

THE ART OF STRATEGIC THINKING



What is Strategy?

- A strategy is a broad plan which combines separate actions to reach the desired objectives.
- A strategy is the methods by which the campaign is conducted.
- A strategy is like a road map. We need to know where we are and where we want to end up. Our strategy tells us how to get there.
- A strategy suggests immediate action but also provides a long-range perspective that will carry us through weeks or even years of hard work, setbacks and short-term success.

What Makes a Good Strategy?

- A good strategy is planned well in advance. It anticipates what is likely to happen. It also considers what is not likely to happen but could happen.
- A good strategy is flexible. It leaves room for alternative plans should the improbable occur.
- A good strategy builds on the experiences of people. It uses their skills and experience to the best advantage.
- A good strategy involves people. People learn as much from the process as from the result of a campaign.
- A good strategy is realistic. It takes into consideration what the members are currently willing and able to do.
- A good strategy includes activities that build spirit, and will keep people interested and involved along the way.
- A good strategy has depth. It includes not only good ideas but steps to carry out those ideas.

Structural Changes

People come and go in organizations.

- They take on new responsibilities.
- They withdraw.
- Their priorities change.

A strategy should be able to survive independently of the individuals who first planned it.

The Strategy should be written down somewhere.

The strategy should also be carried out within a structure so that responsibilities are clearly delineated and actions and decisions are seen to be legitimate.

- How much structure? The more people who are involved in the implementation of the strategy, the more we need to communicate through a structure.
- Information should flow in a predictable, consistent and dependable fashion. At the same time, our interaction should not be structured so that members do not feel part of the decision-making process.

Experience shows that when people participate in creating strategies, they are more engaged in the continued process.

Strategies and Tactics

Strategies and tactics are not the same thing. The strategy is the overall plan. Tactics are the specific things we do to help us get there: demonstrations, picket lines, petitions, mass letter writing, etc. Tactics are important because they move the issue along and build the organization.

Time Lines

Having a time line worked out in advance helps us coordinate our activities and decisions, reminds us of deadlines, and helps us see if we are making the progress we need. Some things need to happen before other things can occur, like choosing a meeting place before advertising a meeting.

Research

Do your homework.

- Know the issues
- Know the players.

The basic rule of thumb is to “dig” for information from any source you can think of.

Research sometimes reveals a public official or business person’s connection, such as:

- being on a company's board of directors
- being a major shareholder in the company
- being related to an influential person in the company.

All information can be sent to:

AUPE Anti Privatization Standing Committee
10451 – 170 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T5P 4S7
Email – antiprivatization@aupe.ca

