

# Building Your Campaign to Win

A Toolkit & Guide to Action for Student Activists

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### Regular Campaign Meetings

You and your group should have weekly or bi-weekly campaign meetings to check in and plan your next steps. This is a great way to keep the momentum going. You may want to come up with a campaign committee structure and have certain people in charge of certain committees or pieces of the campaign (i.e. research, media and events, fundraising, etc.). This is also an effective way to divvy up the workload and build new leadership within your group.

### Leadership Development - Building Student Power and Your Group

One of the most important things you should always keep in the back of your mind is that sometimes winning isn't always winning. Winning isn't only about winning your campaign, but also building a strong student group that will be ready for the next important environmental campaign or project on campus. At every step of the campaign, you want to think about ways the campaign can help build the power of your group. For example, how can the campaign enable your group to recruit new volunteers, identify and build leaders, expand your membership base, and raise money for your group? How can you use the campaign to build student power on your campus?



### Meeting with Decision-Makers

After you've done some work to initially build support for your campaign, you're going to want to begin a dialogue with decision-makers about your concerns and solutions. The best way to begin this process is by sending a 1-2 page formal letter to the decision-maker outlining the problem, your proposed solution, and requesting an opportunity to meet with them. We recommend mailing, e-mailing and faxing the letter to ensure they receive it. Contact CHEJ for sample letters. You will then want to follow up your letter with a phone call a few days after they receive it, to begin the process of scheduling a meeting. Spend some time with leaders in your group preparing for the meeting. Think about what you will want to say, who will say what, what questions will likely be asked, and how you will respond to them. Be sure to bring a small packet of information you can leave with the decision-maker so they can read over your materials. It's unlikely that school decision-makers will give into your demands right away, and you will want to schedule follow-up meetings to continue the dialogue. Finally, dress professionally to the meeting. This will help you gain respect with the decision-maker.

### Meet with Staff in the Purchasing Department

Ask to meet with the key staff in the university Purchasing Department to begin the education process on why PVC-free purchasing is important. Be prepared to respond to any technical or implementation concerns they may have. If you don't have an answer to a question, let them know you will research it and get back to them with a response. Contact CHEJ for sample presentations you can give to purchasers.

### Escalating Your Campaign

As your campaign advances over time, think about ways you can begin escalating it and amping up pressure. For example, you will not want to start the campaign up by having a rally in front of the President's Office with 100 students, but you may want to consider doing that

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after the President refuses to meet with you and other concerned students. Think about ways the campaign can build momentum among the student body, in the media, and building pressure on your campaign targets.

### **Have Fun and Celebrate Your Victories!**

One of the things most groups forget is to celebrate your victories, no matter how big or small! This is so critically important. People like to be part of winning groups that are making progress, not groups that whine about how they never get anything done. So think about progress you can point to that you and your leadership and members can celebrate! Had a great event that drew 50 students? Have friends over for an impromptu party! The administration has agreed to meet with you? It's time for a potluck at Rebecca's house! This not only builds momentum and excitement, but also is important for building strong relationships within your group. Always think about ways you can celebrate, and inject fun into your campaign!

### **Fundraising**

Your group will likely need to raise some money to help cover some basic costs for materials (i.e. poster board, photocopying, etc.). One way many student groups raise money is by organizing fundraising benefit events such as dance parties, potlucks, house parties, etc.

### **CHEJ and Your Campaign**

CHEJ's here to help you with your campaign. We have tons of fact-sheets and reports and materials that will help you (see the resources section). We're more than happy to talk with you and strategize with you on your campaign. In some cases, we may even be interested in coming to speak at your University or to your group. Help is just an e-mail or phone call away! You can reach us at [mike@chej.org](mailto:mike@chej.org) or 212.964.3680. You can also follow us on Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/CHEJfans> and Twitter: <http://www.twitter.com/CHEJ>