



Take Action; Create Change

A Community Organizing Toolkit



Mi Gente,

The National Latino Council on Alcohol and Tobacco Prevention (LCAT) is a 501©3 non-profit organization founded in 1989 by public health professionals who sought a need to reduce the harm caused by alcohol and tobacco in Latino communities across the nation. Its mission is to build a national social movement to prevent and eliminate tobacco use and alcohol problems within the Latino community in the United States and its territories.

In following the mission, LCAT compiled and produced Take Action; Create Change, A Community Organizing Toolkit made possible through The American Legacy Foundation. The toolkit represents an assemblage of exercises and tips created by LCAT, as well as, a range of advocacy sources and are divided into six sections from topics on “Defining an Issue” to “Mobilizing the People”. Through the use of this toolkit you can begin to work successfully in engaging communities around a common goal. Historically disadvantaged communities have been under-represented or misrepresented for too long. Our communities have always held the power to rise up and take action for their rights. This toolkit offers ways to help communities recognize this power, use it, and bring about social change.

Latino communities in the United States are both influential and powerful when effectively organized. This has been demonstrated in efforts such as our involvement in the 2008 presidential election, the formation of the Young Lords Party in the 1970s, as well as Cesar Chavez and the Farmer’s Rights Movement of the 1950s. These moments are proof of the success Latinos can achieve when establishing a voice in response to the injustices within our communities.

We acknowledge you for your continuous efforts to make a difference in the lives of others. It is time for us to stop allowing franchises to profit at the expense of our health and well-being. Your work and dedication allows future generations to gain additional opportunities and have new paths open for their success. LCAT is committed to a healthy and prosperous future for all communities and looks forward to working with you in realizing this dream.

Siempre Pa’Lante,

The National Latino Council on Alcohol and Tobacco Prevention

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SECTION #1

DEFINING AN ISSUE

The initial step to any social action is to identify the issue. In the following exercises you will determine the difference between a problem and an issue. You will also develop and define the issues that affect your community.

- Problem vs. Issue exercise
- Issue checklist

POWER vs. ISSUE

Often the words “problem” and “issue” are used interchangeably or sometimes a problem is mistaken as an issue. There is a key difference between a stated problem and an issue.

<u>PROBLEM</u>	<u>ISSUE</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on individual/personal level <p>Ex. My child will not graduate from high school</p> <p>Ex. My 13-year old child started smoking cigarettes.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Based on a larger/community level <p>Ex. 80% of the students at my child’s high school will not graduate</p> <p>Ex. A large percentage of young people start smoking before the age of 13.</p>

A problem is more of a personal issue that affects one person, like a child not graduating. The problem becomes an issue when a group of people are affected, like 80% of the school is not graduating.

Identify 3 issues and list them below. Then use the checklist on page 6 to help determine the strength and viability of each issue below¹.

ISSUE #1:

ISSUE #2

ISSUE #3

¹ Bobo, K., Kendall, J., Max, S., Organizing for social change: midwest academy manual for activists. Santa Ana, CA, (2001): pp. 22-23.

CHECKLIST FOR CHOOSING AN ISSUE

Issue #1	Issue #2	Issue #3	Will the Issue...
			1. Result in a real improvement in people's lives?
			2. Give people a sense of their own power?
			3. Alter the relations of power?
			4. Be worthwhile?
			5. Be winnable?
			6. Be widely felt?
			7. Be deeply felt?
			8. Be easy to understand?
			9. Have a clear target?
			10. Have a clear time frame that works for you?
			11. Be non-divisive
			12. Build leadership?
			13. Set your organization up for the next campaign?
			14. Have a pocketbook angle?
			15. Raise money?
			16. Be consistent with your values and vision?

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28 E. Jackson Blvd. #605, Chicago, IL 60605

(312) 427-2304 mwacademy1@aol.com www.midwestacademy.com

SECTION #2

WHO HAS THE POWER?

Now that you have your issue at hand, Section #2 will help you determine who has the power to make decisions regarding your issue. In this section you will ask the question, who are my key targets?

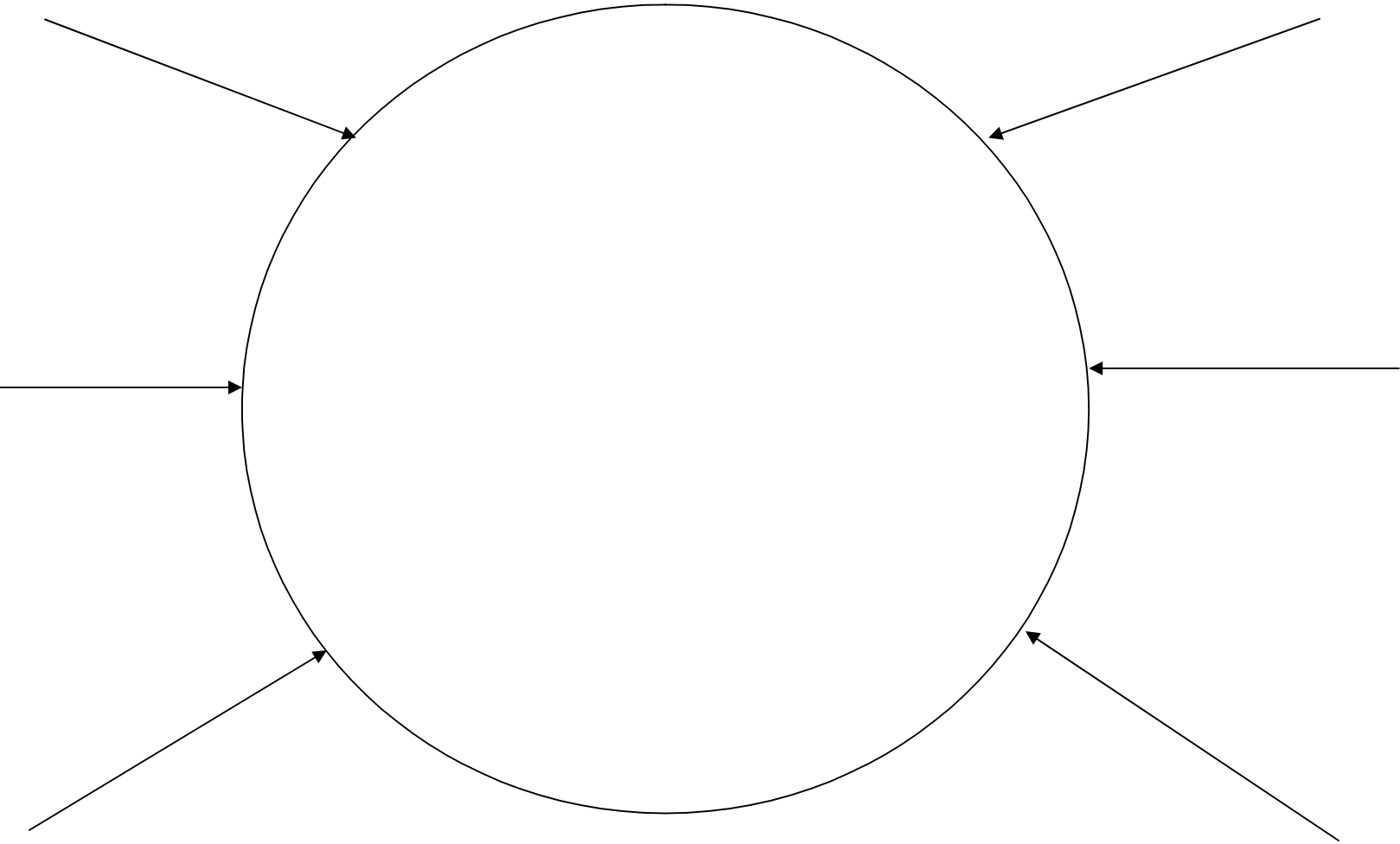
It will also provide the groundwork for you to start looking at the systems of oppression that impact our communities.

- Power Analysis exercise
- Power Chart

WHO HAS THE POWER?

POWER ANALYSIS

Purpose: Identify the different systems that have power and affect the Latino community. This exercise will help recognize who are the decision-makers and who is the target of the social action². Follow the instructions on page 9 to complete the exercise.



² The People's Institute for Survival and Beyond

Step 1:

Diagram the community. What makes up the whole community? Draw all the specific things you would see in your community inside the circle.

Ex. High school, local businesses, Main Street, etc.

Step 2:

Which elements of the community contribute to the impact of tobacco use on Latinos? Look at the drawing of the community and highlight or circle the different entities that influence and/or increase the exposure to tobacco within that same community.

Ex. A specific restaurant does not ban smoking; a local store has tobacco signage displayed throughout its location, etc.

Step 3:

- a) There are larger systems that affect our communities. In the previous step, specific features that contribute to the exposure to tobacco have been identified within our community. Identify the larger systems at play that have a direct influence on the community and place them on the arrowed lines around the circle (community).

Ex. The Board of Education is considered a system because of its affect on all public schools in the state.

- b) What is the relationship between those services within our community and the larger systems at play? List those relationships below the diagram to refer back to later.

Ex. The tobacco advertisements placed in the local stores are controlled by the system of Media.

Step 4:

Now that the systems have been identified, what is the relationship between those systems? How do they affect each other? Indicate this on the diagram by drawing an arrow connecting the systems.

Ex. Tobacco companies sponsor events in the community. An arrow would be drawn indicating this relationship between the tobacco industry and the system (Media) that controls the advertisements through sponsorships.

Conclusion:

The intent of this exercise is to identify who has the “power” to positively and negatively impact the identified community. This will also help distinguish the “targets” or who will be the focus of your action plan.

POWER CHART

To further distinguish who has the power and who is the target fill in the chart below.

<u>WHO HAS THE POWER?</u> From the Power Analysis list who has the “power” in this particular community.	<u>WHAT IS THAT POWER?</u> From the Power Analysis list what kind of power they hold.	<u>POTENTIAL TARGET</u> Of those who have the “power” identify potential “targets” who are necessary in building relationships with in order to achieve the desired outcome? Be specific.

SECTION#3

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

The Community Action Plan will help create a base for your social action. It will help you determine your key targets (the person/people who have the power to make decisions concerning your issue), help you produce goals in regards to your issue, and also create a timeline by when you want to accomplish your goals.

- Part I- “Targets” exercise
- Part II- “Identify your Goals” exercise
- Part III- “Timeline” exercise

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

PART I
TARGET #1

From the previous Power Chart exercise in Section #2, list one of your potential targets.

TARGET #1: _____

OUTCOMES:

Indicate what your desired outcomes are regarding the “target” selected. What do you want to accomplish in regards to your “target”? What do you want your “target” to do concerning your issue?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

STRATEGIES:

“A strategy is the design of the campaign combined with an analysis of power relationships”.³ Strategy is about shifting the relationship between you and your target with the outcome of gaining support for your issue. Often the idea of a strategy is confused with the word tactic. Tactics are the individual steps in carrying out the strategy.⁴ What strategies will you take to meet your desired outcomes created above?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

RESOURCES:

What resources in and out of the community can you call upon to help you reach your “target”?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

GOAL: Now review the above. What is the ultimate goal you want to achieve?

³ Bobo, K., Kendall, J., Max, S., Organizing for social change: midwest academy manual for activists. Santa Ana, CA, (2001): p. 30.

⁴ Ibid

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

PART I

TARGET #2

From the previous Power Chart exercise in Section #2, list one of your potential targets.

TARGET #2: _____

OUTCOMES:

Indicate what your desired outcomes are regarding the “target” selected. What do you want to accomplish in regards to your “target”? What do you want your “target” to do concerning your issue?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

STRATEGIES:

“A strategy is the design of the campaign combined with an analysis of power relationships”.⁵ Strategy is about shifting the relationship between you and your target with the outcome of gaining support for your issue. Often the idea of a strategy is confused with the word tactic. Tactics are the individual steps in carrying out the strategy.⁶ What strategies will you take to meet your desired outcomes created above?

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- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

RESOURCES:

What resources in and out of the community can you call upon to help you reach your “target”?

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⁶ Ibid

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

PART I

TARGET #3

From the previous Power Chart exercise in Section #2, list one of your potential targets.

TARGET #3: _____

OUTCOMES:

Indicate what your desired outcomes are regarding the “target” selected. What do you want to accomplish in regards to your “target”? What do you want your “target” to do concerning your issue?

- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

STRATEGIES:

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- 1)
- 2)
- 3)
- 4)

RESOURCES:

What resources in and out of the community can you call upon to help you reach your “target”?

- 1)
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GOAL: Now review the above. What is the ultimate goal you want to achieve?

⁷ Bobo, K., Kendall, J., Max, S., Organizing for social change: midwest academy manual for activists. Santa Ana, CA, (2001): p. 30.

⁸ Ibid

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN
PART II
IDENTIFY YOUR GOAL

From the goals you have created in Part I, choose one goal that you would like to work on first.

GOAL: _____

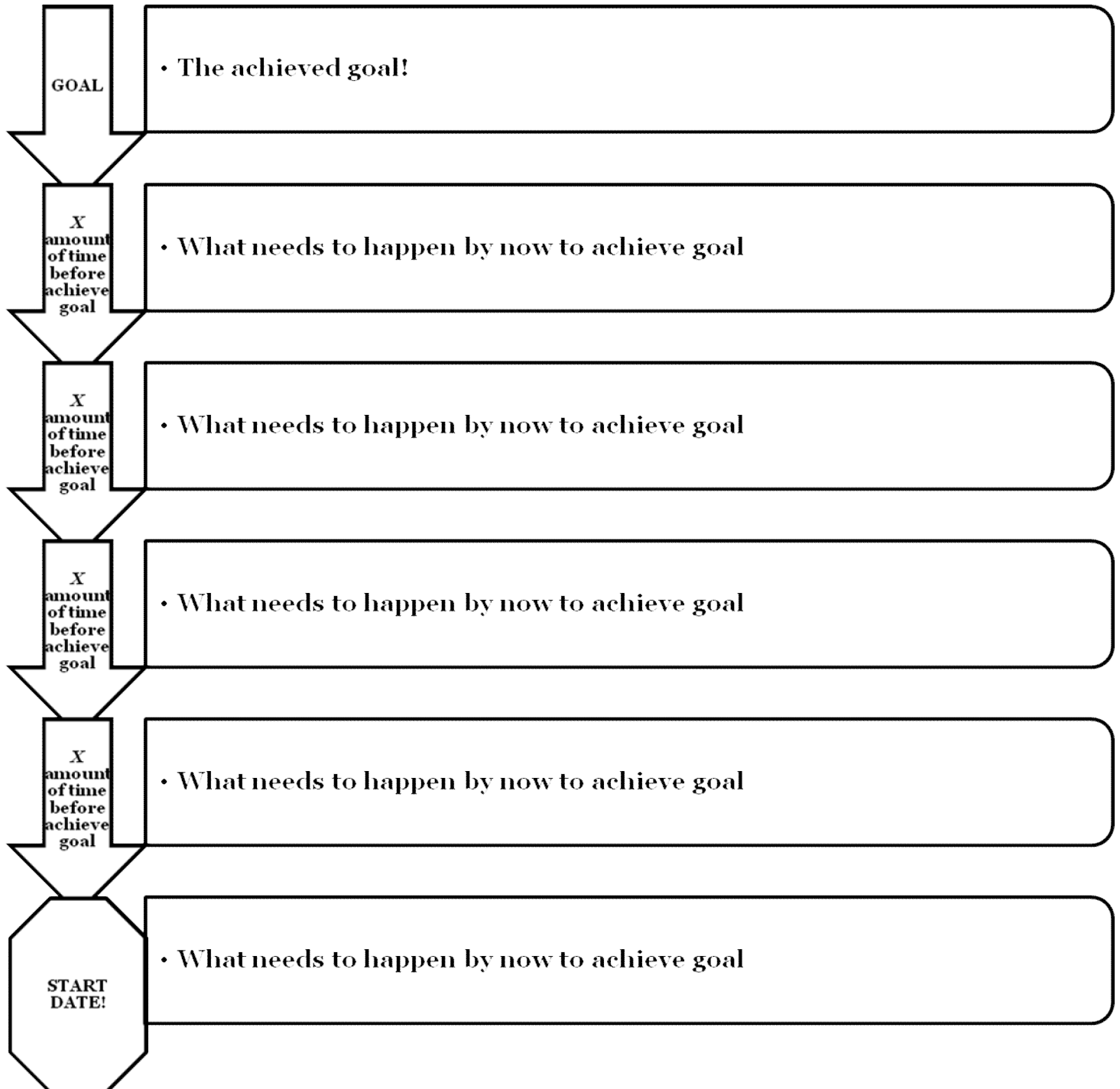
Timeline	Action Steps/Tactics	Resources	Key Players
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine by when you want to achieve the goal? <p>Ex. We want smoke-free public places in our neighborhood.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List what needs to happen to achieve the goal? <p>Ex. We need to have a sit down meeting with community leaders and educate them on our issue.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What resources are already available? • What resources are needed? <p>Ex. Members of our coalition who already work with these community leaders.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are the decision-makers that affect the achievement of the goal? <p>Ex. In order to have smoke-free places we need the support of these community leaders.</p>

COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

PART III
TIMELINE

After you decide by when you want to achieve your goal, create a timeline. This timeline will help you plan out what needs to happen and by when in order to reach your goal. We recommend you develop your timeline by starting at your end date (the date you goal will be achieved) and begin to list the short term goals needed prior to that date in order to obtain the goal.

Below is an example of how to create such a timeline.



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

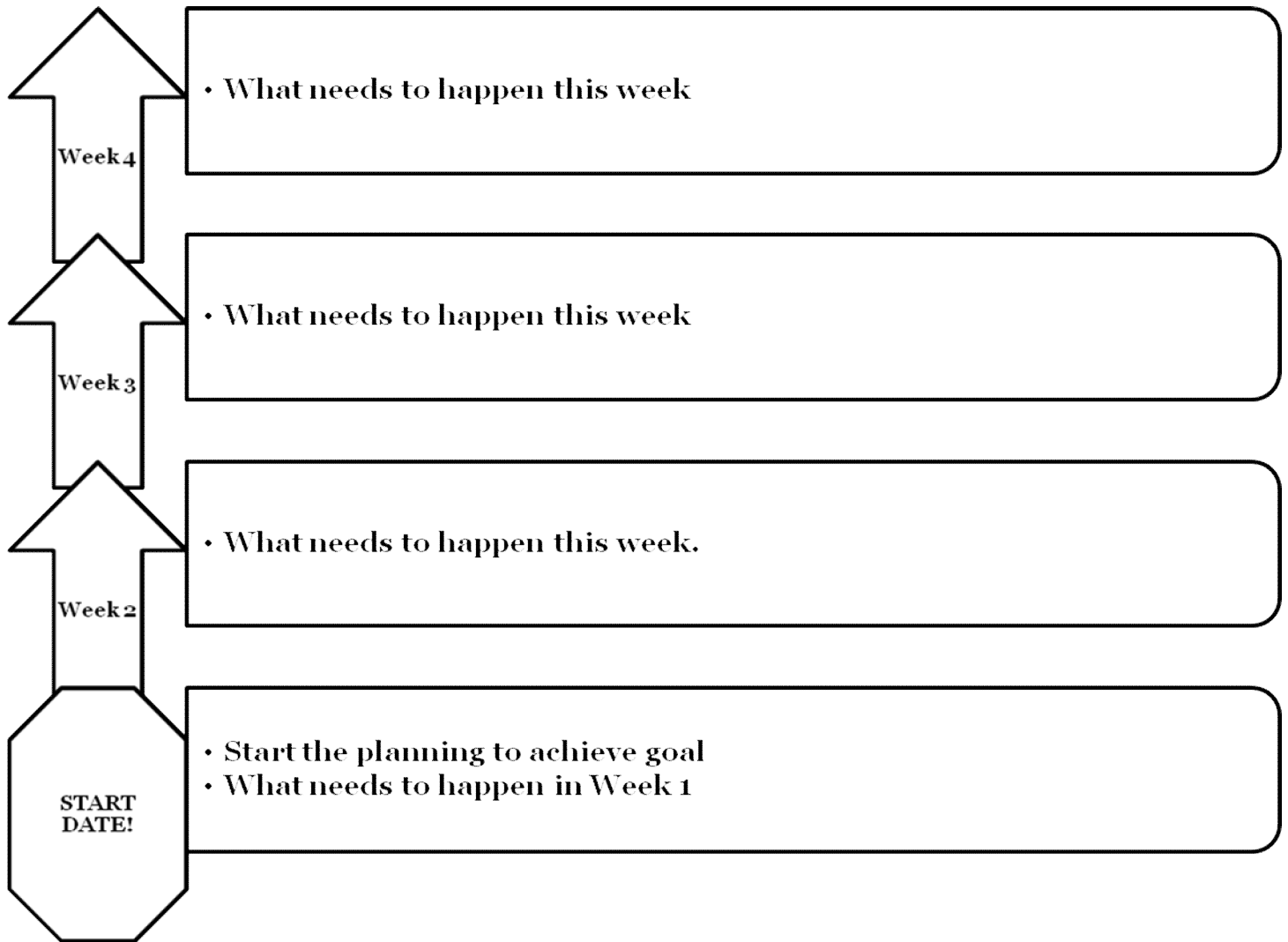
PART III
TIMELINE

Once you have reached the month in which your efforts will begin, start to plan in weekly increments. Your weekly action steps should bring you closer to your desired short term goal for the following month.

Repeat this step each month until you achieve your goal.

Below is an example of a monthly plan.

Monthly Planning



SECTION #4

KEY ALLIES

A key ally is a person who you want to build a relationship with in order to achieve your goal in regards to your issue. As you will notice key allies can also be key targets. It is important to shift the relationship from a potential target to a potential ally.

- Who Represents Me? - Know your Elected Officials
- Media Packet

WHO REPRESENTS ME?
KNOW YOUR ELECTED OFFICIALS

Now that you have created a plan for your desired goal it is important to know and recognize key allies in achieving your goal. Knowing the elected officials is essential because these are the people who represent you and your community. The purpose of elected officials is to take a stand for the community they represent.

The following website will help identify who represents you on a federal level and on a state level.

www.congress.org (Below are instructions for the website)

- On the left-hand side of the screen under “Find your Elected Officials”, type in your 5-digit zip code.
- To find your specific elected officials fill in your full address.
- The next page identifies your specific officials in your district. It also provides a list of key votes in your state.

<u>FEDERAL</u>	<u>STATE</u>
President: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • • Representatives: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	Governor: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Senate: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Representatives/Assembly: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> •

The above website only provides federal and state elected officials. As important as it is to know these people often communities have a more local set of officials.

Ex. Mayor, City Councilmembers, Community Boards, Block Associations, etc.

These are the officials communities will have a more direct relationship with because they represent you on a more local level.

The next page provides a space where you can keep a list of contacts for those local officials.

WHO REPRESENTS ME?
CONTACTS

LOCAL ELECTED OFFICIALS/SUPPORT

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
What do they do?/Committees	

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
What do they do?/Committees	

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
What do they do?/Committees	

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
What do they do?/Committees	

MEDIA

Today, media is used more than ever to convey a message. Whether its newspapers and television, or the new media phenomenon, the internet, people are using different types of media to get your message out to the masses.

PART 1

Identifying key media resources will facilitate more effective organizing.

MEDIA AS AN ALLY

<u>COMMUNITY</u> (local media outlets)	<u>STATE</u> (state-level media outlets)	<u>NATIONAL</u> (national media outlets)
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•
•	•	•

MEDIA

PART 2

Media is not only a key ally; it is also a key target. Different types of media can be used positively as well as negatively. Different media avenues are used to attract, influence, and increase exposure to tobacco; whether it is in advertisements on television or billboards displayed in the community.

Identify below the ways you have seen media used against your community.

MEDIA AS A “TARGET”

<u>TYPES OF MEDIA</u>	<u>WAYS IT'S USED AGAINST COMMUNITY</u>

SECTION #5

MOBILIZING THE PEOPLE

The past sections have been about creating a plan to address a certain issue and identifying key targets and allies that impact your community. With a plan of action you now need the power of the people. Community members are the most important part of any action plan. They are the ones who drive the organizing and the action. This section is about how to get your community involved in the issues that impact them directly.

- Community Mobilization
- Recruitment
- Working with Communities of Color

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

One of the most important aspects of organizing is community mobilization- how do you get your message out to the people? Often the community does not realize there is an issue so it is important to engage the community in a way that will work for them. A great way to get the community involved is to find or organize social gatherings where the whole community can be included and educated on the issue.

Here are some ways to get the message out there and engage the community⁹:

- **Community Block Party-** A block party is a great way to engage the community in a fun way. Find out where the next block party is going to be held and ask if you can hand out fliers about your organization and other educational information. This is a good way to get your message out there and connect with the community.
- **Community Concert/Art Show-** There are always concerts and art shows happening around the community. Use your local newspapers, fliers and advertisements in local establishments to find out where these events are taking place. Contact the organizers or the artists to ask permission to hand out educational information.
- **Film Screening-** Often movies will convey the message you are communicating. Ask the local movie theaters if you can pass out educational information after the movie showing.
- **Speaking Engagements-** Arrange for a staff member to go out and speak to the community. Reach out to churches, Parent Associations of schools, etc. Be aware of the language barriers you might face and plan accordingly, you might need a bilingual educator or a translator.

Also, if the resources are there, organizing these events is a great way to engage people in your issue and involve the whole community in the planning.

Social gatherings are the key to building and engaging the community. It is a great way to get to know the community and what issues are affecting members. Involving the organization in these events is also a tool to recruit people impacted by the same issues.

⁹ National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health

RECRUITMENT

Recruiting community members and building a base of power are important to a successful campaign. There is power in numbers and the more supporters you have for your issue, the louder your voices are, and the more likely you will be heard.

Here are some recruiting methods to help engage the community:

Door-to-door	Special Events/Presentations	Street/Community Outreach
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Door-to-door outreach is way to reach the community and discover issues of concern. When you go door knocking common concerns can be discovered. • There is also potential to engage a population that would otherwise stay silent. Door knocking shows people that their concerns will be heard. <p>EX. Door knocking in a housing complex and discovering all the tenants have a problem with the landlord.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When an event is held like a rally or you have a presentation at a school the best way to recruit is to start a sign-up sheet with contact information. • After the event you can contact people and invite them to meetings. • You can put people on the email list for other events or to receive the newsletter <p>EX. presentation at local church, large fundraising event</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another way to recruit is street outreach. Going to places where large groups convene and having conversations with the people around you. • There is already a group with the same issues so this is a way to listen to a larger audience and discuss issues of interest. <p>EX. Parent Association meetings, young people in an after-school program.</p>

TIPS FOR WORKING WITH COMMUNITIES OF COLOR

When working with communities of color it is important to remember there is no universal strategy that can be used in all situations. Here are a few organizing considerations when working with communities of color:¹⁰

1. **A Framework for Political and Economic Analysis:** As an organizer it is essential to have an analysis of the dynamics of oppression that affect communities of color. Having an understanding of the systems of oppression that impinge on people of color is key when organizing in those communities.
2. **Skills of Empowerment through Conscientization:** It is important for communities of color to develop a critical consciousness in order to recognize their own power. “The consciousness that leads to power involves an understanding of personal experience and political processes and how they affect each other”.¹¹ In other words, turning the personal into political and recognizing the relationship between the two.
3. **Similar Cultural and Racial Identity:** There is a level of effectiveness and understanding when the organizer resembles and represents the community they are serving-racially, culturally and sexual identity.
4. **Familiarity with traditions, values, and social networks:** Being familiar with the traditions and values of a community is essential to being successful, in particular, generational customs. Often problems stem from the relationship between the younger generation and the older generation. Respecting the traditions of the elders and acknowledging them as key resources in the community will be important for success
5. **Intimate Knowledge of the Language and Group/Subgroup Slang:** A knowledge and understanding of the communities’ language style is necessary when working with communities of color. Words and phrases may have a different meaning depending on what community you are working in.

This toolkit provides a foundation for starting to look at these systems of oppression. Its purpose is to provide tools in order to successfully engage those populations that have been historically under-represented or misrepresented. Our hope is that this toolkit will offer ways for individuals and organizations to work with communities in owning their power and in turn bring about social change.

¹⁰ Bankhead, T., & Erlich, J., “Diverse populations and community practice,” in The Handbook for Community Practice. Thousand Oaks, CA: 2005, p. 59-83.

¹¹ Ibid

SECTION #6

RESOURCES

This section provides a space where records of important contact information can be kept to refer to later. This section can include any contact information as well as resources on your issues, like articles, statistics, legislation history, etc.

- Community Resources/Contacts
- Issue Resources

HEALTH ORGANIZATIONS

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
Services:	

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
Services:	

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
Services:	

Name:	
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COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

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POTENTIAL TARGETS

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Contact Person:	
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Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
Services:	

HEALTH COALITIONS (local and state-wide)

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
Services:	

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
Services:	

Name:	
Contact Person:	
Contact email/#:	
Services:	

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MEDIA CONTACTS

Name:	
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Services:	

ISSUE RESOURCES

This area provides a space to include any important information about your issues. For example, any local statistics on Latinos and smoking, news article listings, legislation that has passed or currently been introduced around tobacco.

This is for you to refer back to when needed throughout the course of your work. ¡Buena Suerte!