



# Guide to Great Events

**We all have events. But do you have *great* events? Use this to plan your most successful, strategic, fun event ever!**

## GREAT EVENTS:

- Are relevant, strategic, and inspiring for your group's campaign
- Have good turn-out
- Draw people together from many groups on campus
- Are on a good day, at a good time, in a well-known, accessible location
- Have snacks • Are interesting & fun
- Recruit new people to your group, and build the leadership of existing members

## Plan something strategic, interesting, inspiring, & fun. Set goals:

- Why are you having an event?
- How will it grow your group's leadership and move your campaign forward?
- How can it build connections to new allies and coalition partners?

## Plan ahead. Pick a good date, time, and place, and have enough time to plan.

- Look at calendars, pick a good time and date for students.
- Reserve a nice, easily-accessible location.
- Give yourself at least a few solid weeks to do good turn-out

**Don't do it alone.** Co-sponsor events with several other organizations. Gather a planning team -- you just can't do everything by yourself, and you shouldn't, because you miss opportunities to build a coalition and connect new leaders. Gather seasoned leaders & new leaders to cover the following roles together:

- **Coalition-Builders:** outreach to other organizations, departments, & important people to co-sponsor events together and invite participation in each other's events
- **Logistics Coordinator:** be the liaison to outside speakers or presenters, reserve spaces, finalize paperwork paperwork,
- **Fundraiser & Treasurer:** get the dollars! Secure funds to support the event & manage the event budget
- **Outreach Hero:** maintain a very solid outreach plan (see the Guide to Stellar Turn-out!)
- **Promotion & Media Maven:** coordinate creative, all-over-the-place publicity for the event
- **Snack Chef:** essential for a great event -- especially one related to food issues!
- **Welcome Committee:** greet attendees to the room, connect with them, make sure they sign the contact sheet, follow-up with them at the end

*Meet and check-in regularly with your event team. Be sure people understand their roles & feel supported to accomplish their tasks. Seasoned leaders should check-in regularly to support new leaders, or even work on tasks together.*



**HAVE GOOD TURN-OUT.** Unfortunately, people do not just magically appear at an event because you think it's important. You cannot rely on posters alone, ever. Good turn-out requires a plan. Note these rules:

- **RULE OF HALVES:** If you invite 100 people, 50 will actually say yes, 25 will actually come, 12 will stay til the end, 6 will come to your group meeting. THINK BIG when it comes to invites
- **AT LEAST 3 FORMS OF CONTACT:** People need to hear about an event at least 3 different ways before they remember to come. The most effective way is always a personal invitation.
- **KEEP A LIST:** Always always have a place for people to sign-in or sign-up and give you contact info. Email is great, email + phone # is even better. You can't follow-up with people if you don't have their info! Get it!



# GUIDE TO STELLAR TURN-OUT

**Organizing is all about people!  
If you don't have people, how do  
you build community or build power?**

Doing outreach and turn-out for events, meetings, actions, everything, is key to building a great organization, growing a coalition, and organizing a successful campaign.

## ABOVE ALL, SET GOALS.

Fill out the chart below with your group!

<b>How many people do you want to attend?</b>	
<b>Who absolutely has to be there?</b> <b>Key leaders, supporters and allies.</b> <i>*don't forget community allies -- like farmers, dining hall workers, community orgs. OR your targets! If it's going to be a big awesome event, invite the President!</i>	
<b>Who will you work with to co-sponsor the event to do outreach? Other organizations, departments, leaders</b>	
<b>What outreach tactics will you use?</b> *see box to the right	
Who will make this happen? Group members who will coordinate outreach	
<b>How will you make sure it happens?</b> Your schedule for checking in on your plan & supporting each other with all of the tasks <i>(see sample calendar on other side)</i>	

## OUTREACH TACTICS

**REMEMBER:** Do many of these things & mix it up! Always try to get contact info from people so you can follow-up with reminders.

**Personal invitation:** in-person invitation is the #1 best tactic. Practice good messaging! Appeal to why someone would want to attend & why it matters to you that they come! Confirm with a text/phone call.

**Phone banks:** Gather your group & call your allies & supporters. See above -- be friendly and practice good messaging!

**Tabling in a public place:** have an awesome table, be friendly, practice good messaging. Get contact info so you can follow-up.

**Flyer outside busy places:** hand-out event flyers (or other creative reminders -- event buttons?! carrots?!)

**Postering:** Make them big, beautiful, bountiful, & eye-catching. If you're going to poster, you have to poster EVERYWHERE.

**Class raps:** Attend relevant classes, ask prof if you can give a quick 2-5 minute event promo pitch at the beginning.

**Student newspaper/bulletin article:** Make it snazzy and creative!

**Public banners:** again, snazzy & creative!

**Facebook Event:** invite tons of people, and use the messaging function for reminders in advance.

**E-mail listservs:** Make sure that you get the event out on every relevant listserv, but never rely on email alone!

**Chalking:** fun community-building activity for your group. Chalk sidewalks, especially near dorms, dining halls, & the event location.

# SAMPLE OUTREACH CALENDAR

1 Month Before	3 Weeks Before	2 Weeks Before	Week of Event	Day of Event
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Gather outreach team</li> <li>- Set attendance goal</li> <li>- Get event on all campus calendars</li> <li>- Begin meeting with allies, potention co-sponsors</li> <li>- Contact student newspaper to write</li> <li>- Reserve tables for tabling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Have posters &amp; flyer-making party</li> <li>- Recruit volunteers for postering, flyering, &amp; tabling</li> <li>- Make name-by-name invite spreadsheet, begin invites, Confirm <math>\frac{1}{3}</math> attendees</li> <li>- Have fun social event with planning committee to celebrate succuss thus far</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Main push for personal invitations, check-in on name-by-name -- - Confirm <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> attendees</li> <li>- Send invite to all e-mail listservs</li> <li>- Make public banner</li> <li>- Do class raps</li> <li>- Make Facebook event, invite everyone</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Phone bank: get final confirmations - Confirm all attendees</li> <li>- 2 days before: calk campus</li> <li>- Send Facebook message reminder to event invites</li> <li>- Do any other awesome creative promotional thing!</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Send Facebook reminder message to attendees</li> <li>- Text remind attendees</li> </ul>

## GOOD TURN-OUT REQUIRES THE 4 C's!

**1. A Calendar.** Plan well-in-advance for when you will do different outreach activities. Plan it out. Don't be left printing posters the night before.

**2. A Coalition.** You don't have to plan how to invite all of campus. Start with your allies. Meet with other leaders, attend other organization's meetings, plan the event together and have outreach goals and plans together.

**3. Confirmations.** Make a name-by-name list of people who you have invited and who have confirmed. That is the only way you can confidently have good turn-out. Create a Google Doc spreadsheet and share with the group. Leaders & group members should list out actual people who they are inviting, and update the list as they get confirmation: -- this shows you how many actual people you have, and ensures you are not all just inviting the same people!

**4. Creativity.** Keep it fun! Make beautiful posters and flyers and have fun practicing how you will invite people. Have a potluck party for everyone to come together to make flyers, and actually role-play inviting important people to the event. Celebrate milestones, when you get a new organizational co-sponsor, or reach a certain # of confirmations.





# Running an Awesome Table

**Tabling is one of the most common methods of recruitment for student groups.**

However, it is also one of the methods most subject to simple mistakes that make tabling -- and recruiting new members for your group -- less effective. Here's a run-down of the best tips & tricks for effective tabling on your campus. This is important to plan early so you can recruit the maximum number of new students for your group in the fall.

## Crucial tips for effective tabling:

- Do not sit down, ever.
- Do not even have chairs behind your table.
- Do not remain behind your table.
- Engage people with your body as they walk toward you. Stand in their path.
- Smile and make eye contact.
- Ooze enthusiasm & engage them in conversation by asking a politically charged question.
- Draw them toward your table's display (which should be primarily pictures, if possible, not text)
- Have a short explanation and selling points for your group prepared & memorized ahead of time
- Have fun! You're finding new group members

## Items you want to have at your table:

- Sign-up sheet (and pens): Include at least name, phone, email. You can also include address, class year, top issue if you think it is important. You can use a computer or tablet to gather names -- it can be easier to sort through digital records, but don't forget to save often! Be sure to get the contact list started with people in your group already -- people don't sign empty lists.
- Banner with group name or campaign slogan: If at all possible, elevate the banner using poles so that people will know who your organization is even when you & other students are standing in front of the table talking. Make it bold & beautiful!
- Handouts about your group and your next general meeting
- Pictures on display board, candy, fresh fruit, or other things to attract people to your table

## Sample Tabling Rap

Hey! Do you want more REAL FOOD on campus?

Cool—check this out.

*(place clipboard in hands)*

My name is \_\_\_\_ and I'm with \_\_\_\_\_, the food justice group on campus. Could you sign this petition to support local farmers as part of the Real Food Challenge?

*(As they fill it out, continue:)*

Right now our university spends millions of dollars on food every year, but most of that money goes to the big junk food companies and factory farms that are fueling our obesity and climate change crises.

That's why we're calling on President/ Chancellor \_\_\_\_\_ to support our local farmers and other innovative, sustainable food businesses by signing the Real Food Campus Commitment. Could you sign on? We'll send you more info on how to get involved.

Also, do you think you could volunteer an hour or two to help out the campaign? Just check that box and we'll follow up.

Thanks!

## Logistical considerations to keep in mind:

- Table very early on in the semester (e.g. first or second day of school).
- Table during a busy time of the day, usually from mid-morning to 3pm.
- Table at a very busy place on campus where there is a lot of foot traffic, such as a main plaza, the student union, or outside cafeterias