

Create your campaign timeline

Campaigns live on events and actions. Those actions bring more people in, build relationships, teach about the issue, and ultimately put pressure on people to make change. This session helps a group think about the kinds of actions it will take!

Outcomes of this training

- A list of some of the events and actions that this group might take (including for the future)
- A draft plan for events/actions we will take, including what your next, first action or event might be!

Preparation

- Gather materials - you'll need paper, pens, paper plates, newsprint, markers, and a list of your "Demands and Goals" ready to display.
- Try to avoid giving answers - it is more empowering to ask questions and help the group realize how much they already know!
- If needed, have a conversation with your 350.org contact

After your workshop, you can email community@GoFossilFree.org with feedback from your group - what worked well? How can we improve this guide?

Suggested Workshop Outline

~90 mins	Activity
15 min	<p>Introduction</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By now your group should have some ways it likes to start opening its events: singing; reading, reflection, or prayers; a go-around introduction, or something else! • Review the purpose for the workshop <p>Mingle</p> <p>Have everyone get up and move around the space. Moving around the space, have people share answers to the prompts. Make this two rounds:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When I throw a party, I like to... (for example, I like to put up decorations... or I like creating invitations...) • When I think about our group doing events or actions, I might like to... (for example, I might like to talk... or I might like to make cake...)
5 min	<p>Introduction of the topic, review our demands and target</p> <p>Today we're going to talk about actions we might take. We're looking for some ideas on what we do to grow our group, build power, put pressure on our target, and win.</p> <p>Today let's think about '<i>actions that help recruit new people</i>' and '<i>actions that apply pressure to our target</i>'.</p> <p>Before we start, let's review our demands and targets. (<i>shows to group, read aloud</i>)</p>
30 min	<p>What would be a good way to start your campaign?</p> <p>In groups of 3 or 4, people will come up with actions they've <i>heard others doing or imagine doing</i> to recruit or <i>begin</i> to apply pressure on a target (so not a blockade, but things you'd do early in a campaign).</p> <p>Have people come up with recruitment actions (10 min). Then actions that target (10 min).</p>

	<p>Ask: “Which of these are easy to do? Which require more resources to pull off?” This is a great time for broad observations about what actions are helpful at this stage of a campaign.</p>
<p>10 min</p>	<p>Can you imagine creative actions to achieve each of your goals? (see how to lead this on page 4)</p> <p>People write on a piece of paper a goal they think is important for the group at this stage (such as “recruit older people” or “let our target know we’re after them”).</p> <p>Then, people pass around the paper – and each person writes a new action or event that might work for this group, to achieve this goal.</p>
<p>25 min</p>	<p>How can your group prioritize our goals, plans and actions? Now that we have some ideas for actions, we need to order them.</p> <p>Some come before others. So let’s think about the next couple of months. What are events we know we want to do? What are ones we just came up with that we think are good? It’s helpful to see a stream of actions – not just deciding one action at a time. But let’s see the arc.</p> <p>To do that, we’ll get into small groups again and build a “timeline” using the <i>paper plate challenge</i> (instructions on page 4).</p> <p>Each paper plate (or piece of paper) will be a tactic we want to do. Then we’ll place it in order (first, or maybe later?). That way we can share with everyone our thoughts on a timeline.</p> <p>See if you can agree on a next step to work towards!</p>
<p>5 min</p>	<p>Conclusion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● <i>When I think about one thing I’m looking forward to doing with this group, it is...</i> ● Feedback for the organizer: what was good about this training, what would you change for next time? ● What are the next steps? <p>When the work is done, finish with your group’s closing ritual!</p>

Exercise

The Action Accordion

Hand out blank paper to everyone. Begin by telling people: **“At this stage in our campaign life, what do you think is important we need to do? Think of a goal you think is important for the group at this stage, such as “recruiting older people” or “letting our target know we’re after them” or “showing the community there’s a group that cares about this issue” ... Then, write down that goal – in just a few words – on the top of the paper.**

Next, we’ll pass around the paper and each person will write down an action or event this group might do to achieve that.”

Each person will trade that paper with someone else.

Everyone will read the top description and write one tactic/action that could fit that description. The tactic does not have to be totally figured out or totally viable—but some idea may spark other good ideas.

Lastly, each person will fold up the bottom so their action isn’t visible, but the description still is (like an accordion) — and then pass to someone else in the group.

That person reads the description, writes another tactic, and folds up. Continue at least six or seven rounds — enough so that each paper is filled with several actions.

Share the exciting tools

This tool is great because people are both practicing coming up with new event ideas (great skill-building) *and* each person ends up with a list of events they might want the group to do!

After several rounds, have people return the pages to the original author. Have them read aloud events people find funny, interesting, exciting, different!

Have people share in small groups: *Any great ideas? An actions or two you especially want to do?*

Exercise - The Paper Plate Challenge

Campaigns aren't won all at once; instead, they are won through a series of actions. Yet, too often, we design only one action ahead of time. That can be a problem – when that action is over, people want to know what comes next. Right after the action they are energized and ready to do the next thing, and we lose that energy if we don't have the next step. This tool is about helping us plan ahead and keep momentum. It's a great tool to use after people have been thinking about possible tactics, or near the end of a campaign workshop to finalise a plan.

Step 1: Create groups and set-up

First, put participants into small groups – groups of four to five work well. Have the groups spread out around the room. Working in groups will help folks get new ideas, get feedback about the effectiveness of each tactic, and help decide the order of the tactics. Acknowledge up front that it may be difficult.

Give each group five or six paper plates (or anything else someone can write on).

Put a symbol, like a bowl of fruit, in the middle of the room and explain that this represents the vision of what we are trying to accomplish. It's what we are working toward.

Give the task:

On each paper plate, have participants write down a tactic or action that they think the group should do. Write each tactic/action on a single plate. After each group has a list they feel strongly about, invite people to start from where they are and put down their paper plates in an order the group could do the tactics/actions until they reach the bowl (or whatever symbol they are using).

Tell the groups that during this exercise they should consider: *How do these tactics fit together? What order makes the most sense? How would you use these tactics and actions to involve people outside of the campaign?*

This means they may want to re-arrange, or take out some tactics, or adapt them to be on a similar theme, or all focused on a single target.

Answer any questions — then let them do it! With very little preparation, you can get your group doing thoughtful strategy.

Step 2: Groups work

Have the groups start working. Depending on the group, they may need up to 40 minutes for this step. Disagreement and discussion among participants is great here for

learning. Facilitators should visit the groups and be very available for answering questions, giving support, coaching, and serving as a resource.

Groups may need some support around creating a good strategy. As you visit the small groups, you might want to offer them support to sharpen their thinking. Common principles for them to consider:

- **Comfort zone** • Is your group regularly doing the same actions? What are bolder actions you could do? This doesn't necessarily mean doing a high-risk action, like direct action. For example, one group was holding an award ceremony for core volunteers. To make it more challenging, they told each volunteer that they had to give a short speech about one thing they learned during the campaign at the ceremony. The result was an emotional, powerful awards party that took the group outside their comfort zone (read more about [expanding a group's comfort zone](#)).
- **Action logic** • To an outside observer, does your action explain who you are, what you want, and make them want to support you? *Action logic* is the degree your action makes sense, logically, from the standpoint of someone *not* in your group. The action should have a logic: this thing happened, therefore we will do this thing. This is particularly true in direct action, when you need to show the positive change you are trying to make, or the negative things you are trying to stop (read more about [action logic](#)).
- **Psychology** • Your action might be fun, or inspiring, or angering. Think about where your action leaves your participants. A people's movement fighting against a dictatorship designed an action this way: Toward the end of a massive rally and concert on New Years night, they abruptly stopped the party. They showed the names and faces of people killed by the government that year. Then they announced, "While the dictator is in power, there is no reason to party. When we overthrow the dictator, then we will party." Party-goers left with this powerful message on their minds.
- **Building a narrative** • Your actions should tell a story. How are they connected? How do they tell a single story of who you are and what you stand for? And, most importantly, can the media, an average bystander or your target understand and see that narrative?

As people are finishing, you might announce a break so that people can informally share with each other, spend part of the break finishing, or just read the other stepping stones.

Step 3: Short Debrief

After the break, spend a few minutes debriefing. Invite people to consider the usefulness of what they've just done.

Now, have the group share their plans. Look for common threads – and see if some actions get used more than once. If there are immediate overlaps, have them discuss. These are beginnings of a plan!

Go further

Links to campaigns resources on this topic

- Once you have some events confirmed, you'll need to think about who does them and how – so that one person doesn't do it all. Get some ideas in [How to get others involved](#)
- [Recruiting outside your social circle](#) – tips on recruitment
- [Creating powerful actions with strong action logic](#) – ideas to create powerful actions to put pressure on your target
- [How to create actions that will get media](#) (also see the Trainings website's resources on [Media](#))
- [How to create momentum](#) – some tips for thinking about action design, and especially how to energize a base of supporters

Stories from other organisers

- [How to get people to your events](#) (English-only)
- [Making escalated actions safe, even in repressive countries](#) (English-only)