

The following are terms pertaining to organizing and activism:

Activism- the act of going outside of everyday tasks to do something positive for others. Examples include teaching youth life skills in the classroom as opposed to just passing standardized tests, or defending a person from being evicted from their home instead of waiting to fight a legal battle in court

Base building- the process of increasing the membership of your group and finding more allies and supporters.

Blac Bloc- a series of tactics in which protestors will dress in all black during marches and engage in confrontational and destructive tactics against police and/or commercial and governmental property. It is most effective at causing shock value and costing businesses and government agencies (like police departments) great sums of money.

Blockade- a tactic in which a person or group will block an entrance, road, bridge, or other passage in order to stop the activities of a business or government agency that is harmful. It can involve using their bodies and/or other equipment like chains.

Campaign- a detailed strategy that focuses around attaining a specific goal. For radical activist this includes eliminating a harmful policy.

Community building- the process of working with community members to help them create alternative systems like community gardens, free schools, co-ops, and others.

Consensus- A decision making process in which everyone in a group is given a chance to have their voices heard. Unlike voting which gives people set choices to vote on, consensus involves discussion and modifications to decisions before they are made. It is one of the most participatory systems there is.

Civil disobedience- purposefully breaking a law that person or group finds to be unjust and/or morally wrong. The counter sit-ins during the Civil Rights movement are a great example of this.

Direct action- the process by which a person or a group uses confrontational and disruptive measures to achieve a political goal. A great example is a group of protestors taking over a construction site because they do not want any more condos being built instead of affordable housing.

Flash mob- a protest tactic in which multiple people randomly converge in one area and engage in a mass direct action like a rally.

Liberation- the act of taking over an area away from a business and/or government agency

and using it for a positive purpose. Taking over a closed school and reopening it as free school is an example.

Movement- a phenomenon in which large groups of people work together and organize around ending injustice and creating new systems that embrace justice. The Black Power Movement is an example.

Occupations- the process of taking over a building or area and using it as a base for protest. Used as a means for protesters for centuries, it was repopularized by the Occupy Movements. A great example of an occupation was during the Wounded Knee Protest of 1973 by the American Indian Movement.

Organizing- A structured process by which you carry out a specific goal. One example is community organizing in which a structured and detailed plan is put in place to address issues like poverty or police brutality.

Positive action- the process by which a group creates alternatives to a harmful system through direct action. A great example is when activists break homeless people into vacant homes because the government refuses to provide them with access to housing.

Social justice- a broad term involving fighting to end all forms of oppression through various means.

Stealth- the act of secretly engaging in subversive tactics to achieve a political goal. Sometimes referred to as underground activities.

Strategy- An organized way of using tactics to achieve a political goal

Tactics- different techniques that activist use to achieve their political goals. These could include flash mobs, marches, and others.

Teach-in- a meeting where people sit in a circle (or other formation that makes everyone feel equal) and educate one another on a particular subject like economics or housing policy.

Timeline- The step by step process of a campaign. It may or may not have a specific dates tied to the steps.