Base Power Learning Community
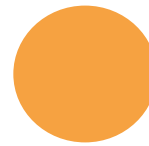
Base Power Learning Series:
From Engaging Members to Developing Leaders

Webinar 3 – Base Power Series

WEBINAR 3: ENGAGEMENT – Engaging Members & Developing Leaders Across Legal Entities

About Nijmie Zakkiyyah Dzurinko

Consultant, movement strategist, organizer, artist, healer

About the Learning Community

The **Base Power Learning Community** brings together progressive intermediaries and leaders to learn, document innovation, and create resources for multi–entity organizations building membership across their legal entities.

NEW LEFT ACCELERATOR

NLA collaborates with those building durable progressive power for the progressive movement.

NLA runs capacity-building programs focused exclusively on supporting progressive organizations and ecosystems to use multiple legal entities to build power, increase impact, and win.

The Base Power Learning Community is Hosted and Sponsored by:

Progressive Multiplier

NEW LEFT ACCELERATOR

ABOUT THIS WEBINAR SERIES

Register for all webinars here:
https://www.newleftaccelerator.org/events

WEBINARS HELD ALREADY –
RECORDING AVAILABLE

1. Base Building and Multi-Entity Membership Models

2. 501(c)3 and (c)4 Membership Programs: Navigate the Law – Bolder Advocacy

ABOUT THIS WEBINAR SERIES

Register for all webinars here:
https://www.newleftaccelerator.org/events

MORE IN THE MULTI-ENTITY SERIES

5. **Resourcing The Base**: c(3)/c(4) Fundraising and Communications
   – October 20, 2021, 12pm PST

6. **Membership and Data**: Do You Have Consent For That?
   – November 10, 2021, 12pm PST

Core Beliefs Guiding Our Webinar Series

1. We believe in collaboration

Given the complexity of our work, we believe collaboration is a powerful tool required for our shared learning journey. We recognize that addressing the challenges of base-building strategy will take all of us – intermediaries, leaders, and funders. We acknowledge that effective base-building strategy requires a holistic approach that integrates the advice and learning from different perspectives within our ecosystem and across different departments within organizations.

2. We take a learning stance to disrupt the traditional expert–learning model

As progressive intermediaries, we are also here to learn. We acknowledge the deep wisdom, lived experiences, and knowledge of the leaders we work with who execute base building in the field. And while we all have expertise, we reject a narrow definition of "expert" and strive for transformative learning that disrupts the typical "expert–learning" dynamic in all our work.

3. We recognize & name the complexity of base building work

We know that base building work within the constraints of existing funding practices, operating within multi-entity nonprofits and other structural and ecosystem limitations is hard. We seek to recognize, name and discuss that complexity in all its messiness.

4. We aspire to change structural limitations

We believe that building power for our communities requires a shift in how our entire ecosystem supports, invests in, and understands multi-entity organizations. We are committed to shifting beliefs and practices about how funders and intermediaries engage with multi-entity work. To that end, we seek to deepen our entire ecosystem's understanding of the critical role of multi-entity base-building, and use that knowledge to enact structural change.

NORMS

- **Privacy and data collection**
  - What is said or learned here will not be attributed to you or your organization in any way
  - We won't sell your info – we promise!
  - We are recording to share the presentation with others – but all questions or speaking from the audience will be edited out
  - Data helps us learn – PLEASE SHARE & ANSWER

NORMS

- **Take care of you**: Break in less than an hour

- **This is a learning space**: What we learn here will also help us build better content for the movement in the future. You are contributing to movement learning – so please respond/share

LEARNING GOALS

- Leaders deepen their understanding of the role of the base in moving change in society
- Leaders better understand the unique complexities and opportunities of multi-entity membership programs
- Leaders are armed with key questions to bring back to their organizations to help build a stronger multi-entity membership/base program
- Leaders understand how c4 membership engagement can build power for their base
- Leaders increase their commitment to ensuring members have real power and voice in the decisions of their organizations
- Leaders understand the benefits, power and pitfalls of engaging members in c4 and political activity

Schedule with Breaks

12:05 – 12:25 3:05 – 3:25	12:25 – 1:00 3:25 – 4:00	1:00– 1:10 4:00 – 4:10	1:10– 1:50 4:10 – 4:50	1:50– 2:00 4:50 – 5:00
Welcome Intro Core Beliefs Goals of the Series	**Organizations and Leadership**	**10–Minute Break**	**Video and engagement in c4 organizations**	**Synthesis/ Closing Evaluation**

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Our Main Legal Structures are Limiting

- Nonprofits are legal entities created by Federal Law (IRS) and State Law. They are not created to help us base build
- c(3)s created by the IRS as a means to give tax breaks to rich people
- Both c(3) and (c)4s are highly regulated: Means we often must create multiple legal entities to build power
- None of us would choose to organize ourselves under these multi-entity structures

ORGANIZING and MOBILIZING

ORGANIZING

A long term process of making change involving building a base of people who are impacted by an issue and the whole system, developing their leadership and taking action together that makes demands and aims to shift power relationships.

MOBILIZING

Bringing people together for short term action. May or may not be directly impacted. Primarily logistical, mobilizing does not require building people's understanding or developing their leadership. Emphasis on turn-out of as many people as possible to demonstrate power and commitment to an issue, demand or policy.

Fundamental Assumptions

Change happens in society through the mass movement of the working class

We need *quality* as well as quantity

Mobilizing (GOTV) is not the same as organizing or base building

Most organizational practice creates the problem of a lack of participation

How might we track what's important to us, not just what's important to funders?

People's participation in study and political education processes

Specific measures of how we are developing people along a leadership pathway from member to active member to coordinator

Metrics of coordination such as how people handle conflict and manage flows of communication

Member, Supporter, Base

Who Is Who?

Leader/ Member

Supporter

Base

The people you are accountable to and are developing

Your larger list, people who are following your work or donating without being directly involved

This is the broader community you represent and seek to engage and need to win (e.g. Latinx woman age 18–35)

Poll 1

- Do you consider your organization to be a membership organization? (Yes/No)

- Our organization has our own metrics for measuring the quality of our leadership development and member engagement beyond what funders require (Yes/No)

- Our organization would like to develop our own metrics for measuring the quality of our leadership development and member engagement beyond what funders require (Yes/No)

WHY WE ORGANIZE & HAVE MEMBERS

What is the purpose of mass organizations?

Politics begin where the masses are, not where there are thousands, but where there are millions, that is where serious politics begin.
- Vladimir Ilyich Lenin

Difference between perception of mass engagement and reality

Difference between building political leadership and astroturfing/list building
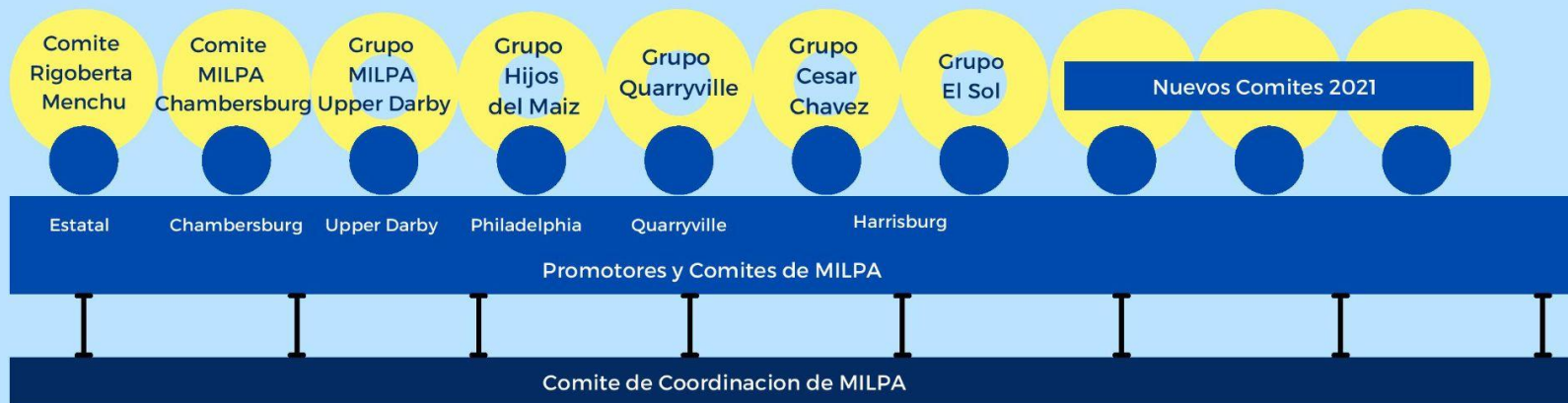
Why do we need leaders?

Sustainability: To withstand ups and downs in funding and staff capacity

Accountability: To move away from being staff-led and driven; hold our organization accountable to our community

Legitimacy: To successfully build and wield power by demonstrating that we are led and controlled by the community

Estructura de MILPA 2021

Comite Rigoberta Menchu

Comite MILPA Chambersburg

Grupo MILPA Upper Darby

Grupo Hijos del Maiz

Grupo Quarryville

Grupo Cesar Chavez

Grupo El Sol

Nuevos Comites 2021

Estatal   Chambersburg   Upper Darby   Philadelphia   Quarryville   Harrisburg

Promotores y Comites de MILPA

Comite de Coordinacion de MILPA

Promotor/as de Derechos: Desarrollo y coordinación de comités de Derechos, documentación de abusos en su comunidad, coordinación de campañas de MILPA localmente

Coordinador/a: Coordina varias comités de MILPA. Reclutamiento de nuevas promotores. Trabaja muy cerca con la Coordinadora de Promotores y Membresia.

Personal de MILPA, Coordinación de Areas de Trabajo como comunicación, campañas, movilización y proyectos estatales, administrativo, finanzas de la red y cuidado comunitario. Desi Burnette, Maria Alejandra Hernandez, Gabriela Castañeda, Julissa Morales

Transactional Member Engagement

Giving people busywork

Show up and hold a sign

Extracting stories without developing leaders

Assuming that poor and dispossessed people can't organize or can't speak on their own behalf to power

Lack of Power Within Org: – e.g. Making candidate endorsements without member/base input

Pitfalls of transactional member engagement

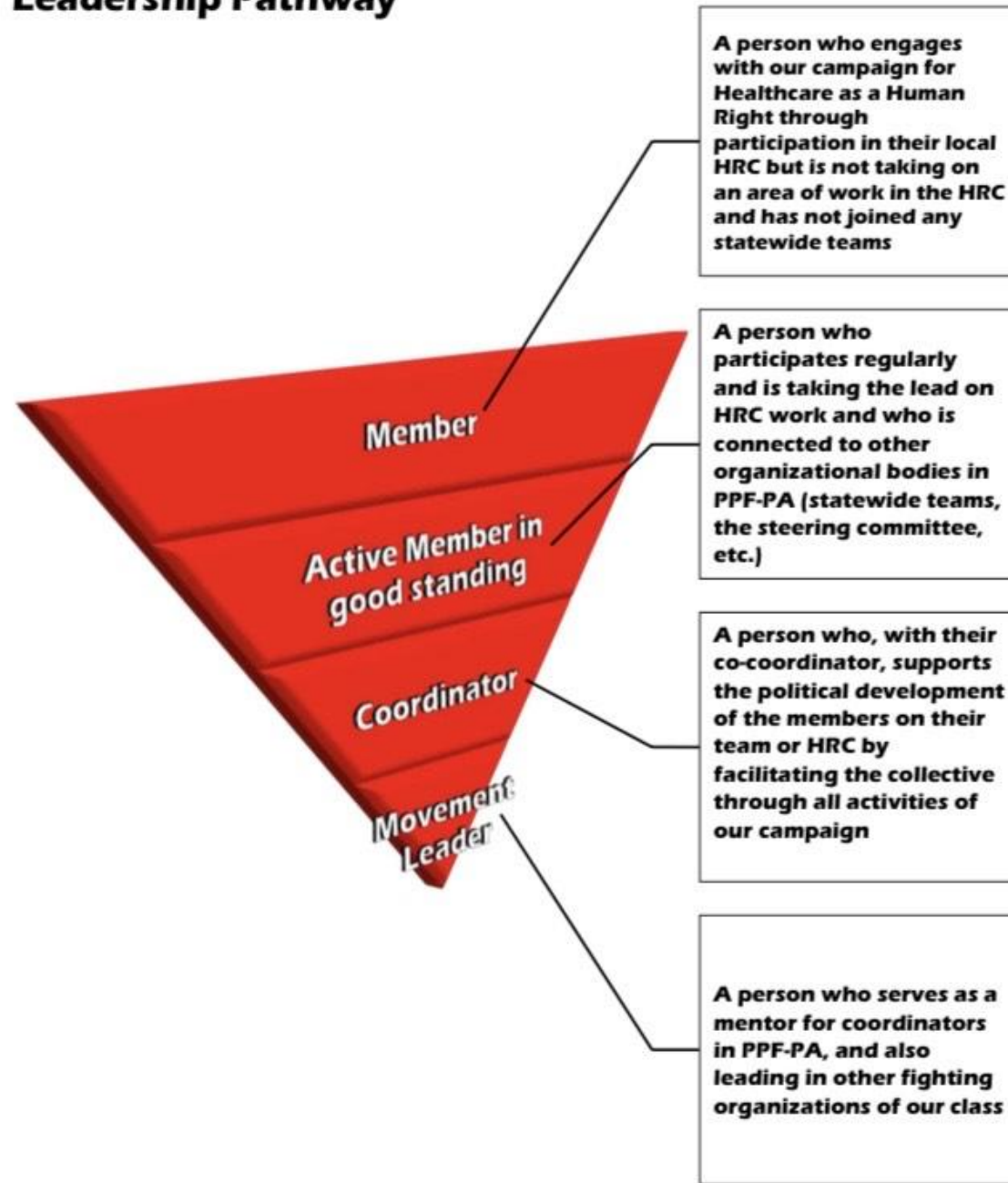**Burn-out**

Mobilizing without Organizing

- (e.g. not using the contact/resources that come in in election years to build true engaged base)

Constant stream of new members

Under-development

- especially during elections – GOVT vs sustained year-round engagement

Leadership Pathway

Member

A person who engages with our campaign for Healthcare as a Human Right through participation in their local HRC but is not taking on an area of work in the HRC and has not joined any statewide teams

Active Member in good standing

A person who participates regularly and is taking the lead on HRC work and who is connected to other organizational bodies in PPF-PA (statewide teams, the steering committee, etc.)

Coordinator

A person who, with their co-coordinator, supports the political development of the members on their team or HRC by facilitating the collective through all activities of our campaign

Movement Leader

A person who serves as a mentor for coordinators in PPF-PA, and also leading in other fighting organizations of our class

How this leader shows COMMITMENT for the long haul	This leader develops the COMPETENCE to take initiative & to carry out these activities	Ways to build deeper CONNECTION to people in our organization & our base	Ways to gain CLARITY about the Root cause of our problems & what we're up against
- Attends meetings occasionally - Shows up to events and mobilizations - Signs up online or with a membership form - Pays dues if able - Subscribed to enews (if on e-mail) - Personal identification with organization - Follows organization on social media and shares content (if on social media) - Attends coalition mass activities	- Be among the first to know about and be able to plug into our work - Looks for opportunities to get more actively involved, which means more opportunities for development - Invites other people to join them in activities	1 on 1 with coordinators 2 on 1s shadowing a more advanced member with someone newer - Participating in a base building effort - Attending Statewide Membership calls - Consistency, reliability	- Take part in a New Member Orientation (intro to organization, history, structure, campaign) - Study New Member Handbook (individually & collectively) - Participation in committee political education - Attends Monthly Political Education sessions

Poll 2

Which of these is true for you (check all that apply):

- We have a written definition of membership (what is required to be a member)

- We distinguish between our membership and our base

- We have different definitions of membership in our 501(c)3 vs our 501(c)4

- We are tracking how long our members have been involved

Definitions of Leadership

What isn't a leader? Commonly held yet destructive conceptions

- Leaders are those who are out in front of the march and cameras.
- Leaders are authoritarian. They give orders.
- Leaders accrue and abuse power.
- Leaders make all the decisions
- Leaders are unaccountable to members and the organization.
- Leaders are threatened by other leaders and collectives of leaders.
- Leaders are bad.

What is a leader? What do leaders do?

- ## Develop other leaders
- Develop themselves as leaders
- Work in, facilitate and build collectives
- Drive and bottom line projects, areas of work and processes
- Use/wield the organizing model and campaign
- Unite our communities around a common vision and strategy
- Identify, analyze and solve problems

What are the 4 key qualities that leaders need to develop?

- Clarity

- Competency

- Commitment

- Connection

We call these qualities the 4 C's of leadership.

Clarity - understanding the root cause of a problem enables leaders to put forth effective solutions to a problem. As MLK said "The prescription for the cure rests with the accurate diagnosis of the disease."

Competency - the ability to think and act strategically and tactically, plan and wield our campaigns, and organize our communities enables us to unite people so that we can work together towards a common end.

Commitment – dedication to each other, to our community, to the human dignity of all motivates our actions and enables us to persevere in struggle, to stick and stay the course.

Connection - the relationship to other leaders and our communities that are struggling enables us to identify our strengths and to understand, represent and fight for the pressing needs and demands of our base.

When we come back . . .

- Creating the environment to build leaders
- c3 and c4 member activities
- The ingredients of leadership
- Benefits and pitfalls of c4 membership
- Questions and next steps

Break: 10 Minutes
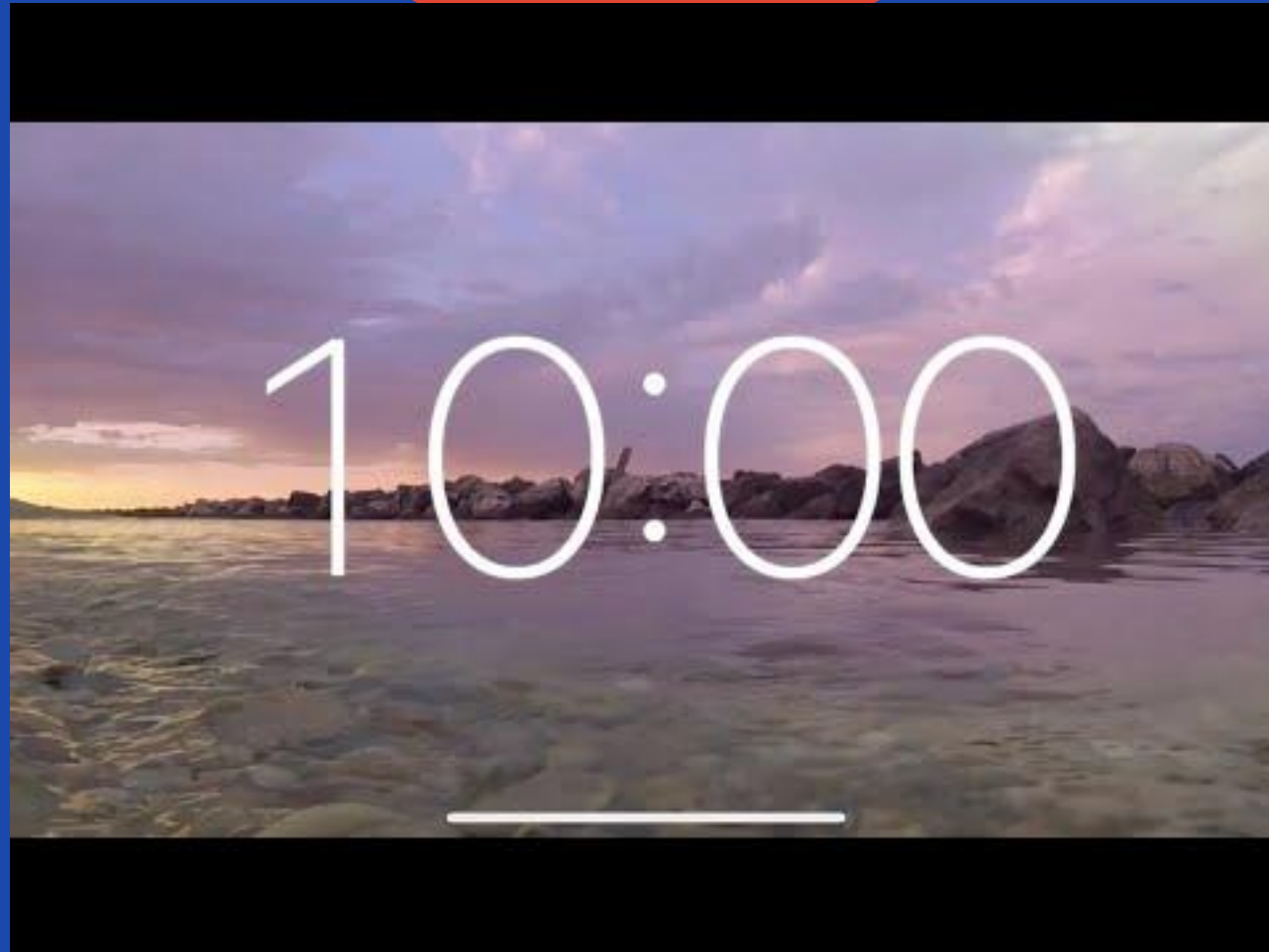
Building Leaders/Members

How do we create the environment to build leaders?

Class Struggle (campaigning)

Classroom (understanding)

Class organization (organizational structure/collectivity) includes data and metrics

501(c)(3) Member Activities

- **Grassroots Lobbying – (c)3**
- **Carrying out actions and tactics (not related to candidates for office)**
- **Participating in and coordinating organizational bodies**
- **Building coalitions and networks**
- **Speaking for the organization and its campaigns**
- **GOTV and voter education**
- **Issue advocacy and education**

501(c)(4) AND (c)(3) Member Activities

- Grassroots Lobbying – (c)3/(c)4
- Holding progressive candidates Accountable (c)3/(c)4
- Policy creation, implementation, regulation, and lobbying (c)3/(c)4
- Community or elected official education (c)3/(c)4

501(c)(4) Member Activities

- **Recruiting and running members from your community for many public offices (c)4/PAC**
- **Endorsing or supporting candidates**
- **Independent Expenditures (IE's) related to candidates for office (pro or against) (c)4/PAC**
- **Raising/donating $ or time to candidates PAC/(c)4**
- **Partisan GOVT or mobilization**
- **Generating content/media with political messaging during elections (c)(4)/PAC**
- **Certain accountability activities during election cycles**

The 4 Cs of Leadership

Video: Willie Baptist on the 4C's of leadership

Benefits & Pitfalls of (c)(4) Membership

(c)(4) Membership Program: Benefits

Generate Unrestricted Funds for Shared Work

– Dues that come in through your c4 can support all your work – funds not restricted by activity

Pathways to Engagement – Visible Victories

- C3 activities are limited – engaging members in activities like determining the org candidate endorsement process can be empowering
- Winning a race is also empowering (DA, School Board, etc.)

Developing Political Home & Political Knowledge

- Engagement in electoral politics can expand members understanding of what is possible (some members run for office)
- If win – lead to increasing engagement in other power building

Engaging C4 Members: Common Pitfalls

Lack of Dedicated Resource/Capacity for Year Round Organizing – follow up

Lack of resources & process (time/$/vol time) – Limited time or money or process dedicated to true development of membership/base – make it real! Staff/investment – inclcreaisngly complex across 2 orgs!

Lack of True Accountability to Base/Members

- Lack of c4 process that truly engage members in c4 decision making – hand off from the c3

Engaging C4 Members: Common Pitfalls

Lack of Member/Base Input into Candidate Endorsement Process

- **Lack of clear criteria for endorsement** (affiliated community vs policy position)
- **Lack of member input into process** (member role in voting/selecting)
- **Lack of clarity about engaging in primaries**
- Pro: power comes from backing progressive v Dem establishment in primaries;
- Con: complex when all candidate on one side – in fighting; lack of agreement among members

Lack of Culture of Compliance – No Dedicated Point Person on Compliance

Who in your organization is responsible for compliance? Answers and encourages Qs?

- Who reviews communications? Manages Data?Answers and encourages Qs?
- If you don't know find out! If you don't have a point person, ask leadership to designate someone!

Poll 3

What are the two greatest challenges you face in building membership across your c3/c4 organization? (please choose 2)
- Managing or sharing data across legal entities
- Different base/community targets for c3 vs c4 membership
- Converting c3 members to c4 members
- Strategic questions about the role of members in our work
- Integrating the member experience across legal entities
- Fundraising or dues-related challenges
- Legal or compliance concerns
- Designing a candidate endorsement process
- Legally compliant messaging to members (elections or otherwise)
- Creating a candidate endorsement process informed by members
- Starting or forming a new entity and building up base

Data & Metrics

Data in election years

Funders provide money for transactional programs - BUT programs can be run in a way that collects valuable data that is personal and helps us really invest in development of our community.

What does your script look like? Can you allow for spacious conversations in people's own language that delve into what folks you're talking to care about?

Can you track that data and engage with them over time in a meaningful way?

What are you thinking about?

What about this content is resonating in terms of your work?

What is one next step for you?

What is one question you have from what you learned here today that will take back to your organization?

Check out the whole Base Power Webinar Series (How to Build Base Power at Multi-Entity Organizations):

https://www.newleftaccelerator.org/events

WEBINAR 5

Resourcing The Base: c(3)/c(4) Fundraising and Communications

October 20, 2021, 12pm PST

Register at: https://www.newleftaccelerator.org/events

Please fill out the evaluation!

Thank You To:

- All of our Roundtable Participants and organizations––You know who you are
- The Base Power Learning Community Partners . . .

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THANK YOU!