Public." The "Organizers" need to figure out the issue of the "Member of the Public" (see role-play roles on page 60-62). It will probably take about 5 minutes to get everyone settled, then give the pairs 5-7 minutes for one participant to be the organizer, then switch (giving out new issues). The "Organizer" should find out:

- The person's experiences, issues, problems, or concerns
- Particularly try to listen for problems that are more general ... not only specific to the individual.

**3. Debrief and Discussion (10 mins).** Large-group discussion about the experiences of "Organizer" finding out issues. What worked? What didn't? What was their issue?

## Key Points

- Remember that an organizing conversation should be about 80% asking questions and listening, and only about 20% speaking.
- Organizers should look for things that are shared in common.
- A good organizing conversation will start by asking questions to fully understand how someone is relating to the issue, what their experiences are, etc.

## Facilitator's Notes

## Materials Needed:

- “Anatomy of Organizing Conversation” chart: Part I – Issues
- Organizing Conversation Scenario Roles
- Post-It sticky notes

# Identifying and Assessing Issues

45 minutes

Facilitator’s Time: 11:45-12:30

## Purpose

*To introduce the concept of assessing issues for whether they are good issues to organize, and to practice the skills of identifying them.*

## Flow

**1. Introduce the Issue Assessment Chart (10 mins).** Hand out the “Issue Assessment” Chart handout (page 63) and go over. Use the Healthcare Is a Human Right campaign as an example – discuss how healthcare is deeply felt, broadly felt, etc.

**2. Small Groups Practice Skill of Issue Identification (20 mins).** Break into 2-3 small groups and give each group one of the “organizable issues” identified on sticky notes from previous exercise. Each group talks about their issue in relation to the “Issue Assessment” chart.

**3. Report Back and Discussion. (15 mins).**

## Key Points

- Discuss how individual immediate issues relate to “big picture” issues, such as changes in the economy.
- Even though unions and community organizations do solve individual problems, the goal is not to become legal service (refer to “What is Organizing” discussion).
- We need to build power to change balance of power between workers and bosses in order to address both the shared shop-floor/community problems and the larger social forces that are driving them.
- To build power, we need to organize at grassroots/workplace level (around immediate issues) and also build coalitions and movements with others to address root cause.

## Materials Needed:

- “Issue Assessment” chart hand-out
- Butcher-block paper for small groups

## Facilitator’s Notes

– LUNCH (30 mins) –

## Move Your Butt/Energizer

10 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 1:00-1:10

*This is an energizer, but with some content. First, check for ability issues: this exercise is difficult for people can't move around easily, and also for people with visual impairment. If this is the case, choose another energizer (see Facilitators' Notes, page 5).*

### **Flow**

Arrange chairs in a circle, with one fewer chair than there are people in the room (participants plus facilitators). One facilitator stands in the center and explains the exercise: the person in the center says a statement that is true of them (such as "I am a member of a union"). Then, everyone else for whom that statement is also true has to get out of their chair and find another empty chair that is at least two chairs away from them (i.e., you can't move to the chair immediately to your left or right). The person in the center also tries to find a chair. One person will be left chairless, and she or he then stands in the center and makes another statement, etc.

At the end of this exercise, reinforce the point that organizing is a process of finding commonalities, of moving from "I" to "we."

**Facilitator's Notes**



# Anatomy of Organizing Conversation (Part II – Organizing Orientation / Innoculation & Part III – Ask / Follow-Up)

60 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 1:10-2:10

## Purpose

*Introduce other elements of an “Organizing Conversation,” and have participants practice the skill.*

## Flow

**1. The Anatomy of an Organizing Conversation (5 mins).** Have five steps of the organizing conversation written up on butcher paper:

1. Issues
2. Orientation to Organizing
3. Innoculation
4. The “Ask”
5. Follow-Up

Facilitators reveal parts II and III (page 59) and go over the Why and How, then explain the exercise.

**2. Role Plays – Parts II & III (20 mins).** Have participants split into the same or different pairs and restart their organizing conversations. Give each pair a new set of role assignments based on the Healthcare Is a Human Right Campaign (see page 60-62), or folks can switch it up by practicing an issue they are actually dealing with. It will probably take about 5 minutes to get everyone settled, then give the pairs 5-7 minutes for one participant to be the organizer, then switch. Each “Organizer” should start with Issues, then move the conversation to Organizing and Innoculation.

**3. Debrief and Discussion (15 mins).** Large-group discussion about the experience of having organizing conversations. What worked? What didn't? What was their issue? How did they do innoculation?

Facilitators then reveal parts IV and V and go over the Why and How, then explain the next part of the exercise.

**4. Role Plays – Parts IV & V (10 mins).** Regroup into pairs and pick up the conversations with the Ask and Follow-Up. It will probably less time for everyone to get settled, with each person taking 2-3 minutes make their ask and figure out follow-up.

**5. Debrief and Discussion (10 mins).** Large-group discussion about the experience of having organizing conversations. What worked? What didn't? What did they ask? Did they get the person's contact information and establish a clear way to follow-up? Give handout at the end.

## Facilitator's Notes

## Key Points

- The process of organizing involves having repeated “organizing conversations” with people, with increasing “asks.”
- Each ask also functions as a test of the strength of our organization.
- A good organizing conversation will leave the organized person with a greater sense of identification with the organization/campaign/etc. – moving further from “I” to “we.”
- How do the different workplace or community problems relate to “big picture” issues? (i.e. changes in the economy, the effects of capitalism, etc.).
- Even though unions and community organizing does solve individual problems, the goal is not to become legal service, referral service, or to make a new friend (although you might!).
- We need to build power in order to address both the shared problems and the larger social forces that are driving them.

## Materials Needed:

- “Anatomy of Organizing Conversation” Chart: Part II – V
- “Anatomy of Organizing Conversation” Chart as a Handout.

### Facilitator’s Notes

# Waterloo

45 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 2:10-2:55

## Purpose

*This exercise was developed to emphasize that thinking about “how will the ruling classes attempt to divide us” and incorporating strategies to preserve unity (i.e., recruiting leaders who represent the diverse demographics of whatever group we’re organizing; confronting racism, sexism and homophobia; etc.) are central to any organizing project.*

## Flow

1. Explain the exercise: We will divide you up into small groups, give you a scenario, and each group will put yourself in the place of the ruling class. Your assignment is not to achieve justice, but to figure out what ruling-class strategies will be most effective in getting what you want (more money and power). (5 minutes)
2. Pass out the “Waterloo” handout (page 64), go over it, and give folks a chance to ask clarifying questions (but no discussion at this point) (5 minutes)
3. Have participants count off to divide them into small groups of 3-5 each. Give each group butcher paper for a report back. It’s useful for facilitators to circulate around the small groups to make sure that they are being sufficiently ruthless, as some people respond to these kinds of exercises by trying to be a “good boss.” (15 minutes)
4. Give each group a few minutes to report back to the group, then facilitate a large-group discussion of the overall lessons of this exercise. Large-group discussion can move from going deeper on each group’s report (see first two points below) to larger lessons/questions. (20 minutes)

## Key Points

- Folks will come up with a variety of ruling-class strategies; it’s useful to ask the larger group “what would be the response of the unions and communities if the mayor does X?” to tease out the implications of different ruling-class strategies for our strategy.
- Similarly, it’s useful to ask explicit questions about how issues of race, gender, and immigration status play out in particular ruling-class strategies.
- Ruling class strategies that divide people are more effective than just going after everyone (which tends to give people reason to unite).
- Giving “crumbs” to one group is a particularly effective method for dividing them from other groups.
- What are the points of possible division between workers with good jobs (teachers, city workers) and the unemployed and low-wage workers? How do ruling class strategies exploit these divisions? What are the implications for the teachers’ and city workers’ unions in terms of how they frame their struggles and the role of their unions in the larger community? What are the implications for unions or community organizations of unemployed and low-wage workers?
- What are the points of possible division between the African-American community and the Latino

## Facilitator's Notes

community, and how do ruling-class strategies exploit these divisions? What do these communities have in common? What are the implications for organizations in these communities?

**Materials Needed:**

- Waterloo handout
- Butcher-block paper and markers for each small group.

– *BREAK (10 mins)* –

**Facilitator's Notes**

# Solidarity in Waterloo

30 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 3:05-3:35

## Purpose

*This exercise is designed to introduce the concept of building solidarity.*

## Flow

1. Return to the Waterloo exercise handout. Explain: "Now we are going to return to Waterloo, and build our own forces. We need to build an organizing committee that can build enough power – through organizing – to make the mayor back off.
2. Break into three small groups representing 1) African-American Parents, 2) Latino Immigrants, 3) Union/Public Sector Workers to discuss the following: (facilitator should add agreement [mercedes])
  - How can you frame the issue to build solidarity between groups? What questions do you need to ask to find out more about their analysis or experience of the issue?
  - What resources or tools do you need to have, or what do you need to understand, to build solidarity with other groups?
3. Ask folks take notes on butcher-block and report back.

## Key Points

- Understanding how people relate (or don't relate) to each other is important for the process of bringing them together in greater unity.
- Organizations and constituencies are not monolithic blocs – some workers will be more invested in the union than others, community organizations might work through some social networks and exclude others, etc.
- It is especially important to understand how the dynamics from the more powerful/less powerful chart play out within and between organizations and communities.

## Materials Needed:

- Butcher-block paper and markers for each small group.

### Facilitator's Notes

# Homework Assignment

10 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 3:35-3:45

Explain that the homework assignment from Session I is for each person to practice organizing conversation(s) and spend some time reflecting by journaling about their experience. Take 10 minutes for each person to plan a list of people they are going to talk to and how they are going to go about it. What questions might they ask to get to their person's issues? What will be their ask(s)? Then go out and try it, followed by a short journal writing exercise to reflect on the conversations and experience. We will be sharing our journals or talking about how it went at the beginning of the next session.

## Evaluation

15 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 3:45-4:00

1. Give everyone two pieces of paper and ask them to take a minute to write down their thoughts about the day on one sheet, and any questions or concerns they have about the next two days on the other sheet. They do not need to put their names on either sheet, though if they want individual answers to their questions/concerns they can put their name and preferred method of contact down (5 mins).
2. On butcher-block paper, do a plus/delta (positive things/things to change) evaluation, going around the room to make sure to get everyone's feedback. After that, open up for larger discussion if time (10 mins).
3. Butcher-block facilitators' names, phone and email, let folks know we're available in between sessions, and also pass around sign-up sheet for email and phone which we'll share with everyone and create listserve.

**Facilitator's Notes**

# Solidarity School Day 2: Campaigns, Strategies and Tactics Check-in and Review

10 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 9:30-9:40

- **Invocation:** Take a minutes to ground ourselves in our connection to the earth and to other workers, to the indigenous land that we are on, to all the workers who made it possible for us to be here today.
- **(Re-)introductions:** Go around and check in how everyone is doing today. If there is anyone new today, also briefly explain why we ask for preferred gender pronoun and ask everyone to introduce themselves (name & preferred gender pronoun) while checking in.
- **Re-affirmation of Agreements:** Review agreements (see p. 6) and re-affirm everyone's commitment.
- **Agenda Review:** Pass out and go over Participants' Agenda for Day 2 (page 47).

## Review of Homework

20 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 9:40-10:00

### Purpose

*To debrief on their organizing conversations.*

### Flow

Ask for one or two volunteers to share their journals and/or experiences then lead into general discussion. What was difficult about the homework? What was easier? Did it change how you thought about your workplace / community?

### Key Points

- Organizing conversations don't come naturally, they need to be practiced.
- Organizing conversations can be uncomfortable, even for the organizer. The purpose is to push people toward participation and collective action, which isn't easy.
- We learn new skills and different ways to be effective with each conversation.

### Facilitator's Notes

# Introduction to Campaign Goals, Strategies and Tactics

30 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 10:00-10:30

## Purpose

*To help participants develop an understanding of how campaign goals, strategies and tactics fit together, and the implications that different strategies and tactics have for building power in the long term.*

## Flow

### 1. Introduce the topic (5 mins).

- *A campaign is a structured series of actions that we engage in to convince the target to use his or her power to enact or allow the solution that we have identified.*
- *Campaigns can be structured and carried out in ways that are more or less successful, that engage larger or smaller numbers of people, and that build or do not build long-term power.*
- *The goal of this session is to give you the skills to be able to develop campaigns that are successful, engage large numbers of people, and build long-term power for unions, the Workers' Center, and other people's organizations.*

### 2. How do campaigns, strategies and tactics fit together (10 mins). Ask for ideas from the participants, but quickly bring discussion around to this, using HCisHR as an example. A campaign requires:

- Clear goals (policy change – single-payer legislation)
- Developing an analysis of the balance of forces (currently single-payer is “not politically possible” because corporations – especially insurance & pharmaceutical companies – and politicians hold too much power. Therefore we need to change what is politically possible by engaging a huge number of Vermonters in a community-based campaign)
- Choosing one or more strategies (base-building, primarily, but also media, moving into legislative)
- Implementing different tactics to carry out those strategies (surveys, local events, May 1<sup>st</sup> rally, postcards)

### 3. Large Group Discussion (15 mins). Hand out and briefly go over the List of Strategies and Tactics (see page 64). Ask group to describe or break-down the HCisHR campaign or another example that folks are familiar with – what were the goals, what were the strategies, what were the tactics?

## Key Points

- Different types of strategies include: base building (organizing people to be involved in the campaign), direct action (directly confronting power holders), disruption (disrupting day-to-day functioning of

### Facilitator's Notes



target), legislative (convincing legislators or city councilors to enact laws/ordinances), advocacy (providing argument & information to sympathetic targets), alliance-building, media, legal.

- Different types of strategies require different types of tactics and therefore different capacities
- Different types of strategies have different implications not only for success, but also for how many people are engaged in the campaign and how much long-term power is built (for example, a highly visible media campaign carried out by a small group against a target concerned with his or her public image may win a concession on a particular issue, but will not build long-term power for the small group, especially if the next target they have to confront is not concerned with his or her public image)
- An overall campaign strategy will generally consist of escalating actions/tactics
- Strategies need to be flexible, to respond to contingencies. For example, a group uses the "direct action" tactic of holding an accountability session with a decision-maker but the decision-maker blows them off. The group's base may be more motivated to engage in more militant tactics (occupying the target's office) in response to the snub than they were before.
- For union contract campaigns, strategies should always include base-building (involving the members), direct action (confronting the boss), and potentially disruption (strike). If boss is susceptible to other kinds of pressure (from others, from public), strategies may also include alliance-building (with those able to put pressure on the boss), media, and legal (if boss is breaking the law)

### **Materials Needed:**

- Handout of the List of Strategies and Tactics.

– *BREAK (10 mins)* –

## **The Battle of the Story**

60 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 10:40-11:40

### **Purpose**

*This exercise is intended to help organizers and leaders create more compelling narratives to communicate about their campaigns – both in one-to-one organizing conversations and in the media. The facilitator should choose a topic, problem or campaign which all the participants will be reasonably familiar with, or else build some time into the session to explain the issue or campaign. For 2010 and the foreseeable future, the VWC will be using healthcare as the issue (see Healthcare Battle of the Story Matrix on page 66).*

### **Flow**

**1. Introduction (5 mins).** First, give credit – this was developed by smartMeme. Introduce concept of “Battle

#### **Facilitator's Notes**

of the Story” (see key points below)

**2. Introduce the Matrix (5 mins).** Pass out the blank "Battle of the Story" matrixes (page 65), and briefly go over the different elements.

**3. Their Story (20 mins).** The facilitator should then ask participants to outline “what is the story that power holders (i.e., the boss) are telling about this issue?,” and break it down into conflict, characters, and images and anecdotes that illustrate the story. The facilitator should also tease out what the assumptions and potential points of intervention are. (see Healthcare Battle of the Story matrix on page 66 for suggestions of what to look for if using healthcare as the issue).

**4. Our Story (20 mins).** After finishing “their” story, help build “our” story, especially focusing on characters, images and foreshadowing (we don’t need to do potential points of intervention for “our” story)

**5. General Discussion and Wrap-Up (10 mins).**

### Key Points

- Strategies can include a variety of elements. One element of strategy that we believe is important to lift up and be explicit about is the strategy of challenging the dominant story, or narrative, that those in power tell about the issue.
- We live in a world shaped by stories. Stories are the threads of our lives and the fabric of human cultures. A story can unite or divide people(s), obscure issues, or spotlight new perspectives. A story can inform or deceive, enlighten or entertain, or even do all of the above.
- Oftentimes activists assume that if we could just inform people about the issue and give them the information they are lacking, then they will join our movements for change. But, in most cases, “the facts” alone are not enough to persuade; assumptions, emotions, internal narratives, and pre-existing attitudes can get in the way of the facts making sense.
- A narrative power analysis suggests that the problem is not necessarily what people DON’T know (the facts). Rather, the problem may be what they DO know (underlying assumptions).

### Materials Needed:

- Blank chart for Battle of the Story.

– *LUNCH (30 mins)* –

– *ENERGIZER (10 mins)* –

### Facilitator’s Notes

# Brainstorm and Evaluation of Tactics

60 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 12:20-1:20

## Purpose

*This exercise is to help participants learn to evaluate tactics by the capacity, commitment and involvement that they require.*

## Flow

**Brainstorm of Tactics (15 minutes)** – Facilitator asks group to develop a list of tactics that would fit within a *base-building strategy* (no discussion, strict brainstorming, write up list). This should be a fairly open brainstorm, but the facilitator should make sure that communication tactics (surveys, newsletters) and base-building tactics (shift meetings, organizing contract action network) are included. It is helpful to have a second facilitator thinking about how to break the tactics up for the small groups.

**Evaluating Tactics (20 mins)** – Break up participants into small groups of 3-4 each. These groups should be different than the groups that the facilitators have previously chosen for "Creating a Campaign Using Escalating Tactics" (see below).

Break up the list of tactics so that each small group gets 3-4 tactics to evaluate. Depending on the number of tactics identified in the brainstorm, the facilitator(s) may want to either divide the list (if this works out numerically) or, better yet, try to give each group a set of tactics that vary in level of membership involvement, requirement of membership commitment, and effectiveness.

Each small group should be given a "Tactic Star" (see page 67) for each of the tactics they are given. Since they are – for now – evaluating tactics in the abstract (not connected to a specific campaign), they should leave the "Strategy," "Message," and "Target" areas blank, and instead focus on the "Involvement," "Commitment" and "Capacity" areas. Ask groups to write down answers on the tactic stars for each tactic.

**Report Back (15 mins)** – Each small group reports back on the tactics that they evaluated, placing the tactics on the wall in increasing order of membership commitment required (from left to right). Depending on time, facilitator might want to break into reports (especially if their evaluation of how much membership commitment something takes seems off) to ask the opinion of the whole group.

**Escalating Tactics (10 mins)** – Facilitator introduces to the group the idea that campaigns need to escalate the pressure on the target; this generally requires increasing the involvement and commitment of members to the campaign as it escalates as well. For union contract campaigns, the ultimate tactic is usually the strike which requires large membership involvement and large membership commitment. Use examples on the wall of how different tactics can build involvement, commitment and pressure on the target simultaneously. If there is time,

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open for general discussion.

### **Materials Needed:**

- Sticky notes with tactics.
- Tactic Star hand-outs
- Butcher-block sheet to map the escalating tactics from low to high.

# **Second Strategy Exercise: Creating a Campaign Using Escalating Tactics**

*90 minutes*

*Facilitator's Time: 1:20-2:50*

### **Purpose**

*This exercise is designed to help participants figure out how to fit several tactics together into an escalating*

### **Flow**

#### **Introduce exercise in large group (10 mins)**

We're now going to do an exercise that, for a real campaign, would take much longer, at least 2 hours or possibly all day. The idea here is not to come up with a perfect strategy, because we don't have the time to do that. Instead, we want to familiarize you with the steps that should be involved in a "strategy session."

Break participants into small groups. Give each group one of the included scenarios (see pages **68-70**). If possible, it's good to think through the participants and group folks by the scenario that is most relevant to their issues.

#### **Small Groups (30 mins)**

Small groups will have 30 minutes to develop the outlines of a campaign. One facilitator should keep track of time to move folks along from one point to the next (i.e., announcing "you should be moving on to your second tactic now"), and if possible, it would be good to have a facilitator in each small group to help keep them focused and moving along.

The small group's assignment is to take their given scenario, and develop an escalating campaign plan by picking 3 tactics from different places on the wall (left, center, right), and using a new tactic star for each one, fill in the strategy, target and message points for each (i.e., the right side of the tactic star).

#### **Report-backs to large group and discussion (50 mins)**

#### **Facilitator's Notes**

Have each small group report back how they have put together three tactics into an escalating strategy. Allow time for questions. At the end, facilitator should look for and lift up commonalities across the strategies developed, and especially tease out how the strategies do (or do not) draw in more members, and increase the commitment of members, as the strategy progresses. Close with some time for general, large-group discussion.

## Key Points

- To build long-term power, escalating tactics should increase in membership involvement as they increase in commitment (not just relying on increasing commitment of small group).
- Communication strategies (surveys, newsletters) are important in building membership involvement.
- Relate the escalating tactics to the concept of increasing “asks” in the Organizing Conversation discussion from Day 1

– *BREAK (10 mins)* –

# How Do Campaigns Change People’s Relationship to Power? (How to Build a Social Movement)

30 minutes

Facilitator’s Time: 3:00-3:30

## Purpose

*Participants reflect on the discussions earlier in the day about strategies and tactics, and about building an escalating campaign. What is different about solving problems (i.e. winning without organizing) or working on a collective project compared to building a social movement? What changes in relation to power?*

## Key points: Social movements...

- Are not simply spontaneous!!! (e.g. Rosa Parks was trained at Highlander)
- Are created by collective action for a common goal by massive numbers of directly affected people who hold deep conviction that the goal is both just and necessary
- Seek deep and sustained social, economic or ecological transformation and refuse to accept the dominant and oppressive order of society (Bold goals – making possible tomorrow what seems impossible today)
- Share a clearly identifiable (even by “outsiders” of the society at large) common purpose, goal and ideology (though tactical, strategic and ideological tensions are always present);

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- Create clearly organized campaigns, programs and organizations
- Reach a level of momentum that is both organized but also begins to snowball into a powerful force that can reshape society
- Rely primarily on resources come from the community
- Recognize the role of culture and transforming people’s worldview or “common sense”
- The Healthcare Is a Human Right Campaign was designed as a broad, open-ended campaign to engage people around moral values (as opposed to a campaign for a particular policy like single-payer legislation) because it allows us to engage around broader questions of health (such as lead poisoning in housing, health & safety at work, etc.), human rights (such as healthcare for undocumented migrant workers), and ideology (public goods vs. commodification).

## Homework & Evaluation

30 minutes

Facilitator’s Time: 3:30-4:00

1. Explain that the homework assignment for Day 3 is to research a social movement. There are two parts to this assignment: First, to come up with a definition of “social movement.” Second, to research and think about one social movement, either by reading something short or by talking to someone (a family or community member or co-worker) who participated in one. If folks don’t think they can come up with one, there are some short readings attached which can be distributed (separate document).
2. Encourage people to watch the CIW video (10 mins) <http://www.pbs.org/now/youramerica/meet.html>
3. Give everyone two pieces of paper and ask them to take a minute to write down their thoughts about the day, on one sheet, and any questions or concerns they have about the third day on the other sheet. They do not need to put their names on either sheet, though if they want individual answers to their questions/concerns they can put their name and preferred method of contact down (10 mins).
4. On butcher-block paper, do a plus/delta (positive things/things to change) evaluation, going around the room to make sure to get everyone’s feedback. After that, open up for larger discussion if time (20 mins).

### Facilitator’s Notes

# Solidarity School Day 3: Movement Building Check-in and Review

10 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 9:30-9:40

- **Invocation:** Take a minutes to ground ourselves in our connection to the earth and to other workers, to the indigenous land that we are on, to all the workers who made it possible for us to be here today.
- **(Re-)introductions:** Go around and check in how everyone is doing today. If there is anyone new today, also briefly explain why we ask for preferred gender pronoun and ask everyone to introduce themselves (name & preferred gender pronoun) while checking in.
- **Re-affirmation of Agreements:** Review agreements (p. 6) and re-affirm everyone's commitment.
- **Agenda Review:** Pass out and go over Participants' Agenda for Day 3 (page 48).
- **POWER Quote:** Ask for three volunteers to read aloud the quote from POWER (page 71), one per paragraph; explain that the reason we are going to get into some deeper theoretical understandings today is because VWC believes that, in order to effectively work for change, we need to develop as working-class intellectuals, and reinforce the importance of using the WHOA:

*As developing working-class intellectuals, we are going to have to grapple with some big and often difficult concepts today. PLEASE, if anyone uses a term that you are not familiar or comfortable with, raise your hand, interrupt the facilitators, do whatever you need to.*

## Tree of Oppression/Tree of Liberation

20 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 9:40-10:00

### Purpose

*The purpose of the Tree of Oppression/Tree of Liberation exercise is to get folks thinking about the root causes of the problems they experience and see in their workplaces and communities, and to introduce the concept of doing "root work" to transform the underlying systems.*

### Flow

This is a large-group discussion. Begin with a tree drawn on butcher paper.

1. Ask people to identify some of the issues they deal with in their workplace or community, and write these on the leaves. If folks offer what are really "root" causes (such as "racism"), push them for specific manifestations.
2. Then ask the group to identify what are some of the root causes of these problems. Facilitator should push folks to who offer up vague things like "greed" or "prejudice" to get to words that are more

### Facilitator's Notes

descriptive of systems ( “corporate domination” or “capitalism,” “institutional racism” or “white supremacy”). Write these on the roots of the tree.

3. *We call this the Tree of Oppression.* Introduce the concept of “root work” – that while work to prune the leaves is important to people’s day to day lives, we can’t uproot the tree of oppression without also doing work that gets at the roots of the problem.
4. If time permits, have people do five minutes in pairs thinking about the Tree of Liberation – what are the leaves (things we want to see in society) and the roots (the underlying systems that make that possible), followed by popcorn-style report-backs on leaves and roots and short time for discussion. If running short on time, give folks a minute to think silently about it, then pull responses from the large group, perhaps going around to ensure equal participation, following with short time for discussion.

## Key Points

- *The point of this exercise is not necessarily to pull out the specific root systems we’ll be addressing in the next section (capitalism, white supremacy, patriarchy), though if they come up that is great.*
- To use the Healthcare Is a Human Right Campaign as an example – the leaves are the un- and underinsured, and we can prune the leaves with free clinics. The roots are not only the current system, but (deeper) corporate power in government and (even deeper) the commodification of health.
- The Tree of Liberation is an open visioning process and can be facilitated with a pretty light hand, but do make sure that it addresses gender, racial and class liberation.
- Make sure everyone gets a chance to contribute to the Tree of Liberation.
- Coming up with the “roots” for the Tree of Liberation is really difficult; this is because we do not have a common language (and especially because we do not have a common understanding of capitalism). This is a weakness in our movement, and will require a lot of dialogue and discussion to develop. If we were industrial workers 100 years ago in Europe, for example, we would label the roots of the Tree of Liberation “socialism,” if we were peasants in China in the 1940s we would say “communism,” etc. Movements in Latin America are beginning to use the term “21st Century Socialism.” While Murray Bookchin uses the word “Communalism.”

### Facilitator’s Notes



# Exploitation Game & Timeline

90 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 10:00-11:30

## Purpose

The “Exploitation Game” is a skit-and-discussion exercise designed to introduce the concept that patriarchy, capitalism, and white supremacy are historical developments – they were **made** and therefore can be **unmade** – and also to give a background of how the economic pyramid developed.

The “Timeline” (see pg. **XX**) covers four centuries of history. The exercise is based on **Project South**'s methodology of timelines. Because the VWC's base consists primarily of white working-class people, whose families immigrated from European countries in the 17th-19th centuries, this timeline primarily focuses on the economic and political developments in Europe and North America. See also “Timeline Events Chart” and “Timeline Events – Historical Reference” (see pg. **XX**).

## Flow

Facilitator might want to reference the “Systems of Oppression” Chart & key points on page **72** while doing this.

\*\* Remember to ask if anyone's family settled in this area or immigrated to America during these different time periods and to note the political and economic history of the timeline while sticking up their post-it note. The social movement history is for the end during the discussion. \*\*

**1. Introduction:** In order to do “root work,” we are going to have to investigate some of the systems that underlie the Tree of Oppression. For the purpose of this school, we are going to discuss three particular systems of oppression: **Patriarchy, Capitalism and White Supremacy**. We have found that an understanding of these systems is crucial to be able to do our work the way we do.

Ask for two volunteers from among the participants. One volunteer is the “Exploiter” and one volunteer is the “Exploited.” Start with a backdrop for a hunter-gatherer society (e.g., trees, plains, with removable food items such as game, nuts, berries). Explain that we're going to try to go through 10,000 years of history in 60 minutes, so there will be spaces for structured discussion but there will also be places where we will ask for just a few responses and then have to move on.

We're going to do a little game, where Person A tries to **exploit** Person B. Does anyone want to offer a **definition of exploitation**? Try to quickly get folks to something approximating the definition on the handout (see page **XX**) – i.e., an ongoing relationship where the exploiter appropriates the benefits of the exploited's labor.

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**2. Hunter-Gatherer:** *For the first part of our game, we are in a hunter-gatherer society, say, 15 thousand years ago. How can Person A exploit Person B? What are Person B's strategies for resisting exploitation? Give each volunteer a few food items, leaving most on the backdrop. First ask the volunteers playing exploiter and exploited, then get thoughts from the rest of the group.*

Help folks come to the realization that **exploitation is very difficult when everyone has equal access to the necessities of life and freedom of movement**. While not free of conflict and injustice, **primitive societies were relatively egalitarian** (“Primitive Communism”). Exploitation only really happens within families (**Patriarchy**), where men dominate women and appropriate the benefits of their labor (cooking, child-rearing, etc.).

Ask participants if any of their family was in America during the hunter-gather period [i.e. native Americans].

**3. Agricultural Class Societies:** *Now, let's invent agriculture. Person B is now raising crops and keeping animals to feed herself and her family. How does Person A exploit Person B now? Change to the “agricultural” backdrop, with crops and domesticated animals. Person B should stand among the fields, etc. Repeat the previous exercise; key points to lift up here are:*

- a) Agriculture ties people to the land, making them more vulnerable to exploitation by force.
- b) Exploitation in feudal/tributary states is done primarily through force or the threat of force.
- c) With invention of agriculture, patriarchy is strengthened because the sexual division of labor is simultaneously reinforced due to increasing complexity of work (beyond hunting and gathering) and in greater need of justification (since physical differences between men and women are not hugely relevant for most agricultural work).
- d) Among ruling class, ownership of land strengthens patriarchy through increased need to control women's sexuality (men need to be certain of paternity for inheritance).

*We now have a “class society” in which Person A is living completely off the labor of Person B, by extracting “surplus” – i.e., some of the product made by Person B – through the threat of force. But, Person B is fundamentally still feeding, clothing and housing herself and her family. But what happens if Person A takes direct control of the land, and kicks Person B off of it?*

Ask if anyone's family was in America during this time period [i.e. still just Native Americans, no white immigrants at this time]

**4. Development of Capitalism:** Ask for another pair of volunteers. Let the new person Person A stand in front of the fenced-in fields, etc. Ask participants questions about how Person A will get work done on his land, and how Person B will feed, clothe and house herself and her family. Points to lift up here:

- a) In Europe, this happened through “enclosure” of common lands, which was brutal.
- b) European colonialism in the Americas was an even more brutal seizure of people's land, but since the Indigenous folks could not be compelled to work the land, and not enough Europeans could be induced

#### Facilitator's Notes

or forced to come work the land, this led to the development of chattel slavery – permanent, lifelong ownership of people considered to be of an inferior “race.” Both of these developments were justified by the development of *white supremacy*.

- c) Food, clothing, land, etc. are transformed into commodities in order to exchange them on the market.
- d) Labor is also a commodity – wage workers have to sell their “labor power” in the “labor market,” while chattel slavery makes commodities of some workers’ very persons.
- e) Since workers are commodities, capitalism needs them to be standardized and interchangeable – and those workers who are not fully “able-bodied” become “disabled.”

*Person A is now functioning as a capitalist – he or she owns the means of production (the land) and is employing workers (Person B). Since Person A is now producing for the market, they don’t have to provide for a variety of needs (food, clothing, etc.) so they can concentrate on raising just one crop, because that’s more efficient.*

Ask if anyone's family settled in this area or immigrated to America during this time periods and to reference the political and economic history of the timeline, saving the social movement history for the end during the discussion. [i.e. colonialism, 1600-1700 hundreds]

**5. Industrial Capitalism:** Put up the “Factory” backdrop next to the agricultural backdrop and ask for a third volunteer (Person C) to come up to be the factory owner – buying cotton from the cotton farmer (Person A) and making clothes to sell to the worker (Person B). Questions to ask/points to lift up:

- a) Would this have been possible before land became private property? Where would Person C have gotten workers, and who would they have sold their goods to?
- b) Under capitalism, exploitation happens through formally free exchanges between capitalists and workers – the market serves to obscure the fundamentally exploitative relationships between people
- c) Antagonism is built into the very structure of capitalism, in struggle between capital and labor, competition between workers, and competition between capitalists
- d) Competition between workers is intentionally heightened by both white supremacy (dividing workers and providing crumbs of white privilege) and patriarchy (dividing men’s and women’s work) – which enrich the capitalists
- e) How does this development affect Person A’s view of the land? In classical economics, which develops along with capitalism, land is seen as an infinitely exploitable resource, rather than something we have a relationship to.
- f) Capitalists do not pay the full costs of production – much of the labor necessary to provide workers (social reproduction like child-rearing, cooking, caring work etc.) is done unpaid by women in the home.
- g) Competition between capitalists makes capitalism dynamic, but uncontrollable. Once one capitalist discovers or invents a way to make more profit (new inventions, more efficient exploitation of labor, etc.), their competitors have to adopt similar measures or go out of business. This leads to both economic crises and environmental crises (eventually, climate change threatening the whole planet)

*So now we have capitalist agriculture, and capitalist industry, which becomes dominant in the advanced*

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*capitalist countries around the 19<sup>th</sup> century (slavery is not very efficient for industrial capitalism, and is abolished around this time). All of the basic necessities of life are commodified. As industrial production becomes more complex, and technological innovation speeds up, the saved profits of individual enterprises are no longer enough to pay for needed investments. Set up the “Bank” backdrop next to the Agriculture and Factory backdrops, and ask a fourth volunteer (Person D) to come up to be the banker. Points to lift up here:*

- a) Originally a means for industrial capitalists to finance industrial expansion, finance becomes dominant part of capital by early 20<sup>th</sup> century
- b) The existence of finance capital allows much greater dynamism – and instability.
- c) Note that we’re using the “bank” to stand in here for a wide variety of financial institutions, including investment firms, private equity holding companies, etc.

Ask if anyone's family settled in this area or immigrated to America during this time periods and to reference the political and economic history of the timeline, saving the social movement history for the end during the discussion. [i.e. 1800s-early 1900s]

**6. Finance Capitalism:** *In the 20<sup>th</sup> century, we transition from industrial capitalism to finance capitalism, where finance capital is dominant over industrial and agricultural capital.*

*We’ve just gone through a lot of history to trace the development of patriarchy, capitalism and white supremacy. Of course, during all of this history there has always been resistance from the exploited – slave revolts, bread riots, the development of trade unions, popular struggles for government policies that limit exploitation, and in some cases revolution. We’ll explore that in the next section.*

For the last five minutes, pass out the “Systems of Oppression” and “Capitalism Key Terms” handouts (see pages **73 and 74**) and go over briefly, relating each term back to the history.

Ask if anyone's family settled in this area or immigrated to America during this time periods and to reference the political and economic history of the timeline, saving the social movement history for the end during the discussion. [i.e. late 1900s-present]

## Key Points

- Immigration is rarely completely voluntary, frequently pushed by economic difficulties, violence and repression, and/or forced servitude.
- Working people engage in both individual/family strategies (survival) and collective strategies (resistance) – how do we move from one to the other? (will be addressed in afternoon).
- Specific historic examples of enclosure: Enclosure in England, NAFTA Article 27 in Mexico, often using violence (capital punishment in England, civil wars in Central America, Iraq)
- Subjugation of whole peoples (imperialism): Ireland, India, etc. -> leads to more immigration.
- White supremacy and patriarchy have been integral to this process, and have been consciously

### Facilitator’s Notes

- developed by the boss, especially in reaction to united resistance (Bacon's Rebellion)
- Globalization/privatization is an ongoing process - goes far back in history - but interrupted by great upheavals (WWI/WWII period, "Age of Revolution" in 1770s-1820s) , which saw a combination of economic dislocation and powerful social movements.

– *BREAK (10 mins)* –

## Survival Strategies

40 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 11:40-12:20

### Purpose/Introduction

*Adapted from Paul Kivel's book "You Call This a Democracy."*

Throughout history, families and communities have found strategies for survival in these systems of oppression. Given today's political and economic system, we each continue to find strategies to survive, but not all strategies lead to the same results. Some strategies may help us survive in the short-term, but can be destructive to us or those around us in the long-term.

### Flow

**Getting Ahead** – We all start out as children doing what our parents and teachers tell us to do. We want to work hard, stay in school, and succeed. We want to get ahead.

**Getting By** – Many of us give up trying to get ahead and just try to get by. We adopt an attitude of “so what, just tell me what to do and I'll do the minimum.” We wait for the weekend, vacations, the end of class, or retirement.

**Getting Over** – Some of us are still committed to getting ahead but don't have the resources or opportunity to do it by legitimate means, so we turn to illegitimate ones. We lie, cheat, or turn to illegal activities to get over the system without getting caught.

**Getting Around** – Some of us don't try to confront the obstacles, but try to get around them through manipulation, seduction, or playing the system with whatever skills, connections, or resources we can muster for ourselves.

**Getting Out** – Some of us get discouraged by the inequality and moral bankruptcy of the current system that we just want to get out. We drop out of our families, out of school or community life. We turn to alcohol or

### Facilitator's Notes

other drugs, computer games or other mindless activity. We drop out emotionally.

**Getting Back** – Some of us are angry at those we perceive to be in the way of our getting ahead. We pick up a gun or weapon and try to get back at those in our way.

or

**Getting Together** – The only strategy which really helps us, our family, and our communities move forward is getting together with others to work for change. This is how people have always made gains – through organized struggles such as the abolition movement, the movement for women's suffrage, unions, the civil rights movement, disability rights movement, GLBTQ movements, and thousands of others. On a smaller scale, people have been getting together in workplaces, schools, neighborhoods, religious communities, and many other arenas to gain access to housing, jobs, education, or to eliminate exploitation, discrimination, and environmental destruction. Getting together is the only strategy which helps us both get ahead and helps change the structures of inequality, exploitation, and discrimination. We have a long history of people getting together.

See full chart on page XX. (10 mins)

**Discussion on survival and resistance:** Have participants pair up and place sticky notes on the social movement timeline for the question: *What is one way that someone in your family 'Got Together' to make a better life for their family, workplace, or community?* (15 mins. to interview; 15 mins. for report back and discussion)

## Key Points

- Insert them.

– *LUNCH (30 mins) & ENERGIZER (10 mins)* –

### Facilitator's Notes

# Hearts

15 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 1:00-1:15

## Purpose

*Since the exercises which follow are focused on privilege, and can be emotionally challenging, the purpose of this exercise is to ground our exploration of privilege in a sense of common humanity and how we're all wounded by systems of oppression.*

## Flow

1. Introduce the overall section: *Now we are going to start moving into how we move from individual survival to collective resistance. We looked at some of the nuts-and-bolts skills and strategies in the first two days. To build the kind of movement we need is going to require that we connect with people who are different from us, so we are going to spend a little time investigating some of the difficulties that presents.*
2. Draw a heart on a piece of butcher paper. *This is the heart of a newborn. What are some of the qualities of a newborn?* Get some responses, especially looking for trusting, loving, etc., and write these inside the heart.
3. Now ask: *What are some of the messages that this child will get as she grows up? What messages will working-class and poor children get? What messages will children of color get? What messages will children get who develop sexual identities outside of "normal" heterosexuality?* Write the responses **over** the heart, covering the newborn qualities (or, if easier, just make a line across the heart for each message – keeping track of the messages themselves is not so important).
4. Ask what happens to a person's heart as we hear all these messages – we develop defenses. Draw a box or fence around the heart. Then draw a second heart, with black lines across it and a fence around it. Explain: *Now when I want to talk to you, I can't talk "heart to heart" because my communication comes out through my defenses – I'm afraid to say certain things – and then you interpret them through your defenses. Sometimes people peek out from their defenses, to see if it is safe to lower them. These are the moments we have to learn to look for in organizing, but we also have to have the skills not to shut people down by unintentionally reinforcing the messages that caused them to build defenses in the first place.*

## Key Points

- If folks bring up neediness or "selfishness" as qualities of the newborn, facilitator should quickly turn this into a discussion of how our needs for each other are what make us able to be social, love, etc.

### Facilitator's Notes

# Benefits of Being Male

5 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 1:15-1:20

## Purpose/Introduction

*From Paul Kivel: AS A PERSON WHO IDENTIFIES AS "MALE," was socialized as a male, and is assumed by others to be male, I don't often realize the benefits or privileges I enjoy that women, transgender, and transsexual people don't share with me. These benefits are economic, social, political, cultural, and physical. This exercise helps men understand how sexism works in our favor on many different levels.*

## Flow

1. Before beginning this exercise, explain that we are going to do three short exercises that involve responding in some way to a series of statements, then we'll have time for discussion after completing all three. Introduce this exercise with the Paul Kivel text above, or something similar.
2. Tell the group that you are going to read a series of statements and that each male to whom a statement applies should stand up after that statement is read. (see Male Privilege statements on page 75)
3. Tell the group that all the males are being asked to participate, and others are being asked to observe.
4. Those who are physically unable to stand may raise their hand to indicate that they are part of the group standing.
5. Each participant should decide for himself whether the statement applies to him or not.
6. If they are unwilling to stand for a particular statement that applies to them, they may pass for that statement, but should notice any feelings they have about not standing.
7. The exercise should be done in silence to help participants notice feelings that come up during the exercise and to make it safer for all participants.
8. After a statement is read and people have stood for a few moments, ask participants to sit down and read the next statement.

## Facilitator's Notes



# Benefits of Being White

10 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 1:20-1:30

## Purpose/Introduction

*From Paul Kivel: I FIND IT A CONSTANT EFFORT TO NOTICE that people of color don't share many of the economic and other benefits I enjoy from being white. This exercise helps white people understand how racism works in our favor, and on many different levels. The exercise is for all white participants, or for mixed groups in which the white people participate and the people of color observe. Since white privilege—the specific kinds of economic, social, and political advantages that white people gain at the expense of people of color—is generally invisible, this exercise helps those of us who are white see and acknowledge just how extensive and pervasive those benefits are.*

## Flow

The flow is similar to “Benefits of Being Male,” above, but with white people participating and people of color being asked to observe. See White Privilege statements on page 76.

# “Getting Ahead”: How Privilege Shapes Opportunity

10 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 1:30-1:40

## Purpose

*This exercise is to demonstrate the concrete advantages that white privilege, male privilege and class privilege confers.*

## Flow

Assemble everyone in the group along one side of the room. If there are folks with ability issues that would prevent them from moving forward as steps are taken, ask if they are comfortable having a facilitator move a marker for them. (someone in a wheelchair ought to be able to roll themselves forward, but folks who can't stand or walk without a cane, etc., may have some difficulty).

Explain that you are going to, once again, read a series of statements. If the statement applies to you, take one step forward.

Read the statements (see Getting Ahead Statements, page 77).

## Facilitator's Notes

Once you've gone through all the statements, facilitator should let folks know that next we'll have some time for discussion and reflection, but first make the general point that in a society shaped by white supremacy, patriarchy and capitalism, no one "starts on an even playing field," that the even playing field is a myth designed to make us blame the victims of oppression and distract us from doing "root work."

## Privilege Discussion

25 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 1:40-2:05

### Flow

**1. Pairs or Contemplation (5-10 mins).** Ask folks to get in pairs to discuss the feelings and thoughts that came up for them participating in (and watching) the exercises. White men should pair with white men, white women with white women; people of color and transgender folks should be given the option of finding someone they feel comfortable discussing with in a pair (preferred) or contemplating their thoughts alone if they wish.

**2. Large Group Discussion (10-15 mins).** Reassemble the group and facilitate an open discussion of the feelings, thoughts, reflections, and insights that people want to share about the previous two exercises.

### Key Points

- The purpose of this exercise is not to discount what white people or men have achieved but to question prevalent assumptions that everyone started out with equal opportunity or that white and male achievement occurs on a level playing field.
- Although some of the benefits listed above are money in the bank for each and every white person or man; some white people and men have bigger bank accounts—much bigger—than the rest. Refer back to the Economic Pyramid from Day 1 – according to 2007 figures, 1 percent of the population controls about 42 percent of the net financial wealth of this country. In 2008, women generally made about 77 cents for every dollar that men made. People with disabilities, people with less formal education, and people who are lesbian, gay or bisexual face substantial discrimination.
- Benefits from racism and sexism are amplified or diminished by our relative privilege. All white people benefit in some ways from whiteness, but some have cornered the market on significant benefits from being white to the exclusion of the rest. Similarly, all men benefit in some ways from male privilege, but some have vastly more power than others.
- Individual white people are not responsible for the circumstances under which they stood for particular questions in the exercise. They were born into and inherited a system that exploits people of color and provides benefits to white people whether they want them or not. Individual white people are not responsible for racism—but they are responsible for how they respond to it.

### Facilitator's Notes

- Similarly, individual men are not responsible for the circumstances under which they stood; they were born into a system of patriarchy that provides benefits to men whether they want them or not. Individual men are not responsible for the existence of sexism—but they are responsible for how they respond to it.
- How we respond to these systems has a huge impact on our ability to organize to improve our workplaces and communities, and especially our capacity to build the kind of movements that we need to order to do "root work."

– *BREAK (10 mins)* –

## Anatomy of a Movement

75 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 2:15-3:30

### Purpose

*This exercise is designed to help people think about what makes a social movement and how it is different from and bigger than a campaign.*

**1. Mingle (15 mins).** First, check for mobility issues, since this exercise involves people moving around. If there are folks who can't move around easily, have folks assemble in a circle and have two conversations, one with the person to the left and the other with the person to the right. In this case, do a quick energizer such as zip-zap-zoom before the exercise.

Give everyone a sticky note and ask them to take a few minutes to write down the social movement they studied for their homework (see p. xx), and one thing that they find inspiring about it.

Once everyone is ready, explain that the facilitator will start playing some music – while the music is playing, folks should move around, and when the music stops, find someone near them and share, briefly, the movement they identified. Do this for several short discussions (or just have folks do two conversations if there are mobility issues as above).

**2. Report on movements from the mingle (10 mins).** Ask each person to come up and put their movement on the wall, telling the whole group what the movement is. See if anyone wants to share any thoughts about the exercise.

**3. Small Group or Paired Discussion (20 mins).** Break participants into small groups and ask each small group to pick one movement from the wall, and discuss, from what they know about this movement, the following questions: *What were the movement's goals? What strategies did they use? Where did their*

### Facilitator's Notes

*resources come from? What was the role of culture in the movement? What are the similarities between this story and your own organizing experience? What are the differences?*

**4. Report-backs (10 mins).** Have small groups report back.

**5. Large Group Discussion (15 mins).**

1. What distinguishes a campaign or organizing work from a social movement? (A campaign can lead to a social movement and many campaigns can form a movement but a movement is more than a campaign ... How?)
2. What makes the examples we discussed more than campaigns?
3. Does anyone here feel they've been a part (or are a part of) a social movement? What does it feel like? What does it look like?

**6. The Road Ahead & Commitments (5 mins).**

Briefly go over key movement-building opportunities in the coming year (social forums, regional gatherings, cross-sectoral gatherings, major demonstrations, etc.). Then give everyone a minute or two of silence to think of a commitment they will make in the coming year to do something to build the movement. Then have everyone go around the room and say their commitment out loud.

**Key points: Social movements...**

- are not simply spontaneous!!! (e.g. Rosa Parks was trained at Highlander)
- are created by collective action for a common goal by massive numbers of directly affected people who hold deep conviction that the goal is both just and necessary
- seek deep and sustained social, economic or ecological transformation and refuse to accept the dominant and oppressive order of society (Bold goals – making possible tomorrow what seems impossible today)
- share a clearly identifiable (even by “outsiders” of the society at large) common purpose, goal and ideology (though tactical, strategic and ideological tensions are always present);
- create clearly organized campaigns, programs and organizations
- reach a level of momentum that is both organized but also begins to snowball into a powerful force that can reshape society
- rely primarily on resources come from the community
- recognize the role of culture and transforming people’s worldview or “common sense”
- The Healthcare Is a Human Right Campaign was designed as a broad, open-ended campaign to engage people around moral values (as opposed to a campaign for a particular policy like single-payer legislation) because it allows us to engage around broader questions of health (such as lead poisoning in housing, health & safety at work, etc.), human rights (such as healthcare for undocumented migrant workers), and ideology (public goods vs. commodification).

**Facilitator’s Notes**

# Evaluation and Appreciations

30 minutes

Facilitator's Time: 3:30-4:00

1. Give everyone a piece of paper and ask them to take a minute to write down their thoughts about the day, and about the school as a whole. They do not need to put their name on the sheet (5 mins).
2. On butcher-block paper, do a plus/delta (positive things/things to change) evaluation, going around the room to make sure to get everyone's feedback (10 mins).
3. Have everyone (including facilitators) write down their name on a sheet of paper and put all the pieces of paper in a bag; then have everyone draw a name at random. Make sure no one got themselves. Have everyone write down something they appreciate about the person whose name they drew on the paper. Ask for a volunteer to start by sharing with the group their appreciation and giving it to the person; then that person does the same with their appreciation, etc.
4. Thank everyone for participating and let them know about upcoming ways to get more involved in VWC (5 mins).

**Facilitator's Notes**

# Vermont Workers' Center

## Our Mission

The Vermont Workers' Center is a democratic, member-run organization dedicated to organizing for workers' rights and living wages for all Vermonters.

We seek an economically just and democratic Vermont in which all residents have living wages, decent health care, childcare, housing and transportation.

We work to build a democratic, diverse movement of working and low-income Vermonters that is locally focused and coordinated on a statewide basis. We work with organized labor in moving towards economic justice and in strengthening the right to organize. We are committed to taking action on the full range of issues of concern to working people, and to building alliances nationally and internationally.

## Our Strategic Orientation

We believe that the most effective means of change is people engaging in collective struggle to place direct demands upon those who hold power.

# Solidarity School

## Participants' Agenda - Overview

### Day One: Organizing 101

Day One is an introduction to the basics of organizing, of getting your neighbors and co-workers involved in organizing for change. Topics include:

- What is organizing, how is it different from providing services?
- Basics of one-to-one organizing
- Issue assessment
- Organizing across differences
- Mapping communities and workplaces

### Day Two: Campaigns, Strategies and Tactics

Day Two is about how we use campaigns, strategies and tactics to win concrete gains and build power. Topics include:

- What is a tactic, what is a strategy, and how they fit into campaigns
- Messaging for the media and for our organizing
- Evaluating tactics
- Building a campaign with escalating tactics
- How do campaigns build power?

### Day Three: Movement Building

Day Three is about understanding the systems of oppression that affect our work and building movements for long-term, transformative change. Topics include:

- Systems of oppression
- People's history
- Globalization and migration
- Movement building

**Facilitator's Notes**

# **Solidarity School Participants' Agenda – Day One Organizing 101**

Welcome & Introductions, Agenda Review and Agreements

First Interview and Longer Introductions

What is Organizing & Where Does Power Come From?

More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart and Economic Pyramid

– BREAK –

“Anatomy of an Organizing Conversation” Part I

Identifying and Assessing Issues

– LUNCH –

“Anatomy of an Organizing Conversation” Part II-V

“Waterloo” Exercise: The Effects of Division

– BREAK –

Solidarity in Waterloo

Homework Assignment

Evaluation



# **Solidarity School**

## **Participants' Agenda – Day Two**

### **Campaigns, Strategies and Tactics**

Check-in and Agenda Review

Review of Homework Assignment

Introduction to Campaign Goals, Strategies and Tactics

– BREAK –

Battle of the Story

– LUNCH –

Brainstorm and Evaluation of Tactics

Creating a Campaign Using Escalating Tactics

– BREAK –

Case Study: Coalition of Immokalee Workers

Homework Assignment

Evaluation

# **Solidarity School Participants' Agenda – Day Three Movement Building**

Check-in and Agenda Review

Tree of Oppression/Tree of Liberation

“Exploitation Game”: Historical Development of Patriarchy, Capitalism and White Supremacy

– BREAK –

Timeline: Globalization and Migration

– LUNCH –

Hearts

Privilege Exercises and Discussion

– BREAK –

Anatomy of a Movement

Evaluation

# What Is Organizing?

Adapted from the Restaurant Opportunities Center-New York (ROC-NY) training manual.

## Day 1: Service Organization

I went to the door of a place that said “Soup Kitchen.” Inside, there were people waiting in line for food. Many of them were part of families. I got into line and waited my turn. When I got to the front of the line, I picked up a plate and held it out, and the woman behind the counter food put onto it. After getting my food, I sat down at one of the long tables with other people and ate. After eating, everybody left. Some people go back every day, but they only serve dinner there.

# What Is Organizing?

Adapted from the Restaurant Opportunities Center-New York (ROC-NY) training manual.

## Day 2: Advocacy Organization

The next day, I went to an organization where the people are supposed to help you get things you need, like food and housing. When I entered the office, a woman told me to have a seat and wait for an advocate to see me. After about 15 minutes, another woman came out and took me over to her desk. She asked me why I was there. I told her that I was hungry and needed food. She asked me questions like did I have kids, where I live, and was I on public assistance. She said that I was eligible for food stamps and did not have to be on welfare to get them. I told her I had already tried to get food stamps, but was turned down. Then she made a phone call. She talked to someone about me for a few minutes and told them I was eligible for food stamps. When she hung up, she said she'd made an appointment at the food stamps office. We went to the office together, she talked to the woman she knew, and I got some food stamps and went to buy food.

# What Is Organizing?

Adapted from the Restaurant Opportunities Center-New York (ROC-NY) training manual.

## Day 3: Community & Economic Development

I went to a house with a big garden in the back. People were working in the garden, weeding and harvesting vegetables. I went up to a man filling a bucket with water. I told him I was hungry and asked him if he had any food he could give me. He said that this was a community garden, which meant people join in by paying a fee and working a certain number of hours in the garden. Everyone who worked in the garden shared the food and taught each other growing skills. Sometimes they gave surplus veggies to the local soup kitchen. He said that even though he wasn't supposed to, he would let me have a little food. He also said I could do a work trade in the garden in exchange for the food. I took the food and told him I would come back later to work.

# What Is Organizing?

Adapted from the Restaurant Opportunities Center-New York (ROC-NY) training manual.

## Day 4: Electoral Organization

While I was in the soup kitchen the other day watching TV, I saw this guy being interviewed and he was talking about how people really need decent jobs to support themselves and their families. I remembered I had seen his picture on the window of a storefront down the street, so I went there.

There were people running in and out of the office with signs and buttons and clipboards. I went to a person at one of the desks and told him I was hungry and needed a job. He told me that if the guy I had seen on TV got elected mayor of the city, there would be more jobs.

He asked me if I was registered to vote. I told him I had never voted in my life. He signed me up to vote, so I could help vote the new guy in as mayor. He said things would be better for people like me if the new guy became mayor. Before I left, he gave me some donuts and coffee.

# What Is Organizing?

Adapted from the Restaurant Opportunities Center-New York (ROC-NY) training manual.

## Day 5: Community Organization

On another day, I wandered into a little place that had a sign saying “community organization.” A woman at one of the desks asked me what I needed. I told her I was hungry and needed food. She said they didn’t have food there, but I could wait there until the soup kitchen opens at four o’clock. I sat down, and we started talking. She asked me all sorts of questions: Did I have any kids? How long have I gone without food? What did I think caused my not having food for so long? Where was I from? How long had I lived in the neighborhood? Did I know other people who were in the same boat? Was I on public assistance? How did I feel about being hungry so much of the time, and whose fault did I think it was that I was hungry?

She said this was a community organization and people who agree with its mission can become members. Most of the members are poor like me. They got together so they can make changes to make things better for everyone. For example, they went to the gas company to keep it from turning off poor people’s heat in the winter. She asked me if I wanted to join the organization. I told her I would have to think about it. She said if I was interested, I could come to a meeting the next evening. She would be going and could pick me up, so I said OK.

# What Is Organizing?

Adapted from the Restaurant Opportunities Center-New York (ROC-NY) training manual.

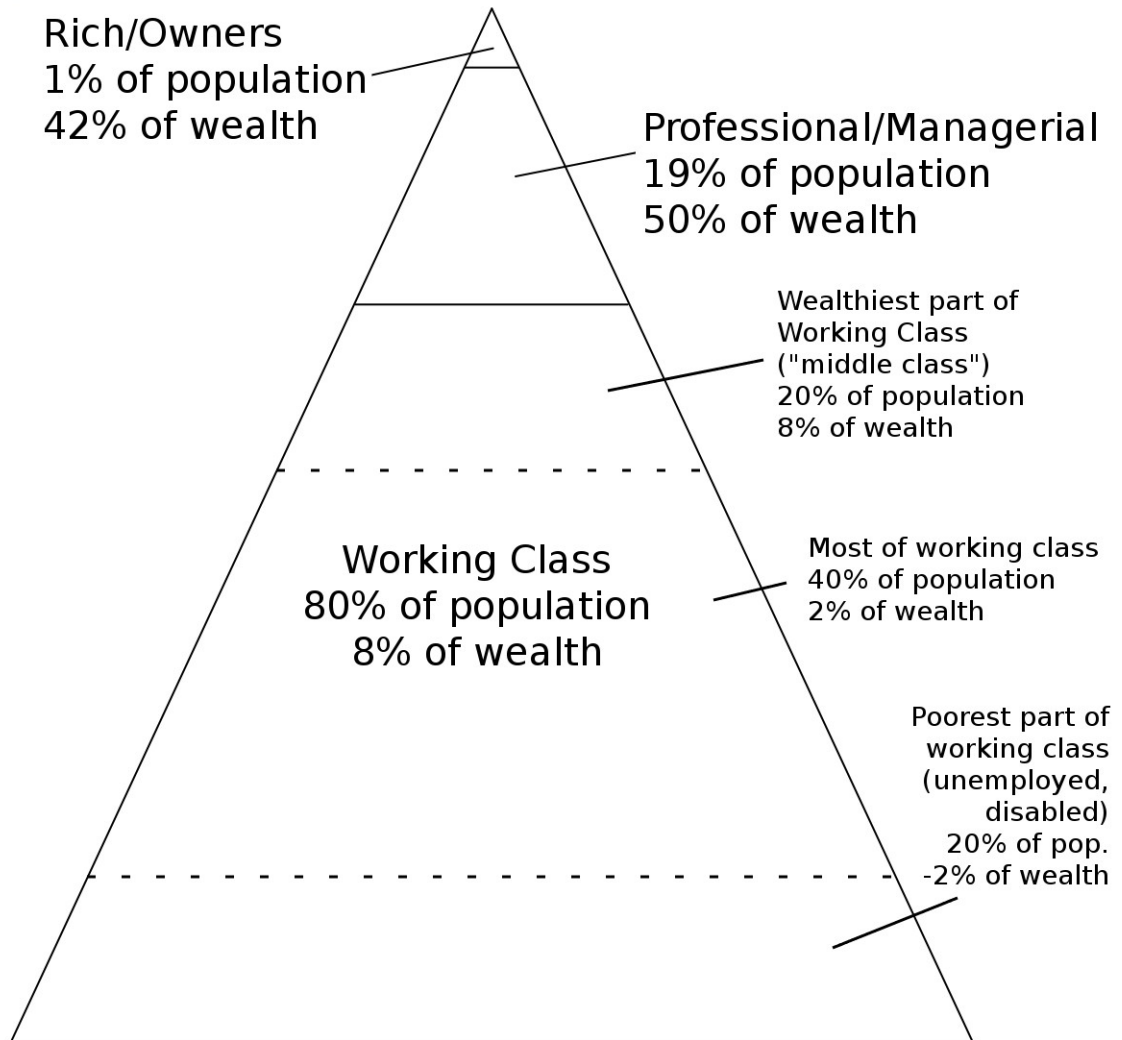
	<b>SERVICE</b> (soup kitchens and food banks)	<b>ADVOCACY</b> (legal services)	<b>COMMUNITY &amp; ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT</b> (community projects, clubs, co-ops)	<b>ELECTORAL</b> (Dems, Progs, Republicans, etc.)	<b>COMMUNITY ORGANIZING</b>
<b>What does the hungry person get?</b>	Food Company Shelter	Food stamps, knowledge of where to get food stamps	Food (maybe) Company (maybe) Membership	Donuts & coffee Registered to vote	Membership Organization Questions
<b>What is the root cause?</b> (from organization's perspective)	There is "not enough" to meet a person's basic needs.	Welfare system fails to catch people who fall through the cracks	Not enough social capital (i.e. community engagement) or needs the skills to take care of self	The wrong people have been elected to office	Economic and political system – institutions and corporations exercising power over people
<b>Organization's relationship to hungry person</b>	Provider → Recipient/Client	Representative or Provider → Client	Club → Member, Teacher → Student,	Candidate → Organization → Voter	Organization → Member
<b>Does the organization change the relationship between the hungry person and oppression?</b>	No	Yes, for the one individual	Not really. If hungry person can join club, they become potential player in community or economy; unclear amount of power.	No. Changes who represents hungry person, but does not affect balance of power	Yes – engages large numbers of people who are in similar situations to fight and overcome common oppression.
<b>Whose power is threatened by this organization's efforts?</b>	Very few people or institutions	Welfare administrators, people who want to abolish welfare programs (right- wing politicians)	None. No direct relationship to power	Other political parties	Politicians, welfare administrators, corporations, some service and advocacy agencies



## More Powerful/Less Powerful Chart

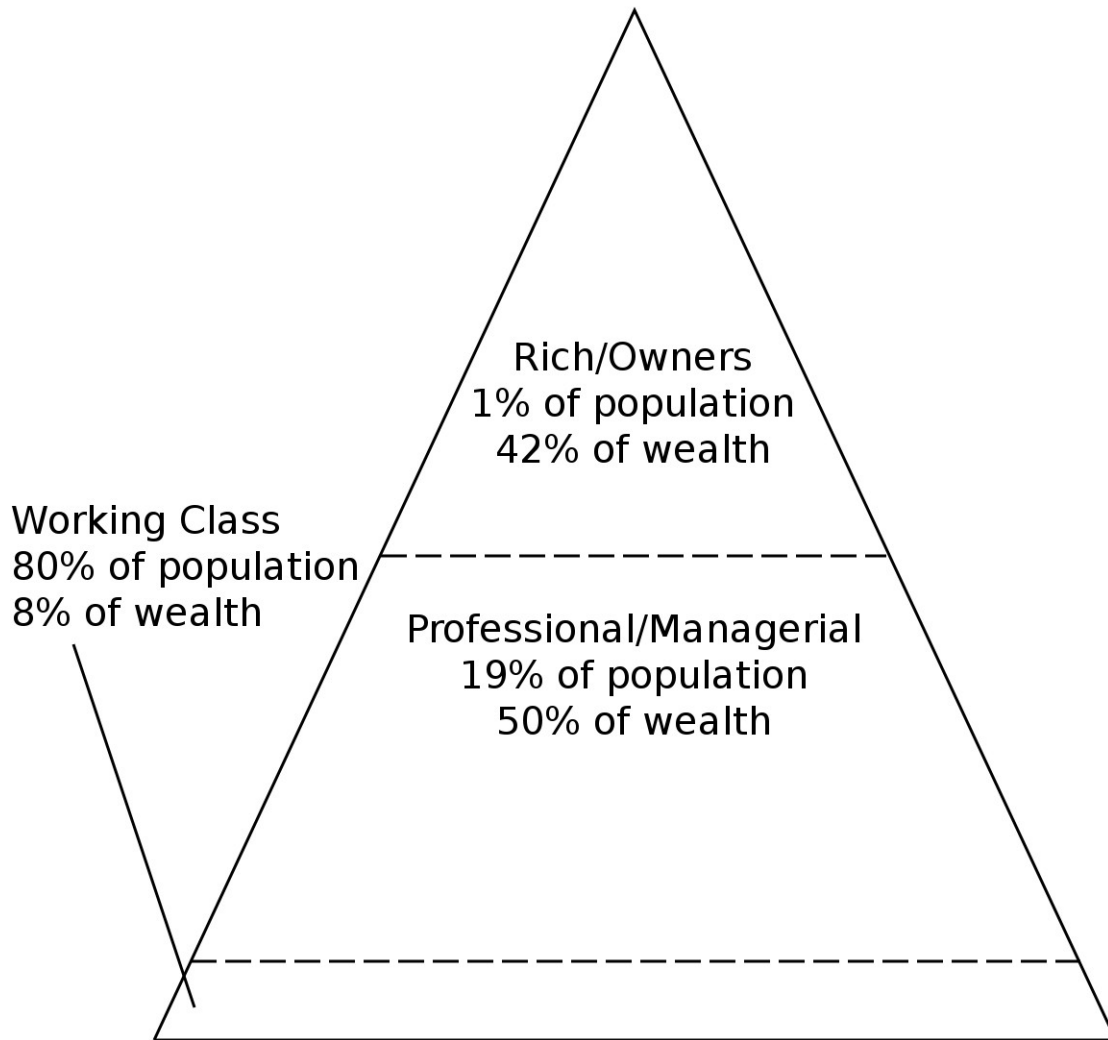
Bosses	Workers
Men	Women
White	People of Color
Middle Class	Working Class
Adults	Youth, Seniors
Heterosexual	LGBQ
Male or Female	Transgender & Intersex
Able-Bodied	Disabled
Formally Educated	Not Formally Educated
Born in U.S.	Immigrant
Christian	non-Christian
People in U.S.	People outside of U.S.

# Economic Pyramid: By Population



2007 Numbers. Source: G. William Domhoff ([sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica](http://sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica))

# Economic Pyramid: By Wealth



2007 Numbers. Source: G. William Domhoff ([sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica](http://sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica))

Vermont Workers' Center – Anatomy of an Organizing Conversation

Part I – Issues	
<b>Why?</b>	To identify the person's issues. People get involved because of self-interest. It's the organizer's job to find out how to connect people to the campaign through their issue.
<b>How?</b>	Listen. Ask specific questions. Don't make assumptions. Drill down until you fully understand the issue. It's the organizer's job to speak less and let the person talk.
<b>What to say?</b>	Is affordable, quality healthcare a challenge for you and your family? What about our system isn't working for you? What would you like to see changed?
Part II – Orientation to Organizing	
<b>Why?</b>	To align the person's issue with the idea of Organizing. It's important for people to understand why organizing matters. It's the organizer's job to excite people about a vision for change through organizing and collective action.
<b>How?</b>	Agitate. Move from "I" to "We." Use their specific issue as an example. Explain the teeter-totter (i.e. balance of power).
<b>What to say?</b>	Who makes the decisions about how (their issue) works? If you and I were involved in making these decisions, would it look differently? What could you do right now to change it? What if 4,000 Vermonters did the same thing?
Part III – Innoculation	
<b>Why?</b>	To prepare people for the opposition. People hear the dominant message all the time (i.e. media, decision-makers, ruling class). It's the organizer's job to prepare people for what they will likely hear from those invested in the status quo or are obstacles to change.
<b>How?</b>	Refer back to the teeter-totter (i.e. ppl on the other side of the teeter-totter want us to believe...)
<b>What to say?</b>	You are going to hear (A,B,C) from people who don't want the system to change (i.e. insurance co). A = "We're tied too much to the federal system and won't get the federal waivers." B = "We can't afford it; people will use the system too much." C = "The quality of care won't be as good. We'll have waiting lines or death panels."
Part IV – Ask	
<b>Why?</b>	To move people towards action. People will build their commitment by participating in the campaign. It's the organizer's job to ask people to do things, otherwise it's not an organizing conversation!
<b>How?</b>	Asks should be appropriate to their level of involvement, but push them to do more. Remember that asking people to do things is not only OK, but it's the only way to fix their situation and it is in their own self-interest.
<b>What to say?</b>	Right now, this is what VWC members are doing: * Will you get two friends to do the photo petition? * Can you get one of your neighbors to come to the statehouse with us next week? * Will you write a letter to the editor?
Part V – Follow-up	
<b>Why?</b>	To establish accountability and make sure people have the tools to accomplish their tasks. People need to set goals and deadlines. It's the organizer's job to check back in and make sure people followed through.
<b>How?</b>	Be specific about what the assignment is (names, numbers, etc.) and when it should be completed. Set up a time to follow-up on the specific assignment.
<b>What to say?</b>	Great, so you're going to do (X). How about I check in with you next Wednesday at 3PM to see how it went. I'll give you a call, what's your number?

**Facilitator's Notes**

# Healthcare Is a Human Right

## Organizing Conversation Role-Play Scenarios

**1. Parent / Single Mom:** Has chronic back-pain. Works full time and raises kids. Hard to find time to see a doctor. Is either covered under spouse's plan or is uninsured. Prefers alternative/naturopathic healthcare (i.e. herbalism, acupuncture, kinesiology, etc.). Upset that this type of care isn't covered by insurance.

Really hard to get involved or do things because of family and work demands. Can't make meetings because of childcare. Hard to find the time to fit other things in.

**2. Issue Doesn't Resonate:** Has insurance, fairly happy with it, doesn't use it much. Currently healthy. Works full-time and employer pays 70%. The out-of-pay price for the remaining 30% doesn't present much of a hardship, but the deductible and co-pays are expensive.

Not really interested. Apathetic. Doesn't see how it effects them.

**3. Overly Extended:** Definitely pissed off at the insurance companies and supportive of the campaign. Has paid high out-of-pocket healthcare expenses even though covered by insurance. Still has healthcare-related debts. Has spent a lot of time on the phone dealing with insurance and hospital administration about over-due bills.

Really busy with work and other projects. Multiple deadlines coming up. Busy, busy, busy.

**Facilitator's Notes**

**4. More Interested in Another Issue:** Sympathetic, but a bit disinterested. Currently healthy and covered by parents' (or spouses') plan. Doesn't really need to deal with the healthcare system at all, but unclear what will happen if they lose their parents/spouses insurance.

Really involved with another issue (i.e. climate change, VT Yankee, Anti-War, etc.). No time for the issue.

**5. Distracted Person:** Currently works full-time and is covered by employer, though has co-pays and deductibles. Avoids going to the doctor as much as possible. Has a skin condition that he/she has been ignoring for a couple of months. Can't really afford the deductible, so is hoping that it will go away.

The issue is unimportant. Gotta get home to watch *“So You Think You Can Dance?”*

**6. Nay-Sayer:** Works as a consultant and gets paid pretty well. Buys insurance in the private market (i.e. no pool). Cost is super expensive, but what can you do? Not a whole lot of jobs out there that offer health insurance, and sick of being employed in an unfulfilling job just for the insurance.

Agrees with you, but doesn't see how doing anything will solve the issue.

**Facilitator's Notes**

**7. Burned Out Person:** Has long-term health problems and bad experiences with the messed up system. Very supportive, but is tired of dealing with the insurance companies, doctors, employer, etc. around health issues.

Used to be involved, but not sure they can't deal with the issue anymore.

**8. Disagrees With the Way You're Handling the Issue:** Retired person covered by Medicare. Supportive of single-payer / universal healthcare, but opposes the way the campaign is going. Prefers advocacy approach over organizing around human rights and economic justice.

Takes issue with the way you're going about the campaign. Doesn't think the strategy is effective. Thinks your ask is counter-productive. Would rather do something else.

**9. Frightened Person:** Low-paying non-profit job and covered by Catamount. Gets tired of the paperwork and it's been difficult finding a dentist that will treat her/him. Supportive but afraid to be visibly involved. Employer wouldn't like it.

Worried that getting involved would put them in jeopardy (i.e. get fired, conflict of interest, be frowned upon, etc.)

**10. Opposed Person:** Hates socialism. Thinks that healthcare costs are so high because of the lack of competition. Thinks consumers should be able to shop around. Is currently covered by a government program (i.e. medicaid, medicare, VA plan, catamount, etc.), but doesn't quite get it. Is worried about rationing of healthcare services under a single-payer system.

Disagrees with the issue and vision. Balks at initial ask.

**Facilitator's Notes**

# Issue Assessment Chart

- ★ When we organize, we talk to people, discover their problems and try to solve them.
- ★ But organizing isn't just about *solving problems*. It means solving them in a way that brings people together and builds their power as a group.
- ★ We can't solve all problems, and we can't build community by going after the wrong kinds of problems.
- ★ How do organizers help people choose which problems to focus on?

CRITERIA:	Broadly felt?	Deeply felt?
Questions:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How many people are potentially affected?</li> <li>• How many people know they are affected?</li> <li>• Would more people be affected if they knew more?</li> <li>• What percentage of the community or workplace is affected?</li> <li>• Are other communities or workers potentially affected?</li> <li>• Does the issue split people from each other, or unite them?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Who cares about the problem?</li> <li>• Why is the problem important to them?</li> <li>• How serious is the problem?</li> <li>• How long has it been a problem?</li> <li>• Have there been other attempts to solve the problem?</li> <li>• Do people still care about the problem, even if earlier attempts to solve it have failed?</li> </ul>
Can it be understood?	Has a target?	Solvable?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can the problem be described simply and quickly?</li> <li>• Can only people who are directly affected by the problem understand it?</li> <li>• Is it necessary to have "expert" knowledge to understand the problem?</li> <li>• Can the problem be described effectively by many people, or only a few?</li> <li>• Is there enough background information that challenging questions can be handled effectively?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can people be identified who have caused the problem?</li> <li>• Can a person or set of people be identified who has the power to solve the problem? (the "target")</li> <li>• Are these people accessible to the people affected by the problem?</li> <li>• Who influences the potential target's decisions?</li> <li>• What are the reasons the target would / would not be willing to solve the problem?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is there a clear, concrete solution to the problem?</li> <li>• Can the solution be achieved by the decision of a target, or targets?</li> <li>• Are there smaller solutions that can lead to bigger solutions? (different levels of "winning")</li> <li>• What is needed to win, in terms of people power, money, expertise?</li> <li>• Do the resources of the workers or community members match what is needed to solve the problem?</li> <li>• Can the problem be broken down, or reframed, to make it more winnable?</li> </ul>

## Facilitator's Notes



# Waterloo Exercise

Your name is Attila Napoleon IV, and you are an evil politician.

You have recently been elected mayor of Waterloo – a medium-sized city whose once-prosperous industrial base has collapsed over the last several decades. It is 2010, and the country is in recession.

In your first act as mayor, you have used authority given to you by the state government to directly take over control of the city's school district (bypassing the elected school board) – the district has many "failing" schools.

Contract negotiations with both the teachers and the city workers are coming up in a few months.

A large and increasing population of immigrants and refugees, primarily from Latin America, are putting greater demands on city services.

The "failing schools" are in predominantly African-American neighborhoods where parents are well organized and have fought for increased funding for (and against the closing of) their schools successfully in the past.

You were elected on an anti-tax platform, and the real-estate and construction tycoons who funded your election campaign are expecting large no-bid city contracts, tax breaks, etc., so in order to find the money to give to your friends, you need to cut city services, negotiate takebacks from the city workers and teachers, and cut costs in the school system by closing schools, eliminating programs and/or increasing class sizes.

# Strategies and Tactics

Strategies	Tactics
Base-building	One-to-one organizing meetings Surveys Petitions Door-to-door canvassing Outreach at public events
Legislative	Lobbying Bringing people to the statehouse Making calls to legislators
Media	Press conferences Letters to the editor Op-eds Meeting with editorial boards
Direct Action	Marching on the boss Rallies
Disruption	Strikes Civil Disobedience
Alliance-building/Movement-building	Meeting with allies Attending or organizing gatherings
Advocacy	Providing information to decision-makers Preparing reports
Legal	Filing lawsuits Filing labor board charges

# Battle of the Story Matrix

STORY	THEIRS	OURS
<p><b>CONFLICT</b></p> <p>How is the problem being framed? Who is the conflict between?</p>		
<p><b>CHARACTERS</b></p> <p>Who are the victims? Who are the villains? Who are the messengers that tell the story? Who are the heroes?</p>		
<p><b>IMAGES AND ANECDOTES</b></p> <p>How does the story use images or anecdotes to convince without being preachy? How does the story engage our values and encourage us to choose sides?</p>		
<p><b>FORESHADOWING</b></p> <p>How does each story show us the future? What is the vision that the story offers for resolving the conflict?</p>		
<p><b>ASSUMPTIONS</b></p> <p>What are the unstated assumptions? What does someone have to believe to accept the story?</p>		
<p><b>POINTS OF INTERVENTION</b></p> <p>How can we challenge the other story's assumptions? What are the other story's vulnerabilities?</p>		

# Battle of the Story Matrix

## Healthcare Is a Human Right

STORY	THEIRS	OURS
<p><b>CONFLICT</b></p> <p>How is the problem being framed? Who is the conflict between?</p>	<p><i>People who are irresponsible with their health vs. healthy folks, employers and taxpayers</i></p> <p><i>Taxpayers vs. government</i></p>	<p><i>People vs. insurance and drug companies who profit off healthcare and buy politicians</i></p>
<p><b>CHARACTERS</b></p> <p>Who are the victims? Who are the villains? Who are the messengers that tell the story? Who are the heroes?</p>	<p><i>Villains: unhealthy poor people, activists who want socialized medicine</i></p> <p><i>Victims: small businesses, hard-working middle class, taxpayers</i></p> <p><i>Heroes: Governor Douglas, “bipartisanship”</i></p>	<p><i>Villains: insurance and drug companies, and the politicians they buy</i></p> <p><i>Victims: workers, folks with disabilities, low-income, unemployed (folks from report)</i></p> <p><i>Heroes: people building HcisHR campaign</i></p>
<p><b>IMAGES AND ANECDOTES</b></p> <p>How does the story use images or anecdotes to convince without being preachy? How does the story engage our values and encourage us to choose sides?</p>	<p><i>Long lines in Canada</i></p> <p><i>Medical technology and innovation</i></p> <p><i>Choice</i></p> <p><i>Decreased quality with inefficient government</i></p> <p><i>Higher taxes</i></p>	<p><i>People are suffering/in fear</i></p> <p><i>People coming together</i></p> <p><i>Building a movement</i></p> <p><i>Greed of insurance companies</i></p> <p><i>Long lines here</i></p>
<p><b>FORESHADOWING</b></p> <p>How does each story show us the future? What is the vision that the story offers for resolving the conflict?</p>	<p><i>We’re on the right track</i></p> <p><i>Making great progress</i></p> <p><i>Catamount</i></p> <p><i>Gov’s health incentives</i></p> <p><i>Obama/Douglas</i></p>	<p><i>Creating people power</i></p> <p><i>Caring communities</i></p> <p><i>Social solidarity</i></p>
<p><b>ASSUMPTIONS</b></p> <p>What are the unstated assumptions? What does someone have to believe to accept the story?</p>	<p><i>Healthcare is a commodity</i></p> <p><i>There are no workable solutions</i></p> <p><i>Free market is good</i></p> <p><i>Government is inefficient</i></p>	<p><i>Healthcare is a human right</i></p> <p><i>People can make change from the grassroots</i></p> <p><i>There is a solution</i></p>
<p><b>POINTS OF INTERVENTION</b></p> <p>How can we challenge the other story’s assumptions? What are the other story’s vulnerabilities and internal contradictions? How does the other story contradict people’s actual experiences?</p>	<p><i>Everyone knows someone who took care of themselves but got sick and needed a lot of healthcare.</i></p>	<h1>N/A</h1>

# The Tactic Star

## for Choosing and Evaluating Tactics

Choosing or inventing a successful tactic often involves some intuition and guesswork – and always risk. Choice of tactics has implications not only for the success of campaigns, but also for building long-term power for our organizations, alliances and movements. The tactic star names some key factors that movement activists should consider when determining their tactics. The same tool can be used to evaluate actions after they have been carried out.

# TACTIC: \_\_\_\_\_

### CAPACITY

How much time, energy, money and membership is needed to carry this tactic out?

\_\_\_\_\_

### MESSAGE

What will the tactic communicate? What will it mean to others? What is its tone? Who is its audience? How will it carry a persuasive story?

\_\_\_\_\_

### COMMITMENT

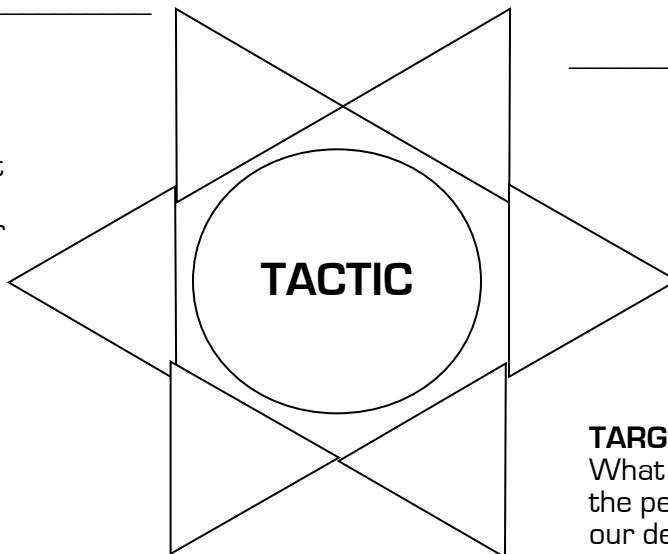
How much commitment does this tactic require of our members and/or allies?

\_\_\_\_\_

### STRATEGY

How will the tactic move us toward achieving our goal?

\_\_\_\_\_



### INVOLVEMENT

How many of our members does this tactic involve? How are they involved? What is their role?

\_\_\_\_\_

### TARGET

What message will the tactic send to the people who have the power to meet our demands? Will it pressure them to capitulate, or enable them to dismiss us or retaliate?

\_\_\_\_\_

Adapted from Beyond the Choir [www.BeyondtheChoir.org](http://www.BeyondtheChoir.org)

# Campaign Scenario One: Consolidatia Health Care

**Background:** CHS is a major healthcare institution including an acute-care hospital, a teaching hospital, and numerous clinics and practices. It is the major healthcare provider, and a major employer, for the geographic region. You are a coalition made up of the CHS nurses' union along with other area labor unions, religious leaders and community organizations.

**Goal:** Your goal is to get CHS to sit down with community leaders to negotiate (and agree to) a "People's Healthcare Initiative" which you have developed, which includes a commitment to specific nurse-to-patient ratios at CHS, CHS funding for public health initiatives in working-class neighborhoods, and public political support from CHS for a universal, single-payer healthcare system.

**Target:** CEO of Consolidatia

# Campaign Scenario Two: Dugud Human Services

**Background:** Dugud is a nonprofit that provides a variety of human services to clients including developmentally disabled individuals and their families. It is funded by the state legislature. You are the union that represents the Dugud workers and you are in contract negotiations.

**Goal:** Your goal is to get Dugud's negotiating committee to agree to your demands of a livable wage for staff and no takebacks on health insurance.

**Target:** Executive Director of Dugud

# Campaign Scenario Three: Return to Waterloo

**Background:** The city of Waterloo, the Waterloo school system, the state of Waterloovia and the University of Waterloo are all facing financial difficulties and threatening to lay off workers unless they take a pay cut. You are: state workers, workers at the university, teachers and staff at the city and public schools, students at the university and parents who have children in the school district. State workers, city and school workers, and faculty and service and maintenance workers at the university are all organized; the rest of the staff at the university have an organizing committee.

**Goal:** Your goal is to get the city, schools, state and university to find resources to avoid cuts by cutting top management salaries and raising revenue through a progressive income tax or increasing the capital gains tax (not raising property taxes or tuition).

**Target:** Mayor, city council and school board of Waterloo, governor and legislature of Waterloovia, Board of Trustees of University of Waterloo.



# Conscious Organizers

The organizer needs more than just skills if she hopes to contribute to the building of a larger movement. Skills alone are not enough. An effective organizer must also have a sharp analysis of how power operates and of how change might happen within a particular system. We call those organizers who combine skill and analysis ‘conscious organizers.’

Conscious organizers are those organizers who self-consciously work to build organization and movement so that the people will be able to strike back at the root causes of the problems in the community.

We believe that conscious organizers must develop as intellectuals. Throughout the Third World where social movements flourish, working class people, who have little formal education, study and debate theory with a prowess that would shame most college graduates in the United States. The challenges of this period demand that organizers develop the skills that are so often frowned upon.

– from *towards land, work & power*  
People Organized to Win Employment Rights  
(San Francisco: Unite to Fight Press, 2005)

# Systems of Oppression Chart

Period	Systems of Oppression	Key Points
Hunter-gatherer	Patriarchy (sexism, heterosexism)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Exploitation in hunter-gathered societies only really happens within families (<i>patriarchy</i>), where men dominate women and appropriate the benefits of their labor (cooking, child-rearing, etc.).</li> </ul>
Agriculture-based class society (slave societies, feudalism, etc.)	Militarism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Agriculture ties people to the land, making them more vulnerable to exploitation by force. Exploitation in feudal/tributary states is done primarily through force or the threat of force, leading to development of military castes and <i>militarism</i>.</li> <li>● With invention of agriculture, patriarchy is strengthened because the sexual division of labor is simultaneously reinforced due to increasing complexity of work (beyond hunting and gathering) and in greater need of justification (since physical differences between men and women are not terribly relevant for most agricultural work).</li> <li>● Among ruling class, ownership of land strengthens patriarchy through increased need to control women's sexuality (men need to be certain of paternity for inheritance).</li> </ul>
Development of Capitalism	Capitalism White Supremacy Ableism Imperialism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● In Europe, "enclosure" of common lands was brutal.</li> <li>● European colonialism in the Americas was an even more brutal seizure of people's land, but since the Indigenous folks could not be compelled to work the land, and not enough Europeans could be induced or forced to come work the land, this led to the development of chattel slavery. Both of these developments were justified by the development of <i>white supremacy</i>.</li> <li>● food, clothing, land, etc. are transformed into commodities in order to exchange them on the market.</li> <li>● labor is also a commodity – wage workers have to sell their "labor power" in the "labor market," while chattel slavery makes commodities of some workers' very persons.</li> <li>● Since workers are commodities, capitalism needs them to be standardized and interchangeable – and those workers who are not fully "able-bodied" become "disabled." (<i>ableism</i>)</li> <li>● Need to control raw materials &amp; markets leads to <i>imperialism</i> – subjugation of whole nations.</li> </ul>

# Systems of Oppression

## Capitalism

A specific, historical system of organizing society in which the production and exchange of commodities for profit in the market place is the predominant mode of production and exchange. Individual capitalists, or capitalist enterprises, hire groups of workers who are then paid a wage to produce particular commodities. The buying and selling of labor power (labor-power itself becoming a commodity) is a necessary part of capitalism. The final commodity that emerges from a process of capitalist production is totally owned by the capitalist, or capitalist enterprise, which then has the task of selling it to consumers in order to realize a profit.

## Patriarchy

A system of power based on the supremacy and dominance of non-transgender men. Patriarchy is based on binary definitions of gender (male/female) with strict gender roles in which women are expected to do unwaged labor in the home for the benefit of men. It also relies upon rigidly enforced heterosexuality that places male/straight/non-transgender as superior and women/queer/transgender as inferior.

## White Supremacy

A system of power based on the supremacy and dominance of "white" people. "White" is a political concept created by the European and colonial ruling elite of the 17th and 18th centuries. In the English colonies and later the United States, it became the justification for the genocidal attack on the Indigenous peoples of the Americas to seize the continent and for the establishment of the system of chattel slavery and the enslavement of millions of African peoples to create super-profits and the great wealth of the U.S. capitalist class.

All three of these systems operate in the economic, political, cultural and social realms. All three of these systems shape and are shaped by each other to form interlocking systems of oppression, and all maintain access to power through violence, intimidation, socio-economic opportunity, and institutionalized and/or internalized ideas about people's role in society.

# Capitalism Key Terms

## Exploitation

When one person or class of people (exploiters) forces another person or class of people (exploited) to perform extra labor for the benefit of the exploiter.

## Surplus

What is produced above and beyond what is necessary for the producers to provide for their own basic needs (including raising children). Under capitalism, surplus value is the difference between the value (i.e., price) a capitalist or capitalist enterprise receives for the commodities it produces and what it costs the enterprise to produce them (i.e., wages, cost of raw materials, etc.). Includes profit, interest, and rent.

## Commodities

Goods and services that have been turned into products for exchange in capitalist markets (i.e., are exchanged for money).

## Capital

Surplus value that is accumulated by a capitalist or capitalist enterprise, which can then be re-invested by purchasing additional goods for trade, additional labor power to produce more commodities, or in more means of production (factories, tools, land, raw materials, etc.).

The accumulation of capital results in certain trends:

- The size of capitalist enterprises tends to become larger and larger over time, and the amount of money needed to start a new one therefore increases.
- Bigger firms tend to buy up others as a way of eliminating competition.
- A greater and greater proportion of capital becomes tied up in means of production (tools, factories, etc.) with a smaller proportion used to hire workers.
- The capitalist class as a whole requires more potential workers than it can consistently employ at any one time, so that there will be a sufficient number available who can be hired at times of peak production. This is called "the reserve army of labor." The reserve army includes such categories as the unemployed, day-laborers and migrant workers, people surviving for the most part on welfare, housewives who are available for part-time or occasional work, peasants on marginal lands, etc.

# Statements for Male Privilege

1. Your forefathers, including your father, had more opportunities to advance themselves economically than your foremothers.
2. Your father had more educational opportunities than your mother.
3. The boys in your extended family, including yourself, had more financial resources, emotional support or encouragement for pursuing academic, work or career goals than the girls.
4. You lived in or attended a school district where the textbooks and other classroom materials reflected men as the normal heroes and builders of the United States, and there was little mention of the contributions of women to our society.
5. You attend or attended a school where boys were encouraged to take math and science, called on more in class, and given more attention and funding for athletic programs than girls.
6. You received job training, educational or travel opportunities from serving in the military.
7. You have received a job, job interview, job training or internship through personal connections with other men.
8. You worked or work in a job where women made less for doing comparable work or did more menial jobs.
9. You work in a job, career or profession, or in an agency or organization in which there are few women in leadership positions, or the work has less status because women are in leadership positions.
10. You live in a city or region in which domestic violence and sexual assault are serious problems for women.
11. You generally feel safe when hiking in the woods, in the mountains, on the beach or in other rural settings. (Note to facilitator: this statement may exclude most men of color.)
12. When you turn on the TV, you routinely see men in positions of leadership, male sports, men portrayed as heroes, and in a wide variety of other roles.
13. When you have medical procedures done to you, or take prescribed medicines and other health treatments you can assume they were tested and proven safe on men.
14. You have seen or heard men in positions of authority belittle women's contributions, women's writing or music, women's intelligence, or physical strength, or make other comments about women being inferior to men.
15. You can have access to sexually revealing images of women whenever you want them, from magazines, the Internet, bookstores, video stores or pornography outlets.
16. In your family women do more of the housecleaning, cooking, childcare, washing or other caretaking than you or other men do.
17. Most of the clothes you wear have been made by women of color in this country and abroad who are paid little for their work.
18. The computers and other electronic products you use such as TVs, VCRs, microwave ovens, phones, and computers are made by underpaid women in this and other countries.
19. In your community women are routinely charged more for haircutting, cleaning, cars, or other services or products.
20. You don't need to think about sexism every day. You can decide when and where you deal with it.

# Statements for White Privilege

1. Your ancestors were legal immigrants to this country during a period when immigrants from Asia, South and Central America or Africa were restricted.
2. You live on land that formerly belonged to Native Americans.
3. Your family received homesteading or landstaking claims from the federal government, or if you or your family or relatives receive or received federal farm subsidies, farm price supports, agricultural extension assistance or other federal benefits.
4. You or your parents went to racially segregated schools.
5. You live in a school district or metropolitan area where more money is spent on the schools that white children go to than on those that children of color attend.
6. You live in or went to a school district where the textbooks and other classroom materials reflected your race as normal, heroes and builders of the United States, and there was little mention of the contributions of people of color to our society.
7. You attended a publicly funded university, or a heavily endowed private university or college, and/or received student loans.
8. Your ancestors were immigrants who took jobs in railroads, streetcars, construction, shipbuilding, wagon and coach driving, house painting, tailoring, longshore work, brick laying, table waiting, working in the mills, working as a furrier, dressmaking or any other trade or occupation where people of color were driven out or excluded.
9. You have received a job, job interview, job training or internship through personal connections of family or friends.
10. You worked or work in a job where people of color made less for doing comparable work or did more menial jobs.
11. Your parents were able to vote in any election they wanted without worrying about poll taxes, literacy requirements or other forms of discrimination.
12. If you so desired, you could arrange to have a room full of white people alone at any time.
13. If you were choosing schools for your children, you could rest assured that almost any school you chose would have white teachers.
14. You have never had to worry that clearly labeled public facilities, such as swimming pools, restrooms, restaurants and nightspots were in fact not open to you because of your skin color.
15. You see white people in a wide variety of roles on television and in movies.
16. A substantial percentage of the clothes you wear are made by women and children of color in this country and abroad.
17. Most of the food you eat is grown, processed and/or cooked by people of color in this country and abroad.
18. The house, office building, school, or other buildings and grounds you use are cleaned or maintained by people of color.
19. Most of the electronics goods that you use such as TVs, VCRs, microwave ovens, computers, and cameras are made by people of color in this country and abroad.
20. You don't need to think about race and racism everyday. You can choose when and where you want to respond to racism.

# Statements for “Getting Ahead”

1. If you feel that your primary ethnic identity is “American,” take one step forward.
2. If you studied the history and culture of your ethnic ancestors in elementary and secondary school, take one step forward.
3. If your family had more than fifty books in the house when you were growing up, take one step forward.
4. If one of your parents was ever laid off, unemployed or underemployed not by choice, take one step backward.
5. If you received less encouragement in academics or sports from your family or from teachers because of your gender, take one step backward.
6. If you were told by your parents that you were beautiful, smart, and capable of achieving your dreams, take two steps forward.
7. If you were told by your parents that you were beautiful, pretty or good looking and therefore what you thought or did wasn’t important, take one step backward.
8. If you grew up in a single parent household, take one step backward.
9. If, prior to your 18th birthday, you took a vacation outside of your home state, take one step forward.
10. If you were ever called names or ridiculed because of your race, ethnicity or class background, take one step backward.
11. If you were ever embarrassed or ashamed of your clothes, your house, or your family car when growing up, take one step backward.
12. If you ever tried to change your physical appearance, mannerisms, language or behavior to avoid being judged or ridiculed, take one step backward.
13. If any women in your family, including yourself if you are female, were ever physically or sexually assaulted in any way by men in your family, take one step backward.
14. If you commonly see people of your race or ethnicity on television or in the movies in roles that you consider to be degrading, take one step backward.
15. If you ever got a good paying job or a promotion because of a friend or family member, take one step forward.
16. If, as a white person, you ever worked in a job where people of color held more menial jobs, were paid less or otherwise harassed or discriminated against, take one step forward.
17. If, as a man, you ever worked in a job where women held more menial jobs, were paid less or otherwise harassed or discriminated against, take one step forward.
18. If you generally think of the police as people that you can call on for help in times of emergency, take one step forward.
19. If you ever felt uncomfortable or angry about a remark or joke made about your race or ethnicity but it wasn't safe to confront it, take one step backward.