



# Strategic Campaign Planning!

**campaign (v):** to work in an organized and active way toward a particular goal  
**campaign (n):** a connected series of operations designed to bring about a particular result

Sometimes it's helpful to think about campaigns like a journey: your goal is your destination, the strategy is the route(s) you choose, the tactics are the vehicle(s) you use, and your target is a roadblock. We have to figure out the right routes and vehicles to move the roadblock so we can get to our destination!

## TARGETS

In a campaign, your primary target is the person who has the power to give you and your organization what you want. *In the Real Food Campus Commitment campaign, this is the University President or Chancellor.*

Secondary targets are people who do not have the power or authority to give you what you want but who can influence the primary target. Often students have more access to this person than the primary target. *At Eastern Washington University, the primary target was the University President, and the secondary target was a personal friend of the President who lived next door to the student group's community garden.*

You can identify other targets by power mapping your university (see separate resources!)

**GOALS** are what you plan to achieve overall, or a milestone you want to reach in order to advance your campaign. It can be helpful to break down your longer-term campaign goal into smaller parts, like mile-markers. If your campaign goal is to get the Real Food Commitment signed by the end of the year, a short-term goal could be to get the student council on board by winter break, for example.

**STRATEGIES** are the routes, or pathways, for reaching your goals. Over the past 2 years, we've found strategies for Real Food Commitment campaigns generally fall into 3 themes:

**A) Mobilizing Student Power:** Unifying students and flexing the muscle of organized students to show your target your collective power. This could include events, petitions, rallies.

**B) Organizing Decision Makers:** Building relationships with key decision makers and moving them towards supporting your campaign. This strategy includes things like research actions, negotiating, and strategic meetings with stakeholders.

**C) Coalition Building:** Accessing organized power (like student or community groups) by unifying groups of people to support your campaign.

*Your campaign may use only one of these strategies, or maybe all three. For example, at UMASS-Amherst, students voted on a campus wide proposal for the Real Food Campus Commitment, and also had to meet with key faculty members, the CFO, & the President, to seal the deal.*

## TACTICS

If strategies are the themes or the routes for reaching your goals, tactics are the on-the-ground actions that advance your campaign.

It's really tempting to jump right to tactics and start planning events, meetings, media, etc. **REMEMBER that tactics should always speak to your goals, and be nested within strategy.** It's super essential to have goals, and a plan, before picking out tactics. A bill or proposal in an election, stakeholder meetings, and coalition events are all examples of tactics in the example above.

**Tip: set mini goals for all of your tactics!** Using a petition? Set a goal for # signatures you want by when. Hosting a movie screening? Set a goal for # people will attend, and goals around how you'll

## TASKS

To get anything accomplished, there are tasks to be done. This is stuff like scheduling meetings, crafting emails, planning for events, etc. These are things that happen behind the scenes. Good task delegation includes the task, who's responsible for it, & by when it will be completed. Everything you do in your campaign (actions, meetings, events...) should all build towards creating the change you want to make.

### Be S.M.A.R.T.!

Tactics and goals should always be SMART:

- **Specific:** Be as specific as possible (i.e. NOT "spread awareness")
- **Measurable:** Make sure you know when you've achieved your goal
- **Ambitious:** Challenge yourself and your group!
- **Realistic:** Make sure it's something you really can (eventually!) accomplish.
- **Time-oriented:** Goals should have a deadline, or else there's no timeline or urgency.
- **Target Focused:** Tactics should be directed at specific targets. Don't just have a petition drive, deliver a stack of petitions — in person — to your target's office! Don't just host a dinner, invite your target and prep compelling stories to include in programming, and at the end, make an ask!

NOT S.M.A.R.T: "More real food!"

S.M.A.R.T: "President [name] and Director of Dining [name] sign the Real Food Campus Commitment by Earth Day 2015, pledging at least 20% of [school's] food budget goes toward real food!"

NOT S.M.A.R.T: "Spread awareness on campus"

S.M.A.R.T: During fall and winter 2014, present the real food campaign to 50 diverse student groups at their meetings, and collect at least 35 campaign endorsements by January 2015.

## Do Double Duty

Use tactics that propel your campaign forward while also building your group. Plan tactics that are exciting & empowering for participants & group members, and which also put pressure on your targets.

### Get the most bang for your buck!

Tabling? Don't just stand there! Have a photo petition, an email list sign-up, cards with upcoming events, etc. Hosting a film screening? Also be sure to explain your group & campaign. Pass around a petition and an email sign-up for people who want to get more involved.

