

How to Organize a Rally

Logistics of a Rally

- Pick one specific cause or issue to rally for
- Pick a location, date, and time. Pick a location that can accommodate your targeted number of participants, is easily accessible, and is meaningful (e.g. if you want legislation passed, rally in front of the state legislature building).
- Speak with police to see if there are any permits or local laws you need to be aware of

Finding local contacts:

Once you have picked one specific cause or issue to rally for, find all the local contacts that may have an interest in the issue. This includes government officials, non-profits, issue advocacy groups, local political action committees, democratic caucuses, student groups, and local progressive blogs.

Send an email to all the local contacts detailing information about your cause, why it is important, and how the rally will have an impact. (E.g. do you want to stop legislation? Pass legislation? Elect a candidate?)

A few days after you have sent out emails, call everyone that you have not heard back from. Ask if they saw your email, then explain why they should participate and support your rally. While contacting people, try to solicit a prominent official or two to speak at the rally. This will add credibility and can help you sell the rally when contacting the press.

Spreading the word:

Your largest source for rally attendees will be members from the different local groups and organizations that you have been in contact with. Use social media: create a facebook event, post tweets about the rally (and ask your local contacts to do the same). In addition, run an ad in local newspapers and write a letter to the editor about your upcoming rally that will make a huge impact on this important issue that has been in the news.

Contacting the Press:

You should send a news advisory to all the local newspapers, TV stations, and any other media outlet that can give the rally media coverage 3-5 days before the rally. Components of the news advisory should include:

1. The release type, date and contact information clearly at the top
2. A header about the event with a sub-header containing a factual blurb about the hosting organization
3. A brief summary paragraph about what the rally will be for, and when and where it will be held
4. Then explicitly restate who, when, and where (not in paragraph form)
5. At the bottom, list the rally coordinator's information to contact for more information or to schedule an interview

Once you fax a news advisory to a media outlet, call to make sure the reporter sees the advisory and to pitch them the event. Try to relate the rally to a story that the reporter wrote. On the day of the rally, call your media outlets one last time to confirm and re-pitch the rally.