

Activist Skills and Experiences Questionnaire

This is a list of useful skills and experiences for social change activists. It can be used for self-assessment, goal setting, or progress evaluation. Consider including your applicable experience in non-social change activities too.

		Experience			Skill			
		None	Some	Lots	Weak	Fair	Strong	Expert
A	Self-Education / Educational Outreach							
1	Educate yourself about an issue							
2	Clearly present your ideas to another person							
3	Discuss your ideas with someone who disagrees							
4	Attend a house meeting, community meeting, or teach-in							
5	Plan a house meeting, community meeting, or teach-in							
6	Arrange a speaker for a group (civic group, etc)							
7	Speak to a small group							
8	Give a formal speech to a large group (more than 30 people)							
9	Engage in street speaking (public speaking to passersby)							
10	Pass out leaflets on an issue							
11	Table (pass out or sell literature from a table)							
12	Canvass door-to-door to present information (not for \$)							
13	Make a sign, banner, poster, etc.							
14	Write a flyer announcing an event							
15	Write a news article for publication							
16	Write an editorial for publication							
17	Interview someone for publication/airing							
18	Publicly sing a song							
19	Write a social change song or poem							
20	Perform a play or skit (street theater)							
21	Write a social change play/skit							
22	Publicly display social change artwork							
23	Create social change artwork							
24	Write a social change short story or novel							
25	Create an audio tape presentation							
26	Create a video tape presentation							
B	Background Research							
1	Research a specific problem or solution							
2	Compile data to illuminate a specific problem or solution							
3	Statistically analyze data to learn about an issue							
4	Write an informational leaflet or article explaining research							
5	Write a research report/analysis explaining research results							
C	News Media Outreach							
1	Write a letter-to-the-editor							
2	Write a calendar or public service announcement							
3	Create a TV or radio public service announcement							
4	Write a press release (and send it)							
5	Make follow-up phone calls to news media							
6	Be interviewed by the news media							
7	Build a relationship with a reporter/editor							
8	Arrange a press conference							
9	Speak at a press conference							

		Experience			Skill			
		None	Some	Lots	Weak	Fair	Strong	Expert
D	Legislative Work							
1	Write a letter to your Congressman or other official							
2	Sign a petition							
3	Circulate a general petition (non-legally binding)							
4	Circulate a legally binding petition							
5	Write a general petition							
6	Write a legally binding petition							
7	Coordinate a letter-writing/petition campaign							
8	Call or visit a public official (lobbying)							
9	Coordinate a lobbying campaign							
10	Speak at a government committee hearing							
11	Arrange a government committee hearing (with an official)							
12	Register people to vote							
13	Walk a district (canvass) for a political candidate							
14	Call voters on behalf of a candidate or to get out the vote							
15	Write a speech for a candidate							
16	Organize a political campaign							
17	Handle the finances for a political candidate							
18	Run for office							
19	Be elected and hold a government office							
20	Be an assistant to a government official							
21	Be a delegate to a political party convention							
22	Be a political party official							
E	Legal Intervention							
1	Research the legal aspects of a social problem							
2	Assist lawyers in preparing a lawsuit/injunction							
3	Prepare a lawsuit/injunction							
4	Argue a legal case in court							
F	Demonstrations / Protest / Direct Action							
1	Wear or display a symbol representing a cause							
2	Attend a rally							
3	Participate in a vigil							
4	March or parade for a cause							
5	Fast for a cause							
6	Participate in an economic, political, or social strike							
7	Attend a civil disobedience demonstration							
8	Be a nonviolent monitor/peacekeeper at a demonstration							
9	Provide support for those risking arrest/jail							
10	Plan a demonstration (rally, march, strike, blockade, etc.)							
11	Negotiate with opponents or police							
12	Risk arrest for a cause							
13	Be arrested for a cause							
14	Spend time in jail							
15	Participate in boycotts							
16	Organize boycotts							

		Experience			Skill			
		None	Some	Lots	Weak	Fair	Strong	Expert
G	Strategic Planning — Campaign Design							
1	Evaluate the forces supporting and opposing social change							
2	Establish a specific goal for a campaign							
3	Design a campaign that accomplishes a specific goal							
4	Evaluate a campaign for its effectiveness							
H	Building Organizations							
1	Contribute money to an organization							
2	Volunteer for an organization (some involvement)							
3	Join an organization (active involvement)							
4	Encourage someone to join an organization							
5	Form an organization							
I	Group Bonding							
1	Teach or lead a group in song							
2	Teach or lead a group in a game or ritual							
3	Organize or facilitate a group outing (party, picnic, etc.)							
4	Organize or facilitate a community ceremony or celebration							
J	Cooperative Decision Making							
1	Plan a meeting agenda							
2	Facilitate a small meeting							
3	Facilitate a meeting of more than 30 people							
4	Facilitate a difficult meeting							
5	Propose a social change activity for a group							
6	Write a formal proposal for a group activity							
K	Personal Skills / Conflict Resolution							
1	Ask someone who is unlike you about her/his background							
2	Sympathize with another person's perspective (unlike yours)							
3	Tell someone your criticisms of her/him							
4	Tell someone your appreciations of her/him							
5	Mediate a dispute between individuals							
6	Mediate a dispute between groups							
7	Learn/develop techniques to help yourself when upset							
8	Arrange for others to support you when you are upset							
9	Support another person when she/he is upset							
10	Set personal goals and achieve them							
11	Help another person evaluate her/his goals							
12	Encourage and support another person to reach a goal							
13	Learn about oppressive behavior (sexism, racism, etc.)							
14	Interrupt interpersonal oppressive behavior							
15	Ask a disruptive person to leave an organization							
L	Multicultural Connection							
1	Teach someone else about your group's culture							
2	Learn the background of someone from another culture							
3	Work closely with someone from another culture							
4	Learn a great deal about another culture							
5	Teach someone of your culture about another culture							
6	Resolve conflicts between people of different cultures							

		Experience			Skill			
		None	Some	Lots	Weak	Fair	Strong	Expert
M	Coalition Building							
1	Actively participate in a coalition event/campaign							
2	Design a coalition event/campaign							
3	Speak to a group to get them involved in a coalition							
4	Negotiate with another group to resolve disagreements							
N	Fundraising							
1	Write a fundraising letter							
2	Purchase a mailing list for fundraising							
3	Write a grant request proposal							
4	Make a presentation to a foundation granting committee							
5	Arrange a benefit event (speech, film, dinner, etc.)							
6	Call a potential donor							
7	Visit a potential donor							
8	Canvass to raise money							
O	Office Work							
1	Mail requested literature							
2	Answer correspondence for a group							
3	Copy, collate, and staple documents							
4	Use a computer for email and surfing the web							
5	Use a computer for wordprocessing							
6	Use a computer for page layout							
7	Use a computer for financial analysis							
8	Solicit articles, photos, graphics for a newsletter/newspaper							
9	Design a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper							
10	Edit a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper							
11	Lay out a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper							
12	Have a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper typeset							
13	Have a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper printed							
14	Prepare a bulk mailing							
15	Write a budget for a project							
16	Perform basic bookkeeping (check deposit, recording, etc.)							
17	Perform complete bookkeeping							
18	Manage petty cash							
19	Manage an organization's finances (check writing, etc.)							
20	Manage a mailing list							
21	Manage an office (organize files, establish procedures)							
P	Supervising Others							
1	Recruit a volunteer/intern							
2	Hire an employee							
3	Supervise an employee, intern, or volunteer							
4	Evaluate the performance of an employee, intern, volunteer							
5	Fire an employee, intern, or volunteer							

		Experience			Skill			
		None	Some	Lots	Weak	Fair	Strong	Expert
Q	Kitchen and Life Skills							
1	Cook for more than 10 people							
2	Plan a meal for more than 10 people							
3	Plan a meal for more than 100 people							
4	Babysit a toddler							
5	Babysit a young child							
6	Babysit an older child							
7	Babysit several children at once							
8	Work with teenagers							
R	Teaching Skills to Others							
1	Attend a skills-building workshop							
2	Teach a person one-on-one							
3	Present activist skill information to a group							
4	Facilitate a role play or exercise							
5	Develop a skills-building workshop							
6	Facilitate a short workshop							
7	Facilitate a several-days-long workshop							
8	Evaluate the effectiveness of a workshop							
9	Write skills-building leaflets or manuals							
S	Other Things Not Listed Above — Please Fill In							
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Inspired by: Skills and Knowledge of a Social Change Agent,

by Jim Nunes-Schrag and Christopher Mogil, April 5, 1984, Movement for a New Society.

— Prepared by Randy Schutt, P.O. Box 608867, Cleveland, OH 44108 <<http://www.vernalproject.org>>.

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Activist Knowledge and Experiences Questionnaire

Philosophy, History, Issues Topics, and Methods

This is a list of social change philosophy, history, issue topics, and methods about which activists should have at least some knowledge. It can be used for self-assessment, goal setting, or progress evaluation.

		Knowledge			
		None	Some	Lots	Expert
A	Economic Systems / Philosophies				
1	Capitalism/corporatism				
2	Free enterprise/entrepreneurialism				
3	Welfare state				
4	Marxism/socialism				
5	Communism				
6	Cooperativism (cooperative ownership)				
7	Stewardship				
8					
B	Political & Social Systems / Philosophies				
1	Dictatorship				
2	Fascism/nationalism				
3	Representative democracy				
4	Pluralism				
5	Libertarianism				
6	Participatory democracy				
7	Statism				
8	Anarchism				
9	Pacifism				
10	Militarism				
11	Colonialism/imperialism				
12	Humanism				
13	Multiculturalism				
14	Environmentalism				
15	Consumerism				
16	Religion and spirituality				
17	Utopian visions				
18					
19					
20					
C	Oppressive Social / Cultural Institutions				
1	Patriarchy/sexism				
2	Racism				
3	Ageism				
4	Heterosexism				
5	Classism				
6	Consumerism				
7	Authoritarianism				
18					
19					
20					

		Knowledge				Social Change Experience		
		None	Some	Lots	Expert	None	Some	Lots
D	History of Major Social Change Movements							
1	Anti-slavery							
2	Populist							
3	Labor (1890s-1920s)							
4	Women's suffrage							
5	Labor (1930s-1950s)							
6	Civil rights							
7	Ban the bomb							
8	Anti-Vietnam							
9	Women liberation /feminist							
10	Gay/lesbian/transgender rights							
11	Anti-nuclear power							
12	Anti-nuclear weapons							
13	Anti-U.S. intervention in Central America							
14	Anti-globalization (corporatization)							
15	Anti-prison-industrial complex							
16	Environmental							
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E	Common Progressive Change Target Issues							
1	U.S. foreign policy, generally (militarism, military spending)							
2	Russia/Eastern Europe							
3	Western Europe/NATO							
4	Africa							
5	Latin America							
6	Middle East							
7	Southern Asia							
8	Pacific Rim Countries							
9	Transnational corporations, World Trade Organization							
10	Labor, economic class system							
11	Wealth distribution							
12	Homelessness							
13	Hunger							
14	Mining							
15	Real estate, land, and development							
16	Agriculture (and pesticides)							
17	Energy							
18	Transportation							
19	Waste Disposal and Toxics							
20	Health care							
21	Social security and retirement							
22	Family issues and childcare							
23	Family planning and abortion							

(Continued)

Target Issues (continued)		Knowledge				Social Change Experience		
		None	Some	Lots	Expert	None	Some	Lots
24	Cultural conditioning, generally							
25	News media							
26	Entertainment media (including sports)							
27	Schools							
28	Churches							
29	Oppression of women							
30	Oppression of African-Americans							
31	Oppression of Chicanos/Hispanics							
32	Oppression of Native Americans							
33	Oppression of disabled people							
34	Oppression of gay/lesbian people							
35	Oppression of animals							
36	Prisons							
37	Taxation							
38	Governance							
39								
40								
F	Large, Progressive Change Constituencies							
1	Labor/workers							
2	Professionals							
3	Farmers							
4	Students							
5	Military personnel							
6	Government officials							
7	Homeless/poor							
8	African-Americans							
9	Hispanics							
10	Asians							
11	Native Americans							
12	Women							
13	Gay men							
14	Lesbians							
15	Elders							
16	Young people							
17	Religious community							
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