

Why campaigning matters

Chris Rose

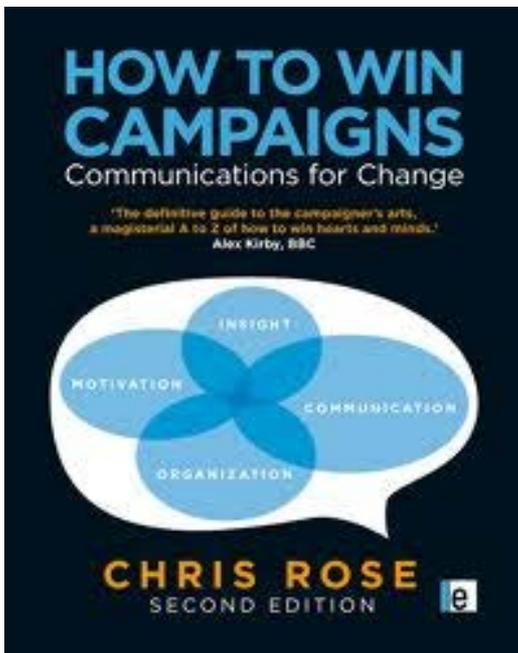
Campaigning & lobbying in a changing political landscape
November 2015

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Who I am

- Live in Norfolk UK
- Communication and campaigns consultant
- Scientist, writer, campaigner eg with WWF Intl, Greenpeace Intl., Friends of the Earth
- Clients include Amnesty International, Greenpeace, Soil Association, Home Office Drugs Strategy Directorate, UNICEF, Natural England, Environment Agency, National Trust, Unilever, OSI Public Health Program, 38 Degrees



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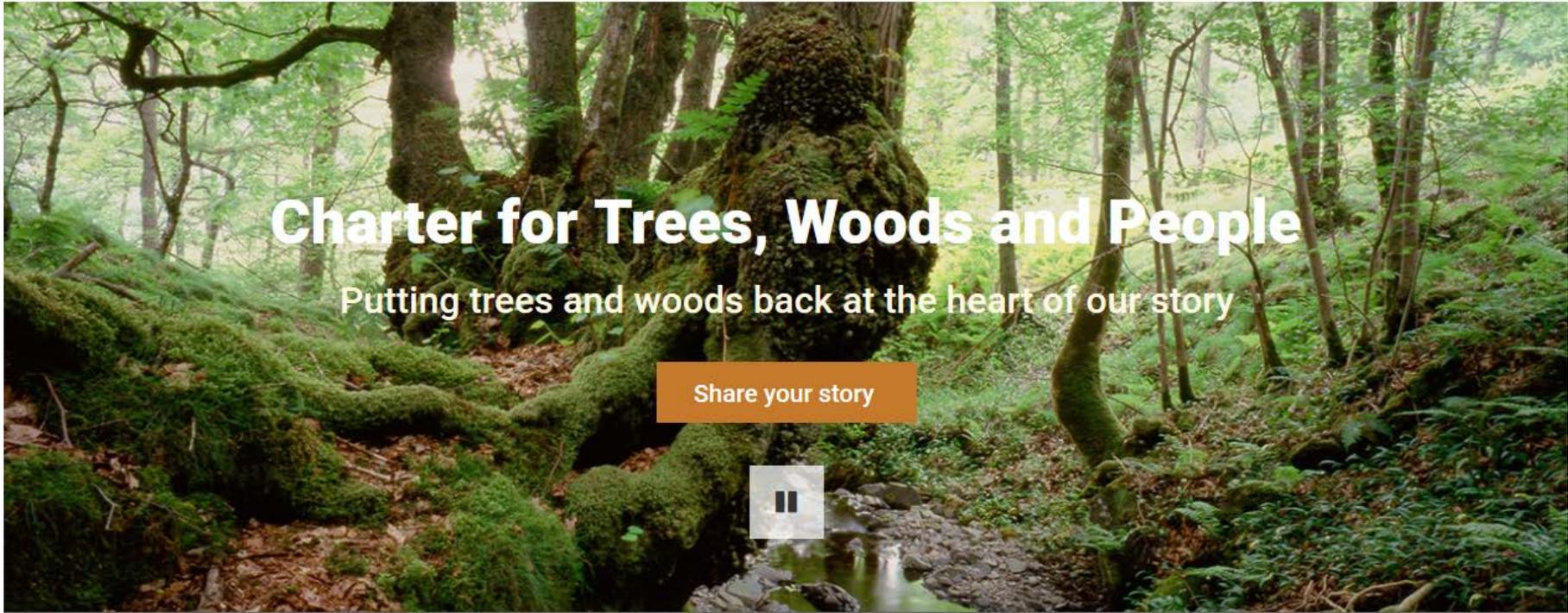
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WHAT MAKES PEOPLE TICK



THE THREE HIDDEN WORLDS OF SETTLERS, PROSPECTORS AND PIONEERS

Chris Rose



Charter for Trees, Woods and People

Putting trees and woods back at the heart of our story

Share your story



People and trees are stronger together – but our nation’s woods and trees are facing unprecedented pressures from development, disease and climate change. They risk being neglected, undervalued and forgotten. We need to act now before trees disappear from our story.

📅 Upcoming events

It's time for us to stick up for trees.

We need to recognise the importance of trees in our society, celebrate their enormous contribution to our lives, and act now so that future generations can benefit too. The Woodland Trust is leading more than 35 organisations from across



Important for society

Important for you

Where society should be

Where society is





helping you
to help others



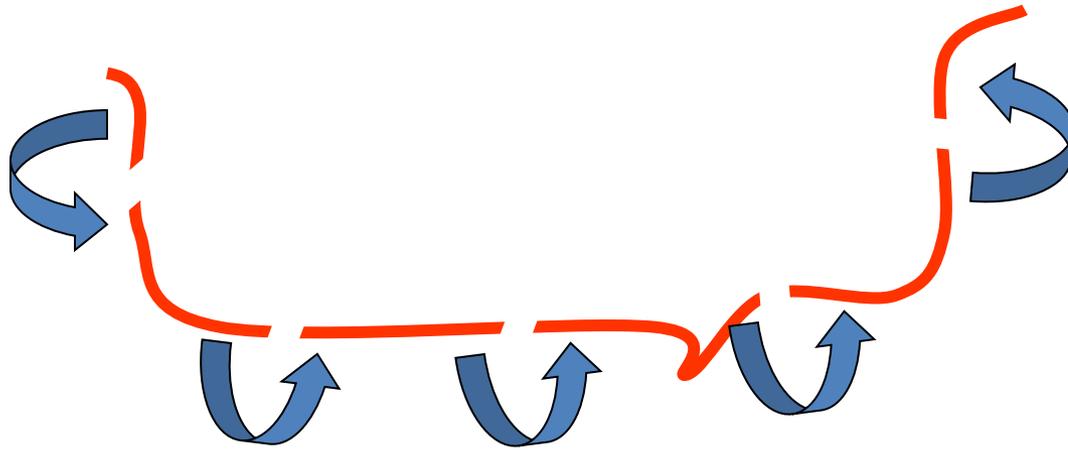
“it’s a complex issue”

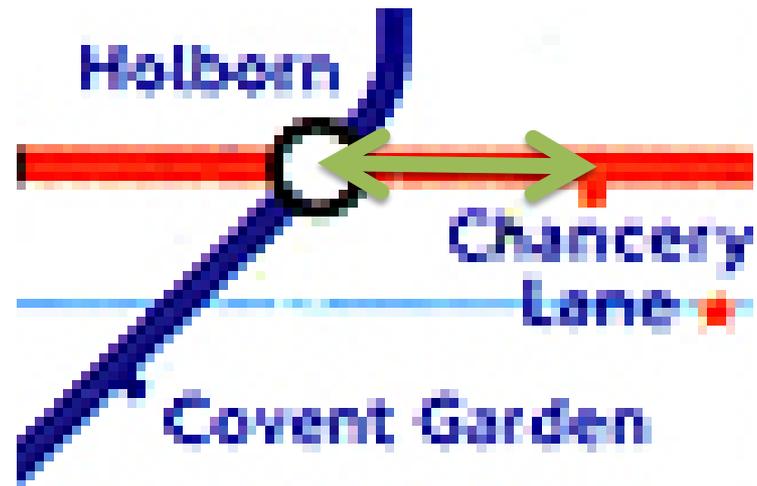


Don't communicate 'the issue'



one step at a time





KISS – Keep it Simple Stupid

Statement on Economic Policy

List of Signatures

Aberdeen University

J A Cairns
Professor M Gaskin
A H Harris
A G Kemp
F D Murphy
D A Newlands
Professor D W Pearce
R Shaw

Bath University

Professor D Collard
R P Kamat
F Mosley

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R E Backhouse
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Sir Fred Atkinson (Professor)
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K Starzec
A Sutherland
R Tarling
S Treloar
J Trevichick
Professor H A Turner
T W Ward
M R Weale
J R Wells
C Whitehead
F Wilkinson

IF YOU FIND A FIRE

1. **Raise the alarm**
2. **Go immediately to the place of safety**
3. **Call the fire brigade**

IF YOU FIND A FIRE

1. **Network with your neighbours**
2. **Explain the issues and the processes of ignition, fuel effects, oxidation and ion plasmas, and address the social and economic justice dimensions**
3. **Educate decision-makers regarding the establishment of an adequately resourced fire brigade and fire-prevention culture, and ask your neighbours to join in**

Effective communication is not accidental it follows patterns

Fire

We are all in danger

Let's go this way

We are leaving

Awareness

Alignment

Engagement

Action

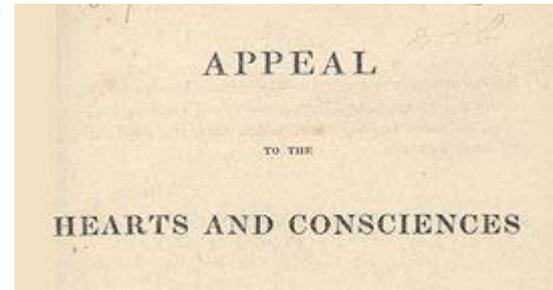
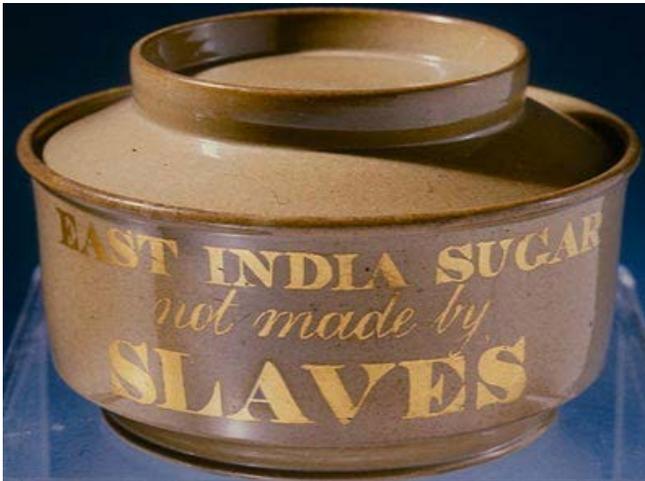




Wedgewood jasperware
medallion 1787



Wedgwood jasperware medallion 1787







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TTIP controversy: The European Commission and Big Tobacco accused of cover-up after heavily redacted documents released

Documents back up fears that TTIP will allow tobacco giants to take legal action against the UK and other European governments who attempt to tighten smoking legislation

Paul Gallagher | @PMGallagher1 | Thursday 27 August 2015 | 96 comments



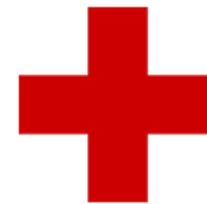
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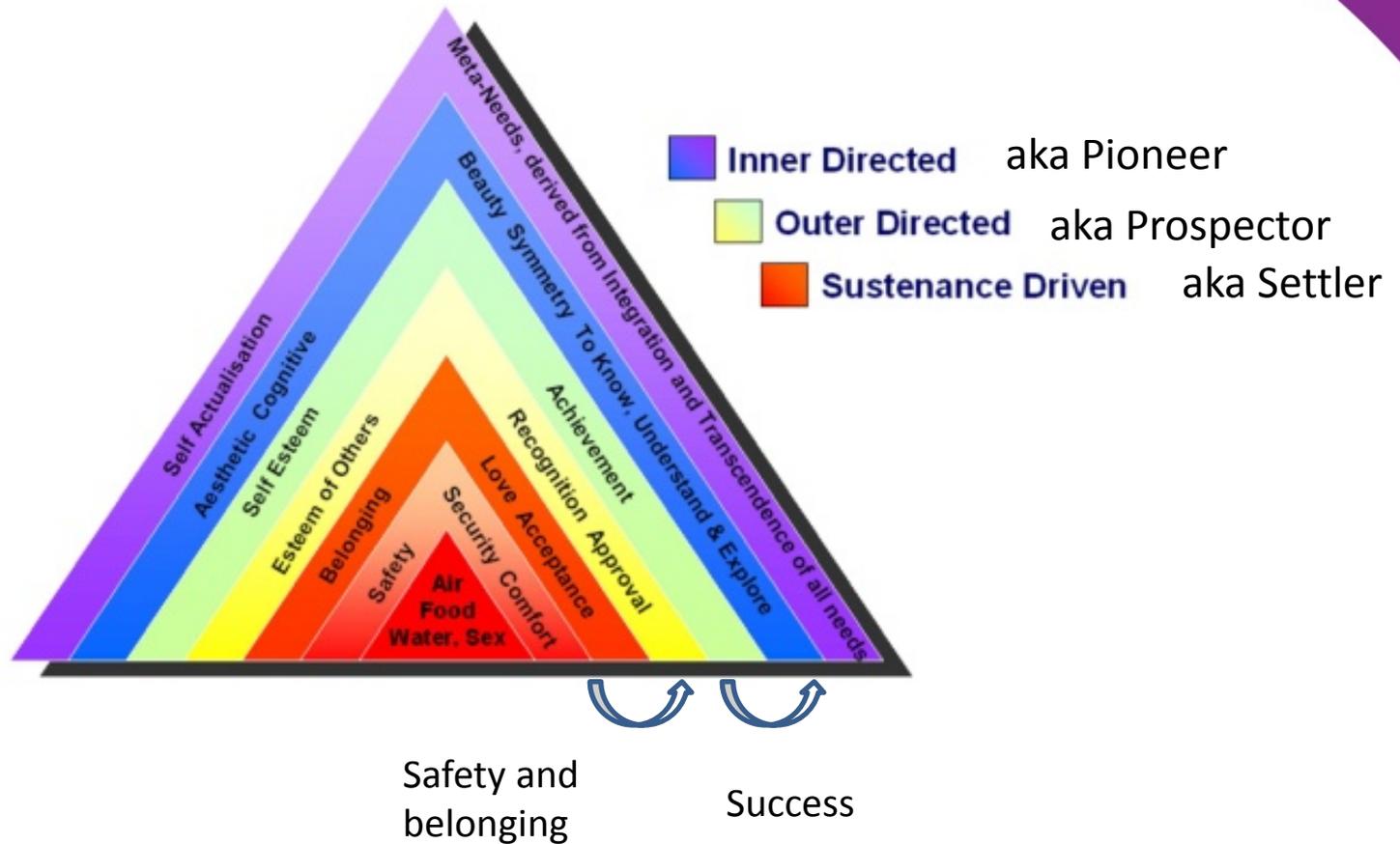




Protestors against the plume trade

Image: The RSPB



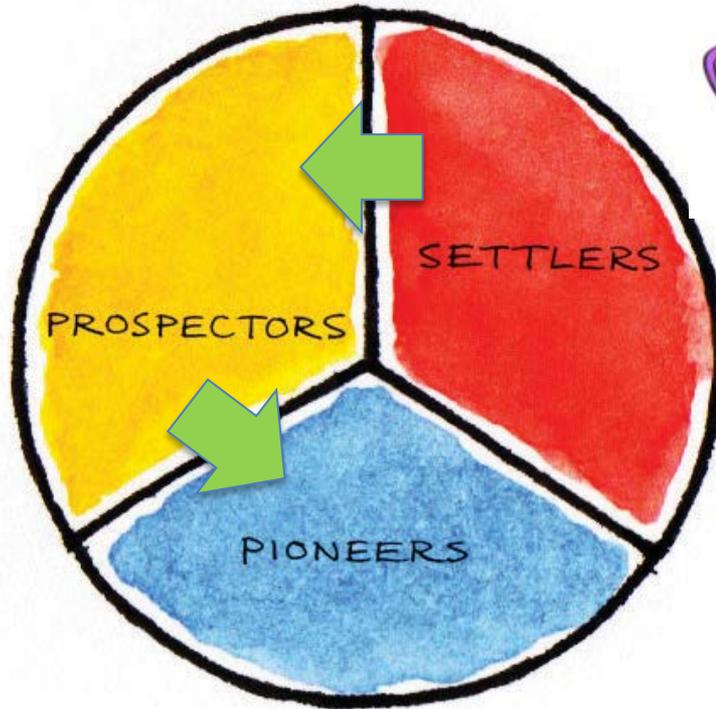


Maslow's hierarchy of Needs – CDSM version www.cultdyn.co.uk - the unmet need is the **dominant** need

People



Prospectors –
outer directed:
need for success,
esteem of others
then self esteem.
Acquire and
display symbols of
success.



Settlers - need for
security driven:
safety, security,
identity belonging.
Keep things small,
local, avoid risk

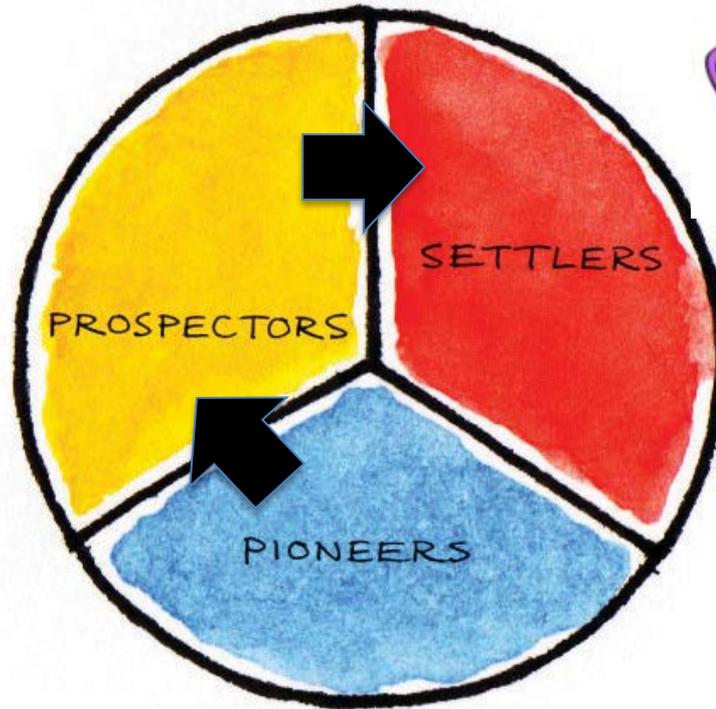


Pioneers – inner directed. Need to
connect actions with values, explore
ideas, experiment. Networking,
interests, ethics, innovation

Organisations



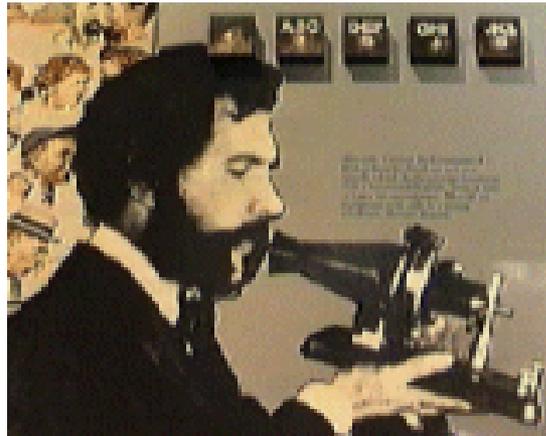
Be better, the best. Compete, safeguard success and reputation



Resist change. Upkeep tradition



Innovate. Experiment. Act on ethics



“I can foresee a time when there will be one
in every town”

C19th politician on the future of the telephone

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descriptive definition of campaigning →

Is 'Online' Increasing the Number of People Engaged in Campaigns ?

Posted on [October 23, 2012](#) by

Chris Rose chris@campaignstrategy.co.uk

@campaignstrat

Campaigns for good purposes must utilise the communications media of the time but it has become a pervasive, 'default' assumption that more 'engagement' or 'mobilisation' is automatically a good thing, and that means the more 'online', the better. Is *that* right ?

So is this a stupid question ? Well it's a no-brainer: of course 'online' does – or maybe it doesn't ?

Yes it is stupid because it can't be answered literally: it all depends on what you mean, what you compare, and how you assess what's important. No, it's not stupid, because we need to think about what's effective.

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'Fashion, which usually confines itself to worthless things was seen for once in the honourable office of promoting the cause of justice, humanity and freedom'.

Why Campaigning Matters

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Directory of Social Change Conference

Campaigning & lobbying in a changing political landscape

London, 27th November 2015

Preamble

I've worked as a campaigner and director for various NGOs such as Greenpeace and WWF International, and on campaigns and communications projects from fear of crime and drugs strategy to human rights and climate change.

I wrote this book [How to Win Campaigns](#) and another, [What Makes People Tick: The Three Hidden Worlds of Settlers, Prospectors and Pioneers](#), about motivational values.

When I get some spare time, I post stuff about campaigns at this website:

www.campaignstrategy.org

Right now I am working on campaigns to engage Small and Medium Enterprises in the issues around TTIP, and on the Tree Charter project, a campaign by the Woodland Trust and some 30 other organisations.

So why does campaigning matter ?

Let me first say that I do not think everything should be done with campaigns. Not all voluntary organisations need to campaign. The process is often fraught, high risk, long, tedious and exhausting. And boring.

As Charlie Watts said about playing with the Rolling Stones for 25 years, it was more like "five years of work and twenty years of hanging around".

But I'd propose two big reasons. It's important for society, and it's important for you, for people working for change in the third sector.

For Society

Campaigns exist where 'delivery' fails. They give people agency and a way of creating choices, where the market and official politics fail to do so.

Campaigns have become the people's politics: public politics. They help make society work.

Campaigns are also increasingly the test-bed for new values propositions, especially where trust and engagement in politics is too low, or where problems are too big or too long-term for politics alone to handle.

If they gain enough support, campaigns show the gap between where society is, and where it should be. They draw their legitimacy from alignment, and from participation.

If you can get what you want without campaigning, then that is almost always the better option. Try everything else first.

Important For You

Campaigning is also important for you as 'civil society', for the third sector. It gives you a way to make change when not just politics and the market cannot deliver but nor can the family, or the community, or your services.

And to do so, the *process* of campaigning imposes a discipline on social organisations which may otherwise be lacking. To get good at it, which is not easy, forces organisations to communicate simply, and effectively.

The essential difference between campaigning and 'advocacy' is public engagement.

Campaigning is not a way to project your opinions but to get people to do things which lead to real change.

I spend a lot of time helping organisations work out how to campaign. One of the starting points is to learn how to achieve simplicity. In this respect, campaigns are to the social sector what advertising is to business: communications of last resort which also make you boil down your proposition to an irreducible essence. Consequently it changes your organisation.

It means you need to start from where your audience is, not from where you are.

It means not talking about the issue, which like the London Underground network, is always too complicated to explain to any large audience. So we cannot campaign by explaining the issue. We campaign to change the issue. One piece at a time.

To do so we need to find the 'red thread' that runs through it, which will lead to the ultimate change we want, and plan a step-at-a-time journey along it.

At every step, we must communicate in ways that work for the public. We need what politicians mysteriously refer to as 'the popular touch'.

KISS or "Keep it Simple Stupid". Easy to say, hard to do.

A favourite saying of ex-Prime Minister Mrs Thatcher. She was famously good at it.

Quite early in her premiership Thatcher adopted 'monetarism' as the way to run the economy. Most economists said she was wrong.

364 of them wrote a long letter explaining why, which was published in *The Times*. They were clever and quite possibly right but the public could not understand them.

Mrs Thatcher went on tv and held up her handbag. In it she said, I have my purse. In the purse is my money. When I do my weekly shop, I cannot spend money I do not have. That's how we need to run the country.

People could understand Mrs Thatcher but not the economists. Seeing as you cannot agree with some-one you don't understand, most people agreed with her. TV is a simplifying medium. Truth on tv always flows towards simplicity. That's true in any in any simplifying context. For example at a distance things always look simpler, and one way and another, public campaigns are run at a distance.

Here's an example of keeping it simple from my book *How to Win Campaigns*. [The fire notice]

It follows the basic communications sequence: awareness, alignment, engagement, action.

If all our communications were that simple, they would be more effective. But why is it that they often look more like this ?

It would not be very effective as a fire notice. People would die, as we have not aligned them to the problem and solution, not told them what do, or shown them how to do it.

This happens when those trying to communicate do not start from where the audience is but try to communicate "the issue". It happens because they know too much about the issue and try to

explain it, rather than motivating people to take just one discrete step, which is of course what advertising does, if it's any good.

Most of all it happens because they have lost sight of what they are trying to do, which in this case is to save lives. If it was for example to save the hotel, the first thing we would want them to do is to call the fire brigade.

For any public communication to be effective, you must know what you want people to do.

Enough of Mrs Thatcher. Let's talk about trees.

I found this photograph when I was working on the Tree Charter project and looking for pictures of big trees. Research shows that most people like trees but they especially like big trees.

At any event this is a big tree, and it's here because of a campaign that did work, although it took a long time to do so.

That was the campaign to end slavery. British abolitionists such as Granville Sharp, took liberated black slaves to Sierra Leone because he wanted to give them their own country. Some of those ex-slaves met under this cotton tree to pray, and it was here that 'Freetown' was first officially declared in 1792.

The campaign to abolish slavery is perhaps the world's best known campaign.

It involved political lobbying, legal action, consumer boycotts, the creation of brands, organising, public speaking, research, investigation and many of the other tactics and strategies still in use today.

In 1791 the Society for Abolition of Slavery developed perhaps the first campaign logo, a kneeling chained man with the question: *"Am I not a man and a brother?"*

These were cast as medallions by Josiah Wedgwood, and became both a campaign badge and a fashion statement. Some were shipped to Benjamin Franklin in Philadelphia, and brought the trans-atlantic slave trade to the attention of the America.

In England, thousands of pamphlets were printed which encouraged people to boycott sugar produced by slaves. 300,000 people abandoned sugar. Sales dropped by as much as 50%. It is said that in areas where the Quakers were strongest, such as in the West Country, sugar acquired such a social stigma that people there still buy less sugar today.

Some shops also advertised goods which had been produced by 'freemen', and sales of sugar from India, where slavery was not used, increased tenfold over two years. Ethical trading.

In Manchester (which sold some £200,000 worth of goods each year to slave ships) 20% of the city's population signed petitions in support of abolition.

One pro-slavery lobbyist complained that the *'Press teems with pamphlets upon the subject ... The stream of popularity runs against us.'*

It wasn't only campaigners who ended the slave trade but they made it possible.

Here's another tree campaign. In 2011 half a million people signed a 38 Degrees petition against the proposed sale of state owned forests in England. 38 Degrees brought the numbers but what really rattled the government was the revolt of the shires, as Conservative voters turned against them.

Eventually the government backed down.

Clearly the proposed sale had struck a nerve which the politicians had not anticipated.

Afterwards the government tried to kick the issue into the long grass by establishing an Independent Panel to look into the future of our forests. In its report, the Bishop of Liverpool wrote that: *'as a society, we have lost sight of the value of trees and woodlands'*.

The government has never properly responded and the future of our trees and woodlands, is unfinished business. The Panel proposed a new political settlement, a new Charter. It was pointed out that the last time there had been any national political settlement about forests was quite a long time ago.

In fact it was back in 1217 in the Forest Charter, which was the business end of the Magna Carta, in which who controlled our forests was the main issue.

This is why the Woodland Trust and its partners are aiming to create a charter with a popular mandate in 2017, on the 800th Anniversary. It will require something of a campaign but it would not be happening, had it not been for those campaigns in 2011.

For me this is an example of what campaigns bring to society. They create gearing: they multiply the impact of efforts at change by enlisting the help of many people. They set agendas, they align the public about what needs to be done. They can remedy a democratic deficit, compensating for the unresponsiveness of our political system. And of course they help challenge abuse of power.

Campaigns have become almost indispensable in trying to protect 'public goods', because politics have broadly become the promoter of private interests.

The issue of TTIP is a current case in point. This is not just a proposed trade agreement but a bypass of democracy and a transfer of power to large corporations. It's being negotiated in secret.

If enacted it will offer multinationals a mechanism to cut down any public protections they see as a 'barrier to trade'. It relegates policies for health, environment, social wellbeing and sustainability to second class concerns. It will give a competitive advantage to large companies over smaller ones, and thus threatens to erode Europe's distinctive business and social culture. That in turn could encourage a cultural convergence between the US and Europe. None of us have voted for it, and without campaigners, most of us would never even have heard of it.

I guess I don't need to convince you that NGOs should be allowed to campaign, although it seems that some of today's politicians are more intent on restricting campaigning than those of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries !

Many of our most respected charities started as campaigns. The RSPB for instance, grew out of the Plumage League which campaigned against killing wild birds to decorate hats, and the Fur, Fin and Feather Folk, a group of Victorian ladies who used to meet in a sitting room in Croydon.

In August, Joe Saxton published [an article in Third Sector](#) magazine reminding us that all these groups started as very political campaigns: [Oxfam, RSPB, NSPCC, RSPCA, Red Cross, Action on Hearing Loss, Mencap and the Salvation Army].

To these you could add the National Trust and many others.

The irony is that many of these organisations struggle to campaign so freely today, not just because of government hostility but because as they age, most organisations become increasingly conservative.

[Cultural Dynamics](#), whose work I describe in *What Makes People Tick*, has mapped people's unconscious motivational values in Britain since the 1970s. In essence they have shown that Abraham Maslow was right and that as social conditions and life chances have improved over time, more people have met their most 'basic' needs such as for safety, security, identity and belonging, so they transition from being Security Driven or as Cultural Dynamics call them, Settlers, to become esteem-seeking Prospectors.

And if they meet those 'Outer Directed' needs, like acquiring and displaying the symbols of success, they become Pioneers, whose unmet needs are 'Inner Directed': such things as innovation and self-exploration, and who believe in ethics and universalism.

The values in fact, that drive people to start cause-campaigns, from Abolition of Slavery to stopping climate change. Hence measurements show that these Pioneers dominate most of your staffs, and they are hugely over-represented in the membership base of change-seeking campaign groups.

Yet organisations go the other way. They start out fringe and weird and a purely Pioneer concern. Then if they get a bit successful they attract the Prospectors, who are vital to grow the organisation because they want it to become bigger and better. To be the best. But they also want to avoid failure. So professionalism takes hold. Big risks start to be avoided. Reputation is safeguarded.

Then finally, once the cause looks 'normal', the Settlers also colonise the group. Being change averse, they make it more conservative.

This basic human nature is an unavoidable reality like gravity. We need to understand and work with it, not deny it or argue with it.

It's why re-invention is hard, and why a constant splintering off of new groups, is no bad thing. In this way Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth grew out of the Sierra Club, and it's no surprise to find former Friends of the Earth campaigners were involved with starting 38 Degrees.

It's also why I do not think the digital revolution has made much essential difference to campaigning, any more than electronic mass media or the existence of the telephone made twentieth century pressure groups very different to the campaigns run by Victorians. The technology, channels and challenges have changed but the dynamics driven by human nature have not.

A couple of years ago I asked if anyone knew if the existence of 'online', of the internet and social media, had [increased the number of people engaged in campaigns ?](#) So far as I could tell, nobody knows the answer but it seems very likely that it is a case of old wine in new bottles.

In values terms for instance, what NGOs regard as "cyber-campaigners" appear to be exactly the same as the people who previously wrote letters to newspapers. Indeed at the moment, many of them are the self-same people.

But it is essential that campaigns evolve because they are in an arms race with politicians and businesses competing for public attention. Groups like 38 degrees and Avaaz are not the same as groups like the RSPB or Friends of the Earth. I see them more as [Campaign Service Providers](#) than clubs or societies, and in many ways they have taken some of the territory previously held by the mass media, the campaigning newspapers of old and the investigative press, and they challenge the media's claim to reflect 'public opinion'.

Herein lies a risk for all campaign groups. Digital media makes it possible to aggregate support drawn from a very thin social and psychological seam and roll it up into a big number. But you have to be very careful about strategies based on a numbers game.

The easier it is to indicate agreement, the more devalued that indication can become. Mobilisation has to matter, to make a difference, and an opinion poll is not mobilisation.

Data are quite hard to come by but if you look at petitions, and at demonstrations, numbers being mobilised do not seem to be increasing. If anything they [may be going down](#).

Likewise, 'digital story-telling' is all the rage amongst NGOs but many of the most celebrated 'successes' do not start to get close to the audiences regularly reached by the old mass media.

Paradoxically, campaigns in the digital age have even more need for direct communication, of face to face and hand to hand engagement.

As we live more in virtual worlds, and as we can design our own feeds of news so that we only see what we want, and only spend time online with people most like ourselves, we are ever less likely to spend time with people not like ourselves.

Even if we are in a public place many of the old ambient signals have gone. We no longer see for example, what news strangers are reading when we sit opposite them on a train. An iPhone does not advertise its content like the front page of a newspaper.

This makes it harder for campaigns to fulfil one of their most valuable tasks: to set agendas, and to align diverse audiences.

Concluding

What of the future ?

Some say the NGO campaign change model is itself broken.

That public cynicism breaks the belief-chain in which public attention and demands will be heard by politicians and corporations. That social media fails to provide the convening and aligning power of the mass media age. That the third sector ends up not changing the rules but holding the baby.

That what the world needs now is for NGOs not to be alarm-sounders and political pressure groups but to be incubators of businesses with an ethical compass. Politicians have ceded so much responsibility to the market that it is the politics of the market where the most important decisions will be made.

There's something in each of these. All I would say is to experiment, innovate and do what works. [Do not waste time looking for a general theory of change](#) – the closest I have found to that is the model of motivational needs – but establish a body of practice, based on evidence of what works for you.

One thing I am certain of is that campaign groups need to reach beyond their 'natural' Pioneer base who can be engaged just with the idea. For example, like the Slavery abolitionists, they need to reach people who love things like fashion: the Prospectors. Thomas Clarkson who persuaded Wedgwood to make those medallions, wrote that

'Fashion, which usually confines itself to worthless things was seen for once in the honourable office of promoting the cause of justice, humanity and freedom'.

Ends