



Action Planning Guide

A learning journey for planning civic action for change, suitable for individual or collective endeavors.

You've Got This

This Action Planning Guide offers some structure to plan action for change. The steps can be used for individual or collective planning.

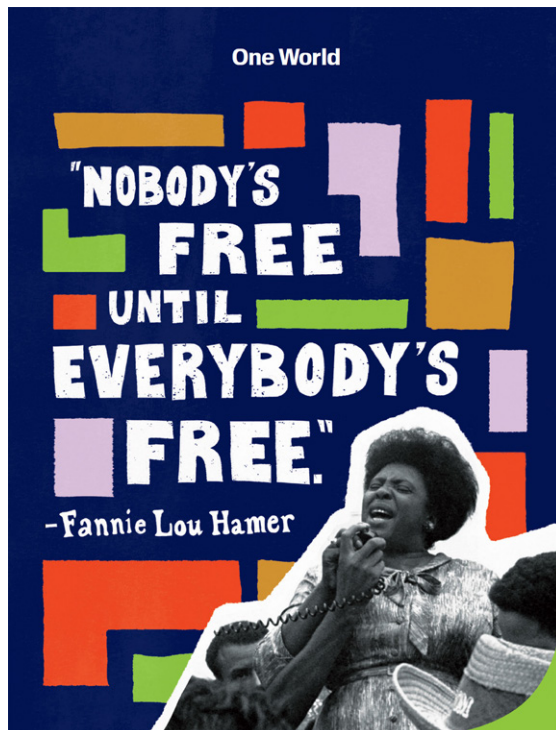
The approach is cyclical, meaning you will go through this process more than once throughout your planning and execution. You can also revisit a previous stage at any point to revise as needed. This Action Planning Guide is a tool meant to help your thinking, so be sure to use it how it works best for you.

In the first stage, you will complete some brainstorming through freewriting. In this section, just let your ideas flow. From this brainstorming, the steps will help you move toward identifying a central issue that you would like to address through action.

Next, we need to think about the context (*the what*) of the issue you wish to focus on, the rationale (*the why*) for addressing this issue, and the action (*the how*) for the change you want.

In Part II of the guide, you will begin planning how to put your idea into action. Here you will think about what questions you need answers to, who can support you, and what resources you have and need. Lastly, you will begin outlining specific steps to get started.

Most importantly, know that you have more knowledge, skills and power to succeed than you realize. Take it one step at a time, and do not be afraid to ask for help. You've got this!



Reflection: “Nobody’s free until everybody’s free.”

Fannie Lou Hamer’s powerful words, “Nobody’s free until everybody’s free,” remind us that in the movement for freedom we are connected to the struggles of others. We must not only advocate for justice for issues that affect us personally, but for those that affect others in our communities and our nation.

Think about the issues and civil rights concerns in your communities. Consider the ones that affect you personally or to which you feel strongly connected. Then think about issues that do not affect you but for which you can be an ally.

Visit learningforjustice.org to download this poster.

Action Planning Overview



Part I: Goal Setting

1. Freewrite.

On your computer or a sheet of paper, let your ideas flow in whatever way makes sense to you. It could be narrative, bullet points, abstract, anything!

You can also draw, sketch, use photos – anything that helps you capture ideas about what you'd like to address in your community. Just put anything down that comes to mind during your freewriting, and feel free to add or repeat the process anytime you need to.

Use these questions to help you think about your action:

- What do you want to achieve?
- How would these changes benefit your community?
- How do the issues you are thinking about make you feel?

2. Write a one-sentence goal statement.

Reflect on your freewriting and identify a central issue you would like to address. Be as specific as possible. You can always revise later, but this will give you a strong focus for the next steps.

3. Context (the 'What').

Explain the issue or topic you wish to address. Describe it as though someone with no knowledge of your community will read your description.

Be detailed in how it affects the community, including any small or large groups or individuals. Does the issue have a history in the community or beyond? You may wish to do some research about it to help you develop more knowledge.

4. Rationale (the 'Why').

Explain why you want to address this issue in your community. You will make connections to the context and how it affects your community, but focus on discussing why the issue needs to be addressed.

What might change or improve as a result? Research may help in this section as well. For example, you may want some statistics that support your plan.

5. Action (the 'How').

Describe how you will address the issue you have chosen. What is the main action?

Being broad in your ideas right now is OK. You will get more detailed in the next steps. Example: Plan a day to go door to door to register people to vote or help them get an absentee ballot.

Part II: Planning

6. What questions do you need answered?

List all that come to mind.

7. Who can help?

Create a list of contacts. These could be people you know, people that you want to meet or people in positions to help implement change.

8. Resources.

This could be things such as funding, materials, people to help and more.

- What do you have?
- What do you need?

9. Map out key steps toward the goal.

- What do you see as the steppingstones to completion? Use these big steps as waypoints.
- Break down what you need to do and list detailed steps to complete the big steps. Be as specific as possible. Remember, you'll revise as you learn and move through your plan.

10. Actionable first step that you can do immediately.

This should be a simple task to get you started, such as contacting someone, reading policy or recruiting team members to help.

11. Seven-day plan and reflection.

Map out the next seven days. After each day, jot a couple of notes. What worked or didn't? What did you learn? What do you need to do next based on how this step went?

Repeat this process each week.

You can also revisit previous steps anytime. Action planning is a cyclical process that often requires planning out your strategies, testing them and revising based on the outcomes.



Write a One-Sentence Goal Statement

Reflect on your freewriting and identify a central issue you would like to address. Be as specific as possible. You can always revise later, but this will give you a strong focus for the next steps.

Context (the 'What')

Explain the issue or topic you wish to address. Describe it as though someone with no knowledge of your community will read your description. Be detailed in how it affects the community, including any small or large groups or individuals. Does this issue have a history in the community or beyond? You may wish to do some research about it to help you develop more knowledge.



Rationale (the 'Why')

Explain why you want to address this issue in your community. You will make connections to the context and how it affects your community, but focus on discussing why the issue needs to be addressed. What might change or improve as a result? Research may help in this section as well. For example, you may want some statistics that support your plan.

Action (the 'How')

Describe how you will address the issue you have chosen. What is the main action? Being broad in your ideas right now is OK. You will get more detailed in the next steps. Example: Plan a day to go door to door to register people to vote or help them get an absentee ballot.



Who Can Help?

Create a list of contacts. These could be people you know, people that you want to meet or people in positions to help implement change.

Name, Title or Relationship	Contact Info

Resources

This could be things such as funding, materials, people to help and more.

Resources You Have	Resources You Need

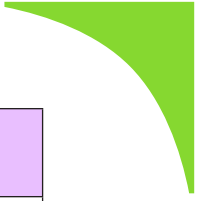


Map Out Key Steps

What do you see as the steppingstones to completion? Use these big steps as waypoints.

Break down what you need to do and list detailed steps to complete the big steps. Be as specific as possible. Remember, you'll revise as you learn and move through your plan.

Key Steps in the Process	Detailed Steps of What You Need to Do
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	



Key Steps in the Process	Detailed Steps of What You Need to Do
5.	
6.	
7.	



Actionable First Steps

What can you do immediately? This should be a simple task to get you started, such as contacting someone, reading policy or recruiting team members to help.

First Step (Be Specific)

Notes



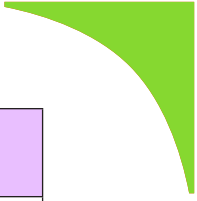
Seven-Day Plan and Reflection

Map out the next seven days. Jot a couple of notes. What worked or didn't? What did you learn? What do you need to do next based on how this step went?

Repeat this process each week.

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7-Day Plan	Notes/Reflection for Each Day
1.	
2.	
3.	



7-Day Plan	Notes/Reflection for Each Day
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	

Introducing

The Learning Center

Online Civic and Political Action Learning for Everyone

Learning for Justice's new online popular education space for everyone (adults, youth and children) offers learning for civic and political action to build an inclusive, multiracial democracy. The Learning Center continues our Community Justice Sites programming in our Southern states and extends our resources to a national audience.

When we "learn for justice," we center learning to inform our actions for change and progress in our communities. Come learn with us to strengthen democracy, counter hate and bias, and build a more just society.

Access free resources online at



**learningforjustice.org/
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