

Building The Will

Pro Tips for Strategic CaseMakers™



How to Stop Competing With Other Causes and Get People to Make a Down Payment on a Better Future

Q:

Many important causes vie for attention in our small community—and everything, from education to housing to health care to community development, seems equally urgent.

My organization's priority is eliminating hunger and poverty. I hate competing for resources with other deserving causes. How do I make our issue stand out?

A:

You've hit the nail on the head! Our causes should not be in competition. We need to solve for them all. And we can! We have **enough brain power, ingenuity, and people power** to create a **better future for everyone**.

That's a big endeavor, and as Strategic CaseMakers™, we can take it one step at a time by determining what levers we can pull for justice **right now**, even as we set our sights on a **bigger vision**.

Visit our [website](#) to join the wider community of Strategic CaseMakers and help lead the charge for justice.

Here's How You Do It

Addressing all the **adaptive challenges** your community faces takes **all the tools in the Strategic CaseMaking™ toolbox**. But here are three steps you can take to boost collaboration and nurture partnerships:



STEP 1: Listen to members of your community.

In the elevator, on social media, in public meetings, and on the sidelines of the soccer field, **ask people this one question:**

What are the top three issues our community needs to address today?

What three issues come up over and over? Is yours on the list? If not, how does your issue connect to what's on people's minds?

Once you've identified the top priorities of your neighbors, think about them as the "pillars" of your long-term strategic roadmap for a thriving community. Here's what that sounds like:

As a coalition, we will work toward all of these things individually and collectively over time. No one is being left behind. But we are going to be strategic about jumping on opportunities as they arise.

Which leads to ...



STEP 2: Determine the very next thing your community can do together.

What is something you or your partners are working on right now that people can show up for or support? For example:

- Advocating for an inclusionary housing ordinance
- Convincing a local business to host a farmer's market in its parking lot
- Speaking in favor of diversifying teaching staff in your school district
- Informing state government about funding local governments need to put policies in place

Tell people this **small step you're taking together** is a **down payment on future change** because we can get it done now.



STEP 3: Show up for your partners.

Because there's power in numbers! And then everyone **shows up for the next thing** on the list, and the next, as you continue to build will for solutions to the key issues in your community.

