

Building relationships to build the movement to end global poverty

Last month, we explored the power of storytelling and our own stories of Self, Us, and Now. This month, we put those stories into action to build deep relationships to grow our capacity, commitment, and power.

What is a relationship?

Relationships are key to making powerful social change and mobilising people into action. Relationships grow out shared *values* - we locate these values by sharing our stories of self. Relationships grow out of beneficial *exchanges* - sharing interests and resources to help each other achieve our goals. And relationships grow out of mutual *commitments* - choosing to continue to invest in the relationship. Relationships have the potential to be *transformational* - changing how we see ourselves and the world.



What is important here is to look at personal narratives and the core values told through our stories. These values serve to anchor relationships, both old and new, in a foundation of shared experiences, values, and beliefs. And this is where many experts argue that community development and change-making, as opposed to a strictly mobilisation-focused approach, originates.

Why are relationships important for building power?

The great social movements in history have had at their core strong relationships between key leaders and their community members. Building a relationship with a powerful person is not the only - or most effective - way to build power in your organisation. "Power" is the ability to achieve purpose; by building relationships you gain access to the resources - including other relationships, creativity, and commitment - of others and thus have greater power to achieve your purpose together.

By forming relationships with those around you, and doing so by aiming for long-term interests, community members feel respected, included, and most importantly, 'empowered'. Relationships are the 'glue' that holds social change organisations together; that enhance commitment and make our work rewarding.

Who do we need to build relationships with?

This question has a very simple answer: We need to form relationships with everyone!

However a good place to start is by seeking out those who you suspect share your values, or have interests and resources aligned with your group's purpose. Who do you know - or would you like to know - that could be interested in joining your group? Who might be connected to others who want to join you? Why has an interest in achieving the same goals as you, or similar goals? Who has access to things - venue, networks, platforms, equipment, relationships, technology, experience, knowledge - that you need? Who could benefit from the things you have access to? Think about local leaders, community and religious groups, parents' associations, or existing organisations. Think about the people who seem to know everyone and everything that is happening in your community. Think also about friends or family of yourself and others in your group. Together, when commonalities are found and values shared, we become powerful. We become change-makers. It all starts at home, and it spreads its way across the whole globe. So get out there, share your story, build community and empower others!

Contact RESULTS

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Take Action Now

- Create a list of 3 people you want to build a relationship with, who you think might be interested in joining your group, or collaborating with your group to achieve your goals.
- Hold One on One meetings with these people, sharing your story of self and obtaining a commitment to continue the relationship.

The key skill of relationship building: The One on One Meeting

One on Ones are based in attempts to find common values, and committed to action. The meeting forms 'public relationships that build communities for action in public life'. There are 5 key components of a One on One, that should be intuitively familiar if you've ever struck up a conversation with a stranger and started to form a friendship:

1. *Attention*; you have to catch their attention somehow if you are going to have a conversation. This may mean making eye contact in a crowded room, or calling up to schedule a coffee.
2. *Interest*; once you have their attention, you have to establish their interest in having a conversation with you, and you with them. You might say something like, "I have heard you are part of a group that's trying to end homelessness in our city – let's work out how we might be able to help each other" or similar, as appropriate.
3. *Exploration*; this is where you spend most of your time, exploring one another's interests and motivations. Tell your story of self, and ask the other person how they came to be doing what they are doing. Ask questions – why did you choose that path? Why did you do x not y? Why did you work here not there? What challenges are you facing? Why? What resources do you bring?
4. *Exchange*; as a result of this exploration, you may begin to make exchanges, right there and then or in future. You offer a sympathetic ear to someone who appreciates your listening. You learn a lot from the other's wisdom. You know a person they should be introduced to. They offer an idea for how to tackle a challenge. You might also find ways you can 'exchange' in future, by agreeing to meet again, attend an event together, or help one another practically.
5. *Commitment*; if you determine a basis exists for a relationship, you make a commitment to meet again or take some other action, e.g. attend the meeting, write to the MP, bring a table of friends to the fundraiser, etc. Commitment turns an exchange into a relationship.

Some tips for your One on One

- Openness begets openness; if you share something of yourself early, it invites the other person to share with you as well, breaking the ice.
- Respect their time by being on time. Schedule a time and arrive early.
- Tell your story in reference to a wider strategy. What are you trying to achieve, and where would be the most appropriate place to start this from?
- Decide on a shared commitment that is action-based; have asks!
- Engage in active listening.
- To see an example, watch [this video](#).

Who are you going to have One on Ones with?

Name	Why I want to talk to them	Outcome and follow up

Report your action at www.results.org.au/Report

Don't Forget: Join our Action Call on April 30. Meeting ID 646 924 392.

Join at <https://zoom.us/j/646924392> and turn video on if you wish so we can see you.

Connect to audio via your computer when prompted, or by phone by calling 02 8015 2088.