

Leading Change by Marshall Ganz - a summary

What are Social Movements

Social movements focus *not just on winning the game, but on changing the rules.*

They assert *new public values* (their vision), *form new relationships* through organising, and *mobilise power* to translate their values into action.

Social movements agitate for change when:

Situation	Example
Past practices are breached	NSA surveillance spies on Americans
New threats loom	Climate change
A sudden opportunity appears	An unexpected electorate elects a progressive independent who holds the balance of power
Social conditions change	Ireland votes for Marriage Equality
New technology changes the rules	Video recording of police brutality

Their 'structures of participation, decision making and accountability' are designed to *celebrate collective identity* and *assert public voice*, so they look more like *churches* or *advocacy groups* than companies that produce goods or services.

What is Leadership

Leaders *accept responsibility not only for their individual 'part' of the work, but also for the collective whole. Leaders create conditions that enable others to achieve a shared purpose.*

Agency is more about *grasping at possibility* than conforming to probability.

Ripe conditions are often foundational, but it is still essential for people (leaders) to grasp the possibility.

Prophetic Imagination

Leaders demonstrate what Walter Brueggemann calls "prophetic imagination", a combination of:

<i>Criticality</i>	<i>Hope</i>
Experience of the world's pain	Experience of the world's possibility
Desire for change	Capacity to make change

Social movement leaders are often young. This is because they have:

1. Biographical availability - time, no family
2. Critical eye - an evaluation of their parents generation
3. Hopeful heart - 'a biological necessity'

The 5 key leadership practices

Building relationships

Relationships are about commitments between people.

They involve the initial interests that bring people together, new interests that emerge through the course of the relationship, and an interest in the relationship itself.

Social movements involve relationships between peers, and between leaders and others. Successful movements involve both strong ties, and weak ties.

<i>Strong ties</i>	<i>Weak ties</i>
Facilitate trust, motivation, and commitment	Broaden access to salient information, skills and learning

Strong ties rely upon 'relationship work' - such as one-one meetings or house meetings. To do this work at scale requires many leaders skilled in this practice - therefore a capacity to train leaders - not only at the top - is a core social movement competency.

Telling the story

A social movement tells a new story. Actionable "grievances" are experienced as an injustice. They are not simply an inconvenience but *a wrong that demands righting*. Grievances (problems) only lead to action if combined with "efficacy or hope" (a Credible Solution + Agency).

Storytelling is important because they it helps explain how we (or how we *should*) make decisions. Stories provide a framework to help us *understand choices* in a moral context, based on values.

Stories can also help overcome emotional barriers to action:

Action barriers	Action catalysts	Notes
Inertia	Urgency	About priority.

Apathy	Anger	Not rage, but indignation at the moral order being violated
Fear	Hope	You can inoculate against the threat of the enemy by recognising their behavior is predictable.
Isolation	Solidarity	Mass meetings, celebration, singing, common dress, shared language
Self doubt	You can make a difference (YCMAD)	Showing what we can do Set people up to succeed

When we experience the “world as it is” in deep dissonance with values that define the “World as it should be” we experience *emotional dissonance*, a tension only resolvable through action.

What drives hope

<i>Driver</i>	<i>Detail</i>
Credible solutions	1) Demonstrate how it is done elsewhere 2) Personal experience at small scale
Faith	Many of the great social movements e.g. Gandhi, Civil Rights, Solidarity - drew strength from religious traditions
Individuals & their psychology	We know people who can inspire hope just by being around. Charisma can be understood as a person’s capacity to inspire hope in others.

Elements of a story

Plot	<p>A plot involves the unexpected occurring.</p> <p>There is a <i>Challenge</i> (the plan is up in the air), a <i>Choice</i> (someone must figure out what to do), and an <i>Outcome</i>.</p> <p>(When there are choices, and we know how process them, this is human <i>agency</i>)</p>
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Character	<p>While arguments persuade with evidence logic, stories persuade through empathetic identification. This is why they have characters - for us to identify with.</p> <p>As Aristotle says “the protagonist’s tragic experience touches us and, perhaps, opens our eyes”</p>
Moral	<p>Stories teach. We deploy stories to make a point (how to act) <i>and</i> evoke a response (hope). Ultimately, they inspire us to action rather than inaction.</p>
Setting	<p>Storytelling is also about the relationship between the storyteller and the audience. It is how we interact with each other, share experiences, counsel each other and inspire each other to action.</p>

Public narrative

Social movement leaders tell **new public stories**.

Story	Purpose	Key Elements
Story of Self	<p>Communicates identity, values, choices.</p> <p>What is utterly unique about us is our journey, our way through life.</p> <p>When we do public work, we have a responsibility to give a public account of ourselves.</p> <p>Stories of self allow us to communicate our experience and motivations with regard to our claims/positions.</p>	<p>Where we came from</p> <p>Why we do what we do</p> <p>where we think we’re going.</p>
Story of Us	<p>Can overlap with stories of self, but goes further.</p> <p>Situates your story as similar to others, based on values (grounded in founding,</p>	<p>Grounded in</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - founding - choices made - challenges faced - outcomes, lessons learned

	<p>choices made, challenges faced, outcomes, lessons learned).</p> <p>The values of our community and distinguishes 'us' from another. Collective identity.</p>	
Story of Now	<p>Articulates the urgent challenge to the values that we share that demands action now.</p> <p>The Story of Now is the <i>Moment</i> in which story (why) and strategy (how) overlap.</p>	<p>What choice must we make?</p> <p>What is at risk?</p> <p>Where lies the hope? (Needs to be specific, with a clear articulation of strategy)</p>

Devising strategy

A function of social movement leadership is creative strategizing.

Tool	Used to tackle challenge
Storytelling	Motivation
Strategy	Resources - challenges of the status quo rarely have access the the resources that its defenders to.

As with David and Goliath, the strategic challenge that social movement leaders face is how to successfully challenge those with more power.

Although no one is entirely without resources, people lack power when unable to mobilise or deploy their resources in ways that influence the interests of critical others. e.g. a person's labor resource can become a source of power vis-a-vis their employer if mobilised collectively. This is a strategy!

Moments

Timing is an important part of strategy.

Opportunities occur at moments when actors resources acquire more value (and leverage to achieve their goals) because the environmental context changes.

If you had a context in which rules, resources and interests were fixed, you could use game theory to design strategy. However, because campaigning is about changing the rules of the game, campaign strategy by necessity becomes an ongoing creative process of understanding and adapting to new conditions.

This is where **strategic capacity** is really handy.

<i>Component of strategic capacity</i>	<i>Why</i>	<i>How to build it</i>	<i>David and Goliath reference</i>
<i>Motivation</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brings focus • Ability to concentrate for extended periods of time • Persistence • Willingness to take risks • More likely to do the work required to learn skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intense interest • Experienced directly a failure as a result of a 'sharp breach in expectations' • Through success 	David knew he had to do it before he knew how!
<i>Salient knowledge</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mastery of skills / tactics • Domain knowledge (e.g. local knowledge) <p>Military strategists would say it's important to know both how to use weapons but equally about the enemy and the battlefield.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strong and weak ties to constituencies and personal experience • Diverse repertoires of collective action. 	David was very good with a stone and slingshot.
<i>Learning processes</i>	<p>Ability to re-contextualise and synthesize information/circumstances in new ways.</p> <p>When faced with a novel problem, power-holders can fail to grasp the threat (their learning processes are slow).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognise problems as new ones that require new solutions. • Diverse points of view. • Mindfulness that multiple 	David could re-imagine the battlefield in the content of what he knew as a shepherd, making creative use of his resources.

		solutions are possible.	
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Focus

Given a fragile governance structure, leaders often try to avoid conflict by saying “Yes” to everyone. This “thousand flowers” approach, however:

- diffuses effort
- squanders resources
- confuses supporters
- trivialises the value of individual contribution

Strong social movements have organisational structures that help bring strategic focus to their efforts.

Action

Action refers to the work of mobilising and deploying resources to achieve outcomes. Power may be built through the relational, motivational and strategic work - but the bottom line is action.

Social movements are, in the end, about changing the world, not yearning for it, thinking about it, or exhorting it.

Resources affect results

	How Mobilised Affects How They Can be Deployed	How Deployed Affects How they Can Be Mobilised	
From participants	Resources mobilised from participants can be deployed with accountability solely to participants in ways that empower them to achieve results.	Action based on resources that participants can commit may limit tactics to those in which they are willing to participate!	Often generates new resources. Union success often yields more members, more dues and more leadership. Faith based organisations do parish renewal (evangelism) their human and financial capacities grow.

From outside	If one's resource advantage is people, using tactics that require money makes little sense.	Outside resources entail accountability to donors, who often place limits on how they can be used.	Often (e.g. grant based action programs) fail to generate new resources through their work, creating state of perpetual dependency.
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No consistently “right” answer to the appropriate interaction of resources and action. But understanding the relationship is essential so leaders can make conscious choices about how to improve the odds that their movement will succeed in its goals.

Translating intent into outcome

Perhaps the single greatest social movement “action” challenge is consistently translating intent into outcome: making things happen on time, counting them; and evaluating them for continual improvement.

a. Culture of commitment

A commitment is a specific pledge of time, money or action. We avoid making commitments we cannot keep - if anything this demonstrates their power and our need to obtain them.

There is a craft of getting commitments. It is hard and we tend to under-ask to avoid a “No” (or to avoid a “Yes” and the reciprocal commitment that goes with it!).

A cultures of commitment is made up of norms, processes and structures.

b. Specific timeframes with measurable outcomes and real deadlines

One of the main reasons movements avoid commitment to specific outcomes is a fear that failure will diminish the motivation needed to sustain the movement. However, this is only of limited strategic value.

One of the most important leadership challenges in a social movement is learning how to handle loss, to experience setbacks as routine practice and a source of learning.

c. Designing volunteer tasks in such a way as to avoid grunt work

- Attention to skill variety
- Task identity (a whole task)
- Task significance (a meaningful task)
- Autonomy (choice as to how to achieve the outcome for which one is responsible)

- Feedback (seeing the results of one's work)

Managing an effective team means scheduling time for the team to meet, to learn, to coach each other, and to receive expert coaching. *A regular "learning" meeting can become the eye in the hurricane, the order at the core of what can feel like a chaotic enterprise.*

d. Contingency

The world of social movements is a world of contingency: almost everything that can go wrong likely will. In a setting where new recruits are trying to achieve daunting tasks, under pressure of time and with fewer resources than they need - disaster lurks just around the corner.

Effective leaders focus on that which they have some control (recognising most is outside their control). For example, reminder calls two hours before a meeting. They also remain in learning mode - better able to adapt.

Structuring social movements - campaigns

When organising or maintaining an organisation, we treat time as a cycle in which we maintain routines, procedures and work to annual budget.

However when we are taking action/campaigning, time is more like an arrow. When time is an arrow, we begin at a specific moment and end at a specific moment. Like an arrow, in a campaign we "target" objectives one at a time with intense concentration and energy.

Campaign "time" is structured as an unfolding narrative:

Prologue	Foundational period
Curtain goes up	Kick off
Act one, act two	Building slowly to successive peaks
Denouement	A peak determining the outcome
Epilogue	Celebration of outcome

Campaigns provide opportunity for learning by allowing for small losses in the early days. They provide a chance to learn how to get it right. Of course, it is important to use the early phase of a campaign "mindfully" in this way so it isn't a preview of what we will do wrong on a large scale.

Campaigning as a symphony

A good campaign is nested - each objective viewed as a “mini campaign” with its own own unfolding narrative. It can be thought of as a symphony of multiple movements. A symphony is also constructed from many different voices interacting in multiple ways, but whose overall coordination is crucial for the success of the undertaking.

Leadership Development

Social movement leadership is not just about adapting to the rhythm of change, but structuring a space in which effective leadership can grow in others. This is particularly challenging given voluntary mode in which most movements operate.

The structural challenge

<i>Common approaches</i>	<i>Challenges</i>
<i>Command and control</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Alienate participation ● Inhibit adaptation to local/changing conditions ● Curb organisational learning ● Over-reliance on process
<i>Antipathy to structure</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Tyranny of structurelessness ● Authority is exercised in opaque ways “off the books” ● Little or no public accountability ● Decentralisation can also inhibit learning/coordination ● Decision-making chaos

Considerations in team structure

	Approach	How
Team design	<p>Move away from dominant model of a heroic individual, standing firm in the face of cosmic challenge, to a team approach.</p> <p>Individuals acquire skills in the context in which they use them, skills learnt are collaborative, and accountability is embedded in</p>	<p>Bounded Stable Interdependent</p> <p>Common purpose Specified roles Clear norms</p>

	the team membership.	
Deliberative practice	<p>Use deliberative practices that enable teams to engage conflict without suppressing it, differ without personalising... collectively:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - define problem - establish outcome criteria - generate alternatives - evaluate alternatives - make decision - learn from the decision 	Much easier to cultivate when the group has articulated shared values, and identified common purpose
Mechanisms of accountability	Recognising the centrality of commitment to volunteer effort .	Focus on equipping teams to confront (offer feedback to) those who did not honor their commitments, celebrate those who did and coach each other across the board.