



*New Tactics in Human Rights:
A Resource for Practitioners*

Classroom Discussion Guide

Developed by: The Center for Victims of Torture
The New Tactics in Human Rights Project
717 East River Parkway
Minneapolis, MN 55455, USA
newtactics@cvt.org
<http://www.newtactics.org>

New Tactics in Human Rights: A Resource for Practitioners: Classroom Discussion Guide

Resources: [*New Tactics in Human Rights: A Resource for Practitioners* workbook](#)

New Tactics in Human Rights: A Resource for Practitioners was initially developed to introduce human rights practitioners to the benefits of strategic and tactical thinking, as well as to highlight a wide range of tactics that have been used to address human rights violations across different contexts and human rights issues. The Workbook, as it is known, was intended to inspire practitioners to incorporate strategic and tactical thinking into their work, as well as to adapt and innovate new tactics.



We believe the Workbook can also inspire students who will be the next generation of human rights leaders. By incorporating *New Tactics in Human Rights: A Resource for Practitioners* in the classroom, students can learn from the practical experiences of others, understand the benefits of strategic and tactical thinking, and develop new skills in analyzing approaches being used to combat human rights abuses around the world. These classroom discussion questions are simply a starting point for conversation about the stories included in the Workbook. We welcome your perspective and experiences using this resource in the classroom. [Join the discussion at www.newtactics.org](http://www.newtactics.org)!

UNDERSTANDING TACTICAL THINKING

The Introduction to *New Tactics in Human Rights: A Resource for Practitioners* outlines several key benefits to strategic and tactical thinking, including the following concepts:

- Different tactics are effective against different targets
- Different tactics appeal to different constituencies
- Tactical flexibility is the sources of surprise

What tactics in the Workbook best illustrate these concepts?

COMPARING TACTICS

- Confrontation v collaborative approaches

Throughout the Workbook, there are examples of both confrontational and collaborative approaches to addressing human rights violations. What factors might influence which path an organization will take? Can you find examples where both confrontational and collaborative tactics are used?

- Comparing sub categories of tactics

Within each large section of the Workbook (Prevention, Intervention, Restoration, Building Cultures and Communities), there are numerous sub-sections. Take two sub-sections that are within the same large section and compare and contrast the tactics. For example, what are the differences and similarities between Resistance and Persuasion tactics in the Intervention section? What might be the advantages to using one type of tactic versus the other?

TACTICAL ANALYSIS

- How to impact average citizens

In what ways do you see average citizens becoming involved in human rights struggles? What tactics are human rights practitioners using to build community involvement and reduce fear or apathy?

- Ethical dilemmas of tactics

Several tactics involve breaking the law in order to advance human rights causes, particularly in the Intervention section. What do you think about the use of unlawful tactics to achieve human rights goals?

- Applying restorative tactics

Many of the tactics in the Restorative section are from countries emerging from conflict or mass atrocities. Research a specific country trying to rebuild after a period of widespread human rights violations. What factors might you consider in determining which types of tactics you would use? How would you deal with perpetrators of abuse?

- Culture and human rights

Throughout the Workbook, and especially in the section on Building Human Rights Cultures and Communities, culture plays a key role. In what ways does culture contribute to human rights abuses? How can cultural resources be used to combat human rights violations?

- ICT tactics

A large and growing number of human rights tactics involve the use of information and communication technologies. What is the role of technology in the stories you have read in this book? What other technologies do you think could be used to combat human rights abuses?

PERSONAL REFLECTION AND ANALYSIS

- What stories in the Workbook do you find most inspiring? Why?
- Identify a human rights problem in your own community. Which tactics do you think would be most effective in addressing that problem?
- In your own words, what have you learned about strategy and tactics in the human rights movement after reading this book?