

Handout | Four roles in successful social movements (Bill Moyer)

Ineffective

- Naive citizen:
 Does not realise the powerholders and institutions serve elite interests
- Super-patriot:
 Blind obedience to powerholders and country
- Promotes positive, widely-held values e.g democracy, freedom, justice, non-violence
- · Grounded in centre of society
- Protects against charges of 'extremism'
- Uses official channels to make change
- Uses variety of means: lobbying, legal action, elections
- Monitors success to assure enforcement, expand success and guard against backlash

Ineffective

- Promotes minor reforms
- Co-optation: identfies more with official powerholders than grass roots
- Limited by hiearchical/ patriarchal structure
- Does not advocate paradigm shifts

REBEL

CITIZEN

CHANGE AGENT

REFORMER

Ineffective

- Self-identifies as 'being on the fringe'
- 'Any means necessary', including violence and property destruction
- Acts from strong negative emotions such as anger, desperation and powerlessness
- Anti-organisation, opposed to any rules or structure
- Personal needs outweigh movement needs

- Protests: Says "NO!" to violation of positive values
- Uses NVDA and civil disobedience
- Puts problems in public spotlight
- Strategic
- Exciting, courageous, risky

- Uses people power: educates, convinces & involves majority of citizens
- Mass-based grassroots organising
- Employs strategy & tactics for waging long-term movements
- Promotes alternatives & paradigm shifts

Ineffective

- Utopian: promotes visions of perfectionism disconnected from current movement needs
- Dogmatic: advocates single approach while ignoring others
- Ignores personal needs of activists
- Disengages from movement to live isolated, alternative lifestyle

Adapted from Moyer, Bill. *The Practical Strategist*. San Francisco: Social Movement Empowerment Projecy, 1990.



Handout | Eight Stages of Social Movement Success Bill Moyer 1990

1. Critical Social Problem Exists

Powerholders support problem
"Official Policies" and "Operating Policies"
violate values
Public is unaware of the problem

Problem is not a public issue

2. Prove Failure of Official Institutions

Many new local opposition groups Use official channels Courts, government offices, commissions, hearings ... Prove they don't work Become experts, do research

3. Ripening Conditions

Recognition of problem & victims grow Public sees victims' faces
More active local groups
Need pre-existing institutions & networks
available to channel new movement
20%-30% of public oppose powerholder policies



Extend success (eg even stronger laws)
Oppose attempts at backlash
Promote paradigm shift
Focus on other sub-issues
Recognise/celebrate successes so far

Powerholders





4. Take-off

TRIGGER EVENT

Dramatic nonviolent actions / campaigns
Actions show public that conditions & policies violate widely-held values

Actions repeated around country
Problem put on social agenda
New Social Movement rapidly "takes-off"
40% of public oppose current policies/conditions

7. Success

Large majority opposes current policies and no longer fear alternative

Many powerholders split off and change positions End game process: Powerholders change policies (it's more costly to continue old policies than to change), are voted out of office or slow invisible attrition New laws and policies

Powerholders try to make minimal reforms, while movement demands social change

6. Majority Public Opinion

Majority oppose present conditions & policies

Show how the problem and policies affect all sectors of society Involve mainstream citizens and institutions in addressing the problem

Problem put on the political agenda

Promote alternatives

Counter each new powerholder strategy

Demonology: Powerholders promote public's fear of alternatives

Promote a paradigm shift, not only reforms

RETRIGGER EVENTS, re-enacting stage 4

5. Perception of Failure

See goals unachieved
See Powerholders unchanged
See numbers down at demonstrations
Despair, hopelessness, burnout, dropout,
seems movement ended
Emergence of Negative Rebel