

# The Power Analysis

**What:** The power analysis is a tool that can be used over time to:

- ✓ Plan priorities in a campaign.
- ✓ Chart priorities for an organization.
- ✓ Visually depict increases in organizational power over time.
- ✓ Familiarize new activists with the political landscape and deepen their understanding of political power; help them understand “power over” versus “power with”.
- ✓ Help seasoned activists think strategically.
- ✓ Engage a large number of organizational members in strategic planning in an organized and democratic way.
- ✓ Help guide decisions about electoral and issue endorsements
- ✓ Help integrate “worldview” into campaign discussions and long-term goals.

**Why:** Defining organizational priorities for social change organizations can be difficult. Doing so in a way that engages a large number of people is even harder. The power analysis is a tool that makes this process easy, and most importantly, FUN. It is a tool that can and should be revisited frequently, giving activists a feeling of forward momentum in their organization and on their campaigns. It should serve as the ultimate grounding for decisions to be made about issue priorities, electoral endorsements, coalition relationships, organizing priorities and even budget/staffing decisions. It is especially helpful for organizations undergoing large structural changes, relatively “young” organizations and organizations taking on new campaigns.

**Who:** The power analysis should be attended all organizational staff and volunteer leaders (board, steering committee, etc.) IN ADDITION TO anyone regularly involved in the group and helping make group decisions about campaigns/events/endorsements/etc. It should be an internal process, so if there are attendees who also wear hats for other organizations, their role at during the power analysis should be with the primary organization being discussed. There are advantages to an “outsider” leading the initial mapping discussion.

**When:** A complete power analysis mapping should take 4-6 hours for the initial map. The power map should be reviewed at each meeting and updated on a regular basis (3-4 times per year).

**Where:** A large space with room to set up a full wall with the power analysis that can be seen from all seating areas.