

# ACTION DEVELOPMENT CHECKLIST

## INTRODUCTION

**This document is designed to provide a general checklist for developing a creative action.**

It discusses how this action and the organising around it can help you achieve your overall goals. Think both about how the process of organising this action (the meetings, making things, rehearsals, and action itself) can strengthen your group, as well as how the action can have as much impact in impacting your target as possible.

## GETTING STARTED

**Before getting stuck in to planning an action it's important to think about the following things:**

- **Conflict** - What is the problem that needs to be addressed? Identifying the problem will allow you to see how you can intervene.
- **Context** - What are the external circumstances that need to be taken into account? What are dominant narratives already surrounding your target? What story do they tell about themselves and how they relate to your community and the world (think both local and global)? What logos, slogans, images, events or places do they use to tell that story? How does your target relate to other emblematic symbols, memes or narratives about the place you are from? What local symbols (food, places, flags, clothing) are locally resonant?
- **Goal** - What is your objective(s) with this action? How does it relate to your overall campaign strategy? What change will be created by this action?
- **Tools/Tactics** - What tools and tactics do you use to achieve your goal? What talents/skills do you have among your group? How can you build on previous actions?

**Once you have a general plan, you can get into the details...**

## ASSESS RESOURCES AND INFORMATION

- **Resources** - What skills, contacts, experience, knowledge, access, spaces, talents, or materials does your group have among its members? What more do you need to make this action a success?
- **Location** - Choose and check out the location: all activism is theatre so find a nice backdrop! Think about who frequents that space and how they relate to your target - what do they need to know to be changed? What is the symbolic value of that space? Is the space practically viable (is it public, accessible, safe - if not, how will you address this)?

## MAKE AN ACTION PLAN

**So you have a general plan, now think it through step by step.**

What has to happen when? Include logistics, transportation, construction, press work, clean up, police liaison, media - everything!

- **Identify and determine roles** - Once you know what needs to be done, determine who will do what. Try to distribute roles evenly so that no one is overloaded with too many tasks. Also think about what tasks can be done together that might help build the team.
- **Practice the action** - The more familiar you are with the action plan, and its steps, the more likely it is that your action will go smoothly. Treat it like theatre and do a rehearsal. Make sure everyone knows their role and knows what to do if there is a problem. Treat every mistake as a “learning opportunity” in case the same thing happens during the action.

## **DO THE ACTION**

**Now is the easy part - enact your plan and do the action!**

- **Know who your audience is** - if its the people around you, the newspapers, the people inside the office building or the video cameras - play to your audience.
- **Have a good documentation plan** - Make sure the camera's charged and you have specific people whose only role is to document and share content. Get your press out as soon as possible for maximum coverage. Think about social media live-sharing as well during the action.

## **AFTER THE ACTION**

- **Celebrate!** Seriously, take the time to celebrate after your action. Go together for a meal, for a drink, or go out dancing. We need to celebrate our victories, however small they may be. Building friendships is an important part of social change.
- **Debrief the action** - Take time to debrief the action properly. Discuss personal reactions: What went well? What could have gone better? What did you learn? What was your favourite part? Evaluate your goals, how were they met or not met? What has changed because of this action?
- **Think about next steps** - Think about how your action can continue to support your overall strategy. What is the next step after this action? How will the group stay in communication with each other?

**Most of all, have fun, learn, don't get too complicated.**

Remember, activism is about storytelling - try and make your action such a good, clever, unexpected, beautiful story that you want to tell people about it. If its a good story, the word will spread. Think about how you tell that story: what images, videos, texts, etc. could communicate this story to your audience.

## **FURTHER RESOURCES**

- [Fossil Free Creative Actions Manual \(online PDF\)](#)
- [Action Strategy Guide from the Ruckus Society \(online PDF\)](#)
- [Tactics from Beautiful Trouble \(website\)](#)