Annotated Agenda

**BUILDING STRATEGIC ISSUE CAMPAIGNS**

**TIME ALLOTTED:** 90 minutes

**PRESENTER(S):**

**MATERIALS NEEDED:**

* Projector and PPT
* Flip Chart
* Markers
* Building Strategic Issue Campaigns Worksheet
* Trainer support: Case Study Sample: Amy Wants a Bike

**GOALS FOR THIS SECTION:**

* Understand the basics of issue organizing
* Be able to use power mapping to identify the best approach for persuading a Member of Congress
* Be able to separate effective tactics from ineffective tactics for moving a Member of Congress

**SKELETAL AGENDA:**

1. **Introduction and Goals**
2. **Issue Organizing Basics**
3. **Persuading Members of Congress**
4. **Planning Effective Tactics**
5. **Debrief, Next Steps and Closing**

**ANNOTATED AGENDA**

**0:00 – 0:05 Introduction and Goals**

0:00-0:02 Personal story introduction

* **[Slide 1]** [Trainer should give a two-minute version of their personal story as relevant to this module. Don’t forget to share challenge - choice - outcome and practice it like any other section! Because of the content of this module, the challenge of the story should focus on a time the trainer felt powerless or saw someone who felt powerless to make a difference.]
* I’m so excited to talk about building strategic issue campaigns today, because issue organizing has taught me that nobody is powerless. Everyone has the power to make a difference - it’s just a matter of creating an effective strategy in order to do so.

0:02-0:05 Goals and Agenda

* **[Slide 2]** Before we dive into the agenda and the rest of the session, I want to lay out a few objectives.
* By the end of this session, our goal is that you
  + Understand the basics of issue organizing,
  + That you’re able to use power mapping to figure out how best to persuade a Member of Congress
  + And that you’re able to separate effective tactics from ineffective tactics, so that you can have as great an impact as possible when you go forth to organize!
* **[Slide 3]** So to accomplish those goals, here’s a look at our agenda:
  + We’re about to wrap up the Introduction
  + Then we’ll talk briefly about the basics of issue organizing
  + After that, we’ll talk about persuading Members of Congress, and that’s when we’ll introduce this concept of Power Mapping as a way to do that;
  + Then, we’ll talk about how to plan tactics that are effective in moving your Member of Congress
  + And then we’ll debrief, talk next steps, and wrap up!
  + **[Animation cue]** So with that, let’s dive into Issue Organizing Basics!

**0:05-0:20 Issue Organizing Basics**

0:05-0:08 Issue Campaigns and Vote Goals

* **[Slide 4]** What do we mean when we talk about issue organizing? What is an issue campaign? [Ask the audience and take 1-2 answers.]
* An issue campaign is a concerted effort to reach a specific vote goal on a specific piece of legislation. Does anyone know what the vote goals would be for a federal issue campaign? [Ask the audience to shout out their guesses.]
* **[Animation cue]** Every federal issue campaign has two vote goals - 218 votes in the House of Representatives, and 60 votes in the Senate.
* Now this is a lot like an election. **[Animation cue]** There are a bunch of voters - some of whom are definitely with us, some of whom are definitely against us, and a bunch of undecided people in the middle.
* **[Animation cue]** So when we think about our Members of Congress, we are really thinking about Undecided Voters, the people who need us to make a compelling case for why they should vote a certain way on a certain piece of legislation.
* So let’s take a minute to talk about persuasion.

0:08-0:15 Persuasion Case Study: Amy wants a bike

* **[Slide 5]** This is Amy and her mom. They were out running errands on a Saturday when Amy saw the most awesome bike in the world in a store window.
* We’re going to take some time to flesh out some details together about why Amy wants this bike and how she might go about convincing her mom to buy it for her.
* [Ask participants what Amy’s family structure looks like (are there two mom’s, single parent, nuclear family? Use a piece of flip chart to draw a picture of stick figures]
* [Lead participants through the case study using the guidelines below.
  + Who is the decision maker? Let the audience discuss and come to a consensus, then circle the decision maker - either Amy’s mom or Amy’s dad. Write “Decision Maker” beneath this stick figure.
  + Now we’re going to imagine we are Amy and form some arguments.
  + What does the decision maker stand to gain if Amy gets a bike?
  + Now, if you were Amy, and you’ve made an ask of the decision maker, and you’ve articulated this argument, but the decision maker still says no, what would you do next? Let audience discuss and come to consensus that she would go next to the other parent. Write “Influencer” beneath this other parent’s stick figure.
  + If you were Amy, what kind of ask would you make to the other parent? What does the other parent stand to gain if Amy gets her bike?]
* [The end goal of this exercise is for participants to understand the thought process behind identifying a decision maker, identifying key influencers, and developing a strategy to persuade the decision maker by using key influencers as messengers. See attached sample for a look at what a complete picture should look like.]

0:15-0:20 Persuasion Case Study: Montgomery Bus Boycott

* **[Slide 6]** Okay, so now that we’ve talked about identifying decision makers and key influencers, let’s talk about a more macro-level example of achieving social change through strategic thinking.
* We like to define strategy as using the resources you have to create the power you need to create the change you want.
* The Montgomery Bus Boycott is a perfect example of using this construct of strategy to achieve a goal.
* Can someone volunteer to briefly recount for us the facts of the Montgomery Bus Boycott? [Call on a participant to tell the story.]
* Great, thank you for that.
* **[Slide 7]** So let’s think about the Montgomery bus boycott in terms of strategy.
* [Ask the audience the following questions, and ask for people to raise hands or call out the answers. The answers you should be looking for are in brackets below]:
  + What was the change the boycotters wanted? [Desegregation of the buses.]
  + What were the resources they had? [Strength in numbers - many people--who were paying customers of the bus authority--wanted this change.]
  + How did they turn their resources into power? [They got a bunch of people to withhold their bus fare from the bus authority.]
  + How did this give them power? [The bus authority wanted to be as profitable as possible, and the boycott made them lose money. They became willing to change their policy in order to get what they wanted: more money.]
* **[Slide 8]** Excellent, so to recap some key lessons from these two case studies:
  + What we learned from Amy and her family is that for everything we want, every goal we want to achieve, there are decision makers, and there are influencers.
  + What we learned from the Montgomery Bus Boycott is that we can persuade decision makers - and deploy influencers to persuade decision makers - by appealing to their own self-interest and showing them that they can get what *they* want by giving us what *we* want.
  + This helps us understand that the people or groups with the most influence on a Member of Congress are usually those who can appeal to that Member’s desire to be reelected.

**0:20-0:55 Persuading Members of Congress**

0:20-0:30 Building a Case Study

* **[Slide 9]** So now, we’re going to try and apply these key takeaways to one of our Members of Congress.
* **[Slide 10]** So for this case study, we’re going to think about how we can get [Insert MOC name] to support [insert issue].
* Now, in order to persuade this Member of Congress, we have to figure out what it is s/he wants and who the effective influencers would be.
* The first step to figuring this out is just to get to know a bit about them.
* So we are going to take 5 minutes to fill in as much of this worksheet as we can, under the section “Knowing the Decision-Maker.” [Hold up the worksheet so participants can see what they should be working on.]
* Feel free to work with a partner, and feel free to use your phone or computer to conduct some research.
* [While participants brainstorm, prepare a sheet of butcher paper with the following phrases, so that participants can report back on their research:
  + Where does MOC live?
  + Previous offices
  + Prior career
  + Party affiliation in district
  + Religious affiliation
  + Organizational affiliations
  + Prior actions on issue
  + Other info
* [After 5 minutes, Have participants report back on what they learned from their research, filling in a little bit on each question.]

0:30-0:40 Identifying our Strategy (worksheet and/or discussion)

* Okay, now that we have had some time to research the Member of Congress, let’s think about our strategy for this issue. So we’re going to answer three key questions together. [This discussion can take place either in a full group or in breakouts, depending on the size.]
  + What is the change we want?
  + What are the resources we have?
  + How can we leverage our resources and turn them into power?

0:40-0:55 Collaborative Power Mapping

* **[Slide 11]** Okay, so now that we know our strategy and we know our Member of Congress, we’re going to try out this exercise called Power Mapping.
  + Power mapping helps us identify relationships that we can turn into power through effective tactics.
  + Using the issue and Member of Congress we’ve selected for our case study, we’ll walk through the 3 steps of power mapping together:
    - Brainstorm organizations
    - Assess influence (put them up on the power map)
    - Identify who you need to build relationships with, and what type
  + So for starters, go ahead and draw your power map on a sheet of paper, just like the one up here.
  + At the top, where it says “Decision maker,” we’re going to write the name of our Member of Congress.
* Step 1: Brainstorm organizations
* Our first step is to brainstorm organizations
  1. Let’s think about the groups who care about this issue and may be able to influence our primary target. We’ll just make a big list of them together.
  2. [Ask participants to shout out names of groups or people. Write them all down on a second piece of butcher paper without any commentary. If the room is quiet, prod by reminding participants that this is just a brainstorm - no bad ideas in a brainstorm!]
* Step 2: Place Organizations on the map
* Okay, our next step is to place these organizations on a map to assess their level of influence.
* [Pick out a few of the groups on the brainstorm sheet and ask the audience where they belong. A few examples around Gun Violence Prevention are listed below - but don’t use them unless they truly apply to your Member of Congress!]
  + 1. NRA - are they with us or against us? [Against us.] Do they have a lot of influence or no influence? [A lot of influence.] Why do they have a lot of influence? [They have a lot of money and they also have a strong affiliation with the MOC.] So we are going to put them in the upper right part of this map.
    2. Mayors Against Illegal Guns - are they with us or against us? [With us.] Do they have a lot of influence or no influence? [Quite a bit of influence.] Why do they have quite a bit of influence? [They have a lot of money, and they are spokespeople with real followings, many of them bipartisan.] Why do you think the Republican Mayors might have the most influence? [They are voicing their opinion in support of change, and many of the people who respect and listen to them are also this MOC’s voters.] Okay, so we are going to put them in the left part of this map, sort of toward the top.
* Step 3: Identify Priority Relationships
  + Now that we have a sense of who has the most influence on our MOC, we know who our secondary targets are.
  + With the groups on the left, who are influential and with us, what kind of relationship would you need to build with them? [Ask the audience to raise hands. Call on 1-2 people and guide them toward]: Right, you can build partnerships with them at an organizational level. You can plan events together, and pool resources to show greater strength in numbers. That’s great.
  + With the groups on the right, who are influential and against us, what kind of relationship would you need to build with them? [Ask the audience to raise hands. Call on 1-2 people and guide them toward]: It won’t be easy to build an organizational relationship with these organizations. In fact - it will probably be impossible and thus a poor use of our efforts. But at an individual level, we CAN build relationships. Individual members of this group who support us on this issue would be great validators for your events, because the Member of Congress will see that members of their own voting base may cease to support them if they do not vote the right way on this issue.
* Now, it’s great that we understand whom we need to build relationships with, but we can only turn those relationships into POWER through effective tactics, which we’ll talk about next.

**0:55-1:20 Planning Effective Tactics**

0:55-1:00 Tactic Scenario 1 Breakouts

* **[Slide 12]** In a moment, we’re going to breakout into groups of four, but please don’t move until I say go [depending on the size of the group, you can have people count off, have them just work with the people near them, or breakout in some other fashion].
* **[Slide 13]** Can I get a volunteer to read out this scenario and question for us? [Have a volunteer read the scenario out loud.]
* Okay, great, so we’ll break out into groups and discuss this scenario. After that, we’ll discuss it as a group, and then move on to a second scenario. Ready - go!

1:00-1:05 Tactic Scenario 1 Debrief

* Which group would like to share their plan? [Call on that group to share, and have a note taker write down toplines on a piece of butcher paper.]
* [Lead a discussion on the effectiveness of this tactic. Make sure the following points are hit on:
  + Does it use strong influencers, or does it use messengers that would actually alienate the MOC?
  + Does it appeal to the MOC’s self-interest?
  + Is it realistic to accomplish in the time allotted?
  + Is it a good use of time and resources?]

1:05-1:10 Tactic Scenario 2 Breakouts

* Okay, so now we are going to talk about another scenario.
* **[Slide 14]** Can I get a volunteer to read out this scenario and question for us? [Have a volunteer read the scenario out loud.]
* Okay, great, so we’ll do the same thing - discuss the scenario in our groups, and then discuss it as a large group. Ready - go!

1:10-1:15 Tactic Scenario 2 Debrief

* Which group feels really great about their plan? [Call on that group to share, and have a note taker write down toplines on a piece of butcher paper.]
* [Lead a discussion on the effectiveness of this tactic. Make sure the following points are hit on:
  + Does it use strong influencers, or does it use messengers that would actually alienate the MOC?
  + Does it appeal to the MOC’s self-interest?
  + Is it realistic to accomplish in the time allotted?
  + Is it a good use of time and resources?]

1:15-1:20 Tactics summary

* Great, so as we wrap up our discussion of tactics and get ready to debrief on the session overall, I want to highlight two key takeaways on tactics.
* **[Slide 15]** The first is that, every time we consider using a certain tactic to move a Member of Congress, we have to ask ourselves two questions: does it truly motivate the Member of Congress, and is it a good use of time and resources? If the answer to either question is no, then we shouldn’t be doing it.
* The second thing I want to highlight is part of an ongoing conversation we’ll be having as we plan out our calendars.
* **[Slide 16]** Every action should be part of a broader campaign that has both big splashes and a drumbeat to keep the heat on. If you look at this sample calendar, you’ll see a lot of different tactics, some ongoing, smaller tactics, as well as a big day of action in coordination with the rest of the country.
* We should always use lots of different types of tactics to create an ongoing drumbeat that makes us visible to our MOC day in and day out.

**1:20-1:30 Debrief, Next Steps and Closing**

1:20-1:30 Debrief, Next Steps and Closing

* **[Slide 17]** This brings us just about to the end of our session, but first, let’s review some key takeaways and talk next steps before we move to Q & A.
* **[Slide 18]** To review three key takeaways from the past session:
  + First of all, winning a federal issue campaign means meeting two vote goals by persuading Members of Congress. We are always after those magic numbers on a national legislative issue campaign.
  + Secondly, remember that Power Mapping helps you figure out how to persuade your particular member of congress
  + And finally, smart tactics are a worthwhile use of resources, and effectively motivate your Member of Congress.
* **[Slide 19]** [Discuss the next steps you’d like participants to take in order to put these skills to use taking action, or talk about additional training opportunities where they can refine their skills.]
* **[Slide 20]** Alright, and with that, let’s take some questions! We probably won’t get to every question, but will answer as many as possible.
* If you have more, please take a moment to write them down now, and ask them in your evaluation at the end of the day.
* [Answer questions for as long as time allows]
* Thank you!