

Building & Managing Effective Coalitions

New Partners for Smart Growth
Conference

February 4, 2011



Building your Grassroots. Advancing your Agenda.

What's a Coalition?

- Multiple constituencies or constitute groups collaborating to advance a common agenda or policy objective
- Tool for all levels of policy advocacy:
 - Local, Regional, State, Federal
- Many Varieties & Management Structures
 - Formal, Informal
 - Single Issue, Multiple Issue
 - Short-Term, Long-term
 - Participant-led, Staff Managed



Effective Coalitions: Why bother?

- Address Challenging Political Environment
- Demonstrate Broad Appeal: Strength through Diversity
- Create Political Advantage with Policymakers
- Raise Issue Awareness and PR Value



Effective Coalitions: Why bother?

- Share the Burden
- Increase Intelligence; Leverages Strength of a Network
- Use Strengths, Core Competences of Partners
- Support (or Changes) Issue Framing
- Invigorate Supporters



Effective Coalitions: What Drives Success?

- Clear Purpose – Know what success looks like
- Clear Roles for Partners & Leveraging Key Partner Assets
- Regular Communication
- Robust Partner Engagement and Action
- Common Strategy Driven by Collective Input
- Prepare for, Acknowledge Conflicts
- Flexibility, Nimbleness in Response to Changing Environment
- Share Success



Effective Coalitions: Overcoming Obstacles

- Fear of New Partners
- “Care and Feeding” Costs, including Opportunity Costs
- Loss of Control
- Fear of Diluting Message, Agenda
- The Credit Game
- Let’s Make a Deal ... Who Speaks for the Group?
How does the Group Negotiate?



For More Information

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