

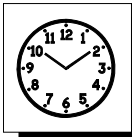
Module 2: Coalitions



Goals

Participants should come to understand:

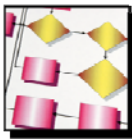
- That coalition building is actually harder than building a single organization.
- Organizational self-interest.
- Specific guidelines for success and how to analyze potential allies.



Time

Total: One Hour

- Presentation: 30 minutes
- Exercise: 20 minutes
- Debrief: 10 minutes



Overview

Coalition building is often one of the most frustrating parts of organizing. The problem is made more difficult because organizers expect coalition building to be easy and don't give it the special attention it deserves. The more coalition experience the group has, the more discussion there will be.



Materials Needed

- Easel paper (five sheets per small group)
- Masking tape
- Dark markers



Handouts

- Make copies of the handouts as detailed in the Program Preparation section in the front of this manual.



Equipment Needed

- Easel/"flipchart" (recommended minimum of two, five is preferable)
- *If you have elected to develop your own PowerPoint presentation to suit your specific training audience for this module, you will need:*
 - Computer with PowerPoint software
 - LCD Projector
 - All cords and cable needed to connect computer with LCD projector, and extension cord to connect computer and LCD projector with electrical outlet
- AV stand or tab (if you will be using PowerPoint in this module)



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Introduction



Welcome To Module 2: Coalitions — Building And Joining

By the end of this module, you should understand the following concepts:

- Building a coalition is actually harder than building a single organization.
- Organizational self-interest.
- Specific guidelines for success and how to analyze potential allies.

Coalitions Defined



Let's start with a definition of coalitions. When we use the word coalition we mean:

An organization of organizations that is actively working on an issue campaign.

A coalition is *not*:

- *An organization of individuals* who are different from each other.
- *An organization of individuals* who happen to belong to other organizations as well.

Many groups that call themselves coalitions aren't coalitions. In Grassroots Organizing when we use the word coalition, we mean an *organization of organizations*.

In real life, most coalitions are a mixture of individuals, representatives from organizations and people who happen to belong to organizations but who weren't sent to the coalition by their group. The main difficulty with coalitions of this type is that the people in them have different needs.

Example:

Every organization knows that it must get some public recognition for its work if it is to recruit members, develop a base, and keep its funding. Individuals who are not faced with the problem of maintaining an organization often don't understand this and consider the organizational

Coalitions Defined

representatives to be “power hungry” or “domineering.” In a coalition where everyone is a formal organizational representative, they might be more competitive, but they at least understand each other's motives.

There are three basic types of relations between organizations, all of which are often referred to as coalitions. It helps to sort them out.

- **Formal Coalitions** – Coalitions exist when groups enter into a formal agreement to work together toward a specific, long-term objective. Some coalitions are permanent or are expected to last for many years.
- **Issue Campaigns** – Groups that get together for an ongoing effort; for example, to pass specific legislation. It is often more useful to say "campaign" rather than "coalition," when the expectation is that a campaign will go out of existence when the issue is over and not live on to compete with its own members. The key understanding in a legislative campaign is to agree on not only what will go into the bill, but what is the least that the coalition will accept.
- **Informal Coalitions** – Groups work together from time to time, often on a specific event, but without formal agreement or rules.

Building a coalition is one of the hardest parts of organizing. The hard part isn't getting groups to join, but getting the coalition to work and keeping the groups in it. Often we expect a coalition to function the way a group of friends does, but this is seldom the case. Organizations in a coalition have institutional needs and self-interests that are different from the needs of individual people.

- To make coalitions work, we must identify these institutional needs and work to meet them.
 - The job is sometimes complicated because the people who represent groups in a coalition may not be experienced enough to articulate their institutional needs. They just know that something isn't going well, and they feel that their organization is getting weaker instead of stronger.
-

Advantages And Disadvantages Of Coalitions



Ask

What has been your experience working in coalitions?

Possible Responses:

- We got sidetracked from our own program.
- Others didn't do their share.
- Too many compromises required.
- Problems with who got credit.
- We felt ripped off.
- The activities were dull.
- Too many meetings.



It sounds like you have had some very interesting experiences. And not all positive. Let's talk about them. What have been some of the disadvantages of working in coalitions?

Advantages And Disadvantages Of Coalitions



Instructor Note

Make a mental note of who responds. If a lot of people raise hands there will be much discussion. You need to watch the time here and limit discussion if necessary. If there are a lot of negative comments and bad experiences, start with the disadvantages.

- Below are examples of negative experiences, if no one says them:
- We got sidetracked from our own program.
- Others didn't do their share.
- Too many compromises required.
- Problems with who got credit.
- We felt ripped off.
- The activities were dull.
- Too many meetings.

Again, get the story right. You will refer back to these comments when you give the coalition guidelines. For example, "Now Michelle might not have had the problem she mentioned if her local PTA had chosen a unifying issue..." Get five or six comments. Don't spend a lot of time on this.



Ask

So, if working as a coalition is so hard, why do it?

What are some of the advantages of working in coalition?

Advantages And Disadvantages Of Coalitions



Post Responses On Flipchart

Write down some of the advantages. Again, don't spend a lot of time just get some advantages written down.

- Below are examples of advantages if no one says them:
 - Able to win something that couldn't be won alone.
 - Increases power.
 - Increases resources (staff, money, members).
 - Broadens the scope of our work.
 - Able to get better/more media coverage.
-

Guidelines For Coalition Building



As you go through these guidelines, relate them to the problems you just listed from members' experiences. List them on Easel Paper or Power Point.



So, your PTA council knows what the problem is and what the issue is. It also knows that there are other organizations that are concerned. In order to increase your power and resources, and to win something you couldn't win alone, you decide to build a coalition. Here are tried and true guidelines for successful coalition building.

1. Choose Unifying Issues.

Avoid shopping lists. When coalitions form to work on a specific issue, it is a relatively easy structure to organize, because those who aren't interested just don't join.

- When an organization is a permanent ongoing coalition that moves from issue to issue, then the choice of issue needs to be made more carefully. This is the key. The issue needs to be one that is important to all groups in the coalition. It should not be the main issue of any one group. This avoids having some groups feel that they are being co-opted to work on someone else's issue.
- Avoid coalitions based on groups agreeing to exchange help, "We'll help you fight the utility rate increase if you help us win funding for an after school program." Organizations can rarely deliver their members to work on some other group's program, and no group feels that it gets enough out of the coalition. Coalitions in which groups put their issues on the table and try to work on all of them are called shopping list coalitions.

2. Coalitions Are Rarely The Road To Diversity.

Don't create coalitions in the hope of bringing greater diversity to your efforts. Diversity will only be achieved if the coalition partners are really interested in similar issues and need each other in order to win.

Guidelines For Coalition Building

3. Avoid Contorting Your Program To Suit Some Other Group.

Likewise, don't expect them to change their program just so that everyone can be friends.

4. Understand And Respect Each Group's Self-Interest.

Every organization needs to:

- Gain new members.
- Raise money.
- Be seen as powerful by administrators or politicians.
- Get publicity.
- Build relationships with other groups.
- Provide an exciting activity for its members.
- Build internal morale.
- Have a public role for its leaders.

These are good things to do. Experienced leaders can use a coalition to achieve them. Inexperienced leaders neglect them and their groups dwindle. The coalition should help its members accomplish these things.

5. Respect The Group's Internal Process.

Every group has its own way of making decisions. Don't rush them. If you don't like the answer from the group's chair, don't go around the chair to someone else in the leadership.

- Don't get involved in another group's factionalism or worse, cause it.
 - Don't use the work of the coalition to draw the members of another group into your own group.
-

6. Agree To Disagree.

Not everyone has to agree on everything. The coalition can only function within the areas of agreement.

Guidelines For Coalition Building

7. Play To The Center With Tactics.

All groups should be comfortable with the tactics. There are sometimes advantages to encouraging the more confrontational groups to go off and do their thing independently. However, it should be part of the overall strategy.

8. Recognize That Contributions Vary.

Some groups are better at conducting research; others can turn out a large number of people, or may have good community contacts.

A coalition should have a budget, even if everything is contributed. Put down the cash value of contributed items. This allows the member groups to better understand the importance of their respective contributions.

9. Structure Decision-Making Carefully.

One group, one vote. This method only works if the groups are of equal strength. The small groups should not be able to out-vote the large just because there are more of small groups. Individuals should not be able to out-vote organizations. It is often better to recognize that in some coalitions, everyone is not equal. The program won't work if the strongest groups don't support it, and it is acceptable for marginal organizations and individuals to stay out of a particular activity in which they don't feel comfortable participating.

When faced with these problems, many groups turn to consensus decision-making, in which everyone has to agree on everything. This is fine if you can do it, but recognize that it excludes people who can't spend long hours at meetings. The decision-making process is often smoother when the coalition is composed strictly of organizations that can make more or less the same level of contribution to the work. The decision-making process should be clear from the outset. So should the ground rules.

There is no such thing as the "democratic right" to join a coalition. You can allow in, and keep out, whichever groups you wish, including sectarians and disrupters. Don't be guilt tripped.

Guidelines For Coalition Building

10. Urge Stable And Senior Representation At Meetings.

The same people should represent a group at each coalition meeting, and they should have the power to commit the group to, or approve, the coalition program. Otherwise, the coalition can't move without long delays.

11. Distribute Credit Fairly.

The coalition itself needs to get the larger share of publicity or credit. Otherwise the whole isn't greater than the sum of the parts.

Try to distribute the remainder of the credit, media attention or spokesperson positions among the individual members fairly, but with an eye to the contribution that each makes.

12. If There Is Staff, It Should Be Neutral.

Problems develop when the staff is contributed by one member organization of a coalition. If there is staff, they should be people with no other loyalties, whose main job is to build the coalition as a whole. For coalitions that do not have paid staff, this also applies to leadership and facilitation roles.



Instructor Note

Ask for discussion as time allows.

Guidelines For Joining Coalitions



Suppose another organization approaches you, as the leader of your PTA unit, to join a coalition.

There are several things that your group must first assess before agreeing to join. Here are some guidelines for joining and participating in coalitions.



Display On A Flipchart Or PowerPoint.

Guidelines for joining coalitions:

1. Know what you want to get out of it.
2. Know who is behind the coalition.
3. Maintain an independent program.
4. Evaluate your role carefully.



1. Know What You Want To Get Out Of It.

Of course you want to win on the issue, but you are also building the PTA. How will participation in the coalition help you do that?

Will it:

- Expose you to more potential members?
 - Allow you to win more significant victories?
 - Share the burden of organizing large activities?
 - Get you publicity?
-

Guidelines For Joining Coalitions

Example

A student association at a large state university was fighting cuts to the state education budget. Another statewide organization was fighting tax cuts for corporations that were forcing cuts to the state public programs budget. Naturally, the groups were interested in working together when they found out about each other's campaigns. Before joining a coalition, however, the student group set the following conditions:

- Opposition to education budget cuts had to be a major demand of the new coalition.
- Other students on the campus who wanted to get involved in the coalition would be told to join through the association.
- The student association's leaders would be frequently used as spokespeople for the whole coalition.
- A major coalition turnout event, a speakout on the state budget, would be held in an auditorium on campus.

Did this arrangement strengthen the student association? Of course it did, but it also strengthened the whole coalition. The speakout drew over 900 people, and half of them came as a direct result of the student group's efforts.

2. Know Who Is Behind The Coalition.

- Who is funding it?
 - What are you expected to contribute?
-

3. Maintain An Independent Program.

A group that is only strong enough to do one thing at a time shouldn't join a coalition. If you have no program outside the coalition, you won't develop your own identity or membership. It may not seem to matter, but where the coalition goes; your group will go with it. Use the three-fourths rule: three-quarters of your energy and resources should go into your own organization.

Guidelines For Joining Coalitions

4. Evaluate Your Role Carefully.

Is it really necessary for the leaders of your group to play a large role in the leadership and decision-making of the coalition, or is it enough to get your members to show up for occasional coalition activities?

The coalition can absorb all of your time and energy just as easily as your own organization can. If three-quarters of your effort doesn't go into building your own group, your members will be drawn into the activities of the coalition or be recruited away by other groups.



Instructor Note

Discussion as time allows.

Coalition Exercise



Instructor Note

Directions for a Coalition Exercise are on the following pages.

As stated in the *Getting Started>About This Manual>Three Types Of Campaign Exercises* section of this manual (page viii), three case studies are available. Each illustrates advocacy at the local, state, or federal level. You should have selected the level you believe to be most appropriate and relevant to your group, and made copies of the handouts for that level's case study to use in the following exercise.

Reminder, the design of this course is for the level addressed to remain consistent throughout. That is, if you work the local-level case study in this module, you should work the local-level case studies in all the other modules.

Coalition Exercise — Local

Local

Forming The St. Finbar Education Coalition



Participants practice evaluating possible coalition partners to work together on a local issue.



Total: 30 minutes

- Exercise: 20 minutes
- Debrief: 10 minutes

Coalition Instructions

Local



Hand out the assignment sheet and ask people to read it. Remind them to also refer to their background sheet if needed.

Ask if there are any questions about the assignment.

Create groups of four, if there is a small group (24 or under). If there is large group (more than 24), split it in half, with each trainer taking half the group, and then number off one through four within each group. Appoint a leader for each of the four groups. Give each group easel paper and markers. Debrief the two groups separately.

Say this: "We will now break up into four committees of PTA. Each committee is to evaluate a potential partner for the coalition. Please be clear on this, you are to do this from the perspective of PTA members. **You are not members of the group you are assigned to evaluate.** You have 20 minutes to answer the questions at the end of the exercise and write the answers on easel paper. Choose someone to report back to the whole group."

Remind participants of the exact time to return.

A frequent problem is that the groups think they are to answer the questions from the point of view of the organization being asked to join the coalition. This is not so. They should look at it from the viewpoint of PTA.

Coalition Instructions

Local

Make the rounds of groups to be sure that they are all on track and not role playing the group they are supposed to discuss.

Tell the group it has 20 minutes to work on the exercise. It is essential that everything go on schedule as the debriefing time is only 10 minutes for each of the four groups. Don't send people to breakout rooms in another building. Give a 10- and a five-minute time warning.

At the end of the time, bring everyone back to the main training room. Have them put their answers on the walls. Ask them to put the name of the group they were discussing at the top of the first sheet of chart paper.

Coalition Debrief

Local



How To Debrief

1. Bring all the groups together and have them put their charts on the wall. Ask them to write the name of the group under discussion at the top of each chart.
2. If the group has not picked a spokesperson, the person who wrote the chart should present it.
3. After each chart is presented, ask the whole group if there are any comments or questions.
4. If any of the following points are left out, add them.

St. Finbar's Small Business And Manufacturers' Association.

<p>1. Why would the organization want to join the Education Coalition?</p>	<p>Once the economy starts to pick up they will be hiring. They need an educated workforce.</p> <p>Increasing use of technology means hiring people with technical experience. This may mean younger workers with less experience.</p> <p>Hiring locally is less expensive but means the local educational system has prepare students to work in a new economy.</p>
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Coalition Debrief

Local

	Global companies trying to attract workers from afar need to be able to ensure that they are located in a “world class” city with great schools.
2. What might prevent them from joining?	They may not see this as “their issue.” Don’t want to spend a lot of time in meetings.
3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?	Political clout. Some may be campaign donors. Possible contributions to the coalition... not only financial but other “stuff” that can be used by the coalition or raffled off at fundraising events.
4. What liabilities do they bring?	May force your coalition to moderate its position on an issue, because they do not want to be seen as “too radical.” May not want to jeopardize some of their political relationships.
5. Who from the PTA unit should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?	PTA President or executive director should contact the head of the association.

St. Finbar Interfaith Committee

1. Why would the organization want to join the Education Coalition?	<p>They are losing church members. Participation might attract new members.</p> <p>The issue may affect families in their congregations.</p> <p>The African-American churches may be interested because their students in their congregations may be disproportionately affected.</p>
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Coalition Debrief

Local

<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>The issue might be divisive within some congregations that have more members with children not in magnet schools.</p> <p>Churches with a large number of senior citizens might get pressure to support the cuts as they will keep property taxes down.</p>
<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Access to congregations for letter writing and turnout.</p> <p>Access to meeting facilities.</p> <p>Respected spokespersons.</p> <p>The resources are actually at the church level. The Alliance can open doors but has little of its own money to give.</p>
<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>They may be more conservative about tactics than some groups in the campaign.</p> <p>People tend to defer to the opinions of clergy even when the clergy may be wrong.</p> <p>Media tend to focus on clergy more than other community leaders.</p>
<p>5. Who from the PTA unit should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>This is a less hierarchal organization. If there is a member of the clergy who is close to someone in the unit and also a member of the Alliance, that person could raise it. They might arrange for the unit president to make a presentation at an Alliance meeting.</p>

Coalition Debrief

Local

St. Finbar's State Senior Citizen Federation

<p>1. Why would the organization want to join Education Coalition?</p>	<p>Some of their members may have grandchildren who are affected.</p> <p>It helps them present a more inter-generational face.</p> <p>Contact with community groups may lead to new organizing opportunities. They are trying to attract "younger seniors."</p>
<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>They may not consider this their issue.</p> <p>Too many other pressing issues on their agenda.</p> <p>Afraid it will increase property taxes.</p> <p>May not operate on the same time schedules – don't like evening and weekend meetings.</p>
<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Some resources. Could dedicate some volunteer effort to the campaign.</p> <p>They are active in electoral politics and may have pull with elected officials including school board members.</p> <p>Members for turnout, letter writing, email, petitions, phone banks, etc.</p> <p>Experienced leadership.</p>
<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>May want to do things their way.</p>

Coalition Debrief

Local

<p>5. Who in the PTA unit should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>There are often long-standing relationships and rivalries. You do not want to get caught up in them.</p> <p>If the group is staffed, your leader should approach their executive director. Do not go directly to the president or another officer as you will be perceived as “going around” the executive director.</p> <p>If it is not staffed, go to their president.</p>
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St. Finbar NAACP Branch

<p>1. Why would the organization want to join the Education Coalition?</p>	<p>They may have members whose children are affected.</p> <p>They want to extend their alliances for future campaigns on education issues.</p>
<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>Lack of staff time and resources.</p> <p>Other priorities.</p> <p>They might not consider this a civil rights issue.</p> <p>It may be divisive of their membership if they have parents on both sides of the issue.</p>
<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Experience working on issue campaigns.</p> <p>Money, meeting space, experienced leaders, etc.</p> <p>Experience at getting media attention. The media knows them.</p> <p>Strong organizing skills. Ability to do large turnout.</p>
<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>If their leadership is well known they might divert press attention from the coalition to themselves (not intentionally).</p>

Coalition Debrief

Local

<p>5. Who in the PTA unit should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>Your president should approach their president. Do not send your newest volunteer who happens to be African-American. That is an insult.</p>
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Close with some comments about how PTA members should always do this type of analysis when forming a coalition. It helps avoid surprises later on, and it prepares them to anticipate and overcome a group's objections to joining with them. Also, it is helpful to do this when considering joining a coalition in order to better understand the motivation of their would-be partners.

Coalition Exercise — State

State

Fremont PTAs Organize A Coalition



Participants practice evaluating possible coalition partners to work together on a statewide issue.



Total: 30 minutes

- Exercise: 20 minutes
- Debrief: 10 minutes

Coalition Instructions

State



Hand out the assignment sheet and ask people to read it. Remind them to also refer to their background sheet if needed.

Ask if there are any questions about the assignment.

Create groups of four, if there is a small group (24 or under). If there is large group (more than 24) split it in half, with each trainer taking half the group, and then number off one through four within each group. Appoint a leader for each of the four groups. Give each group easel paper and markers. Debrief the two groups separately.

Say this: "We will now break up into four committees of the PTA. Each committee is to evaluate a potential partner for the coalition. Please be clear on this, you are to do this from the perspective of PTA members. **You are not members of the group you are assigned to evaluate.** You have 30 minutes to answer the questions at the end of the exercise and write the answers on easel paper. Choose someone to report back to the whole group."

Remind participants of the exact time to return.

A frequent problem is that the groups think they are to answer the questions from the point of view of the organization being asked to join the coalition. This is not so. They should look at it from the viewpoint of PTA.

Coalition Instructions

State

Make the rounds of groups to be sure that they are all on track and not role playing the group they are supposed to discuss.

Tell the group it has 20 minutes to work on the exercise. It is essential that everything go on schedule as the debriefing time is only 10 minutes for each of the four groups. Don't send people to breakout rooms in another building. Give a 10- and a five-minute time warning.

At the end of the time, bring everyone back to the main training room. Have them put their answers on the walls. Ask them to put the name of the group they were discussing at the top of the first sheet of chart paper.

Coalition Debrief

State



How To Debrief

1. Bring all the groups together and have them put their charts on the wall. Ask them to write the name of the group under discussion at the top of each chart.
2. If the group has not picked a spokesperson, the person who wrote the chart should present it.
3. After each chart is presented, ask the whole group if there are any comments or questions.
4. If any of the following points are left out, add them.

Fremont Retail Merchants Association

<p>1. Why would the organization want to join the Education Coalition?</p>	<p>The recession is hurting business.</p> <p>Budget cuts could mean higher unemployment.</p> <p>Parents may have to pay more out of pocket for school programs and activities for their children.</p> <p>Bus transportation could be cut.</p> <p>All of the above could lead to less</p>
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Coalition Debrief

State

	<p>expendable income to be spent in local shops.</p> <p>Budget cuts could lead to curriculum cuts. Hiring locally is less expensive, but that means the local educational system has to be preparing students to work in a new economy.</p>
2. What might prevent them from joining?	<p>They may not see this as “their issue.” Don’t want to spend a lot of time in meetings. They hear lots of customers talking about the high cost of government and the need for deep cuts!</p>
3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?	<p>Political clout. Some may be campaign donors. Possible contributions to the coalition... not only financial but other “stuff” that can be used by the coalition or raffled off at fundraising events.</p>
4. What liabilities do they bring?	<p>May not want to be seen publicly with some members of the coalition that they consider “too radical.” May not want to jeopardize some of their political or customer relationships.</p>
5. Who from PTA should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?	<p>PTA president or executive director should contact the head of the association. If a PTA member knows someone who is part of the association who is viewed as credible, go through that person. The association is not a very hierarchical organization.</p>

Coalition Debrief

State

Fremont Interfaith Committee

<p>1. Why would the Interfaith Committee want to join the Education Coalition?</p>	<p>Church membership may be on the decline. Participation might attract new members.</p> <p>The issue may affect families in their congregations. If their members have to spend more on their children's education, they will have less for the collection basket.</p> <p>The African-American and ethnic churches may be interested because their congregations may be disproportionately affected.</p>
<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>The issue might be divisive within some congregations.</p> <p>Churches with a large number of senior citizens might get pressure to support the cuts as they will keep property taxes down.</p> <p>They may have a school or day care facility associated with the church, and think the public schools already get too much.</p>
<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Access to congregations for letter writing and turnout.</p> <p>Access to meeting facilities.</p> <p>Respected spokespersons.</p> <p>The resources are actually at the church level. The Interfaith Committee can open doors but has little of its own money to give.</p>
<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>They may be more conservative about tactics than some groups in the campaign.</p> <p>People tend to defer to the opinions of clergy even when the clergy may be wrong.</p> <p>Media tend to focus on clergy more than other community leaders.</p>

Coalition Debrief

State

<p>5. Who from PTA should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>This is not a very hierarchical organization. If there is a member of the clergy who is close to someone in the PTA and also a member of the Interfaith Committee, that person could raise it. They might arrange for a PTA leader to make a presentation at an Interfaith Committee meeting.</p>
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Fremont Senior Citizen Federation

<p>1. Why would the organization want to join Education Coalition?</p>	<p>Some of their members may have grandchildren who will be affected.</p> <p>Because of the economy, some are currently subsidizing their children and grandchildren and are stretched to the limit.</p> <p>It helps them present a more inter-generational face.</p> <p>Contact with community groups may lead to new organizing opportunities. They are trying to attract "younger seniors."</p> <p>They will be facing threatened cuts to Social Security and Medicare and are anxious to make alliances with other organizations.</p>
<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>They may not consider this their issue.</p> <p>Too many other pressing issues on their agenda.</p> <p>Afraid it will increase their property taxes.</p> <p>May not operate on the same time schedules – don't like evening and weekend meetings.</p>

Coalition Debrief

State

<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Could dedicate some volunteer effort to the campaign. Testimony about how the economy is affecting them and their families and how further budget cuts will hurt more than help.</p> <p>They are active in electoral politics and may have pull with elected officials, including Sen. Rosten.</p> <p>Members for turnout, letter writing, email, petitions, phone banks, etc.</p> <p>Experienced leadership.</p> <p>May have ties to local unions and the State Labor Federation.</p>
<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>May want to do things their way. The issue could be divisive within their membership and that might play out in your coalition. Some members may be pushing them to take a stand in favor of the cuts.</p> <p>May fear that some cuts will go through anyway and if the PTA prevents them from being education cuts it could amount to cuts in senior programs.</p>
<p>5. Who from PTA should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>There are often long-standing relationships and rivalries. You do not want to get caught up in them.</p> <p>If the group is staffed, your unit president should approach their executive director. Do not go directly to the president or another officer as you will be perceived as “going around” the executive director.</p> <p>If it is not staffed, go to their president.</p>

Coalition Debrief

State

Fremont NAACP Branch

<p>1. Why would the NAACP want to join the Education Coalition?</p>	<p>They may view this as a civil rights issue leading to a unequal access to education as those in poorer school districts are likely to be disproportionately affected.</p> <p>They may have members whose children are affected.</p> <p>They want to extend their alliances for future campaigns on education issues.</p> <p>They are currently focused on reactivating their branches and may see this as a way to involve their members in an important issue in the community.</p> <p>More community involvement may result in more members for their branch.</p>
<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>Lack of staff time and resources.</p> <p>Other priorities.</p> <p>They might not consider this a civil rights issue.</p> <p>It may be divisive of their membership if they have parents on both sides of the issue.</p> <p>Saving education funding may result in cuts to other programs they care about.</p>
<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Experience working on issue campaigns.</p> <p>Money, meeting space, experienced leaders, etc.</p> <p>Experience at getting media attention. The media knows them.</p> <p>Strong organizing skills. Ability to do large turnout.</p>

Coalition Debrief

State

4. What liabilities do they bring?	If their leadership is well known, they might divert press attention from the coalition to themselves (not intentionally).
5. Who from PTA should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?	Your president should approach their president. Do not send your newest volunteer who happens to be African-American. That is an insult.

Close with some comments about how PTA members should always do this type of analysis when forming a coalition. It helps avoid surprises later on, and it prepares them to anticipate and overcome a group's objections to joining with them. It is also helpful to do this when considering joining a coalition in order to better understand the motivation of their would-be partners.

Coalition Exercise — Federal

Federal

Reauthorization Of The Childhood Nutrition Act



Participants practice evaluating possible coalition partners to work together on a federal issue.



Total: 30 minutes

- Exercise: 20 minutes
- Debrief: 10 minutes

Coalition Instructions

Federal



Hand out the assignment sheet and ask people to read it. Remind them to also refer to their background sheet if needed.

Ask if there are any questions about the assignment.

Create groups of four, if there is a small group (24 or under). If there is large group (more than 24) split it in half, with each trainer taking half the group, and then number off one through four within each group. Appoint a leader for each of the four groups. Give each group easel paper and markers. Debrief the two groups separately.

Say this: "We will now break up into four committees of the PTA. Each committee is to evaluate a potential partner for the coalition. Please be clear on this, you are to do this from the perspective of PTA members. You are not members of the group you are assigned to evaluate. You have 20 minutes to answer the questions at the end of the exercise and write the answers on easel paper. Choose someone to report back to the whole group."

Remind participants of the exact time to return.

A frequent problem is that the groups think they are to answer the questions from the point of view of the organization being asked to join the coalition. This is not so. They should look at it from the viewpoint of PTA.

Coalition Instructions

Federal

Make the rounds of groups to be sure that they are all on track and not role playing the group they are supposed to discuss.

Tell the group it has 20 minutes to work on the exercise. It is essential that everything go on schedule as the debriefing time is only 10 minutes for each of the four groups. Don't send people to breakout rooms in another building. Give a 10- and a five-minute time warning.

At the end of the time, bring everyone back to the main training room. Have them put their answers on the walls. Ask them to put the name of the group they were discussing at the top of the first sheet of chart paper.

Coalition Debrief

Federal



How To Debrief

1. Bring all the groups together and have them put their charts on the wall. Ask them to write the name of the group under discussion at the top of each chart.
2. If the group has not picked a spokesperson, the person who wrote the chart should present it.
3. After each chart is presented, ask the whole group if there are any comments or questions.
4. If any of the following points are left out, add them.

The County Medical Association

1. Why would the Association want to join the Nutrition Coalition?	<p>Care about health issues. Want children to get a good start in life. Think good nutrition is a part of that.</p> <p>Need allies in the community for other "fights" around health care.</p>
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Coalition Debrief

Federal

<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>They may not see this as “their issue.” Don’t want to spend a lot of time in meetings. They think “Big Government” is interfering in people’s lives.</p>
<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Political clout. Some doctors may be campaign donors. Possible contributions to the coalition. Expertise on the substance of the issue.</p> <p>Have examples of good and bad health outcomes based on nutrition.</p>
<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>May not want to jeopardize some of their political or patient relationships.</p> <p>May not work well in coalition. Used to being in charge.</p>
<p>5. Who from PTA should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>PTA president or executive director should contact the head of the association. If you know someone who is part of the association, who is viewed as credible go through that person. The association is not a very hierarchical organization.</p>

Coalition Debrief

Federal

The Interfaith Committee

<p>1. Why would the Interfaith Committee want to join the Nutrition Coalition?</p>	<p>Church membership is on the decline. Participation might attract new members.</p> <p>The issue may affect families in their congregations.</p> <p>The African-American and ethnic churches may be interested because their congregations may be disproportionately affected. Diabetes and heart disease occur in much higher rates in Latino and African-American populations.</p> <p>Many congregations now have “parish nurses” responsible for seeing that their parishioners make wise health choices and get access to appropriate medical care.</p>
<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>The issue might be divisive within some congregations.</p> <p>Some congregations may have schools that could be affected by the legislation. If they are raising income through vending machines in their church run facilities, they may not want to push for the amendment.</p>
<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Access to congregations for letter writing and turnout.</p> <p>Access to meeting facilities.</p> <p>Respected spokespersons.</p> <p>The resources are actually at the church level. The Interfaith Committee can open doors but has little of its own money to give.</p>

Coalition Debrief

Federal

<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>They may be more conservative about tactics than some groups in the campaign.</p> <p>They may have anti-government members who want the government out of their lives.</p> <p>People tend to defer to the opinions of clergy even when the clergy may be wrong.</p> <p>Media tend to focus on clergy more than other community leaders.</p>
<p>5. Who from PTA should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>This is a less hierarchical organization. If there is a member of the clergy who is close to someone in the unit and also a member of the Interfaith Committee, that person could raise it. They might arrange for a PTA leader to make a presentation at an Interfaith Committee meeting.</p>

Local 123 Of The State Teachers Association

<p>1. Why would the association want to join the Nutrition Coalition?</p>	<p>Teachers see firsthand the effects of poor nutrition in children.</p> <p>Teachers have to deal with children in the classroom who are hyped up on sugar or "starving," because the empty calories did not fill them enough to get through the class or the day.</p> <p>Tooth aches and growling bellies do not facilitate learning.</p> <p>Would like to form stronger relationships with PTA that might help them on other issues involving education.</p>
<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>They may not consider this their issue.</p> <p>Too many other pressing issues on their agenda.</p>

Coalition Debrief

Federal

<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Expertise on the issue. Money for lobbying and advocacy. Organizing staff that might be helpful on this campaign.</p> <p>Knowledge about the congressman and how he stands on this and other related issues.</p>
<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>May want to control the campaign and access to the congressman.</p> <p>May be willing to give this one (the amendment) up in exchange for something else it wants in the Act.</p>
<p>5. Who from PTA should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>There are sometimes internal rivalries. You do not want to get caught up in them.</p> <p>If the group is staffed, your president should approach their executive director. Do not go directly to the president or another officer as you will be perceived as “going around” the executive director. The union is a hierarchical organization.</p>

The County NAACP Branch

<p>1. Why would the NAACP want to join the Nutrition Coalition?</p>	<p>They may have members whose children are affected.</p> <p>They may want to increase their alliances for future campaigns on education issues.</p>
<p>2. What might prevent them from joining?</p>	<p>Lack of staff time and resources.</p> <p>Other priorities.</p>

Coalition Debrief

Federal

<p>3. What resources and assets might they bring to the campaign?</p>	<p>Experience working on issue campaigns.</p> <p>Money, meeting space, experienced leaders, etc.</p> <p>Experience at getting media attention. The media knows them.</p> <p>Strong organizing skills. Ability to do large turnout.</p>
<p>4. What liabilities do they bring?</p>	<p>If their leadership is well known they might divert press attention from the coalition to themselves (not intentionally).</p> <p>They may get corporate donations from some of the companies that will be prohibited from selling their products in school.</p>
<p>5. Who from PTA should approach the organization and to whom should they speak?</p>	<p>Your President should approach their president. Do not send your newest volunteer who happens to be African-American. That is an insult.</p>

Close with some comments about how PTA members should always do this type of analysis when forming a coalition. It helps avoid surprises later on, and it prepares them to anticipate and overcome a group's objections to joining with them. It is also helpful to do this when considering joining a coalition in order to better understand the motivation of their would-be partners.



Transition To Module 3: Recruitment And Organization Building
