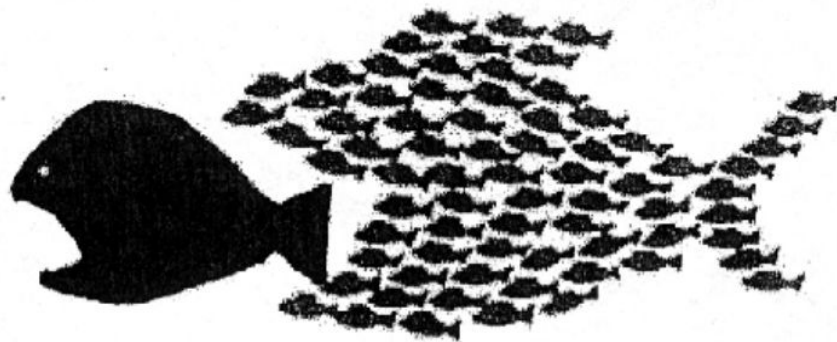

ACORN & Building Power for Change

The Power of Organizing Is Key!



What is Power?

What is Power?

- ★ Power is the ability to act.
- ★ Power is not good or bad. It is how you use it and toward what end.
- ★ Power unchecked or unaccountable can corrupt – it can also reveal...
- ★ Power is not a zero sum game – there is not a limited amount.
- ★ Power is not set, it is relational. People power has the ability to alter the relationship.
- ★ Exercising our power consciously can manifest the outcomes we desire.

What are the Different Kinds of Power?

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- ★ Power Over – that's what the boss or state use
- ★ Power With – horizontal organizing, that what we need to model and build
- ★ Power Within – every single one of us has power to act. For some this is also spirit – a willingness to be fully alive, present and participating as an agent of change.
- ★ Power Under – when we give up the power that we have, when we say we can't instead of won't.

What are sources of Power

What are Sources of Power?

- ★ Authority or Legitimacy
- ★ Human Resources
- ★ Material Resources
- ★ Skills and Knowledge
- ★ Psychological Factors
- ★ Sanctions
- ★ Privilege

**What are the Different Kinds of Power We
Need?**

What Kind of Power do we need?

- ★ Organized people – collectives, unions, coalitions, cooperatives
- ★ Organized money – pooling funds, dues etc, collectively we have more
- ★ Organized actions/votes – political power to persuade, convince, coerce just action

How do we Build More power?

Brainstorm

How members can we each get!

Alejandra got 1

Can you beat Peter at 5 Full members?

NOTE

The ACORN community union is not a fee for service; it is the collective experience of fighting for justice

What Has ACORN Won (last 3 years not comprehensive)

\$100's of millions in building maintenance - across the country

Connect to Success and Connecting Families: \$80 million / year since 2015

Rent Control in Nova Scotia (set to expire in Jan 2024) and temporarily in New Brunswick (expired in Jan 2023)

Eviction protections in New Brunswick

Renoviction Ban in BC

Stopped countless renovictions and evictions

Inclusionary Zoning in Ontario (Toronto and other cities are developing)

Rentsafe / Landlord Registration in Toronto, Mississauga, and soon Halifax

Toronto Rent Grant Program - \$3 million / year

Changes to the definitions of affordable housing

Enhancements to property standards - to include pests in Ottawa, expanded in both Hamilton and Halifax

Anti Renoviction strategies in Hamilton and Toronto

Tenant Assistance Policy in Burnaby

\$15 million in the Ottawa budget for affordable housing 2019

\$175 increase to disability rates in BC

Rap	Things to think about
<p><u>Step 1: Introduce yourself</u></p> <p>At the Door: Hey, I'm _____ I'm with a community action group called ACORN. You've probably seen us in the news fighting for tenant rights.</p> <p>At ACORN Event: Hey I'm _____. Glad you made it out to the action today.</p>	<p>Just be friendly and be yourself - don't worry that some people will be in a bad mood.</p> <p>Once you break the ice the convo gets easier.</p>
<p><u>Step 2: What is ACORN and what are ACORN's key campaigns.</u></p> <p>Do you have a minute to talk a bit more about how we can get more affordable housing?</p> <p>Great - ACORN is a community union and we are fighting for things like healthy homes, raising wages, and cheaper internet.</p> <p>Right now our BIG push is for <u>rent control to keep our housing affordable.</u> Who can afford rent these days, right?</p>	<p>Get right into the discussion.</p> <p>If you delay and don't get to the point people will just leave, close the door, and be confused.</p>
<p><u>Step 3: Connect with the person - build the RAPport.</u></p> <p><i>*Wait for response* (listen & validate!)</i></p>	<p>People won't remember most of what you say. Let people share what they are thinking</p>

Step 3: Connect with the person - build the RAPport.

**Wait for response* (listen & validate!)*

Are you having issues with your landlord? Tell me about it.

Your rent went up by how much?!?! I am sure they are doing all the repairs though, right?

VALIDATE - "THAT'S OUTRAGEOUS!"

Ask open questions to get them talking.

People won't remember most of what you say. Let people share what they are thinking .

Listen, acknowledge their points, validate their strong points.

Don't let them go on for TOOOOOO long.

Don't argue with them on the ideas they have you don't like, turn the conversation back onto something we can organize on.

Step 4: Polarize! Agitate! Build a Vision for Action!

Do you think there needs to be laws against landlords raising rents to levels we cannot afford?

Exactly - Landlords are organized, tenants need to be too!

That's why ACORN is getting tenants together across the province to FIGHT for Rent Control laws that keep apartments affordable for everyone.

We do actions, picketing, petitioning, and get in the media. We are thorn in the side of the government and their landlord friends.

Enough is enough! It's fun!

Jump back in and hit them with a zinger!!

Focus on why we need to fight back.

Get them emotionally engaged in the conversation.

Get them Fired Up!

Step 5: Campaign Ask

Does this sound like something you want to be a part of?

If you don't ask directly, people won't believe you.

Weak asks won't work (don't say maybe you will get involved? if you ask maybe you will only get a maybe. We want a firm YES.)

	maybe. we want a norm (ES.)
<p><u>Step 6: Explain how a ACORN Works (DUES ASK)</u></p> <p>ACORN is a community union. Individually we can't solve these problems, but together we have power and can. It works like a church or union where all members like me chip in <u>dues</u> - 15 bucks a month.</p> <p>Is that something you can do? [Let them answer, don't talk]</p>	<p>Be confident. . Ask clearly and then stop talking: "Is that something you can do?"</p> <p><u>Don't trail off after asking:</u> "Is that something you can do?... I get you may not be able to.... That's fine... We understand..."</p>
<p><u>Step 7: Comebacks</u></p> <p><i>See Handout - People don't often join right away. Maybe's are not no's so keep going!</i></p>	<p>Try to ask 3 times!</p> <p>End your responses to their concerns with another ask to join.</p>
<p><u>Step 8: Sign the Petition</u></p> <p>We are asking people to sign this petition for Rent Control? Great! What is your name? phone number email? address?</p>	<p>Ask each line specifically and unless you have bad handwriting it is always better to write it all yourself.</p>

COMEBACKS - Leadership Training

Comebacks	Things to keep in mind
<p><i>"I can't afford that"</i></p> <p>I hear you. Everything is expensive, and I make a sacrifice to make sure that ACORN is financially strong and able to keep fighting.</p> <p>Do you understand why we pay dues?</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Explain why we pay dues and then ask again.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">If they still say they can't afford \$15 a month say:</p> <p>Fair enough. Some of our members chip in less, around 5 or 10 bucks a month. What could you do?</p>	<p>Validate all concerns, they all matter to the person.</p> <p>People often do not understand why we pay dues. So ask them if they do!</p> <p>ACORN members like you are not rich, so make sure they know why you make the small sacrifice.</p>
<p><i>"I need to think about it. I don't know ACORN very well"</i></p> <p><i>Yeah, I get it, we just met! I felt the same way before I joined.</i></p> <p><i>What do you need to think about? (listen and answer)</i></p> <p>Tell them more about the campaign:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Quebec has vacancy control which helps rents in Quebec stay lower.- Ontario and BC have rent caps!- Rents are rising 6x faster than our incomes- [GET REGIONAL NUMBERS] The waitlist for subsidized housing is 10 years long with thousands of people on it- Calgary and Halifax have the fastest rising rents or any major Canadian city!- New Brunswick has the fastest rising rents in Canada! <p>Re ask for them to join again</p>	<p>If someone isn't feeling comfortable, then it's your job to reassure them. By asking them what they want to know about you can help them understand that ACORN is the biggest tenant union in the country!</p> <p>Confidence is infectious.</p> <p>Show them an article about ACORN!</p> <p>Talk about how you got started in ACORN!</p>

“Nothing will ever change”

I hear you, it seems that way for sure. Overall we don't win every time BUT if we don't fight collectively it is guaranteed we will lose every time. That's why so many of your neighbours are joining ACORN, enough is enough. What do you think?

This is a hard one. Remember not everyone will join and sometimes that may even be a good thing if people are too negative!

<p>“I don't feel comfortable giving out my bank info.”</p> <p>Fair enough, I hear you. We do it though the Bank because it is the safest and most secure way of doing financial transactions. But ACORN also does credit card if that is easier for you?</p>	<p>People give their info out all the time if it is a corporation. Who is more trustworthy, ACORN or a faceless corporation?</p>
<p>Comeback Tip: Always end your response with an ask for membership..</p> <p>If they ask when the meetings are, say “Our meetings are the second Saturday of every month at the Don Montgomery Rec Centre. Would love to have you there!! The best way is to go there as a full dues paying member - what do you think?”</p> <p>If they say “Nothing will ever change” you say “I hear you, it seems that way forsure. Overall we don't win every time BUT if we don't fight collectively guaranteed we will lose every time. <u>That's why so many of your neighbours are joining ACORN, what do you think?</u> “</p>	<p>Ask people to join three times.</p> <p>Practice replying to their questions with thoughtful responses coupled with another ask to join!</p> <p>Stay positive! Don't confuse people saying maybe and thinking about it with anything negative - they likely just need more info.</p>

Rap

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1sJRi0nJpa0sclhpj1ng8pNVt9G9IltnwJn78IVO6xCA/edit>
