



The information in this resource section is intended to support you with your campaign and help get the best possible outcome. Its divided into subsections, covering various aspects of campaign planning, growing your campaign, getting noticed, good actions and tactics, talking to the media and more.

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1. Introduction to campaigning

People powered campaigns

Put simply a campaign is a planned approach to achieve a goal. Really great campaigns generally involve having a clear vision of where the campaign is trying to get to, supports and values the people's participation, is inspiring for others to become involved and shows the power of people acting together.

People powered campaigns can range from keeping the local library from closing, open a daycare centre in your area, prevent a big company from polluting your area or prevent the closure of a bus route your community depends on.

Campaigning online

Online campaigning is pretty much like traditional campaigning - you know what you want, have a clear target, want to reach as many people as possible and have a plan for how you are going to win your campaign.

Digital technology is a great tool (but only a tool) to help make your campaign as strong as possible. Some examples of online campaigning are starting a petition, targeting decision makers on social media, A petition can reach alot of people very quickly, social media can spread the word and create great conversations about the issue you are campaigning on. Twitter is a great place to get noticed by the media and to directly speak to the target of the campaign.

Here are some useful resources about online campaigning

<http://www.fairsay.com/>

<http://www.campaigncentral.org.uk/know-how/using-internet>

Why should I use online campaigning?

Campaigning online is a really great way to bring about the change you want to see really fast. Social media like Twitter, spreads ideas very quickly and now, more than 1 in 7 people

in the world are using Facebook. You can spread news articles, pictures and connect with thousands of people in your area, nationally and internationally faster than ever before. My.uplift provides a powerful online tool that is specifically designed for running campaigns. It will give you the power to connect with people in your area, build a petition, lobby a local politician and set up groups in your area.

What if I'm not good with technology?

All new tools take a little getting used to and it's definitely worth the time. With a little practise, you will be emailing, Facebooking and using My.uplift for campaigning in no time. They are designed to be as easy as possible to use.

2. Planning your campaign

Sometimes you know what you want to change but you don't know how to change it. Don't worry. First of all we need to think about the problem and what it is you want changed. This section takes you through the main areas that need to be considered.

What's the problem: Analyse your situation

Sometimes we only see the effects or the symptoms of a problem. It's often useful to think about the problem as a tree. We can see the bit that's above the ground but we really need to target the roots of the problem. Ask, why is it this way? What can be done to change it?

This can be complicated with many interconnected reasons or it could be very straight forward. There will probably be social, political and economic reasons why the problem exists. These are the 'roots' of the problems.

It's useful to map this out. Draw the problems as the root of the tree and the symptoms as the parts above ground. Once you know this, you can make a list of goals or 'objectives'. These will describe what success would look like for the campaign.

Example: The road near the school is quite dangerous and a child was almost knocked down. There is a dangerous bend in the road and shrubs grow out over the edge, limiting drivers' visibility.

Examining all of this, we will find where the school board fits into it, what the local authority can do, what had previously been done, are there budgetary issues etc. Cutting back the shrubs provides a limited solution but perhaps the road needs to be widened/straightened for

a long term solution. What are the political implications in this, what about objections, planning etc.

Clarify your aim

Your aim is the change you want to create as result of your campaign. You should be able to explain this to a friend in a single sentence e.g. get the council to make the school road straighter and safer for our children.

If you know what your aim is and it's very clear, then it will be very easy to explain it to others, including the people you are trying to convince.

Don't make the aim too unrealistic e.g. 'End austerity'. You might want to fight austerity and budget cuts. This is the wider context. You can't change that overnight. But you can make other changes that will all add up to a big difference.

Objectives

Objectives are the list of goals that you want to achieve in order to make your aim successful.

If you want to save your local bus route, then your objectives are all the goals you want to undertake to make this happen.

First, think about what kind of change you think is need to achieve your aim. Do you need to change policy at a local or national level? Do you need to persuade the local politician that ending the bus service would have a huge impact on the community? For other campaigns, you might need to influence a retailer or media company to conduct its business differently. Is a new service needed in your area or should existing services adapt to serve unmet needs?

Write down all the changes that *could* lead to the change you want. Which of these would be best to pursue, given your resources and what's happening in your local area?

Crisitunity

Crisitunity is either a crisis or a moment or opportunity that you can take advantage of to raise the profile of your campaign before you've even started campaigning. Crisitunity can give you a head start and can provide a sense of urgency that catches people's attention and encourages them to take action sooner rather than later.

Crisitunity might take the shape of an upcoming review of policy relevant to your campaign issue, an expose or similar programme on TV, a big story in the newspaper, an upcoming report, an upcoming closing date, or even a high profile event likely to sway public opinion in your favour.

An awareness of crisitunity is important for choosing the most effective course of action. It will help you make the best of local conditions for your campaign, to build strategically important relationships.

Example: The road near your child's school with the dangerous bend. Drivers can't see around it and there have been accidents. You and other parents are afraid that there will be an accident and children could be hurt or worse. This is a crisis. An appropriate opportunity for you to make the best of your campaign, is to campaign in the months and weeks before school starts again. 'Back to school' is much talked about this time of the year. Crisitunity can be either a crisis or opportunity; it doesn't have to be both but sometimes it is.

Make your objectives SMART

Now that you've listed your objectives and you know what your crisitunity is, you need to make your objectives as clear as possible to help you reach your aim and win this campaign! Objectives should be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Ambitious, Realistic (and relevant) and Time-bound. This will help you to know when you've won (!) and to assess how well you're doing as you go along.

- **Specific:** Your objectives are clear and unambiguous.
- **Measurable:** Achievement of your objectives can be measured.
- **Achievable:** Your objective is fully within the realm of possibility!
- **Realistic:** The objective needs to reflect what you are willing and able to do compared to your resources, energy, knowledge and time. It needs to be based on evidence and the analysis of the situation talked about earlier.
- **Time-bound:** There is a clear timetable for achieving your objective. Some campaigns are naturally time bound e.g. making the school road safer before school starts again.

Theory of Change

Once you've clarified your objectives, you need to examine them and ask - will they help you reach your aim? This is a very important step and is called your Theory of Change.

A 'Theory of Change' outlines why you think change will occur by the means you have identified.

It's useful to think of your Theory of Change as a single, 'If/ then' statement; if we do this, then we believe that this will happen e.g. If we draw attention to the dangers of the road near the school and put pressure on the local council, then they will be pressured into fixing the road.

Your Theory of Change links your objective to your aim by making your assumptions about how one leads to the other, really clear.

3. Stakeholders

When you have listed all your objectives, you know they are SMART and you know what your Theory of Change is, you need to think about all the people involved. All of these people are called the stakeholders.

A useful way to identify your stakeholders is to ask; Who is affected by this? Who are the decision makers?

Who is affected?

You are, but you are almost certainly not alone in this. Your neighbours, friends, family and your broader community as well as people online, will all care about the issue. The stakeholders are all of you's, but also everyone else who is directly affected by this. These people might be service providers, workers, politicians and other decision makers. In the Bus route example the stakeholders are the locals, but also the bus drivers who might lose their jobs and local services who will lose customers because they can't get to the shops.

In our school example the stakeholders are the parents, children, teachers, school board, local councillors and any driver who uses that road.

Who are the decision makers?

This is usually a very important point to identify. When you are thinking about your Theory of Change, you will often think of decision makers. These are the people with the power to influence decisions in your favour. They can be politicians local or national but might also be the board of directors or the school principal.

Potential stakeholders

Sometimes people might not seem to be an obvious or immediate stakeholder but you can change all that and contact these people and make them stakeholders. These stakeholders might be:

- National politicians: You might be in the constituency of a Government Minister.
- Local politics: Local mayor, councillors, planning authority etc.
- Communities: Community leaders, interest groups (clubs and societies) faith leaders like your local priest, local charities community groups and local Gardaí.
- Celebrities and high profile individuals, academics, national charities and sports people who are associated with local charities.
- Business: Local business owners and employers, national and multinational corporations.

Influence and Stakeholders

Not every stakeholder will be of use. You should think about which ones are closely aligned to what you want to achieve and think about who would not help you, or would even work against your goals.

If the decision to cut back on transport costs came from the more conservative party who are in power, it's unlikely that representatives of this party will work to restore a bus route. On the other hand, if you or a friend know a minister from this party really well, you could convince them to be an ally.

It's important to think about which stakeholder has influence in your situation but also who can influence these people in turn. For example, local people like you and your neighbours, have influence on councillors and TDs because you elect them but council officers and civil servants also have influence because they feed elected representatives with research, information and advice.

When mapping your stakeholders and building people powered campaigns think about three groups of people; allies, supporters and opponents.

Allies are the people you can work with, build alliances with and share resources with. They are often the most active people in your campaign e.g. other parents, family, friends and people directly affected by the issue.

Supporters (and potential supporters) are the people you want to side with your campaign and help apply pressure to your target. These people will add their voice to yours, sign petitions and spread the word on Facebook or in the media.

Opponents are the people who disagree with your campaign and who may resist and attempt to block you achieving your aim for whatever reason.

It's best to focus on the first two groups to build your support and pressure the last group with this support. This is how people power works.

4. Action Plan (Strategy)

Action Plan

Now that you know all the above, you can formulate your action plan or strategy.

You might be in your kitchen writing this out on paper. You know what the problem is; you know the stakeholders and you have a list of smart objectives. So that's where you are right now.

You know your Theory of Change and that once you have achieved these objectives or goals, you will have succeeded and that's where you want to be. Your strategy is your plan to get you from 'here' to 'there'.

You might have limited resources including limited time, energy and money to spend on your campaign. Your strategy is the carefully considered choices you and your group make on how best to use your time, your abilities, sometimes your money and other resources. You have to create the greatest possible leverage you can, to win your campaign.

Your campaign and circumstances are unique but that doesn't mean you have to reinvent the wheel when it comes to strategy. Research similar campaigns beforehand and ask around to see what has worked and what hasn't. You may have some unique aspects to the campaign and need to tailor those campaign ideas and strategies to your needs. Be strategic. Think strategic.

This means:

- Be realistic about your resources and maximise what you do with them. Be creative. You probably don't have the money to print 1000s of flyers but you do have access to My.uplift and the internet.
- Select the most effective tactics to influence your targets. If you are targeting your local politician, Facebook will be useful but an article in your local paper might be very effective. Most targets hate bad publicity.
- Use allies, local celebrities and other resources to maximise your impact. There might be other groups who have greater resources than you who are working

towards similar goals. There may also be external resources that can really help you create a bigger impact.

- Be aware of and be responsive to changing circumstances like the changing political environment e.g. elections. Make sure there isn't already new legislation being proposed by a local politician which would achieve the change you want. If election time is near, politicians will be looking to their grassroots and this can be great leverage for your campaign.
- Be realistic about what you can do with your time and energy and put it to greatest use.

Tactics

Once you know who the stakeholders and the target of your campaign are, you can decide how best to influence them. These methods are called *tactics*.

Tactics are the smaller actions or interventions that you will take to influence your target and exploit moments of crisis.

Ask yourself; what does the target care about and what would influence them?

An example of a tactic is to inflict brand damage on a company by boycotting their products or by publicising workers' rights abuses in their company. You could do this by using social media activities and/or a protest at their company, shop, office or some other relevant area.

Building a petition is a great way to highlight the issue and build a base of supporters and allies. Delivering the petition in a creative and public manner can achieve similar results to a protest especially if it is done at the company's head office or shop.

Letter and email writing to the target to persuade them, can also be very effective. If you have built a support base online or through a petition, a great tactic is to ask those supporters to go another step and write/email the target.

Often it is best to use several tactics in your overall strategy. Sometimes you can use several at once but other times you might start with just one and then switch to others to maximise moments of crisis or opportunity.

Broadly speaking your tactics should fall into; alliance building e.g. forming a group, gathering signatures, activism/lobbying, direct action (delivering a petition/demonstration) and raising public awareness.

Examples of tactics are; media campaign (interviews, radio ads, press releases), social media (create infographics, post pictures, videos and articles, create hashtags), boycotts, demonstrations, mass letter writing/emailing a target, petitions and flash mobs.

Create a Communications plan

Campaigning means getting word about your issue out there and building support for it. You should make a plan about how you will achieve this. There are a few things you can do easily and straight away that will really help you get your message out there and build support with people who will take action on it, support you or relay and magnify your message.

A campaign name.

This should be short and do what it says on the tin. Short, snappy names e.g. Save Kenmare Library, are memorable and encompass your campaign in only a few words. Keeping it short means it's also ideal for creating Twitter 'hashtags'. This 'brands' your campaign and helps people recognise it more easily.

The Elevator pitch.

If you found yourself in an elevator with the Taoiseach, would you be able to describe your campaign, its aims and demands in 30 seconds or less before they got off? You should be able to. It's useful to develop one because it's a great way to explain your campaign in a short burst - you might be asked by a journalist or potential ally.

Media Message.

When dealing with traditional media, you need to be really sure of your main message. It's useful to have three points. Make sure other people involved in your campaign know these messages and stick to them. It can be very confusing if there are mixed signals coming from the campaign.

Facts and figures.

These will really lend weight to your argument and you should know them well. It's important to stick to the substance of the message though; too many numbers and people will lose interest. Numbers and data will help focus your story - they shouldn't be the whole story. Again, keep them short and easy to remember, e.g. 1 in 4 people in our area have been affected by this issue. Do your homework, make sure the facts you do use, are facts.

The opposition's argument.

The target will no doubt try to wave off your campaign by using facts, figures and arguments of their own. Think about what they would say to discredit your campaign or downplay your arguments. Now think about how you can counter these arguments. If you were in a debate on local radio, what would be the 3 worst questions you could be asked by the interviewer or opponent? Prepare for those questions.

5. Monitor & Evaluate your Campaign

You need to monitor and evaluate the campaign to gauge how it is doing, make sure that it stays focused, see if it needs to change direction, make the best of new opportunities, know when to switch tactics and examine what's going well and what isn't.

Monitoring

Check in with the other people in your campaign and ask how they are doing with tasks that have been agreed on. Keep notes of this and minute meetings, especially with officials and similar stakeholders, so you know who said what and what they promised to do.

You also need to monitor your social media. Tools like facebook and google have built in 'analytics'. You can see how many times a story was shared and liked etc.

Pay attention for any media mentions in the local and national papers and radio. You can save or share these clips too; they not only give you a welcome confidence boost but can be used as great feedback for your supporters to show your tactics are working and tell the story of your journey together. This is about people power afterall.

Evaluate

Is it working? Do you need to do something differently? If it's not working, why not? If something is working really well, what can we learn from that? Are you near to your goals? Have objectives been met?

A great way to answer these questions is a SWOT analysis. Divide your campaign into four areas; Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats.

Strengths are what is working well and what you could do more of.

Weaknesses are what haven't gone as well as anticipated. You can learn where best to focus your resources. Be honest.

Opportunities are events or moments that you could exploit to make your resources and tactics more likely to succeed.

Threats are people, events or moments that make the campaign less likely to succeed. You don't want to get caught off guard because you didn't think of something, so it is useful to sit down with one or more allies to do this exercise.

6. Campaign's end

Sooner or later, your campaign will end. This could be for many reasons but hopefully because you've achieved all your objectives and your aim.

You should mark the end of your campaign for several reasons. It gives you a chance to; recognise the work that has been done, thank those involved, celebrate success, learn lessons, provide a space to reflect and most importantly, provides a sense of closure to something that may have taken up much of your time and energy.

Consolidate your resources and reflect on your campaign overall. Your new allies and supporters will be useful if you discover that you are a born campaigner and want to campaign on your next issue.

Strategy template

Now that you've read all about starting your campaign, you can use this template to figure out how this all applies to you in your situation.

Use the template below and briefly fill in each section. You can come back and fill out each part in more detail once you have a good idea of what your campaign looks like.

Planning Your Campaign	
Analyse your situation	What's the problem? Clarify aims

Objectives	SMART? Crisitunity? Theory of Change?
List Stakeholders	supporters, opponents, decision makers?
Strategy	What's your plan?
Tactics	Petition? Email a TD? Radio?
Communication plan	What journalists have written or spoken about your campaign before?
Monitor/Evaluate	SWOT (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats)