Identifying the Right Issue

WHAT DO WE WANT?

With the passage of new federal welfare reform, Mayor Rudolph Giuliani is free to put thousands of welfare recipients into the largest workfare program in the country, the Work Experience Program (WEP). The welfare office starts calling in welfare recipients who are also members of Community Voices Heard (CVH) to give them their assignments. (For background on WEP and CVH, see “The Story of Community Voices Heard,” p. xxxi.) They will have to spend up to thirty-five hours a week doing maintenance and office jobs in city agencies or nonprofit organizations, along with a combination of other work activities, for which they will not receive a salary. If they don’t agree to take these assignments, they will lose their minimal cash and other benefits.

Mothers with young children scramble to figure out child-care arrangements. Many students have to leave college and educational programs. In Central Park and other city parks, the sight of older women stooping down to pick up garbage, wearing baggy orange vests and a pair of flimsy gloves as their only equipment, becomes commonplace.

CVH organizers go out into the field to talk to WEP workers before and after their work shifts and during lunch breaks. In conversations and impromptu meetings in locker rooms and lunchrooms, workers sign pledge cards and fill out surveys. At meetings at the CVH office, they say they like working and want to work, but the issue is starting to become clear: WEP workers want a paid job with living wages, education, training, and access to a better life.

What Is Issue Identification and Why Is It Important?

Issue identification—or issue ID—is a research and data-collection step. It is the first step an organizer and leaders take when they are ready to take on a new campaign. By engaging in issue identification, you ensure that you choose issues that truly matter
to members and constituents, so that you can mobilize and build your membership effectively.

Through issue ID, you go beyond recognizing that a problem exists to focusing on how constituents want to address it. You begin to assess how willing people are to come out and make a specific solution happen and how possible it is for them to achieve what they want.

**What’s the Difference Between a Problem and an Issue?**

*An issue is the solution to a problem.*

A community power-building organization never organizes around the problems of individuals. It organizes to advance solutions to collective problems that have a systemic cause.

For example, if you are a college student and the finance office does not send your work-study check on time, you have a problem. In order to resolve it, you make a phone call and get the check, or a student advisor advocates for you. But that is not organizing. You organize when you talk to other students and learn that no one gets her or his check delivered on time. You have begun to identify a systemic problem. The office will probably not get your next checks out on time either. When you find out you all have this same problem, you can identify an issue. You can set out to make the finance office function correctly.

Table 7.1, Problems or Issues? further illustrates the differences between problems and issues. In addition, Exercise 7.2, Issue ID: The Problem Tree, trains people to distinguish between a problem and an issue.

**Who Does Issue ID?**

*To guide the ID process, the organizer assembles a leadership team of people who are directly affected by the issue and able to spend some time developing the campaign.***

The team includes both experienced leaders and newer people. It is not a closed group. (For more on how to develop a leadership team, see Chapter One.) The leadership team works with the organizer to help set up a framework for engaging in issue ID, including identifying the best tools to use, how many people to talk to, and what issues and demands to test with a broader group of people.

**What Makes an Issue the Right Issue?**

*The right issue moves people to participate and inspires them to lead a successful campaign.*
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is going on?</td>
<td>A local company is dumping toxic waste in a local lake.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who deals with this?</td>
<td>Someone with power, resources, or access, such as an elected official or reporter who can bring attention to the problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the goal?</td>
<td>The dumping stops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What gets fixed?</td>
<td>The current dumping stops.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who holds power?</td>
<td>Elected official or reporter.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What power change takes place?</td>
<td>None.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>End result</td>
<td>The problem gets addressed, but the system that addresses and stops toxic waste dumping and spills does not. If it happens again, the community has to start over.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A group of residents who live near the lake and use it and are concerned about the environment and their health.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>A system or institutional change occurs that stops the dumping and ensures that the dumping does not happen again.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The system for investigating and responding to toxic waste dumping and other environmental issues changes and improves.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The community residents affected by the toxic waste dumping can make a difference.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The community gains strength and influence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>When the community addresses the dumping by getting more agency staff to investigate and stop toxic dumping, there is a greater chance that if the problem happens again, it can be addressed quickly.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Here’s how you know if you have chosen the right issue:

• **It resonates.** The issue is important to the people who experience the problem it resolves. It makes them animated and angry.

• **It delivers.** Winning on the issue delivers a concrete, positive change that will make people’s lives better.

• **It’s winnable.** It is possible to win what you want.

• **It has a clear target.** There is one specific person who can give members what they want. This person is known as the target of the campaign.

• **It builds power.** The issue strengthens your organization and brings in new resources—members, relationships, allies, and funds. It unites rather than divides people in the organization.

• **It supports your mission and values.** The right issue is within the parameters of your organization’s work.

**How Do We Identify the Issue?**

You identify the right issue by going out, talking to people, and asking questions.

There are three main tools to identify issues: surveys or questionnaires, individual meetings, and small group meetings.

**Surveys or questionnaires.** These tools ask people clear and pointed questions about problems in the community. You administer short surveys or questionnaires in person or over the phone. Surveys offer a good leadership development activity when you train working members, leaders, and volunteers to administer them. They also help you get updated information about members. See Tool 7.1 for tips on how to do a phone survey and a sample phone survey conversation. See Tool 7.2 for a sample issue survey.

**Individual meetings.** When you sit down and talk with individuals, you can probe and have deep discussions. Individual meetings take time, but they give you better information than phone conversations. You can ask more open-ended questions, get people to talk more about problems and issues, and engage in political education. In the following example, Michael, the organizer, probes in a number of areas to help Robert hear things that resonate with his experience. Michael makes choices about how to steer the conversation based on the focus of the organization and what he and the leadership team have been hearing from other people.
Robert (Constituent): I called my landlord five times about my leaky roof. My apartment is full of mold and the kids are getting sick.

Michael (Organizer): When it rains, can you tell me what happens in your apartment and how it affects other people in the building?

Robert: My neighbor across the hall has it too. Her walls are starting to crack. And Number Five downstairs—their ceiling is falling down from the water.

Michael: What other buildings in the neighborhood does the landlord own?

Robert: He’s all over town. He goes from building to building in his fancy car . . .

Michael: The city just passed a new law increasing penalties against landlords who repeatedly violate health and safety codes. Has the city filed a complaint against him before?

Robert: I don’t know.

Michael: We have to find out. If the landlord does not respond to your phone calls, what do you think he might respond to?

Small group meetings. These meetings bring people together to share and discuss their ideas and concerns. Small group meetings give people an opportunity to see their connections on an issue. Small group meetings can be house meetings in people’s living rooms, or they can take place at the organization’s office or at other community sites. Tool 7.3 gives details on house meetings, along with a sample house meeting agenda. Here’s an example of how a small group meeting might happen at a work site.

Identifying an Issue Using Group Meetings

In the offices of a cramped city agency overlooking 125th Street, twenty women on welfare move files from one cabinet to another. Water leaks from a ceiling pipe in the center of the room, splashing loudly into a plastic bucket. Dust fills the air. With the windows sealed shut, the women cough repeatedly. Just two weeks after being forced into this workfare assignment, some have already suffered asthma attacks.
When Paul, organizing for CVH, meets with them during their lunch break, he talks with them about their right to a healthy work environment. Even though conditions are bad, most of the women believe they are on the path to work so do not want to cause a stir.

Their feelings soon change. When Paul returns a few weeks later and asks about what is going on at the work site, the women vent their frustrations. “I have been working here for five weeks. They told me I would get a job, but all I am doing is working for the city for free,” says a young mother. “They just make you work to work—for no reason,” another woman complains. She says that she doesn’t even mind coming in every day if she learns some skills, but all she is doing is carrying wet boxes from one room to another. “This is not helping me get off welfare. It's keeping me stuck on welfare,” she insists. Several of the women are visibly sick from the dampness and dust. When Paul asks why they think they are there, they say they understand two things: “They either want us to leave welfare or do city work for free,” as one woman explains. “Either way, the mayor saves money for his rich friends,” she continues. Paul asks them what they want the city to do, and their discussion leads them to agree: they want paid jobs with training. When Paul passes around a sign-up sheet, eighteen of the twenty women write down their names and phone numbers so he can call them about the next CVH meeting.

How Do We Make Sure We Get to the Issue and Not Just Talk About Problems?

When using issue ID tools, you lead the dialogue and use issue probes in ways that accomplish the following:

Get specifics. If a person says “housing” is an issue, ask what he means by housing. Try to get as specific an answer as possible. Does he mean building more affordable housing or problems with housing conditions?

Identify commonalities. Guide people to distinguish between problems and issues. Where have they identified similar problems? Do they see the same potential solutions?

Prioritize issues. When the individual or group has come up with some issues, have people vote or prioritize what they would like to work on.
Test potential demands. Once the leadership team starts to get a sense of the issue, it drafts a campaign goal and potential demands. When on the phone or out in the field, you start to test these demands with people you talk with.

How Many People Do We Have to Talk To?

Good issue ID requires hundreds, sometimes thousands, of conversations.

You don’t rely on the perspectives of a handful of people or the opinions of “experts” who are not directly affected. You go out and talk with people. Exercise 7.1, What’s the Issue? offers a way to train members to practice identifying an issue.

If People Identify an Issue, Will They Organize for It?

Not necessarily. Sometimes people identify an issue that is immediate and important, but this does not mean that it is the issue they will put the time and energy into addressing.

For example, at the early CVH welfare reform teach-ins at social service organizations, homeless shelters, schools, and Head Start programs, Gail Aska repeatedly heard mothers on welfare identify the low level of the welfare cash benefit as the biggest welfare-related problem in their day-to-day lives. Finally, she asked people directly, “Would you come to meetings and work with other women to raise the welfare grant?” Their answer was clear: no. Probing, she learned why they would not organize for a benefit increase. Some did not think welfare would be around for much longer. Some bought into the argument that welfare was essentially bad. Overall, most of the women believed that getting a living-wage job was the best thing they could do for themselves and their children.

What If People Identify an Issue That’s Different from What Our Organization Usually Works On?

You make decisions about the issues you take on based on the mission of your organization and what you can and cannot do.

Even though community power-building organizations are constituent-led, this does not mean the organization changes its focus every time new people get involved. The organization has a mission as well as members, funders, and supporters to whom it is accountable. Everyone doing recruitment for the organization and inviting people into the issue ID process is clear about the parameters of the work. You don’t just start in a whole new direction, even if an issue is important.
Sometimes the members look to another organization that works on an issue that is affecting them. For example, an organization that works on low-income housing development engages in issue ID and learns that most of the people surveyed identify classroom overcrowding and poor conditions at the local public school as something they are concerned about. The housing organization, due to its mission statement and limited resources, refers these individuals to a neighborhood organization engaged in a campaign to improve public schools, rather than develop a new campaign. When there is no other organization working on an issue members identify, they can make the strategic decision to expand their organization's issue focus. But this should be an organization-wide decision that includes board and other leadership.

**How Long Does It Take to Identify an Issue?**

*One organizer working full-time with a leadership team and a base of members should be able to develop an issue in four to ten weeks.*

For a reactive or defensive campaign, the time frame for issue ID may be shorter. If, for instance, the community has just learned of a cell-phone tower being erected near an elementary school, the issue gets defined very quickly as stopping the tower. The length of the issue ID process depends to some extent on the immediacy of the problem.

Table 7.2 shows how and when you generally use the issue ID tools. You can use this as the basis for establishing a plan for engaging different types of members, leaders, and potential members. You set goals for the numbers or activities you will undertake, such as small group meetings, as well as the number of people you will reach in each category of membership.

Once you identify the issue, you draft a goal and define concrete demands for a campaign, as we describe in the following sections.

**What Is a Campaign Goal and How Do We Develop It?**

*The campaign goal is a statement about the issue that addresses the big-picture change you want to see. Members develop the campaign goal as they understand why the problem exists and who benefits from it.*

A good goal provides a hopeful vision. It gives the campaign a clear focus. You are explicit about where you are heading so you do not bounce from activity to activity. In a community power-building organization, the goal is often a statement.
for change, not just for reform. For example, in CVH’s Transitional Jobs Campaign, the goal was “End WEP.” It was not “Improve WEP” or “Reconsider WEP” CVH staked out a position that would shift the debate on the issue and clearly state what members wanted.

Political education helps stimulate conversation about what people ultimately want to reach for. In meetings and one-on-one conversations, members discuss the big picture and decide on the statement they want to make about the issue.

**What Other Goals Does a Campaign Have?**

*You establish goals to build your organization internally, especially membership and resources.*

Internally, a campaign may seek to organize a new constituency, develop new leaders, raise your profile, or build your influence with allies and stakeholders. For
example, if your organization decides to improve transit services so that children can get to school safely, but your organization only organizes parents of public school students, you set a goal to bring in public transit riders.

**What Is a Campaign Demand?**

*A campaign demand is the actual program, administrative procedure, or policy that you want to create or change.*

A demand is a concrete, measurable request that you make of an individual person. Every campaign must have a demand.

A demand can be for a social policy: We want you to support a bill that will create jobs for 3,500 people. It can be an administrative demand: We want you to release funding for a jobs program that has been in the city budget for the past three years, or we want you to update the college computer systems so that work-study checks arrive on time.

A demand can be proactive: We want you to require the company to clean up its toxic waste. It can be reactive: Stop the plan to store toxic waste at this location.

“Jobs Now!” is not a demand. A statement like this is a slogan.

A demand requires a clear yes or no answer. This component is essential for evaluating whether the target, who is the person who can give you what you want, supports you or not. A demand that requires a yes or no answer is effective, in part, because it is not what most elected officials, administrators, and corporate executives usually experience. They can usually avoid saying yes or no and instead dance around the question.

A campaign can have more than one demand but generally not more than three. Multiple demands need to be extremely focused. Presenting a laundry list of demands is no more effective than chanting about broad social problems.

**How Do We Develop Campaign Demands?**

*You do effective research to find out what will fix the problem. The leadership team talks with members and leaders to create a solution that truly represents what they want.*

Throughout demand development, you do political education with members so they understand how agencies and institutions work. Sometimes, particularly with policy and legislative demands, you work with intermediary or technical assistance groups that help you develop a bill or program to fight for. You always in-
clude members in working with these groups. Following are the steps in developing campaign demands, with an example of how they play out.

Members identify the issue. Through extensive issue ID, members say they want more social service programs for seniors.

Leadership team researches the issue, determines potential demands. The leadership team talks with the city’s department of aging as well as local senior groups and elected officials. Team members conduct Internet research on models for senior service programs.

Team develops a list of possible demands. Team develops possible demands based on its research and discussions with a group that specializes on public policy and the aged. Possible demands include more funding for current programs, more senior programs in public schools, and funding and a request-for-proposals process for community organizations to develop and run new senior service programs.

Team surveys members about possible demands. Organizer and leaders call members who would benefit from this campaign, such as seniors and people with senior parents. Organizer conducts one-on-one visits with people in their homes. The goal is to identify the priorities people have, given the range of possible demands. The team also directly asks people if they would work on a campaign to get the demands they name.

Team surveys additional constituents. The team surveys seniors in the community. It may decide to use a written survey form as a tool for having organized conversations. The goal of this survey process is to get information about the demands. Similar to recruitment, you collect names and contact information. But because the purpose is data collection, you usually do not follow up with people immediately, as you do in recruitment. Eventually, you contact the people you surveyed to try to get them involved with the campaign. But this step may be three weeks or three months after you meet them. It will be harder to recruit them after so much time has lapsed, so the numeric goals and your time and effort are different.

If the team is using a written survey, it may survey current members of the organization as well by calling them or talking with them when they come to the office for meetings.

Team analyzes survey responses. The team meets to analyze responses. They guide their analysis with some pointed questions, including asking if they themselves would come to meetings and work over the long term to win the demands. Would their friends, family, neighbors work on this issue? Why or why not? The team
members also consider what they experienced while surveying and talking with people. Were the people they spoke with agitated or neutral? Did they name what they wanted right away, or did the team members bring them to the demands?

Members meet to choose demands. The organization holds a meeting with members and constituents the team met during the demands-development process. The leadership team presents the proposed goal, the survey responses, and the proposed demands. It either puts the demands forward as decisions already made, or it asks the fuller group to make decisions about what the demands will be. In either case, staff and leaders explain how they came up with the demands and educate people about the reasons behind their recommendations.

By the end of this meeting the organization agrees on one demand: more funding for existing senior programs. Like everything in campaign development, a full group of members will ratify and activate this decision later, when the organization writes its final campaign plan.

What Is a Target?

The target is the person who can meet your demands.

Once you decide what you want, you figure out who can give it to you. You analyze how much power your organization has to move this person. The target is always the person who can give you what you want, the lowest-ranking person who can meet the demands, an individual—not an organization or a group of people—and someone your organization has or can build enough power to move.

You always select a primary target of the campaign. In addition, you may choose a secondary target or targets. A secondary target can influence the target in ways your organization cannot. More on secondary targets follows later in this chapter.

How Do We Do Target Identification?

Target ID is a research process. You answer the following two questions as thoroughly as possible:

Who has the power on your issue? Who can pass the bill you want, create your program, or stop the practices that are harming members of your community? Who is the lowest-ranking person who has the legal administrative power to give you what you want? The target is not necessarily the person with the most power. Someone much lower in a structure may be the person who can make the decision and who your organization can move. You may start out thinking you want to go
after the governor, but when you look more closely at the issue, you realize that a commissioner is actually the person who can deliver on your demand.

To whom is the potential target accountable? If it is an elected official, is she accountable to other elected officials, interest groups, campaign contributors? If it is a private citizen, is she accountable to shareholders or trustees? The answer to this question starts to tell you if you have the power to move this person. It also helps determine what secondary targets you might need to establish.

To do target research read the newspaper, go to the library, use the Internet, and talk to colleagues and allies. Review laws, administrative practices, or statutes. Explore which city government agencies control programs, finances, and administration relevant to your issue. Talk to lawyers, government officials, or staff of agencies and departments. For corporate issues, examine materials such as organizational charts, reports, or company Web sites.

In Chapter Eight, we describe how to analyze your ability to move a target and more fully explore where to find information about targets. See Tool 7.4 for questions to use to begin to identify your campaign target.

What Is a Secondary Target?

A secondary target is a person who can get the primary target to do what you want.

Sometimes you do not have enough power to move the target. Instead you can move someone who does have power over the person who can ultimately meet your demands. This person is a secondary target. You must have the ability to get him to do two things: take a position on your demands and move the primary target.

Just as you need to understand the power, accountability, and position of the primary target, you need to know the same things about the secondary target. In addition, you must be totally clear about what you want that secondary target to do.

For example, the speaker in the state legislature is the person who can give you what you want. But you do not have any members in his district, so it will be hard to influence him. Instead you look at who chairs the committee that handles your issue. Both the speaker and the committee chair hold positions of power. The speaker listens to the committee chair. You have a member base in the chair’s district. The chair becomes your secondary target. You do not build an alliance or partnership with the committee chair. You exert constituent pressure on him to take a position on your demands and to get the speaker to do what you want.
How Can We Act Quickly in a Crisis and Still Develop a Successful Campaign?

Accelerate the steps laid out above—but do them while you take advantage of the galvanizing force of the crisis.

In a crisis campaign, you immediately hold group meetings so that people can come together and talk about what's happening. The organizer may meet with key individuals rather than embarking on a time-intensive process of meeting individually with many people.

If the crisis is public, constituents often mobilize themselves. They come out to meetings and actions much more readily. But you still have to go out and talk to people and engage them in order to build the base beyond those people who self-identify.

You don't just hand out flyers or start an e-mail list. You follow the same steps we laid out in Chapter Three: know who you are looking for, calculate how many people you need to talk with, identify where to find them, and practice what to say to them. Get their names and contact information, add them to your list, go visit them, or call them on the phone.

In a time of crisis, it is easier to do issue ID and demand development than it is to identify the target, especially if the campaign involves corporate responsibility. In a crisis it is tempting to start protesting against the person who is most immediately associated with what's going on. Instead you need to research who can actually stop the budget cuts or the pollution.

Accelerating the Steps

At CVH, after the city implements the transitional jobs program, members and organizers hear rumors that the city plans to cut wages for the new workers by almost $2 an hour. The newly elected mayor, Michael Bloomberg, soon confirms the rumors, announcing that he will implement a directive from outgoing Mayor Giuliani not only to cut wages but to privatize the jobs as well, eliminating many of the union and wage protections.

Within two weeks, CVH organizes a meeting of workers to see what it can do about this, and fifty people come out. These workers tell other workers about the organizing and the CVH phones start ringing off the hooks. Fifty to sixty people come out for each organizing meeting and quickly focus on the target, Mayor
Bloomberg, and their demands to stop the wage reduction and privatization plans. The organizers and leaders don’t know much yet about Bloomberg, except that he does not like bad publicity. CVH decides to use direct action and a media strategy to get what members want. Three weeks after CVH first became aware of the issue, the workers hold their first action, a protest at City Hall. Almost one hundred workers show up. Within six weeks of the announcement, the mayor agrees not to implement the wage and privatization proposals.

Keep in mind that a reactive crisis campaign is probably only the first campaign you will run. Once the crisis is averted, you engage in a more in-depth issue ID process to get at the systems behind the crisis. If you have built your base, you build power with a victory. Then you develop and mobilize the community to make sure it never happens again.

**LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES DURING ISSUE ID**

- **Survey others.** Leaders conduct surveys and lead discussions and focus groups with other members, constituents, and community groups.

- **Conduct online and policy research.** Leaders get on the Internet, talk to policy groups, and read about the issue to help develop talking points or presentations for members.

- **Organize research meetings.** Organize and facilitate meetings with groups that may either potentially work on the campaign or have information on the issue.

**CHALLENGES IN ISSUE ID**

“We thought we had the right issue, but no one is coming out to meetings.” Sometimes you identify an issue that seems right only to find that you can’t sustain a campaign around it. You don’t go from hearing something in individual conversations to developing demands without seeing if people will come out to work on the issue. When people don’t come out, you have more conversations and forums and probe more deeply.

Identifying the Right Issue
“People keep identifying the issue but they won’t move on it.” Sometimes the issue is correct, but you have to cut it a different way—that is, to change your approach and the way you talk about the issue with constituents. Members work together to try different approaches in explaining the issue and demand. Cutting the issue may or may not be the solution. If you try a few different approaches and people still will not move, you don’t have the right issue, no matter what they are saying.

“We’ve been identifying the issue for months, but we still are not sure about it. A core of people are ready, though, and getting restless.” Move to limited action and set a timeline for a final decision on the issue and demand. Do small-scale action as you continue base-building and issue ID. In addition to motivating people to stay involved, you may more clearly identify the campaign issue.

“Our members want to make a demand we can’t win.” Or “Our members want to make a demand that is really insignificant.” The organizer helps people to think through their decisions. You probe and agitate members to look more realistically at the impact of the demand they want. You directly ask how likely it is that they can win the demand or even aspects of it during a campaign. If members ultimately want the demand, you go with it, but you make sure the campaign has clear objectives and points where they can evaluate their progress.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ESSENTIAL ELEMENTS FOR EFFECTIVE ISSUE ID</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>☑ Choose the right issue. Identify something that resonates with the community, fixes the problem, and moves people to action for something they can win.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Consider how the issue builds your power. Be clear about how the issue builds your organization. Does it bring in new members, new alliances, new knowledge?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Make sure one person can resolve the issue. The issue has one clear target, not a variety of different targets.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Choose the person who can actually meet the demand. Identify the lowest-level person who can give you what you want.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☑ Test the issue and demand. Hold extensive conversations with individuals and groups, including possibly doing small actions to make sure these people want a campaign.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tool 7.1
Sample Phone Survey

The following are the steps in conducting a phone survey, along with an example of how such a conversation might go.

Identify yourself and why you are calling. Hi, Jackie, this is Michael from Neighbors United. Jackie, you were involved with our Campaign for Safe Housing a few months ago, do you remember that campaign? Great. I'm glad that together we were able to get the commissioner to hire more housing inspectors and keep the landlords in check. I'm calling to follow up with people involved in that campaign.

Ask open questions to engage in a conversation about the problem. How are things with your apartment? Did your landlord make the repairs the inspection turned up?

Find out specifically what her problems are now. How responsive has your landlord been since the inspections increased? Are the repair and safety problems you are still experiencing affecting you alone, or are your neighbors having these problems too?

Ask general, open-ended questions to see what's important to her. I am calling people to find out what they think we need to work on next. What issues would you like to see us address?

Assess what's most resonant. Out of the following issues you've mentioned, and some that others have been mentioning, which would you say is the most important to you and your family: adding additional housing inspectors, having the city take over the landlord's buildings, or building more affordable housing?

Determine her interest in moving to action. Which of these would you work on, maybe come out for a couple of hours a month to address?

Establish a next step. Thanks for this information, Jackie. Could I set up a time to talk to you more after we figure out what our next potential campaign is?
Tool 7.2
Sample Issue Survey

The following is a sample survey that Community Voices Heard has used as a tool to identify the issues people most want to work on. You can also use this kind of survey as a tool for recruitment, as we describe in Chapter Three.

CVH Issues Survey
(Used by permission of Community Voices Heard)

Name
Address Apt. # Zip
Phone E-mail

We'd like to know what issues New Yorkers are most concerned about in 2005. Please rank the following in order of importance to you:

Economic development
Children and youth
Jobs, education, and training

If Economic development, please identify the most important issue to you:

Stopping the use of public money for a Jets Stadium
Construction and preservation of affordable housing
Getting low-income people more involved in the distribution of public money
Other

If Children and youth, please identify the most important issue to you:

Affordable, accessible, quality childcare
Quality of public schools
After-school and community programs for children and youth
Other
Tool 7.2
Sample Issue Survey, Cont’d

If Jobs, education, and training, please identify the most important issue to you:
Living-wage jobs for low-income New Yorkers ________________________________
Paid jobs programs for people transitioning off of public assistance ______________
Access to education and training programs for low-income people ________________
Other ________________________________________________________________

Other issues or comments: ________________________________________________
Would you identify yourself as economically self-sufficient? ____________________

What is your current employment status?
Public assistance _______ Low-wage worker _______ High-wage worker _______
Unemployed _______ Retired _______ Stay-at-home parent _______
Comments ______________________________________________________________

Thank you for your participation!
Tool 7.3
House Meetings

You can use the following as handouts or discussion tools to help people do house-meetings for issue ID.

What Is a House Meeting?
A house meeting is a small gathering of people (approximately five to ten). A member or leader invites community members to her home, including family, friends, and neighbors. You use house meetings for a variety of purposes in organizing, including base-building, fundraising, and committee discussions, but they offer an excellent way to investigate problems and identify issues. They help members and leaders to build networks of community relationships that the organization can then mobilize. Staff attend to support the host, but house meetings take the emphasis off the organizing staff.

What Does It Take to Do a House Meeting?
You need to have a list of people to invite to whom you are willing to pose questions about their experiences and probe about what they think should be done about their community problems. This is not a time to gather people to tell them what’s on your mind. You need to be ready to really listen to the people you invite.

Once you have a list, it takes about six to ten hours of time to prepare for the house meeting over the course of about three weeks. Call people to invite them, then make follow-up calls to make sure they are coming. Keep in mind that about half of the people you invite will say no, and of those who say yes, only half are likely to come. So to get a group of five people, start with a good list of fifteen. Before the meeting, talk with staff to plan an agenda, prepare what you will say, and get materials such as sign-in sheets or organization newsletters. If you have not facilitated a meeting before, build in a half-hour for a staff member to train you in basic facilitation skills. Get some refreshments and put chairs in a circle. The house meeting itself requires a four- to five-hour evening to set up, hold the meeting, debrief, and clean up.

You need to be able to accommodate five to ten people in your home or at a private, comfortable community location.

House Meetings: Frequently Asked Questions
“What if I do not have a list of people to invite?” Staff can help you think about your contacts and build a list of people, including organization contacts close to
where you live. You only need a group of about five people to have a successful house meeting.

“What if my friends and neighbors are not activists or organizers or don’t understand why I am involved in organizing?” A house meeting is a great way to introduce friends and families to this work that is important to you. There is not a lot of pressure on them to follow up.

“What if my home is small?” A comfortable space where you can have five to ten people sitting on chairs or pillows is fine. You do not even need a table. You can also ask a local community organization, such as a church, if you can host a meeting there. Or ask staff to connect you with someone else who does have space for a meeting, and invite people together.

“What if I feel uncomfortable facilitating a meeting by myself?” The organization staff will train you on how to facilitate a meeting and will come to the house meeting to support you.

“What if I don’t have the time or money to provide food for everyone who comes?” There’s no need to emphasize food. Soda or tea, chips or cookies is enough.

“Is a house meeting a party?” No. Although a house meeting is friendly and interesting, it is not a party. You take time before and after the meeting to ask about each other’s families and lives, which helps people to get to know one another, like one another, and build relationships. But a house meeting is an organizing tool to help identify issues and people who want to build power.

### Sample Housemeeting Agenda

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:00–6:15</td>
<td>Guests arrive and have refreshments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:15–6:20</td>
<td>Welcome and overview. Host says why she asked people to come, briefly what the organization does, her role with the organization, what will happen in the meeting, and when it will end.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Tool 7.3

#### House Meetings, Cont’d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6:20–6:30</td>
<td><strong>Introductions.</strong>&lt;br&gt;People say their names, their connection to the host, and why they are there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:30–6:40</td>
<td><strong>Purpose of the meeting.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Host says what the goal of the meeting is: to help learn more about the problems people are experiencing in the community (or a more specific topic, based on the organization and where in the issue ID process the meeting is taking place) and to figure out what we might be able to do about it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6:40–7:00</td>
<td><strong>Mini one-on-ones.</strong>&lt;br&gt;People talk with the person next to them about the problems they are experiencing in the community.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:00–7:15</td>
<td><strong>Report backs.</strong>&lt;br&gt;The group comes together and each pair says what problems it identified. The host takes notes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7:15–8:00</td>
<td><strong>Issue ID.</strong>&lt;br&gt;The host suggests what the two or three top problems seem to be. People explore the problems more deeply, see what they have in common, and brainstorm about potential solutions. The host serves as a facilitator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:00–8:15</td>
<td><strong>Organizing and organization overview. Contact information.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Someone else from the organization, probably a staff person, talks more about how the organization builds power and what it will do with the contact information and knowledge gained from the meeting. Circulate a sign-in sheet for anyone who wants to give their contact information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:15–8:25</td>
<td><strong>Next steps and commitments.</strong>&lt;br&gt;The host asks who will make a commitment to take a next step, such as hold a house meeting or come to a follow-up meeting. This is not a high-pressure sales pitch; it is an offer for those who want to do more.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:25–8:30</td>
<td><strong>Brief evaluation.</strong>&lt;br&gt;Everyone says what they thought of the meeting.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tool 7.4
Sample Target ID Questions

You can use the following questions to start to identify the target of your campaign. It requires some advance research so that you can be as accurate as possible.

What, specifically do we want?

Who has some power to do something about this? (Fill out the following for as many people as you think could do something.)

  Name:
  Position:
  Who this person reports directly to:
  Who she or he thinks they need to deliver to:
  Is this person the final decision maker or someone whose support would make it happen?

To find who is the lowest-ranking person who can deliver on the issue, ask:
  How do the positions of each of these people compare to the others?

To find who might be a secondary target, ask:
  Who else could we get to influence each of them?
Exercise 7.1
What’s the Issue?

You can use the following scenario and the questions that follow as an exercise to train members to practice identifying an issue. You can also use the questions to look at problems and issues in your own community.

Scenario: Your organization recently won its campaign to add 2,500 jobs to an existing public jobs program for people leaving the welfare system. Members of your organization are now getting these jobs and are talking about problems they’re having with transportation. Your organization is ready to develop its next campaign. You are the staff organizer. You are starting to investigate the transportation problem.

Task: Answer the questions below, addressing as specifically as possible what you might potentially find as you identify the issue for the next campaign.

Questions for Identifying an Issue

Problem. What is going on?

Potential Solution. How can it be fixed?

Win-ability. How can we get it fixed? Do we have enough power?

Target. Who can fix it?

Secondary targets. Who else has power in relation to it?

Constituents/Base. To whom does this matter:

- Constituents outside our organization?
- Members of our organization?

Goal. What do we ultimately hope to achieve?

Issue. Based on answering these questions, what might be the policy or administrative change our organization can pursue?
Exercise 7.2
Issue ID: The Problem Tree

(Used by permission of Community Voices Heard)

This exercise trains people to distinguish between a problem and an issue. You can use it to convey the difference between a problem and an issue conceptually or you can use it to begin a discussion about the specific issue the organization may want to address in a campaign. (To see how to use this problem tree exercise to review the role of collective action in making social change, see Exercise 3.3, “The Community Voices Heard Community Teach-In.”)

Time: About 30 minutes (40–45 if you include partner sharing at each stage).

Materials: A large image of a tree outlined on paper. Post-It notes. Markers.

Roles: Facilitator, timekeeper.

Room set-up: Movable chairs. Enough blank wall space to post a large image of a tree.

- Facilitator places an outline of a tree on the wall. It is simply a trunk, branches, and roots.
- Facilitator describes the goal of this exercise: To see the difference between a problem and an issue. Possibly to identify issues the organization can address in a campaign.
- Facilitator describes the basic exercise: Participants will create a “problem tree” out of the tree outlined on the wall.
- Facilitator hands out Post-It notes and markers to participants.
- Facilitator asks people to take a few minutes to write on the Post-It notes “problems” that they are facing in their communities or in relationship to what the organization works on—one problem per note. These notes will form the leaves on the tree. Facilitator asks participants to write clearly enough so that others can see it when it’s posted on the tree. Facilitator creates an example and posts it as a leaf on a branch to illustrate what the participants will do. Facilitator encourages people to think personally, such as, “I’m about to lose my job,” “My child is always sick from the poor air quality in our neighborhood,” “The traffic on my street is getting dangerous.” Gives participants five minutes and asks them to wait until everyone is done before posting their problem-leaves.
Exercise 7.2
Issue ID: The Problem Tree, Cont’d

• If time allows, facilitator may ask people to turn to the person next to them first and talk through what they are thinking of writing down, taking two minutes each. You can do this partner-sharing at each or any stage of the exercise. It helps create a buzz in the room, helps people to go deeper in their thinking, and builds relationships.

• Facilitator asks people to call out what they’ve written and come up to place their Post-Its as leaves on the branches of the tree.

• Facilitator leads a discussion of the “issues” that could arise from these problems, asking “If that’s the problem, what is the solution?”

• Facilitator writes issues in the trunk of the tree. For example, if a problem-leaf says, “I’m about to lose my job,” an issue could be “We need a job training center.” Problem: “My child is getting sick from poor air quality.” Issue: “The buses need to burn cleaner fuel.”

• A visual picture starts to form of the relationship between problems and issues.

• Facilitator leads a discussion about what is at the “roots” of the problems. Encourages people to look more deeply at what creates the issues they face. Examples include racism, stereotypes, unrepresentative government, profits over people. Facilitator writes these words along the roots, or asks people to come up and write what they think. Facilitator leads a group discussion on the issues.

• The group reviews what participants learned in this exercise.
Researching the Politics of an Issue

LEARNING WHO IS FOR US
AND WHO IS AGAINST US

Community Voices Heard (CVH) leaders and organizers know that Work Experience Program (WEP) workers want to fight for paid jobs with education and training. They set out to learn the politics of the issue. CVH cofounder Gail Aska attends meetings and coalition events with union leaders and religious leaders to find out where there is agreement on what to do about WEP. Working closely with the organizer, CVH leaders take on other tasks. Betsy facilitates meetings with allies to explore what is and is not winnable at the state and local levels. Janet calls organizations that have developed innovative transitional jobs programs in cities and states throughout the United States. Others explore what Mayor Giuliani’s position on job creation would be, determine who on the city council would support the call for jobs, and consider who else will support or oppose a campaign on this issue.

What Is Campaign Research and Why Is It Important?

In campaign research you investigate the forces that shape the issue. Good campaign research empowers organizers and members with information that helps you to choose an effective strategy and create a successful plan to move the target and win your campaign.

In campaign research you get a landscape of the issue and analyze the target and the power dynamics surrounding the issue. You assess the capacity of your organization to take it on.
The history and current politics of an issue can be complex. They can have a negative effect on your campaign if you do not know what to expect. In addition, your ability to develop a winning strategy depends on knowing who the potential stakeholders and opponents are and how they might line up for or against you. Information about how a target acts and reacts helps you choose the most effective actions and tactics.

**What Are the Elements of Campaign Research?**

*Campaign research is made up of the following four elements that inform your campaign plan. We discuss each of these elements later in the chapter.*

**Landscaping.** Campaign research begins with getting an overall picture—the landscape—of the issue. You investigate its history and the possibilities for change in the future.

**Target analysis.** You know who the target is. Now you acquire an in-depth understanding of the target’s position on your issue as well as his pressure points.

**Power analysis.** You consider who else cares about your issue and how much power they have to support or oppose you. Based on this accumulated knowledge, you honestly assess how much power you will need to move the target and win the campaign.

**Organizational assessment.** You answer a series of questions about your membership, finances, organizational knowledge, and staffing in order to understand your organizational capacity. This information also helps you determine what kind of strategy you can manage.

**Who Engages in Campaign Research?**

*Staff, members, and leaders who are either part of the organizing committee for the campaign or who form a separate committee to do the research.*

You have an organizing committee in place for getting started that will oversee the development and implementation of the campaign. This committee includes both new members of the organization and experienced leaders. An organizer builds the committee and helps the members to do its work successfully. The committee can designate a few members to conduct campaign research, or the entire organizing committee can do research as its main activity.

For purposes of this chapter, we refer to the group of leaders and members who are working with an organizer to do research as a freestanding research committee.
How Do We Conduct Good Campaign Research?

Read, listen, and talk politics with a wide range of people with different perspectives.

The following are some tips to help you conduct good research:

Keep up with the news. Read the newspaper. Watch the news. Listen to the radio. It sounds simple, but local and neighborhood newspapers and magazines, as well as national publications that cover your issues, are important sources of information. Read newspapers and journals that represent the interests of the people involved in your issue. If it’s a worker rights issue, read local union papers and business and labor journals. If the issue involves housing or economic development, read real estate papers and journals.

Watch public affairs news programs and television shows, both national and local. Record important coverage to share and discuss with members and leaders. Keeping up with the news tells you where politicians stand. It gives you a sense of public opinion and media interest.

Conduct library research or collect data over the Internet. At the library you can research previous news coverage of the issue or community problem. Ask the librarian how to use the research system there to get what you need. From your office or home, you can use the Internet.

Start with a search engine like Google. At a library you can use LexisNexis, which is an archive of information that requires a fee to access. Search by issue or by people involved in the issue. In addition to reading articles, look at Web pages for other organizations working on your issue. Read their reports and studies. This research tells you the history of an issue and who the players are. (For more on using the Internet to conduct research, see Chapter Six.)

To find out where people who are key to your issue give money and what boards they sit on, talk to researchers in friendly organizations, such as labor unions, or to local political consultants. They can tell you what they know and steer you to current Web pages for public officials or candidates. These pages tell what groups the officials are members of and what issues they care about.

You can go to your local campaign finance board to find out who donates to candidates.

Talk politics. Talk politics with a wide range of people. They may include labor leaders, community leaders, political consultants, elected officials and aides, and people in other community-based or national organizations. Schedule time on the phone or in person and include leaders of your organization. Go to events where
you can strike up conversations. Get different viewpoints and positions. Much of what you hear will be officially off the record. You hear people’s opinions, not objective facts. That’s why you talk to a lot of different people.

*Use government resources.* Many government Web sites offer information about how the political process works and the hierarchy of an agency. For example, in New York City the Web page for the Department of Planning shows the entire process for changing zoning designations.

Larger advocacy organizations and government watchdog groups, particularly those that work with community organizations, frequently have advocacy guides on their Web sites.

*Check out local political meetings.* If your issue is related to building or zoning, go to the planning board meeting. If it is social services, go to the social services board hearings. Most local governments have “sunshine laws” that require them to provide information about upcoming hearings and meetings. When you attend community meetings, you meet people, see who the players are, and get notice of other important meetings or events.

If you have trouble finding out about meetings, go to the Web site for the local legislative body. Find out who sits on what committee and who the chair is of each committee. This research will lead you to the chairperson’s office, where a constituent liaison can tell you when meetings occur.

Another way to find information about government resources is to call your state representative. Talk to her liaison or go to her office and ask for what you need.

*Communicate with the target.* Sometimes the target or the target’s staff may give you the information you need up front. This meeting is a research meeting, not a place to make a demand. It should be attended by two or three of the strongest leaders of the campaign who come with clear goals of what you want to get out of a meeting. This meeting is different from collective public action because it is not using agitation and power to move the target. Rather, its goal is to find out the target’s position.
improvements. First, someone from the leadership team asks for a meeting on behalf of the group with the person the team believes is responsible for approving capital improvements in the parks department. The leader puts a request in writing and then follows up with a phone call. This meeting may take place with the target or the target’s key staff.

The letter says something like the following: “We are interested in improving the parks in District 12. We would like to meet with you as the District Parks Manager to find out what needs to be done to improve the administration of services in the park and how we could work together to improve the system.”

At the meeting, the leaders ask questions: “What is the process to get what we want done?” “Do you support what we are trying to accomplish?” “If not, what would need to happen for you to support it?”

If the target supports your position or demand, keep in mind that voicing support is different from actually doing something. Campaign development continues, but the campaign research takes a different path. You focus on key questions: Does the target usually follow through on what she says? If not, what makes her follow through? If yes, how close to the actual demand will the target deliver what she promises? The campaign also develops differently, stressing goals and objectives that ensure implementation.

Your ability to get a meeting with the target depends on your issue, the target’s position, and your relationship with that person. It can be easier to get than you might think, and it can often be an extremely effective way to get the information you need to begin the campaign.

Throughout campaign research, you spend time thinking about the answers to the questions you pose to yourself and others. Look at the relationship of the answers to one another to see how they fit together.

What Is Landscaping?

Landscaping is the process of developing a full picture of an issue.

You landscape either a major policy issue, such as creating more affordable housing, or a local issue, such as repairing a dilapidated park. In landscaping you look at how the issue has changed over time and what interest groups, organizations, and individuals have been involved in it.
You do landscaping to see your issue’s history and potential future. If it’s a public policy issue, how is it playing out in your state or at the national level? For example, if you are seeking to create more affordable housing, what kinds of state and federal financial support can your city access? If it’s an administrative, corporate, or agency issue, how does it play out within its organizational structure? For instance, if you are seeking an environmental clean-up, has the board of the polluting corporation supported clean-up elsewhere? If it’s a community issue, how does it relate to what others are doing? For example, if you want to increase services for people with AIDS, what other public health groups are looking to build their programs as well?

Landscaping tells you what the campaign could look like and what potential opportunities and barriers exist. In an established organization, landscaping tells you if it’s worth having a core group of leaders pitch it to the membership.

How Do We Do Landscaping?
In landscaping you get answers to some very specific questions by analyzing the information you get using the research tools discussed earlier.

In landscaping, an organizer working with a research committee explores the following questions:

*What is the history of the issue?* What has happened on the issue in the past? Who was involved? Was the issue addressed? How has it evolved over time?

*What is the current status of the issue?* Who is involved now? What is currently happening on the issue?

*How could the issue develop?* What could create some movement on the issue? For example, would things move on this issue if there was more money in a city budget or if the issue began to affect a new constituency?

*Are there any clear patterns and how could these patterns affect our campaign?* Over the history of an issue, do patterns occur? Does an organization or individual always get involved at a certain point and shift things? Does a campaign always end in an election year? Do groups in a coalition always get distracted by other things? By identifying patterns you can make sure they do not derail your campaign or you assess how to use them to your advantage.

You take detailed notes and develop lists of stakeholders. You keep track of this information on the computer and with large sheets of paper on the wall so that others can understand and respond to it. The following example shows how to landscape an issue, in this case with a draft demand in place.
**Landscaping Employment and Training Issues in New York City**

*Drafting a demand.* CVH starts to develop a campaign to improve the coordination among agencies that provide workforce development services, such as job search, job placement, and basic training. The welfare agency manages some of the services, the youth services agency controls others, and the economic development agency manages some as well. Different city commissioners oversee each of these agencies.

The draft demand is to get the mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, to create a new position, Deputy Mayor for Workforce and Human Development, to oversee all workforce-development programs rather than this oversight being distributed among different agency commissioners.

*Learning the history of workforce development.* The research team focuses on learning the history of workforce development in New York, including the terms and jargon people use in the field. They meet with staff people from city agencies to find out how the system has worked in the past as well as with people who operate locally based employment programs. They find out which of the city agencies have done a good job and which have not, as well as the dynamics among different agencies. They test the demand of creating a new deputy mayor position to assess resonance and to see who would support or oppose this idea.

*Identifying the current status of workforce development.* The research team meets to brainstorm about who is affected by workforce-development programs. At the meeting, a member puts a big sheet of paper on the wall. The team creates a list of stakeholders, including specific service providers, clients and consumers of services, business people, and labor and advocacy groups. Later, leaders and staff schedule meetings with some of these key people as well as with friendly people CVH knows inside City Hall to understand how the creation of a new Deputy Mayor for Workforce Development might affect a range of stakeholders, and again, who might support or oppose the campaign.

At the end of this process, CVH realizes that the commissioners who oversee the welfare, youth, and economic development agencies very much want to keep their power. Although CVH has the support of some potential allies, this support is not strong. If CVH runs this campaign, it will have to do so alone. At the same time, no allies oppose it.
Finding out how the issue could develop. The research also tells CVH that it is not the only organization concerned about the division among agencies and commissioners. Some people inside are trying to improve the coordination of city agencies. One commissioner is particularly difficult and does not work with others, but she is close to the mayor. Others are trying to get her to work more as a part of a team. CVH knows now that its issue is at least on the radar screen of some people in City Hall.

Staff meet with program officers in private foundations that fund workforce development to find out if there might be resources for this campaign and to ask if they know of others in the country who are using this kind of coordinating position effectively and if so, how it works.

Looking for patterns. The mayor is up for reelection in the coming year. There is a very strong likelihood that he will win. After analyzing the landscape (and doing a power analysis, which we describe later in this chapter) members and leaders decide it is better to pressure the mayor to address the situation in his next term. In addition to what CVH has learned about this particular issue in the landscaping, it has found in the past that new terms offer opportunities to shake up administrations. Once the mayor gets reelected he is likely to change some of his commissioners. Job creation is a part of his campaign message. CVH can appeal to his need to fulfill this promise and his desire to have a legacy by addressing the need for a more coordinated approach to workforce development in New York City in his next term.

What Is Target Analysis?

Target analysis tells you how a target thinks, acts, and reacts and why.

Once you determine the lowest-ranking person who can meet your demands using the issue ID process we describe in Chapter Seven, you do a thorough analysis of this person and his motivations. This analysis tells you what is most likely to get him to concede to your demands. You are looking for how to use your power to move the target to give you what you want, whether he or she likes you or not.

How Do We Do Target Analysis?

You dig deep and gather the following information about the target:

Clarify basic information about the target. Make sure you know the target’s name, title, and place in the organization as well as how long he has held this job.
Understand the target’s position. Research what his position currently is on your issue and if it has changed over time. Even if the target’s position is generally in your favor, it does not mean he will deliver on your demand. For example, a public official might support government funding of job training programs, but that does not mean she will support your demand for a training program that pays a wage.

To learn the target’s position, read past media coverage, review any official correspondence or record keeping, talk with people who understand the politics of the issue, or directly ask the target if she will support your position.

Learn where the target derives his power. Targets generally derive their power from voters, wealth, members, and organizational or government structures and regulations. Many times, agency officials and commissioners derive their power from elected officials.

Politicians derive their power from voters. This group goes beyond who they see as their base of supporters in the general electorate. Politicians get power from the votes of other legislators as well as from their tenure in office or their skill at political maneuvering. Politicians get their power from campaign contributors as well.

Commissioners, high-level bureaucrats, and their key staff derive power from the person who appoints them, who is usually an elected executive such as a mayor or governor.

Lower-level government staff and bureaucrats draw their power from the structures and regulations of an agency and from their tenure with that agency.

Private-sector targets, such as landlords and corporate executives, usually get their power from personal wealth, including cash, property, companies, or stock holdings. They may also derive power from the trustees who oversee their activities.

Heads of unions, community organizations, and similar locally based groups obtain their power from either a board of directors or their membership.

Dig deep. Don’t assume you know where the target derives his power based only on cursory information.

Review the policies or issues the target is currently working on. Look at the target’s speeches, especially a governor’s State of the State or a mayor’s State of the City address. For a politician, review the laws he is sponsoring or what he’s recently sponsored and what committees he sits on. You can get copies of laws, sometimes for a fee, from the offices of legislative bodies or from the legislative committee. You can get the text of some laws on the Web. Elected officials have newsletters and constituent mailings that outline what they have been involved in. City and state
agencies sometimes have reports and Web sites that outline what they accomplished over the year.

Find out who he listens to. You find out who the target listens to and trusts for counsel by reviewing press coverage and asking people who study him.

Investigate self-interest. Figure out what motivates him. Where does the target put his energy? What boards does he sit on, what professional organizations does he belong to? What are his career goals and what does he want his legacy to be? Are members of his family prominently involved in charitable causes or businesses? Sometimes a target’s self-interest is clear—elected officials want to stay elected, many politicians want higher office. Sometimes the self-interest is more nuanced. For instance, some politicians are most concerned with making government work. These officials are often quite movable if you are willing to engage in a constructive relationship.

You can’t assume that a person’s political leanings or identity will tell you if she will be with you or against you. Her politics or identity alone will not tell you where she will stand on your issue, or even more likely, your demand. Political self-interest often rises above everything else. People you see as friends may not do what you ask of them and people you think would never be with you may be willing to support good policy that improves a community problem. You have to do your homework on everyone.

Tool 8.1, Target Analysis Chart, provides a guide to getting and understanding the types of information discussed in the target analysis so far. Tool 8.2 offers a worksheet to use when doing target analysis.

Find out what has moved the target in the past. Knowing what has moved the target in the past helps you to develop your campaign strategy and to identify tactics that will work. (See Chapters Nine and Twelve for a more in-depth look at strategy and tactics.) People who have engaged in recent campaigns with the target are a good source of information. Does the target respond and react to press coverage on an issue, to direct actions and public meetings, to lobbying by important stakeholders? Does she respond to rational policy arguments based on facts and research?

People in power learn to understand tactics and may respond differently over time. For instance, CVH moved Mayor Bloomberg on a campaign within six weeks of his election by going unannounced to City Hall and demonstrating. But while he
responded to this tactic early in his first term as mayor, he got used to it. On later campaigns, it was no longer effective.

As with landscaping, you keep careful notes about everything you learn. Tool 8.3 shows a sample chart depicting what moved a target on specific campaigns. Tool 8.4 offers a blank worksheet you can use to record what has moved your target. Exercise 8.1, Getting a Target Snapshot, will help train leaders and members in doing all of this initial target research.

What Is Organizational Assessment?

Organizational assessment tells you two things about your ability to move the target: your organizational power and your internal capacity.

You do this assessment in two steps. In the first step, you look at your organizational power. After you do a full power analysis and choose your strategy, you do the second step, which is to assess your internal capacity and your ability to implement the strategy. We examine the second step in Chapter Nine.

Organizational power is the result of your numbers and your track record. How many people can you move to action, directly or through alliances? Have you won other campaigns that increase your skill and your clout?

Internal capacity is the degree of your financial and human resources for running the campaign. Do you have enough money and staff, or do you have access to these resources? Do you know enough about the issue?

In addition, organizational assessment includes looking at whether or not members buy in to the campaign and if it moves the organization’s mission forward.

How Do We Assess Our Own Power?

You review your past campaigns to identify your successes and failures, your strengths and weaknesses.

The leadership of the organization, including the board, the organizing committee members, and the staff, conducts the assessment by asking a series of questions, listed below, and answering them as honestly as possible. In addition to answering questions, they may gather more objective views from allies and other people in the field.

If you use a database to track attendance at meetings and actions, you can easily find the answers to some of the questions.
The following questions will help you begin to assess organizational power:

Who are the constituents in our base?
Who are the constituents who could be in our base?
How many members do we have?
What have we won recently (during the past one, three, and five years)?
When did we win it?
Who was the target?
How long was the campaign?
Did we win on our own?
Who were our allies?
Which of these allies has a stake in our current issue?
Who will stand with us right now?
Who will stand with us if we put some work into bringing them along?
Which allies are we willing to call in on this campaign?
How many constituents outside of our organization did we move to action?
How many could we move now?
How many people with political power can we get to act with us or on our behalf?

Don’t forget to evaluate the campaigns that you may not have won. In those cases, did the organization win incremental gains or build limited power? Did it gain knowledge or develop a new base of members? You factor in all of your organization’s achievements when assessing your power.

In addition, you use a more nuanced analysis to look at other factors. For instance, do other allies and stakeholders return your calls? Are they willing to meet with your organization? Do they want to know your position on their issues?

**How Do We Understand Our Power If This Is Our First Campaign?**

*You try to get some people involved and see who comes out by engaging in action early.*

In an established group, internal mobilizations, such as meetings, outreach days, and trainings, all help you assess when you have enough members who will move
on the issue and enable your group to be taken seriously. In a new group, try to get some people involved. For example, a group of homeowners on a block want to stop the building of a high-rise. They do some research and learn the local city council can stop it. They go door-to-door throughout the neighborhood and readily get contact information from people. They hold two well-attended community meetings. Many homeowners are willing to meet with their council representatives and attend actions at their offices. In a small city, this new group has some power.

In a larger city the group’s power may not be clear until it engages in action. There are likely to be more forces lined up in opposition or support of the homeowners. The group would have to send ten homeowners unannounced to a council member’s office or somehow challenge powerholders collectively in order to know if the group can have some effect.

Working in coalition can also increase the power of a new group. The homeowners may find that the PTA of the local school is also interested in the issue, since the high-rise will lead to overcrowding in the school. If the homeowners work with the parents, they will have more power.

Engaging in public collective action early helps you both to assess your power and show your target, potential allies, and other stakeholders that you have some base that you can mobilize. At what point you do this action is an important judgment call. Do it too early, without a reliable base, and your target won’t take you seriously. Do it too late, and the fight might be over. Also, if you wait too long, other organizations become the legitimate representatives on the issue.

Assessing Organizational Capacity and Power: Opposing Pay-Cuts for Parks Workers

The newly elected mayor of New York City, Michael Bloomberg, announces he is cutting the pay of workers in a jobs program in the parks for people transitioning off of welfare. CVH board members, leaders, and staff meet to assess whether or not CVH should develop a campaign with these workers to oppose the cuts. They look at CVH’s resources and what the organization is currently working on. CVH has an experienced organizer on staff who worked on the jobs campaign, some uncommitted funds, a base of members who want jobs, and knowledge of the parks system and where workers hang out from doing WEP worker organizing.
CVH understands and has some relationships with unions, particularly the union representing the workers whose pay the mayor is cutting. What CVH does not have in its base are workers from this particular program or a deep understanding of how the program works.

However, according to Zelda, a CVH leader who worked hard to win the jobs campaign, “We organize welfare recipients, and the women who are about to lose their pay are welfare recipients in a program we won. We have to bring them into CVH and work with the union to fight the wage cuts.”

Despite what they do not have, leaders, members, and staff assess that they have enough in the form of experienced staff, resources, knowledge about the type of organizing needed, and a connection to the issue. Even without any base or leaders, CVH moves forward to develop the campaign. The campaign ultimately succeeds in stopping the cuts and improving services and education for the workers.

What Is Power Analysis and How Do We Conduct It?

*Power analysis is an examination of the external forces surrounding the target. It uses a systematic approach to look at who is with you, who is against you, and how important their support or opposition is to the campaign.*

Power analysis tells you the power you have, the power you could have, the power that might support you, and the power that is aligned against you. Initially, power analysis gives you essential raw material for choosing a strategy. Throughout the campaign, you do power analysis as the dynamics of the issue shift.

To do power analysis, you lay out the data you’ve gathered so far in landscape, target analysis, and assessing your organizational power and look for pressure points, potential alliances, and likely opponents that will influence the outcome of your campaign activities.

The core work of power analysis is to look honestly and realistically at your organization’s power and the power of others. You analyze what it will take to accumulate enough power to win, including what it will take to neutralize the opposition.

Power analysis is a group process that includes leaders and members as well as staff. In the initial power analysis, you lay out the campaign research. You hash out how people view the power surrounding the target. You revisit these topics throughout the campaign.
In your power analysis meeting or a series of meetings you look at the following information:

- Current organizational power—your base of members and leaders
- Potential new constituents who can be part of your base
- Other power players, stakeholders, and potential stakeholders
- Potential allies who could support you in your demands
- Potential opponents who could oppose your campaign

You usually need the two meetings to have a good initial power analysis. In the first meeting, a smaller group of members that includes one or two leaders and one or two people from the research committee sorts out the information the research committee has gathered so far in campaign research. It identifies what to bring to a larger group discussion. In the second meeting, you conduct your power analysis. The power analysis meeting includes the organizing committee members. In this meeting, you post charts and collectively fill in the Power Analysis Grid, as shown in the sample in Tool 8.5, using information the organization has accumulated through its research. Tool 8.6 contains a Power Analysis Grid worksheet you can use for your power analysis.

You look at facts, think about them, and figure out what they mean. Power analysis is not a job for any one person sitting behind a closed door. Power analysis is a skill that some people have a knack for and that most people get better at the more they do it. It draws on the best thinking of those who will implement the campaign.

You can sometimes apply the same questions you use for target analysis to looking at other potential allies or opponents. For example, power analysis shows you that an agency commissioner can make or break your campaign. She is not the decision maker, but if she says no the issue is dead. The campaign then has to include either neutralizing her or gaining her support. Your research tells you whether she will respond to an editorial or to five people arriving unannounced at her office.

You do civics education during this process. People need practical knowledge about how the system works and about past experiences the organization has had on campaigns. They need to know what’s in the grapevine about an individual or organization.

You do the initial power analysis grid to get the raw material to choose a strategy that will move the target.
Does Our Power Analysis Change Over Time?

Yes. Power analysis is a focused process at the beginning of the campaign, but continues throughout the campaign as conditions change.

Power analysis is not static. The power dynamics of a campaign are like a chess game. As the players move their pieces, everything adapts and shifts. You start organizing a group of workers to fight for living wage legislation. You succeed in raising the issue’s visibility. When a major union gets involved because it sees workers the union can organize, the power dynamics shift. The organization again puts the grid up on the wall. It engages in power analysis to see how to move forward.

What Other Questions Should We Ask Ourselves?

Before moving ahead with the campaign, the board or other governing body of the organization does a brief mission check to make sure the campaign will build the organization in line with its mission and values.

An organizational mission check ensures that a campaign fulfills and is aligned with the organization’s mission. Two questions are crucial to ask at this point: How do the campaign and issue match our organizational mission and values? How will the campaign unite or divide our members?

---

**Leadership Development Opportunities During Campaign Research**

- **Conduct literature review.** Members and leaders read news articles, journals, and other periodicals, and share information with the research committee.

- **Collect television and radio coverage of an issue and analyze it.** This is an especially good task for members with limited reading skills.

- **Set up and attend meetings with others.** Leaders meet with people who have worked or are working on the issue. They make phone calls, write letters of introduction, and follow up.

- **Analyze information.** The research committee meets to analyze information after it is initially gathered. Leaders identify what information to bring to the power analysis meeting. Then, they hold a power analysis meeting.

- **Facilitate research meetings and power analysis meetings.** Leaders develop skills to guide members to understand the information they are analyzing.
“We are finding very little information on our issue.” If you are breaking new ground with your issue, you may find little information. In that case use what information you can get to choose a strategy and to plan and implement a campaign. If you need to proceed in this way, engage in action either internally or externally, and build points of evaluation early into your campaign plan. These steps will expose you to more information.

“We can’t identify who has the power to deliver on our demand.” You try to find the person closest to the issue and start doing some small-scale action to find out who the target is.

“The target is unmoving.” Everyone can be moved. You just have to find out how. If you cannot move the target you have chosen, try another way to address the issue with other demands and targets in order to achieve the same result.

“Our power analysis shows that no one else is interested in our issue, and we do not have enough power to move the target.” This challenge especially happens if you are in a geographically based organization, such as a neighborhood group, and the target is a statewide official. Sometimes you can cut the issue to appeal to other partners or include demands that might not be important to your members but are important to others. If you decide to engage in a campaign alone, you have honest, internal conversations about how long it will take, how you will build the power you need, and ultimately decide if the campaign is worth it.

“Our power analysis shows that there is no way we can win the campaign.” Not all campaigns are winnable. Sometimes conditions, laws, and the political climate make it very difficult to win on the demand that members want. You can decide not to waste resources and time by taking on an unwinnable campaign, or you can try to cut the issue differently or choose different demands. Other times, you might decide to take on the campaign just because it is right, taking a movement-building approach. (For more on movement-building, see Chapter Fourteen.) If the organization decides to take on something it can’t win, you make sure members understand why it is doing so and the potential impact it could have on the organization. You build in goals and objectives that you can measure and evaluate to make sure members and leaders can evaluate any impact, such as getting one editorial supporting your organization’s position or moving six legislators to support your program.
Be honest with your assessments. Do not engage in wishful thinking. You don’t misread the research team’s data and assessments or convince members that the campaign will be easy or winnable if it is not.

Do be optimistic. Believe in the ability of your organization and leaders to build power to win something.

Get a variety of viewpoints. Don’t just go to friends and people who are going to tell you what you want to hear. Go to people with different views and those who may even oppose you.

Think about different ways to cut the issue. Your organization does not just look at how the issue affects its own members. The research phase is the time to identify other ways to cut an issue and to figure out ways to engage other constituencies and allies.

### Tool 8.1
**Target Analysis Chart: Sample Questions**

The following chart outlines the main points of exploration for target analysis. You can use this as a tool to train staff and leaders. Tool 8.2 provides a blank Target Analysis Chart Worksheet for you to use in doing research on your specific target.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Power</th>
<th>Target Analysis</th>
<th>Where to Find Answer</th>
<th>Why It’s Important to Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Where does the target derive power?</td>
<td>Is she elected or appointed? Does she have power due to wealth or organizational status?</td>
<td>Law, state constitution, city charter, legislative codes, organizational structures, trustee rosters. Conversations with allies, political strategists, friendly politicians.</td>
<td>Tells you the pressure points the target will respond to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much power does she have?</td>
<td>Is she accountable to other legislators, to donors, trustees, or others?</td>
<td>See above.</td>
<td>Tells you how much power your organization will need to move the target.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Tool 8.1
**Target Analysis Chart: Sample Questions, Cont’d**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Target Analysis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the target’s position?</td>
<td>Is she for or against or doesn’t have a position?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How big a priority is this issue to the target?</td>
<td>How high up in her priorities is the issue—is it high or low?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is her position open to change and what would make that happen?</td>
<td>Is she open to change her mind on this issue? What has previous work on this issue with the target been like?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why it’s Important to Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tell you she may support your demand or not have a position.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If it’s a low priority and her moving to action gets you out of her hair, she might meet your demand quicker. If it’s a higher priority, it might take longer, as many groups might be working on the issue, requiring negotiation among them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If she has a history of being moveable or flexible this will help determine your strategy.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Who Does the Target Listen To?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Who are the people the target listens to?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why it’s Important to Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Helps determine who a secondary target or potential allies might be.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Motivation or Self-Interest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is the target’s self-interest?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the target’s motivation?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Why it’s Important to Know</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tells you what to appeal to with the target.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tool 8.2
Target Analysis Chart: Worksheet

*Fill in the blanks here as a guide to help you develop a portrait of your target. Complete the second column (Step One), then add the information to the third column (Step Two) as you acquire it.*

**Target’s Name:**

**Target’s Title:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Step One: Where and How Will We Find the Answer?</th>
<th>Step Two: What Do We Know?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where does the target derive power?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How much power does she have?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Issue</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the target’s position?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How big a priority is this issue to the target?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is her position open to change and what would make that happen?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who Does the Target Listen To?</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who are the people the target listens to?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Motivation or Self-Interest</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the target’s self-interest?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is the target’s motivation?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Tool 8.3
What Moves the Target: Sample

The following chart shows sample information about three campaigns that organizations have conducted over the last three years that moved your sample target. Tool 8.4 provides a blank worksheet you can use to fill in information you learn about what has moved your target on previous campaigns.

**Target's name:** Mayor Anders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Campaign</th>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Strategies Used</th>
<th>What Worked?</th>
<th>What Did They Finally Have to Negotiate?</th>
<th>How Long Did They Run the Campaign Before Winning?</th>
<th>Why Did the Target Move?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Campaign 1</td>
<td>Smoking Ban—Pass ordinance ending smoking in bars</td>
<td>Alliance Advocacy Media</td>
<td>Alliance Advocacy Media</td>
<td>Allow bars in operation more than 25 years to keep smoking areas.</td>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Rational policy and self-interest on health and smoking issues</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign 2</td>
<td>Bus Route Campaign—Increase numbers of bus routes in low-income communities</td>
<td>Direct action Media Advocacy</td>
<td>Direct action Media</td>
<td>Elimination of 3 routes that were underused</td>
<td>1 year</td>
<td>Media coverage Nuisance campaign at public events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign 3</td>
<td>Food Stamp Campaign—Add 3 Food Stamp offices in city</td>
<td>Direct action Media Advocacy</td>
<td>Direct action Media</td>
<td>Nothing</td>
<td>8 months</td>
<td>Media coverage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What strategies worked in all three campaigns? Media, Direct Action
What strategies might have worked? Advocacy
What did we learn about the target? Cares about media image and likes health issues.
Tool 8.4
What Moves the Target: Worksheet

Fill in the chart using information about three campaigns that you or others have conducted over the last three years that moved your target.

**Target’s name:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Strategies Used</th>
<th>What Worked?</th>
<th>What Did They Finally Have to Negotiate?</th>
<th>How Long Did They Run the Campaign Before Winning?</th>
<th>Why Did the Target Move?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What strategies worked in all three campaigns?
What strategies might have worked?
What did we learn about the target?
## Tool 8.5
Power Analysis Grid: Sample

The grid shows sample information for a power analysis of the CVH campaign to create a deputy mayor for workforce development.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Constituency</th>
<th>Names of Groups or Individuals</th>
<th>How Much Power Do They Have?</th>
<th>Do We Want Them Involved in Our Campaign?</th>
<th>How Will We Get Them Involved in Our Campaign?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Who is directly affected by the issue?</strong></td>
<td>Unemployed and downsized workers. Welfare recipients, youth of color, and disconnected youth. Members and leaders associated with CVH jobs campaign.</td>
<td>They have the potential to have some medium power on the issue if organized and if they can interject their experiences and perspectives into the media.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Recruitment and base-building, especially leadership development and ongoing organizing meetings.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>New Constituency</strong></td>
<td>Youth of color and unemployed men.</td>
<td>If organized, there is the potential for strong power since there are many of these constituents. However, these are hard groups to organize.</td>
<td>Yes.</td>
<td>Recruitment at training sites, unemployment sites, and at the neighborhood level.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stakeholders</td>
<td>Names of Groups or Individuals</td>
<td>How Much Power Do They Have?</td>
<td>Do We Want Them Involved in Our Campaign?</td>
<td>How Will We Get Them Involved in Our Campaign?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Commissioners and deputy mayors. Businesses looking to hire people. Service and training organizations. Clients of services. Other advocacy groups working on the issue of workforce development.</td>
<td>Employers: some of the biggest have some power. Commissioners and deputy mayors have the mayor's ear and control city agencies. Larger training providers have some power.</td>
<td>Employers: Yes/Maybe Human Services: Yes/Maybe Commissioners/Deputy Mayors: No</td>
<td>One-to-one relationship-building with our key leaders and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allies</td>
<td>This campaign does not have allies who do not have self-interest.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Opponents</td>
<td>Commissioners and deputy mayors.</td>
<td>Commissioners and deputy mayors are close to the mayor and have his ear.</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Make them irrelevant by getting others to move the mayor, including press and mayoral advisors.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Who or what has successfully moved the target in the past on an issue? The target, Mayor Bloomberg, responds to press—wants a good public image.
**Tool 8.6**  
**Power Analysis Grid: Worksheet**

*You can use the following grid to train staff and leaders to do power analysis.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Core Constituency</th>
<th>Names of Groups or Individuals</th>
<th>How Much Power Do They Have?</th>
<th>Do We Want Them Involved in Our Campaign?</th>
<th>How Will We Get Them Involved in Our Campaign?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Members.</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Constituents outside the organization.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Constituency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Are there new constituencies that have not been working on this issue but who now are being affected by it?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Tool 8.6
Power Analysis Grid: Worksheet, Cont’d

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Names of Groups or Individuals</th>
<th>How Much Power Do They Have?</th>
<th>Do We Want Them Involved in Our Campaign?</th>
<th>How Will We Get Them Involved in Our Campaign?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Stakeholders</strong>  Who are the people who have identifi-able self-interest in the outcome of the campaign?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Allies</strong>  Who will support our campaign demands, but do not have a vested self-interest in the outcome?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Opponents</strong>  Who will oppose our demands?</td>
<td></td>
<td>(How do we keep them out of our campaign or neutralize them?)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now, answer this question based on your campaign research as recorded in Tool 8.4: Who or what has successfully moved the target in the past on an issue?
Exercise 8.1
Getting a Target Snapshot

You can use this exercise to begin to get a picture of who the target is, and train or engage leaders and members in doing initial target research. Much more detailed research will follow, but this can be an interesting starting place.

**Time:** 30 minutes.

**Materials:** Enough copies of news articles and other materials about the target for each participant to have one. Flip chart and markers for debriefing.

**Roles:** Facilitator. Readers.

**Room set-up:** Enough room for everyone to see the flip chart clearly and enough light to read small print.

- Facilitator distributes copies of news articles about the target. You can search back to when the target won her election or was appointed to her position. These are times when there is usually a flurry of news coverage about a person. You may also include printouts from the target’s Web site, campaign literature, or other information that is easy to read.
- Participants take a few minutes to read the material. Volunteers read a few samples.
- Using a flip chart to write people’s responses, the facilitator lists some questions about the target based on what the group has just read. Some sample questions include the following:
  - What is her power? What does she do? Where does her power come from?
  - Who is she? What is her self-interest? What issues does she care about?
  - What has she done before the position she now holds?
  - With whom does she ally herself? What is her style or approach?
  - Given this information, what’s our snapshot of this target?
  - What will she respond to?

*This exercise can stretch people to look beyond someone’s more obvious characteristics. For example, someone who is gay or lesbian may not necessarily have a record on LGBT issues. A man may have a substantial record on women’s issues. Reading what reporters have to say about targets can create an interesting and useful starting place to learn about them.*