

Where to Start?!

MORE BANG FOR YOUR BUCK!?

Today's activists are busy. They are looking to stream line their volunteer efforts and effect the most amount of change in the least amount of time. If you are going to lead an army of activists you have to select the issue you are most impassioned about. It is going to take time and resources to make an impact but you can do it! Once you have selected the issue you want to affect change on it will be easier for you to find other supporters who will ride if not drive the change bus with you!

WHERE ARE MY FRIENDS?!

You are not alone! Whatever issues you care about there are more of you out there. Sometimes you can even find established activists that are looking for an outlet. There are strength in numbers and while one activist can have an impact the louder the voice the bigger the impact. You want to find out if your community has social groups that meet regularly around these issues. You can start by looking at churches, libraries, high school/colleges, and check the flyers at your local grocery store. Another good way to find interested people is a simple web search. For example, type in things like 'Northbrook and glbt' or 'civil unions and Northbrook'. You can also be proactive and recruit people to your cause by posting your events and interest on your favorite blogs and online groups. Some other effective recruitment tools are social networking sites. You can find already established interest groups on sites like my space and facebook. (e.g. Students for Marriage Equality on facebook has some 9,000+ members) By joining these groups you can participate in discussion and post events you're attending/planning in your area! Often times if you contact the administrators of these groups, because they are activists like you, they are more than willing to publicize your event to help spread the word. The admins will have broader access to communicating with the members of these groups.

WHO SHOULD WE TALK TO?!

After you have rallied some local activist to your cause you have to figure what to do next. There are a few ways you can figure what to do next. If your goal is to grow more support you can use your new activists to help spread the word and co-hosting community events with you. If these people have internet access another good way to grow support is by going *VIRAL*. In internet lingo going viral essential means growing exponentially. It is easier to do online because you don't have to spend as many resources as you would if you were doing it in person. For example, if you were to use the Facebook group Students for Marriage Equality and its 9k+ membership you could get your message in front of more than 9K self-identified interested people in less than 5-10 mins. Doing this kind of leg work via canvass or phone bank would take hours, days and even weeks. It is, however, essential to compliment your online grassroots efforts with tested 'offline' efforts as well. This will ensure that you are not only making superficial contact but a deeper more committed contact! You can also work with these folks and your newly recruited folks to contact local legislators and community leaders to influence decision making process.

