



Understanding Issue Campaigns

The Bonner Community Engagement Curriculum

Overview:

Students will likely find themselves leading any number of campaigns: be it challenging a city ordinance, running for student government, or raising awareness/funds for a specific cause, the strategies for organizing your community with a campaign are fairly universal. This training seeks to examine a few of these tactics, and to engage students to think critically about how best to implement them.

Category:

Project Planning, Project Management, Goal Setting, Advocacy, General Leadership

Level:

Applicable towards all students that are interested in learning about leading action-plan and projects.

Recommended

Bonner Sequence:

This training is recommended for Bonner Students during the third year, or in conjunction with the 4 x 4 training on diversity and inclusion model. It is one of several modules that addresses social and political action connected with civic engagement.



**Third Year
Students**

Focus or Goals of this Guide:

- Participants will learn how to identify and assess issues or challenges that they want to take action on in their communities, connected to their engagement work.

- Participants will learn how different causes need specific awareness campaigns that are consistent with the cause.
- Participants will recognize effective campaign techniques and learn how to implement them under various situations.

Materials:

- Computer (with access to internet)
- Projector
- Flip Chart/Markers or Whiteboard/Markers
- Discussion Questions Handout

How to Prepare:

Review the trainer guide. Prepare the handouts and other materials for the workshop. Review and modify the workshop to fit the size of participants and issues.

Brief Outline:

This workshop is organized around leading participants through a series of tactics on how to run a campaign and have participants think critically about how best to implement them. The goal of this workshop is to educate students on different campaign styles and how to implement these different styles.

The outline for this 60 minute workshop has the following parts:

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|----------------------------|---------------------------|
| 1) Warm Up | suggested time 5 minutes |
| 2) Building a Campaign | suggested time 20 minutes |
| 3) Presenting the Campaign | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 4) Watching Videos | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 5) Discussion Questions | suggested time 10 minutes |
| 6) Wrap Up | suggested time 5 minutes |

Part 1) Warm Up

Suggested time: 5 minutes

To begin, have participants break into small groups and ask them to discuss the following question:

What is the most memorable awareness campaign you have ever seen?

Mention a few different campaigns that they will likely be familiar with, to ensure that participants have a clear understanding of what an awareness campaign is ("Save the Rainforest, Breast Cancer Awareness, etc.)

Part 2) Building a Campaign

Suggested time: 20 minutes

Assign each small group a single cause from the list below:

- Breast Cancer Research
- Penguin Conservation Efforts
- Finding long term housing for homeless individuals
- Nutritional School Lunches
- Raising money for a club ski trip
- Teaching Sub-Saharan Africans Computer Skills
- Earthquake relief in Haiti
- Hurricane Sandy relief in New Jersey
- Raising money for a fellow student/friend's hospital bills
- Teaching English to US immigrants

If your whole gathering has more than 10 groups, simply choose additional causes you are familiar with while trying to keep them mixed in terms of scale, seriousness, location, etc.

Once each small group has a specific cause, explain that they will be designing an awareness campaign around their specific cause. Small groups will each need to address the following specific elements of an awareness campaign. Questions listed are meant to generate conversation, but students should move beyond these introductory questions during their conversation.

1.) Funding

- How will your campaign finance itself? Will you make a bake-sale? Apply for multi-million dollar grants? Sell t-shirts? Organize benefit concerts?

2.) Image

- How will your campaign present itself to the world? Is there a particular demographic you want to target? What sort of image would they respond well to? Do you have a logo? What does it look like? Why?

3.) Language

- How will your campaign communicate to the world? What are keywords or phrases you'd like to include in your campaign? If you were to put together a 30 second elevator speech, what would it sound like?

4.) Reach

- How will you communicate your awareness campaign to the world? Do you need to make radio and TV advertisements? Will you send emails to all your contacts? Make T-shirts? Business cards?
- After 15 minutes have passed, ask participants to record the fruits of their conversation on their flipchart paper (along with any logos or slogans they might have come up with) and have groups assign a specific representative who will report back on their group's work.

Part 3) Presenting the Campaign

Suggested time: 10 minutes

One at a time, have participants come up and explain their campaigns to the rest of the group. Feel free to ask them questions about why they chose to do things a certain way, and encourage questions from the rest of the group (while keeping each presentation short enough so that everyone can go in 10 minutes.)

Part 4) Watching the Videos

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Show participants the below videos, explaining that each is part of a different awareness campaign with different goals and tactics. Ask students to watch for ways in which the videos are similar and ways in which they are different.

TOM's Shoes → <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KvpSIKoFWtl>

Team Rubicon → <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vFf9bTDT18Q&list=UUxa-qk7FDhHnjdVpDkxytQ>

LiveSTRONG → <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PAnRVaQ535I>

As you move into discussion questions, consider drawing participant's attention to the following ideas.

- Each organization has a different cause, and therefore their awareness campaigns (including these videos) took different directions.

- An organization like TOMS seems to be marketing towards young people that care about style and the social impact of their purchasing decisions. Is this why they're so popular, or are there other reasons?
- An organization like liveSTRONG focuses on the charisma and personal story of one inspirational figure. What happens when the image of that single figure is tarnished?
- Team Rubicon is an organization with a great cause, but it doesn't spend much on advertising or a flashy awareness campaign. Why not? What might happen if they did?

Part 5) Discussion Questions

Suggested time: 10 minutes

Distribute the attached hand out with discussion questions for participants to answer in their small groups.

- What makes each of these causes successful? What causes them to lose momentum/popularity?
- Does the way a cause try to gain momentum/attention have to be consistent with the cause itself? Why are some campaigns for a given cause "serious" while others are "funny." The three videos all seemed to have a different feel: why did that matter?
- Regarding the earlier activity:
 - Why did you chose to raise awareness/funds the way you did?
 - What was your favorite small group's cause? (besides your own) What did you like about it? Which was your least favorite? What didn't work well for you? Why?

Part 6) Wrap Up

Suggested time: 5 minutes

Close by asking to hear back from just a few people regarding what was discussed in their small groups, and then wrapping up the main points covered in the workshop. End by reminding students that as they go forward and organize campaigns of their own, there are many different choices to be made. By being aware of how their cause can be most effectively communicated to the world, participants have the best shot at making an impact with their work.

Credits:

- Updated in 2017 by Baneen Al-Akashi, Bonner at Allegheny College

Followed by Handouts:

- Discussion Questions (page 7)



Discussion Questions

- 1.) What makes each of these causes successful? What causes them to lose momentum/popularity?
- 2.) Does the way a cause try to gain momentum/attention have to be consistent with the cause itself? Why are some campaigns for a given cause “serious” while others are “funny.” The three videos all seemed to have a different feel: why did that matter?

Regarding the earlier activity:

- 3.) Why did you choose to raise awareness/funds the way you did?
- 4.) What was your favorite small group’s cause? (besides your own) What did you like about it? Which was your least favorite? What didn’t work well for you? Why?