THE SUSTAINABILITY WORKSHOP SERIES

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These workshops aim to build infrastructure that empowers and connects student leaders, as well as build stronger ties between the McGill Office of Sustainability (MOOS) and the student sustainability community.

Instead of targeting new students and introducing them to sustainability 101, these workshops provide tools for student leaders to build stronger initiatives and become more effective mobilizers within their own student communities. Targeting experienced students allows for deeper and more nuanced conversations, and builds a sense of peer leadership and connection amongst attendees.

In recognition of the indispensable role that students have played in pushing forward the sustainability movement, these workshops are dedicated to all the badass student initiatives and activities that will continue to shake up McGill. You are the life of this campus!
Guidelines for Sustainability Workshops

GENERAL TIPS

- Read the WHOLE OUTLINE before you run each workshop!
- Many of these workshops are on the longer side (around two hours). It’s totally up to the facilitator’s discretion to choose the exercises that make the most sense for your needs.
- If the workshop is stretched for time, have participants discuss with a partner instead of with the group as a whole.

PREPARATION

- Having people register for the workshop ahead of time gives a higher guarantee of participation, and gives you their contact information for future conversations. **Set deadlines!**
  - You can find a sample registration form here
- Encourage participants to invite other student leaders through word of mouth. Chances are students working on the ground have wider networks than you!
- You can also set up an open facebook event, with casual / low advertising
- Book a space in advance! Bring snacks and know where the bathrooms are ahead of time.
- Have participants to bring notebooks to the workshops. Many of them include individual journaling times, but it’s also useful for reducing the amount of printed paper that would be used for simple worksheets.
- Set up your workshop space in a circle if possible! These are discussion-based workshops that sometimes require some mobility around the room.
KEY WORDS:
- **SCRIBE**: Write down input or ideas as you get them from participants. It’s helpful to have two facilitators, so one person can lead the conversation while the other writes things down.
- **EXPLAIN**: While the workshops give an example of how to say your point, don’t simply read off the page. A good technique if you’re feeling uncertain is to read the sentence, and then rephrase it a second time in your own words.

FORMATTING:
- **Bold** signifies a question to the workshop participants
- **Italicics** signifies talking points for the facilitator
- Regular formatting signifies instructions for the facilitator

WORKSHOP FORMAT:
- Preparation of workshop
  - Blurb
  - Goals
  - Time
  - Materials
- Intro
  - Land acknowledgment
  - Introductions (names, preferred gender pronoun, context)
  - Workshop norms
- Energizer
- Activities
  - Activity title (time)
    - Blurb about the activity for the facilitator
    - Italicized introductory points for the facilitator
    - Instructions for the workshop
    - Bolded questions for facilitator to ask the group
    - Diagrams to describe exercise
    - Italicized concluding points for the facilitator
- Conclusion
  - Check-out
- Poster / materials templates
- Worksheets (if applicable)
Student Sustainability Workshop
Storytelling and One-on-Ones

BLURB: Facts don't spark engagement in our initiatives - stories, emotions and values do. We will be looking at our own experiences as a powerful way to increase commitment and engagement from the community around us through storytelling and one-on-ones.

Goals:
- Have participants identify and develop their stories
- Emphasize the importance of storytelling
- Familiarize participants with the one-on-one framework
- Understand why relationships are at the root of building a movement

Time: With everything, two and a half hours

Materials (see templates at the end of workshop outline):
- Handouts
- Extra paper and pens (encourage participants to bring a notebook beforehand)
- Posters
  - Why is Storytelling Important? (blank)
  - Themes in Storytelling (blank)
  - Challenge – Choice – Outcome (no title needed)
    - Challenge
    - Choice
    - Outcome
  - One-On-Ones Definition
    - A one-on-one is a structured conversation where you authentically share your story with another person and listen to theirs. Based on your commonalities, you invite the person to work together
  - One-On-Ones Build Relationships
    - Identifying, recruiting and developing leadership
    - Building Community
    - Turn Community Resources into Power
  - 5 Cs of a One On One
    - Connection
    - Context
    - Choice
    - Commitment
    - Catapult
INTRO (5 min)

- Land acknowledgment
  - We would like to acknowledge that we are currently on the traditional territory of the Kanien'keh:ka (Ga-nyen-gé-haa-ga) (which means “Mohawk” in the Mohawk language), a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. We recognize and respect the Kanien'keh:ka (Ga-nyen-gé-haa-ga) as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. It’s important to remember the ways that history, and especially the history of colonialism, impacts how we are building a sustainable society today.
- Have participants go around and say their name, preferred gender pronoun if they would like, and the story of your name
  - Your preferred gender pronoun is the word you would like to be referred to when you are out of the room. For example, “Lily went to the store, SHE bought some bread.” You can phrase your preference by saying, “I prefer him-his pronouns” or “I go by he”
  - My last name is Schwarzbaum, which means ‘black tree’ in German. My parents chose my first name, Lily, because it is short (unlike Schwarzbaum) and easy to pronounce in any language.
- Introduce yourself and the context of this workshop
  - E.g. “My name is Lily, and I’m the Student Engagement Facilitator at the McGill Office of Sustainability, or MOOS. This workshop is geared towards sustainability leaders to build capacity and raise discussions around leadership. Thanks so much for coming!”
- Explain workshop norms:
  - This workshop is discussion based; you are strongly encouraged to participate. If you find yourself talking a lot, take a step back to allow more space for other people. If you aren’t sharing as much, challenge yourself to contribute.
  - Stories are personal and messy. Be respectful and open while listening!
  - This workshop is loosely based on Story of Self (Marshall Ganz) and the New Organizing Institute guide on relationships
  - Point to where the bathrooms are, and tell participants they can go at any time
  - Briefly go over the agenda and timeframe of the workshop

ENERGIZER: Rock-Paper-Scissors tournament (5 min)

Have participants find a partner and play a rock-paper-scissors game, best two out of three. Whoever loses becomes the winner’s cheerleader, and then winner goes on to challenge another person. Each time someone wins, the “trails” of people merge to become that person’s cheerleader, until there is a final epic battle and the whole group is chanting for one person!

YOUR STORY (5 min)

This is a way for you to model what good storytelling looks like for participants. Make sure you practice beforehand! It’s especially helpful to spend some time going over the worksheets on your own, and practice reciting it. It should ideally be no longer than two minutes.

- Have everyone come back to the circle, and open it by telling your own story. An example:

  *I grew up with a strong background in social justice, especially in my socialist summer camp. From a young age, we would be sitting in circles and figuring out how to share our candy and who would wash dishes, which instilled in me a very strong sense of community and collective organizing.*
On a whim I ended up coming to McGill for university, and I was massively impacted by the 2012 student movement. The feeling of being surrounded by endless people on the streets demanding a better future was incredibly empowering; but at the same time, I was simultaneously hurt and alienated by the aggressive and hostile organizing environment on campus. Somewhere between four-hour meetings and chanting with 100,000 people, I decided that I wanted to go beyond just understanding and critiquing the world, and actually act on changing and challenging the systems around me.

After the strike ended, I was looking for my next issue, and thought “I’ll choose environment; it’s easy, no one can argue with saving the environment!” - and quickly realized I had stumbled into the greatest problem of our generation. I went to PowerShift, a youth environmental conference, and found a really inspiring group of people who would later go on to create Climate Justice Montreal, a grassroots group who I still organize with. I also founded Divest McGill, and started getting interested in how the university can be used as a playground to model the changes we want to see on a societal scale.

Entering the sustainability community has linked my passion to create change on a wide scale with a strong sense of belonging and personal commitment. As the Student Engagement Facilitator at MOOS, I’m particularly interested in how students in bring creative, energized change to the university. That work is paired with building a web that stretches across campus, and brings people together regardless of hard lines of reporting.

OUR STORIES (15 min)

This exercise will start jogging people’s brains about the stories that they have lived through, and starts to identify the shared values that make people relate to, and get inspired by, stories.

- Have everyone turn to a partner and share their stories in pairs: (5 min)
  - What personally got you involved? (in sustainability, in our group, etc.) What brought you to where you are today?
  - What was the turning point?
- Ask participants to not speak while their partner is talking; for this exercise it’s an exchange, not a conversation!
- Ask partners to switch halfway through so both people get a chance to share
- Bring everyone back together, and ask the group (10 min)
  - What are your initial impressions of sharing stories like this?
  - What were some sentiments people heard in your partner’s story?
- Write down themes on your “THEMES IN STORYTELLING” poster
  - Some answers might include:
    - I was overwhelmed /shocked with the state of the world (urgency, importance)
    - I wanted to make a change
    - I felt like I could make a change
    - I was dissatisfied with where I was / the efforts I had participated in
    - I felt part of a community
- EXPLAIN: People are strongly linked by shared motivations, feelings and experiences. This is a key element in your story – the aspects that highlight the humanness and meaning behind your journey.
WHY IS STORYTELLING IMPORTANT? (10 min)

This is a quick brainstorm of identifying the usefulness of storytelling, particularly to connect with people and strengthening relationships amongst our peers

- EXPLAIN: Drawing from our own experiences (including what we’ve done just now!), we’re going to quickly brainstorm why storytelling is important. Think broadly – from our day to day lives, to when we’re discussing the work we do in sustainability.

- Ask the group to brainstorm:
  - Why is storytelling important?

- Write down responses on your “WHY IS STORYTELLING IMPORTANT” poster
  - Responses may include:
    - Stories engage with and identify our motivations and common values
    - Stories are more resonant than facts
    - You can’t argue with a story
    - Stories reveal what we can learn from one another (experiences, resources, etc.)
    - Stories reveal the complexity behind choices to get involved in a single issue
    - Sharing our stories builds team sentiment, builds care and trust amongst us
    - Stories gives hope to those engaging in the same work
    - If we don’t tell our own stories, they will be told for us by others less familiar or favorable to our initiatives

Facilitators note: this discussion was originally created to separate responses into “important in delivering our message” and “important in building our community.” The line is blurry and not necessarily relevant (so no pressure to follow those lines!) but it raises an interesting conversation about both strategy and community building

EXPLAIN: There are lots of different reasons why we might tell our story, whether it’s to get people on board with our initiatives or to build stronger connections with our peers. We are going to be working on crafting our story of self, and later put that storytelling into practice when we learn about one-on-ones in the second half of this workshop.

CHALLENGE-CHOICE-OUTCOME (30 minutes)

This is a framework that gives participants structure to break down the narrative flow of their stories. Folks might find this a bit clunky to work with at first, especially if they try to follow the challenge-choice-outcome structure too rigidly. Encourage people to use this as a model, and ask questions that help people dig into their past to find key moments.

EXPLAIN: We are going to discuss the framework of Challenge – Choice – Outcome. This is a tool to develop your story by pivoting it around key turning points. Think back to your literature classes in high school, and remember that elements as basic as characters, settings, and narrative arcs are important in making your story captivating and communicative.

- Go through the “CHALLENGE-CHOICE-OUTCOME” poster, and link it to the story you (the facilitator) told in the beginning of this workshop (10 min)
  - CHALLENGE: What was the specific challenge you faced? How was it your challenge?
    In the story I told in the beginning, my challenge was feeling alienated in the student strike, and searching for a new issue to take action on
CHOICE: What was the specific choice you made? Where did you find the inspiration?
I chose to get involved in the environmental movement and the sustainability community. The urgency of the issue, and the strengths of the friendships I built, inspired me.

OUTCOME: What was the outcome as a result of your choice? What hope can it give others?
I found purpose and belonging in the environmental movement, and especially in the creativity and energy within the student community. It can inspire people to get involved in this vibrant and exciting movement.

EXPLAIN: A helpful way of thinking about this structure is like a movie trailer – the goal isn’t to tell your whole life story, but to identify the moments that convey your motivations. Remember that a story often includes multiple challenge-choice-outcome cycles. Different audiences might call for different stories to better match their experiences!

Going over the Story of Self worksheets: (10 min)
- Have a participant read out loud the section “Three Key Elements of Story Telling Structure: Challenge – Choice – Outcome” on the handout, and go over any questions or thoughts participants may have about those ideas.
- Briefly go over the section “Developing your Story of Self,” not reading everything word for word, but especially pointing to the prompts that may help participants find the elements they want to highlight in their own stories.

EXPLAIN: The best stories include a personal paradigm shift, often encapsulated in one event (an article, a speech, a conversation, an experience).

- Give people five minutes to work on their own stories using prompts from the worksheet. If participants don’t have notebooks, provide some paper and pens. Afterwards, have people reshare their story of self with the same partner, to compare different story versions (10 min)

EXPLAIN: Our stories are a powerful tool to connecting with people around us to get involved in our initiatives. We’re going to be using this in our exploration of one-on-ones - keep it handy!

*TAKE A BREAK*

INTRO TO ONE-ON-ONES (15 min)

This is a pretty explanation-heavy, poster-heavy section to introduce the pieces of one-on-ones. If you have more exciting ways of presenting this information, or if you want to encourage different kinds of conversations, please do!

EXPLAIN: We just spent a solid amount of time going over why our personal stories are important for inspiring and connecting with people, and how to tell our stories with a big impact using the Choice-Challenge-Outcome framework. Now we’re going to put storytelling into practice through one-on-ones, where we can build our community and leverage resources towards our initiatives.

- Can anyone explain what a one-on-one is in your own words?
- Has anyone done one-on-ones before? In what context?

EXPLAIN: Chance are, you have already done a one-on-one without even knowing it! If you’ve sat down with someone to talk about the work you’re doing in the hope of getting them involved, you already have experience under your belt that you can draw from in this workshop.
Going over the “ONE ON ONES DEFINITION” poster (5 min)

- Ask someone to read the poster out loud, and afterwards go back over the text emphasizing key parts of the sentence:

“A one-on-one is a structured conversation where you authentically share your story with another person and listen to theirs. Based on your commonalities, you invite the person to work together.”

  - “A structured conversation where you authentically share”: As we’ll explore further, the framework of one-on-ones break down organic interactions into identifiable pieces
  - “Share your story with another person and listen to theirs”: It’s fundamentally about an exchange of stories to connect on a human level. It’s not an interview or a transactional conversation
  - “Based on your commonalities”: Stories reveal our shared motivations!
  - “You invite the person to work together”: While the core of this conversation is about relationship-building, the point is to use that relationship to move forward and share resources.

- What are your initial impressions about this framework? Popcorn 1-3 responses.

EXPLAIN: One-on-ones can feel kind of awkward at first, but they are fundamentally about breaking down the pieces of what builds a successful friendship. It shouldn’t feel transactional or formulaic, but can actually help build stronger connections by breaking down the steps toward being more vulnerable and open with each other.

MAKEUP OF ONE-ON-ONES (10 min)

This is a chance for participants to walk through the different elements of a one-on-one, and get a bit more tangible about how to make them happen.

- Open up a brief brainstorming space with participants about how to get started (5 min)
  - Who would we want to do a one-on-one with? Brainstorm either specific groups or common traits
    - People with useful networks, specific skills, common motivations
    - People within our group who we are trying to connect with more (newer recruits, peers)
    - Elected student executives, mobilizers, graphic designers…etc.!
  - How would you ask someone to do a one-on-one with you?
    - Be transparent about your purpose: “I’m starting a new network and thought you might be interested,” “I’m struggling with a problem and I think you could help,” “I know you have an interest in X and I’d love to chat about it with you”
    - At the same time, assert that it’s about building a relationship: “It’d be great to hang out and learn more about what you’re up to” or “where you’re coming from”

EXPLAIN: Now that we’ve broken the ice on asking someone to hang out, we’re going to dive into the conversation itself. Remember that this process is meant to break down genuine interactions into smaller pieces – it may seem formulaic, but is actually based on what we naturally do!
• **Go over the “5 Cs OF A ONE-ON-ONE” poster.** Read over the terms, and flesh out the definitions using the prompts below (5 min):
  o **Connection:** Most of a one-on-one is dedicated to sharing stories and asking questions to learn about the other person’s values, purposes and resources. It’s important to make it a two-way street!
  o **Context:** Explain why the work you are asking them to engage in is important. Ask questions that help the person locate their own sense of engagement around your issue.
  o **Choice:** Decide whether or not to move forward with your relationship, and continue exchanging knowledge and resources
  o **Commitment:** This probably means meeting again and engaging in action together. Be specific (schedule a time, specific task). The goal isn’t just to get someone to make a pledge; it’s to start sharing some stream of work together.
  o **Catapult:** Ask if they recommend other resources or people that you can follow up with to build a wider network.

• **Thoughts or questions about this framework?** Popcorn 1-3 responses.

**EXPLAIN:** Now that we’ve broken down the different elements about what a one-on-one looks like, we’re going to practice with some roleplays. Remember that this gets easier with practice! As we move forward, remember to think about how our stories can inspire and connect with people through our shared motivations and experiences.

**ROLEPLAY (20 min)**

This is where participants will be able to put what they’ve learned into practice. Throughout this exercise, be encouraging and open about what constitutes each of the steps in a one-on-one, and encourage participation and analysis about both positive and challenging aspects about how people interact in these exercises. Remember (and remind participants) that the time allotted to these practice rounds for one-on-ones are much shorter than actual one-on-ones, and to not feel discouraged if you don’t cover all the ground you want to at once!

**ROLEPLAY #1 (10 min)**

Start off by asking for one volunteer to be the “interviewed” person. Set up two chairs in the middle of the circle, and model a one-on-one. If you feel comfortable, you can make up a new story to keep it interesting and diversify it from the story you originally told. (5 min)

Ask participants to reflect on the roleplay: (5 min)
- **What did you notice in that conversation? How was the flow?**
- **What worked? What could have gone better?**
- **How did it compare to the 5 Cs outline?**
- **What were some common values that were shared by the two people?**

**ROLEPLAY #2 (10 min)**

Depending on the number of people and their comfort levels, this could play out in a few ways:
- You can bring two new people to the centre of the circle, and ask them to do another reflection with the group as a whole. This allows for more collective reflection, but gives fewer people practice.
- You can split people in pairs and ask them each to practice doing one-on-ones on their own. This gives more people practice, but potentially offers less complete feedback from an external perspective.
You can offer people to do one-on-ones as themselves, or ask if some people to adopt roles (e.g. a student executive, someone from a like-minded organization, someone who doesn’t immediately get excited about sharing their story) to give some people practice with different scenarios.

However you make it happen, give some time in the end to gather one or two reflections on how it feels to actually put this into practice.

EXPLAIN: One-on-ones take practice, but ultimately become more natural the more you practice doing them. While these structures are useful, don’t get lost in the rigid structures of this process - it’s more of a guide than strict steps! You have more experience than you think, just by dint of already having worked on sustainability projects at the university.

CLOSING (10 min)

Have participants go around in a circle or turn to a partner and answer the question, “What are you taking away from this workshop? A thought? A question? A next step?”

Thank folks for coming, and invite them to sign up for the MOOS listserv or take your email to keep in touch! Ask for feedback and reflections, whenever they pop up, by getting in touch with you.
One-On-Ones

A one-on-one is a structured conversation where you authentically share your story with another person and listen to theirs. Based on your commonalities, you invite the person to work together.

5 Cs of a One-On-One

Connect
Context
Choice
Commitment
Catapult

Challenge
What was the specific challenge you faced? How was it your challenge?

Choice
What was the specific choice you made? Where did you find the inspiration?

Outcome
What was the outcome as a result of your choice? What hope can it give others?
Student Sustainability Workshop
Mobilization and Sustainable Team Structures

BLURB: In a world of constant transiency and high energy, how do we ensure that student initiatives remain sustainable? Join the conversation on building accountable and durable structures, institutional memory and mentorship.

Goals:
- Identify tools to bring people in to your group
- Identify motivations for people to join initiatives
- Examine different styles of leadership and structures in groups

Time: 1 hour, 30 minutes

Materials (templates at the end of workshop outline):
- 2 copies of “Purpose Driven Campaigning” to use as a resource
- Post-its
- Moveable lines (popsicle sticks, pencils, etc.) and circles (stickers, gummy bears, etc.)
- Posters
  - “Stake-Vision-Role”
    - Stake: Why do you do what you do?
    - Vision: What is your vision for your initiative on campus?
    - Role: What is your role in the team you want to build?
  - “Rings of Involvement” (Page 5 of Purpose-Driven campaigning handout)
- 5 copies of “Fantastically Cheesy Mobilization Spectacle!” script (+1 for facilitator)
- Papers with character labels for spectacle
  - “NARRATOR”
  - “COMMUNITY”
  - “CROWD”
  - “CONGREGATION”
  - “COMMITTED” (x 2)
  - “CORE” (x 2)
  - “APPLAUSE”

NOTE: This workshop is well-matched with the “Storytelling and One-On-Ones” workshop. Consider running them as a pair if possible!

NOTE: Choose to run only ONE of the following exercises, or else the workshop will be super long!

- Organizing a Team Around Shared Values: This exercise is useful for workshops run for a particular group. It touches more on connections through intimate sharing, and encourages participants to get into a leadership mindset.
- Getting Involved: This exercise is useful for a workshop of individuals who come from different groups, and addresses more about the nuts and bolts of recruitment.
INTRO (5 min)

- Land acknowledgment
  - We would like to acknowledge that we are currently on the traditional territory of the Kanien'keh:ka (Ga-niyan-gé-haa-ga) (which means “Mohawk” in the Mohawk language), a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. We recognize and respect the Kanien’keh:ka (Ga-niyan-gé-haa-ga) as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. It’s important to remember the ways that history, and especially the history of colonialism, impacts how we are building a sustainable society today.

- Have participants go around and say their name, preferred gender pronoun if they would like, and a bit about the groups or initiatives they are involved in
  - Your preferred gender pronoun is the word you would like to be referred to when you are out of the room. For example, “Lily went to the store, SHE bought some bread.” You can phrase your preference by saying, “I prefer him-his pronouns” or “I go by he”

- Introduce yourself and the context of this workshop
  - E.g. “My name is Lily, and I’m the Student Engagement Facilitator at the McGill Office of Sustainability, or MOOS. This workshop is geared towards sustainability leaders to build capacity and raise discussions around leadership. Thanks so much for coming!”

- Explain workshop norms:
  - This workshop is discussion based; you are strongly encouraged to participate. If you find yourself talking a lot, take a step back to allow more space for other people. If you aren’t sharing as much, challenge yourself to contribute.

- Point to where the bathrooms are, and tell participants they can go at any time

- Briefly go over the agenda and timeframe of the workshop
  - This workshop is going to dive deeper into what makes not only a good team, but a sustainable team – one that successfully involves and empowers people, builds accountability and trust, and lasts over multiple generations of leaders.
  - Please draw on your own experiences as this conversation unfolds! You can apply this both to your specific group, as well as to the wider sustainability movement
  - While teambuilding can refer to many things, we are going to be focusing more on mobilization and structure, and less on building collective trust and vision. That isn’t because those elements are not important, but rather because there is really only so much we can fit in one workshop!

ENERGIZER (5 min)

Have everyone stand in a close circle (with shoulders touching) and close their eyes. Ask everyone to put one hand in the middle and to find someone else’s hand; have everyone do the same with the second. Ask participants to open their eyes and figure out how to “untie” their human knot. As they unravel, notice patterns, techniques or leaders that emerge to bring up in the following conversation.

WHY TEAMS? (10 min)

The energizer is a good way to start the conversation on what are good ways to organize teams. Participants will draw on this brief exercise to surface initial ideas about why team building is important, and what makes a team sustainable.
• When everyone is un-knotted, do a celebratory applause and have everyone return to their seats. Go into an opening conversation / debrief:
  o **What did you notice in unraveling your human knot?**
    ▪ Get 2-3 responses about the general experience
  o **What makes a good team?**
    ▪ Draw on the human knot scenario by asking leading questions, for example:
      ▪ *Where did the direction come from in your group? Leaders?*
      ▪ *How do you feel your team communicated in that exercise?*
      ▪ *How did you decide what strategy you would use?*
    ▪ Some answers that might come up:
      ▪ Communication, shared knowledge, distribution of power, awareness of our interconnectedness
  o **Why do we organize in teams?**
    ▪ Some answers might include:
      ▪ Gather different skills by combining different people
      ▪ Wider range of perspectives
      ▪ Able to build a community that is nourishing at the same time as it’s effective (having fun with friends!)
  o **What does this have to do with sustainability?**
    ▪ Some answers might include:
      ▪ Reflects the values that we’re trying to embody (a collective over individualistic society)
      ▪ It’s more sustainable to have multiple people empowered, so that knowledge lives on beyond one person leaving

EXPLAIN: *One of the best references in identifying people’s motivations is your own experience. Keep this in mind as we go into the next exercise*

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**FACILITATOR NOTE:** CHOOSE AHEAD OF TIME WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING TWO EXERCISES YOU WILL RUN!**

**ORGANIZING A TEAM AROUND SHARED VALUES (20 min)**

This conversation connects one’s personal commitment with the collective group vision. This conversation can spiral out in a million ways, but it’s important to keep it rooted in how sharing this reflection builds trust and clarity among members, and thus strengthens the group’s structure.

EXPLAIN: *Understanding our stake in our initiative, our vision for the future, and how our work fits into this broader vision helps us to holistically engage in our work, and build stronger teams that can stick together for the long haul.*

• Go through the “STAKE VISION ROLE” poster, using examples from your own life
  o **Stake:** *Why do you do what you do?* Think about your own experience an what led you into this work
    e.g. *I’m passionate about building the communities and structures that will create and replace our current unsustainable status quo*
  o **Vision:** *What is your vision for your initiative on campus?*
    e.g. *I want ECOLE to serve as the hub that will spark creative and genuine connections across groups on campus*
  o **Role:** *What is your role in the team you want to build?*
e.g. I want to curate group dynamics and connect ECOLE with people across the university

- Are there any questions or clarifications people would like about this framework?

- Have people take five minutes to write down their answers, and then share with the person next to them. Afterwards, ask for some people to discuss all together:
  - Any first thoughts on your reflections?
  - How did it feel to tie your individual experience to the group’s wider vision? Why might it be important to explore that connection?
    - Builds sense of “being in it together,” trust, belonging
    - Shared passion
    - Easier to move forward with personal conviction over obligation as motivation
    - Easier to identify what the group should prioritize
  - How can we create the spaces to make that happen in our groups?
    - Check-ins, informal retreats, targeted conversations, one-on-ones, reading circles, including values in job descriptions, vision / mission statements

EXPLAIN: People’s personal connection to your initiative is an enormous factor in making a strong group. Finding ways to collectively sharing this reflection builds trust and clarity among members, and thus strengthens your personal connections as a group.

GETTING INVOLVED (10 min)

This is another small brainstorm to get people thinking about their own experiences as a reference point for how to get new participants involved.

- Have participants turn to a partner and discuss a time they got involved in a group or initiative. Ask each group of partners to discuss:
  - What made you join? An event, a relationship, a personal call to action?
  - What made you stay? How did you take on the responsibility you did?
  - Make sure to remind groups to switch so both partners have a chance to speak!

- Bring everyone back together and have people share a few reflections. Encourage people to use examples from the stories they heard.
  - What made you join?
    - Answers might include:
      - Visibility (tabling, stickers, listserves)
      - Personal interest
      - Incentives through related means (class project, job opportunity)
      - Openness / acceptance (welcoming committees, vibes)
      - Encouragement (special attention from a mentor)
      - Friendship!
  - What made you stay?
    - Answers might include:
      - Training / mentorship (escalation of responsibility)
      - Friendship, community
      - Impact of the group itself
      - Shared and united vision
      - Personal commitment to cause

Going over the “BEFORE COMMITTING, PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW” poster
- Drawing on examples generated in the discussion, go through each line:
“Will they make friends?” People often join a group seeking community. If they feel out of place or unwelcome, they will be less likely to stick around.

“Are they actually needed?” Feeling purposeful and involved is important for making people take ownership of the group itself. But without a purpose, you’re mostly just showing up to meetings and hearing what other people are up to – not so exciting.

“What is the benefit in joining to them?” Does your group give a great sense of community? Does it add something to someone’s CV? Does it give people the opportunity to meet new people, or have big impact?

“What is expected or required of them if they join?” Having clarity around the amount of work a group requires makes it easier for new people to evaluate if they have the time or energy to commit.

- Ask if this resonates with participants by a show of hands. You can ask if people would like clarifications around anything, or take 1-2 comments about how this matches up to their own experience.

EXPLAIN: Your best indicator of how to get people to join is to draw from your own experiences. Thinking about how to make clear expectations and a warm welcome are key factors in bringing in new members to your group!

RINGS OF INVOLVEMENT (25 min)

This tool is useful in breaking down the different levels of people engaged in your group, and figuring out what kinds of activities speak best to each segment. It’s really helpful to have a common case study in mind for everyone to use (e.g. ECOLE, Environcom, etc.) so you can brainstorm examples together. But if there isn’t one example everyone is familiar with, you can ask people to use personal examples from their own group, or you can use a fictional group for everyone to reference together (e.g. Compost McGill, described later in this outline).

- EXPLAIN: Keeping these ideas in mind about an individual’s experience getting involved in a group, we’re going to discuss wide-scale recruitment through the Rings of Involvement model.
- This tool is from Make Believe’s adaptation of “The Purpose Driven Church” by Rick Warren. In his book, Warren describes how he grew his church, Saddleback, from scratch to 20,000 members attending each week. It is now the eighth biggest church in the United States. Make Believe created the guide “Purpose Driven Campaigning” to transfer these lessons to sustainable non-profit organisations and mass support for progressive campaigns.

Going over the “CIRCLES OF INVOLVEMENT” poster

- Put the poster on the floor, so everyone can see the text. Have your post-its ready for the second part of this exercise!
Go through each ring and explain what it represents. As you go through, ask people to draw examples from a common case study, personal examples or a fictional group. (Examples in this workshop outline refer to ECOLE as a case study)

- **Community** – The general public that exists. This is the widest circle of people you can convince to get involved in your initiative.
  - E.g. McGill students
- **Crowd** – Everyone who shows up to your events. These are people who have never signed up for anything, but who agree with your initiative.
  - E.g. everyone who came to ECOLE skillshares and promotional events, or who used the ECOLE space for one of their events
- **Congregation** – The official members of your organisation, and who personally identify with your group. They may have signed a petition or participated in a funding campaign.
  - E.g. People who come to general assemblies, occasionally come to collective meetings, helped with the fee levy campaign
- **Committed** – They act, give time and energy, and are dedicated to growing in discipleship. They are reliable people but haven’t yet taken on a personal chunk of leadership responsibility.
  - E.g. People who regularly come to collective meetings, the board
- **Core** – These are the people who regularly take responsibility and always show up. Without these people your organisation would come to a standstill
  - E.g. Facilitators, coordinators, particularly motivated leaders

EXPLAIN: The idea of this model is to think about **how to bring outer circles close to the inside**. (Facilitator note: you might want to draw an arrow from the “community” ring to the “core” ring)

- Focusing on the core tends to create such close-knit relationships that it’s hard to break into. You often end up seeing the same people at every event, because all of the networks of involved people have been exhausted.
- When developing your group, listen to the community and crowd, and earn their trust! The growth of your group is dependent on being exciting and relevant to people who are outside of your currently existing network
- This is a model that is focused on growing your organization. You may come to a point where you don’t want it to grow – and that’s fine! Apply this model only as it makes sense for you.

EXPLAIN: Now we’re going to do some more tangible brainstorming of how to target each of these rings. **What kind of initiatives would target each of these rings to move them in closer to the core?**

- Divide people into partners, and pass out post it notes. Ask people to brainstorm events or ideas that might attract people in each ring, write them down on post it notes, and stick them to their corresponding ring.
- After everyone puts their post-its down, go through each ring out → in, and read out loud the ideas people generated. Validate the examples by giving the summaries below of each ring.

- For **community**, large events that captures attention and build bridges to the organization
  - Concerts, parties, festivals
- For **crowd**, events targeted at those seeking new ideas (instead of re-convincing the convinced) and that build a feeling of being part of a community
  - Conferences, speakers
- For **congregation**, small groups that start to build relationships and require a bit more commitment and presence
  - Workshops, community meals
For **committed**, training for skills that will allow people to take on more leadership
  o Introductory workshops, webinars, information
For **core**, leadership development
  o Skill development, retreats

EXPLAIN: As with all models, this is a way to frame your thought process, not an absolute rulebook of what kind of events attract each kind of audience. The best way to figure out how to be most effective is to seek out people from each ring and make your decisions based on what you hear directly from them – their motivations, their concerns, and their interest.

**DAY-TO-DAY RINGS OF INVOLVEMENT (15 min)**

This exercise applies the Rings of Involvement to the way individuals can influence people join a group and successfully gain experience and take ownership within it. This is a lighthearted activity, but remember to bring it back to the lessons at the core of the exercise!

EXPLAIN: *We’re going to take this model one step further and look at how we can use it to build targeted leadership within our initiatives. Using some fun theatre, we’re going to explore how the roles of people change can intentionally over time.*

- Ask for five volunteers to come to the front of the room, and distribute character titles and scripts
  - Give the NARRATOR the “Applause” sign, and tell them to hold it up every time the word “Applause” is written in the script
  - As characters “evolve,” give them their new roles
  - If you don’t have enough people, you can create puppets or ask some people to act as two characters (COMMUNITY and COMMITTED)
- Start the play with some opening words and applause:
  - “Introducing, the Fantastically Cheesy Mobilization Spectacle!”
  - Have volunteers read and act out the script!
- After the play ends and giggling has subsided, open up a conversation
  - **What makes this succession sustainable?**
  - **Where do we find leadership in this series of exchanges?**
  - **What are some challenges that would pose obstacles to this series?**

EXPLAIN:
- **Team building is an ongoing process, not something that happens once. It’s something that we do to strengthen our relationships within our initiative and work better together**
- **This process can be stretched over time. Some groups choose to have an integration process that lasts over a year, and sometimes people don’t feel comfortable being considered “experienced” until they’ve done a number of actions**
- **Your voice as an experienced person means a lot to someone who is just getting started. Don’t be afraid to encourage people to step up and take on big responsibility – the only way to get experience is by trying!**

**MODELS OF LEADERSHIP (15 min)**

This exercise uses images to spark conversation about the ideal structure of a sustainable group. There are some key points to hit, but let the conversation flow naturally – depending on the experience of the group, you can arrive at some new and interesting reflections!
EXPLAIN: We’re going to take a look at some governance models of groups, and analyse their benefits and challenges. Figuring out how you want to structure decision-making plays a big part in determining the sustainability of your organization – how can we ensure ongoing leadership? How can we bring new people in as others leave? How do we institutionalize practices and collective knowledge?

- Using objects to map out the different structures makes this exercise more memorable (e.g. popsicle sticks and gummy bears), or if you have enough people, you can ask people to act out these structures and use their arms to represent lines of command.
- Arrange circles and lines in the middle, and have people take a few minutes to observe the three models

![Models A, B, C](image)

- Ask people to talk out loud one by one through each model, and talk about what they notice. Open up a conversation:
  - What does decision making look like in this group?
  - What are some challenges this group might face? What are some benefits?
  - How might different people feel in this model? (e.g. the person in the middle of model A, or a person on the outside of model C).

Your conversation can hit on the following key points:
- A. Leader in the middle
  - Decision-making falls on the middle person
    - Things get done more quickly with fewer decision-makers
    - Person in the middle holds the most responsibility, information
    - Group falls apart when that person leaves (e.g. graduation)
  - People on the outside follow middle person
    - Take on less generalized responsibility, able to specialize
    - Less informed about overall structure, less likely to take on leadership
    - Have more space to engage with things outside the group (less of a commitment)
  - Hard to hold each other accountable, less support networks
- B. Buckshot / “Leaderless” structure
  - No hierarchy or defined levels of reporting
    - More space for individual projects supported by a general network
    - Less opportunities for coordinated initiatives
    - Difficulty or potential resistance towards implementing structure
  - Cohesion relies on the relationships people have with each other in the group
    - Organic, spontaneous initiatives when friendships are strong
    - Hard to hold each other accountable when those relationships change
• Informal power structures may go unnamed – people with more experience may subtly control group’s direction
  o Tricky for new people to plug in without a structure
• C. Interdependent leadership / working groups
  o Core team sets strategy and coordinates smaller working groups
    ▪ Clear understanding of how communication and decision making works
    ▪ Mechanism to replace and train people who leave
    ▪ Good for breaking down groups with a high number of people
  o Working groups take on smaller pieces of overall strategy
    ▪ Structure makes it easy for new people to plug in with less up-front commitment
    ▪ People in the outer group may have a hard time breaking into the “core”
  o A lot of meetings!
• Are there other formats of groups that you know which provide distributed and accountable leadership?
  Some examples could include:
    o A board or council that provides ongoing feedback or institutional memory
      ▪ McGill Farmers Market, ECOLE
    o Leapfrogging “execs” and “interns” that rotate each year
      ▪ MSEG
    o Institutionalized positions as part of a larger, stable entity
      ▪ Envirocom (SSMU)

EXPLAIN: Especially in a transient student context, creating structures that outlast the people who are currently driving the project is a key part of making a group sustainable. There is not one-size-fits-all model of how to build a structure; experiment and learn from groups around you to get inspiration.

Closing (10 min)

• Have participants go around in a circle or turn to a partner and answer the question, “What are you taking away from this workshop? A thought? A question? A next step?”
• Thank folks for coming, and invite them to sign up for the MOOS listserve or take your email to keep in touch! Ask for feedback and reflections, whenever they pop up, by getting in touch with you.
Fantastically Cheesy Mobilization Spectacle!
A script to unpack the Rings of Mobilization on a day-to-day level

CHARACTERS, in order of appearance:
NARRATOR
CONGREGATION
COMMUNITY
COMMITTED
CORE

NARRATOR stands on one side of the stage. On the left side of the stage, CONGREGATION stands at a market stand, organizing vegetables and waving at passing clients. COMMUNITY, COMMITTED AND CORE are offstage.

NARRATOR: And now, for a wonderfully cheesy illustrative script on mobilization!

*APPLAUSE*

NARRATOR: It’s a beautiful sunny day at the McGill Farmer’s Market. The sun is shining, the zucchinis are ripe, and “CONGREGATION” is excited to chat with passerby outside of SSMU. After seeing an invitation on the Farmers Market listserv, “CONGREGATION” has been volunteering for an hour a week at the stand.

CONGREGATION: It’s great spending time meeting people in the community. Oh, here’s someone new!

COMMUNITY comes on stage and walks up to CONGREGATION

COMMUNITY: Look at all these beautiful vegetables! What’s all this about?

CONGREGATION: This is the McGill Farmers Market, which happens on McTavish every Thursday from 12-5PM. We connect local farmers to the McGill community, and we sell organic produce through our CSA program. Would you like to sign up for our listserv to stay in touch about the market?

COMMUNITY: Sure!
COMMUNITY mimes signing up for a listserv
Switch “COMMUNITY” tag for “CROWD”

*APPLAUSE*

CONGREGATION: Thanks so much, enjoy the market!

COMMUNITY walks off stage; COMMITTED walks up to CONGREGATION
COMMITTED: Hey *CONGREGATION*, that was awesome how well you engaged with that passerby who is now on our listserv! Would you be interested in training some other volunteers on how to run the market stand and talk to the public?

CONGREGATION: Wow, you really think so? It’s definitely been useful having your training and support at the stand to get to this point. I would be so honored to take on that responsibility!

Switch “CONGREGATION” tag for “COMMITTED”

*APPLAUSE*

COMMITTED: There’s a meeting happening on the right side of the stage to talk about the larger strategy of the market. Want to come?

CONGREGATION: Sure!

_The two walk over to the right side of the stage; CORE joins them._

CORE: Welcome to the meeting on the right side of the stage! As you all know, we are thinking of expanding our operations to include a bicycle coop. It would require some serious time and coordination from people who are already familiar with the market.

COMMITTED: That sounds like something I’d be interested in doing! I’ve been working here for a year doing volunteer coordination and fundraising, and I’m super passionate about the farmers market. I would love to put my experience towards such an ambitious and exciting project!

CORE: That’s awesome! Can’t wait to see where you take the organization!

Switch “COMMITTED” tag to “CORE”

*APPLAUSE*

NARRATOR: And they all lived sustainably ever after!

_Everyone bows_
### POSTERS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stake</th>
<th>Rings of Involvement</th>
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<td>Why do you do what you do?</td>
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<th>Vision</th>
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<tr>
<td>What is your vision for your initiative on campus?</td>
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<th>Role</th>
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<tr>
<td>What is your role in the team you want to build?</td>
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Student Sustainability Workshop
Sustainability and Anti-Oppression

BLURB: As social sustainability becomes a growing conversation, it is increasingly important to articulate how anti-oppression factors into the work we do. Join this workshop to learn some basic vocabulary and tools to analyze how sustainability is rooted in societal power dynamics, and open up the conversation on how we can build safer spaces in our community.

Goals:
- Introduce framework of anti-oppression
- Give students tools to make links to social sustainability
- Unpack anti-oppression that applies to the sustainability community at McGill

Time: 2 hours, 30 minutes

Materials (templates at the end of workshop outline):
- Posters
  - “Systems of Oppression” (blank)
  - Pre-made example of Inequalitree
  - Four blank copies of the Inequalitree
- Handouts
  - Printed copies of term definitions
- Key terms on small note cards
  - Colonization
  - Oppression
  - Power
  - Privilege
  - Environmental Racism

Preparation:
- Consider sending an email a day or two beforehand to get people geared up to be in a good headspace for the workshop. Give people a rough idea of the discussions that will happen, and encourage people to lean into the discomfort that can come from entering a vulnerable conversation.
INTRO (10 MIN)

- Land Acknowledgment
  - We would like to acknowledge that we are currently on the traditional territory of the Kanien'keh:ka (Ga-niyen-gé-haa-ga) (which means “Mohawk” in the Mohawk language), a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. We recognize and respect the Kanien'keh:ka (Ga-niyen-gé-haa-ga) as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. It’s important to remember the ways that history, and especially the history of colonialism, impacts how we are building a sustainable society today.
  - Open a small conversation:
    - Why do we do a land acknowledgment? How does it relate it to sustainability?
      - Answers may include:
        - Indigenous peoples are the original sustainable communities on the planet
        - Erasure of indigenous history in environmentalism
        - Distinction of environmentalism as extra-curricular versus part of someone’s identity and survival
- Introductions
  - Have participants go around and say their name, preferred gender pronoun if they would like, and a bit about what they are involved in
  - Your preferred gender pronoun is the word you would like to be referred to when you are out of the room. For example, “Lily went to the store, SHE bought some bread.” You can phrase your preference by saying, “I prefer him-his pronouns” or “I go by he”
    - Emphasize that if they do not feel comfortable naming a PGP, that is also fine
    - Remind participants to refrain from saying: “I don’t have a preferred pronoun” or “you can call me whatever.” This language is often associated with cis-privilege as the person has not had to consider which pronoun is best suited to them
  - Introduce yourself and the context of this workshop
    - E.g. “My name is Lily, and I’m the Student Engagement Facilitator at the McGill Office of Sustainability, or MOOS. This workshop is geared towards sustainability leaders to build capacity and raise discussions around leadership. Thanks so much for coming!”
- Explain workshop norms:
  - Take care of yourselves and take breaks as needed. It’s totally alright to not be 100% or feel “on.” Every activity is optional!
    - Point to where the bathrooms are, and tell participants they can go at any time
  - There are different levels of knowledge in the room - everyone is where they are at, and everyone has the capacity of learning from one another.
    - While there are many right answers, there are also wrong answers. And that’s ok! That being said, the facilitators will address them directly. The facilitators may interrupt or interject sometimes to make sure we’re on track.
  - Speak from personal experience rather than generalising. Use ‘I’ statements vs. speaking for any group.
    - E.g. ”As a mixed race woman of colour, I often feel that racialised women are exoticised in many spheres of society”
    - Also, refrain from accusatory language. “You are x because of y.” vs “I feel that x because of y.”
o Be conscientious of the effect of your participation, both as a listener and contributor
  ▪ How much are you talking?
  ▪ What is your body language conveying to your peers?
  ▪ Are you challenging ideas or are you challenging people?

o Our jobs as facilitators are to foster a specific understanding of anti-oppression. This is not a neutral space. Community is political and it is important to continuously evaluate how this may manifest itself within the sustainability sphere and the wider community context.

o There is a difference between feeling uncomfortable and feeling unsafe. Encourage participants to move towards the discomfort - this allows for growth and learning. Move towards this vulnerability.
  ▪ Unsafe: experiencing violence or the threat of violence that compromises mental or physical well being
  ▪ Uncomfortable: experiencing a feeling of self-consciousness or a heightened sense of self-awareness; sometimes questioning whether or not you have the right to voice an opinion

o This is an introduction to anti-oppression and sustainability. This conversation by no means ends at the end of this workshop, but is meant to start the conversation that will hopefully continue throughout our lives!

o This workshop was created in partnership with Emily Yee Clare, and draws on the awesome activities developed for anti-oppression programming in McGill residences

ENERGIZER (5-15 min)

Ask participants to take five minutes and think about the three following questions:

- What is the piece of land you feel most connected to?
- Do you know who the indigenous people of that land are?
- Where are your ancestors from?

Have participants go around in a circle and share their answers. It’s okay if this takes a bit longer than an energizer normally might, as it sets the tone for personal sharing and listening for the rest of the workshop. Remember to share your own!

EXPLAIN: This workshop is going to ask us to be personal and open about our every day experiences. Anti-oppression is not an abstract concept, but grounded in our daily reality – how history shapes our present. Remember to keep this space welcoming for those difficult reflections throughout this workshop.

DEFINITIONS (20 min)

This is a chance to introduce some basic terms into the discussion, and to break the ice around using them comfortably. It also reveals how much people already know (often much more than they think!). The rhythm of this conversation sets the tone for the rest of the workshop – work on making the space open and supportive, but also up-front about what we mean when discussing privilege and oppression.
EXPLAIN: We’re going to start by going through some basic terms around anti-oppression. You might be super familiar with these words, or not at all – that’s alright either way! We’re going to unpack these terms together; chances are you know more than you think you do.

- Spread key words on the ground in the middle of the circle, and ask participants to define and discuss the terms with the person next to them.
- Bring everyone back together. Going term by term, ask participants to share the definitions they created and the conversations they had. Allow the conversations to go where it will, but make sure to cover all the terms and bring in missing elements from their definitions below
  - **What are ways that these words connect?**
  - **What do you see as the difference between power and privilege?**
  - **How can we think of these terms in relation to the work we are doing in sustainability?**

- Definitions
  - **Colonisation:** The process by which a foreign power dominates and exploits an Indigenous group by appropriating its land and extracting the wealth from it, and trying to exterminate or assimilate that population. This is not just a thing of the past, but also a living reality exhibited in modern-day wars and resource extraction.
  - **Oppression:** The act of one social group using institutionalized power or privilege for its own benefit while disempowering, marginalizing, silencing and subordinating another group. Oppression occurs both institutionally (within organizations) and socially (between individuals). Because these prejudices are systematic, instances of oppression can happen both intentionally and un-intentionally.
    - E.g. oppression at an institutional level: Policies or laws that make it easier for some individuals to access resources, which can be enforced in schools, governments, companies, organizations etc.
      - If maternity leave isn’t included in the job structure, someone who needs to leave work to give birth may lose their job.
    - E.g. oppression at a social level: unconscious assumptions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions which are supported by the media and cultural stereotypes (also known as microaggressions)
      - “You’re too pretty to be an engineer and a woman!”
  - **Power:** The differing ability of individuals or groups to do or act in a particular way. Power can come into play when a group of people either directly or indirectly impacts another group. Some power remains static while other shifts, and some is actively exerted (using the military) versus passively held (a charismatic person staying quiet).
  - **Privilege:** The experience of freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities afforded to members of a dominant group in a society or in a given context. While this may be linked to the initiative of individuals (when people work to change their class privilege), but rather is linked to historical indicators and inheritance (race, gender, health).
**Environmental racism** is the forced placement and increased proximity of low-income or minority communities to environmentally hazardous or degraded environments, such as toxic waste, pollution and urban decay. This can also manifest in terms of available employment and work place safety.

- E.g. intensive resource extraction projects providing the main source of economic employment in an indigenous community, while simultaneously impacting the health and livelihood of that same community

- As the conversation unfolds, scribe key terms on your “SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION” poster. If they don’t naturally arise, make sure this complete list is up on the paper:

  - **Must-have terms:**
    - Racism
    - Ableism
    - (Cis-Hetero-)Patriarchy
    - Classism
    - Colonialism
    - Capitalism

  - **Other useful terms:**
    - Fatphobia / sizeism
    - Religious oppression
    - Ageism

- Facilitator note:
  - When doing this brainstorm, it helps to remind people that this list is about power dynamics that exist between some groups of people over others. Some things that are NOT on this list:
    - **Antropocentrism**: This term refers to human power over animals: this exercise focuses on human power over humans
    - **Globalization**: This term refers to a system that is created by humans to build a certain economy, but does not in itself describe human power over other humans (it is, however, built on racism, classism, etc.)
    - **Individualism**: This term refers to when humans prioritize themselves as individuals over the collective, as opposed to a group of humans with a shared identity holding power over other humans.

- The reason that **colonialism** and **capitalism** are on that list is their particular role in sparking these systems of oppression. In order to justify both, European colonizers created and enforced cultural systems of dominance to justify the violence and theft of resources.

EXPLAIN: These terms are fluid, but help frame the conversation about what oppression actually means. Now we’re going to go from the abstract to the personal, and position ourselves in this framework.
POSITIONALITY (30 min)

This is an activity that gets people thinking about their personal experiences of privilege and/or oppression. This can be a pretty vulnerable exercise, especially when it’s hard to help but compare your experience relative to co-workers, etc. Keep the room warm and confidential, and encourage people to speak only to the level they feel comfortable – allow space for personal processing. If you are running this exercise with two facilitators, decide ahead of time which facilitator will read each section.

EXPLAIN: We are going to do an exercise called “Move Up, Move Back.” This will be a chance for us to draw from our personal experiences to get a sense of the kind of privilege or oppression we have experienced.

MOVE UP, MOVE BACK (10 min)

- Have everyone stand on a line, about halfway across the room. Explain that when sentences are read aloud, participants will either move forward or backwards, depending on their response.
  - Recognize that everyone has different ability levels and that participants ought to do as they feel most comfortable.
  - Avoid the ableist language of ‘stepping up’ or ‘stepping back’.
- EXPLAIN:
  - Please do this exercise in silence so you can experience your own feelings and reactions, but if you don’t hear a question, feel free to ask for it to be repeated
  - If you don’t feel comfortable moving forward or backwards, you are welcome to stay in your place. Do what feels right for you – this is a personal reflection.
  - It’s more important to think about where you are than where others are!
- Start this activity with a few easy sentences
  - If you are left-handed, move back
  - If you are taller than 5 ft 5, move forward
  - Continue the activity using the following chart

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Move Forward</th>
<th>Move Back</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>If your family owned the house that you grew up in.</td>
<td>If either of your parents did not graduate from college.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you have never felt scared or anxious that you would be misgendered.</td>
<td>If you have ever been made to feel exoticised due to your race.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you believe that police would help you in an emergency.</td>
<td>If you have ever lived somewhere where you and/or your family didn’t feel safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you studied the history and culture of your ethnic ancestors in elementary and secondary school.</td>
<td>If you have ever felt shame or isolation due to your sexual preferences or practices.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you have never felt limited due to your race or gender.</td>
<td>If you ever felt an opportunity was closed to you because you didn’t know how to speak, dress, or act.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If your parents are paying, at minimum, for a portion of your tuition and/or living expenses.</td>
<td>If your family or ancestors were forcibly moved from their land.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>If you can work in a job without being underestimated because of my age or perceived age.</td>
<td>If you have ever felt judged or uncomfortable because of your body.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Leave a bit of time for participants to have a last thought, and then ask participants to move around the room and space to get out of their positions. This can open up conversation and be less daunting.

**DISCUSSION (15 min)**

- **How was it to go through that exercise?**
  Some answers might include:
  - Blended identities create different experiences of privilege (“intersectionality”)
  - It felt uncomfortable to be in the back / front (“positionality”)
  - It was tricky deciding if a description applied to me – things aren’t black and white!

- **Are you surprised? New realisations?**
- **How does it feel to be in the front? Middle? Back?**
- **How does this play into the work that you’re doing in sustainability? How do you personally relate to this work?**
  - You might take this opportunity to mention that sustainability is often dominated by white women!

**EXPLAIN:** A key part of figuring out how anti-oppression thought plays into our work is acknowledging our personal, lived experiences. This isn’t an abstract analysis; it’s about our day-to-day relationships and divisions of power. We can make an effort to notice these ideas all the time: who is speaking more? Who is taking on more behind-the-scenes jobs? Who isn’t present at all?
**TAKE A BREAK!**

INEQUALITREE (10 min)

This is a tool that roots sustainability issues in systems of power and oppression. It was created by Ayendri Ishani Perera and used here with appreciation. Like all models, there are holes in how to make this the most comprehensive and intuitive parallels to reality. Welcome those conversations, as they often highlight the nuances of diving into this analysis.

EXPLAIN: We’re going to work with a tool called the Inequalitree. This is a useful tool for breaking down how the issues that we’re trying to address with our sustainability initiatives are not just a question of the physical environment, but are fundamentally about the social systems that define how people have historically held power over each other.

Going over the INEQUALITREE POSTER (10 min)
- Go through each level of the Inequalitree, elaborating with the descriptions. It helps to model an issue – feel free to use the example below, or choose one of your own.
  - Facilitator note: Have your “SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION” poster nearby as a reference for the roots!
- Inequalitree Framework
  - The leaves refer to the everyday symptoms that you see of a societal issue. These are things that are most visible to the public, and are the easiest demonstration of an issue at stake.
    - e.g. Tar sands symptoms could include oil spills, decreased biodiversity, displacement of indigenous peoples, increase in cancer rates, economic disparity, polluted water, exploitation of foreign workers
  - The trunk refers to the institutions that make these symptoms possible. Thinking about institutions makes us move away from individual actions towards locating where enormous power (whether by money, legacy or infrastructure) can be influenced. Institutions support symptoms, just as a trunk supports the leaves / branches.
    - e.g. Tar sands rely on easily identifiable institutions (oil companies) as well as indirectly responsible or legitimizing institutions (courts, media outlets, governments, universities, unions, police, the military, residential schools)
  - The roots refer to way humans relate to each other, based on historical power and privilege. These are the kind of ideas that are ingrained in everything we do, the extent of which is often invisible especially to those with more power. The roots support the institutions and symptoms, as roots support a tree.
    - These roots include all of the terms we brainstormed in our “SYSTEMS OF OPPRESSION” poster
      - Tar sands are rooted in racism (environmental racism!)
        - Indigenous communities often are not consulted about projects on their traditional lands and bear the brunt of health impacts from these projects
        - Temporary foreign worker programs bring people in on precarious work status, make money for Canadian companies, and then send them back
- Tar sands are rooted in **patriarchy**
  - Workers are predominantly men, and many describe the masculine presence of oil towns with a heavy presence of sex work and addiction
  - CEOs of oil companies are predominantly (straight, white) men

- Tar sands are rooted in **classism**
  - As the government removes social services and continues to heavily subsidize the oil industry, workers face limited choices and turn to resource exploitation as a source of income

- Tar sands are rooted in **capitalism**
  - Profit is placed as the priority of the industry, out-weighting all other impacts that come as a result

- Tar sands are rooted in **colonialism**
  - The continued land theft and resource exploitation, at the expense of indigenous people and for the profit of non-indigenous people / settlers, is well-represented in the tar sands industry.

- **EXPLAIN:**
  - The idea of the tree is that **effective initiatives connect with people through symptoms, target or replace institutions, and address root problems.**
    - The general public is most likely to get involved through everyday impacts (“We care about clean water! We want healthy food!”)
    - You can either work within institutions to redirect the work they are doing (encourage a supermarket to sell organic, local food), or create new institutions that work differently (create your own farmers’ market)
    - Ultimately if you don’t address root issues, you will keep fighting the same problems (if a company decides to sell organic strawberries, but continues to exploit foreign workers at low wages, you’re only greenwashing)
  - The tree represents an issue one is fighting, not a general topic. It wouldn’t work to make a tree called “urban planning,” but you could do one on “gentrification” or “urban sprawl”
  - Like a tree, the everyday symptoms (or leaves) we see are propped up by institutions (the trunk), which in turn are supported by its roots. If we want to actually challenge systemic oppression, we can’t simply attack the everyday occurrences; we need to get down to the underlying systems that make this possible.
  - You can find parallels with another commonly used anti-oppression “iceberg” model

**ARTICULATING THE LINKS (30 min)**

This is a chance for participants to practice using the Inequalitree to analyze the issues they are working with. You can explore your own ways to find the questions that are most relevant to each workshop, but remember to choose examples that up to five people are comfortably knowledgeable in discussing.
EXPLAIN: We’re going to take some time to practice independently creating our own Inequalitrees. Remember that the point isn’t to be experts or to find an objectively perfect analysis, but to use this as a tool to open up conversations about how our work is related to anti-oppression.

- Divide participants into groups of 4 or 5 and give each group a big piece of blank paper. Ask the group to collectively brainstorm some ideas for the Inequalitrees
  - Some options of how to brainstorm
    - Ask participants to list the issues they are confronting with their groups
    - Have participants brainstorm a random list of sustainability issues
  - Ask participants to generate their own Inequalitree using a brainstormed example (coordinate so that two groups don’t unpack the same issue) (15 min)
    - Facilitator note: walk around to each group and check in to see if people are on the right track, or if they’re getting stuck. Let conversations flow as they will (that’s the most important part of this exercise!) but make sure there’s enough time for some discussion on each level before everyone comes back together.

- Come back together and ask groups to present their trees (10 min)
  - Take care as you get to the trunk and the roots to ask people to be clear about why they made those connections
    - e.g. If someone says “We included patriarchy because men are more privileged in society,” encourage them to make an actual link to the issue at hand – “Most of the people gaining economically from this are men – from the heads of these corporations to the laborers themselves – and women are often expected to stay behind and care for families.”
  - Open up a discussion (5 min)
    - Were there any conversations that stuck out while you made this tree?
    - Do you notice any similarities between the trees?
      - The institutions and roots are often the same!
    - Are there any connections you can make going “up” the tree, instead of down?
      - Encourage participants to link roots to symptoms that may initially seem less obvious
        - e.g. How is racism connected with decreased biodiversity? How is ableism linked to spills?

EXPLAIN: It’s a good idea to practice articulating the links between sustainability issues and their roots in societal oppression. The more you read and discuss these topics, the easier it will be to convey those ideas. Once you start looking out for these roots, you’ll see them everywhere!

REFLECTION (15 min)

- Have participants take five minutes to journal about an issue they are working on, or a group they are working with. Ask them to list four concrete ways that they can bring this workshop into the work they are doing. You can give the following prompts:
- Is there any framing in your initiative that addresses these wider issues?
- Who is involved in your group? Are people who are most impacted involved in the initiative?
- What kinds of work take place in your group? Who tends to take on each task?
- Is your group doing work that addresses root causes, and not just symptoms?
  - Have participants share their five concrete points with a partner, and reflect on how they might make those ideas become reality
  - You can have partners consider becoming “accountability buddies,” and staying in touch after the workshop to see if each person has made progress

**CONCLUSION (10 min)**

- Have participants go around in a circle or turn to a partner and answer the question, “What are you taking away from this workshop? A thought? A question? A next step?”
- Thank folks for coming, and invite them to sign up for the MOOS listserv or take your email to keep in touch! Ask for feedback and reflections, whenever they pop up, by getting in touch with you.
- Distribute copies of “Definitions and Resources” handout at the end of this workshop
POSTERS

Systems of Oppression

Colonialism  Power

Oppression  Environmental

Racism

Privilege
Definitions and Resources from “Anti-Oppression and Sustainability” Workshop

- **Colonisation**: The process by which a foreign power dominates and exploits an Indigenous group by appropriating its land and extracting the wealth from it, and trying to exterminate or assimilate that population. This is not just a thing of the past, but also a living reality exhibited in modern-day wars and resource extraction.

- **Oppression**: The act of one social group using institutionalized power or privilege for its own benefit while disempowering, marginalizing, silencing and subordinating another group. Oppression occurs both institutionally (within organizations) and socially (between individuals). Because these prejudices are systematic, instances of oppression can happen both intentionally and un-intentionally.
  - E.g. oppression at an institutional level: Policies or laws that make it easier for some individuals to access resources, which can be enforced in schools, governments, companies, organizations etc.
    - If maternity leave isn’t included in the job structure, someone who needs to leave work to give birth may lose their job.
  - E.g. oppression at a social level: unconscious assumptions of well-meaning people in ordinary interactions which are supported by the media and cultural stereotypes (also known as microaggressions)
    - “You’re too pretty to be an engineer and a woman!”

- **Power**: is the differing ability of individuals or groups to do or act in a particular way. Power can come into play when a group of people either directly or indirectly impacts another group. Some power remains static while other shifts, and some is actively exerted (using the military) versus passively held (a charismatic person staying quiet).

- **Privilege**: The experience of freedoms, rights, benefits, advantages, access and/or opportunities afforded to members of a dominant group in a society or in a given context. While this may be linked to the initiative of individuals (when people work to change their class privilege), but rather is linked to historical indicators and inheritance (race, gender, health).

- **Environmental racism**: The forced placement and increased proximity of low-income or minority communities to environmentally hazardous or degraded environments, such as toxic waste, pollution and urban decay. This can also manifest in terms of available employment and work place safety.
  - E.g. intensive resource extraction projects providing the main source of economic employment in an indigenous community, while simultaneously impacting the health and livelihood of that same community

Resources

- Social Equity and Diversity Education Office (SEDE)
- SSMU Equity Committee
- www.rezprojectresources.com

Student Sustainability Workshop:
Power Mapping and the University

BLURB: If we want to build a more sustainable McGill, we need to understand how the system itself works. This workshop will unpack the different places that power lies in the university, and go through an organizational chart to map out decision makers and influencers in the university.

Goals:
- Explore where power lies in the university
- Empower participants to embrace their power and think beyond hard lines of reporting
- Familiarize participants with the structure of the university

Time: 1.5 hours

Materials (see templates at the end of workshop outline):
- Posters
  - Why Understand how the University Works? (blank)
  - Students, Staff, Faculty, Administration matrix (blank) (template attached)
  - Organogram (optional – you can also draw it as you go)
    - Note: Consult with MOOS and others for the most recent version!

INTRO (10 min)
- Land acknowledgment
  - We would like to acknowledge that we are currently on the traditional territory of the Kanien'keh:ka (Ga-niyen-gé-haa-ga) (which means “Mohawk” in the Mohawk language), a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. We recognize and respect the Kanien'keh:ka (Ga-niyen-gé-haa-ga) as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. It’s important to remember the ways that history, and especially the history of colonialism, impacts how we are building a sustainable society today.
  - Have participants go around and say their name, preferred gender pronoun if they would like, a bit about what they are involved in, and (if you have few enough participants that it’s not super long) a question they have coming into this workshop
    - Your preferred gender pronoun is the word you would like to be referred to when you are out of the room. For example, “Lily went to the store, SHE bought some bread.” You can phrase your preference by saying, “I prefer him-his pronouns” or “I go by he”
    - Your question might be about an initiative you’re trying to get off the ground, a discussion you’ve been wanting to have about power in the university, or something you specifically want to learn more about
      - Facilitator note: Remember these (jot them down if you’d like) and come back to individual questions during the conversation
  - Introduce yourself and the context of this workshop
    - E.g. “My name is Lily, and I’m the Student Engagement Facilitator at the McGill Office of Sustainability, or MOOS. This workshop is geared towards sustainability leaders to build capacity and raise discussions around leadership. Thanks so much for coming!”

- Workshop norms:
This workshop is discussion based; you are strongly encouraged to participate. If you find yourself talking a lot, take a step back to allow more space for other people. If you aren’t sharing as much, challenge yourself to contribute.

Point to where the bathrooms are, and tell participants they can go at any time

Briefly go over the goals, agenda and timeframe of the workshop

ENERGIZER (10 min)

EXPLAIN: This is an exercise from Theatre of the Oppressed, a form of theatre that is used to highlight social and political change and turns the audience – you – into “spect-actors”

• Have participants break up into pairs, and then call for a volunteer to model the exercise with you. Person A begins by assuming in a position that asserts power over Person B. Person B then goes into a position that asserts more power, or challenges the power, of Person A. Have participants take turns and move around each other when forming their images, and experiment with different kinds of power. The exercise often initially brings up images of violence or aggression, but eventually gets more creative through humor, delegitimization, collaboration, or other ways of breaking the paradigm.

• Do a quick debrief with participants, getting 1-2 responses for each question:
  o What did you notice about doing this exercise?
  o Was it easy to assert power?
  o What were some of the more unexpected or creative ways of asserting power?

EXPLAIN: As we will see in this workshop, there are many different kinds of power, which can be found in different pockets of the university. It’s not always about achieving the highest hierarchical position, but about understanding the system and thinking creatively!

SYSTEMS THINKING (5 min)

This is an opening conversation to root sustainability in systems thinking. You can let it flow wherever it goes – it’s a pretty softball opening that participants should click with pretty quickly.

• Open a conversation:
  o Why is it important to understand how the university works?
  o What does this have to do with sustainability?
  o Write down responses on your “WHY UNDERSTAND HOW THE UNIVERSITY WORKS?” poster

• Some answers may include:
  o If we want to change the system, we need to understand it!
  o Bringing about sustainability is about a culture shift, not just siloed initiatives
  o People in different places may have power or information that we can use
  o Working with a network means it’s more likely to survive if someone leaves
  o Connectivity is important for more collaboration and respect to grow in our community
EXPLAIN: A sustainable solution is one that changes the way a system functions. In order to change the system, we need to be able to understand how it has existed thus far.

WHO HOLDS POWER IN THE UNIVERSITY? (20 min)

This exercise lays the groundwork for thinking about how to leverage information in the organogram. Depending on your audience there might be holes about information (McGill is, after all, siloed). Feel free to add or encourage other information from your participants!

- Open a conversation (5 min):
  - Who holds power in the university?
    - Let the conversation naturally lead to admin, students, professors/deans, and (may or may not come up) staff
  - Briefly explore the diversity in each of these identities
    - Who do we include in each identity?
      - Administration: The principal? P7? Senate and the Board?
      - Students: Elected? Undergraduates?
      - Staff: Unions? Clerical?
      - Academic: Deans? Profs? Tenure?
    - What are ways that intersecting identities can influence this power?
      - Credibility through formal (e.g. research grants) or informal (e.g. charisma) channels
      - Holding privileged vs. marginalized identities
      - Years spent working at the university
      - Ability to leverage public attention through the media
      - Access to information (e.g. secretaries)

EXPLAIN: The exercise of laying out who holds power at different levels of the university is never black and white, and always dynamic depending on the context. Nevertheless, we are going to try to map out the general kinds of power we can expect to find within this general breakdown (students, staff, deans/faculty and admin).

- Reveal a blank copy of the “POWER MATRIX,” poster and fill out the chart from left to right.
  - Facilitator note:
    - Don’t feel the need to hit all of the points on the next page, but rather as a reference for you as the conversation unfolds.
    - Feel free to use keywords as you fill out the matrix to stand in for the full explanation of your conversation (e.g. “risk-taking” instead of “as clients of the university, students can take on more risk than other actors (won’t be fired)”)

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## POWER MATRIX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Students</th>
<th>Staff</th>
<th>Deans / Faculty</th>
<th>Administration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Power</strong></td>
<td>Access to resources (through professors and mentors, funding, space)</td>
<td>Receive set amount of funding to achieve mandates</td>
<td>Deans get relatively large control of their faculties, seen as separate turf</td>
<td>Carry ultimate decision-making power</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>As clients of the university, students can take on more risk than other actors (won’t be fired)</td>
<td>Control behind-the-scenes operations (finances, pedagogy, cleaning, etc.)</td>
<td>Set the defining questions and frameworks of academic discussion</td>
<td>Sets direction for university as a whole through policies, priorities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enormous amount of energy and creativity</td>
<td>Keep things running smoothly, invisibly</td>
<td>Esteem from being part of elite research institution</td>
<td>Influences budget decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Freedom to drop one initiative and pick up another (creates more opportunities for interdisciplinary experiences)</td>
<td>Invisibility leads to less micromanaging, in some cases</td>
<td>Expertise in their field (knowledge power)</td>
<td>Protecting reputation over an enormous and decentralized university</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Legacy of student initiatives</td>
<td>Institutionalization of work, long-term expectations of work commitment</td>
<td>Define norms of academic experience (classroom dynamics, setting expectations)</td>
<td>Wield enormous power over parts of a university they don’t normally see</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Political power of student unions, faculty / departments, independent groups</td>
<td>Representation / bargaining power through unions</td>
<td>Institutionalization of work, long-term expectations of work commitment</td>
<td>Fully backed by McGill reputation, has attention of societal stakeholders</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Challenges to power</strong></td>
<td>Demanding academic schedules</td>
<td>Invisibility leads to less recognition</td>
<td>Under enormous pressure to publish and get tenure</td>
<td>Institutionalization of work, long-term expectations of work commitment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Transiency of student body, loss of institutional memory</td>
<td>Precarious job security, especially at a time of budget cuts</td>
<td>No pedagogical training to deal with daily teaching experience</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Lack of legitimacy because of age, experience</td>
<td>For unionized staff, often less recognition and institutional value</td>
<td>Siloed by academic theme</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Administrative distrust of students from the legacy of previous students</td>
<td>Seen as less relevant than academic staff</td>
<td>Limited grant funding to conduct own research</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Siloed by department or skill</td>
<td>Precarious job security without tenure</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perception of power</strong></td>
<td>Often unaware of student power in the scope of larger system</td>
<td>Aware of position within the established university hierarchy</td>
<td>Deans are strongly aware of it, as they exert a lot of decision making power</td>
<td>Highly aware of it, as it’s so formally explicit and reinforced</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Battling understanding of the role of students (in society, in university)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Profs less likely to feel any kind of flexibility</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
EXPLAIN: We could spend a whole workshop on this matrix alone, but we also want to apply this to the actual humans behind these identities. As we go into the organizational chart of McGill, keep these powers and challenges in mind while thinking about who you want to influence to ensure the success of your initiative.

THE ORGANOGRAM (30 min)

This is the big deal of the workshop! Here’s an example of an organogram from April 2015:

Facilitation notes:
- It is strongly recommended to draw out the organogram beforehand so you don’t have to deal with awkward spacing in the middle of the conversation.
- Chances are you will forget something, or someone in the crowd might know more than you – encourage input, but don’t get sucked into too much detail!
- Remember to refer back to the overall categories (student, staff, prof, admin). The division of axes drawn above (P7 on top, Deans on the left, students and unions in separate webs (NOT always on the bottom!!)) seems to visually work well.
- Consider the use of colors to indicate things, depending on your goal (e.g. key people, offices with whom we have relationships, etc.)

EXPLAIN: We’re going to be unpacking the organogram, or organizational chart, of McGill University. This is a tool that we’ve traditionally given to people who work at MOOS, but are now spreading to more people in the sustainability community. We’ve found that projects are most likely to succeed and become institutionalized in the long term when they are connected to a variety of stakeholders across the university. Keep your own initiatives in mind as we dive into this chart!
Some disclaimers before diving in:
- This structure is constantly in flux, and we may not be entirely accurate in the way we present it. This speaks to the changing nature of what we often like to think as a stable, stagnant institution. Feel free to contribute more information!
- Maps are drawn differently depending on who’s doing the drawing, and this is definitely a MOOS-centric map. The best way to learn more parts of the chart is by asking other people for connections and clarity from their point of view.

Present the organogram!

Questions after the organogram
- What is it like to see the system laid out like this?
- What are places that you want to connect with for your own initiative?

CONCLUSION (10 min)

- Have participants go around in a circle or turn to a partner and answer the question, “What are you taking away from this workshop? A thought? A question? A next step?”
- Remind folks that MOOS is always here to connect you to the people you would like to meet (or the people who know the people you would like to meet), and feel free to drop by our office for a chat.
- Thank folks for coming, and invite them to sign up for the MOOS listserve or take your email to keep in touch! Ask for feedback and reflections, whenever they pop up, by getting in touch with you.
### Why Understand how the University Works?

### Power Matrix

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Student Sustainability Workshop: 
Messaging and Strategy

BLURB: This workshop will explore how to tell a story and make ideas resonate with the broader community. We’ll be breaking down the different elements of building a communications strategy, and defining the goals, audience, message and tactics that will mobilize people around your initiative.

Goals:
- Introduce a framework to build a messaging strategy (goal, audience, message, tactic)
- Explore a variety of creative and effective tactics
- Apply this framework to a real-world problem

Time: 1.5 to 2 hours, depending on whether the last exercise is included

Materials (templates at the end of workshop outline):
- Posters (see end of workshop outline for templates)
  - "Communications Strategy" (Goal, Audience, Message, Tactic outline)
    - One filled out (“Kale” example)
    - Six blank
  - SMART goals
    - Specific
    - Measurable
    - Animating
    - Realistic
    - Time-sensitive
  - Tone
    - Values
    - Vocabulary
    - Humor
    - Storytelling
  - Goals / Audiences
  - Communications Plans Ideas
- Markers

Preparation:
- Have a few examples of successful messaging in your head that you can bring up to illustrate different examples (ones that participants are familiar with, or especially ones that relate to the context they are working in)
INTRO (5 min)

- Land acknowledgment
  - We would like to acknowledge that we are currently on the traditional territory of the Kanien’kehà:ka (Ga-nyèn-gé-haà-ga) (which means “Mohawk” in the Mohawk language), a place which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst nations. We recognize and respect the Kanien’kehà:ka (Ga-nyèn-gé-haà-ga) as the traditional custodians of the lands and waters on which we meet today. It’s important to remember the ways that history, and especially the history of colonialism, impacts how we are building a sustainable society today.

- Have participants go around and say their name, preferred gender pronoun if they would like, and a bit about what you’re working on
  - Your preferred gender pronoun is the word you would like to be referred to when you are out of the room. For example, “Lily went to the store, SHE bought some bread.” You can phrase your preference by saying, “I prefer him-his pronouns” or “I go by he”

- Introduce yourself and the context of this workshop
  - E.g. “My name is Lily, and I’m the Student Engagement Facilitator at the McGill Office of Sustainability, or MOOS. This workshop is geared towards sustainability leaders to build capacity and raise discussions around leadership. Thanks so much for coming!”

- Explain workshop norms:
  - This workshop is discussion based; you are strongly encouraged to participate. If you find yourself talking a lot, take a step back to allow more space for other people. If you aren’t sharing as much, challenge yourself to contribute.
  - Stories are personal and messy. Be respectful and open while listening!

- Point to where the bathrooms are, and tell participants they can go at any time

- Briefly go over the agenda and timeframe of the workshop

- EXPLAIN:
  - “Messaging” encompasses a huge amount of information, and this workshop is just a slice. We will be mostly focusing on getting down the building blocks of a communications strategy
  - This workshop uses material from the Distilled Consulting Guide on Tone, as well as the Ruckus Society Action Guide

ENERGIZER (5 min)

Distribute small pieces of paper to everyone. As you (the facilitator) name a category, have everyone write something that fits under that category. The object of the game is to have as many people write the same thing as possible. For example, if the facilitator were to say the category “breakfast food,” you might have a bunch of people write down “eggs” and thus win; you might have only one person write down “french toast,” and lose. You can choose to play it more competitively (any term with more than one person is +1 point, any isolated term is -1 point), or you can just play it freely.

You can use the following categories:

- Things that are cold
- Musical instruments
- Clothing
- School supplies
EXPLAIN: An enormous part of messaging is being in tune with your audience, and understanding their motivations and instincts. This game highlights how well we can guess our neighbor’s behavior, but this can scale out to any audience. We are going to be discussing messaging in a pretty broad sense, but it’s important to remember that you’re ultimately reaching out to actual humans!

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY FORMAT (10 min)

This exercise lays out the basic format that participants will use to plan their messaging strategies, and also the outline of the workshop as a whole. This is a lot of facilitator-talking time; welcome questions and clarification to break the one-sidedness, but also be reassured that more interactive time will come shortly afterwards.

EXPLAIN: This chart is a useful way for us to organize our communications strategy. It’s particularly helpful in remembering the order to build your plan: from goals to tactics. People often start off with a desire to do a tactic (“Let’s do a video! Let’s build a website!”), but forgetting to identify your reasons for doing so will leave those tactics lost and ineffective. We’ll go through this basic outline, and then dive deeper into each section separately.

- Go through the “COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY” poster, and explain each step using examples listed below
  - **GOAL:** Why you’re communicating. What will ideally happen as a result of successfully executing your sustainability strategy?
    - “Get McGill undergrads to eat more kale”
  - **AUDIENCE:** Who you are communicating with. Depending on what your goal is, you will probably want to target a specific group of people.
    - “McGill undergrads who don’t eat kale yet, but might (e.g. gym-goers, first years in residences, food clubs)”
  - **MESSAGE:** What you are trying to communicate. Think about the tone and language you are using, and what will be most effective considering your audience and your goal.
    - “Kale is tasty!”
    - “Kale is healthy!”
    - “Kale is hot!”
  - **TACTICS:** How you communicate. This can range from traditional communications channels (social media, articles, etc.) to more creative stunts and events. It’s important that your tactics are driven by your goals, audience and message!
    - Kale taste-testing
    - Kale recipe blog
    - #kale4ever twitter campaign

EXPLAIN: We are going to collectively build a communications campaign together, and later we’ll each practice making our own campaigns on issues that we are working on in our daily lives.
GOAL (10 min)

EXPLAIN: Your communications plan always starts with a goal! As we will explore, this is the most important part of making sure you stay on track when determining what to prioritize and put into action when moving forward.

- Open up a conversation and popcorn responses (10 min)
  - **How would we define a communications goal? What makes a good goal?**
    - Some answers might include:
      - It is geared towards changing something (a policy, a behavior, etc.).
      - It is aimed at a specific group of people
      - It is NOT a tactic, but defines what tactics are appropriate
      - It’s not necessarily the same as the goal of your group
        - E.g. A group’s goal may be to provide local, fresh produce for McGill students at a farmers market; a communications goal may be to encourage students to sign up for a CSA basket
    - Scale is appropriate to the group
      - E.g. a SSMU club could independently impact McGill’s climate policy, but not UN climate policy
    - Can be over different periods of time
      - E.g. An ongoing communications presence for a culture shift, vs. a campaign to get something done in the short-term

EXPLAIN: You might have heard of SMART goals. It’s difficult to perfectly hit each of these elements, but it’s a good guideline to think about forming our goals

- **Go over the SMART goals poster:**
  - **Specific:** Your goal should clearly explain the purpose of your initiative
  - **Measurable:** You can clearly measure success, quantitatively or qualitatively
  - **Activating:** Your goal is exciting enough for people to dedicate time and energy to it
  - **Realistic:** The goal is ambitious but achievable
  - **Time-specific:** There is a limit of time around which people can envision success

EXPLAIN: Let’s say we want to do a campaign that has to do with cycling on campus. It’s up to this group to collectively create a full messaging plan around this initiative.

- Open up a brainstorm (5 min)
  - **What are some potential communications goals that you might want to use for a cycling campaign?**
  - Scribe responses on the “goals” side of your “GOALS / AUDIENCE” poster
    - Examples
      - Get people to bike to campus
      - Advertise bike racks on campus
      - Make biking trendy, fashionable
- Promote bike safety on campus

**AUDIENCE (10 min)**

- **EXPLAIN:** Now that we have some goals, let’s brainstorm some audiences that you would target with each goal.
  - *Think about the wide range of McGill, not just the obvious suspects (e.g. the Principal, student unions, urban designer staff).*
  - *The more specific the better! Instead of targeting “students,” try “first-year students,” “students in the artistic community,” “students at the gym”*

- Scribe around 3-4 well-developed responses on the “Audience” side of your “GOALS / AUDIENCE” poster
  You can guide the brainstorm with the following questions:
  - **Who are the decision-makers?** Who has the power to make your goal possible?
    - This is an especially relevant question with goals that require policy change, but is also relevant for individual behavior change
      - *E.g. Admin makes the decision to get bike racks on campus, individuals decide to change their personal behavior*
  - **Who can influence your decision makers?**
    - You can get some help from a second level audience who has the attention of your decision-makers in some way
      - *E.g. Getting professors to appeal to admin for bike racks*
  - **Who is / likely to be interested in your goal already?**
    - Who you can easily get on board, and who can advocate with / for you?
      - *E.g. The Flat Bike Collective is dedicated to biking on campus!*

- Have the group choose one goal to focus on for the rest of this workshop, with two or three audiences. You can choose by getting a general sense from the group, or by the one with the most potential for an interesting discussion.
- **On your “GOALS / AUDIENCES” poster,** highlight the choice (underlined, boxed) and make sure everyone agrees to work with that choice

**MESSAGES (15 min)**

- **EXPLAIN:** Now that we’ve identified our key audiences, we’re going to focus on what might speak to each of them individually.

- Have participants divide into small groups, ideally one group per audience. **Pass out blank “COMMUNICATIONS PLAN” posters** and ask groups to choose an audience they will work with, and to fill in the “goal” and “audience” section of their chart (if you feel creative, draw a symbolic stick figure in your audiences section!)
EXPLAIN: The main impression we want to give through our communications plan is in our message. It’s important to remember that good messages are simple, clear and memorable (some people call them “sticky”).

EXPLAIN: When we’re crafting our message, it’s useful to think about the tone that we use to appeal to our audiences.

- Go through the “TONE” poster (5 min)
  - **Tone:** Not what you say, but how you say it. The tone is geared towards making people feel a certain way, and connect to your initiative.
    - **Values:** People strongly connect through shared values. You can draw on the spirit or vision of your initiative for inspiration.
    - **Vocabulary:** Choosing certain words will convey certain values, and serve as signals for your interested audience.
  - **What key words or values do you associate with each audience?**
    - E.g. student involved in the sustainability community would include “green, systems, community, sustainability”
    - E.g. McGill would be “excellence, innovation, research-intensive”
  - **Humor:** This isn’t necessary or appropriate in every campaign, but is a really useful strategy to connect with people in an accessible, personal way
  - **Storytelling:** A narrative is a good way to boil a lot of information into a simple and memorable way to communicate values. It helps to focus on specific people (as opposed to the initiative as a whole) who go through a challenge, choice and outcome. Draw on your story of self if you are familiar with it!

- Brainstorm message (10 min)
  - Have participants in their groups brainstorm 2-3 messages that would pair with their audience and goal. While they discuss, walk around and help point conversations in the right direction. **Remind participants that good messages are simple, clear and memorable!**
  - When groups are done brainstorming, have them bring the charts to the front of the room for everyone to see. Let each group read out loud the messages they made.
  - Ask people for a brief reflection
    - Was it easy to generate your messages? What were some of the trickier parts?

**TACTICS (15 min)**

EXPLAIN: Now we’re getting to the most fun part of this exercise – thinking about the cool tactics that we can use to achieve our goal! This is where all your creativity should be unleashed.

- As you brainstorm tactics, remember to keep the **goal, audience and messages in mind!**
You can use anything from traditional communications channels (social media, articles) to more out-of-the-box means (events, stunts, images). The more creative your tactic is, the more memorable it will be!
  - E.g. A photo exhibit, a bike brigade, pop-up cooking workshops, flash-mobs

Have participants find a partner, and give each pair 2-3 post-its.
Tell pairs to speed-brainstorm a few tactics to fill in the tactics column of each chart. (5 min)
Have participants stick up their post-its, and ask a volunteer to read the tactics out loud (5 min)
  - Do folks have any thoughts or reflections on these tactics? What stands out to you?

**REFLECTION (10 min)**

EXPLAIN: Now that we’ve mapped out a full communications plan, let’s take a step back and ask people to reflect on the profiles as a whole

- Open up a conversation for people to discuss the process and plan (5 min)
  - How did it feel to build a communications strategy in this way?
  - Do these profiles feel comprehensive? Strategic?

EXPLAIN: Making communications plans takes practice! We’ve taken a short amount of time to go over a large amount of information, and people spend their whole lives perfecting this craft. Luckily, these are tools that can be applied to any context and initiative.

*FACILITATOR NOTE: IF YOU INCLUDE THE APPLICATION EXERCISE, TAKE A BREAK HERE*

**APPLICATION (30 min)**

This is a chance for participants to independently practice building communications plans, and especially to ground these ideas in relevant initiatives. It’s ideal to have a good chunk of time for this to happen, both for discussion within their groups and in reflection with the wider circle.

EXPLAIN: It’s important to apply these ideas to the real world and practice building plans on our own. To ground this conversation, we are going to draw on some of our initiatives, or other issues that are happening on campus right now.

- Have participant brainstorm different issues relevant to the group, and scribe them on your “COMMUNICATIONS PLANS IDEAS” poster (2 min)

- Ask participants to divide themselves with 4-6 people in each group, and pass out blank “COMMUNICATIONS PLANS” posters. Have each group choose an issue, and fill out their own chart (15 min)
  - While groups are discussing, circulate amongst them and feel free to redirect the conversations and ask probing questions. Some common mistakes that come up:
- Confusing tactics and goals!
- Choosing an audience that’s too broad
- Getting caught up in finding the perfect goals / messages

- When groups are done, have each group share their plans with the wider circle (10 min)
- Ask for reflections from participants (5 min)
  - How was the process of creating these plans? What were some challenges in your conversations?
  - Which plans stood out to you? What could be done to make a bigger impact?

CONCLUSION (10 min)

- Have participants go around in a circle or turn to a partner and answer the question, “What are you taking away from this workshop? A thought? A question? A next step?”
- Thank folks for coming, and invite them to sign up for the MOOS listserve or take your email to keep in touch! Ask for feedback and reflections, whenever they pop up, by getting in touch with you.
### Communications Strategy

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Goal</th>
<th>Audiences</th>
<th>Message</th>
<th>Tactic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td>To whom are you communicating?</td>
<td>What are you communicating?</td>
<td>How are you communicating?</td>
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