

Checklist for Choosing an Issue

A good issue is one that matches most of these criteria. Use this checklist to compare issues or develop your own criteria and chart for choosing an issue.

Issue 1	Issue 2	Issue 3	Will the Issue ...
			1. Result in a real improvement in people's lives
			2. Give people a sense of their own power
			3. Alter the relations of power
			4. Be worthwhile
			5. Be winnable
			6. Be widely felt
			7. Be deeply felt
			8. Be easy to understand
			9. Have a clear target
			10. Have a clear time frame that works for you
			11. Be non-divisive
			12. Build leadership
			13. Set your organization up for the next campaign
			14. Have a pocketbook angle
			15. Raise money
			16. Be consistent with your values and vision

Midwest Academy Strategy Chart

After choosing your issue, fill in this chart as a guide to developing strategy. Be specific. List all the possibilities.

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies, and Opponents	Targets	Tactics
<p>1. List the long-term objectives of your campaign.</p> <p>2. State the intermediate goals for this issue campaign. What constitutes victory?</p> <p><i>How will the campaign:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Win concrete improvements in people's lives? • Give people a sense of their own power? • Alter the relations of power? <p>3. What short-term or partial victories can you win as steps toward your long-term goal?</p>	<p>1. List the resources that your organization brings to the campaign. Include: money, number of staff, facilities, reputation, canvass, etc.</p> <p>What is the budget, including in-kind contributions, for this campaign?</p> <p>2. List the specific ways in which you want your organization to be strengthened by this campaign. Fill in numbers for each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expand leadership group. • Increase experience of existing leadership. • Build membership base. • Expand into new constituencies. • Raise more money. <p>3. List internal problems that have to be considered if the campaign is to succeed.</p>	<p>1. Who cares about this issue enough to join in or help the organization?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whose problem is it? • What do they gain if they win? • What risks are they taking? • What power do they have over the target? • Into what groups are they organized? <p>2. Who are your opponents?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What will your victory cost them? • What will they do/spend to oppose you? • How strong are they? 	<p>1. Primary Targets</p> <p>A target is always a person. It is never an institution or elected body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? <p>2. Secondary Targets</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who has power over the people with the power to give you what you want? • What power do you have over them? 	<p>1. For each target, list the tactics that each constituent group can best use to make its power felt.</p> <p>Tactics must be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In context • Flexible and creative • Directed to a specific target • Make sense to the membership • Be backed up by a specific form of power. <p>Tactics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media events • Actions for information and demands • Public hearings • Strikes • Voter registration and voter education • Law suits • Accountability sessions • Elections • Negotiations

Strategy Chart for _____ .

Goals	Organizational Considerations	Constituents, Allies, and Opponents	Targets	Tactics

Checklist for Tactics

All tactics must be considered within an overall strategy. Use this checklist to make sure that the tactics make sense given your strategy.

_____ Can you really do it? Do you have the needed people, time, and resources?

_____ Is it focused on either the primary or secondary target?

_____ Does it put real power behind a specific demand?

_____ Does it meet your organizational goals as well as your issue goals?

_____ Is it outside the experience of the target?

_____ Is it within the experience of your own members and are they comfortable with it?

_____ Do you have leaders experienced enough to do it?

_____ Will people enjoy working on it or participating in it?

_____ Will it play positively with the media?