

# Taking Your First Steps

In many cases the most important steps in an advocacy strategy are the first ones, moving from a still position to an active one and bringing your allies and organization along with you. First steps develop and signal momentum, both internally and externally, and lay the groundwork for what comes after. The basic question for considering first steps is this one: *What will get us moving that also has real strategic value?*

## I. In the Next Month

1. Get internal consensus on the advocacy plan
2. Develop an internal 'to do' list (what meetings, what planning, what outreach, what research)
3. Develop clear assignments for every task
4. Establish a work calendar for the coming year
5. Get people excited!

## II. In the Next Three Months

1. You've turned your strategy plan into a detailed action plan.
2. You've developed a basic understanding of the political terrain you need to deal with.
3. You've had strategic conversations with your key allies in the NGOs, civil society groups, government and elsewhere.
4. You've started your research work.
5. You've developed some basic materials.
6. People are even more excited!

## III. In the Next Six Months

1. You have a concrete proposal and are advocating for it.
2. All your basic research is done and your materials are developed.
3. You've met with key decision makers and others beyond your allies.
4. You've refined your action strategy based on a deeper understanding of the political realities.
5. Your alliances are strong, active and expanding.
6. People continue to be excited!

*And Always Adjust to What You Learn on the Way!*