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Briefing Notes:

Sweeping People into a Campaign for Strategic Change

The campaign approach to change is based on the premise that today's scarcest resource is mindshare, that is, people's relative attention to the issues you are seeking to advance. Minzberg's work on managerial time suggests the average time spent on any given issue is 15 minutes (1973). Research on advertising shows that the average consumer is exposed to thousands of persuasive messages in a typical day. The campaign approach to change cuts through this clutter, mobilizing people around a strategic theme and building on energy already in the system.

A central challenge to sweeping people into a campaign is getting their attention amid a barrage of competing concerns. A second challenge is finding and using the natural networks of influence and mobilization. A campaign works best by looking for natural entry points, then tapping into the amplifying power of networks. In this view, the leader's job is mobilizing energy and keeping the expanding web connected.

Going Public

Taking into account time constraints, a campaign deliberately works downstream. It begins with a small nucleus of people who are already engaged or interested in the initiative. A critical issue at the early phase of a campaign is how long to remain below the radar, honing the ideas and nourishing "found pilots" before opening up to sweep others into the campaign. The most effective campaigns create "pull," in contrast to "push," by first building enough energy in the core group that the dynamic is a sense of others being attracted rather than persuaded. Persuasion consumes much more energy and creates a different kind of membership.

An early stealth phase also gives the core group time to build an infrastructure to make use of the resources that recruits will eventually bring. Recruits can easily drift away if the campaign is not ready to absorb and engage their enthusiasm.

Before too long, however, the core group needs to begin sweeping people into the campaign. Sometimes the inner core group can be its own worst enemy by making invidious value judgments about latecomers to the movement, rather than welcoming them and finding roles for them.

Natural Entry Points and the Power of Networks

The first people to be swept into a campaign can be those already headed in the direction the campaign is going. This draws on energy already in the system. From the early "listening-in" phase of a campaign, lead users (Von Hippel, 1988) or early adopters have been identified. Often a "found pilot" is already engaging at least a few people in the new behavior; they are simply operating beneath the radar. These people may see an advantage to attaching themselves to something larger.

Another way to use the institution's own energy is to find natural entry points to already established networks. To this end, core group members will need to figure out natural venues and "meeting systems" (for example, monthly meetings of the advisory group for information technology) and make a systematic effort to capture parts of those events. By piggybacking on existing events rather than always creating new ones, a campaign gives potential recruits the gift of time (which means they are more likely to pay attention) and weaves itself more tightly into the fabric of the institution. The "Stakeholder Mapping" technique outlined later in these briefing notes is a good first step toward figuring out which groups to target.

The amplifying power of working through existing networks adds up in a very short time, as more and more people are recruited to a campaign and take up the campaign theme. A campaign tries to plant ideas where people will find them and carry them into their own circles, where they gain strength and shape. Seeding ideas where people will find them is not unlike the "viral communication" strategy that Levi Strauss is counting on to boost plummeting sales of its jeans. Levi's is planning to "insinuate itself into the consumer's own clubs, concert venues, street scenes, favorite stores, Websites and fanzines in order to leave the company's tag, spoor, logo, presence or aura for kids to discover for themselves. Viral communications." (Espen, 1999)

Not to be overlooked are the inner circle's own networks. Members can think about venues where they are already influential (or could become more influential—making an effort, for example, to become program chair of professional association meetings). That vantage point can be used to introduce the ideas directly to new recruits.

Allowing the Theme to Drive the Work

By looking for natural entry points and counting on the amplifying power of networks, a campaign draws on the natural energy of the institution. This strategy is high on "power," but low on "control": Not everything can be planned. Things take unexpected turns. Strange bedfellows end up together.

The campaign's orienting, strategic theme, however, can help keep things on track. People who deeply share the values surrounding a campaign can be relatively autonomous because they are self-organizing and self-orienting around the goal. For example, the anti-war movement was loosely coordinated mostly by local inventive actions, but all were connected by the common purpose. (This is easier, we should note, in oppositional campaigns than in affirmative ones where agreement can be more difficult to achieve.)

A big part of the core group's job, therefore, is to find ways to communicate the theme—over and over—and to take every opportunity to frame the many grassroots activities in terms of the theme. By helping people *see* the connection, the campaign helps create the connection.

The core group must walk the talk, living the campaign theme in its own actions. The core group can also act to create stakes. The defense industry, for example, has been a master at distributing the benefits for major contracts to a wide variety of political districts, making it more difficult to undo.

Accommodating a Range of Commitment

Effective campaigns create a range of ways that people can become involved without encountering significant hurdles at the early stage of interest. Making a few phone calls, poll watching, being a block captain—in political campaigns, these represent incremental steps to becoming more deeply involved; at no one time do people have to make a major, line-in-the-sand commitment.

The action-focused campaign approach has the power to attract bystanders and fellow travelers who have become passive because they feel helpless. When the campaign is able to achieve some focused "small win" (Weick, 1984), it can create hope and draw others in. The Polish Solidarity movement became a revolutionary force by enacting its values in small, local ways (at considerable risk to participants), which overcame the sense of despair in others (Schell, 1986).

Three Analytical Tools

Sweeping people into a campaign for organizational change does not happen by itself. A number of analytical methods can help you think systematically about the people and groups that might be pulled into a campaign and come up with specific strategies for attracting and using their energy. Three of those tools are described here. Each builds on the other.

Stakeholder Mapping

For any change to become widespread, the support of a wide array of stakeholders—people who can affect or are affected by the change—is almost always crucial. "Stakeholder Mapping" (CFAR, 1985) can be a powerful method for thinking about the many different groups that might be swept into a campaign and the possible sequence and strategies for targeting them. Appendix One provides a template and explains how to create a stakeholder map. As the appendix shows, this involves brainstorming a list of stakeholders, characterizing the nature of their interest and their power, then rethinking coalitions and strategies.

A stakeholder map can be helpful in several ways:

- *Natural Opportunities*—Identifying interest groups can make you more sensitive to natural opportunities to engage people around changes, especially when you can piggyback on existing ventures rather than create some extra event or occasion. Hardin (1978) has spoken of the need to "stalk taboos" by adopting a nonthreatening stance. You may find opportunities to work from the inside to expose new constituents to ideas that would be dismissed if pushed in a provocative fashion.
- *Shifting the Coalitions*—Serendipitous events create natural entry points for outmaneuvering an implacable opponent. By looking at the coalitions of stakeholders, you have a better sense of which events can create new opportunities to shift the coalitions. For example, when the New York Times published an expose on police "cooping"—sleeping because of too little work to do—reformers were able to overcome the police union's power to block the creation of a fourth platoon. With a fourth platoon in place, police staffing began to match the predictable rhythms of crime over the 24-hour day.
- *Strange Bedfellows*—By thinking about the stakeholders as a set, you can imagine strange bedfellows who are so often present at breakthroughs in a change process. The focus on people's interests rather than their positions can help you craft integrative solutions (Fisher, 1981; Shell, 1999). Often the mere presence of strange bedfellows can create significant movement for a campaign. For example, when McDonald's switched to brown recyclable containers it enacted new behaviors resulting from negotiations with the Environmental Defense Fund. This in turn energized many other organizations to get aboard this emerging movement.
- *Richer Set of Paths*—By including many stakeholders beyond the obvious power players, you create a much richer set of possible paths for an innovative idea or practice to evolve. This can accelerate the progression from a few people on the margins to a mainstream current.

Stakeholder Strategies

The traditional rational approach to influencing stakeholders is to identify the powerful gatekeepers who control adoption and engage them either by creating representative task forces or by seeking their sponsorship or approval.

If you create a matrix of stakeholders by power and stance, however, as in the "Stakeholder Map" above, your campaign can differentiate strategies for the recruitment of various "segments."

Attitude Toward Idea

Power	***For***	***Against***
Strong	Mobilize	Reframe
Weak	Organize, empower	Coopt

As illustrated in the diagram above, stakeholders who are strong and "for" the initiative simply need to be mobilized and supported. Those who are weak, yet favor an emerging idea, need to have opportunities created for them. For example, commissioning a workgroup within a larger task force and putting a relatively weak but passionate advocate in charge can provide a forum for that person to exercise leadership. Those who are weak but opposed are amenable to co-optation in which the trade implicitly involves letting people feel included in return for moderating their views (Selznik, 1949).

A classic error in traditional planning is to involve powerful but opposed people. Because they are already influential, they do not receive any significant benefit from being put into the participatory structure and often they will simply use the structure to more efficiently block the implementation of the ideas. Although it is difficult, powerful people who are opposed can be engaged through reframing—for example, linking the issue to something much more important to them or changing the way that they see the issue.

Cialdini's Principles of Influence

The psychologist Robert Cialdini has identified six principles for influencing people (Cialdini, 1993):

- *Reciprocation*—We feel obligated to repay, in kind, what another person has provided us.
- *Commitment and Consistency*—Once we have made a commitment, we will encounter personal and interpersonal pressures to behave consistently with that commitment.
- *Social Proof*—One means we use to determine what is correct is to find out what other people think is correct.

- *Liking*—We most prefer to say "yes" to the requests of someone we know and like.
- *Authority*—Because obedience to authority is mostly rewarding, it is easy to comply automatically with that authority.
- *Scarcity*—Opportunities seem more valuable to us when their availability is limited.

You can draw on these principles to develop strategies for influencing the stakeholders you have identified through techniques such as those described earlier. Appendix Two is a template that can help you apply the principles systematically to a set of stakeholders.

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Appendix One:
Stakeholder Mapping

Stakeholder Mapping is a way to analyze people and groups in regard to their effect on an initiative. It helps you figure out strategies for building support and contending with opposition.

Directions: Follow these steps to create a Stakeholder Map, using the template on the next page.

Step 1: Objective—Clarify your purpose: To what end are you trying to influence stakeholders?

Step 2: Stakeholders—Brainstorm a wide variety of stakeholders who can affect or are affected by the outcome of your objective. Then list on the template the major stakeholders you want to influence.

Step 3: Actions and Interests—First characterize their interests by thinking about their behavior. (Actions speak louder than words!) Then consider what motivates their behavior: What do they care about? How does the initiative affect them?

Step 4: Power—Characterize their power (high/medium/low), differentiating between adoption and implementation. For example, people in the current power structure are often powerful with regard to adoption, but weak relative to implementation. Frontline workers, on the other hand, may be weak in terms of adoption, but powerful relative to implementation.

Step 5: Coalitions—Consider and revise coalitions.

Step 6: Strategies—Now identify strategies.

Stakeholder Mapping

Step 1: **State Your Objectives**

Step 2: **List Stakeholders**	***Step 3:*** **Stakeholder's Interest in Your Objectives**	***Step 4:*** **Stakeholder's Power**	***Step 5:*** **Coalitions**	***Step 6:*** **Your Strategies for Influencing the Stakeholder**
Be specific—Names or titles, groups.	What behaviours do you see? What do they care about? How does this project affect them?	Power in regard to adoption? In regard to implementation?	Who influences them? Whom do they influence?	

Appendix Two:
Using Cialdini's Principles of Influence

Cialdini's six principles of influence, below, can help you develop strategies for building support and contending with opposition. For each major stakeholder you wish to influence, use the matrix as a brainstorming tool to come up with concrete strategies for enacting the principles—including what you plan to do, how, where and when.

Target Stakeholder (Person or Group): ___________________________

Principle	Enacting the Principle (What and How)	Venue (Where and When)
Reciprocation—We feel obligated to repay, in kind, what another person has provided us.		
Commitment and Consistency—Once we have made a commitment, we tend to behave consistently with that commitment.		
Social Proof—One means we use to determine what is correct is to find out what other people think is correct.		
Liking—We most prefer to say "yes" to the requests of someone we know and like.		
Authority—Because obedience to authority is mostly rewarding, it is easy to comply automatically with that authority.		
Scarcity—Opportunities seem more valuable to us when their availability is limited.		

Principles from Cialdini, Robert B. *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*. New York: Quill, 1993.