

Civil Disobedience Activity Strategy

Intro (5 min)

Civil Disobedience is just one of many tools and tactics we use in our struggle for liberation. What are some of those?

We face problems that are long-term and systemic, and run campaigns that might last years.

It's important that we think strategically about where civil disobedience and other forms of direct action fit within the larger arc of a campaign. We should also remember that there are many other kinds of public action we might take.

Activity (15 min)

I'm going out lay out a scenario, then hand out cards with activities that might be part of a campaign to address that scenario. Your task is to put the steps in the order you think makes the most sense.

Ask group to explain the order and why.

Introduce stages of a direct action campaign planning framework (5 min)

1. Gather information/define issue and demands/create power analysis;
2. Do education and leadership development to build base of support;
3. Issue demands, attempt to meet with or negotiate with target;
4. Demonstrate and increase motivation and commitment for the struggle ahead;
5. Escalate direct action;
6. Create new relationship with opponent which reflects the new power reality.

Wage Theft campaign

Background:

Day Laborers in Washington, DC look for work on a day-to-day basis, mostly in construction, land-scaping and moving. Because of their immigration status and informal work situation, many employers exploit them, The most common problem workers face is employers who don't pay the promised wage, or don't pay workers at all.

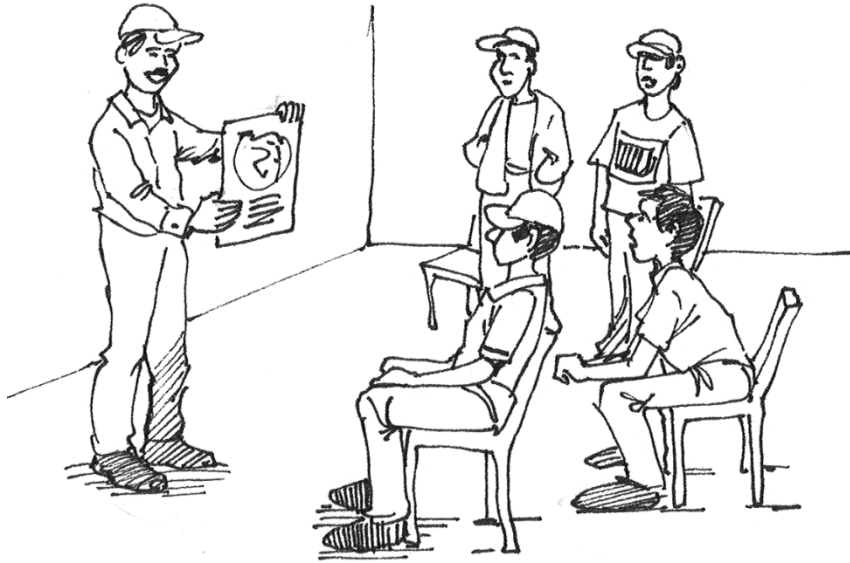
The city government has an Office of Wage and Hours that is supposed to help workers recover their wages. The DC Workers' Union, an organization of day laborers, is trying to prevent wage theft and recover stolen wages. They have been educating workers about their rights, and also helping each other file claims with the Office of Wage and Hour.

But, after a year of taking case to the Wage and Hour Office, it's clear that the agency isn't helping anyone. So, the DC Workers' Union has decided to start a campaign to hold the Wage and Hour Office accountable for doing their job and getting workers' wages back.

Collect information



The DC Workers' Union organizes meetings with day laborers who have filed claims with the Wage and Hour Office to learn about their experiences and identify the problems with the system.



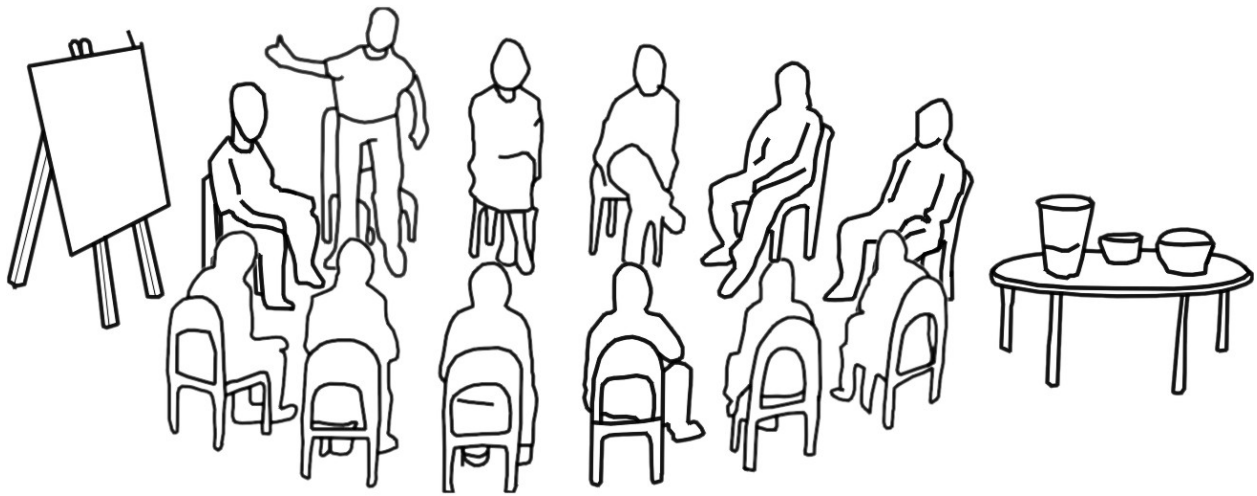
The DC Workers' Union researches the Wage and Hour Office and the DC Government to understand who is responsible for what decisions in order to create a power map.



Based on their analysis of the problems, the DC Workers' Union develops demands for how they want the Wage and Hour office to change. They use their power map to identify the best targets for their demands.



Leaders of the Workers' Union visit work sites every week to discuss the campaign and their demands and recruit more workers to be part of the campaign.



Leader from the DC Workers' Union speak to other organizations in the community about the issue of wage theft and ask them to support their demands.



The DC Workers' Union delivers a letter to the Director of the Wage and Hour Office expressing their concerns, presenting their demands, and asking for a meeting.



The DC Workers' Union testifies at the DC Council oversight hearing where they share the problems with the Wage and Hour Office and explain their demands.



The DC Workers' Union and community allies organize a delegation to the Office of Wage and Hour to deliver hundreds of postcards supporting their demands.

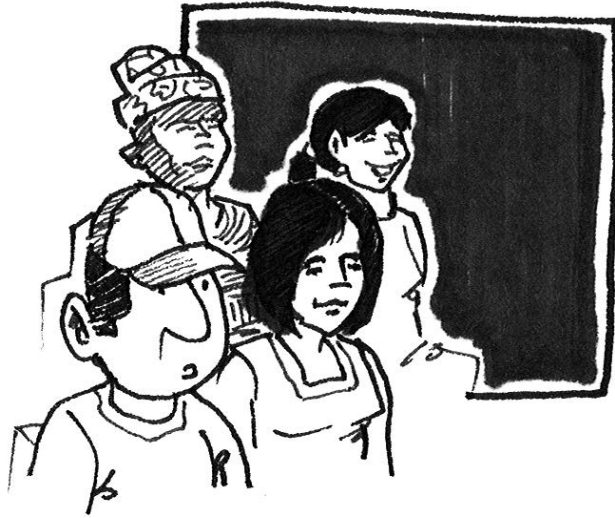


Members of the Workers' Union and community allies demonstrate outside of an event where the Wage and Hour office is speaking.



por las que dan voz
a nuestro silencio,

Worker leaders and faith allies stage a sit-in at the Wage and Hour office.



Under pressure, the Director of the Wage and Hour office agrees to meet with the DC Workers' Union. During the meeting, workers speak about their experiences. At the end, the Director agrees to their demands and commits to work with them to implement them.



The Director of the Wage and Hour office meets with members of the Workers' Union every month to discuss progress towards demands and give workers input into changes at the agency.