

# Step 4: Create Your Campaign Theme

To effectively focus your campaign, you need a **campaign theme** that will give your campaign a “signature” which members, supporters and the general public will readily recognize as *yours*.

## What Is a Campaign Theme?

A campaign theme should be a *concise, positive, and active* public statement that gives a name to your campaign – **who you are, and why you are doing what you’re doing**. Initially, most people in your community and the media assume that negotiations are solely about wages and benefits. It is the theme that lets them know how your negotiations fit in to the larger picture of the community – what’s in it for them.

Here are some guidelines for choosing a campaign theme:

- It must be *concise* – It should fit on a bumper sticker or yard sign.
- It must be *positive* – you are waging a campaign *for justice, for better jobs for your community, for better health care, for a safe workplace*.
- It must be *active* – the words should give your members energy to wage a winning fight and be able to find allies who will help because *it is in their interest* to do so.

You should regularly repeat the theme in your publications. It should be on flyers, press releases – in all of your communications. By the end of the campaign it should be the biggest story in town.

Hint: Campaigns that are waged around human rights like Dignity and Justice, or Health and Safety, are often more successful than ones that focus on specific economic issues – like wage percentage increases.



### Tests of a Good Campaign Theme

- Does it help to build the union and move the campaign forward?
- Does it help clarify the union’s goals and issues?
- Does it appeal to the broader community and help build allies?

## Creating Your Campaign Theme (Activity 1—Step 4)

### **Instructions:**

1. Get together with your group and ask yourselves these questions:
  - What are our issues and goals (Step 3 – Activities 2 and 4)?
  - How do we want our members to view our campaign?
  - How do we want the community to view our campaign?
  - What is in it for them?
2. As a group brainstorm possible campaign themes. Write all of the suggestions in the space below.
3. Kick around all of the ideas you listed. Mock them up on bumper stickers or buttons. Together decide what your final campaign theme is and write it in the box at the bottom of the page. You may decide to merge several ideas into one. Go with your gut. Pick one.

## Final Campaign Theme



### **Steelworkers from all around have created themes for their contract campaigns. Here are some examples:**

- Building For Our Future
- Protecting Our Jobs, Protecting Our Community
- Hey (Employer), Invest in Our Future!
- World Class Workers Deserve a World Class Contract
- The Choice is Clear, No 2 Tier (for use with members)
- Securing Our Jobs, Our Community, Our Future
- Paperworkers—Working Toward the Health and Future of Our Community
- Quality Hospital, Quality Workers, Quality Care
- Common Goals, a New Beginning (for use with Council)
- Respect Our Loyalty—Reward Seniority