

## Framing the challenge

An effective campaigner needs to be crystal clear about the challenge and speak about it clearly and in straightforward language.

### Think about the challenge:

- Do you have evidence of it?
- How 'winnable' is this issue? How achievable do you think your campaign ambition is?
- Do you have a clear solution?
- Is there support from people who use the service or are most affected?

Part of being a successful campaigner is being able to pick one issue (or a very small number) and stay focussed on it without getting distracted.

Think about whether you are really addressing the root cause of the issue – or is there a deeper reason for it? A really simple trick is to ask *but why* is your problem a problem? And then ask *but why?* again and keep repeating until you feel you have got to the core reason.

### Example:

**The issue:** *homeless people in our area seem to be in a constant state of revolving doors – they move from project to project and back onto the street without ever finding a permanent solution to their housing need.*

#### **But why?**

*There are just short-term solutions for people with no attempt to see the needs of the whole person.*

#### **But why?**

*The funding for homelessness is based on short term goals – there is no incentive to see the needs of the whole person.*

#### **But why?**

*There has been no challenge to this short-term narrow approach.*

#### **But why?**

*No campaign has built up the political pressure for change.*

With this example, by stating the problem and then asking, 'but why?', we can begin to work out what is the core problem and develop our solution.

## Understand your external environment

With your team it is really advisable to spend a bit of time discussing how you see the outside world, challenging your assumptions about it and coming to a shared understanding of your external context.



### These questions may help to frame your discussion:

- Where does power lie? Both in general and with your issue.
- How does change happen in society? How has change happened in the past?
- How do you find out about power and influence? What are the key sources of information?

As your campaign develops, your knowledge about the outside world will also develop. It's a good idea to review your external assessment on a regular basis as you review your campaign plan. This assessment is the foundation for your campaign – you can now start to build your plan.

### Example:

- *Power rests with the lead politician for housing – she seems to have the authority to change policy and practice on all local housing issues.*
- *Change seems to happen when there is pressure built up from different parts of society for a particular change; change rarely seems to happen when just one organisation or sector promotes a change.*
- *We find out about power and influence by talking with our local partner organisations but also privately with other local politicians and officials.*

### Develop your evidence base

Any campaign needs evidence. This can be a quick piece of work to find evidence that will be support for your campaign. ([Section Two: Identify the Problem](#) looks at this in more detail)

We have developed resources to enable you to quickly but effectively gather evidence about street homelessness in your area, highlight the challenge locally, and the need for change. We do this by running a [Connections Week](#).

Effective campaigners use both [statistics](#) that show the extent of the challenge and individual human stories that demonstrate the human impact.

### Clarify your campaign message

**A good campaign stripped to its basics tries to do three things:**

1. To make a connection with someone
2. To encourage them that change is possible
3. To get them to act on it

A really good way to apply this is in your *elevator pitch*. Imagine that you step into an elevator and the one person you have been waiting months to speak to steps into that same elevator with you. How do you then use the next 15-30 seconds? That is the *elevator pitch*.



It is hard to convey your campaign in 30 seconds maximum. What it takes is practice so that you never lose the chance to promote your campaign.

### **Example:**

*Hi! I'm Roberto from the local housing project. We are concerned from our street counts to find that there are 100 homeless people on the streets of our town each night. We know that nobody wants this. We think that there is a better way to help people move off the streets for good. Would you meet with me to discuss what we might be able to do together?*

This says who you are and states your problem with the evidence. It outlines a solution, and the ask is simple – just a meeting. The language uses 'we' and not 'you' – we don't just want to point the finger of blame, we want to encourage and support people to do something to tackle this problem.

### **Assert your credibility to campaign**

As campaigners we need to be clear about our legitimacy and credibility to campaign on our issue. As you begin to develop momentum, you will attract opposition – this is one sign of a campaign making real impact.

You need to have thought about this in advance and to have a clear line about your legitimacy and credibility to campaign.

### **Example:**

*We have spoken to 53 homeless people during our Connections Week about their experiences. They have told us what they need and why the services currently provided don't work for them.*

### **Assess the risks**

It is important to consider risk and see risk management as part of the campaign plan.

All good campaign plans include a risk register, listing the potential risks that could happen, their likelihood, their probable impact and the action needed to reduce them. The risk register should be reviewed and updated regularly.



## Example:

<b>Risk</b>	<b>Likelihood</b> <b>(1 low – 4 high)</b>	<b>Impact</b> <b>(1 low – 4 high)</b>	<b>Action to reduce the risk</b>
<i>Campaign is embraced by just one political party</i>	2	4	<i>Ensure there is engagement with all of the political parties</i>
<i>Lack of support from own supporters for campaign issue</i>	1	3	<i>Ensure regular communication with supporters in run-up to launch and then on-going responses to any concerns</i>
<i>Attack in the media about the campaign</i>	2	4	<i>Develop good network of allies who will be ready to speak out publicly in defence of the campaign</i>

By identifying risks and taking action to reduce them you will strengthen your campaign and chances of success.

## Seek influence on your target

Your campaign must be focused on the person/people (target) who has the power to make the change you want to see happen.

Explore the opportunities to make a direct approach to your target.

Also look for opportunities to make indirect approaches to your target. What and who influences them?

## Example:

*Our target is the lead politician for housing. We know that she has been reluctant to meet with us in the past but we do know that she is a trade union member. We could contact her trade union so that they help influence her on this issue. We also know that her church is very important to her, so we could approach her church as well.*

## Use opposition to strengthen your campaign message

As campaigners we often focus on the messages that motivate us. But we must build wider support, and to do that we need to think about the opposition to our campaign.



A useful tool is the Opposition Matrix. Take a sheet of paper and draw a line down the middle. On the left list all the arguments against your campaign. And on the right, you list the arguments for the campaign. Then pause and consider whether your lead arguments are really addressing the key opposition arguments. Sometimes you'll see that you should be using other arguments instead.

This useful exercise is best done as a group. It's also a great way to prepare for an important meeting with your target and allows you to practice your response to different opposition arguments.

### Example:

Argument against	Argument for
<i>"Housing is a big problem – includes other groups – they need to demonstrate that they deserve a house"</i>	<i>"It's a Human Right. But also should target people most in need – e.g. people sleeping on the street"</i>
<i>"People on the streets don't have the ability to manage a house and can cause problems"</i>	<i>"Housing First is the answer –we know current approaches don't work but Housing First has been proven to be effective– a more dignified solution"</i>
<i>"This is difficult because it is new – challenging"</i>	<i>"Demonstrate the results – success in other countries – training for workers available – we know we can't keep doing what we do now"</i>

### Develop your strategy

Now you have pulled together the key elements for your campaign – how is it going to launch and build momentum for your issue?

A theory of change for your campaign is vital, it's your story of how your campaign is going to develop in the future to achieve your goal. But it must also be grounded in the reality of your local context.

An effective theory of change uses two little words – **so that** – to connect one activity to the next so that you build momentum on your issue to push for change. Campaigning is never just about one activity – but a chain of events leading to your ultimate goal.

### Example 1:

*We are going to do some research*

***So that***

*We can brief politicians*

***So that***

*They can raise the issue*



***So that***

*We can get some media coverage*

***So that***

*The government responds*

Very often media coverage can really energise your campaign but only at the right time and when you consider it will be helpful to move your campaign forward. (See [Section Six: Plan your communications](#))

Your theory of change needs to be reviewed on a regular basis as your campaign develops and changes.

**Example 2:**

*We are going to build our evidence base to highlight the scale of homelessness in our area*

***So that***

*We can prepare a detailed report on both the problem and the solution to tackle local street homelessness*

***So that***

*We can use this report to build a wide coalition of local groups who share our desire to see a new approach to homelessness*

***So that***

*We can show our growing support in the media and on social media*

***So that***

*Pressure will build from various parts of society on our target politician for change*

***So that***

*She will meet with us and with our wide-ranging partners and cross party support we can make the case for change*

***So that***

*Housing First is implemented locally to tackle street homelessness*