Action Star

a tool for planning and evaluating actions

Target:
Who or what is the political target of our action? Why? If they have the power to concede to our demands, how is our action designed to pressure them? Will our action cost them something (or threaten to cost something)? Will it put them in a *decision dilemma* where we win no matter which way they respond?

Building & Tending the Group:
Will the action build our group's capacity? Will it generate new interest and help plug new people in? How can we use the planning process to build more group members' leadership and skills? Are we adequately supporting each other as we make sacrifices and take risks together?

Points of Intervention:
In what arena are we intervening — the point of *production* (e.g. a workplace), *destruction* (e.g. an oil pipeline), *consumption* (e.g. a store), *decision* (e.g. the statehouse), or *assumption* (e.g. dominant beliefs and narratives)?

Action Logic:
Does the action itself tell the story and convey our intended message? Will passersby intuitively "get it" without us having to say anything at all?

Action

Spectrum of Allies:
How will our action *activate passive allies*, win over currently on-the-fence *potential allies*, and isolate our opposition? Which specific constituencies do we want to prioritize?

Values & Common Ground:
Are we connecting with people's values—especially the values of our intended audience—and appealing to their commonsense? What kinds of popular images and symbols are we including in our action and messaging?

Story:
How are we strategically narrating and framing the conflict? Is there a villain in our story? Are we putting forward our own *sympathetic characters* as protagonists? Are we foreshadowing our desired outcome?

Audience:
Who is our priority audience and what message do we want to send them? What kind of presentation and tone (e.g. solemn, jubilant, angry, etc.) will be most effective?
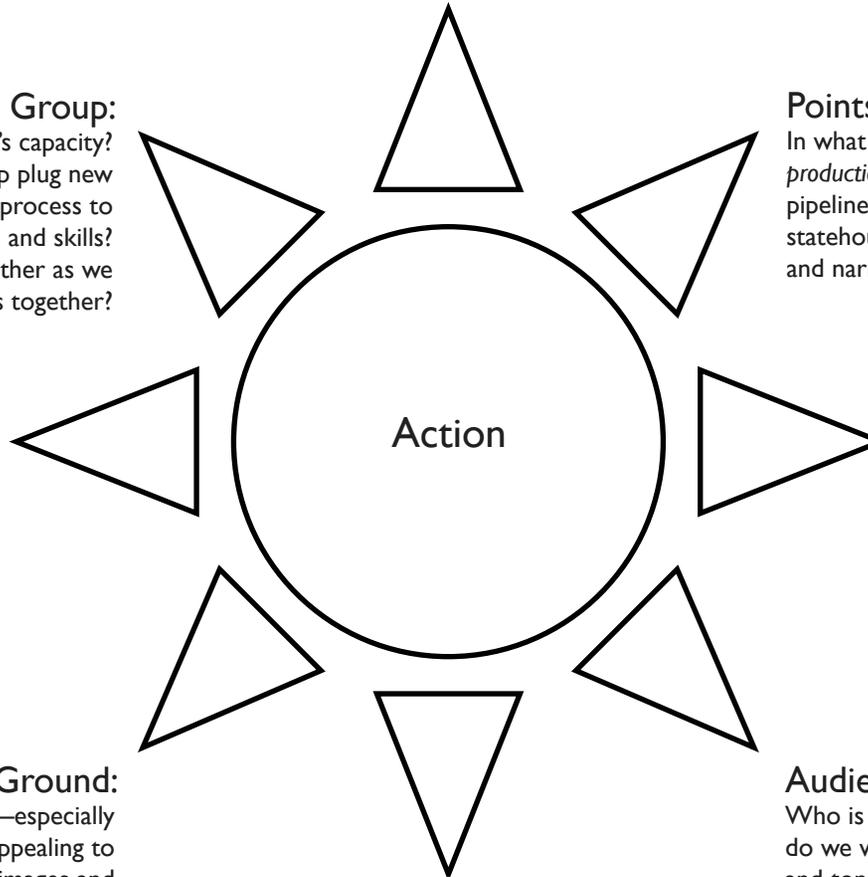
—contributed by Jonathan Matthew Smucker