

Pathways to Change - a summary for campaigners

Taken from www.evaluationinnovation.org/publications/pathways-change-10-theories-inform-advocacy-and-policy-change-efforts

5 grand theories of change about where power is and how change happens

1 - Large leaps - crisis or sudden unexpected events create the opportunity to create change.

Those in power will see that 'something has to be done' to respond to an unexpected or unanticipated event. Those in power will be looking to be seen to be responding by proposing new measures or solutions. For campaigners it should mean we need to have the 'break glass if' strategy ready to go.

2 - Policy Window - issues get attention when they become 'problems' for those in power, and they know that they have to do something to respond, for example the impending end of the lifespan of existing nuclear power stations means that the government needs to make some decisions about the future of the UK energy mix, thus providing an 'policy window' for campaigners for renewable energy - however for a policy proposal to be successful it needs to be seen a technically feasible and consistent with policy maker and public values.

3 - Coalition - policy change happens through coordinated activities amongst individuals and organisations outside of government with the same core policy beliefs. If enough people can come together they can force change, however the magic 'n' number of how many people that needs to be isn't always clear.

4 - Power Elites - the power to influence policy is concentrated in the hand of a few - some people have more power than others, so influencing efforts should be focused on the few, not the many.

5 - Regime - Governments must work collectively with public and private interests to achieve its aims and outcomes - these are known as 'regimes' (so in the UK we have a 'regime' around both political parties) and they coalesce around a shared broad agenda. So those seeking influence either need to be become part of the existing regime, or 'overthrow' the existing regime and replace it with another.

5 tactical theories which can be selected depending on the context of a campaign or advocacy effort.

1 - Messaging and Framework - individuals don't make rational choices but instead decisions are made based on the way in which opinions are presented or framed. However this strategy needs to be embedded in a broader communication campaign. Campaigners should develop and disseminate messages to our target audience.

2 - Media Influence - mass media, especially news media, influences the public agenda, it shapes reality as opposed to reflecting it. Campaigner should conduct media advocacy campaigns.

3 - Grassroots - people can create power by taking mutual action to achieve social change. Campaigners should organise individuals, and engage them in grassroots advocacy towards decision makers.

4 - Group Formation - our identity is shaped by groups/tribes we are members of. Campaigners should coalesce a group around core attitudes, values or experiences to see a shift social norms.

5 - Diffusion - the process by which a change agent models or communicates an innovation (policy, practice, program or idea) - over time the innovation is adopted, and may reach a critical mass when it will either be adopted or rejected. Campaigners should develop and disseminate research, develop champions of innovation or communicate the innovation.