

Time:

30 minutes, minimum

Goal or purpose:

To learn about the rich history of nonviolent campaigns, gain a better understanding of campaigns, tactics and movements

How it's done/facilitator's notes:

The facilitator asks people to break into small groups of five or six. Ask one person in each group to list numbers 1 to 10 on a piece of paper. Tell groups they are “competing” with one another to see who can do the task in the fastest time (as opposed to our usual cooperative style!)

Tell each group to list 10 wars as quickly as possible, raising their hands when they are done. Facilitator should note the time, and when all groups have finished, ask them to make another list of 10 nonviolent campaigns, and again raise their hands when done. Note how it takes longer to come up with the nonviolent campaigns than the wars!

Starting with the “winning” group. Write their list of nonviolent campaigns on a wall chart, then ask other groups to add to the list. There will probably be a mix of movements, tactics, campaigns, etc. List them all and then use the list to explain the differences so people learn about strategic processes and how effective strategies develop. For example, the list may include “anti-apartheid” (movement), “Salt March” (a campaign) and “sit-ins” (a tactic). It may also include campaigns they've been involved with (if groups are struggling, this can be a helpful way of helping them fill their lists).

See the Glossary of terms in this handbook. Using the list, ask the participants to describe components of campaigns, identify tactics, and describe what makes a movement. You can also use this list to introduce people to campaigns they are not familiar with; participants will often enjoy giving brief summaries of campaigns and actions – especially if they were involved in them!

This exercise can become the basis of a longer discussion; use a well known campaign as a case study to learn about strategic development of nonviolent campaign; the 'Letter from a Birmingham jail' exercise is a good introduction to doing this.

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