

Campaign Strategy Newsletter 75 November 2011
Getting More Resources For Your Campaign

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It surprised me this year when a major campaign group I was running a few days training for (they have been around almost 40 years) declared that the most useful thing we'd covered in two days was the basic 'Campaign Planning Star'. You can find it online here <http://bit.ly/d3JEmy> and in my book *How To Win Campaigns: Communications for Change*, at <http://amzn.to/v9wXB7> along with more examples of each of the 'points'.

The Star 'points' are the point of the thing. It's a way to think about a concept – the rough idea for a campaign – without getting stuck in any one way of thinking. The five points can all be starting points but they always need to be factored into a concept before trying to turn it into a plan.

The change objective – this is the thing you want to change, preferably specified as a detectable 'state change' (not an ultimate aim or goal). This is also where rationalistic and policy oriented groups often get 'stuck' as they have so many objectives they are used to articulating in advocacy, and would like to achieve. But in the end you must have just one. This is the obvious place most groups start but it's not necessarily the best.

The Allies, Interests and Obstacles – the 'intelligence' about the 'situation'. Who the players are who really count, who controls important elements, who is already onside or against you or aware but indifferent, and who might come onside. This is the home territory of the 'Public Affairs' industry, and understanding this often sorts the well-informed campaigner from the enthusiastic but naive.

The Social Weather Conditions – or how change is happening these days. Trends, fashions, ways of communicating, ways of organising, shifting values, attitudes and beliefs and so on. This is the 'softest' and so the hardest area to investigate. It's the zone of psychology and sociology and systems, market research and political innovation.

The Communications Objectives – as distinct from the change objective (which you may also want to communicate of course). These are things that the organisation wants people to conclude as a result of the campaign, and are equally valid objectives, though ones that in many organisations only the management rather than the campaigners think about. Internally it is important that everyone involved knows about and accepts these – what the campaign 'says about' the organisation.

Last but not least, the Assets and Resources – the things you need to devise, organise and run the campaign, from logistics and equipment to people, knowledge, money and networks. Many campaigns fail simply because they are under-resourced: too ambitious.

Last week Cornelia Durrant sent me a great example of ingenious campaigning which increased the assets and resources available to a campaign. In this case it was *Occupy Wall Street* and it's on Youtube at <http://bit.ly/w1UBwR> - 'Keep Wall Street Occupied'. The concept is simple and clever and it's a version of the well worn tactic of reciprocity, or reversing the problem (or turning it inside out or upside down – try it for brainstorming).

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'Keep Wall Street Occupied' proposes that people sympathetic to Occupy Wall Street take junk mail sent to them by banks, credit card companies and other financial players, and send back the Freepost envelopes but without applying for whatever service is offered. This way the company which paid to have you sent junk mail has to pay for it to be processed.

The campaign even proposes ways to make this more effective, such as inserting bits of wood to make it heavier and rigid, so increasing the cost; or, enclosing suitable messages or additional literature. Have a look: the video explains the rationale of making the banks react to the consumer citizen. It's a way of pirating the opponent's resources to help run the campaign.

See also version two – using comparison and review websites to rate the ratings agencies, at <http://bit.ly/uCKLzw>

Reviewing 'What Makes People Tick'

My new book *What Makes People Tick: The Three Hidden Worlds of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers* was published last month. Back in 2009, unable to convince any agents or publishers that they ought to be interested in motivational values (a book about something they'd never heard of, from someone they'd never heard of, didn't sound a great idea in the depths of a recession) we lost patience and decided to self-publish it. You can buy it direct from me via <http://www.campaignstrategy.org/threeworlds/> or as a Kindle at Amazon <http://amzn.to/w14n0f> (unfortunately Amazon keep running out of paperbacks it seems). But what would be really great is if you read it and post a review. I hope campaigners find it useful.

Forecasts and Predictions

An awful lot of campaigns are about attempts to head off future problems. Dan Gardner's book *Future Babble* (Virgin 2011) is an illuminating account of why most predictions by experts are 'wrong', and why we so like to believe they will be right, and we conveniently ignore, forget or filter away evidence that does not fit what we want to believe.

Gardner's book shows clearly why it is easier if you can make your campaign about the present or the past, than about the future.

It contains many lessons for campaigners: the story of the baby photos in the wallet (which can also be found here <http://tgr.ph/72qKf>) is one of the more compelling examples of how our decision making is affected by our unconscious emotional hard wiring.

In that experiment, run a few years ago in Scotland, researchers left wallets lying in the street waited to see how many were returned. Each contained no money but an address and a small assortment of personal bits and pieces, such as a discarded raffle ticket, to make them feel genuine. The test part though was to see whether the rates of return were affected by personalising the wallets by including a photo. Some had no photo, others a baby, or an elderly couple, or a puppy, or a family. Here are the rates of return:

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baby – 88 percent return
puppy – 53 percent
family – 48 percent
elderly couple – 25 percent
no picture – 15 percent

They put what you could call the *Baby Effect* down to our evolutionary legacy. We are unconsciously 'programmed' to respond positively to babies. Indeed to any baby, even if it's not ours. Although on strict grounds of natural selection you might think we should ignore babies that are not ours, presumably the evolutionary advantage of playing safe and protecting a baby rather than 'stopping to think about it' is so vast that it outweighs other factors.

As to campaigns, if you can make them about/for babies in some way, you're probably onto a winner. Though puppies are not bad either. And families are pretty good.

Which is why I tried, unsuccessfully, to persuade climate groups before the Copenhagen 'summit' to frame climate action as being for, by and about 'families' rather than the atmosphere or the planet. Given a long list of identity factor choices, the British Values Survey (described in detail in *What Makes People Tick*, above) finds the most popular overall choice is 'being a parent'. This is so strong that even people without children will say it's important as part of their identity! Presumably this too, has evolutionary origins.

My favourite one liner from the book is this: *'politicians know predictions are about convincing people today, not being right tomorrow'*. Which is probably why there are no prizes for being right in campaigns, as if you win, and people have to reverse previous behaviours and opinions, they quickly and easily forget ever being 'on the other side'. Oh well.

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HOW TO WIN CAMPAIGNS pub April 7 2005 Earthscan by Chris Rose see

http://www.amazon.co.uk/exec/obidos/ASIN/1853839620/ref=ed_ra_of_dp/202-6151204-2796606 or from

<http://www.earthscan.co.uk/?tabid=102418>