

## Planning an Action

This is a fairly comprehensive list of the things you want to talk about and decide in your collective or group about in the lead-up to your action.

### Strategy

**GOALS:** What are you trying to accomplish? Create a goal or goals that are concrete, tangible and winnable.

**TARGET:** Who are you trying to get to act?

**MESSAGE/DEMANDS:** What is your message? You may have more than one message directed at different audiences for the action. Think about:

- What do we want them to know;
- What do we want them to do;
- Can it be summed up in a slogan;
- Are your demands clear and simple; (you may want to think about having a few 'fallback demands'.
- Will you use the media to publicise your message/ demands before or during the action?

**WHAT:** What is going to happen at your action and what will it look like? Ask:

- Is the action symbolic or disruptive? Public or secret?
- How does it begin, middle and end?
- Does the action communicate your message? How? (speakers (who?), song, dance, performance, participatory activities)
- How you will demonstrate your power?

**WHERE:** The place you decide to hold your action is key. Most actions are about space in some way – about taking over space, disrupting the usual flow of a space, being visible in a certain space, etc.

- How does your action site relate to target?
- Think about size, visibility, access, proximity to roads, security, sidewalks, public space nearby, transport, parking, tenants

**WHEN:** The timing of your action will dictate who can take part; who will see and hear you; the level of impact you can have. How can you maximise these things?

**BUILDING YOUR ACTION:** AKA getting people there. Think about who might join you on your action:

- Will you publicise your action to the public or people outside your group?
- How will you contact them? (Think about: fliers; postcards; webpages; emails; posters; ads)
- How will you convince them to come?
- How much time will you need to build your action? How much notice will people taking part (or who you hope will take part)
- Do you have a plan if it's a good turn out?
- How will you change the plan if you don't have enough people?

### TIP

It's a good idea to send out a reminder (email, text, etc.) about your action the day before. You should also call key people and get them to confirm that they are coming and they know what the plan is/ what they are responsible for.



**THE AFTERMATH:** Do you have a recruitment, reminder, follow-up plan for after the action? This is important and often gets forgotten in all the excitement and activity of planning and preparing for an action.

## Preparation

**RESEARCH:** Get some handy facts and figures on your action, to be used in news releases, leaflets and briefings.

**LEAFLET/PAMPHLETS:** You'll probably need to find or write one. Who are you aiming it at – you might write different text for a member of the public than you would for other sex workers, for example. Make sure you use your message!

**ACTION SCHEDULE:** Break it down, what needs to happen and when/ by who? Plan the detail from set up to clean-up.

**PROPS AND BANNERS:** What do you need? (puppets, costumes, masks, candles, etc) Where will you get them? How will you pay for them? Do you need to make them? How long will you need to make them?

**ACTION SITE:** Have you scouted the site? Do you need to make a floor plan? (Think about: elevators and stairs, bathrooms, access, your opponent's office. Can the site accommodate disabled members? Do you need to get permits (Do you want to get permits?)

**SECURITY PLAN:** Will you inform the Police of your action? Do you know what police plans and contingencies are? Think about how to protect participants? How will you deal with provocateurs?

**THE LAW:** Know your legal rights. There are many activist and civil liberty organisations who produce materials about rights for demonstrators; what to do if you're stopped and questioned/arrested, etc.

**ACTIVIST BRIEFING:** Ensure that people on the action know what it's about and have a good idea what to expect. You could arrange a speaker meeting the week before, send a briefing by email, or meet in the pub beforehand to talk or read through it.

- Is everyone in your group comfortable with the plan?
- Are people prepared for their roles?
- How will you communicate with each other during the action?
- How will you make decisions on the day?
- Do you need to allocate tasks to people
- Is there a possibility of arrests? Do you have a plan if people get arrested?

### TIP

**DECISION-MAKING** – It's important that activists can agree upon a decision-making structure to use during the action.

For example how will you respond to Police requests to move on; what if your opponents try to negotiate with you? Will you use a spokes-council, will you have a Tactical Team in charge of making-decisions, will you hold a mass meeting?



### TIP

Appoint an action co-ordinator who will act as a point of contact before, during and after the action, and who will make

sure it all happens. Nominate someone who will be responsible for each task. E.g. Do you need: set-up crew; drivers; people to bring and collect props; negotiator/s; media spokesperson; marshall/s; police liaisons?



## MEDIA CHECKLIST

### ONE WEEK TO GO:



- Send a press release including notice of any photo opportunity and highlighting your gimmick.
- Call the daybook a week ahead of time.
- Calls to reporters to pitch your story and give them background.
- Prepare a press pack (including briefing and background materials and contact details) for distribution on the day of the action.

### ONE DAY TO GO:

- Send a press release.
- Call assignment editors the day before the action.
- Prepare spokespeople to talk with the media during the action.

## TIP

Make sure there's a good photo opportunity, with the right visual image you can almost guarantee a photo in your local newspaper.



## THINGS TO BRING ON THE DAY

Some ideas for things you might want to bring on the day:



- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Signs          | <input type="checkbox"/> Costumes      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Banners        | <input type="checkbox"/> Rights cards  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Flags          | <input type="checkbox"/> Bust cards    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sound system   | <input type="checkbox"/> Chant sheets  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Megaphone      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cameras       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sign up sheets | <input type="checkbox"/> Food          |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clipboards     | <input type="checkbox"/> Drinks        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pens           | <input type="checkbox"/> Transport     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Noisemakers    | <input type="checkbox"/> Set up crew   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Whistles       | <input type="checkbox"/> Clean up crew |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Drums          | <input type="checkbox"/> Press packs   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Puppets        | <input type="checkbox"/> Placards      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Props          | <input type="checkbox"/> Balloons      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Masks          | <input type="checkbox"/> Kites         |

## Debriefing

Review the action afterwards, to learn from what went well and what could have been improved. Apply your learning to your next action! Do this as soon as possible, ideally on the same day.

- What happened to each person? How did people feel during the action? Was everyone supported by the group? How did the group interact?
- What was achieved? What could be improved?
- Does the group want to stay together for further actions?
- Do people need any continuing support, for example because they have a court case as a result of the action?