

# SECTION PLANNING FOR ACTION THREE

## PLANNING FOR ACTION

### EDUCATING

Framing Your Message

### RESEARCHING

Knowing and Understanding Local Government Structure

### ORGANIZING

Creating an Action Plan  
Creating a Project Timeline

### MOBILIZING

### EVALUATING

Section Three Planner Evaluation

## OVERVIEW

In this section you will:

- frame the message of your living wage campaign
- Use the action plan format to develop your action plan
- Develop a timeline for your campaign.

## FRAMING YOUR MESSAGE

In Section One we emphasized how important it is for the members of your group to be in agreement about economic justice principles, and in Section Two we gave you the information you need to be able to address the opposition with one voice. Just as important to maintaining this environment of harmony and unity of purpose is the development of a campaign message that sticks in the minds and rolls off the tongues of

### HELP, CHARLOTTE, NC

*Helping Empower Local People (HELP), a local coalition of churches and neighborhood associations, spearheaded Charlotte's "Living Wage" campaign, as part of a national movement to raise the wages of low-income employees in the public sector. HELP sought to accomplish their goal in Charlotte by convincing City Council to adopt a Living Wage ordinance. The ultimate goal was that other segments of the marketplace, especially the Charlotte business community, would follow the city's lead. The issue was first brought before City Council in 1999; it never made it to the council agenda. In September of 2000, HELP once more formally requested that the council consider passing a Living Wage ordinance. The measure failed but the campaign continues.*

your group members. Your message should be clear, purposefully crafted, grounded in fact, and easy to transmit to allies and supporters, and politicians and business people alike.

Framing is most often used to describe interaction with issues. However, facts, images and stories connected to issues are also framed or given meaning in such a way that people can relate them to their own lives. A frame draws attention to the content inside, for example a framed piece of art or a photograph gets more attention than an unframed one. Framing allows you to draw attention to your message.

Frames do the job of bringing together or calling to mind the "cultural social and political themes" that exist in the realm of people's experience. They act on what people believe, assume and "see" in the world. For example, a cartoon that shows a politician with an outstretched hand and a rich person putting money into it automatically draws out the idea of money buying power.

The one who gets to frame the social and political messages for the media gets to control the debate around those issues. They not only get to tell other folks what the issues are and what they mean, they also get to put the signs on the good guys and the bad guys.

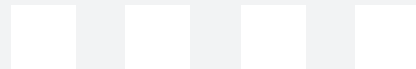
In the following exercise, you will analyze some examples of how the same messages can be framed by opposing sides. You will practice framing using excerpts from two articles about Living Wage. Then you will choose some facts that are specific to your community and relevant to your campaign to frame your campaign message.

*Your message should be clear, purposefully crafted, grounded in fact, and easy to transmit to allies and supporters, and politicians and business people alike.*



## LEARNING TASK THREE- I

# Framing the Message



**HANDOUT #3-1**  
Framing Analyzing  
Extremes

**OBJECTIVE:** To become familiar with how issues and messages are framed by different perspectives; to practice analyzing information to detect the framing context; to begin shaping your campaign message.

**TIME:** 2 hours

**MATERIALS:** Flip chart, markers, Handouts: "Framing: Analyzing Extremes"; "Leaders say Living Wage won't Help Businesses..."; "Santa Monica: Fighting for Living Wage"



Framing often involves stereotypes by using an extreme case and presenting it as if it were typical. Distribute the first handout to the large group. Read Practice #1 and Practice #2, which illustrate how an issue can be framed by two extremes. Read Practice #3 and use the discussion questions to analyze the passage.

**HANDOUT #3-2**

Leaders say Living Wage won't help...

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

1. What is the key information in this passage?
2. Who are the "bad guys" in the passage?
3. What is the key message in this passage? Pick out the words, phrases, images and stereotypes that are a part of the message.
4. Who do you think the author is talking to? What makes you think this?

**HANDOUT #3-3**

Santa Monica:  
Fighting for a Living Wage

Divide into small groups of four or five. Choose a reporter for your group. Each small group will read one of the two passages pertaining to Living Wage Handouts 3-2 and 3-3. Use the discussion questions to analyze the passage.

**HANDOUT #3-4**

The Growing Economic Divide

Reconvene the large group and share the results of the small group discussions. Answer the following questions.

1. Both of these stories have "true" information in them. So why do you think they are so different?
2. When you read an article, what do you need to think about besides the truthfulness of the information?

**HANDOUT #3-5**

Federal Poverty Line

Following the discussion, go back into your small groups. Distribute the "Current Situation" news article from Section Two and one of the handouts containing a passage from Section One pages 25-27 to each small group (each group will be working with a different passage). Spend a few minutes reading the information contained in the handouts. Discuss the following questions. Record the important points on a flip chart page:

**HANDOUT #3-6**

Minimum Wage

1. Can you identify the publisher's position on the issue by reading the article? If so, what is it?
2. How can the Living Wage passage be incorporated into the article to more effectively frame your message?

**HANDOUT #3-7**

Living Income Standard

Report back to the large group. Use the brainstorming tool to come up with ways to get out the message you have framed. Turn over the brainstorming list and the information from the small group discussions to the Publicity Committee, who will use the reframed information in future press releases and promotional materials.

At this point you have built up a core group of workers and supporters needed to follow through with the strategies, activities and tasks that will lead to the accomplishment of the goals you have set for your campaign. You are ready to map out an action plan. Action planning will involve the members of your working group systematically discussing, defining and recording the goals of your campaign, the resources needed, and the kinds of activities necessary to achieve the goals. Plan to spend an entire meeting working on your action plan.

*The time you invest in planning your campaign will pay off in the long run, but be prepared to seize the opportunities that are not included in your plan.*



## LEARNING TASK THREE-2

# Making An Action Plan

**OBJECTIVE:** To discuss, define, and record: the major goals of your campaign; the strategies, activities, and tasks that will lead to the completion of campaign goals; and the needed resources.

**TIME:** 3-4 hours

**MATERIALS:** Flip chart, markers, Campaign Action Plan worksheet

### ACTION PLAN STEPS:

1. Set Goals. Clearly say what you want to accomplish.
2. Select strategies for goal completion.
3. List Tasks to be accomplished for each strategy. Figure out the tasks that need to be done and in what order. Be sure to think about all aspects of the project: publicity, holding regular meetings, making phone calls, ordering supplies, doing manual tasks, raising funds, etc.
4. Assign people to each task.
5. Figure out a schedule for completing each task (see Timeline).
6. Decide how they will do it. What kind of help do they need?
7. Check off when the task is done.
8. Review the plan regularly to see if it still makes sense.

**HANDOUT #3-8**

Campaign Action  
Plan Worksheet

**FLIP CHART**

Task List



Essentially, the timeline is a picture of your action plan, laid out so that you can see everything that you are going to do and when you are going to it. Your timeline will help you allow sufficient time to accomplish the goals of your campaign by setting deadlines for each task that must be performed. It will also help you be realistic about how much you can accomplish in a given time frame, as it relates to the availability of resources, manpower, and seasonal limitations. Working group members, particularly committee chairpersons should use the timeline to develop individual campaign work plans.



## LEARNING TASK THREE-3

# Creating a Project Timeline

**OBJECTIVE:** To develop a schedule/calendar for the coordination and completion of the activities and tasks listed in your campaign action plan.

**TIME:** 2 hours

**MATERIALS:** 12-month calendar, flip chart, markers, extra large 12-month wall planning calendar (illustrated below)

**STEP 1:** Clearly state the goals of your project in the context of the timeline. Develop a statement of each short-term goal and post each on a separate flip chart sheet for the whole group to see.

**EXAMPLE:** Goal: Develop and distribute press packets to state and local media

**STEP 2:** On the flip chart sheet record the tasks that will need to be completed for each goal.

**EXAMPLE:** Write text for brochure, contact printer, lay out brochure, select sites for feature, take photographs, contact sponsors, hold car wash to raise funds...

**STEP 3:** Use the planning calendar or create a calendar on flip chart pages, leaving plenty of room to write tasks into each month. Write the months down the left hand side of the flip chart page, leaving about three inches between each month. Draw a horizontal line between the months to clearly indicate where one month ends and the

**FLIP CHART**

Project Goals

**HANDOUT #3-9**

Timeline  
Worksheet

other begins. The page should look something like this:

CALENDAR/TIMELINE	
January	July
February	August
March	September
April	October
May	November
June	December

STEP 4: Beginning at the end of the timeline, fill in tasks from your action plan. Refer back to your goals and write some brief form of that into the month in which you want to have it done. Be sure to include regular

meetings dates in your timeline. Leave extra time for tasks to be accomplished around holidays.

STEP 5: Have your group members write their names next to their task assignments. This might be done for a specified time period, and repeated at intervals.

STEP 6: Refer to your timeline at your regular meetings. Check off tasks that have been done and note any new tasks that have arisen. The timeline should be flexible, with adjustments being made at each meeting.

## KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING LOCAL GOVERNMENT STRUCTURE

In preparation for effectively engaging in dialogue and negotiations with local government officials and their personnel, have working group members read the information on local government structure. The tasks, which follow the reading, will guide you through the process of diagramming the specifics of your local government and identifying the office holders and staff people who work with them.

*No matter who holds the highest office in the local government of your municipality or county, make sure you know where the real power lies.*

**HANDOUT #3-10**  
NC Local  
Government

## COUNTY GOVERNMENT

The first image of county government that comes to mind might be the courthouse. Although the county's central offices are usually located in the courthouse, county government does not stop at the courthouse steps. Counties operate facilities ranging



from health care clinics to jails. All counties provide two kinds of services: mandated services or standard services that are required by state law; and optional services based on the needs of the community and the requests of local citizens. Most county services are available to all county residents, whether they live inside or outside a city or town.

In each county, the sheriff, register of deeds, board of county commissioners and clerk of court are elected officials. At one time the clerk of court was an office of county government, however, the General Assembly consolidated all county courts into a statewide court system, and made the clerk an employee of the state courts, even though they are still elected by the county's voters. Some judicial districts include only a single county, but regardless of the size of the district, judges and district attorneys are state officials, not county officials, and are elected by judicial districts. Members of local school boards are also elected, but sometimes school districts include only a part of a county. Therefore, the county commissioners, the sheriff, and the register of deeds are the only county officials elected by voters in each of the 100 counties.

## COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

In North Carolina, county commissioners are elected to serve 2-4 year terms on boards that may have two to seven members. The board of county commissioners performs the following duties:

- Sets the local property tax rate;
- Adopts the county budget;
- Passes ordinances, resolutions, and orders to establish county policies; and
- Shares authority for setting county policy with state officials, the sheriff, the register of deeds, and independent county boards.

Various state agencies as well as the General Assembly are often directly involved in setting policy for county governments through mandates that require counties to provide certain services or follow specific procedures. As elected officials, the sheriff and the register of deeds have authority independent of the board of county commissioners and may set policies for their departments. A clerk is appointed by each board of county commissioners to keep official records of the board's meetings and decisions, publish notices, conduct research, perform other duties, including providing information to citizens about their county government.

## INDEPENDENT BOARDS

State law provides for separate independent boards with responsibility for alcoholic beverage control, education, elections, health, mental health, and social services policy. Independent boards appoint directors for their agencies and make local policies



regarding agency operations. Smaller counties may join together in a single health district or mental health area, with boards made up of representatives from each of the participating counties. Larger counties typically have their own health and mental health boards. In counties where alcoholic beverages may be sold, an Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Board controls ABC stores in the county. The independent boards that exist in all 100 North Carolina counties are social services board, board of elections, and the board of education. County boards hire a director for the county department of social services and advise the director on program needs and budget requests. Because the federal government funds many social service programs, federal and state regulations set much of the policy for social services delivered by counties.

None of the independent boards has the authority to levy taxes. County funds to support these services must be raised by the board of county commissioners. All of the independent boards must also have their budgets approved by the board of county commissioners. In addition, with the power to control expenditures and the responsibility for financing operations, the board of county commissioners coordinates county policy for the services with independent boards. And because it raises and allocates county funds, the board of county commissioners has the potential to influence all government programs that depend on county money, even those that operate as separate administrative units.

## THE COUNTY MANAGER

Every North Carolina board of county commissioners hires a manager who, serves at the pleasure of the board (meaning that the board can fire the manager whenever a majority of the board decides they want a new manager). The county manager's duties are:

- To direct the general operations of county government;
- To hire and fire personnel in departments directly under the authority of the board of commissioners (but not those responsible to an independently elected official nor those who by state law are under the state personnel system or an independent board);
- To prepare the county budget;
- To manage county expenditures, and
- To report to the board of commissioners on county government operations and on public problems facing the county.

## MUNICIPAL GOVERNMENT



Cities, towns, and (in a few cases) villages are all terms that refer to a municipality created by the state and authorized to make decisions for a community and to carry out the approved policies and programs. While these terms carry no special legal meaning in North Carolina, in general, "towns" are often thought of as smaller than "cities," but that is not always true. The Town of Cary, for example, is now the seventh largest municipality in North Carolina. It had more than 94,000 residents in 2000. The city of North Topsail Beach had only 843 residents that same year.) The powers and responsibilities for each municipality are established by North Carolina law.

## GOVERNING BOARDS

In each municipality, people of the jurisdiction elect a governing board, which represents and has the authority to act on their behalf. In many North Carolina cities and towns municipal governing boards are called councils; however, some are called "board of commissioners" or "board of aldermen." In addition to making official decisions for the city, municipal governing board perform the following duties:

- Establish local tax rate;
- Adopt budgets that dictate how the city will spend its money;
- Set policies for municipal services;
- Pass ordinances to regulate behavior; and
- Enter into agreements on behalf of the municipality.

In most cities and towns voters also elect a mayor; however, in some places the governing board elects the mayor. The mayor presides over the governing board and is usually chief spokesperson for the municipality.

North Carolina municipalities generally hire a professional manager or administrator to serve as chief executive. This is called the council-manager plan. The city (or town) manager has the following responsibilities:

- Carrying out the council's policies;
- Running city government;
- Hiring and firing municipal employees
- Coordinating the work of municipal employees;
- Advising the council on policy issues;
- Proposing a municipal budget; and
- Reporting to the council on municipal activities.

Serving at the pleasure of the council, the manager must work closely with the council



in developing city policies. He or she must also work closely with city employees to ensure that city policies are carried out.

Each municipality also has a clerk, who is appointed in some cities and towns by the manager, and in others, by the council. No matter who appoints the clerk, he or she reports directly to the governing board. The duties of the clerk are:

- Keeps official records of the board's meetings and decisions;
- Publishes notices;
- Keeps municipal records; and
- Conducts research for the governing board.

**HANDOUT #3-11**  
Duties and  
Responsibilities of  
Local Government  
Officials

The clerk carries out a wide variety of other duties, as assigned by the board, and is usually a key source of information for citizens about their municipal government.

In small municipalities, where there is no manager, the town's business is administrated under the direction of the governing board. The board manages the town's affairs together, as a committee, or assigns different board members day-to-day oversight responsibilities for different departments. In such situations, the clerk often "wears many hats," and is in effect a key administrator in the town.

City personnel are organized into departments, each specializing in a particular service, such as police work, fire protection, water supply, or recreation. Department heads, typically selected by the city manager, work with the city manager in planning and coordinating the activities of employees in their departments. In addition to organizing and supervising the employees in their departments, department heads may work in a personnel department to recruit applicants for city jobs, screen job candidates, and hire new employees.

## ELECTION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

County commissioners are elected in even-numbered years. Because county elections are **partisan**, whereby candidates run under political party labels, each party has the opportunity to choose their candidates for public office in the primary election held several months before the general election. Along with state officials and members of Congress, county officials run in the November general election, which always falls on the Tuesday after the first Monday in November.

City council members (or aldermen) are elected in odd-numbered years. Mayors are



elected at the same time in those cities and towns where the voters elect the mayor. In most cities and towns elections are **nonpartisan**. While these municipalities may have local voters' organizations that support candidates, the Democratic and Republican parties are not permitted to run candidates in most North Carolina municipalities. A few cities and towns, however, hold primary elections.

There are more than 700 elected officials that serve the state's county governments and almost 3,000 elected officials in North Carolina municipalities.

*No matter who holds the highest office in the local government of your municipality or county, make sure you know where the real power lies.*



## LEARNING TASK THREE-4

# Who's Running the County?

**OBJECTIVE:** To develop a list of county and/or municipal officials and personnel in your local government.

**TIME:** 30 minutes

**MATERIALS:** Work sheet handout, flip chart, markers

The handout lists the elected officials positions in county and municipal government. Use a brainstorming session to fill in the names of the persons holding these offices in your county and/or municipality. Be sure to name other key personnel with whom you will interact in your Living Wage campaign. Assign a contact person from your working group to each official. Their first assignment will be to find out where the official stands on Living Wage.

Have a recorder create a flip chart list of elected officials to be posted in your meeting place.

**HANDOUT #3-12**  
Duties and Responsibilities of Local Government Officials

**HANDOUT #3-13**  
Duties and Responsibilities of Local Government Officials

**FLIP CHART**  
Brainstorm Local Officials

# SECTION THREE

## PLANNER EVALUATION

ACTIVITY	TARGET DATE	PERSON/S RESPONSIBLE	DATE COMPLETED	HOW IT IS DOCUMENTED
*Appointed, or invited persons to serve as facilitator and recorder.	*		*	
* Had an agenda and kept records of decisions made at each meeting.	*		*	
*Used relationship, team and community building activities to start meetings.	*		*	
*Encouraged attendance at meetings through phone calls or other contacts.	*		*	
Selected facts specific to your community and relevant to your campaign and used them to frame your campaign message				
Developed a campaign action plan				
Set goals for the campaign				
Completed a task list for each of your campaign goals				
Assigned people to work on each task				
Determined time and resources needed to complete each task				
Completed a campaign action plan work sheet				
Completed a campaign timeline				
Became familiar with local government structure				
Created a "List of Elected Officials"				
* Should happen at every meeting.				

