Tools for Organizing: Leadership, Community, Power

PAL 111M

Organizing Notes
Charts
Action Plan

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What Is Organizing

(2003)

Organizers identify, recruit and develop leadership; build community around leadership; and build power out of community. Organizers challenge people to act on behalf of shared values and interests. They develop the relationships, understanding, and action that enable people to gain new understanding of their interests, new resources, and new capacity to use these resources on behalf of their interests. Organizers work through "dialogues" in relationships, interpretation and action carried out as campaigns.

Organizers interweave relationships, understanding and action so that each contributes to the other. One result is new networks of relationship wide and deep enough to provide a foundation for a new community in action. Another result is a new story about who this community is, where it has been, where it is going -- and how it will get there. A third result is action as the community mobilizes and deploys its resources on behalf of its interests -- as services or as advocacy.

Organizers develop new relationships out of old ones - sometimes by linking one person to another and sometimes by linking whole networks of people together.

Organizers work with people to interpret why they should act to change their world – their **motivation** – and how they can act to change it – their **strategy**.

Organizers motivate action by deepening people's understanding of who they are, what they want, and why. Mobilizing feelings of anger, hope, self-worth, solidarity, and urgency, they challenge feelings of fear, apathy, self-doubt, isolation, and inertia that inhibit action.

Organizers help people to articulate why they should act as a shared story of the challenges they face, why they must face up to them, and why others should help them – rooted in understanding who they are, where they've been, and where they want to go.

Organizers help people understand how they can act by creating opportunities for them to deliberate about their circumstances, reinterpret them in ways that open up new opportunities, and strategize to make creative use of their resources.

Organizers challenge people to take the responsibility to act. Empowerment for a person begins with taking responsibility. Empowerment for an organization begins with commitment: the responsibility its members take for it. Responsibility begins with choosing to act. Organizers challenge people not only to understand, but also to commit, and to act.

Organizers work through campaigns. Campaigns are highly energized, intensely focused, concentrated streams of activity with specific goals and deadlines. People are recruited, programs launched, battles fought and organizations built through campaigns. Campaigns polarize by bringing out those ordinarily submerged conflicts contrary to the interests of the constituency. One dilemma is how to depolarize in order to negotiate resolution of these conflicts. Another dilemma is how to balance campaigns with the ongoing work of organizational growth and development.

Organizers build community by developing leadership. They develop leaders by enhancing their skills, values and commitments. They build strong communities through which people gain new understanding of their interests as well as the power to act on them -- communities which are bounded yet inclusive, communal yet diverse, solidaristic yet tolerant. They work to develop a relationship between a constituency and its leaders based on mutual responsibility and accountability.

Introduction: Chart 1

Introduction: Chart 2

Introduction: Chart 3

Learning to Organize

(Week 1)

In his discussion of the difference between the "raft and the shore", Thich Nhat Hanh distinguishes among frameworks with which to structure learning, learning itself and what is learned. Although we do not need it once we have crossed a raging river, we do need to know how to build a good raft to get across. Our organizing "praxis" can serve us as a "raft" to focus on critical tools, pay attention to key questions, see how elements of organizing interact and share a common language to learn from each other's experience. On the other hand, it is only one possible starting point. In a classroom no one learns how to organize. That is a life's work. But you can learn how to learn to organize - that is a reasonable goal.

Organizing is a practice. Learning practice is different from learning "theory" because it can only be learned from the experience of taking action. Taking action, in turn, requires the courage to take risks - risks of failure, of making mistakes, of losing face, of rejection, etc. Because organizing is a relational practice – done in interaction with others – the more you can distinguish between your own goals, the goals of others, and how they interact, the easier it becomes for you to take the risks that learning requires. And the more deeply committed you are to your project, the more you will learn because you will be motivated to risk gaining new experience from which you can learn.

Organizing is also theory. We do not learn theory to "apply" it. Theory is not how things "really are". Theory is a way to simplify reality for specific purposes, such as predicting a likely outcome. We all have theories – the generalized lessons we learn from our experience (or experience reported by others) so we have an idea of what to expect. Using theory "mindfully" requires stepping back from our experience, writing about it, reflecting critically upon it, and drawing lessons from it. Learning what we can learn from our experience requires the discipline to place it in perspective, compare it with that of others, and reflect on it analytically.

Learning the "praxis" (theory of practice) of organizing may challenge some of your assumptions (your own theories) about how the social world works. These may be assumptions that serve you perfectly well in your private life, but may not work as well in the public work of organizing. Cognitive psychologists have taught us how we develop "schemata" with which we organize our understandings of the world. Schemata enable and constrain. They enable us to make sense of things, generalize, make choices, draw conclusions, and act. But, as stereotypes, they can inhibit our clarity of perception, cause us to see what we expect to see, and make it difficult for us to learn. We can, however, learn to become more "mindful" of our assumptions so they become less constraining, allowing us to develop more useful theory.

Being mindful of our assumptions can help us hear the elements of truth in arguments of those with whom we disagree, even while we engage in vigorous argument. Fearing argument, debate and conflict only inhibits learning. On the other hand, Rabbi Hillel contended that argument for “the sake of heaven”, the goal of which is to unearth the truth, must be grounded in one’s values and beliefs, entered into with humility, rooted in a commitment to hearing one’s opponent, and developed by learning to articulate the opponent’s argument to their satisfaction.

To facilitate our discussions, I use charts because we are learning about social processes often more easily visualized than verbalized. The four basic patterns embedded in these charts are those that

depict relationship, purpose, feedback-loops, and focus. Relational charts depict interactions, balances, and exchanges among parties fundamental to organizing. Purpose charts depict movement or development toward a goal, a peak, an outcome. Loops -- or more accurately spirals -- depict ways action leads to outcomes that influence subsequent action. Focus charts show the effect of concentrating diffuse energy and resources on specific targets.

Our approach is rooted in the traditions and values of democratic organizing - mobilizing people to act on common interests by developing leadership accountable to them. Although some tactics may be similar, democratic organizing is not about how to organize an army, a corporation, or a social service agency. The values that motivate democratic organizing are found in our moral traditions – religious, cultural, political -- traditions that we draw upon for our motivation to act. The understanding of organizing I build upon emerged from the Judeo-Christian and democratic traditions of the West, but as democracy has become a goal of peoples around the world, this tradition has been both challenged and enriched. The most important 20th Century innovator of democratic organizing, for example, was Gandhi. His combination of Eastern and Western traditions created a legacy further developed in the African freedom movement, the American Civil Rights movement, the work of Solidarity in Poland, and elsewhere.

Organizing is done as a campaign - a way of mobilizing time, resources, and energy to achieve a specific outcome. Stephen Jay Gould says time is sometimes a “cycle” and sometimes an “arrow.” Thinking of time as a “cycle” helps us to maintain our routines, our normal procedures, our annual budget, etc. Thinking of time as an “arrow” on the other hand focuses us on making change, on achieving specific outcomes, on focusing our efforts. A campaign is time as an “arrow". It is an intense stream of activity that begins with a foundational period, builds to a kick-off, builds to periodic peaks, and culminates in a final peak, followed by a resolution. This creates momentum strategically by gathering more and more resources - the way the snow that a snowball gathers allows it to gather more snow. Campaigns can also create momentum motivationally, as early successes can create the credibility to make later successes more achievable. You may find it useful to think of this course as a 6-week campaign.

Engaging in new experience, critical analysis of that experience, and reflecting on the values within which that experience is rooted can be very challenging. This is why much of what we do is in interaction with others – constituency, classmates, colleagues, and instructors. This is not an "extra" but at the core of the learning process. Learning how to challenge, support, and motivate those with whom we work - and to be challenged, supported, and motivated by them - can be one of the most useful "organizing" lessons you can take from this experience.

Introduction: Chart 4

Leadership
(Week 1)

Who Are Leaders?

Who is a leader? Many of us call to mind historic figures like Dr. Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela, Jane Addams, Robert Kennedy or President Reagan. In reality, we find leaders everywhere - linking together networks through which we work to achieve common purposes. In every community, church, classroom, and organization hundreds of people are doing the work of leadership without which these efforts would not survive.

Although we associate leaders with certain kinds of attributes (like power), another way to look at leadership is as a kind of relationship. James McGregor Burns argues leadership can be understood as a relationship that emerges from repeated "exchanges" or "transactions" between leaders and followers or constituents. Leaders provide resources constituents need to address their interests and constituents provide resources leaders need to address theirs. (Leadership Chart #1)

What do we exchange in this kind of relationship? Constituents may get help solving a problem, a sense of empowerment, access to resources, etc. Leaders may get the same things - and something else too, something that makes us willing to accept the responsibilities that go with leadership. Dr. King describes this as the "drum major instinct" - a desire to be first, to be recognized, even to be praised. As much as we may not want to admit it, this might sound familiar. Rather than condemn it - it is, after all, part of us - Dr. King argues it can be a good thing, depending on what we do to earn the recognition we seek. He quotes Jesus as saying to James and John, "if you want to be my disciples you not only "can" be first, you must be first - first in love and first in service."

Based on this view of leadership, then, who makes leaders? Can they be self-anointed? Can I decide one day that I am a leader? Or do I earn leadership by entering into relationship with those who can make me a leader by entering into relationship with me - my constituents? This makes it easy to recognize leaders. There is one simple test. Do they have followers? Fine speeches, a wonderful appearance, lovely awards and excellent work aside - no constituency, no leaders. You may not agree with this, but consider it.

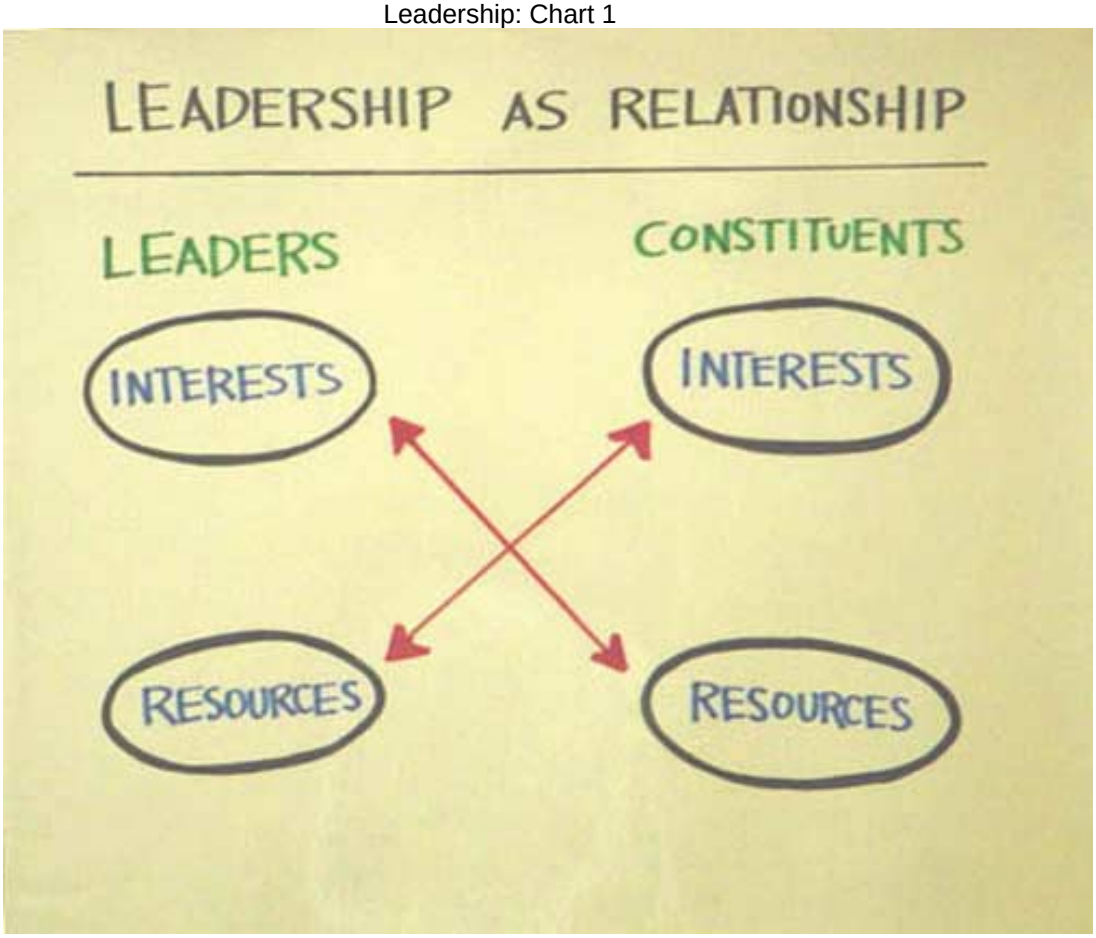
How Does Leadership Work?

Many of us may not want to think of ourselves as followers or as leaders, for that matter. Often we are told, especially in an institution like this one, that we are all leaders...or we should want to be. Leadership is highly praised, but no one says anything about being a good constituent…or citizen. I argue voluntary associations only work when people are willing to accept roles of leadership and followership. Leading and following are not expressions of who we "are" but of what we "do" - in a specific meeting, committee,

project, organization, or institution. We may play a leadership role with respect to one project and a followership role with respect to another.

What are the differences in those roles? Leaders accept responsibility for very specific pieces of work a group must do to work together successfully. Doing this work that makes it possible for us all to succeed is how leaders earn their leadership. As Jo Freeman argues, organization (or collaboration of any kind) simply doesn't work if we don't have ways to assign clear responsibilities and hold ourselves accountable for fulfilling them. A most important responsibility is that of seeing to the needs of the group as a whole. Although leadership can be exercised by individuals working in a team - a leadership team can bring complementary strengths to bear on solving a problem - the responsibility of seeing to the team itself still has to rest somewhere.

Leadership: Chart 1



We are also wise to distinguish "authority" from "leadership." Authority is a "legitimacy" of command usually attached to specific social positions, offices, or roles - legitimacy supported by cultural beliefs as well as coercive resources. An organization is a way to formalize authority relations among the participants – people's rights and their obligations. Bureaucracies structure authority as a set of rules according to which managers direct subordinates. Markets structure authority as a set of rules according to

which entrepreneurs can design incentives for persons to make enforceable choices based on their individual economic resources. Civic associations – organizations we are focusing on in this course – usually structure authority democratically in that leaders are accountable to the constituents whom they serve. Exercising leadership in a civic context can require more skill than the other settings because it depends more on persuasion than on command.

Most of us have been in situations in which those with authority have not earned their leadership, but try to compel cooperation based solely on their legitimacy or "power over". In these circumstances, to what extent do we think our interests are acknowledged and addressed? How does this affect our motivation and performance?

Cultures have institutionalized beliefs about whom is “authorized” to lead and who isn’t that can bar certain “kinds” of people from the opportunity to earn leadership. Leaders who develop under these conditions constitute a challenge to conventional ideas of authority. Authority can also be a resource a person can draw upon to earn their leadership. And sometimes leaders find authority has been conferred upon them as a result of their having earned their leadership. But leadership and authority are not the same thing.

Finally, leaders can be distinguished from “activists.” Hard working activists show up every day to staff the phone bank, pass out leaflets, and put up posters, and make critical contributions to the work of any volunteer organization. This is not the same, however, as engaging others in doing the work of the organization. Leadership is exercised through relational work.

What Do Leaders Do?

We’ve said a great deal about what leadership is and isn’t, but what is it exactly that leaders do to earn their leadership? What is the organizational work they do? And why is it so important?

Most of us have had lots of experience in “disorganizations," as shown in Leadership Chart #2. What are they like?

- They are <u>divided</u>. Factions and divisions fragment the organization and sap it of its resources.
- They are <u>confused</u>. Each person has a different story about what’s going on. There is a lot of gossip, but not very much good information.
- They are <u>passive</u>. Most “members” do very little so one or two people do most of the work.
- They are <u>reactive</u>. They are always trying to respond to some unanticipated new development.
- They are <u>inactive</u>. No one comes to meetings. No one shows up for activities.
- And they <u>drift</u>. There is little purposefulness to meetings, actions, or decisions as things “drift” from one meeting to the next.

Being part of a disorganization can be pretty discouraging, demotivating, and makes us ask ourselves why we're involved at all.

On the other hand, some of us may have had experience with organizations that really work.

- They are united. They have learned to manage their differences well enough that they can unite to accomplish the purposes for which they were formed. Differences are openly debated, discussed, and resolved.
- They share understanding. There is a widely shared understanding of what's going on, what the challenges are, what the program is and why what is being done had to be done.
- People participate. Lots of people in the organization are active - not just going to meetings, but getting the work of the organization done.
- They take initiative. Rather than reacting to whatever happens in their environment, they are proactive, and act upon their environment.
- They act. People do the work they must to make things happen.
- They share a sense of purpose. There is purposefulness about meetings, actions, and decisions and sense of forward momentum as work gets done.

So what makes the difference? Why are some groups disorganizations and other groups organizations? It is the quality of the work leaders do within them that makes groups work.

- Leaders turn division into solidarity by building, maintaining, and developing relationships among those who form the organization.
- Leaders turns confusion into understanding by facilitating interpretation of what is going on with the work of the organization.
- Leaders turn passivity into participation by motivation - inspiring people to commit to the action required if the group's goals are to be accomplished.
- Leaders turn reaction into initiative by strategizing - thinking through how the organization can use its resources to achieve its goals.
- Leaders turns inaction into action by mobilizing people to turn their resources into specific actions by means which they can achieve their goals.
- Leaders transforms drift into purpose by accepting responsibility for doing the leadership work which must be done if the group is to succeed and challenging others to accept their responsibility as well.

Each week, for the next four weeks, we look at a different aspect of how leadership is exercised in organizing - rela

Relationships

What Are Relationships?

One way to look at relationships is as exchanges illustrated in Relationship Chart #1. We each have certain interests and resources. We may exchange our resources to address each others interests.

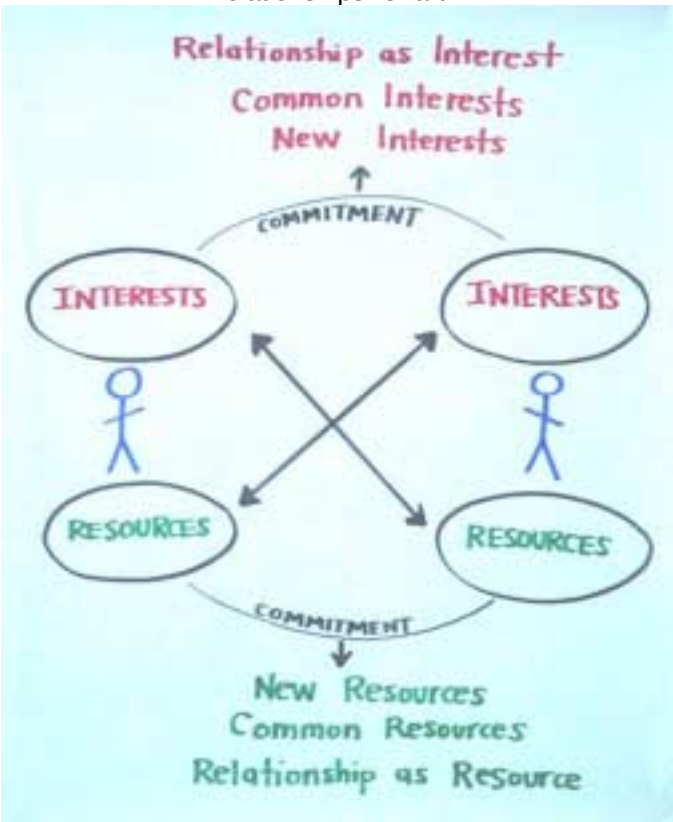
Our interests grow out of existence, relational and growth needs; the values we learn in our families, communities, and cultures; and our access to resources. Our interests are many -- family, work, community, religion, politics, culture. We want to care for our families, contribute to (and be recognized by) our communities, and succeed in our careers - to make a difference in the world. Understanding our own values and interests and those of others with whom we interact is critical to understanding the dynamics that drive the social and political world. One way of learning one's values and interests is to reflect on one's "choice points" - forks in the road when we make choices based on what we value.

We mobilize resources on behalf of interests. A resource is anything we can use to achieve something else. Natural resources are those we more or less came into the world with: our bodies, our minds, our spirit, our time, and our talents. But acquired resources are distributed far less widely -- land, money, equipment, status, skills, and information. The fact that some resources are more scarce than others and less equally distributed influences differences in our interests and in whose interests get acted upon - and whose don't. And some resources behave differently from others. Economist Albert Hirschman described resources that grow with use -- relationships, commitment, understanding --as “moral” resources while those that diminish with use -- money, materials -- “economic" resources.

But a relationship is more than an exchange. A relationship implies a future and assumes a past. A conversation over coffee contributes to a relationship only if there are to be more conversations. This commitment to a shared future -- and the consequences of a shared past -- transforms an exchange into

a relationship. Relationships are the foundation of most political work, including building organizations. Gladwell''s account from the New Yorker highlights the role of relationships, even in the absence of formal authority, in "getting things done."

Relationships: Chart 1



Building Relationships: Creating Social Capital

Entering into a relationship, as Relationship Chart #1 shows, may reconfigure our interests and resources in several ways. Our interests may change as our interaction with others reveals new interests of which we had not been aware. For example, "Hmm...Before we talked I didn't realize I really wanted to be a doctor, but now..." We also may discover common interests of which we were unaware. As you remember from the skills workshop, we may find shared interests in music, in movies, or in doing something about the dining hall service. Most importantly, we begin to develop an interest in the relationship itself. To the extent we hope to preserve the relationship we must do lots of work to sustain it.

Just as the relationship becomes a source of new "interests" it can also become a new source of resources. We may discover new exchanges our individual resources. "I'll help you with your problem sets if you help me with my literature essay." Relationships may facilitate development of common resources. "Why don't we pool our funds to hire a tutor to work with both of us?" Most importantly the relationship itself can become a resource on which we both can draw.

That new relationships construct new interests and new resources is what makes them into what Putnam and others call "social capital" -- a source of "power to" which simply didn't exist before. This capacity or "social capital" explains why strongly "relational" communities are capable of so much collaborative action of all kinds.

Why Relationships Matter

Our relationships influence how we can live in a world in which we both compete and collaborate with others. Some of our interests are shared, some differ and some are in conflict. The scarcer the resources we need to act on our interests - and the more skewed their distribution - the more likely we are to find ourselves in conflict with others. Conflicts of interest are sometimes obvious. We may want to keep our job to support our family and send our children to school, but our employer may want to lay us off to move the plant some place where production costs less. Sometimes conflicts are not obvious. Allocating funds for better public schools may require raising taxes of those paying to send their children to private schools. Keeping kids off drugs may threaten the interests of the dealers who thrive on getting them onto drugs. Recruiting kids for nonviolent conflict resolution may threaten gangs who are recruiting them for something else.

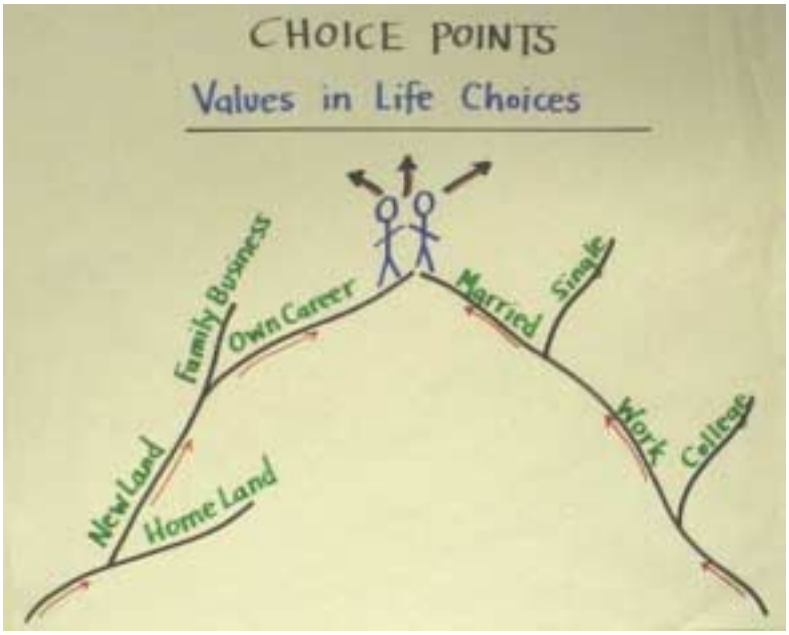
Common interests are not always obvious either. And even when they are obvious, we may not act on them. For example, in the health care fight a few years ago, most Americans told pollsters they had a "common interest" in health care reform. But the insurance industry had an interest in stopping health care reform. They mobilized far more effectively than “the public." This is evidence of the famous "collective action problem" - those with narrow interests and lots of resources find it easier to mobilize than those with broad interests and fewer resources. Relationships make collective action far more likely.

Public and Private Relationships

We all play many different roles in the relationships we enter into – both private (friend, spouse, sister, parent) and public (student, teacher, lawyer, doctor, leader, citizen). The all more conscious we become of the “roles” we play in different social settings the more we can reflect on the extent to which our performance of these “roles” meets our own interests and those of others with whom we interact. Fear of “losing face” if we are rejected when we ask for help can make it very hard for us to ask for the kind of help we need. We also learn to play roles of deference and domination, reinforcing inequities of power through every personal interaction. An extreme example was the interaction of blacks and whites in the Deep South before the civil rights movement. The gendering of our public interactions can be viewed in this way as well.

One way we connect the roles we play, giving meaning to them, and making them accessible to others, is through our "stories" – our narrative of we have been, the challenges we face (and have faced), and where we hope to go. When we enter into a relationship with another, we become "actors" in each others stories, not only exchanging resources and making commitments, but influencing how we think of ourselves and who we want to become. As shown in Relationship Chart #2, learning each others "stories" can be a critical step in forming, maintaining, and developing relationships.

Relationships: Chart 2



How We Create Relationships

How do we really create a relationship? In Relationship Chart #3, I propose one way to look at this.

• First, we must catch each other's attention. If I call up a minister to set up a meeting, it will help "get his attention" if I tell him someone he knows referred me. If I'm calling a potential volunteer on the phone, it will be important for me to use their name and explain how I got it. We may also be related to a common institution. Or, across a room full of people, we may just make eye contact.

• Once we have gotten each other's attention, we need to establish an interest in having a conversation. I may mention to the minister, for example, how I was told he was interested in doing something about domestic violence in his parish and that's what I'd like his advice on. Or, I was told he is the key

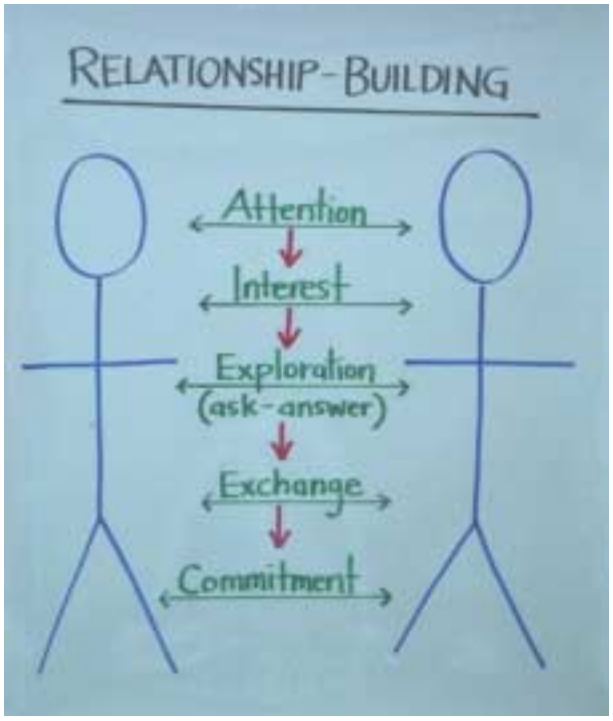
person from whom to get advice about what is really going on in the parish. Or, since we both happen to be taking the same class, maybe we should talk about how we can help each other..

• There usually follows a period of exploration -- of asking and answering each other's questions, of probing for areas of common interest, of testing whether the other has anything to contribute to us, and of whether we have anything to contribute to the other. The key here is learning to ask good questions, such as why a person has made the choices they have.

• As a result of our exploration, we may begin to make exchanges -- not just in the future, but then and there within the conversation. We may turn out to be a good listener for someone who needs listening. We may find we are learning a great deal from our interaction with the other person. We may find we have an opportunity to offer another person some insight, support, or recognition that they find valuable. We may find we can challenge the other person in ways that may yield them new insight. We may also discover a basis for future “exchanges” -- such as going to see a movie we both want to see, deciding to come to a meeting the other has told us about, taking responsibility to help pass out some leaflets, or just deciding to have another conversation.

• Finally, if we’ve determined a basis may exist for a relationship, we make a commitment to the relationship by agreeing to meet again, have coffee, come to the meeting, send emails, etc. What turns the exchange into a relationship is the commitment we make to each other and to the relationship. People often make the mistake of trying to go right to a commitment without laying a relational basis for it first.

Relationships: Chart 3



Leadership, Relationships and Organizing

Relationship building is central to the craft of organizing because it is within relationships that we develop new understanding of our interests and new resources to act on those interests. And to the extent that we share Burns' view of leadership as a kind of relationship, it is central to the exercise of leadership as well. Leaders can offer resources to help constituents address their interests and constituents can offer resources to help leaders address theirs. When this interaction yields a deeper understanding of ones values and how to translate them into action, Burns calls this moral leadership. And although identifying, recruiting and developing leadership is critical to the capacity - or power - of most organizations, it is the particular focus of organizers whose work is to be leaders of leaders. The primary responsibility of an organizer is to develop the leadership capacities of others and, in this way, of the organizations through which their constituents act on their common interests.

Mobilizing Interpretation I:
Motivation, Story and Celebration
(Week 2)

What Is Interpretation?

The last time we met, we looked at how organizers build relationships. Today we begin to look at how organizers provide leadership to a group as it figures out what to do and why it should do it - what I call interpretation. We reinterpret our world and our roles within it even as we change it. Our understanding of ourselves and the world around us is based less on information about what the data is than on our interpretation of what the data means - is something good for us, is it bad for us, is it irrelevant for us. We interpret data by contextualizing it within schemata or “frames" we have learned. Frames are patterns of understanding that influence what we remember, what we pay attention to, and what we expect that give meaning to discrete pieces of information we encounter. They are emotionally anchored, derive from our direct experience, and give us our “grip” on the world.

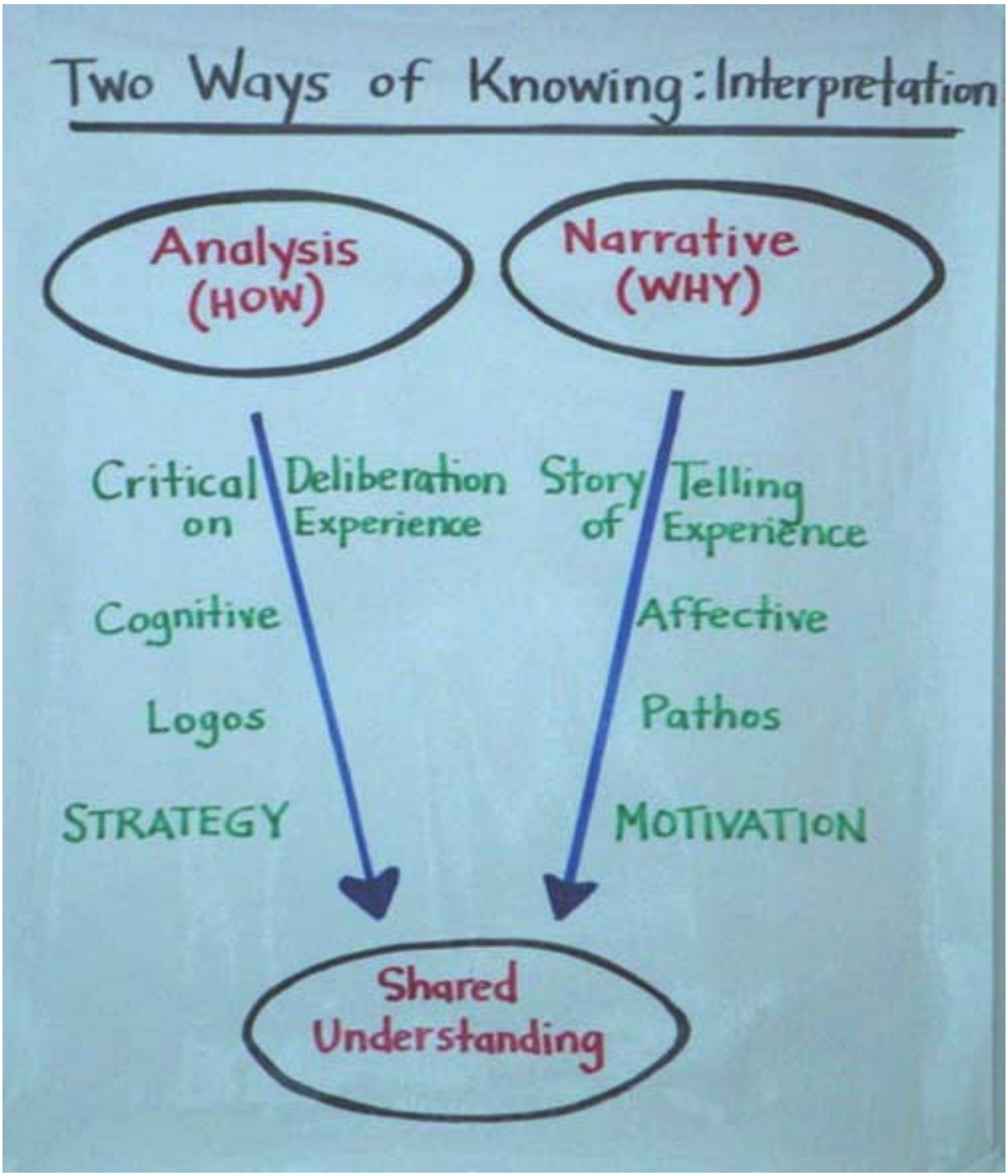
Two Ways of Knowing
Why and How

We can distinguish between two ways in which we interpret the world -- narrative and analytic -- as shown in Interpretation Chart #1. We construct a narrative understanding of who we are, where we are going, and how we hope to get there. It is rooted more in how we feel about things (affect) than in what we think about them (cognition). It is inductive, evaluates “truth” as the extent to which it “moves” us, and dominates fields of religion, literature, poetry, and politics (yes, politics). Psychologist Jerome Bruner argues that its power to engage grows out of the wisdom we are eager to learn about coping with uncertainty. Its power to move us grows out of the extent to which we can identify with the protagonists. It is the most ancient form of interpretation, remembrance, and communication. In organizations, we enact narrative in symbols, rituals, and celebrations. This way of knowing helps us understand WHY we should act – our motivation.

The analytic (a privileged form of “knowing” in the university) is based on our application of critical reason to understanding data about the world. It is rooted more in what we think about things (cognition) than in how we feel about them (affect). It is deductive, governed by rules of logic, and often constructed in the form of syllogism. It dominates fields of economics, policy analysis, and much scientific research. Although its persuasive power ultimately rests on evidence (experience) that confirms or falsifies its hypotheses, it is based on our acceptance of assumptions on which the logic is based or the authority of those who invoke this logic. It is most persuasive when it "works" - helps us achieve the outcomes we want. In organizations we often do analytic work as deliberation, the job of many meetings. This way of

knowing helps us understand HOW to act – our strategy. This week we focus on motivation and next week on strategy.

Interpretation: Chart 1



Knowing Why

Movement, Motivations, and Emotion

To understand our motivation – that which moves us to act or keeps us from acting – we must turn to our emotions, the root word for which is the same - motor, "to move". As you recall from our discussion of leadership, leaders "motivate" to transform a passive "disorganization" into an active "organization." Strategy turns reaction into initiative by mobilizing our thinking, but motivation turns passivity into participation by mobilizing our feelings.

Reflecting on Henry V's work with his men. How did he transform a circumstance of certain defeat into one of possible victory? To what did Henry appeal? How do you think his men felt? How do you think he felt? How do you think he brought his men to see their condition differently? Until Henry brought his men to feel differently about their circumstance, how do you think he could he have persuaded them to see new possibilities in it?

One reason it wasn't very likely is because the emotional lenses through which we view "the facts" profoundly shapes our perception of them. Some of us have learned to fear novelty, others, to embrace it. Some of us dread risk; others thrive on it. Some of us are threatened by difference; others of us are engaged by it. Some of us cannot tolerate ambiguity; others of us are energized by it. So when we observe a certain set of facts – our employer cuts our pay, for example – through the lens of fear, we are unlikely to do anything to protest. We may even rationalize that we deserved the pay cut. And when it happens again, we can reassure ourselves that we were right to be afraid all along.

So how can we ever break out of such loops enough to risk the action required to change our circumstances? If an organizer comes along and tells us that a union might keep our employer from cutting our pay, but we still have the fear lens in place, we'll just see the organizer as threatening, his or her facts as suspect, and his or her proposal as hopeless. How can we come to see "the facts" differently?

Isn't this what Henry V does with his men? As he spoke with his men, he engaged them in an "emotional dialogue", drawing on one set of emotions, grounded in one set of experience, to counter another set of emotions, grounded in different experience. But because it was a dialogue in emotion, does that mean his performance was "irrational?" Some would say so. But philosopher Martha Nussbaum argues that genuine moral choices – by which she means choices we are actually motivated to act upon, not only to think we "ought" to act upon – are rooted in critical data our emotions provide us as to what is of real value to us. Or as St. Augustine observed, "knowing" the good is not the same thing as "loving" it, being moved to act upon it.

Breaking Belief Barriers

Organizers engage people by mobilizing feelings that can move them to act in ways that challenge feelings that inhibit action, as shown in Motivation Chart #2. Most of us hold conflicting feelings, some of which are more salient at one time than another. Mobilizing one set of feelings to challenge another can produce an emotional dissonance, a tension that can only be resolved through action. This is sometimes called “agitation.” For example, a person’s belief that her boss (teacher, parent, employer) is all-powerful may come into conflict with her belief in her own self-respect -- when her boss does something that violates her sense of self-respect. She may become angry enough to challenge her boss, or she may decide to “swallow her pride,” or she may get angry with the organizer who points out the conflict. There is a cost attached to any of these resolutions, but one may serve her interests better than another. One of the main ways organizers resolve this tension is with action embedded in the telling of a new story -- a story of hope.

FEAR - ANGER

The biggest “belief barrier” to action is fear - fear of all kinds: threats, danger, standing out, failing, being laughed at, etc. When we are afraid we pay little attention to the new leaflet about all the wonderful benefits a union can bring, for example. We are also likely to come up with all the excuses we need to avoid having to confront our fear. The most time-honored way to counter fear is with anger - not uncontrolled “rage," but the indignant anger of “outrage” at unjust conditions. Gamson describes this as developing an "injustice frame" to counter a "legitimacy frame." This is a constructive anger based on difference between what “ought to be” and what “is”. It is the indignation we feel when our “moral order” has been violated. People rarely mobilize to protest inequality, but they do mobilize to protest inequity - injustice. In other words, our values, moral traditions, and sense of personal dignity are critical sources of the motivation to act against fear. This is one reason organizing is so deeply rooted in moral traditions. Organizers can sometimes prepare for fear by “inoculating” those whom they are organizing, warning them the opposition will threaten them in this way and promise them that. When it actually happens it is not “unexpected” but “expected” and affirms the wisdom of the organizer. Fear and anger are really on a kind of continuum. Depending on the stage of development of an organizing drive, the same incident (e.g., the burning of a cross) can produce fear (early in the drive) or anger (late in the drive). This anger can then lead to action.

APATHY - HOPE

People talk a great deal about apathy - not caring. The root word of apathy is Greek for not feeling. What we often describe as not caring, however, can be caring too much about something that we be-

lieve we can do nothing about. When apathy is coupled with anger it becomes its first cousin - cynicism or, in the elite world, *cynical chic*. It can also become despair, a sentiment many faith traditions identify as a primary sin. Apathy can be countered with hope. But where does "hope" come from? It won't work to pass out cupcakes, sing kumbaya and announce we should "be hopeful now." One source of hope is in the experience of "credible solutions", not only reports of success elsewhere, but also, as Chong explains, direct experience of small successes, small victories. Another important source of hope for many people is in their religious beliefs, their moral and cultural traditions. It is no accident many of the great social movements of our time drew strength from religious traditions within which they arose (Gandhi, Civil Rights, Solidarity). Much of today's organizing is grounded in faith communities. Another source of the experience of hope is in the relationship between the organizer and organizee. Don't you know people who instill a sense of hopefulness in you when you spend time with them? It's difficult to be a pessimistic organizer. Eeyore, for example, would make a very poor organizer ("Good morning, Eeyore! What's good about it, Pooh?"). And isn't "charisma" simply a kind of capacity to inspire hopefulness in others, inspiring others to believe in themselves? Lots of people have it, but need to be encouraged to use it. Just as religious belief requires a "leap of faith," Cornel West argues, politics (or civic action) requires a "leap of hope." Perhaps this is where courage comes from.

SELF-DOUBT - YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

One of the biggest barriers to action is "self-doubt" - I can't do it, people like me can't do it, we aren't qualified to do it, etc., etc., etc. Organizers work to counter self-doubt by coming up with ways people can experience YCMAD - you can make a difference. These include recognition, an action program, accountability, and training.

• One way is to offer <u>recognition</u> - specific recognition of specific people for specific contributions at specific times and in specific ways, visible recognition, widely shared recognition. But to be credible, recognition must be based on real accomplishment. Otherwise, it degenerates into flattery no one believes. The idea is not so much to spread recognition around. It is to spread accomplishment around and then recognize people for that accomplishment. The 1987 Agnos for Mayor campaign in San Francisco had an extensive volunteer precinct leader operation. When anyone agreed to be a precinct leader, his name was written on a star that was hung from the ceiling of the campaign headquarters. As the election approached, when you entered the headquarters, you would look up and see hundreds of stars hanging from the ceiling in recognition of the grass roots leaders involved: the real "stars" of the campaign.

• Another key way to create the belief that you can make a difference is to base your <u>action program</u> on what people can do, not what they can't do. For example, if you design a program that requires each new volunteer to recruit 100 people tomorrow and offer no leads, no training, no coaching and no support -- it

will only create frustration and deeper feelings of self-doubt. A fully supported program to recruit 5 new people within the next week would be far more effective. This is how accomplishment can be spread around.

• A third key to persuading people they can make a difference is accountability. There is no real recognition without accountability. Requiring accountability does not show lack of trust in a volunteer. It is evidence that what the volunteer is doing really matters. Have you ever volunteered to walk a precinct in a campaign? They give you a packet with a voter list, tell you to mark the responses, and bring it back when you're done. One time, I'd been out for 4 hours, did a conscientious job, returned to the headquarters ready to report and was told, "Oh, just throw it over there in the corner, thanks a lot, see you next week." What about all my work? It didn't even matter enough for anyone to debrief me about it - let alone mark it up on a wall chart and try to learn from it. Do you think I went back "next week?"

• Finally, training is essential. Training people to do new tasks which a program or campaign requires is not so much about giving skills, as it is about giving confidence. Training is a way of supporting people in a safe setting in which they learn a new task is something they can do.

ISOLATION - SOLIDARITY

When we feel isolated, we don't see the interests we share with others, we have little sense of access to common resources, we have no sense of a shared identity, and we generally feel quite powerless. The experience of solidarity - or of love - is a direct counter to this. As Chong points out, because of the "snowball" effect it is much easier to get people to join others who are already in action. What was one of the main reasons the workers in the rubber work story found the courage to shut down the plant? This is one of the important roles of mass meetings, singing, common dress, shared language, etc. It is also one of the reasons that developing relationships among those whom we hope to mobilize is so important.

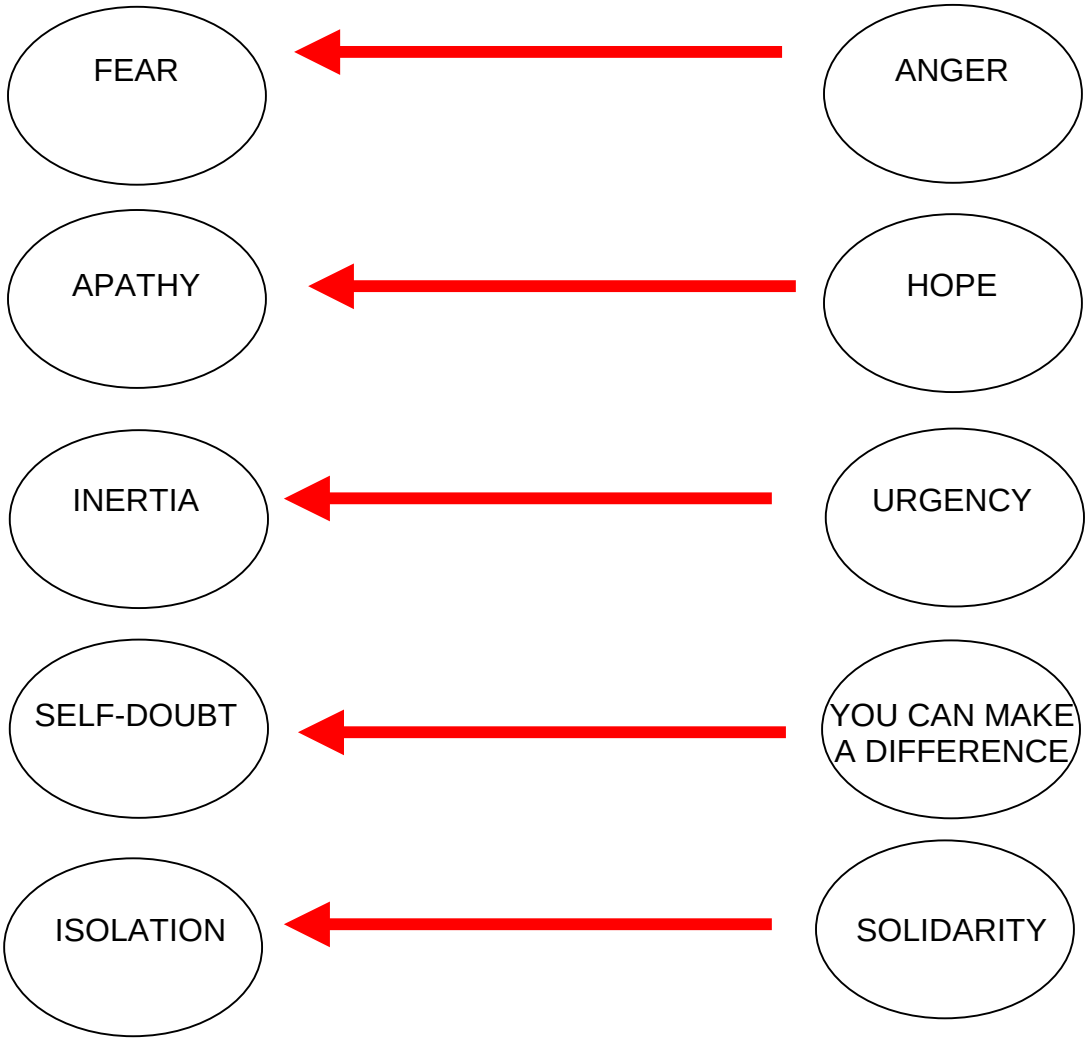
INERTIA -URGENCY

What about inertia - just plain old resistance to change, habit, etc. The best way to counter inertia is with urgency. Although we think urgency is about time, it is really about commitment. It is about creating a space within which new action can unfold. The urgent is what we really respond to, and unless we find ways to make the important also urgent, the urgent alone will take priority. Imagine that someone calls you up and tells you they are recruiting for a plan to change the world, but it will take 100 years or so and they are just now in the first phase and were thinking about having a meeting sometime in the course of the

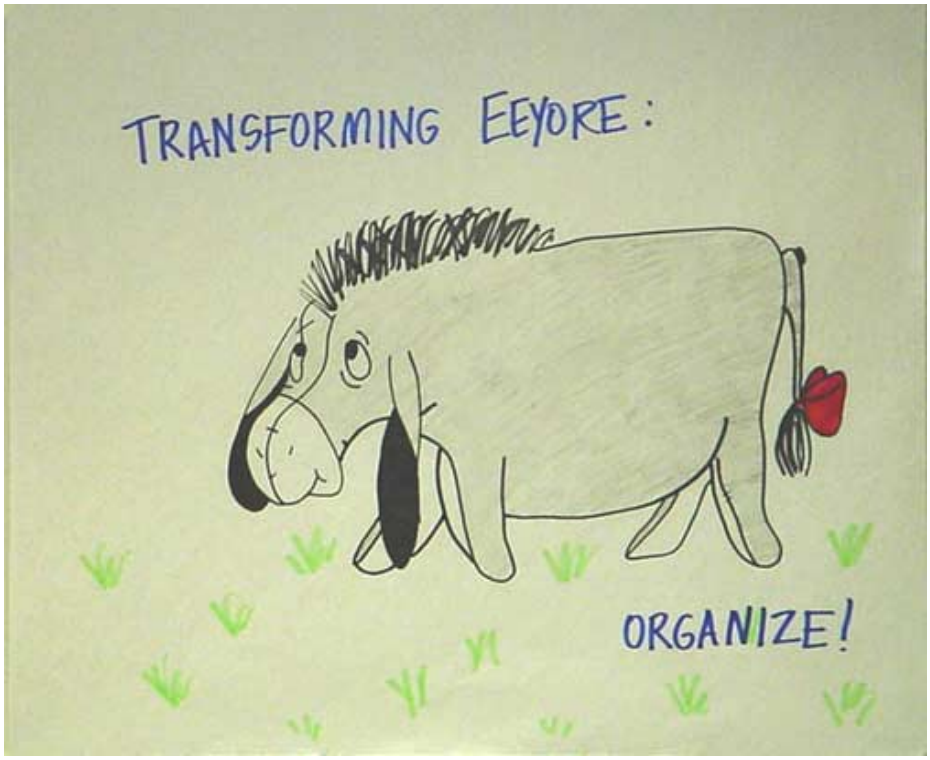
next 6 months and want to know if you would be interested in coming whenever it happens? On the other hand, what if someone calls you about an election you care about with the news that election day is just 7 days away and that within these 7 days, 3000 targeted voters - or about 500/day - have to be contacted in order to win. With help of 220 volunteers who agree to contact 20 voters each they can reach them all. You happen to live near 20 of these voters. If you will come down to the headquarters just down the street from you at 6:00 PM, they'll show you exactly how to do it? Commitment and concentration of energy is required to get anything new started and urgency is often a critical way in which to get the commitment which is required.

Motivation: Chart 2

BREAKING THE BELIEF BARRIERS



Motivation: Chart 3



Story Telling

Engaging in Motivational Conversation

Henry V engaged his men in a powerful emotional dialogue the night before the battle of Agincourt. But what was the form of that dialogue? Was it as an argument – a claim that he backed up with appropriate evidence? Or did Henry tell a story. Not a story about what once was, but a story about what could be. Stories of "what could be", stories of hope, are one of the main ways organizers translate values into action.

What is a Story?

Scholars of narrative specify three elements: a plot, characters, and a moral.

What makes a plot a plot?

As shown in Narrative Chart #1 a plot has a beginning, a crisis, and a resolution. As the story begins (once upon a time), our protagonist is going along their way to a desired goal. But the unexpected intervenes. A crisis ensues and we get interested. He or she struggles with what to do. Will it turn out alright? Will they succeed or fail? As events unfold, suspense builds to a climax when things are resolved by

getting back on the old track, getting on a new track to the old goal, or getting on a new track to a new goal.[1] There is a resolution.

Why does this interest us so? If most movies, plays, novels, anecdotes, jokes, myths, political accounts, etc. are plotted in essentially the same way, why are they so compelling to us? Isn't dealing with the unexpected – on a small scale or on a large scale - a part of our daily lives. And isn't it by its very nature something we are never entirely prepared for. Yet isn't dealing with it a big part of how we define who we are, how we make choices, how we deal with risk, how we face the unknown. Isn't how we handle real choices – choices in which it is not obvious what to do – how we actually exercise agency in the world? Learning how to cope with the unpredictable seems to be something we are infinitely curious about. Why else do we invest billions of dollars a year, not to mention countless hours, in films, literature, sports events and even religious practices that engage us in this question?

What about characters?

The characters are how we connect with the story. Arguments persuade with a convincing explanation. But stories don't persuade us. They "move" us – or they don't. But when they do it is through the mechanism of empathetic emotional identification with the characters in the story. And what most stories have to teach is more about how to handle difficult choices emotionally – to be courageous, to keep our cool, to trust our imagination - than about the specific tactics to use in any one case.

And the moral?

Can you have a story without a moral? Most scholars think not because to engage us, a story must have a "point". Haven't you ever been at a party where someone is holding forth on something that happened to them that just goes on and on and on. Don't you ever want to shout "point! point! what's the point?!" A story teaches us something about the "right" way to act – not just what tactic or strategy to use to deal with a particular kind of challenge - but how to "be" courageous, inventive, steadfast, and so forth. In fact, the power of stories rests, in part, in the values, the emotional commitments, that they draw upon, affirm, or challenge. So stories articulate strongly held beliefs about what we value, what we fear, what inspires us, and what alienates us. They enact how we "feel" about the world, not just how we "think" about it. Analytics may be a repository of "knowledge," but stories are a repository of "wisdom." The academic world scoffed at President Reagan's lack of analytic interest, failing to realize that academic "logic" was an inadequate response to his moral "story" about America.

Stories engage us because they become lived experiences - we become part of the story, as tellers or as listeners. As a story is told we respond, call up our own stories, and tell another in response. And when we retell it, we may "customize" it a bit to bring out our "truth" of what "really" happened. Stories engage because they teach us about something in which we are deeply interested -- how to deal with the unexpected that comes upon us every day as we try to live our purposeful lives.

Although we often tell stories about the past, as in "once upon a time", what moves us to tell stories is concern with the future. Through stories we can draw on the past, to meet a current challenge, to shape a desired future. This is what Henry V did. Rather than using his time engaging in tales of jolly old

[1]In post-modern fiction, there may be no resolution at all as the protagonist wanders off in no particular direction --

England, although there certainly could have been a place for this, his real focus was on mobilizing his men's understanding of their past, their identities, to face a current challenge in a way that would make a new future possible for them – individually, as part of the "happy few", and for their country. The importance learning to tell a new story can have is illustrated by the way Henry V "dramatically" altered a very frightening situation in which the English found themselves. He "reframed" the English story of themselves as a tattered band with a lost cause, doomed to destruction in a foreign land, into a "happy few," a band of brothers with a holy cause, destined for honor and success.[2] By engaging his men in telling a new story of their situation, he transformed certain defeat into possible victory. Of course the story didn't do it alone. Victory also required a supply of English longbows that could knock the French knights off their horses. But longbows or not, if the English had believed themselves beaten, they most likely would have been. How did he do this?

As shown in Narrative Chart #2, organizers weave new stories out of old ones by linking stories of individuals, organizations, and communities, drawing upon our common "stock" or stories. In fact, one way to think about our "identity" is as our "story", a narrative that links our experiences in a coherent account of where we have been, where we want to go, and how we are getting there. Some psychologists argue this way of processing is embedded in our hard wiring. We experience life as goal directed, from birth through a series of transformative crises (childhood, adolescence, young adulthood, marriage, retirement, etc.) which finally get resolved at our death (Solon said the meaning of a person's life is never known until it is over). Through the stories of our families, our communities and our cultures we learn how to live. Most of the time parents spend with small children is in story telling.

Our individual stories - or identities - are about who we are (our backgrounds, our families), where we are going (our goals, our interests), and how we are getting there (our life choices, the crises we have overcome, our "defining moments"). Our community (and family) stories are also about who we are (as a community), where we are going (our values, our shared goals), and how we are getting there (our religious traditions, political beliefs, economic beliefs). We tell our community stories again and again as folk sayings, popular songs, religious rituals, and our community celebrations (e.g., Easter, Passover, 4th of July). Our cultures are the repositories of our stories.

Stories are constructed from our direct experience (action), our interactions with others (relationships), and the language (symbols, metaphors) with which we interpret that experience. Early learning is particularly important in story formation -- for individuals, their childhood; for groups, their forming moments; and for nations, their founding moments. The ways we learn to deal with experiences fraught with uncertainty are critical for forming our identities as individuals, groups, and nations. We can all recall "defining moments" in our understanding of our relationships with ourselves and with those whom we love. Nations institutionalize retelling of stories of moments like the "New Deal" or "Pearl Harbor" or "Viet Nam" on which they base evaluative choices for years. Since stories develop in interaction with others, they en-

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when the author may be telling us about the meaning in meaninglessness.

[2]We don't have class time to show the video of Kenneth Branaugh's version of this scene, but I'll put a copy on reserve at the library for anyone who would like to see it. Stories really need to be told to be appreciated, not read,

compass “roles” and “norms” that govern our relationships and which emerge in the early stages of group formation. One reason story formation is so deeply embedded in interactions with others is that the actions and reactions of others is a principal source of the uncertainty we fear and must learn to manage. Stories are also shaped by the symbolic structures with which we organize our communication with one another -- our language, metaphors, and analogies.

Stories are so important because they are the principal way we organize information for action. A dilemma arises, however, in that like other schemata, stories help us organize the data to fit our beliefs, screening out data inconsistent with them -- like the "exception that proves the rule." If we become trapped by beliefs that limit our ability to act on our interests, we can have a real problem. Here are some snippets of stories grounded in self-defeating beliefs: I am powerless; my problems are uniquely my own; I don't deserve more; I can’t trust anyone; I’m "better off" than those people, even though they have the same problem I do. We can get trapped in a self-reproducing loop: we act based on data as interpreted by patterns of belief that lead to actions which produce more data which reinforces those same patterns of belief. Under these circumstances, giving someone a leaflet to read is not likely to make much difference. This can help explain why sometimes we don't act in our "best interest" even when we "know" better.

But because stories are generated by in the meaning given to direct experience of choices made in the face of uncertainty - often in relationship with others -they can change in the same way. Through new relationships, the experience of powerlessness can be transformed into one of “making a difference” -- as one is listened to, asked questions, afforded agency. Symbols can change our stories as when Southern blacks in the civil rights movement took prayer services to the county court houses, transforming the meaning of going to the courthouse for blacks and for whites - or in the way many groups struggle to claim their autonomy by renaming themselves.

Old stories are most powerfully challenged by the reframing of new experience -- experience dissonant with our old story. New experience can begin a new story in which the “facts” acquire new meaning. Participants in the Montgomery bus boycott, for example, experienced a kind of power that challenged prior beliefs in the powerlessness of blacks in Montgomery. This is why “action” is so important in organizing -- it creates new experience. The challenge facing many organizers, then, is not one of offering new “information," but of offering new “experience," because new “experience” can create the opportunity to begin a new story, thus leading to new “action” -- breaking the “motivational loop. Finding ways to move people to act that give them opportunities to reframe their experience as a new story is a critical step in organizing. But the value of the experience can be lost if not reframed as story. Look back at the Exodus story you'll note God stops the action just as the Israelites are about to cross the Red Sea to instruct them in telling the story of what is happening and establish rituals for its annual retelling.

Stories of Hope

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because much of their power is in the interaction between story teller and listeners - who both participate in a kind of narrative reframing of their circumstances.

When we start a new organization, we not only build new relationships and mobilize new resources, but we begin a new story -- a story that, if it is successful, will weave together individual stories with a broader story of the community within which we live. "Organizing stories" bridge individual stories to a shared story, old frames to new, individual interests to those in common; old possibilities, to new ones. Organizers learn to tell a "story of hope" as shown in Narrative Chart #1. This includes:

• Our challenge (why now) - an account of the injustice that has created the crisis that requires action out of the ordinary now. This may appeal to feelings of anger (at the injustice), urgency.

• Our identity (why us) - an account of why we in particular must face this particular challenge based on our story of who we are, where we came from, and where we hope to go. This may include an origin myth, tales of founders, early achievements, crises overcome, our goals, why they are worthy, etc. This is an important appeal to feelings of solidarity.

• Our call (why you) – a call for action rooted in the stories of those whom you hope to mobilize – and account of why others must act as well as a credible strategy of how we can act. This appeals to the feelings of hopefulness, you can make a difference, urgency.

Stories are told for many purposes. They are told to recruit as a “rap” in which I invite you to link your story with mine and that of our organization. They are told to teach -- they communicate values, like “the way we do things around here,” who our “heroes” are, what our “formative moments” were, etc. They are told to empower -- the story of a new organization unfolds as new people join in “writing it” and weave their own story into it. They are told to mobilize -- a march, for example, is an enacted story in which each of us makes a contribution to a journey toward a shared goal. They are told to build community as we express shared identities in rituals, celebrations, commemorations, etc. They are told as we interpret ourselves and our organization to the world -- in word, symbol and deed.

Celebrations

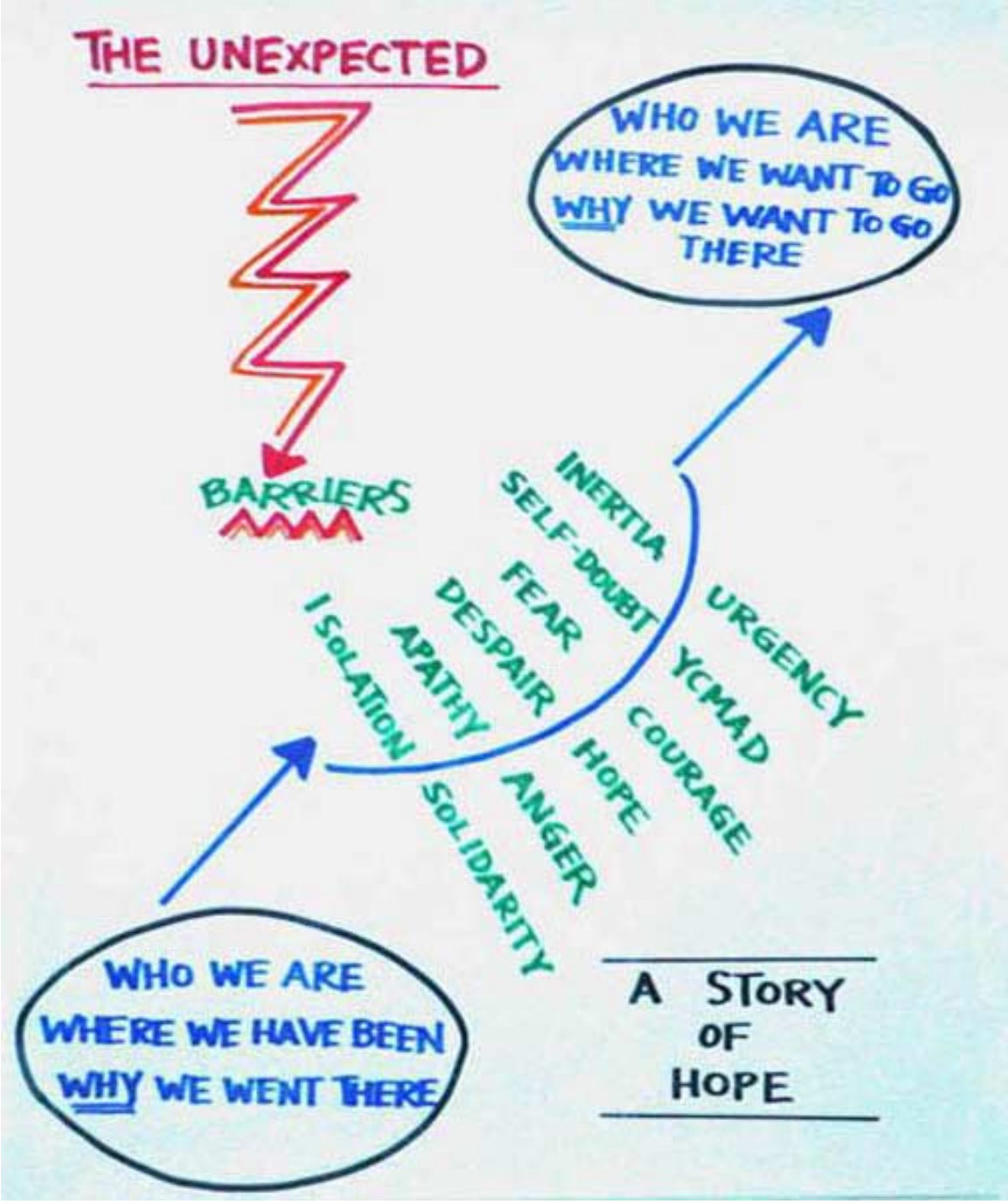
If we do our deliberative work in meetings, we do our story telling in celebrations. If meetings are about thinking, celebrations are about feeling. A celebration is not a party. It is a way members of a community come together to honor who they are, what they have done, where they are going -- often symbolically. Important life celebrations may be at times of sadness, as well as times of great joy. Celebrations provide rituals that allow us to join in enacting a vision of our community -- at least in our hearts. Institutions that retain their vitality are rich in celebrations. In the Church, for example, mass is "celebrated." Harvard's annual celebration is called graduation and lasts a whole week. Of course celebrations that lose touch with the day-to-day experience of what the organization does can lose their meaning, become formal, and actually emphasize the need for renewal.

Celebrations are a way we can interpret important events, recognize important contributions, acknowledge a common identity, and deepen our sense of community. They can be formal or informal--rallies fiestas, victory parties, shared meals, mass meetings, or religious services. Small "celebratory acts" can be introduced into many aspects of an organization's life. In the UFW we learned a "farm worker applause" that celebrated our solidarity, expressed our unity, and identified us as participants in the movement. Certain traditional opening and closing songs can play this role. Amnesty International ends its meetings with a short letter writing session on behalf of one of their prisoners. More important than the number of letters written is the affirmation of what the organization is all about. What sort of celebrations do your organizations hold? What is celebrated there? How? What is the story these celebrations tell of your organization? How do you conduct celebrations that acknowledge diversity as well as unity?

Conclusion

Organizers can offer leadership to others by motivation action that can creating new experiences that can make new understanding and action possible. Have you ever watched a mama bird and her baby birds when it is time for them to learn to fly? Does she peck gently at their ears, persuading them they have nothing to be afraid of? Does she describe the wonders of flying, hoping to entice them? Usually, with a quick push, they're out of the nest and in the air. They wobble around a little bit, try their wings, go up, go down, but eventually get it. And as they begin to fly instead of seeing the ground as dangerous and distant, they come to see it as a safe place to rest. Instead of seeing the sky as a vast and frightening expanse, they come to see it as a wondrous place to explore. And, as the mama bird would tell you if she could, it isn't just knowing what to do that matters, but when to do it.

Narrative: Chart 1



Narrative: Chart 2

Helpful Hint

Interpretation III: HOW
Strategy, Deliberation and Meetings
(Week 3)

Introduction

Last week we discussed how organizers develop shared understanding of why we should act – motivation, narrative, celebrations. This week we focus on how to develop a shared understanding of how we can act – strategy, deliberation, and meetings. Last week we discussed moving from passivity to participation, this week from reaction to initiative.

Strategy and Power

Strategy is how we turn what we have into what we need to get what we want - how we turn resources into power. If we think of power as the influence one actor can have upon another because of an imbalance in interests and resources, as shown in Strategy Chart #1, one way to correct the imbalance is to find more resources. That's one reason people pool resources, as when they form a union, an advocacy organization, or a nation. But more resources aren't always available. So another way to correct the imbalance is to move the fulcrum on which the balance rests to get more leverage out of the same resources. This is what good strategists learn to do - get more leverage from resources that ARE available. So power is not only a matter of material resources, but also of imagination. And because organizers are often trying to change things, they have to rely on resourcefulness to compensate for lack of resources. In the selection from Samuel, do you think David was a good strategist? What role did motivation play? What resources did he rely on? How did he "recontextualize" the field of battle? How did he get more "power"?

What Is Power?

Dr. King defined power as the "ability to achieve purpose." "Whether it is good or bad," he said, "depends on the purpose." In Spanish the word for power is "poder" -- to be able to, to have the capacity to. So if power is simply a way to describe capacity, why, as Alinsky asks, is it the "p-word" -- something we don't like to admit we want, acknowledge others have, concede matters, or even talk about? Do we confuse the world as it "should be" with the world as "it is?" Do we want to avoid admitting the limits on our own autonomy? For purposes of our work this semester, focusing on power -- or the lack of it -- matters because it not only helps to explain the source of many of problems with which we are concerned, but how to solve them

Two Kinds of Power

Power works in at least two different ways. Traditionally we think of it as "power over" or dependency and domination. (top diagram in Strategy Chart #2) I gain power over others by making them dependent on me for resources they need -- power that gives me access to their resources on terms that meet my interests at their expense. An employer, for example, who controls most of the opportunities for income (resources) in a "company" town can exercise power over individual workers who need the income (interests), thus gaining access to their labor (resources) at low wages. The employer can exploit the worker because the worker depends on the employer. The employers' interests get addressed but at the expense of workers' interests that do not. I'm sure you can think of many other examples of how this works in settings drawn from your own experience.

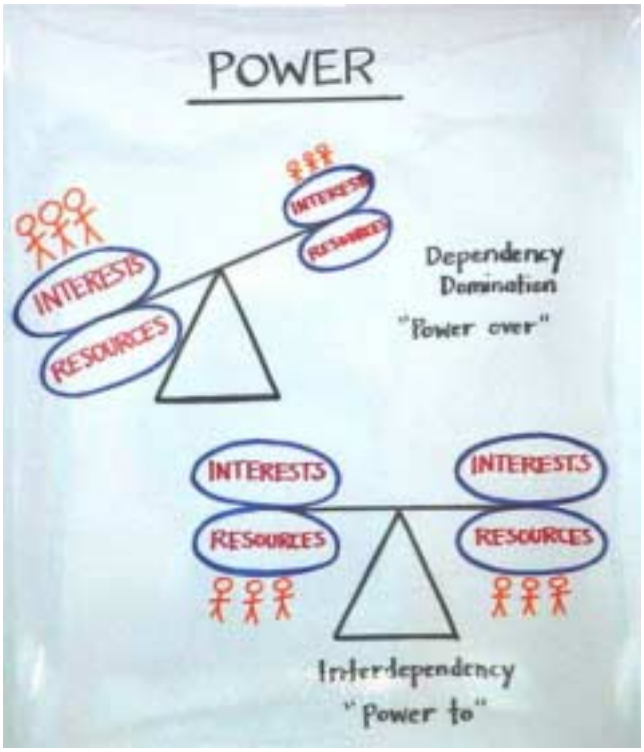
But there is a second way to look at power -- as "power to" or interdependency. As the bottom diagram in Strategy Chart #2 shows, when I have resources you need and you hold resources I need, an opportunity exists for an exchange that can enhance our combined power. In this setting, mobilizing power is not "zero-sum". New immigrants, for example, may pool their savings in a credit union to make low interest loans available to its members -- increasing their financial power. "Power to" is a result of social cooperation and our capacity to accomplish together what we cannot accomplish alone.

Organizing based on "collaboration" requires finding ways to generate power to achieve common interests by creating more interdependency among the actors who share those interests -- cooperative child care, credit unions, etc. This way power can be created to solve problems that are the result of a failure to mobilize around common interests. On the other hand, organizing based on "claims making" requires finding ways to generate enough power to alter relations of dependency and domination that are due to conflicts of interest in the first place. If workers combine their resources in a union they may be able to balance their individual dependency on their employer with his dependency on their labor as a whole.

This way a dependent “power over” relationship can be turned into an interdependent “power to” relationship.

A key to successful organizing is understanding that getting the power to challenge relations of dependency and domination (power over) may require creating lots of interdependency (power to) first. Many unions, for example, began with death benefit societies, sickness funds, credit unions -- ways to create “power to” based on interdependency among members of the constituency. But many efforts that begin with the intent to rely on “power to” wind up challenging “power over” as the conflicts of interest that were not apparent begin to surface. The strongest opposition to a recent effort to create a community credit union in New York came from some actors no one had considered -- the loan sharks and their political allies.

Strategy Chart 2



Three Faces of Power

Why are conflicts of interest not always apparent? Power operates on multiple levels, as shown in Strategy Chart #3. The first “face” of power is the visible face and can be detected by observing who wins among decision makers faced with choices as to how to allocate resources. Attend a board meeting, city council meeting, legislative session, or corporate board meeting and you will see one side win and another side lose -- giving you a pretty clear indication of who exercises power and who doesn’t.

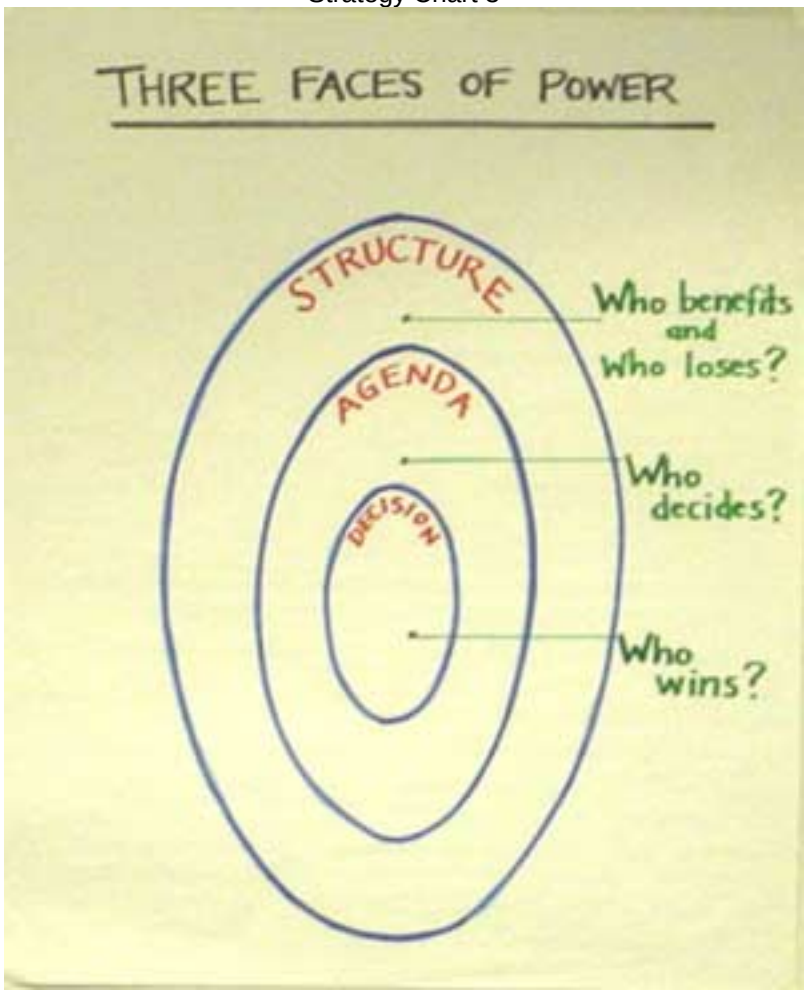
But who decides what gets on the agenda to be decided? And who decides who sits at the table making decisions. Deciding what gets on the agenda and who sits at the table is the second “face” of power. It can be observed when there are groups clamoring to get issues on the agenda, but can’t get past the “gatekeeper” -- the situation that faced African Americans during many years of apparent “racial harmony” before the civil rights movement. There was no lack of groups trying to bring the issue before Congress, but it rarely got to the point of congressional debate because those controlling the agenda kept the issue off the floor.

The third “face” of power is harder to detect. Sometimes the power relations that shape our world are so deeply embedded that we “take them for granted.” Before the women’s movement, for example, many people claimed that job discrimination against women was "not an issue." Women’s interests were not being voted down in Congress (there were almost no women in Congress) and women’s groups were not picketing outside, unable to place their issue on the agenda. Yet women occupied subordinate positions in most spheres of public life. Was that because they were “content with their lot”? Perhaps. But sometimes, people would like things to be different, but simply can’t imagine they could be -- enough, at least, to take the risks to make them so. To detect the power relations at work in a situation like this, you have to look much deeper -- beyond the question of who decides or who gets on the agenda, and focus on identifying <u>who benefits</u> and <u>who loses</u> in the allocation of valued resources. If you then ask why the losers generally lose and the winners generally win, you may discover the power disparity at work. (This can be tricky because the winners always claim they "deserve" to win while the losers "deserve" to lose, and sometimes they convince the losers).

From this perspective, take another look at your project and ask what are the sources of the problems faced by your constituency. Why don't your constituents have the resources they need to act on their interests? Did someone decide not to allocate the resources as in voting down a school funding proposal? Were the concerns of those with similar interests kept off the agenda? Or do people just assume that this is how things are, so it is wise to make the best of them? Do you detect conflicts of interest at work that are not readily observable? A couple of years ago, one Sociology 96 student asked why so many Harvard students do public service, but abandon it in their professional lives. The most common explanation was

that her generation just “doesn’t care.” She noticed that despite a very elaborate recruiting festival each Fall for investment banks and consulting firms, there was virtually no recruiting for careers in public service. She thought this was an example of the third face of power and organized a "careers and social responsibility" conference in response. What do you think?

Strategy Chart 3



Tracking Down the Power

You can uncover the power relations relevant to an organizing project by asking four questions to “help track down the power": (1) What are the interests of your constituency? (2) Who holds the resources needed address these interests? (3) What are the interests of the actors who hold these resources? (4) What resources does your constituency hold which the other actors require to address their interests?

Strategy and Tactics

Strategy is a way of imagining. It is the conceptual link leaders make between the places, times and ways they mobilize and deploy resources and the goals they hope to achieve. It is a way of framing specific choices within a broader framework of meaning. It is a way of defining context.

The word strategy comes from Greek for general -- *strategos* . When armies were about to clash on the plane below, the general (Strategy Chart #1) went up to the top of the hill and, with the goal of winning the battle, evaluated resources on both sides, reflected on opportunities and constraints imposed by the battle field, and how to deploy troops in ways most likely to achieve his goal. A good *strategos* not only had a good overview of the field. He also had intimate knowledge of the capacities of his men and those of his opponent, details of streams and bridges -- mastery of both the forest and the trees. Once the battle was underway, however, the best *strategoi* were often back on the battlefield where he could adjust the plan as conditions changed.

The *taktikas* were the individual ranks of soldiers with specific competencies whom the *strategos* deployed to take specific actions at specific times and places. Tactics are specific actions through which strategy is implemented. Tactics are no less important than strategy, but they are different. A *strategos* with an excellent overview, but who misjudges the competence of his t*akitakas* would be lost. Getting results, taking initiative successfully, requires developing the capacity for good strategy and good tactics.

Strategy Chart 4

Strategic Action

Strategy is about turning “what you have” into “what you need” to get "what you want" -- figuring out how to use the resources you have to achieve your goals in light of constraints and opportunities within which you must work (Strategy Chart #5). Strategic action is a way of acting, not an alternative to action. It

is acting with intentionality, with mindfulness of one's goals, as opposed to acting out of habit or emotional reaction. So devising strategy is an ongoing activity, not simply a matter of making a "strategic plan" at the beginning of a campaign and then sticking to it. Planning (getting an overview of the plane) is useful in helping those responsible for leading the organization arrive at a common vision of where they want to go and how they hope to get there. But the real action in strategy is, as Alinsky put it, in the reaction - of other actors, of the opposition, of chance events. What makes it "strategy" and not "reaction" is that choices are made mindfully of where one wants to go and how one hopes to get there.

Although strategic action is taken with reference to the future, occurs in the present. It is about making choices in the present with an eye to consequences these choices may have. (Strategy Chart #6). When we strategize, we give a voice to the future in the present. We give the future claims on the present. When we don't strategize it is often not because we don't know how, but because it can be very difficult. When we must make choices about how to invest scarce resources, voices of our present constituencies speak most loudly, even though they were created by choices in the past. The voice of future constituencies is silent. Strategy is a task of leadership in part because it requires real courage -- a willingness to say no to current demands, while finding the faith to commit to an uncertain future. Our choices may turn out as we wish, but, then again, they may not. Trying to shape the future may require choices that could involve substantial risk in the present. The first step in shaping the future, however, is to imagine it. . . and then to find the courage to act on our imagination.

Mapping the "arena" within which you hope to realize your goals first requires being as clear as you can about your goals. The more concrete, imaginable, and specific your goals, the more clearly you -- and others whom you engage -- can focus on pooling your efforts to achieve them. You make judgements about the constraints and opportunities within your "arena" of action. Surveying the resources of your constituency and those of other actors who may play a role in the unfolding action, including any potential opposition, is another assessment that helps you understand your capacities. But resources are also not always obvious and good strategy often involves discovering resources in unexpected places. Strategic action is not a single event, but a process or a loop continuing throughout the life of a project (Strategy Chart #3). We plan, we act, we evaluate the results of our action, we plan some more, we act, etc. We strategize as we implement, not prior to it. As Alinsky writes, and as the cases we read this week illustrate, much strategic action flows from generating reactions from others to which one must respond creatively and adaptively. In other words, good strategizing is an ongoing adaptive process that effective leaders learn to do.

So strategy requires choosing -- committing yourself and your resources to the course of action you believe most likely to yield the desired outcome, yet remaining ready to adapt to new opportunities as they emerge. A laundry list of "what we are going to try" is not a strategy. Cesar Chavez used to say strategy is not so much about making the *right* decision as it is about making the decision that you make the right decision.

Strategy Chart 5

Strategy Chart 6

Targeting

We can understand strategy by breaking it down into elements: targeting, timing and tactics (Strategy Chart #3). Targeting is figuring out how to focus limited resources on doing what is likely to yield the greatest result - especially in terms of constituency, issues, and opposition.

• One critical choice is deciding who exactly it is within your constituency with whom you are focusing your initial effort.

• Another critical choice -- as people become more familiar with each other and their interests -- is about what problem they want to turn into an "issue" around which to mobilize. California organizer Mike Miller distinguishes between a "topic" such as education, a "problem" such as a lousy school, and an "issue" such as replacing this principal with another one. Topics become problems when they become real within people's experience. They become "issues" when a solution to the problem has been defined. The topic of racial discrimination, for example, becomes a problem when "I have to get on the bus at the front, pay my fare, get off, get on again at the back and sit (or stand) in the back even if there are empty seats in the 'white' section." A problem, in turn, becomes an issue when something very specific can be done about it by specific actors; e.g., telling the bus company to integrate the buses (a solution) or face a boycott. A good issue is achievable, yet significant.

• A third critical choice is about which decision-makers you will hold accountable for taking action on your issue.

Timing

Timing is about sequencing your activities to take the initiative and keep it, build momentum, and take advantage of particular moments of opportunity. You are wise to use initial tactics that yield resources that can give you a greater capacity to succeed at your next steps. This is how momentum works -- like a snowball, each success contributes resources, which makes the next success more achievable. Another timing concern is about when to “confront” the opposition -- or, if yours is a collaborative campaign, when to face the most difficult challenge you face. Alinsky also wrote that it was important never to seek a confrontation you cannot "win." Patiently building the capacity you need to launch a credible challenge to the opposition may avoid the necessity of confrontation - if they become convinced of your power. You keep the initiative by never concluding one activity until it is clear how it will lead to the next one. You also keep the initiative by expecting that every action you take will produce a reaction to which you have already considered how to respond.

Tactics

Tactics are specific activities with which you implement your strategy - targeted in specific ways and carried out at specific times. Here are a few hints about good tactics (there are others in the readings by Bobo and Alinsky). They are consistent with your resources, but expose your opposition's lack of resources. They build on your strength and your opposition's weakness. They fall within the experience of your constituency, but outside the experience of your opposition. They unify your constituency, but divide the opposition. They are consistent with your goals. Violent tactics in pursuit of peaceful goals are dissonant, as are goals of "empowering" people that rely on mobilizing money. Good tactics are fun, motivational, and simple.

Strategic Capacity

As I argue in my article, “Why David Sometimes Wins” good strategy is a creative process, a process of learning how to achieve one’s goals by behaving adaptively in the face of constantly changing circumstances. It is the result of inputs from people with diverse experience – people who have learned the “nitty-gritty” detail of the situation being strategized about, but who also have learned that there is more

than one way to look at things. It takes people who have learned what there is to know about the trees, but can also picture the whole forest. It takes people whose life experience, networks, and understanding link them to the diversity of constituencies whose mobilization matters to the success of the enterprise. In civic associations a key element in developing good strategy is the deliberative process by which it is devised. The more people are involved in making strategy, the more committed they will be to making it work. Although good strategy can be the fruit of a strategic genius, it is more often the result of a good strategy team that a good leader has put together.

Deliberation: Meetings

The word for deliberation derives from “to liberate, to free from assumptions” and is often about challenging “frames” with which we interpret experience. Socrates, for example, challenged people to evaluate their experience against their frames by employing critical reason in the interrogatory “Socratic method.” He also created so much tension that he was accused of impiety and made to drink the fatal hemlock. Strategic thinking is reflective, creative, critical, and often occurs in interaction with others. It requires taking seriously people’s ability to know, reflect, understand, and choose.

The deliberative life of an organization is conducted in meetings. One way an organization comes to life is as a group of people in a room deliberating about what they can do together. An old organizer I once knew said meetings for an organizer were like mass for a priest -- it's where they do their business. That they are so important in the lives of our organizations, but that we manage them so poorly is a strange paradox. It is not hard to hold good meetings. It requires answering questions:

- Who is responsible for managing the meeting?
- How do you make certain everyone is heard from?
- How do you make decisions in the meeting?

Who is responsible for the meeting?

A good meeting happens only when someone is responsible for making it happen. Taking responsibility for making a meeting work requires clarity about the purposes of the meeting. Is it to plan, to make decisions, to evaluate? These are tasks often best accomplished in different meetings. *Planning* is reflective. We get perspective, go up on the hill, get broad overviews, and imagine. Taking everyone away for five days of planning is likely to "push responsibility down" more than the "leader" going "up on the mountain" and coming down with a "revealed" plan. *Decision-making* requires focus on clear choices within defined time limits. Decision-making can also be widely shared. When mobilizing an entire organization, the decision to mobilize can itself be pushed down -- facilitating mobilization at the same time. In the UFW we sometimes pushed decisions down from the executive board to ranch committees,

the UFW we sometimes pushed decisions down from the executive board to ranch committees, to crew representatives to individual crews so that when we had to turn out several thousand members, they had all been parties to the decision. *Evaluation* is more like planning, but contributes to accountability and learning when built into normal routines of an organization - like five minutes of evaluation at the end of each class.

Regardless of its general purpose, those responsible for the meeting should be clear about the outcome they hope to achieve. If you don't know the purpose of a meeting, it is better not to hold it. On the other hand, regular meetings can be important because they give an organization's work a predictable rhythm around which we can plan. As any other purposeful activity, a meeting should be planned strategically. The “agenda” is the strategy for the meeting. It is the plan for what will happen first, second, third, and when the meeting will conclude. Just like a "mini-campaign" a good meeting will tie together relational, interpretive and action elements. What are the relational elements in the meeting? What is the interpretive core of it? What are the actions you hope to achieve there? Because in the final analysis a meeting is about the action that comes out of it, it should be evaluated in motivational and strategic terms. A good meeting requires leadership responsible for its success. It may be an officer, an agenda committee, an executive group, an informal “cabal” -- but the buck has to stop somewhere. Being responsible for the meeting is not the same thing as “controlling” it. It simply means making sure the group has what it needs to do its work successfully.

Organizing a good meeting requires (1) thinking through the goals, (2) designing an appropriate agenda, (3) selecting a good location (convenience, access), (4) seeing to the arrangements (room size, sound, seating, lighting), (5) turning people out (sending out reminders, doing reminder calls, one on one meetings, etc.) and (6) and assigning responsibilities for the work of the meeting. Each of these elements is important. I once organized a rally that was a big success because 500 people came, but the sound system was so worthless that no one knew what was going on. After that, I always made sure someone with a rock band took care of the sound.

Meetings require management, leadership or, if you prefer, facilitation. A well designed meeting structures opportunities for participation so people can be heard, questions can be asked and answered, discussion can take place, decisions are arrived at, and the most important items attended to. This doesn’t just happen “spontaneously”. People sometimes object to “formalizing” deliberative process – why do we need an agenda, we don’t need a facilitator, we’ll just make it up as we go along, etc. Perhaps they fear “rules” will inhibit the creativity of the group. In fact, agreement about basic rules allows a group to be more creative than when it turns in on itself because it can’t decide how to decide. Rules can be “bureaucratic", but only if someone else makes them. Civic associations differ from bureaucratic organizations because of who makes the rules – not simply because rules exist. Fear of “commitment” that compromises a person’s individual choice may also be a concern. But an organization that doesn’t entail obligations along with rights isn’t much of an organization.

Opening a meeting separates “regular” time (our own time) from “community” time (time during which we occupy organizational roles). A meeting begins when it is “called to order" at the announced time. Meetings that start late, drag on forever, and end late are disrespectful of our "own time" and our "community time." The first few times it may be a little rough starting on time, but everyone will get the idea as they realize "this group is different" and takes "its time" and "their time" seriously. Call the meeting to order clearly and crisply -- not "well...gee....I guess maybe it might be....cough, cough...it might be about....time to start...I mean, if no one has an objections...but we can keep waiting if you want to.....since so few people are here...." Welcome people to the meeting. Some groups have a short prayer. This sets off the “specialness” of community time, focuses everyone’s attention, and brings silence to the room so the meeting can begin. When the ancient Greeks prepared to play music they made a loud noise that got everyone’s attention and, as they put it, created the silence into which the music could flow. After welcoming people, review the agenda, explain the goals of the meeting, how the time will be used to achieve those goals, and what time the meeting will end. Rules of order should be reviewed. It may be important to ask the group for its consent to the agenda. Introductions may be appropriate depending on the size of the group, its familiarity with itself, and so on.

The person managing the meeting must move the agenda along, pay attention to the time, and see to participation of the group. Because one meeting can usually handle only one major item of business, it is very important not to spend all the time on the first item just because it is the first item -- like whether to serve chicken dogs or hot dogs at the annual bar-b-q. Focus on what you want to make happen at the meeting -- a choice about a program, election of an officer, or adoption of a program. Plan the meeting so this item is at the center of attention and that there is adequate time to discuss it. It is important for the group to feel that something happened at the meeting -- that people's "emotional memory" of the meeting isn't that it was just a "big waste of time."

How do you make certain everyone is heard from?

Your meetings will be more successful if everyone has a real opportunity to participate. The views of participants based on their experience are one of the most valuable resources the group has to draw on – especially if it is a group with some genuine diversity. People don’t speak up in meetings for many reasons, including fear of being rejected by the group, believing they have nothing to contribute, thinking others will not take them seriously, inhibitions of class, race, gender and nationality, and so forth. A skillful facilitator is proactive in asking people for their views, especially those who don’t always have their hands up. The members of the group can help by doing the same. You may also want to have a time in your meeting when you go around the room and get everyone’s opinion (if it's not a meeting of 500 people). Groups that tolerate differences of opinion tend to make better decisions because they can avail themselves of more information and challenge themselves to think through their reasoning more clearly. Those

who have been party to a decision are also likely to be more committed to carrying it out. Again, it doesn't matter so much how you do it, as that you do it.

How do you make decisions in the meeting?

Making decisions requires agreement to a "decision rule" -- voting, consensus, majority, no objections, or some other scheme. Decision rules appropriate in some situations may not be in others -- for example, consensus. Many people seem to prefer consensus because then "everyone agrees". The difficulty with this in civic associations is that everyone does not agree, but the work of the organization usually must still proceed. Requiring everyone to agree in fact can make dissent illegitimate by making it threatening to the ability to the group to get its work done. So consensus often turns into pressure on those who disagree to "get them to agree" in ways that can rob the process of integrity too. On the other hand, some groups thrive operating by consensus. The important thing is explicit agreement about how you will make decisions.

The most awkward point in a meeting is when the question of who will do what arrives. The most wonderful, creative, wise decisions mean nothing if no one accepts the responsibility for implementing them, for carrying them out. Again, there is no one way to do this. A chair may appointment people. A person may volunteer? People may be chosen by the group. As with delegation, there are many elements to consider – who is most skilled at what is required, who is most motivated, who has relationships with the appropriate people, whom does the group trust, who will learn the most from doing it, who's turn is it to do it, etc. Again, there is no one way to do this, but if you do not do it, you just wasted most of your time in the meeting.

Meetings should end on time. Before closing, conduct a brief evaluation, repeat follow-up announcements, and set the time and place for the next meeting. Some groups have closing prayers or songs that mark the return to "personal time." Once the meeting is formally adjourned, everyone can return to normal time, exit their formal "meeting roles" and interact with each other in less formal ways. It may be important to facilitate this with refreshments and some music. Proof of a good meeting is a "meeting after the meeting" -- people hang out, energized, wanting to talk more about what just happened. Meetings that just kind of fade away are evidence of an organization that is fading away.

Conclusion

Story and Strategy

There is tension inherent in the fact that our experience shapes what we think, but what we think shapes our experience. Are we wiser trying to alter our experience or how we think about our experience? Is it more effective to make new experience accessible in terms of people's existing frames (frame alignment) or to change people's frames to reinterpret their experience (frame transformation)? What is the link between "reinterpreting" the world and "changing" the world?

Organizing is not only about changing the world, nor is it only about changing what people think about the world -- it is about the connection between the two. Organizers argue taking people on a week-long "reframing" retreat will change very little if they return to the same "structural" setting they left behind. On the other hand, organizers also argue that changing a "structural" setting without changing the people who operate within that setting, will also change very little. Insofar as people change, they may begin to acquire the power to change their circumstances -- and as people acquire the power to change their circumstances, they begin to change. This is one reason this course is called "people, power, and change."

On the one hand, organizers challenge people to interpret their experience differently. This is the value of the "outsider's" perspective. Organizers don't just provide "information" but challenge people to reframe their understanding of themselves and their experience through relationships, new stories (frame transformation), deliberative processes, and action tactics. On the other hand, organizers must also make the world accessible in terms of the frames people have (frame amplification, frame bridging, frame extension). This is the value of the "insider's perspective. Outsiders don't "frame" things as insiders do. This is why "reframing" is based not on one party doing a "snow job" on the other, but on a dialogic process between and among them. The work of turning "problems" into "issues" (reframing a problem as actionable) lies between the two. Much of the interpretive work of organizing involves finding ways to put new wine into old bottles. If people find they like it, they may decide to rebottle it.

Although story telling is primarily motivational and strategy is primarily analytic, a "credible strategy" plays an important part in a hopeful narrative. Devising a credible strategy and telling a motivational story go together. Most effective campaigns have a complementary "story" and "plan." How we can build from resources we have, how we can take advantage of opportunities, why the constraints will not overwhelm us, how each step leads to the next -- all of these are elements in a plausible strategy. Just as good strategy gives individual tactics meaning by transforming them from isolated events into steps on the road to our goal, a good story gives our actions meaning by transforming us into participants in a powerful narrative. Analytics can also help us "deconstruct" an old story, on the way to learning to tell a new one. In organizing, a strategy and story are not only how we persuade ourselves that a particular course of action is worth the risk but also how we mobilize others without whose participation there would be no action at all.

Action
(Week 4)

Four weeks ago we began our work on leadership in organizing. We looked at how organizers build relationships. We looked at the two ways organizers do the interpretative work of motivation and strategy needed to arrive at a shared understanding of what is to be done and the will to do it. This week we focus on action - the concrete ways we mobilize resources and deploy them to provide services or to make claims. Interweaving relationships, understanding and action creates new organizations.

In a civic association, its most valuable resources are those its constituency can contribute - time, energy, effort -- in a word, their commitment. The action - whether holding a rally, conducting a delegation, mounting a petition campaign - begins with a commitment. Action does not follow strategy, but unfolds together with it. We may learn what is possible only when acting creates new possibilities -- as when Rosa Parks sat down on a bus in Montgomery Alabama and refused to move to the back of the bus.

Action and Planning

We are often told the way things work – or ought to work – is that we evaluate our environment, we make a plan, we take action, we evaluate our action, we plan, etc. In reality, the process is far less linear than this. Sometimes it is only by taking action that we gain the understanding we need to develop a meaningful plan. This is what Alinsky means when he says, “the action is in the reaction.” The students who conducted the first sit-ins in Greensboro, North Carolina, in 1960 had no elaborate strategic plan about how their action would give rise to a whole student movement. By taking action they focused the issue, inspired others to act, and sparked a movement – that made all sorts of plans possible that would have been inconceivable before they had acted. Jane Addams warns us to avoid being caught in the “snare of preparation” – a common academic affliction – just one more survey, just one more data point, just one more regression and we’ll KNOW what to do. Sometimes too it is only by doing that we come to know what is possible – especially in the work of making “change.”

Action and Strategy

A complete organizing strategy answers three questions - how are do we build relationships, how do we interpreting what we are doing, and how do we do it. In the real world, these occur together. I have separated them for "analytic" purposes. In other words, any good organizing tactic will have a relational, interpretive and action component. Conducting a petition drive involves relational tactics, for example, in recruiting new people, motivating them, training them, uniting them as group, and so forth. It also involves interpretive tactics such as deliberation about whom to target and stories you tell about why someone should sign your petition. Action tactics include organizing daily signature gatherings, developing the best techniques (where to stand, how many to hold, whether to use a table or an ironing board), tracking and reporting procedures, and how best to use them. Similarly, holding a house meeting is relational in that it draws on networks to bring people together, it is interpretive in terms of the talk which takes place there, and may result in action such as signing a card of support, agreeing to help on a phone bank, etc. This way a new group begins learning the action of which it is capable even while strengthening its relationships and deepening its understanding.

Where Does an Action Program Come From?

The account of one of Cesar Chavez's first house meetings offers a glimpse of an action program in the making. Chavez clearly brought with him a vision of where the organization could go. The conversation unfolded, however, in terms of the interests of those who came to the meeting - burial and credit. Chavez led them into a reflection on how they could mobilize resources through the organization to solve these problems - a death benefit, a credit union. And how could these goals be achieved? Each person could begin that very evening by filling out a census card or agreeing to host a meeting of his or her friends. In this way, the goals of an action program evolve from the interests of a constituency, and the steps to be taken based on the resources available to it. It also shows how narrow individual interests can be translated into the basis for broader community action.

Collaboration and Claims Making Action

Whether an organization pursues "collaborative" or "claims making" strategy, its action program usually begins with "collaborative" tactics. Closer to the bottom of the pyramid are tactics that can help build a broad base of support to develop as much organizational capacity or "power to" as possible. These tactics can be used to achieve collaborative goals such as a credit union, a death benefit, or cooperative day care. On the other hand, if the organization has "claims making" intent, a foundation built in this way can be the first step in challenging someone else's "power over" the community; for example, getting the city to allocate funds, an employer to raise wages, Congress to pass a law. This may require direct action, political action or economic mobilization. In any case, collaborative work lays the foundation by creating

enough “power to” to begin to challenge “power over.” Social service programs are usually collaborative at best, whereas social action programs usually involve claims making. Mobilizing community resources for after school tutoring program is an example of collaborative action or "power to." Mobilizing to require the university to establish an ethnic studies program is an example of claims making action that challenges "power over."

Collaborative Action

Action programs begin with “start-up tactics” that cast the net for support very widely, giving many people the opportunity to commit their support, and drawing in resources that could become very important later on (Action Chart #1). These tactics include filling out a census card, signing a petition, filling out a pledge, and getting an endorsement. These tactics are tied to a specific goal - such as getting 1000 signatures - which, in turn, is tied by a credible strategy to the ultimate goals of the project. Can you think of ways that tactics like these can facilitate leadership development, relationship building and developing shared understanding? What can you learn from debriefing your results as you go along that will help you refine your program? What resources are you generating which can be called upon later in your action program?

In the second phase of an action program, organizers build upon individual expressions of support to bring people together, deepen their commitment and broaden support. Tactics may include coming to a meeting, going to a rally, participating in a march, and so on. The main focus of the activity remains one of expanding support - building more “power to.”

The goals of a collaborative action program are based on resources a community can mobilize to do for itself. For example, the farm workers established a credit union and a death benefit program, and the “orange hats” learned to conduct an effective neighborhood watch campaign. These goals can be achieved based on inside resources such as membership fees, fees for service, volunteer time, and in kind contributions. They can also be based on outside resources such as start-up grants and loans. Tactics include committing to recruit others, taking part in a fund-raiser, joining a specific program, volunteering for a neighborhood watch, volunteering to make phone calls, and engaging people in helping solve each other's problems.

Claims Making Action

A “claims making” action program aims at a response - or reaction - from individuals and organizations with the resources to address the claims. Community organizations often have to pressure local city government to “claim” money for drainage, pot holes, schools and other community needs. In the farm worker account, the UFW had to get union contracts from the growers. The organizational resources drawn on are no different from those mentioned above, but may need to meet requirements for a greater

degree of commitment. Inside resources include dues, tithing, group pledges, and regular fund-raisers. Outside resources include fund-raisers, wealthy contributors, sympathetic groups, direct mail campaigns, second collections in churches, and gate collections outside union halls.

To avoid premature confrontations while building organizational capacity, organizers usually begin making claims with persuasive tactics such as petitions, delegations, public meetings, public protests, demonstrations, rallies, fasts, vigils, exposes, fact finding missions, etc. These tactics also educate one's constituency, potential supporters, the public, and the opposition (or people within the opposition who might be potential allies). They give the organization as a whole an opportunity to learn how to mobilize under conditions less likely to produce a crippling oppositional reaction.

Depending on how the opposition responds, more assertive tactics may be appropriate such as “non-cooperation” (as Gandhi called it) or “disruption” - sit-ins, sit-downs, shop-ins, teach-ins, pray-ins and (as described above) balloon-ins. Tactics of non-cooperation reveal the fact that most of the institutions to which we attribute so much "power" rely on our active (if unthinking) cooperation to do their business. Sharp catalogues most of the nonviolent tactics anyone has thought of.

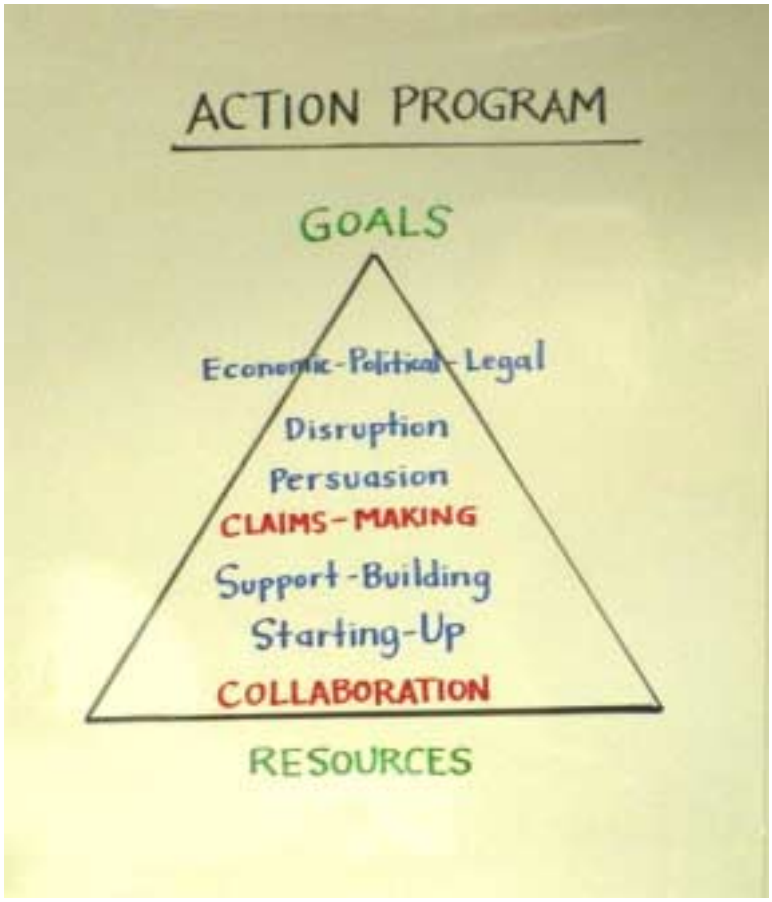
Economic tactics can be still more assertive and include such actions as strikes, boycotts, and picket lines. They also include stockholder campaigns, proxy fights, and various "corporate" campaigns used more recently by unions and others. Sometimes tactics of non-cooperation and economics are combined as in the boycotts of the American colonists or Gandhi's salt march.

Legal tactics may be used in hopes they will produce the desired outcome directly (as in winning a lawsuit), but more often because of the economic and other costs they may impose on the opposition, and sometimes because they help delegitimate the opposition. In 1965, the Mississippi Freedom Democratic Party persuaded two members of Congress to challenge the right to be seated of Mississippi Congressional representatives who had been elected in segregated elections. The hearings this led to throughout rural Mississippi created venues in which black citizens could summon local white officials to account for their actions - and could themselves testify under Federal protection. Although the challenge itself was ultimately lost, the process helped mobilize local African-Americans and outside support while it demoralized the opposition. One of the main reasons the Teamsters Union decided to make peace with the Farm Workers was the legal fees they faced which approached $750,000. Legal tactics include lawsuits, motions for discovery, interrogatories, depositions, and challenges to legislative seating.

Finally, useful electoral tactics include accountability sessions, candidate endorsements, opposition, getting out the vote, registering voters, staffing phone banks, lobbying, and letter writing. A capacity to mobilize to influence the election or defeat of political officials is one of the most persuasive ways to influence their actions.

The strategic judgment, of course, is in linking appropriate resources, tactics, and goals in an achievable action program.

Action: Chart 1



Resource Mobilization and Effective Action

The way resources are mobilized affects how they can be deployed, and the way they are deployed affects how they can be mobilized, as illustrated in Action Chart #2. This helps clarify the relationship between action programs and resources. Resources mobilized from within a constituency can be deployed with accountability only to the constituency. Outside resources, on the other hand, often entail accountability to those who contribute them - placing limits on how they can be used. When a number of foundations decided that the environment was a priority, for example, some inner city organizations dependent on foundation funding decided that the interests of their constituents could be served by focusing on environmental programs.

Similarly, devising tactics that require lots of money, if what you have is lots of people, can impose severe constraints on what you do. Or they can backfire as in Ron Carey's recent campaign for the presidency of the Teamsters Union which relied on high tech tactics which required large amounts of funds which were raised in dubious ways. Basing your action program on tactics that require mobilizing people, on the other hand, can most directly empower your constituency, but it can constrain you to find tactics in which your people are willing to take part.

Although an organization can mobilize resources in a variety of ways, its center of gravity rests somewhere in the area described by Action Chart #3. If the center of gravity is in the inside/people box then it empowers the constituency, makes the organization accountable to the constituency, and limits the use of resources to the constituency's interest. One example is a union. On the other hand, if the center of gravity is in the outside/money box, then it can disempower the constituency (unless it is outside), make the organization accountable to its funders, and limit its tactics to those consistent with the interests of its funders. One example is a foundation funded service program.

Finally, action programs that generate resources must be distinguished from action programs that drain resources. In union organizing, for example, the more successful the union, the more members it gets, the larger the dues base, the more leadership it has developed, and the greater its human and financial resources. Similarly, as some community organizations conduct parish renewal work among member churches, its human and financial capacity grows. Grant-based action programs, in contrast, often fail to generate new resources from the work they do -- and keep themselves in a state of perpetual dependency.

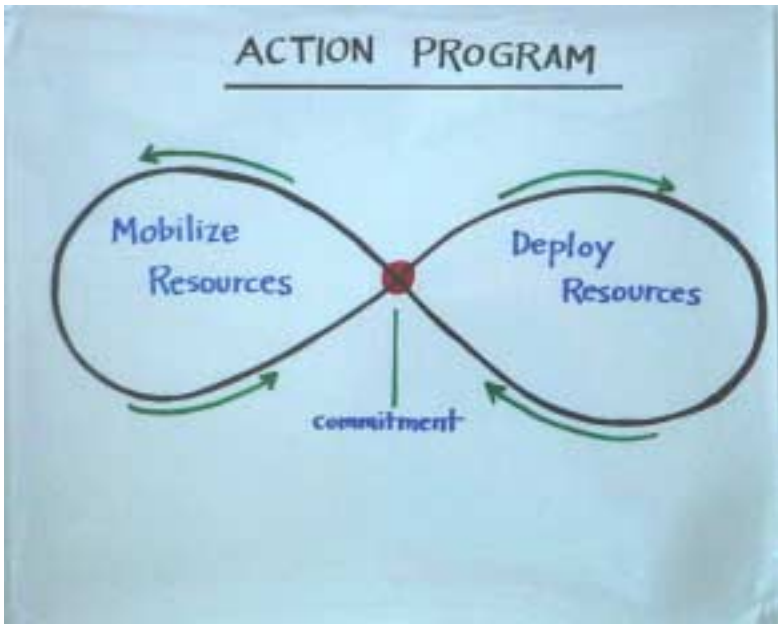
The beauty of the grape boycott was that it was an action in which everyone could play a part -- from a person who shunned grapes in a Florida supermarket to a student who dropped out of school to come to work full time for the UFW, and everything in between. At one point in 1975, pollster Lou Harris found that 12% of the American public - some 17 million people - were boycotting grapes. The wider the opportunity to act, the wider the participation and the responsibility.

Action entails cost -- time, effort, risk, and hard work. Sacrifice can also be widely shared. The more widely it is shared, the more people have a stake in the outcome. The boycott is a good example of this as well. When one or two people do all the "sacrificing" they quickly become "burned out," while everyone else blames them for whatever goes wrong.

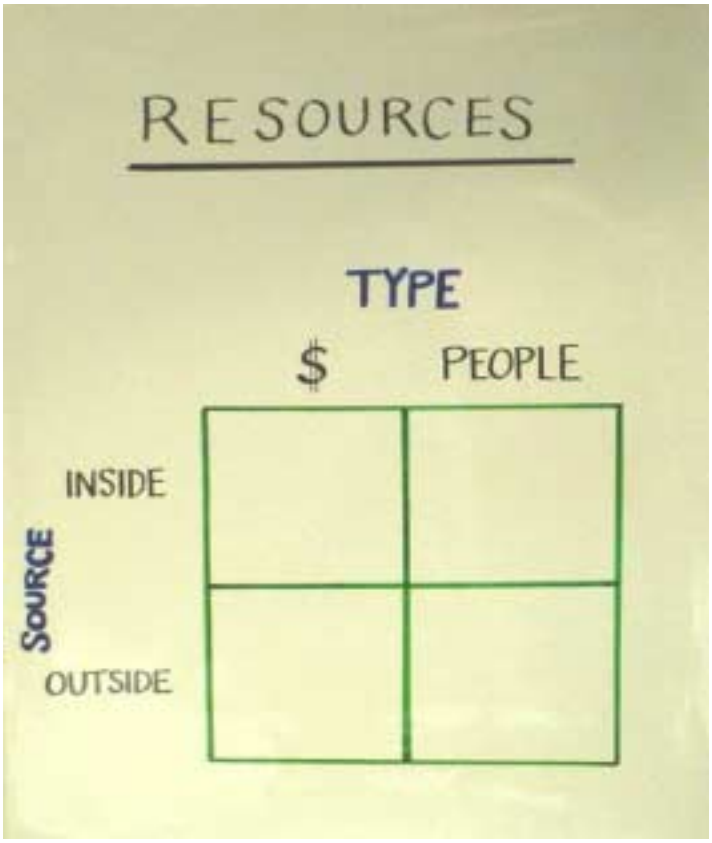
The flip side of shared sacrifice is shared success. When many people have an opportunity to contribute to the effort, they also share in its success. It is "their" victory, not someone else's. This, in turn, creates motivation and a sense of entitlement that facilitates accountability. The day after we won the Pelosi for Congress campaign in San Francisco, 15 Filipina women who had served as precinct leaders showed up at the campaign headquarters looking for Nancy (Pelosi). They had turned out her vote very effectively and played an important role in the victory. They had won, they said, and now they had come to find "Nancy" to get help on the immigration problems they had. This was exactly as it should be. It had been their work, their victory, and now they were entitled to enjoy some of the fruits of success.

There is no right or wrong answer to what an appropriate relationship between resources and action should be. Understanding the relationship is essential, however, so you can make conscious choices about how to set up your organization so it has a chance to accomplish its purposes.

Action: Chart 2



Action: Chart 3



Action and Commitment

Without commitment there is no action. One of the greatest challenges organizers face is in learning how to ask for -- and get -- commitment from others. There is a big difference between putting the word out about a meeting and getting commitments from people to attend. Unless organizers and volunteers ask or and obtain commitments to attend - in writing, if possible - meeting attendance will be a "crap shoot." This is challenging because we fear being rejected and we often fear placing others under obligation, because it obliges us as well. Whatever the reasons, it takes courage, training, and dedication to develop a team of leaders who are not afraid to ask for and get commitments. Without this, the "action" will remain always just a little out of reach.

Evaluating An Action Program

There are three sound ways to evaluate an action program (Hackman):

• *First, does it solve the problem at hand?* Did you get done what you set out to do? Are there more books in the school, for example? Did more money get allocated for environmental protection?

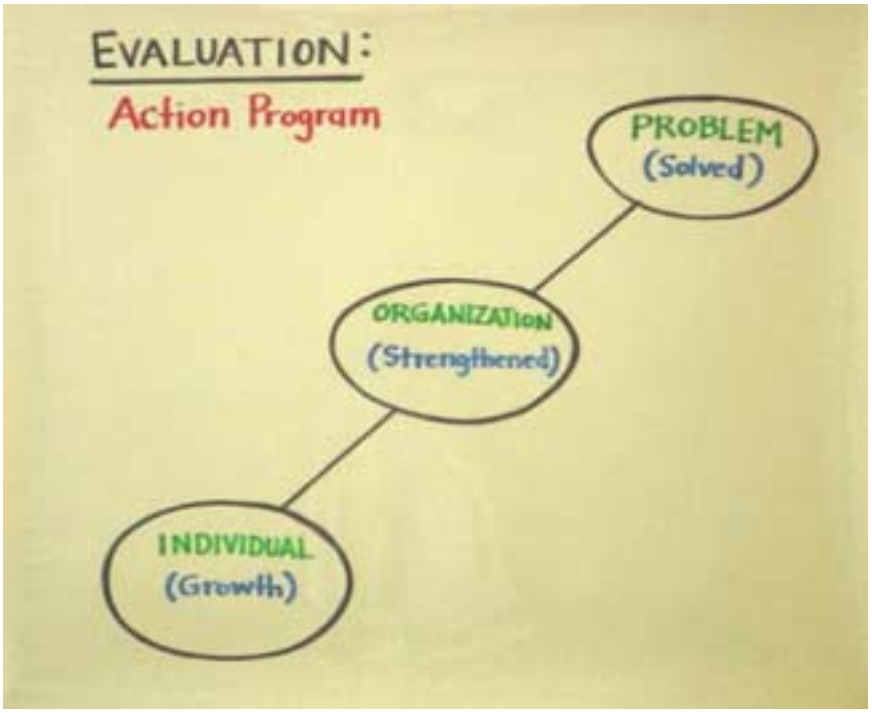
• *Second, does it strengthen the organization?* Did it deepen understanding, build relational commitment, and generate new resources?

• *Third, does it facilitate the growth of individuals who take part in the action?* Did people learn, did they gain confidence, were they energized - or were they completely burned out?

Conclusion

Returning to Cesar's house meeting, an event at the beginning of his efforts to build the UFW, let's reexamine the tactics. What were the relational tactics he used? What kind of interpretive tactics did he use? And what kind of action tactics did he use? The goal of the work we have done the last three weeks is to see how these three kinds of tactics can be woven together in effective organizational strategies - of which this house meeting is an excellent example.

Action: Chart 4



Leadership Development

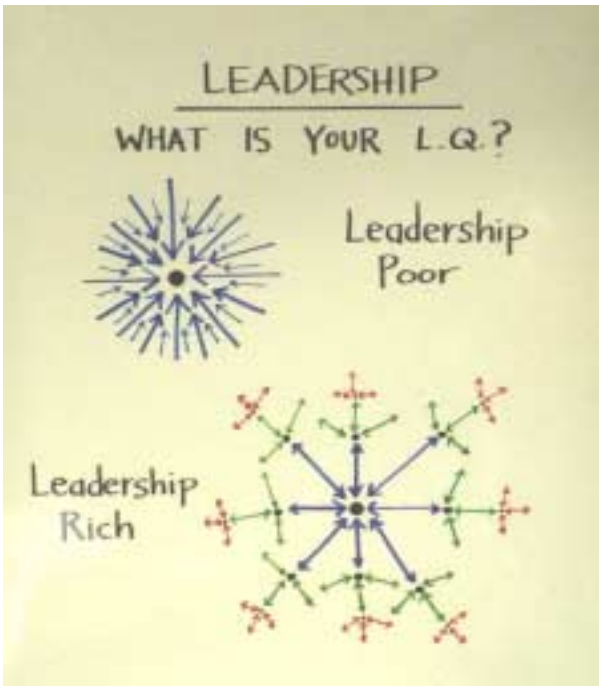
Growing Your Organization
(Week 5)

Leadership and Delegation

So if leaders are so important to organizing, how can organizers make sure they have the leaders needed to accomplish their mission? Organized people are empowered to make lots of things happen - especially new organizations that are learning to do new things - not by the efficiency of their systems, but by the depth of their leadership capacity. This is particularly true of civic associations that bring people together, facilitate their understanding of one another, and enable them to act together on common interests.

Take a look at the “leadership quotient” of your organization. How many leaders do you see doing leadership work? Is there one “leader” with everyone else linked to that leader like spokes to the hub of a wheel? Or are there lots of “leaders” linked with each other and with other members, multiple centers of coordination, inspiration and action. Are some people “followers” in relation to some “leaders” but “leaders” in relation to other “followers”? Or are some people always “leaders” and others always “followers”? Is it "leadership rich" or is it "leadership poor"?

Leadership Development: Chart 1



So what does it take to develop a “leadership rich” organization? As Moses had to learn as described in the selection from Exodus, it takes learning to delegate – i.e. letting others take real responsibility for leadership as well. Letting others take responsibility -- especially for outcomes of projects we care about -- can be very difficult. What if they mess up? What if they don’t come through? What if I pick the wrong person? What will I do then? Maybe it’s “safer” if I just do it myself. I can do it faster myself. Does any of this sound familiar? As shown in Leadership Chart #3, paying attention to seven things can help make delegation work:

1. Risk

Risk small failures early in the life of a project in order to avoid big failures later on. If you take the risks required to learn to delegate, you will learn how to do it and you will learn who "comes through" and who doesn't. It is important to learn this with a small meeting at stake and not the monster rally of 5000 at which only 50 people show up. One reason to set up quantifiable goals, regular reports, and ongoing evaluation is to detect early failure and success so they become "learning opportunities" for everyone. "So, Mary, why did that work so well?" "So, Sam, what happened there? What could you have done differently?" Don't assume everyone is going to do everything right from the very beginning because it never happens. Also, it is often not completely clear what the "right" way is at the beginning of a project. Think about how to turn this fact to your advantage. Where can you get the courage to take the risk of letting other people share in the responsibility for outcomes you care about?

2. Selection

We develop good judgment about people by taking risks, making choices, experiencing success and failures, and learning from this experience - and we will still be surprised. On the other hand, the more experienced we are the better judgment we can begin to develop. There is no "rule book" to go to on this, but if you are afraid to risk making choices, you never learn to make good choices. Here are some questions you might ask yourself. How do you select to whom to delegate? How do you know who the right person is? How can you find out ahead of time? How do you know when a person is ready for a big job? Are you selecting them because they are easily available or because they are the right people for the job? Are you selecting them because they already know what to do because you have worked together before or because they "look as if they can learn what to do" with some good coaching? Or did you select them because you "heard" they were good? Where did you hear that? Who told you? Should you believe them? How do you know?

3. Motivation

When looking for someone to take responsibility, don't make the responsibility easier, and easier, and easier. . . until there's nothing left. The challenge is in learning to motivate people to accept the level of responsibility needed to get the job done. And when a person has accepted responsibility, the motivation work continues. Keeping others motivated, keeping yourself motivated, and getting the work done go together - all are based on real accountability, lots of coaching, and lots of recognition of success.

4. Responsibility

Delegation is not about assigning tasks, but offering responsibility. It is different to ask "would you make these 50 phone calls telling people about the meeting?" and "would you take responsibility for getting 10 people to come to the meeting?" "You will?" " Great!" "Here's some things that may help you contact them and get them there -- a list of names and phone numbers of people who said they were interested, 100 leaflets, some posters, and some sign-up sheets you could use to get commits." Do you see the difference? With the "task," the person can become a kind of yo-yo: go do this, come back for what's next, go do that, come back for what's next. They are "helping" you with your responsibility. With a "responsibility," the person takes it and runs with it, and you can help them meet "their" responsibility.

5. Support

Once a person accepts responsibility, it is in your interest to offer her as much support as she wants to ensure her success. The challenge is learning to offer support without taking back the responsibility. "Oh, you'll get the ten people to come? Great! Let's sit down for a few minutes and "role play" just what you're going to say to them." Or "give me a call to tell me how it's going -- or if you run into problems." A regular coaching session means you want to meet not because you think they are in trouble, but because you are interested in their work. These sessions can be very useful for learning what's really going on out there as well.

6. Accountability

Delegation is real only if the person is clearly accountable for the responsibility he or she accepted. Accountability should be regular, specific, and timely. The point of accountability is not to catch someone to punish them, but to learn what kind of results they are getting so everyone can learn from them. If someone is having trouble, we need to learn why so we can figure out what to do about it. If someone is being successful, we need to learn why so we can try the same thing in other places. Without accountability the most important learning we can do in the course of a campaign -- systematic reflection on our own experience -- is impossible.

7. Authority

You cannot expect a person to take responsibility without authority. If you want someone to take the responsibility to get 10 people to a meeting, hold them accountable, provide training, offer support -- but give

them the authority to do what they've been asked to do. If you see or hear of them making a mistake - - or think you can do it better -- this means going directly to them, not around them or taking care of it for them. It is really a matter of basic respect.

Leadership Development Chart #2

Leadership Development

Developing a leadership rich organization not only requires learning to delegate. As shown in Chart #4, it requires a conscious strategy for identifying leaders (opportunities for leaders to emerge), recruiting leaders (opportunities for leadership to be earned), and developing leaders (opportunities for leaders to grow).

Identifying leaders requires looking for them. Who are people with followers? Who brings others to the meetings? Who encourages others to participate? Who attracts others to working with them? Whom do other people tell you to "look for?" Alinsky writes about community networks knit together by "native" leaders - people who take the responsibility for helping a community do its work out of their homes, small businesses, neighborhood hangouts, etc. They can be found coaching athletic teams, organizing little leagues, serving in their churches, and surfacing in other informal "schools" of leadership. Where would you look for these kinds of leaders around here?

Although leading is a matter of "doing" and not "being," there are some ways of being that can help you lead. It is hard for a person who has not learned to be a *good listener* to become an effective

leader - you have to understand the interests of your constituency if you are to help them act on those interests. Listening means learning to attend to feelings - *empathy* - as well as to ideas because the way we feel about things affects our actions more than what we think about them. *Curiosity* helps us see the novel as interesting rather than threatening, enabling us to learn how to face new challenges that are always a part of organizational life. A good *imagination* helps because strategizing is a matter of imagining different futures and possible ways to get to them. A sense of *humor* helps you from taking yourself and your troubles too seriously and helps keep things in perspective. A *healthy ego* is very important - arrogance and a wish to dominate others are usually the sign of a weak ego constantly in need of reassurance. Leadership also requires *courage* - the willingness to take risks, make choices, and accept the consequences.

Recruiting leaders requires giving people an opportunity to earn leadership. Since followers create leaders, they can't appoint themselves and you can't appoint them. What you can do is create opportunities for people to accept the responsibilities of leadership and support them in learning how to fulfill these responsibilities. If you have to get the word out for a meeting, you can get three of your friends to help you pass out leaflets in the Yard one day or you can find one or two people in each House who will take responsibility for recruiting 5 people from their House to attend. They earn their leadership by bringing the people to the meeting. What other ways can you think of that you can give people the opportunity to earn leadership?

Developing leaders requires structuring the work of the organization so it affords as many people as possible the opportunity to learn to lead - delegation. Distributing the leaflets through House Committees, for example, shares the responsibility for engaging others with many people. It is true organizing the work in this way can be risky. You may delegate to the wrong people; they may let you down, etc. But as Moses learned from Jethro, if you fear delegating, the strength of the community is stifled and can never grow. But you can do things to increase the chances of success. Leadership training sessions help clarify what is expected of leaders in your organization, give people the confidence to accept leadership responsibilities, and express the value your organization places on leadership development. As Hackman and Walton show, you can provide "coaching" that helps new leaders strategize about their responsibilities and encourages them as they deal with difficult situations.

Leadership Development Chart #3

Leadership Team or "Lone Ranger"

The most successful organizers are those who form a leadership team with whom to work early on in their campaign. Although it can be a mistake to recruit people to act as an "organizing committee" too early - especially if you are not careful to recruit people drawn from the constituency whom that community views as leaders or, at least, potential leaders - organizers more often err in delaying too long. The sooner you have a team of people with whom to work, the sooner the "I" of the organizer becomes the "we" of the new organization. One you have formed a leadership team you can more easily establish a rhythm of regular meetings, clear decisions, and visible accountability that will help make things actually happen. You don't build an organization of 500 people by recruiting them all yourself. You build it by finding people willing and able to commit to help building it with you. If you don't have a leadership team working with you by midterm, it’s time to look very closely at why.

Leadership Development Chart #4

Conclusion

Although identifying, recruiting and developing leaders is critical to the capacity - or power - of most organizations, it is the particular focus of organizers whose work is to be leaders of leaders. The primary responsibility of an organizer is to develop the leadership capacities of others and, in this way, of the organizations through which their constituents act on their common interests.