**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.

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|  | **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  | Create a flyer announcing an event  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 15  | Write a news article for publication  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 16  | Write an editorial for publication  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 17  | Create or curate a website  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 18  | Publish a blog or Facebook page  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 19  | Engage others using social media  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 20  | Interview someone for publication/airing  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 21  | Publicly sing a song  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 22  | Write a social change song or poem  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 23  | Perform a play or skit (street theater)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 24  | Write a social change play/skit  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 25  | Publicly display social change artwork  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 26  | Create social change artwork or crafts  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 27  | Write a social change short story or novel  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 28  | Create a podcast  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 29  | Create a video  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **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  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Page 2 **Experience**  |  **Skill**  |
| None  | Some  | Lots  | Weak  | Fair  | Strong  | Expert  |
| **D**  | **Legislative Work**  |  |
| 1  | Write a letter to your member of Congress or other official Sign a petition Circulate a general petition (non-legally binding) Circulate a legally binding petition Write a general petition Write a legally binding petition Coordinate a letter-writing/petition campaign Call or visit a public official (lobbying) Coordinate a lobbying campaign Speak at a government committee hearing Arrange a government committee hearing (with an official) Register people to vote Walk a district (canvass) for a political candidate Call voters on behalf of a candidate or to get out the vote Write a speech for a candidate Analyze voter data for outreach targeting Organize a political campaign Handle the finances for a political candidate Run for office Be elected and hold a government office Be an assistant to a government official Be a delegate to a political party convention Be a political party official  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **E**  | **Legal Intervention**  |  |
| 1  | Research the legal aspects of a social problem Assist lawyers in preparing a lawsuit/injunction Prepare a lawsuit/injunction Argue a legal case in court  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **F**  | **Demonstrations / Protest / Direct Action**  |  |
| 1  | Wear or display a symbol representing a cause Attend a rally Participate in a vigil March or parade for a cause Participate in a boycott Organize a boycott Vote your company shares for social responsibility Divest from socially-irresponsible companies or funds Be a whistleblower (release secret information) Fast for a cause Participate in an economic, political, or social strike Attend a civil disobedience demonstration Be a nonviolent monitor/peacekeeper at a demonstration Provide support for those risking arrest/jail Plan a demonstration (rally, march, strike, blockade, etc.) Negotiate with opponents or police Risk arrest for a cause Be arrested for a cause Spend time in jail  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Page 3 **Experience**  |  **Skill**  |
| None  | Some  | Lots  | Weak  | Fair  | Strong  | Expert  |
| **G**  | **Strategic Planning — Campaign Design**  |  |
| 1  | Evaluate the forces supporting and opposing social change Establish a specific goal for a campaign Design a campaign that accomplishes a specific goal Evaluate a campaign for its effectiveness  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **H**  | **Building Organizations**  |  |
| 1  | Contribute money to an organization Volunteer for an organization (some involvement) Join an organization (active involvement) Encourage someone to join an organization Form an organization  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **I**  | **Group Bonding**  |  |
| 1  | Teach or lead a group in song Teach or lead a group in a game or ritual Organize or facilitate a group outing (party, picnic, etc.) Organize or facilitate a community ceremony or celebration **Cooperative Decision Making** Plan a meeting agenda Facilitate a small meeting Facilitate a meeting of more than 30 people Facilitate a difficult meeting Propose a social change activity for a group Write a formal proposal for a group activity  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **K**  | **Personal Skills / Conflict Resolution**  |  |
| 1  | Ask someone who is unlike you about her/his background Sympathize with another person’s perspective (unlike yours) Tell someone your criticisms of her/him Tell someone your appreciations of her/him Mediate a dispute between individuals Mediate a dispute between groups Learn/develop techniques to help yourself when upset Arrange for others to support you when you are upset Support another person when she/he is upset Set personal goals and achieve them Help another person evaluate her/his goals Encourage and support another person to reach a goal Learn about oppressive behavior (sexism, racism, etc.) Interrupt interpersonal oppressive behavior Ask a disruptive person to leave an organization  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **L**  | **Multicultural Connection**  |  |
| 1  | Teach someone else about your group’s culture Learn the background of someone from another culture Work closely with someone from another culture Learn a great deal about another culture Teach someone of your culture about another culture Inventory the ways you are oppressed and privileged Resolve conflicts between people of different cultures  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Page 4 **Experience**  |  **Skill**  |
| None  | Some  | Lots  | Weak  | Fair  | Strong  | Expert  |
| **M**  | **Coalition Building**  |  |
| 1  | Actively participate in a coalition event/campaign Design a coalition event/campaign Speak to a group to get them involved in a coalition Negotiate with another group to resolve disagreements  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **N**  | **Fundraising**  |  |
| 1  | Write a fundraising letter or email Purchase a mailing list for fundraising Write a grant request proposal Make a presentation to a foundation granting committee Arrange a benefit event (speech, film, dinner, etc.) Call a potential donor Visit a potential donor Canvass to raise money  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **O**  | **Office Work**  |  |
| 1  | Mail requested literature Answer correspondence for a group Make copies, collate, and staple documents Use a computer for email and surfing the web Use a computer to create documents Use a computer for complicated page layout Use a computer for financial analysis Solicit articles, photos, graphics for a newsletter/newspaper Design a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper Edit a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper Lay out a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper Have a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper typeset Have a flier, leaflet, newsletter, or newspaper printed Prepare a bulk mailing Manage an email list Prepare a mass email message using a database Write a budget for a project Perform basic bookkeeping (check deposit, recording, etc.) Perform complete bookkeeping Manage petty cash Manage an organization’s finances (check writing, etc.) Manage a mailing list Manage an office (organize files, establish procedures)  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **P**  | **Supervising Others**  |  |
| 1  | Recruit a volunteer/intern Hire an employee Supervise an employee, intern, or volunteer Evaluate the performance of an employee, intern, volunteer Fire an employee, intern, or volunteer  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Page 5 **Experience**  |  **Skill**  |
| None  | Some  | Lots  | Weak  | Fair  | Strong  | Expert  |
| **Q**  | **Kitchen and Life Skills**  |  |
| 1  | Cook for more than 10 people Plan a meal for more than 10 people Plan a meal for more than 100 people Take care of a toddler Take care of a young child Take care of an older child Take care of several children at once Work with teenagers  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **R**  | **Teaching Skills to Others**  |  |
| 1  | Attend a skills-building workshop Teach a person one-on-one Present activist skill information to a group Facilitate a role play or exercise Develop a skills-building workshop Facilitate a short workshop Facilitate a several-days-long workshop Evaluate the effectiveness of a workshop Write skills-building leaflets or manuals  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **S**  | **Evaluating Effectiveness**  |  |
| 1  | Evaluate your own skills and abilities for effecting change Evaluate your effectiveness in bringing about change Evaluate the effectiveness of the groups you work with Make changes in your activites so you are more effective  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **T**  | **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 <http://www.vernalproject.org> OK to copy for non-commercial purposes.

ActQuest-5.xlsx, Pt. 1 RDS 5-22-2018

**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.

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|  |  **Knowledge**  |
| None  | Some  | Lots  | Expert  |
| **A**  | **Economic Systems / Philosophies / Critiques**  |  |
| 1  | Capitalism/markets, government regulation  |  |  |  |  |
| 2  |  Unequal negotiating power: monopoly, monopsony  |  |  |  |  |
| 3  |  Other market failures – externalities, information, behavior, etc.  |  |  |  |  |
| 4  | Free enterprise/entrepreneurialism  |  |  |  |  |
| 5  | Welfare state  |  |  |  |  |
| 6  | Marxism/socialism  |  |  |  |  |
| 7  | Communism  |  |  |  |  |
| 8  | Cooperative ownership  |  |  |  |  |
| 9  | Stewardship  |  |  |  |  |
| 10  | Macroeconomics – productivity, inflation, unemployment, trade  |  |  |  |  |
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| **B**  | **Political & Social Systems / Philosophies**  |  |
| 1  | Monarchy  |  |  |  |  |
| 2  | Oligarchy/plutocracy/kleptocracy  |  |  |  |  |
| 3  | Dictatorship  |  |  |  |  |
| 4  | Fascism/nationalism  |  |  |  |  |
| 5  | Representative democracy, pluralism  |  |  |  |  |
| 6  | Libertarianism  |  |  |  |  |
| 7  | Participatory democracy  |  |  |  |  |
| 8  | Anarchism  |  |  |  |  |
| 9  | Pacifism  |  |  |  |  |
| 10  | Militarism  |  |  |  |  |
| 11  | Colonialism/imperialism  |  |  |  |  |
| 12  | Humanism  |  |  |  |  |
| 13  | Multiculturalism  |  |  |  |  |
| 14  | Environmentalism  |  |  |  |  |
| 15  | Consumerism  |  |  |  |  |
| 16  | Religion and spirituality  |  |  |  |  |
| 17  | Utopian visions  |  |  |  |  |
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| **C**  | **Oppressive Social / Cultural Institutions**  |  |
| 1  | Patriarchy/sexism  |  |  |  |  |
| 2  | Racism  |  |  |  |  |
| 3  | Nativism/xenophobia  |  |  |  |  |
| 4  | Colonialism  |  |  |  |  |
| 5  | Ageism  |  |  |  |  |
| 6  | Ableism  |  |  |  |  |
| 7  | Heterosexism/CIS genderism  |  |  |  |  |
| 8  | Classism  |  |  |  |  |
| 9  | Consumerism  |  |  |  |  |
| 10  | Authoritarianism  |  |  |  |  |
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| Page 2  |  **Knowledge**  | **Social Change** **Experience**  |
| None  | Some  | Lots  | Expert  | None  | Some  | Lots  |
| **D**  | **History of Major U.S. Social Change Movements**  |  |
| 1  | Anti-slavery Populist Labor Women’s suffrage Civil rights Ban the bomb, anti-nuclear weapons Anti-Vietnam war Women liberation/feminist/#MeToo Gay/lesbian/transgender rights Anti-nuclear power Anti-U.S. intervention in Central America Anti-globalization (corporatization) Anti-prison-industrial complex Environmental Climate change Gun control Black Lives Matters  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **E**  | **Common Progressive Change Target Issues**  |  |
| 1  | U.S. foreign policy, generally (militarism, military spending)  Russia/Eastern Europe  Western Europe/NATO  Africa  Latin America  Middle East  Southern Asia  Pacific Rim Countries Transnational corporations, World Trade Organization Labor conditions, economic class system Wealth distribution Tax policy Corruption Homelessness Hunger Mining Real estate, land, and development Agriculture (and pesticides) Energy Transportation Waste disposal and toxins Healthcare Social security and retirement Family issues and childcare Family planning and abortion  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| Page 3 **Target Issues (continued)**  |  **Knowledge**  | **Social Change** **Experience**  |
| None  | Some  | Lots  | Expert  | None  | Some  | Lots  |
| 26  | Cultural conditioning, generally  |  |  |  |
| 27  |  News media  Entertainment media (including sports)  Schools  Churches Oppression of women Oppression of African-Americans Oppression of Chicanos/Hispanics Oppression of Native Americans Oppression of disabled people Oppression of gay/lesbian people Oppression of animals Law enforcement (and abuse) Prisons Voter discouragement and suppression Government structure and governance Corruption  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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| **F**  | **Large, Progressive Change Constituencies**  |  |
| 1  | Labor/workers Professionals Farmers Students Military personnel Government officials Homeless/poor African-Americans Hispanics Asians Native Americans Women Gay men Lesbians Transgender people Elders Young people Teens Religious community  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
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