

LWV WORKSHOP - GROUP EXERCISES PLANNING FOR A SUCCESSFUL CAMPAIGN

Exercise 1: Define your Goals

Using this space please identify your primary and secondary goals (there may be more than one secondary goal):

Examples:

- Stop/pass the legislation
- Increase membership
- Raise \$
- Increase standing in political world and be seen as leader in the coalition community
- Weaken your opponents
- Meet the requirements of funders
- Strengthen Organizations capacity at grassroots organizing
- Other:

Exercise 2: Define the Issue

Please fill in the following blanks in relation to the issue at hand:

The LWV of ___ believes. . .

Therefore . . .

Exercise 3: Assess your Organizational Capacity

	<u>STRENGTHS</u>	<u>CHALLENGES</u>	<u>HOW TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF STRENGTHS AND OVERCOME CHALLENGES</u>
STAFF			
MONEY			
REPUTATION			
FACILITIES			
ALLIES			
PRESS CONTACTS			
VOLUNTEER BASE			
OTHER			

Exercise 4: Identify Potential Coalition Members

Who shares your position on the issue?	What do they bring to the coalition?	Who else could they bring to the table?	Who could they alienate?	Other Info?

Exercise 5: Identify decision makers

First: Identify decision makers (legislators, governors, secretary of state, local elections officials etc)

Second: Determine if they are responsive to messaging from the grass roots/tops and/or public pressure and

Third: Identify other priority issues for the decision maker that you are actively supporting or opposing.

Who has the power (name/position)	Grassroots	Grass Tops	Public Pressure	Other Priority Issues?

Exercise 6: Establish a Timeframe

When do you realistically believe you can meet your primary goal? _____

Are there other goals that have a specific timeline? If so please list them here:

Exercise 7: Identify Tactics, Strategies and Goals

Tactics are tools used to implement a Strategy to obtain a Goal.

Please take a moment to identify Tactics and Strategies to obtain the stated Goal(s):

Tactic	Strategy	Goal

Exercise 8: Developing a Budget and Fundraising Plan

Item	Cost	\$ on hand	\$ needed	Priority?	Responsible party?	Funding source?
Staffing						
Copying						
Overhead						
Transportation						
Consultant(s)						
On-line advocacy						
mailing						

Messaging Tip Sheet: Creating compelling messages

Effective messaging is about narrowing the focus and making a few strong points that people will remember – rather than throwing out a variety of points and letting the audience decide which of these it wants to retain. Before you can decide what you want to say in these points, however, you need to answer a couple of questions.

Question One: Who are you trying to reach with your message?

The audience for your message should be as narrowly targeted as possible. Your audience should never be the general public – it is simply too big and diverse to reach everyone with a single message. Instead, you should select a very specific target that relates to your goal.

Example: The League is concerned that the state legislature may take up a proof of citizenship bill in the next few months and wants to stop the bill from becoming law. Potential audiences for its messages could include legislators, governor, funders, internal members, potential coalition groups, grassroots/tops. The audiences could be narrowed even further by selecting constituents of senators in four targeted districts. The narrower you are with your audience choices, the more your message will resonate with those audiences.

Question Two: What does your audience care about?

Messages that take into account the values and core concerns of the target audience are most effective. By tapping into your audience’s existing values, you can create common ground and more easily motivate them to act. These can be “big” values like fairness but they can also be “smaller” core concerns of fiscal restraint and/or prioritization of the issues.

Before you begin developing message points, take the time to think carefully about what your audience cares about. Be honest with yourself – the values of your audience may be different than your own values. Brainstorm a list of audience values, and then select the one that seems to be most important to your audience. You can review public opinion studies or even informally talk to members of your target audience for insights.

The important thing to keep in mind here is that you want to be sure that your message taps into one existing value that your audience already has – **not the value that you want them to have.**

Example: The League was fighting against proof of citizenship and photo ID requirements in the state. The League of Women Voters’ reason for fighting these policies is because *“The League supports full voting participation by all eligible American citizens and opposes efforts to create new barriers that block citizen voter participation. We therefore oppose ID and documentary proof-of-citizenship requirements”*.

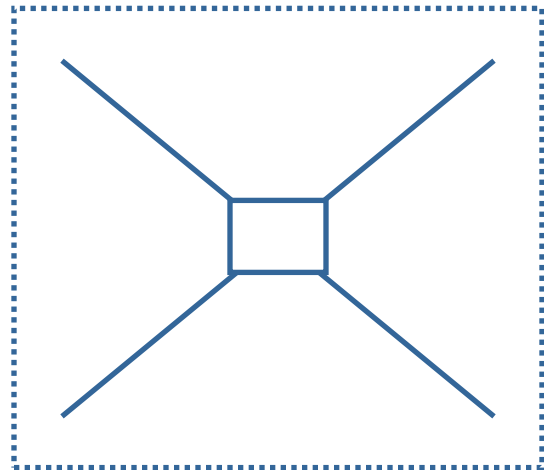
However, the general public and legislators were most concerned with the state of the state economy. Thus the message delivered to legislators was “we can’t afford to

implement a \$__ million a year program to fix a problem that doesn't exist – especially during a time of economic crisis in the state”.

Developing Message Points

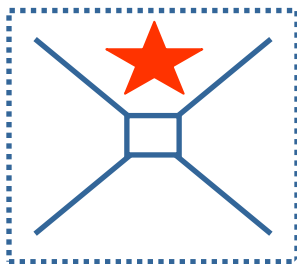
Once you know who you want to reach and have determined what they care about, you can create message points that will resonate with this audience. Good messaging has no more than four main points. These points need to be both concise and compelling. It is that easy, and that hard.

To help you think through your message points, try using a message box. The message box is in this shape for a reason. The circular nature of it reminds you that you can start at any message point and hop around to your heart's desire in a speech, during an interview, in a press release – any time you are communicating about your issue. Just stay in the message box. If the messages were presented in a linear fashion, the inclination would be to start at the top and work down. Instead, messages should remain flexible so you can deliver the ones that best fit an audience's knowledge and interest.



For each different target audience that you are trying to reach, you should have a different message box. This is because every audience has different values and your messages will be most effective if they are tailored to each of your target audiences. Tailoring your messages doesn't mean starting from scratch, but rather adjusting each of the points as needed for the new audience.

Once you have filled in the four core messages in your box (described below), you can develop supporting points for each message including compelling facts, stories and statistics.

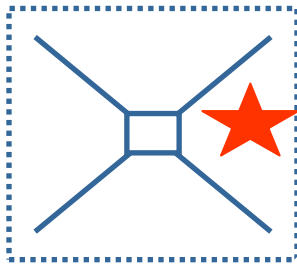


The Value Message

This is where you connect with your audience and tap into a specific value that your audience has. This message point reminds them of your common ground, or says something that will get them to agree or at least nod their heads. For newcomer audiences this is a point that you may spend a great deal of time on when making a speech or preparing materials. For the choir this is more of a touch and move on point.

Remind them quickly and move to other points that are more pressing.

Example: in the ID example the value message could be: “It would be wrong to erect barriers to voting that would stop eligible citizens from voting”.



The Barrier Message

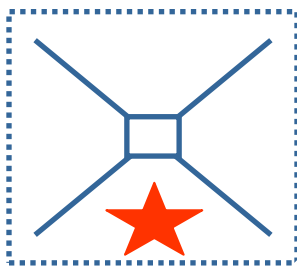
With so many different opinions out there, the chance for misconception is high. People may not realize the extent of a problem – or they may not realize they are basing all their decisions on an incorrect fact.

Think about all the seemingly credible stories you have heard that have ended up being urban legends. It took a lot of people passing around false information before the story made its way to you and countless others. It doesn't take long to take an incorrect fact and circulate it as the truth. The barrier message point addresses this challenge by countering your audience's key misconception about your issue.

The key to a successful barrier message is that you do not repeat your audience's misconception. Rather, you provide new or unexpected information to overcome this barrier to your audience buying in to your message.

Example: Proponents of photo ID and proof of citizenship requirements often try to make their case by falsely implying rampant voter fraud exists.

The League's response could be: *There has been no evidence of voter impersonation in the state. We need not fix a problem that doesn't exist. The Legislature should focus on provisions that would help improve polling place operations, foster effective training and recruitment of poll workers, and make election administration more efficient, secure, accurate and recountable.*

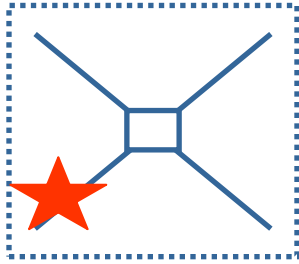


The Ask

At least one message point should be focused on getting the target audience to do something. What's the point in getting their attention if you don't use it to reach your goals? This is where the ask comes in – the more doable it is the better. Asking someone to save the children isn't helpful – it's overwhelming. People have no idea how to do this. Increasing a school budget to allow for more qualified teachers, however, is something people can get behind.

Example: In the ID example the "asks" may be:

1. Contact their legislator
2. Submit a letter to the editor to their local newspaper
3. Make a donation to help fight the barriers to voting
4. Forward the message to a friend



The Vision Message

This message point echoes the value message point. It says to people: If you do what I ask you to do, then you get what you want.

Example:

By rallying around the vision message, *then we'll have a fair, efficient, secure, accurate and recountable election system, Election reform advocates connected with the fairness value they originally touched in the value message*": It would be wrong to erect barriers to voting that would stop eligible citizens from voting".

Testing Your Message Box

Once you have finished your message box, pat yourself on the back. Then find a way to test your messages among some audience targets. This could be as simple as asking three or four members of your audience what they think, or it may mean fielding a state or local poll. Either way, try it out on someone who can evaluate the messages from a neutral standpoint – this rules out you and anyone who helped you complete your message box.

Exercise 9: Develop a Messaging Plan using Spitfire Messaging Tip Sheet

Check one:

- Decision Makers Internal/Coalition Members General Public

<p>Value Message</p>	<p>Barrier Message</p>
<p>The Ask</p>	<p>The Vision</p>

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Who is your policy maker target?

What do they care about most?

What do you want to ask of them?

What is most likely to stop them from doing what you want (barrier)?

Exercise 10: Getting on the same page

1. Identify who will be the spokesperson for the campaign:

- Organizational spokesperson(s): _____
- Coalition spokesperson(s): _____

2. Identify who will draft the talking points and briefing packets and when they will be completed:

- Drafts to be completed by (person responsible): _____
- No later than: _____

Exercise 11: Getting the message out

Please fill out the form below identifying the targets of each messaging tactic and if it is a priority (1 being highly important and 5 being not important at all)

	Decision Makers	Grass Roots	Grass Tops	Internal	General Public	Priority?
Action Alerts						
Earned Media						
Letter to the Editor/Op Ed						
Mailings						
Door to door campaigning						
Information tables						
List building						
Town hall meetings						
Questions at political debates						
Web sites						
Paid media						
Other						

Exercise 12: Managing the Plan

Please identify the following:

Who will lead this work for the organization and do they have the time?

Do you want a “smaller subgroup” to work on the issue and/or larger coalition group?

Identify budget constraints if any:

Exercise 13: Immediate Next Steps

Fill out the form below for any and all tasks that need to be completed by January 15, 2011

Task	Who is Responsible?	Due Date

Exercise 14: Evaluate your Success

Identify a date that you will return – post campaign – to evaluate your work

We will meet on or before _____, 2011

At that meeting or via questionnaires answer these questions:

1. Did you do what you said you would do in the timeframe given?

2. What worked/didn't work?

3. What would you do differently?
