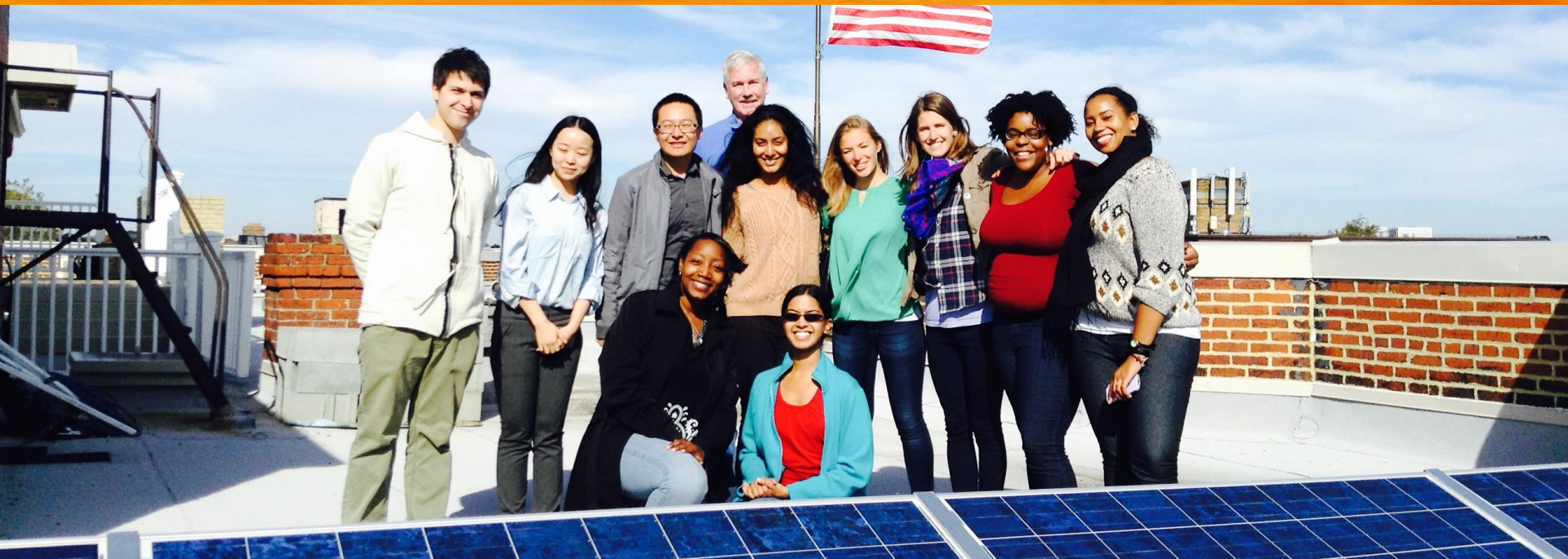




LOCAL ORGANIZING 101 TRAINING



Introductions



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SOLAR UNITED NEIGHBORS

We're a community of people building a new energy system with rooftop solar at the cornerstone.



over
100,000
supporters

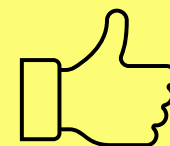


VA Victory: Legislation Transformation

- Since 2014, HOA's in Virginia had the right to “establish **reasonable restrictions** concerning the size, place, and manner of placement of... solar energy collection devices”
- Reasonable restrictions ~ up for interpretation

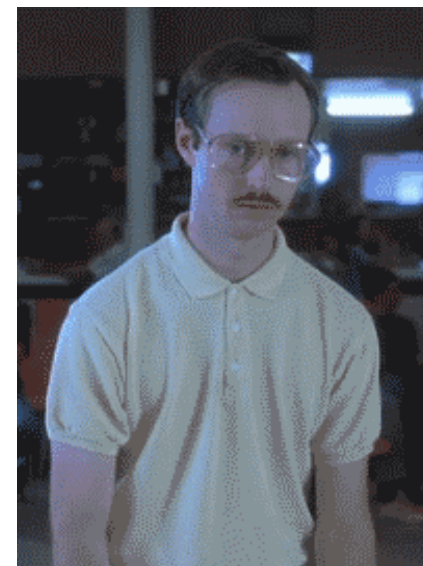
*** This prevented **300+ Virginia homeowners** from going solar and cost the state **more than \$7 million** in lost economic investment

- In March 2020, new legislation (Senate Bill 504, House Bill 414) was signed into law by the Governor
- **NEW LAW:** HOA restrictions are “unreasonable” if it
 - 1) Increases system cost by more than 5% over the proposed design
 - 2) Decreases system performance (e.g. energy production) by more than 10% over the proposed design



VA Victory: The Power in Community Organizing

- This is the result of **on-the-ground organizing work** by:
 - the staff, members, and volunteers of Solar United Neighbors
 - +
 - a diverse coalition of solar industry representatives, solar advocates, and environmental organizations
- Produced bipartisan support
 - Unanimous consent in the VA Senate
 - 95:4 in the VA House of Delegates



Objectives

- **Identify** problems we face and feel empowered to do something about them
- **Explain** what organizing is and why it works
- **Understand** the steps to launching a local campaign



Fact or Fiction?

Representatives always listen to reason and facts surrounding an issue.

Fiction: Our democracy is supposed to ensure that our representatives look out for our best interest, but they are often are also focused on appeasing stake holders, corporations and other entities influences that often overpowers public good.

Fact or Fiction?

Knowledge = Power

Fiction: Knowledge is imperative to organizing, but our power is wielded through collective organizing. I like to say that knowledge = important and is your responsibility. You have to build power.



What is power?

Organized resources and organized people



**Who has
power?**

Big Money •
Law • Consumers



**What is your
power?**

Collectivity

WHAT?

What is organizing?

- A powerful tool against corporate interests
- A method to build power
- Bringing people together to raise voices and create change
- Working toward systematic change

What goes into it?

- Planning
- Knowledge
- People Power

Faction or Fiction?

We win campaigns from our ability to bring direct pressure?

Fact: Direct pressure wins. Groups often have illusions of their own power that lead them to think they win because:

- They are right
- They are on their side
- They have the moral high-ground
- They have all the best information
- They speak for large numbers of people

CUTTING AN ISSUE

What are you trying to accomplish?

Ex: You want to retire a coal fired power plant near your community

Ex: You want to pass a bill that will move your city to 100% clean energy by 2035

Ex: You want to get your HOA to uplift a ban on rooftop solar in your neighborhood

Goal, Target, Strategy, Tactic



Goal: the thing you are trying to win or change



Target: the person who can give you what you want



Strategy: the theory for how you'll influence your target



Tactics: actions taken to build or show power

Fact or Fiction?

Your targets need to agree with you in order to win your campaign.

Fiction: They don't necessarily need to agree with you if you can appeal to their self interest

What is a goal?

It's what we want to achieve, stated in terms of strategy and timeline !!

3 Main Components of a Goal:

1. A target 🎯 (local, state, or federal)
2. A measurable action 🏃
3. A timeline
 - Short term = weeks, months
 - Long term = +1 year

Test it:

At the end of the timeframe, will you know if you won or lost? If not, revisit



But first...let's talk about pitfalls

- We often jump straight to tactics (hold a rally, gather petition signatures, make phone calls...) without SLOWING down and figuring out:
 1. What our goal is for the issue we are working on
 2. What our strategy is or our theory of change to reach our goal
- We often assume the “bad” or “mean” elected official is the person we should be putting pressure on (targeting).
- Other pitfalls?



A SMART Goal

- **S**pecific (simple, sensible, significant)
- **M**easurable (meaningful, motivating)
- **A**chievable (agreed, attainable)
- **R**elevant (reasonable, realistic and resourced, results-based)
- **T**ime bound (time-based, time limited, time/cost limited, timely, time-sensitive)



What's an example of a goal with these components?

3 Main Components of a Goal:

1. A target  (local, state, or federal)
2. A measurable action 
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 - Short term = weeks, months
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Targeting & Power Mapping

Take time to research the following:

- Vulnerability of target
- Opposition
- Our organization' s/ your networks access and resources
- Political aspirations of target
 - Human traits
(e.g. take on a challenge, or fold under pressure?)
 - Donations
 - Self-interest
- Relationships: learning the self interest of all players connected with your primary target.

Goal, Target, Strategy, Tactic



Goal: the thing you are trying to win or change



Target: the person who can give you what you want



Strategy: the theory for how you'll influence your target



Tactics: actions taken to build or show power

Strategy

Strategy =
theory for
how you are
going to WIN



Four Steps to Developing a Strategy:



01

Choose the lowest on the totem pole that can get the goal done)



02

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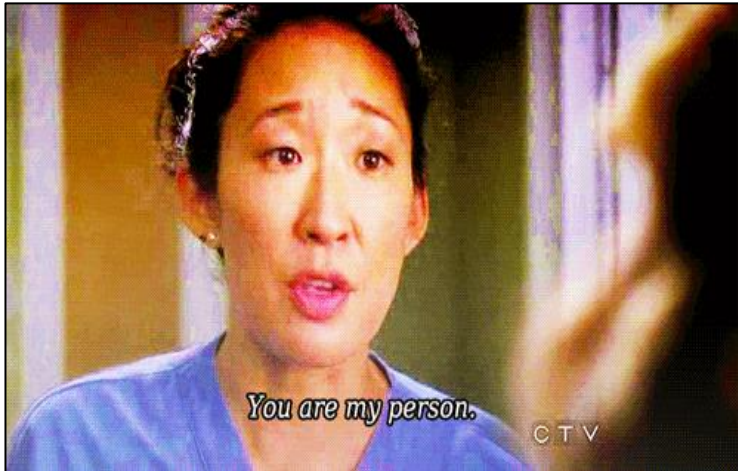
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First you do research on who your target will be....



Then you decide which strategy to use.

These 4 strategies are...

Hero Opportunity



Convincing them of
their self interest



Persuasion

Convince someone to solve it --

Usually only happens if our self interest and their self interest is already aligned and we “show them the light.”

Pressure: Creating change using public action



Cover

Making it easy for them to do the right thing



TYPES OF STRATEGIES CONTINUED

	Constituency is with us	Constituency/ other interests is against us
Target with us	Hero opportunity/ Persuasion	Cover
Target against us	Pressure	X

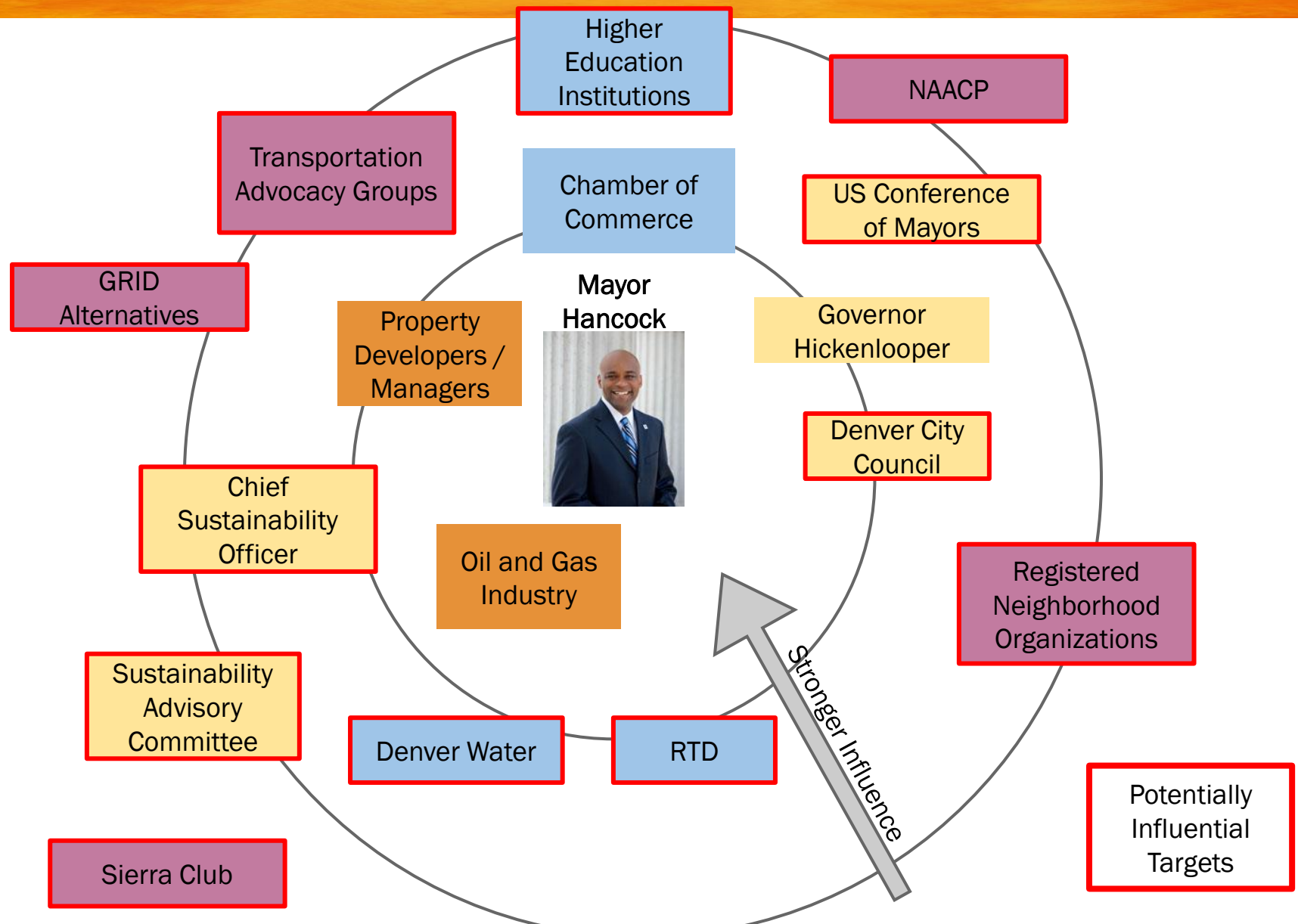
If in the lower right quadrant – lacking leverage

- Choose a different target
- Choose a different influential constituency
- Choose a different campaign

CASE STUDY: READY FOR 100



Ready for 100 Power Mapping



Tactics

- SPECIFIC ACTIVITIES used to influence the power map and implement the strategy



Choosing Tactics

IMPORTANT: There are common tactics used frequently on many campaigns. Only use tactics that actually implement your strategy – do NOT use a checklist of tactics that do not contribute to your specific goal/strategy.

Tactic Menu:

Tactics menu:

1. Lobbying
2. Media
3. Coalition building
4. Research/reports
5. Rally
6. Other

These are common tactics used frequently on many campaigns. Only use tactics that actually implement your strategy – do NOT use a checklist of tactics that do not contribute to your specific goal/strategy.

Note: Tactic does NOT = campaign

Example: Virginia Victory, Goal, Strategy, Tactics

Goal: Remove the #1 barrier to residential solar deployment (i.e. 300+ installations blocked since 2014) asap.

Strategy: Target those in position of power to help us overcome barrier: Legislators/Governor

Tactics:

- Built diverse coalition (industry, enviro, our network, legal expertise)
- Engaged Bill patrons early on: Found well-respected patrons
- Lobbied and showed grassroots support: Action alert, phone to action, in person,
- Spoke at committee hearings
- Engaged listserv- frequent updates etc.
- LTE's from affected people
- Engaged HOA representatives (i.e the other side) came up with consensus language that we could both live with
- Used opportunity to build trust with other side with goal of longer term relationship



Last Tips

1. You can escalate, but you can never de-escalate
2. Look to use as few resources as possible while building as much as possible
3. The more fun things are, the more opportunity there is for team and organizational building and long-term power

Takeaways

- Please chat in: 1 thing you learned
1 lingering question



Thank you!

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