

BEYOND THE MOMENT

Beyond the Moment:

After the Action: Recruitment for Long-Term Organizing

Who are we?

The Movement for Black Lives

The Movement for Black Lives includes a number of organizations, individuals and networks focused on a hopeful and inclusive vision of Black joy, safety and prosperity. That means freedom from violence and economic inequality, as well as the freedom to realize our greatest dreams.

The Majority

In this moment, Black and Brown people, immigrant communities, the economically unstable, women, children, the disabled, the LGBTQ community, those working to protect our right to work and those fighting for our right to clean air and water, are all facing attacks because a minority whose values are rooted in white supremacy, division and hatred have taken power.

Although in power, hate is not the majority. People who believe in freedom, justice and the humanity of all people are the majority, and we've had enough. We won't stand idly by and watch our communities be attacked and torn apart.

Join The Majority, and fight for a future where all of our children can be free, safe and live healthy, abundant lives.

after the action

Why we do mobilizations & marches

Mass mobilizations and marches are powerful tactics that accomplish a number of objectives.

- 1. Demonstrates our power:** Our power is on full display. The number of people that show up for a march or mobilization is an indication of the power of a cause or movement. We are signaling to both the people in power as well as the general public that we are part of a mighty movement that is just, popular, and growing. This inspires hope in the general public and concern with those oppose us.
- 2. Grows our numbers:** Recruiting people to participate in a mobilization or march is a great way to recruit new people. Mobilizations and marches can be fun, inspiring, and educational experiences for new recruits to our movement. It's one of the most effective way to recruit a large number of people to take action. The lists of new recruits from mobilizations and marches is an invaluable resource of potential new members, volunteers, and organizers.
- 3. Changes the Story:** When we come together in front of the world we change the story. Our actions are seen from social media to the 5 O'clock news. We're able to interrupt the story of those in power, and begin to tell ours.
- 4. Mobilization:** is the momentary coming together of large numbers of people for a particular action. Mobilization cannot take the place of organizing. Organizing is the long-term work we do to make lasting change.

after the action

usually organizing includes four main components:

1. Political education:

An understanding of history, ideology, current events, and other disciplines to be able to take an accurate temperature check of our situation and how we and our movements fit

2. Leadership development:

Training on a number of skills essential to a successful organization or campaign, or cause so that over time you become more and more of a change-making specialist.

3. Recruitment:

Bringing new people into the movement, your organization, or a cause.

4. Relationships:

People build close relationships to one another and to the cause.

how mobilization and organizing go hand-in-hand

Though mobilization and organizing are two separate things, they can go hand-in-hand. One of the three components of organizing is recruitment.

You have no better opportunity for mass recruitment than after a successful mobilization.

You may have brought together hundreds or even thousands of people. Many of these people were strangers to the cause and certainly strangers to one another before the mobilization.

It's often the case that after the march or rally many of those people go home, never to reconnect with each other or your organization.

Your objective is to recruit as large a percentage of them as you can into meaningful roles in your organization.

Here's some tips for making that a reality.

1 Think recruitment early, often, and everywhere:

As a rule, also ask yourself, "how will this aspect of our mobilization or march help with recruiting people to the cause afterward?" You'll find yourself making thoughtful decisions all along the way to improve your chances at bringing people into the long-term work.

2 Lists, Lists, Lists:

You can't invite someone to a meeting if you don't have their contact information. Find opportunities to get contact information before and during a mobilization so you can reach out to new supporters. There are all types of technology that help you build lists, from online forms, to text chains. You can research a number of those, or when in doubt use a trusty clipboard and paper.

The four pieces of information we have found to be helpful are NAME, MOBILE NUMBER, EMAIL, and ZIP CODE. With those four pieces of information you know how to refer to someone, where to reach them, and what neighborhood they live in.

If you're using paper lists, make sure you have a data-entry plan afterwards. In other words, make sure you're planning some time and volunteer hours to type up all that valuable information into a format easy to read and use.

Note on Security: Security concerns are real. It's possible that people may be uncomfortable with you collecting their information. Please respect that. Mutual respect for people's boundaries is important and demonstrates your cause or organization cares about people and their concerns. There are secure ways to store information. You should research a database, CRM, or spreadsheet solution that works for your needs and feels secure enough for your purposes when collecting and storing people's information.

3 Set a Realistic Recruitment Goal:

Even in the best circumstances, following a successful mobilization, many of the people that came out won't show up at your local meeting. That's ok and should be expected. Don't be disappointed. Instead plan a realistic recruitment goal.

Let's say you planned on recruiting 10% of the people you mobilized? If you have and 1,000 person rally, that's 100 people.

Once you've decided on a realistic number of people to recruit, think through the steps to getting them in the door.

some recruitment steps

1. Plan a post-action event:

Plan a large-scale event for after the march. Do it now so you can publicize it before and during the march. Make sure the event is not just designed for insiders. Make it fun, informative, and interactive. Give new people as many opportunities as you can to express themselves, and interact with one another. Provide meaningful next steps for people to take at some point during the event. Don't invite people to a planning meeting as an introduction to the cause. It's hard to keep up as a new person in a space where a crew of people has been planning something for some time. Instead invite them to something that is interactive.

Some event ideas

Report-Back: Create a big, fun, and informative space for everyone to review the successful mobilization. What were the highlights? What did we learn? How could we improve? What do we do next?

You can host a panel of activists to give their perspective, break into small groups so everyone can share, invite people to use their imagination and plan where we may go from here.

Speak-Out: All you need is some amplification and a space. Invite anyone from the community to speak their minds, tell their stories, or in other way react to the moment. This is a fun and participatory way for people to feel connect, involved, and heard. At some point sign people up to join the cause.

What's Next: A mix between a social hour and an informational on the cause. Many people learned about the cause for the first time at the mobilization. Now they want more information and more context. Create a space where people can mingle with other activists including long-time activists. Present the goals of the cause or organization, roles people can play to move the work forward, and next steps to get there. Make sure to get people to sign up for specific roles.

some recruitment steps con't

2. Prepare for new people / Plan roles:

Think through what roles new people can take on. Make sure these roles are both meaningful and realistic for someone new to your organization. People bring many different skills to the table, so also make sure you have a diverse set of roles people can play. It's also important to make your organizing spaces as democratic and open as possible so new people feel valued, know their ideas matter, and feel a sense of power. During and following your post-action event sign people up for these volunteer roles.

3. Prepare for new actions / Plan activities:

Following a march or rally many people ask, "what do we do next?" Be prepared with concrete actions people can take to keep the momentum going and keep the pressure on. These can include canvassing the community to spread awareness and recruit new people, attending a meeting to plan a direct action, joining a petition drive. During and following your post-action event sign people up for these actions.

4. Build Committees:

Having lots of people to bring into your organization is a good problem for an organizer to have. One of the ways to manage an influx of people is to have a committee structure in place. Committees might focus on a specific aspect of the work. For example, you might have an outreach committee devoted to recruiting people from the community and a direct action committee dedicated to crafting disruptive actions aimed at advancing your goal.