**RESULTS New Advocate Basics**

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**RESULTS Basic: Powerful Speaking**

Knowing how to speak powerfully about our issues is essential for effective action. RESULTS advocates use the EPIC format to create powerful messages. EPIC can be used to speak with members of Congress, publish media, or engage others in your community to take action with RESULTS.

**EPIC Messages**

EPIC is an acronym to help you remember the basics of a powerful message.

**Engage Your Audience:** Capture your listener’s attention with a dramatic fact, short statement, or personal story.

*We have an affordable housing crisis – that is now acute in the current pandemic – which is hitting families in our community hard.*

**Problem:** Present causes of the problem you introduced in the first section. How widespread or serious is the problem? How has the problem impacted you or your community?

*According to Harvard researchers, since 1960 renters’ median earnings have gone up 5 percent while cost of rent went up 61 percent.*

**Inform about Solutions**: Inform the listener about a solution to the problem you presented. You might cite a recent study or tell a first-person account of how the solution has impacted you or others you know.

*Right now, millions of American families are struggling to pay rent and put food on the table as layoffs skyrocket. Congress has moved legislation to help address the immediate crisis – including resources for people experiencing homelessness, but given the scale we need a****national moratorium on evictions****and****$100 billion in emergency rental assistance****(building on the*[*bipartisan Eviction Crisis Act*](https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/?vvsrc=%2fBills%2fUSA%2f20192020r%2fS.+3030)*, S. 3030).*

**Call to Action:** A Call to Action answers the question “so what do you want *me* to do about it?” Make the action something specific you can follow up on.  Frame it as a yes or no question.

*Will you tell leadership to include an eviction moratorium and billions in emergency rental assistance for families facing evictions in upcoming economic recovery legislation?*

**Personalize Your Message**

Research shows that personalized messages are much more effective than form messages (messages that are pre-written for you to use). While RESULTS provides a [sample (form) EPIC message](https://results.org/volunteers/laser-talks/) for advocates to use, it’s up to you to personalize it and make it truly powerful.

Consider including:

* Why do you care about the issue?
* How is the issue impacting you currently (or how has it impacted you in the past?)
* How does the issue show up in your local community or state?
* What values are motivating you to support solving this issue?

**Delivering Your Laser Talk**

Speaking naturally and from the heart is an important advocacy skill. Practicing your message will allow you to feel comfortable delivering it. You may not always deliver your laser talk exactly as you learned it. But if you learn it well, you will be able to use all sections of the talk as you need them.

Tips for Delivering Your EPIC Laser Talk:

1. Practice your laser talk out loud several times. Practice by yourself and aloud with others.
2. Memorize as many of the details as possible.
3. Deliver your talk without stopping, even if you make a few stumbles along the way.
4. Critique yourself and ask for feedback. Pick two things that you liked about the talk and one thing you would like to improve upon.

**RESULTS Basic: Communicate with Congress**

Members of Congress need to hear from their constituents. They depend on you to educate them about what is happening in their district or state and what legislation is most important to their constituents.

RESULTS advocates maintain connection with Congressional offices through regular emails, letters, and phone calls. This communication will allow you to build a relationship with your Congressional office.

**Who should advocates contact?**

1. Staff who work in the local District Office
2. Aides who work in the Washington D.C. office

\*Your local group will know the best aides to contact on RESULTS issues. You can also look up staff information [here](https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/legislator-lookup/?vvsrc=%2fAddress). After finding your specific member of Congress, click on the “Staff” tab for a list of aides. You can also call the Congressional office and ask or reach out to RESULTS staff for help.

**District Offices**

*Role of the Office*

* Members of Congress have local district offices set up across their Congressional District (or for Senators, across the state). Staff connect with the local community, represent the Congressperson at home while they are in D.C., provide case management services to constituents, and, most important, listen to YOU.
* District Offices are a powerful link between you and your member of Congress.

*Communicating with the District Office*

* **Hand-Written Letters**: If you have a hand-written letter, it’s best to send it to the local office. Mail is screened in D.C. for anthrax and can be held up for weeks. The District Office can ensure written messages are seen by the right people quickly.
* **Emails & Phone Calls**: You can email and call the district office with specific policy issues you want the Congressperson to support. They will pass it along to the appropriate D.C. based aides.

**Washington D.C. Office**

*Role of the Office*

* Congressional offices in D.C. are staffed with aides who have specific expertise on policy issues. Aides follow specific issues and legislation and advise your member of Congress on those issues. Ultimately, it is up to your member of Congress to decide whether or not to support a piece of legislation, but key aides can influence their decision.

*Communicating with the D.C. Office*

* **Emails & Phone Calls**: You can directly email the aides who work on RESULTS issues (Housing Aide, Tax Aide, Ag Aide, Foreign Policy Aide) so they can take your information into consideration when advising your member of Congress. You can also call the D.C. office to follow up on unanswered emails or have time-sensitive conversations about decisions that are happening imminently.
* **Hand-Written Letters**: It is not advised to send hand-written letters to the D.C. office due to security delays. If you are in Washington D.C. for a lobby meeting, you should bring hand-written letters from community members to deliver in your meeting.

**Tips for Writing & Calling**

For emails, letters, or phone calls, use the [EPIC format](https://results.org/resources/empower-yourself-activist-milestone-2/) to create a concise and powerful message.

LETTERS & EMAILS: In addition to the EPIC message, be sure to start your message with an introduction of who you are and include your contact information at the end of your message, including your zip code, so the office can reply. RESULTS also has email actions you can take in the [Action Center](https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/).

PHONE CALLS: When calling, ask for the aide who works on your issue. If that person is unavailable, ask to speak with someone else. Messaging for a phone call or voicemail should be even shorter and more concise than a typical letter so there is space for conversation. Be sure to include your name and zip code in voice messages so they can confirm you are a constituent.

Sample Letter to Congress

*Dear Senator/Representative\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_:*

*I am \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, a constituent and RESULTS volunteer. I’m reaching out to ask that Congress(wo)man \_\_\_\_\_\_ support critical global health and education funding to address the global impact of COVID-19.*

*As a leader in global health and development, the United States must urgently respond to contain and mitigate the impact COVID-19 and protect hard-fought gains in global health in low-income countries.*

*Already, COVID-19 is diverting essential funding needed to control TB, the world’s leading cause of death from infectious disease. Immunization campaigns across the world have been suspended, which would have collectively immunized over 13.5 million people. And without urgent action, the number of people facing hunger is expected to double to 265 million by the end of 2020.*

*US leadership and support has played a key role in combatting the spread of HIV and TB in the past and ensuring children have access to lifesaving vaccines and nutrition. It is critical we continue our support now.*

*As Congress prepares for the next stage of its coronavirus response, they should include support for lower-income countries to deal with the immediate crisis and to strengthen their healthcare systems in the long run. Will you speak with leadership and ask them to include the following in upcoming efforts?*

* *$1 billion for the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, TB, and Malaria*
* *$200 million for USAID Global Health-Tuberculosis*
* *$900 million for Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance*
* *$250 million for Nutrition ($200 for Food for Peace, $50 for USAID Global Health-Nutrition)*

*I would appreciate your prompt reply to my requests. Thank you for your time and attention.*

*Sincerely,*

*John Q. Public, 1234 Citizen Ave, Anytown, USA 98765*

Sample Call to Congress

**Example 1**

"My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ and I am from [city/town]. Congress must ensure that any emergency spending package includes resources to help people experiencing homelessness and ensure housing stability for America's lowest-income renters. Please tell the senator/representative to prioritize $100 billion emergency assistance for renters and a national moratorium on evictions, as well as direct financial assistance for homelessness service providers."

**Example 2**

Hi, this is \_\_\_\_\_ a RESULTS volunteer from \_\_\_\_\_\_. Can I please speak with the aide who works on Housing issues?

--

I’m calling to urge you to ensure the next coronavirus relief package includes funding to meet the urgent needs of people experiencing homelessness and America’s lowest-income renters.

As the health and economic impacts of coronavirus becomes clear, our country’s lowest-income and most marginalized people are at the greatest risk of harm. People experiencing homelessness are vulnerable to contracting the disease, and once infected are more likely to require critical care and die from COVID-19. Resources are needed NOW to curb the spread of coronavirus and save lives.

The next coronavirus relief package must include funding to help keep America’s lowest-income renters stably housed. Congress should provide at least $100 billion for emergency rental assistance and implement a uniform national moratorium on all evictions and foreclosures.

Please tell House and Senate leadership to ensure the next Congressional relief package addresses the urgent needs of people experiencing homelessness and the lowest-income renters!

**RESULTS Basic: Write a Letter to the Editor**

Letters to the editor (LTEs) are a powerful advocacy tool and a major component of RESULTS advocacy campaigns.

1. They appear on the Editorial page, the most read section in the paper
2. Strong media work can move decision makers and can put a message directly in front of a decision maker or their staff ([see an example here](https://results.org/blog/first-name-basis/))
3. Media educates the public, building political will and engaging new people

Getting your first piece published can feel overwhelming at first. With a little support (and a little more persistence!) you *will* see your message published in your local newspaper.

**Purpose of a Letter to the Editor**

The goal of your LTE is to persuade.

* Member of Congress 🡪 Support a solution
* Community 🡪Care about an issue

Deciding the basic message for your LTE is as easy as putting together a Madlib. Just fill in the blanks.

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ should \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_.

(WHO: person) (WHAT: action)

The rest of the message can include a mix of facts and opinion to persuade your audience to agree with your message.

**Key Components of an LTE**

**Local or timely hook**

Respond to a recent article in the newspaper or current event.

*In reference to your recent article “Missouri lawmakers approve $6 billion COVID-19 emergency funding bill” I am grateful both our state legislature and Congress have now passed emergency legislation to help people survive this crisis.*

**Why it matters**

Why do I care? What makes it compelling now? Why does my MoC need to know about it?

*But more is desperately needed. Thousands of laid off workers in Kansas City have no income now and no guarantee they’ll still have jobs when the crisis ends. Without help, they and their families face hunger, eviction, and possibly homelessness. We must help. In the next coronavirus response bill, Congress must prioritize housing and hunger by providing $100 billion for emergency rental assistance, passing a national moratorium on evictions, and increasing the maximum SNAP (formerly Food Stamps) benefit by 15 percent.*

**Call to action**

Mention members of Congress by name if possible

*I urge our Congressman Cleaver and Sens. Blunt and Hawley to help people secure stable housing and keep their families fed during this economic crisis and beyond.*

**Submit your letter!**

100% of letters not sent never get published. You can:

* E-mail it directly to the paper (e.g. letters@kcstar.com - look on paper’s website for address)
* Submit it through your paper’s website (usually an online form)
* Submit it through the RESULTS website (<https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/>)
* Mail a hard copy to your local paper (takes longer)

**Important!** Most papers require you to include your name and contact info to be published. If you are a new writer, they will sometimes contact you to verify authorship.

**LTE Do’s**

* Keep your letter to 150 words or less
* Submit your LTE to multiple newspapers
* Be persistent, rejection is normal. Keep writing, re-writing, and re-submitting until you are successful
* Ask for feedback: Share your LTE with a media buddy or RESULTS staff for their support
* Send published media to your members of Congress and deliver them as leave behinds in congressional meetings
* Find online media action opportunities in the [RESULTS Action Center](https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/)
* Report your published media to RESULTS [here](https://results.org/volunteers/reporting-your-advocacy-actions/)

**RESULTS Basic: Understand How Congress Works**

RESULTS focuses on advocacy at the federal level of government. There are two chambers of Congress (Senate, House of Representatives) which we can influence. Through these two chambers, we can also exercise influence on decisions made by the President.

**Chambers of Congress**

US Senate

* Lawmakers in the Senate are referred to as “Senator”.
* Everyone has two Senators who represent the entire state.
* Each state has equal representation in the Senate.

US House of Representatives

* Lawmakers in the House of Representatives are referred to as “Representative” “Congress(wo)man” or “Congressperson”.
* Everyone has one Congressperson who represents a specific Congressional District in your state, determined by population.
* More populous states have more representation in the House of Representatives (California: 53, Montana: 1)

All lawmakers in the Senate and House can be collectively referred to as ‘legislators’ ‘lawmakers’ or ‘members of Congress (MoCs)’. Referring directly to a Senator as “Congress(wo)man” would be a faux pas. Individual Senators should always be called “Senator”.

**Congressional Offices**

Members of Congress have offices in Washington DC and in your local community. It’s important to be in touch with both but there are a few differences in the role the office plays.

**Washington D.C. Office**

*Role of the Office*

* Congressional offices in D.C. are staffed with aides who have specific expertise on policy issues. Aides follow specific issues and legislation and advise your member of Congress on those issues. Ultimately, it is up to your member of Congress to decide whether or not to support a piece of legislation, but key aides can influence their decision.
* Each member has one office in D.C.

**District Offices**

*Role of the Office*

* Members of Congress have local district offices set up across their Congressional District (or for Senators, across the state). Staff connect with the local community, represent the Congressperson at home while they are in D.C., provide case management services to constituents, and, most important, listen to YOU.
* There are usually multiple offices located throughout your state or district.
* District Offices are a powerful link between you and your member of Congress.

**Congressional Staff**

Congressional offices include a team of staff who help the member of Congress fulfill their duties and stay up to date on issues and actions.

Key Staff (D.C. office)

* **Chief of Staff**: Head honcho. Oversee the operations of the office.
* **Legislative Director (LD)**: Senior policy staffer. Oversees all major policy decisions and has jurisdiction over issues most important to the congressperson
* **Legislative Assistants (LA)**: Primary expert on a particular issue. Typically follows multiple issues. Advises Congressperson.
* **Legislative Correspondents (LC**): Responsible for managing and drafting responses to mail. Typically less experienced than LAs.
* **Staff Assistants**: Handles phone calls to the office and greets visitors.
* **Scheduler**: Responsible for the congressperson’s schedule. The ultimate gatekeeper, they determine whether you and your group meets with your congressperson
* **Regional/District Director** (**local office)**: This is the Chief of Staff of the local offices. They usually hold a close relationship with the member of Congress and have a lot of influence with the member of Congress.

The life of a congressional staffer can be difficult. They typically work 50-70 hours a week in a fast-paced but cramped environment with low pay and frequent calls from angry and rude constituents. They are generally eager to hear from you (and it’s their job!) Remember when communicating with the congressional office to be:

1. Respectful of the staffer’s time: Be prepared, organized, and focused.
2. Respectful of the staffer’s humanity: Be kind, even if you disagree with them! Cultivate a relationship that makes them want to hear from you.
3. Patient: It’s important to be persistent and follow-up with the office but do understand the limitations of staff in DC and in-district.

**How a Bill Becomes a Law (and where you can have influence!)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Legislative Process | Advocate Actions |
| Members of Congress draft a bill to confront specific problems and create solutions. | Bring ideas to your Senators and Representatives. Advocates can influence the creation of new legislation. |
| Bill is introduced by an MoC and assigned to a committee for review.  | Ask your MoCs to co-sponsor the bill. This increases likelihood of success. |
| Committee meets to discuss, amend, and vote on bill. | If your MoC is on the committee: Ask them to pass the bill out of committee (or not) or make/support amendmentsIf your MoC is not on the committee: Ask them to speak with members of the committee to pass (or not) |
| If passed out of committee, bill proceeds to full Senate/House for further discussion, amendments, and voting | Ask your MoC to vote YES or NOAsk your MoC to support specific amendments to a bill to strengthen it |
| Bill passes. All bills must pass both the Senate and House before being sent to the President. If the bill passed the Senate, it still needs to pass in the House to advance and vice versa. | Celebrate! Say thank you. Follow all of the above steps to ensure passage in the other chamber of Congress. |
| Bill passes both chambers. If the bills are not identical, a conference committee, made up of both chambers, meets to resolve differences and decide on a final version of the bill. | If your MoC is on the conference committee, ask them to support the best form of the bill. If your MoC is not on the committee, ask them to weigh in with the committee to support the best form of the bill |
| Final version of bill is sent back to Senate and House for final voting. | Ask your MoC to vote YES (or no) |

**RESULTS Basic: Meet your Member of Congress**

Meetings with members of Congress and their staff lay an essential foundation for your relationship with their office. This relationship is your key to influence. By relating in person, talking about the issues, and telling our powerful stories, we invite them to become champions for the end of poverty.

RESULTS has a whole [section of our website](https://results.org/volunteers/lobbying/) dedicated to providing lobbying tools and support.

**Steps to a successful lobby meeting**

1. Assemble your lobby team
2. Schedule your meeting
3. Plan your agenda, assign roles, and practice
4. Collect letters from your community
5. Go to your meeting & report back to RESULTS
6. Follow up, follow up, follow up

1 Assemble your lobby team

This can be your RESULTS group, your friends, members of your faith community, community partners who have a stake in the issue, or anyone else who might care. It can also just be you!

2 Schedule your meeting

When scheduling your meeting, you’ll need to share the date(s) you had in mind, issues you want to discuss in the meeting, and number (possibly names) of people attending. You may have to call and follow up several times to get your meeting confirmed. Be persistent! Find sample meeting requests in our [Lobbying Resources](https://results.org/volunteers/lobbying/).

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Type of Meeting | How to Schedule |
| Face to Face with member of Congress | Reach out to the Scheduler in DC: Call the DC office and ask to speak with the Scheduler or send an email to the Scheduler. Some offices have specific meeting request forms  |
| Meeting with local aide at local office | Call the local office and schedule directly with aide |
| Meeting with DC policy aide | Email or call the aide and schedule directly with them |

3 Plan your agenda, assign roles, and practice

Start by researching your member of Congress. Look them up on the [RESULTS website](https://results.org/volunteers/action-center/legislator-lookup/?vvsrc=%2fAddress). Check out their congressional website and social media listed in their profile. Get an idea of their voting history on the [RESULTS Congressional Scorecard](https://results.org/volunteers/congressional-scorecard/). What can you thank them for? Where can you find common ground?

*Decide the goals of your meeting. Goals should include:*

* Build a relationship
* Introduce your group as a resource
* Prove that constituents care about an issue
* Educate about an issue & solution
* Gather intelligence about the office and their stance on RESULTS issues
* Get them to support your solution!

*Assign meeting roles:*

* Facilitator
	+ Kicks meeting off. Leads introduction, thank-you’s, and meeting overview. Ensures the meeting stays on track.
* Story-Teller
	+ Shares a personal story about the issue or solution.
* Issue Educator
	+ Educate about the broader issue, problem, solution. Shares facts about how the problem shows up in the community and why it matters
* Requestor
	+ Makes a yes or no request of the congressperson
* Note Taker
	+ Notes any important information from the meeting: What questions did the person raise? What concerns do we need to address in the future? What was the member’s response? What follow up is needed?
* Deliverer of the Leave Behinds
	+ Ensures any letters, media, request sheets, or other supportive materials are left with the office. Find leave behinds in our [Lobbying Resources](https://results.org/volunteers/lobbying/).

*Plan your agenda based on EPIC & meeting roles*

Find a lobby meeting planning form in our [Lobbying Resources](https://results.org/volunteers/lobbying/) to assist in creating your agenda. You can also schedule a lobby prep session with [RESULTS policy staff](https://results.org/staff-board).

SAMPLE LOBBY MEETING AGENDA

* **Introductions (Facilitator)**
	+ Thank you
	+ Who you are, why you care. Who RESULTS is. Individual team member intros.
	+ Let aide or Member of Congress introduce themselves too!
* **Meeting Overview: Summary of issues/asks to be discussed (Facilitator)**
* **EPIC (Engage, Problem, Inform on Solution, Call to Action)**
	+ Engage: Share Story to Illustrate Issue (Story-Teller)
		- Move her/his heart
	+ Problem / Inform on Solution: (Issue Educator)
		- Educate on Issue
	+ Inform on Solution / Call to Action (Requestor)
		- Make Yes / No Request
* **Listen for response**
	+ **Respond**
	+ **Converse!**
	+ **Make Follow Up Plans**

4 Collect Letters from your Community

Ask friends, family, and others in the community who care about your issue to write a letter to your member of Congress that can be delivered as a leave behind in your meeting. This will be a strong reminder to the congressperson that more people in the community care about the issue which can influence their willingness to act.

5 Go to Your Meeting & Report Back to RESULTS

You can do it! It’s normal to be nervous! It is literally their job to listen to you. They want you to be there (they do!) If you followed the steps above, you are more than ready to have a powerful experience. [Let us know what happened!](https://results.org/volunteers/reporting-your-advocacy-actions/) This informs our policy staff of anything we need to do to help you move your member of Congress forward.

6 Follow up, follow up, follow up

After your meeting, send a follow up message to the aide you met with. Thank them! Provide answers to questions they raised in the meeting. Restate your ask. Most likely, you did not get a firm yes or no response in the meeting, especially if you met with an aide and not the member directly. The follow up is where commitments happen!

If you meet with a member of Congress or their aide and never follow up with them again, it’s almost as if your meeting never happened. Follow up!

**RESULTS Basic: Grow the Movement. Organize.**

The individual actions you take as an advocate matter. Ultimately though, our power as a grassroots movement comes from our collective voices, rising together, to call for solutions to poverty. It is essential to our success that we are continuously recruiting and supporting new advocates to take action, grow in leadership, and push our advocacy goals forward. We will not accomplish all of our goals tomorrow, this year, or maybe even in your lifetime. Recruiting and organizing new advocates will allow us to sustain our movement now and in the future.

The most effective recruiters of new advocates are … YOU! current advocates, living in the same communities or in relationship with others that share our values and drive to make a difference on issues of poverty. We know that people in our communities are eager to make a difference, just like you were when you first became an advocate. Most just don’t know what to do or where to start. You may once have felt the same way! You now have valuable experience and opportunities to share to bring other new advocates along.

There are different ways to engage people in advocacy, most falling into two categories: 1) Mobilizing and 2) Organizing. Both are important and matter, but ultimately have different goals.

**Mobilizing** seeks to get a high number of people to take an action to demonstrate broad support for an issue.

**Organizing** seeks to build long-term people power, engaging people in action and elevating them to grow in their leadership and commit to further action, building a lasting movement.

**Organizing vs Mobilizing**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Organizing** | **Mobilizing** |
| **Major Goal**Leadership development and growing long-term people power | **Major Goal**Getting the most # of people to take an action to demonstrate broad support for an issue |
| **Communication Style**Personalized (1:1s), curated to the individual | **Communication Style**Mass Communications to reach many people quickly |
| **Strategy is Relationship Based**Constantly seek to deepen connection between people as well as people’s relationship to broader movement | **Strategy is Not Relationship Based**Actions can be sent broadly as a one-off with little follow up to action-takers between actions |
| **Organizing = High value for time**Assumption that people want to be involved in something powerful and have the biggest impact, willing to commit time to make it happen. Seek to make action taking meaningful & valuable. | **Mobilizing = Low value for time**Assumption that people want the easiest most ‘costless’ action that can be done quickly with the limited time and attention they have available. Seek to make action taking easy. |
| **Purpose of Outreach** Build a list of people that can be mobilized to **demonstrate a broad base of community support** with decision makers. Build a list of people from which you can **identify new leaders** that can be trained and supported to mobilize others to build greater power | **Purpose of Outreach**Build a list of people that can be mobilized to **demonstrate a broad base of community support** with decision makers. |

RESULTS engages in organizing and mobilizing but believes that ultimately, organizing is most essential for sustaining our movement in the long-term.

**Organizing Characteristics**

1. **Relationship**
	* Give volunteers work that bring them in contact with others
		1. Instead of engaging people individually to take action on their own, create opportunities for people to work together to define and accomplish goals together
2. **Agency**
	* Provide strategic autonomy on how the work is done
		1. Instead of telling people the who, what, where, when, and how to accomplish an advocacy goal, decide as a team what the big picture is and give people the opportunity to decide how to accomplish the action and how they want to contribute as an individual
3. **Purpose**
	* Show volunteers how their work fits into the bigger picture—the campaign, the change they are creating in the world

Clear? Probably not! The next section includes examples to help you envision what mobilizing as a RESULTS advocate might look like compared to organizing.

Read through these examples and see where relationship, agency, and purpose show up in organizing opportunities and how ease of action taking shows up in mobilizing opportunities.

**Mobilizing vs Organizing Examples**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Outreach Activity** | **Mobilizing** | **Organizing** |
| **Connect with friends and family. Ask them to take action or donate money** | Forward an online action alert to everyone on your email list | Invite a friend to a RESULTS action event, introduce them to other advocates to take a collective action, follow up with your friend to process their experience and what they desire for future action opportunities |
| **Connect with like-minded groups and orgs in your community** | Ask members of a community organization to write letters you can deliver in an upcoming congressional meeting. Pre-write the letter, leaving space for people to write a sentence or two about why the issue matters to them | Host a letter-writing event with a local group or org ahead of a Congressional meeting to collect letters as leave behinds. Ask the group to share about their work and how it relates to the issue you are advocating on. Give EPIC message training and ask attendees to write their own letters using EPIC format. Leave time for people to share their letters with each other. Ask attendees if anyone wants to share their letter in person by joining the upcoming Congressional meeting. Reach back out to the org post-congressional meeting to update them on how it went and the impact their letters had. Invite people to continue taking action / ask how they would want to be involved in future action opportunities.Partner with a community organization on a meeting with a Congressional office. Support their members to take a lead in the meeting and follow up with the office. Debrief with the leader on the experience and their vision for their group action in the future |
| **Engage new people in Congressional meetings** | Ask your friends / contacts to make calls to your congressional office at the same time your group is meeting with the office. Provide a short phone script Ask members of your local group to write letters you can deliver in a meeting | Invite someone to participate in a meeting with you, help them prepare for the meeting so they feel empowered to take on a role, debrief the meeting with them to help them understand the power of their actionAsk members of your group: “What can we do to demonstrate overwhelming community support during our Congressional meeting?” Make a plan where each of your members takes responsibility for generating letters or turning people out for the meeting or to make calls |
| **Manage an online Action Network** | Send letter writing, phone call, or e-actions to your action list regularly | Send letter writing, phone call, or e-actions to your list regularly. Follow up with people who took the action to let them know how it contributed to the bigger picture. Invite them to a ‘thank you’ celebration for action takers to put them in touch with others in the community, understand their collective action, and deepen their connection with your group |
| **Table at a community event** | Ask people to sign a petition or postcard that your group can use as a leave behind in upcoming congressional meetings | Actively speak with people and ask about their passions and goals, follow up with people who signed a postcard/petition and invite them to a social to meet other members or to deliver their message in your next congressional meeting |

**Organizing Skill: 1:1 Conversations (aka: Relational Meetings)**

The most essential organizing tool advocates use is called a One-on-One (1:1) conversation. This is also referred to as a relational meeting. This forms the basis of your relationship with a new advocate and potential leader.

**What are we trying to accomplish with an initial 1:1 meeting?**

* **Determine the person’s values & drives.**
	+ Get to know them – What are their motivations? What do they care about in the world? What issues keep them up at night? Why are they driven to action? What needs are they trying to fill in their life? Why?
	+ Why? People do things for reasons that matter to *them* (not you).
	+ After really getting to know this person, you can help them connect to RESULTS advocacy based on what’s internal and important to them (not what *you* care about and what *you* think is important)
* **Establish relationship**
	+ Why? People need to know you genuinely care about them. People need to feel known, respected and accepted.
	+ Establishing a relationship through 1:1 conversations shows you value that person for who they are and genuinely care about them, their drives and their needs. It shows that you value this person more than process – you don’t just want to use them to accomplish your goals, but you want to work together to meet mutual, shared goals
* **Envision & explore possibilities**
	+ Through a 1:1, you will hear a person share skills, strengths, passions, perspectives, and experiences that this new person can bring to your team
	+ Why? Helping someone connect their skills and experiences with the broader movement can help them clarify where they can fit and contribute meaningfully.
* **Move person from interest/motivation to action**
	+ Why? People are inspired by their own action (not just hearing you and others talk about actions you’ve taken).
	+ There is an ask for someone to do more in a 1:1. Take an action. Come to a meeting. Join your RESULTS group. Take on a leadership role. Etc…Don’t be afraid of the ask!
	+ Since you have connected on their drives, shown that you care about them, and helped them envision their possibilities, the ask will connect them with action in a way that is meaningful to them and meets their needs.
	+ A 1:1 conversation is the on ramp to the destination of engagement and action. Don’t let your 1:1 lead your new advocate to a dead end.

**Tactics for a great 1:1 conversation**

* Identify why you chose this specific person to reach out to
	+ Do they work in a related field?
	+ Have they talked about related issues with you?
	+ Are they part of another group that has similar interests?
	+ Get curious about that in your conversation. Asking “why” questions in your one-on-one will bring their values & motivations to the surface. Be genuinely curious and ask questions.
		- Why did you choose this field?
		- Why did you join \_\_\_ group?
		- Why were you motivated to participate in \_\_\_\_\_\_?
		- Why does \_\_\_\_\_ (issue) matter so much to you?
		- What do you want to see happen in the world?
		- What’s motivating/inspiring you?
		- Is there something about advocacy that’s particularly interesting to you?
* Actively listen - with your ears, eyes, and heart.
	+ It’s tempting to spend a conversation sitting there thinking about what you are going to say next. But actively work to listen to what they are saying and respond by acknowledging their values, needs, and desires and helping them make connections between their motivations and advocacy. The only way to ‘prepare’ for this kind of response is really listening to and hearing the person as they share.
* Have an ask in mind to take the person to the next advocacy level. Examples:
	+ Join your group
	+ Attend a meeting
	+ Take an action
	+ Host an event
	+ Take on a leadership role
	+ Meet individually again to continue talking and exploring opportunities

1:1 Conversations are an art, not a science! They vary as much as any two people do. If you are new to organizing, you can use our basic 1:1 conversation agenda in the next section to help you get started. But remember, the key is to listen, learn, connect, and respond, not just tell the other person everything you want them to know about RESULTS.

**Sample 1:1 Conversation**

**I would love to hear more about you. Why are you interested in\_\_\_\_\_\_? What are you hoping to accomplish? I’d love to hear more about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_.**

**Who is RESULTS?**

* Volunteer advocacy movement. Train and empower everyday people to become powerful voices for the end of poverty.
* It’s a big task, but poverty is not inevitable. We have created communities that don’t work for everyone. If we can create barriers, then we can put solutions in place. We focus on improving health, education, and economic opportunity.
* RESULTS volunteers believe that not only *can* we create a better world, but if we’re going to be successful we need to take action to make that happen. RESULTS supports us to do that.

**ASK: Is this in line with your values and interests? What’s your vision for the future? Is there a question you can ask them related to what they’ve shared with you that will connect RESULTS issues with their values and experiences?**

**Why Advocacy**

* Advocacy is one of the most effective ways to use our time to make the biggest impact.
* When we advocate, we build relationships with members of Congress who make decisions that impact the lives of millions of people here and across the world. Through those relationships, we are able to influence their decisions.
* Through advocacy, we guide them to make better decisions on issues of poverty.

**ASK: I’m wondering if there is something about advocacy that’s interesting to you? Have you considered this before? Why/not? Is there something you can ask that will help them connect their experiences and desires with advocacy?**

**How we do it**

* Describe actions we take: meeting with Congress, media, community. Let them know about an action they can take with RESULTS that’s related to the things they’ve been sharing

**ASK: Have you done anything like this before? What’s most exciting to you?**

**Connect with next steps – make your ask**

* Give information on current issue and an action you have coming up. Make plans to take the action they said they were most interested in. Take action together!