

SESSION 10:

Measuring Success/Building on Experience

(Approx. 4 hours in total)

Session Objectives

- To consider the benefit of routinely evaluating your campaign's plan, tactics, and progress
- To discuss strategies for holding ourselves and our candidates accountable to promises made during the campaign
- To explore how to learn from one's past experience and to build a repertoire of best practices as a leader

10.1

Exercise: How will we know when we are successful?

(Approx. 60 min.)

Ask a volunteer to read the following narrative.



Usha Patel entered the room and sat at the head of the long conference table. The twenty coalition members and campaign staff applauded her loudly.

“Thank you for joining me today,” Usha began, “to launch our national campaign for girls’ literacy. As you all know too well, over 50% of the female population in this country is illiterate. The purpose of this campaign is to raise awareness of the problem, to raise money to help fund solutions, and to raise our country’s expectations of what we can achieve. If our society does not truly believe we can do better, there is nothing that this coalition can do or say that will change current conditions. For that reason, I need to know that everyone here believes, really believes, that we can eradicate illiteracy among girls.”

Usha paused for effect and cast her eyes around the table. A woman sitting to Usha's right raised her hand. "Yes, Gita," said Usha smiling.

"Shall we set a deadline? Say, in ten years? In ten years we will eradicate girls' illiteracy throughout the county?" asked Gita.

"Sure, we can say that. But I don't want to lock us in to too narrow a dream. What if illiteracy is not eradicated in ten years? Have we failed? We will know success when we see it."

"But don't we need some concrete goals?" pressed Gita. "Ways that we can take stock of what we are doing, how we are campaigning, our advertisements, our investments in schools, how we are spending our money, our time, all of our resources?"

"Of course, Gita, but that can wait. Our job right now is to speak to our donors, to raise money, and to raise awareness of what we are trying to achieve. You just have to have faith. We are all so committed, and as long as we all believe that we can do it, we will eradicate the illiteracy of girls. I know it!"



Questions for Group Discussion

- Did you agree with Usha that they "will know success when [they] see it?" Why or why not?
- What was Gita trying to do? Was her advice good?
- Were the benchmarks she suggested going to be helpful to her organization? Why or why not?
- What other benchmarks might you add to their list?

Divide the group into teams of five or six. Ask each team to develop a ten-year calendar for Usha and Gita's coalition. On a long piece of paper, have each team draft a ten-year timeline with from five to fifteen benchmarks for a literacy campaign. It is up to each team to determine what resources they have, and to develop their goals and benchmarks accordingly.

After 20 minutes, reconvene the teams. Each team should present their ten-year timeline and explain their goals and benchmarks for success.

10.2

Exercise: Setting Our Benchmarks

(Approx. 45 min.)

Write on the board the **Session 4 Goal**.

Benchmarks are accomplishments that help you see that you are reaching your goal. For instance, if your goal is to get your local government or city board to adopt the articles of the United Nations Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) into its governing charter, benchmarks of success might include 1) holding a meeting with the local council to educate them about CEDAW, 2) presenting panel discussions at area schools and universities on the topic, 3) getting local media to discuss the issue, 4) measuring an increase in public awareness about what CEDAW is and what it might mean for local women, and 5) circulating a petition that successfully collects over 4,000 signatures in support of CEDAW.

Ask the group to brainstorm indicators of success in pressing for the Session 4 Goal. Try to identify from five to ten. What objectives does the group want to achieve?

Divide the group into teams of three or four participants. Assign each team a couple of objectives from the board. Ask each team to brainstorm two to four benchmarks for success for each of the stated objectives.

Reconvene the group and ask each team to report back their benchmarks. Ask a volunteer to record the benchmarks on the board.



Questions for Group Discussion

- Do the benchmarks on the board empower you? Make you feel like you can start to see the path you should be taking to achieve your goals? Why or why not?
- Which benchmarks do you like the best? Why? Which do you think will be most helpful in assessing your progress towards your goals?
- Which benchmarks do you like the least? Why?
- Going back to the objectives, do you think it would be possible to prioritize the objectives on the board—putting some first and others last? Or are all the objectives equally important?
- Which objectives can be achieved more quickly than others? Which objectives depend on others being achieved first?

10.3

Exercise: Watering the seeds you plant

(Approx. 45 min.)

Ask a volunteer to read the following narrative.



Nasreen opened her newspaper and hunted, as she did every morning, for news of her candidate for the national Parliament. Astrid Hejinian had been a popular candidate among women and the poor because of her promises to improve the schools and to make education more accessible to girls and the very poor. Since her success in the election, Ms. Hejinian seemed to have disappeared from public view. It was eight months since she was voted into office and there was no word, at least in the papers, that she was doing anything for education, or was politically active on any issues at all. “She could be working hard behind the scenes,” thought Nasreen. “Hopefully...”



Questions for Group Discussion

- If there has been no news of Astrid Hejinian’s activities in Parliament, is it likely that she has not been doing anything to press for the issues she promised during the campaign? What are other possible explanations for there being so little news about Astrid Hejinian?
- Have you ever supported a candidate for political office, and once they were elected wondered if they were really working towards the goals they said they would?
- What can you do to follow up with a political official to learn if she is trying to do what she said she would do?
- Do you still need to support your candidates once they are in office? Why or why not?
- What can you do to ensure that candidates fulfill their campaign promises once they are in office? Do you think that candidates should be supported in fulfilling their campaign promises?

Break the group into teams of three or four. Ask each team to imagine that they had supported the candidacy of Astrid Hejinian. Their task is to draft a manifesto of five to ten strategies, activities, or promises they will commit to that will demonstrate their support for MP Hejinian. (If there is a real candidate that team members support, they can alternatively draft their manifesto on behalf of that person.)

Ask the teams to consider whether they need more information about the actions of Parliament and more information about Astrid Hejinian. How could they get

this? What can they do if she is having trouble finding supporters in Parliament for her initiatives? What can they do if she is afraid to speak out? What can they do if Astrid Hejinian's efforts are being undermined by other members of Parliament?

Reconvene the teams when they have completed their manifestos. Ask a volunteer from each team to read her manifesto.



Questions for Group Discussion

- What were the themes or strategies that more than one team mentioned?
- Have you personally taken any of the steps mentioned in the manifestos in support of a political official?
- What steps could you see yourself taking in the future to support women in political office?

10.4

Exercise: What did we learn from the women in this workshop?

(Approx. 45 min.)

Put the names of each participant and yourself on a small piece of paper, folded in half, into a bowl. Have everyone, including yourself, pick a name from the bowl. (If someone pulls her own name, have her trade with another person.)

Make sure everyone has a sheet of paper and pen or pencil. Ask everyone to write on top of the sheet the name of the person on her slip and to record the two or three most important things learned from that person—about leadership, political organizing, being a powerful woman...or something entirely different. Take five or ten minutes to do this.

Reconvene the group, and have everyone identify the woman she picked and what she learned. This should be an enjoyable process, so let the group take its time and share stories about each other.

Workshop Evaluation Tool: What did we learn from the Workshop Sessions?

(Approx. 45 min.)

It is useful to take notes during this discussion, as the comments of participants may help guide your facilitation of other workshops.

Divide the groups into teams of three or four. Ask each group to discuss the following four questions and record their answers on a sheet of paper (this should take about 20 minutes):

1. What did you achieve during the workshop that you hoped to achieve?
2. What objectives did you have that you feel were not met, or might have been met if more time had been devoted to them?
3. What was the most inspirational or enjoyable exercise, discussion, or experience during the past ten sessions? Why?
4. What recommendations or changes would you suggest for facilitators of these workshops?

Reconvene the group and have each team share their report.

Questions for Group Discussion

What specific lessons did you learn or ideas did you gain from the workshop sessions that you will try to incorporate into your own work? How will you change your own behavior, expectations, or choices in the future as a result of the workshop sessions?

What is the group's next step towards addressing its **Session 4 Goal**?