

# 10 keys

to mobilise strategic  
communications coalitions



**01**

**Seek unity,  
not uniformity.**

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There's no one size fits all message  
for a diverse coalition.

Ensure **unity in narrative strategy** but do offer  
**different messaging alternatives.**

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Frank Sharry, America's Voice



**02**

**Build opt-in alliances.**

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Let members **opt-in to specific activities** that are a good fit for them.  
Don't expect everyone to be involved in everything!

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**03**

**Leverage the power  
of partnership.**

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Ensure the best mix of members  
with **complementary** roles, resources,  
skills and access to maximise  
narrative impact.

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**04**

**Agree direction, not details.**



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Seeking consensus on every detail  
leads to stagnation and conflict.  
Instead, agree the narrative strategy, leaving  
space for implementation options.

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**05**

**“If you’re not uncomfortable,  
your coalition is too small.”**

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Work with **unusual allies**  
to build the strategic partnerships **needed**  
to access audiences you don't usually reach  
— especially “the middle”.

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Beautifultrouble.org

**06**

**Adopt three smart tactics  
for one winning narrative strategy.**

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Ensure the coalition covers all tactics:  
further mobilise the supporter base,  
engage “the middle” and define  
and marginalise extremists.

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**07**

**Drive the agenda.**

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Be proactive to set and steer the public debate  
with **your common** narrative agenda,  
rather than solely countering the opposition.

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**08**

**Get your narratives  
known and owned.**



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Promote narratives widely and persistently  
in public debates (achieving **presence**)  
and work for them to be internalised through deeper  
experiences and interactions (achieving **immersion**).

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Rashad Robinson, Color of Change

**09**

**See narrative change as  
a bridge to power.**

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Integrate your public advocacy and policy work  
— shifting public opinion builds the political will  
needed to effectively influence policy  
and law (achieving **power**).

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Rashad Robinson, Color of Change

**10**

**Embrace a movement  
perspective.**

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See your work stitched into the  
**broader shared impact goal** of the movement,  
rising above short-term individual interests.

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English version supported by

**OPEN SOCIETY  
FOUNDATIONS**

Funded by

as part of the federal programme



Federal Ministry for  
Family Affairs, Senior Citizens,  
Women and Youth

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**Robert Bosch  
Stiftung**

How can networks and coalitions best work together to achieve narrative impact? What can we learn from experienced practitioners in this field?

This set of cards synthesises the main lessons from ICPA's work supporting a diverse range of national and international strategic communications coalitions.

Explore more resources and guidance at:

[www.narrativechange.org/incubator](http://www.narrativechange.org/incubator)

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