



May 3, 2014

## Issue Action Team Training

1. Establish common mindsets around power, issues, and action that will allow effective research and campaign planning by issue action teams.
2. Continue to develop relationships to strengthen our new team.
3. Launch issue action teams that will initiate research and continue to build our base.

# What do you want to change?

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## Introductions:

- Name
- Which issue action team you are joining

## In pairs:

Think of a time you encountered something you wanted to change in this area, but didn't have the power to make the change. Share a story about this time with another member of your issue action team. *(8 minutes)*

# Temperature Check

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- 1) Which of the following is more meaningful to you: taking a stand on an issue that is deeply aligned with your values, but unlikely to change in our lifetime, or engaging in a practical strategy to make a specific change on a smaller/narrower issue in the next year? (Moral stand move to the left, practical move to the right).
- 2) How do you want to spend your time: Taking on a huge problem that you know to be at the root of educational inequity but may not have the power to win, or focusing on a smaller piece of the problem where you will likely be able to see a concrete improvement?
- 3) What will position us in 2 years to make a bigger impact for kids: a first loss on a large issue or a first victory on a small issue?

# Debrief: Living in Tension Between Two Worlds

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## World as it Should Be

- Engine:** ■ Love/Justice/Data
- Motivation:** ■ Altruism (what's good for kids)
- Glue:** ■ Recognition of common humanity

## World as it Is

- Power
- Self Interest (what's good for me)
- Relationships

**“If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want crops without plowing up the ground. They want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the awful roar of its many waters. This struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. **Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.**”**

--Frederick Douglass

# Power Session Objectives

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- **Mindset Goals:** Obsession with understanding power as a necessary tool to create impact for kids.
- **Knowledge Goals:** Acquisition of a specific vocabulary and conceptual framework to understand and analyze power in your region.
- **Skills Goals:** Ability to conduct a power analysis of the education space in your region.

# Definition of Power

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- PODER: “To be able”
- The ability to act

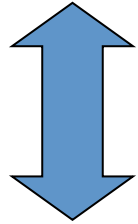


# Sources of Power

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- Position/Status
- Organized Money
- Organized People

**Self Preservation**



**Self Realization**

- Selfishness (me only)
- Self interest (*inter-esse*: me amongst others)
- Selflessness (others only)

# Stick Figure Self-Interest Map

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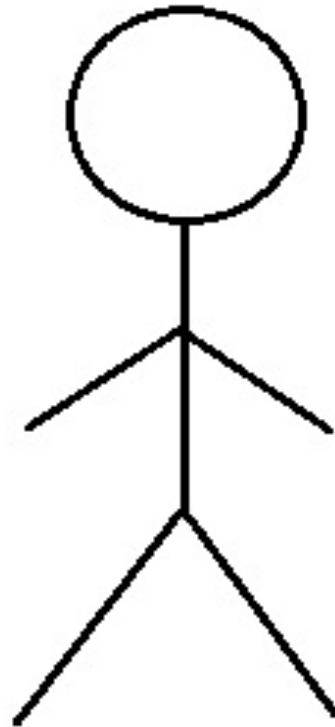
Key Individual Relationships

Key Institutional Relationships

Key Stories

Time

Money



Reflection

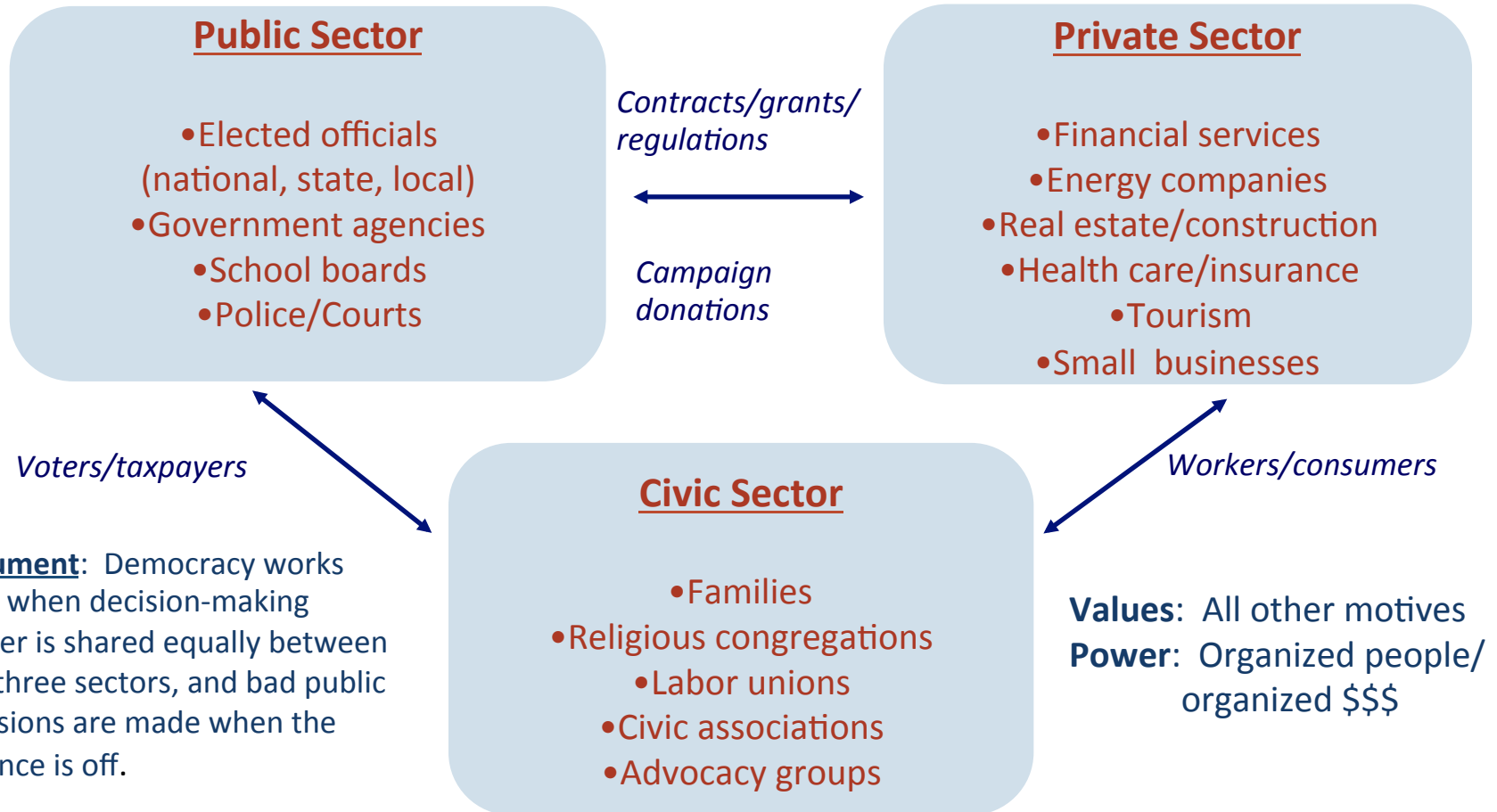
What do you read?

What do you write about?

# Three Sectors Analysis of Power

**Values:** Administration, control  
**Power:** Position

**Values:** Profit  
**Power:** Organized \$\$\$

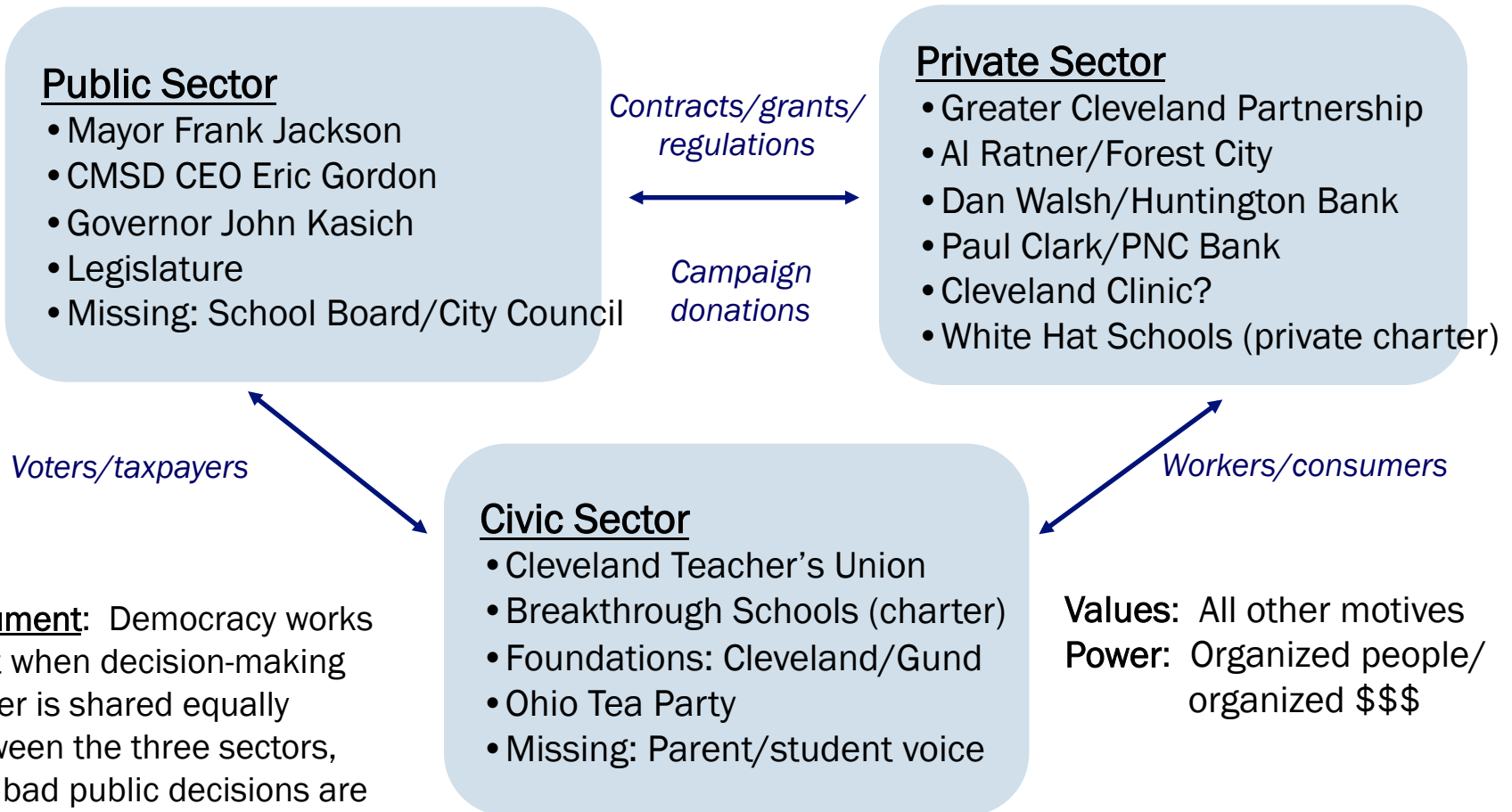


**Argument:** Democracy works best when decision-making power is shared equally between the three sectors, and bad public decisions are made when the balance is off.

# Cleveland Schools Power Analysis

**Values:** Administration, control  
**Power:** Position

**Values:** Profit  
**Power:** Organized \$\$\$



**Argument:** Democracy works best when decision-making power is shared equally between the three sectors, and bad public decisions are made when the balance is off.

**Values:** All other motives  
**Power:** Organized people/organized \$\$\$

# Power mapping

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Public relationships are critical to organizing and advocacy



# Bill de Blasio's Circle of Power

By DAVID W. CHEN, LARRY BUCHANAN and FORD FESSENDEN

Officeholders have kitchen cabinets: advisers who provide counsel, feedback and friendship. Bill de Blasio's includes people he met as a Democratic operative, a city official and an active parent in Brooklyn. Here is a guide to those in the mayor-elect's orbit.



## The Inner Ring



### Chirlane McCray

Mr. de Blasio's partner in politics, as well as in life, she is likely to become the most influential first lady of New York City since ... well, maybe, ever. She will be active in just about everything, including recruiting, speechwriting and policy making, according to her husband.



# Three Sectors Analysis of Power: Who holds power in your context?

**Values:** Administration, control

**Power:** Position

## Public Sector

*Contracts/grants/  
regulations*



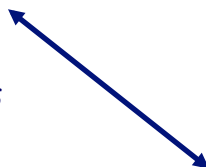
*Campaign  
donations*

**Values:** Profit

**Power:** Organized \$\$\$

## Private Sector

*Voters/taxpayers*



**Argument:** Democracy works best when decision-making power is shared equally between the three sectors, and bad public decisions are made when the balance is off.

## Civic Sector

*Workers/consumers*



**Values:** All other motives  
**Power:** Organized people/  
organized \$\$\$



Definition: The ability to act

Sources:

1. Organized People
2. Organized Money
3. Position/Status

Love without power is sentimentality.

Power without love is tyranny.

Power with love is justice.

*-Paul Tillich*

# Problem vs. Issue

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## Problem

- Vast, overwhelming
- Ongoing
- Can't get a handle on it
- No clear decision-maker
- Leads to activity:
  - Conferences
  - Task forces
  - Protests

## Issue

- Specific
- Immediate
- Winnable
- Clear decision-maker
- Leads to action
  - Clear steps targeted at generating a reaction from the decision-maker

# Definition: Action

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- Generates a reaction
- Public action: 2 or more people engaging a decision maker for the purpose of getting a specific reaction that creates change.

# Discussion in Issue Pairs

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- Imagine an issue that you could plausibly narrow down to from one of our 3 problem areas:
  - Schools as Community Hubs
  - Elevating the Teaching Profession
  - Racial Disparities in School Discipline

# Action vs. Activity

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## Action

- Oriented towards a reaction
- Purposeful
- Targeted
- Builds power because leaders see results and know that their valuable time is well-spent
- Leads to winning
- Focused on an issue

## Activity

- No clear reaction
- Diffuse purpose
- No target (or wrong target)
- Saps power because talented leaders see activity as a waste of their time.
- Leads to wheel-spinning
- Focused on a problem

# Discussion

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- Describe a time in the past 6 months when you have been a part of action or activity.
  - How did you know if it was activity or activity?
  - What did you do or say about it and why?
  - What is the consequence of lots of activity for LEE?



# Internal Actions

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- Re-action: Build Power
  - Individual Meetings
  - House Meetings
  - Issue Assemblies
  - Research actions



# Public Accountability Action

- Large numbers of constituents meet with decision-makers seeking specific commitments on issues.
  - Requires disciplined turnout
  - Research in advance
  - Testimony
  - Meeting with and briefing decision-maker
  - Media





# Press Conference

- Presents new information that, when covered by media, puts pressure on decision-maker and forces a reaction.
- Requires pre-work: preparing testimonies, preparing a study or report, building relationships with the media in advance, turnout.
- Be careful – many press conferences end up being activity generating no reaction at all.



# Canvassing, Phone Banking, Voter Registration

- Going door to door/phone banking in the district of a legislator asking citizens to call him/her to support an issue:
  - The legislator will hear from constituents, affecting his/her position on the issue
  - The legislator will react to the fact that your organization has the capacity to recruit volunteers to go door to door in his/her district.
- Voter registration is a good in and of itself, and can be connecting to voter turnout on a key ballot initiative or issue of concern.
- Press coverage amplifies the impact of these actions.



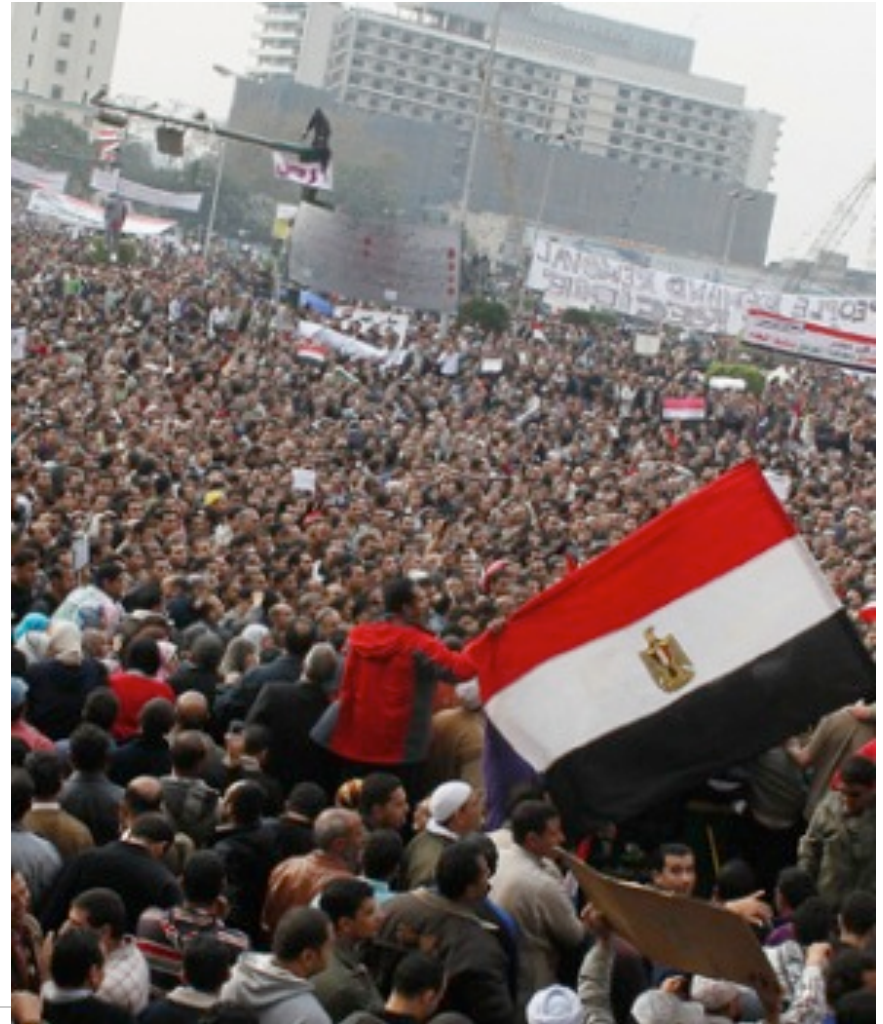
# Civil Disobedience

- Prevents a decision-maker from going about his/her daily business until he/she addresses the issue in question.
- Has the capacity to generate media reaction.
- More successful on issues of moral clarity (civil rights movement, etc.)
- Risks
  - Damages relationships that might be important for the future
  - Puts members at personal legal risk
  - If out of touch with larger culture, can be dismissed as fringe
  - Must be consistent and persistent to succeed



# Boycott/Strike/Withdrawal of consent

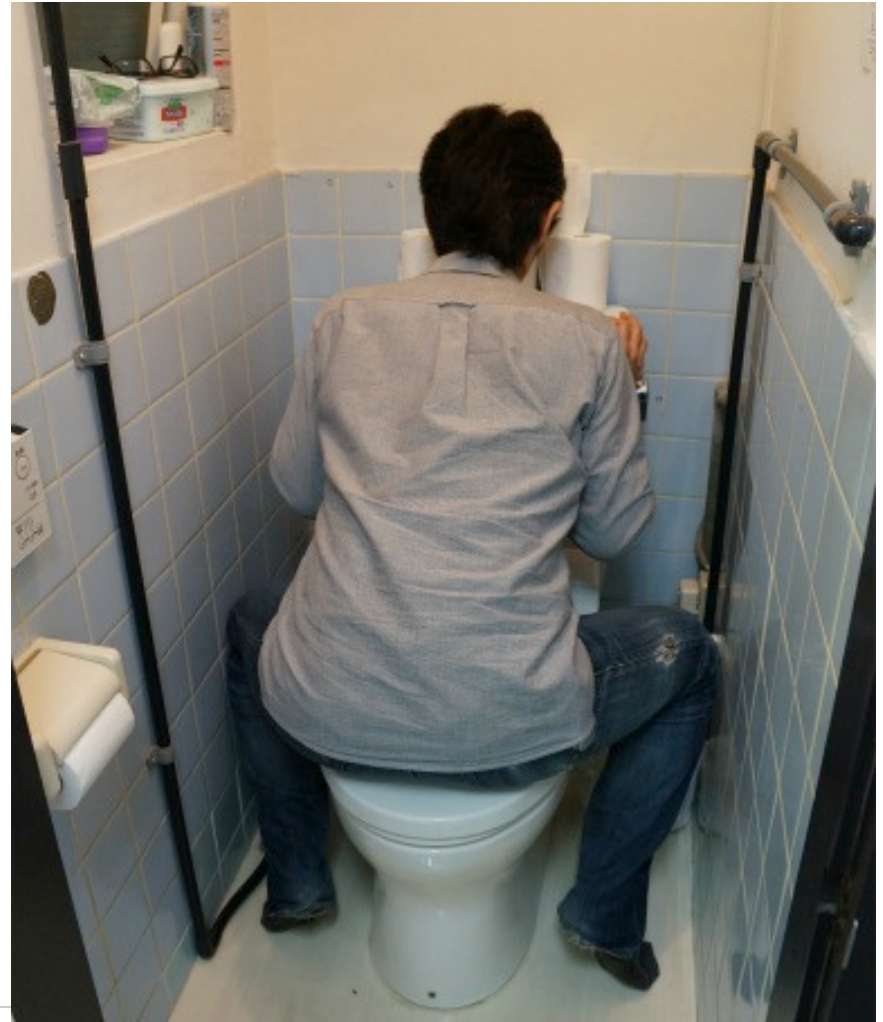
- Directly impacts the interests of the decision-maker
- Must be wide-spread and sustained to succeed
- Generally only possible in the context of a larger movement (where it can “go viral”), but requires a credible central organized group to negotiate the victory.



# To Think About

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- Which of these tactics is most inside the experience of our members? Which do you feel most comfortable with? Which are most challenging to you?
- What is not on the list that belongs? What is not on the list that doesn't belong?



- i. Establish clarity on the purpose of issue action teams: to continue building a base of power, and to identify and lead campaigns that are specific, immediate, and winnable given the power of our network.
- ii. Build relationships between team members
- iii. Set goals for the number of house meetings to organize focused on this problem area to begin surfacing specific issues.
- iv. Brainstorm list of potential allies to engage for research actions.
- v. Review next steps.
- vi. Set next meeting