

10 Steps To Grassroots Organizing – A Blueprint for Success

By Sal Gilbertie

Grassroots organizing can be done effectively by a dedicated few.

Time is the most valuable resource.

1. GET DETAILS

Go to the source, ask detailed questions. When? Where? How? With what toxin?

2. MAKE A SIMPLE GAME PLAN

Decide what you want to accomplish and how best can you do it. Set attainable goals.

3. EDUCATE YOURSELF

Gather as much information as possible. The internet is invaluable, look for information specific to the toxin being used. Look for “hot button” items (like Asthma) to create a credible argument that captures people’s attention. Research alternatives and analogies.

4. GET HELP

The big players can assist with everything from information to volunteers. They are eager to help. They can often provide information sources, publicity and press contacts, invaluable networking and monitoring functions. Established organizations remain after you are gone.

5. DISSEMINATE INFORMATION

Target at-risk populations with willingness to help – schools, churches, alternative health facilities and health food stores are great places to spread information and solicit support.

6. BE POSITIVE

Remember you are helping people who probably have not asked for help. You are often the first bearer of information regarding the dangers of toxins. An “in your face” attitude will be rebuffed and you will not find a welcome audience nor a willing pool of support. Be amazed, not angry.

7. PEOPLE CARE, BUT NOT TOO MUCH

People will listen and be concerned, but few will help with anything other than a phone call or two to public officials. Use this to your advantage. “Hot buttons” and the 24-hour window of opportunity.

8. BE FLEXIBLE AND LISTEN TO FEEDBACK

Input from people will direct you to the immediate concerns of the locals and allow you to change or add information to your literature making it more effective.

9. REMEMBER YOUR ULTIMATE TARGET

Policy/decision makers are the ones you need to influence most. All literature must include contact information for these people - phone numbers are best.

10. PRINT LITERATURE – HANDOUTS

Effective and cheap. Simple action flyers. Detailed information sheets. Font and color are crucial. Solicit help from an organization to be listed as the “For more information” contact.