

Campaign Bootcamp Training Principles, Participants and Methodology

Our principles

Our trainings are an embodiment of our principles: our organisational vision, mission and values.

- Our vision is a world in which people impacted by injustice have the tools and skills they need to end it.
- Our mission is to support people to run effective campaigns that challenge injustice.
- We work with transparency, we hold ourselves accountable, we seek a fair and just world, we value learning, we work in a way which is accessible and adaptable, we care, and we believe training can transform people and communities.

Our participants

Because of our principles, we deliberately seek to work with people who are directly impacted by injustice as we believe that these are the people best placed to organise for a better, fairer future.

- We aim to have a broad range of people with various different marginalised identities in our training spaces, including people of colour, working class people, disabled people, LGBTQIA+ people, women, migrants and asylum seekers.

Having different identities in the training space is not only about training the most marginalised people, but also about intentionally bridging across all of these different issues and identities as a core part of the learning.

Our methodology

We see the role of our trainings within the broader movement as having three elements:

1. Supporting better, more strategic and more sustainable campaigning and movement practice
2. Providing experiential and transformational ways of addressing power
3. Challenging the comfortable and empowering at the edges

These are all essential parts of creating a world in which people impacted by injustice have the tools and skills they need to end it.

In order to fulfil all three elements, we have two strands of learning operating in our trainings at once, **both of which are essential**:

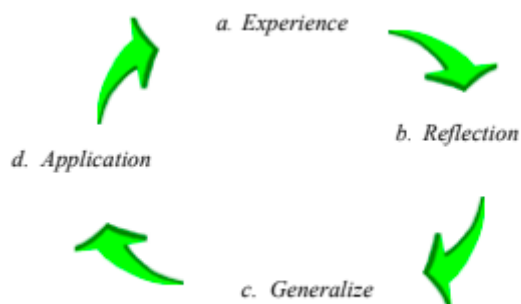
1. 'Hard' skills about campaigning
2. Relational and transformational work

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These two strands are intertwined in our **experiential learning methodology**. At the centre of this methodology is the belief that experience is knowledge. So we hold space for people to bring their experiences into the space, and we encourage 'learning by doing' in the space.

Session and programme structure

On a session level, we work through the 'Experience > Reflect > Generalise > Apply >' cycle:



This means that gamification of our content is a key part of our methodology.

We build our 4 Cs into the structures of the training so the entire training in itself is the Experience part of each participant's ongoing learning:

- **Challenge** - empowering people to challenge injustice
- **Community** - deliberately building community amongst campaigners
- **Care** - choosing to value care as a core element of sustainable organising
- **Creativity** - celebrating creativity as central to inspiring campaigning

Power and privilege

We expect people to bring their socialisation into all of the oppressive aspects of society with them into the training space. We expect people to have had different experiences of the same oppressions. We deliberately choose participants who have marginalised identities. This means we expect dynamics around oppression and harm to occur in the space.

We build in disability access considerations and support from the outreach stage, through application, processing and selection, pre-training, during training and in follow up. We normalise gender diversity by giving models for sharing pronouns and giving a brief explainer at the start of Bootcamp.

We do not run an explicit session on power and privilege at Bootcamp, nor do we explicitly challenge dynamics of oppression in the room from the front. We want to empower people to build community and engage dynamics themselves, so we build majorities of groups - such as people of colour, and we spend a lot of time building trust within the group, as well as signalling from the front of the room and through facilitators that raising issues will be supported. The training and facilitation team tracks issues, and the week is facilitated in an emergent way in order to hold space to address them.

How we work

Our trainings are designed to be transformational experiences, and the feedback we regularly receive from participants demonstrates that this is indeed the impact.

We believe that training can transform people and communities, and empower people to challenge the injustices they face in their everyday lives in sustainable ways.

We therefore see the role of our trainings within the broader movement as having three elements:

1. Supporting better, more strategic and more sustainable campaigning
2. Providing experiential and transformational ways of addressing power
3. Challenging the comfortable and empowering at the edges

It is easy to emphasise the output-oriented focus of point 1, but all 3 are integral to the way we run trainings, partly because 2 and 3 are - we argue - key parts of being able to undertake strategic and sustainable campaigning.

In order to fulfil all three elements, we have two strands of learning operating in our trainings at once:

1. Hard skills about campaigning
2. Relational and transformational work

They are both essential and intertwined, through our **experiential learning methodology**.

Experiential learning

Our model of learning is based in our beliefs about how training spaces should be run, which link directly back to our guiding values and principles.

We believe in freedom. We believe that training spaces should be places of freedom, where the current systems of injustice – which includes how people are conventionally taught – are directly confronted and challenged.

We believe in 'real' learning. We believe that deep and long-lasting learning happens best through experiencing things, through 'learning by doing'. This learning is best enabled when people take risks and step outside their comfort zone.

We believe in individuals. We celebrate that everyone brings into the training space their own identity, background and life experiences, and engages in the space based on their own learning style.

We believe in community. In being connected to something bigger. That when individuals come together to learn from each other and their history, they can create something more powerful than any one individual alone.

We believe in transformation. In working with people towards personal moments of transformation. It is these moments that lead to the larger transformation of people, policies, politics and ultimately the very systems, both written and unwritten, by which our society functions.

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As a result of these beliefs, we train through an **experiential model of learning**.

This model is a rejection of a conventional top-down teacher-learner paradigm, which is the only experience of being in a learning or training space that many of our participants will have ever had (e.g. in school). We believe that a top-down model reinforces unequal power dynamics of 'expertise' where trainers and teachers are framed as having expertise that learners need to access through passively receiving that information from the teacher. We do not think this 'banking' model enables long-term, deep, transformative learning. We also do not believe that it is empowering for participants.

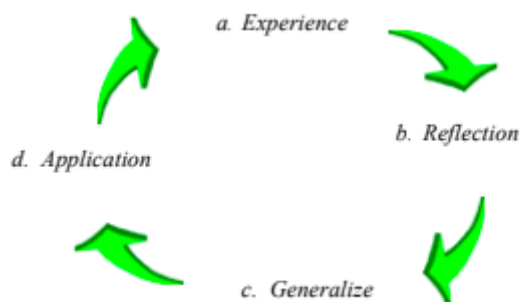
Instead, an experiential model holds that experience is knowledge, and therefore aims to centre the experiences and knowledge of people in the room, drawing out their expertise through relating their own experiences to the campaigning tools we introduce. We also facilitate the sharing of experiences and of participants learning from each other as much as possible.

We aim to embed the experiential learning model throughout the entire structure of a Bootcamp residential. We aim for it to be in how we structure individual training sessions, how we design the learning arc of the week, how we create support structures for participants, how we establish expectations around learning for participants, how we enable access, how we respond to conflict, who we have in our training team, and how we support them.

How we structure sessions

The most obvious way that we build in experiential learning to our training is through the structure of individual training sessions.

Sessions will, as far as possible and appropriate, be structured around the experiential learning cycle:



First you **Do/Experience** the thing, then you **Reflect** on the thing, then you **Generalise** from the thing, then you **Apply** the thing.

This means that gamification of our content is a key part of our methodology, as many of the 'Experience' stages are games that work as metaphors from which participants can be supported to generalise to campaigning activities.

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For example, on Camp the 'rainforest game' is a session about strategy. The aim is for the participants to understand the distinctions between a goal, objectives and tactics. Very briefly, the arc of the session is the following:

- **Do** - play a game where each team tries to achieve the task they are given, such as 'get all of the red sweets' or 'make sure everyone is hydrated'. Chaos ensues for about ten minutes.
- **Reflect** - once the game is finished, the teams debrief on how the game went, and what they actually did during the time, how they achieved (or tried to achieve) their task, what it felt like.
- **Generalise** - the teams are supported by facilitators to work out what their goal was (the task), their objectives (whatever was in their list of things they did that was an achievable step en route to their goal) and their tactics (how they tried to make their objectives happen). They are asked, if they had sat down to make a strategy before, how might they have played differently?
- **Apply** - participants apply the goal/objective/tactics labels to their own campaign and think about how they might act more strategically in their own campaigning work.

The emphasis in this cycle is primarily that participants learn through doing, and thereby working things out for themselves, rather than through being told things.

This cycle is repeated throughout Camp. Similarly, the sessions in the Everyday Activism programme handbook are also based on the experiential learning cycle.

The 4 Cs

One of the ways our values translate into underpinning themes within our trainings is through what are referred to as our '4 Cs':

- **Challenge** - empowering people to challenge injustice
- **Community** - deliberately building community amongst campaigners
- **Care** - choosing to value care as a core element of sustainable organising
- **Creativity** - celebrating creativity as central to inspiring campaigning

Often campaigning skills trainings would emphasise only the 'Challenge' part of this list. Part of the learning we are encouraging within our participants is about valuing all of the 4 Cs as key parts of sustainable campaigning, and so we build their importance into training content, how we structure the training, the physical space, how we facilitate, and the support structures we create for participants and the training team.