

## Keeping Strategic Plans Moving in the Face of Controversy or Resistance

TACTIC	WHEN TO USE	CAUTIONS
<b>APPEAL TO LARGER VALUES</b> <i>Tie the initiative to an unassailable goal, principle, or person</i>	When you and your critics share a culture and set of values	Everyone agrees in principle, but arguments continue over details
<b>INVITE THEM IN</b> <i>Appoint representative critics to an advisory group; give them a channel for their input to shape the effort</i>	When critics have credible expertise, can be converted, and are opinion leaders who can sway others	Their presence slows down decision-making
<b>OFFER A STAKE</b> <i>Find a way for critics to share the "spoils" of the innovation or change</i>	When the initiative is likely to produce tangible benefits, e.g. in money, access, or reputation – and you have control over the benefits	This produces compliance and lip service – the pretense of commitment – but critics hedge their bets figuring they'll win either way
<b>SEND IN EMISSARIES</b> <i>Pick "diplomats" from the initiative and have them periodically visit critics to provide them with information</i>	When you have a strong team of people with diplomatic skills and can give them the time and resources for this activity	Critics waste your team's time They appear to listen but positions don't change
<b>DISPLAY SUPPORT</b> <i>Ask sponsors for a visible demonstration of backing</i>	When high level leaders are committed to the effort and willing to put their personal reputations on the line	Supporters disappear when they realize effort is controversial Or, their support is equivocal, so critics sense weakness
<b>REDUCE THE STAKES</b> <i>De-escalate; scale down the losses or changes implied by the change</i>	When there is flexibility in project timing or elements; when coalition members are willing to support a more "conservative" approach	The initiative gets so watered down that it is unlikely to succeed, produce change, or create much in the way of new benefits
<b>CONFRONT IN PUBLIC</b> <i>Denounce critics in front of powerful people and opinion leaders</i>	When stakeholder opinion is largely on your side and favors project goals	Critics become so embarrassed and angry they try to sabotage project
<b>USE BRUTE FORCE</b> <i>Use position power to get critics removed from the scene</i>	When you (or your sponsors) have the authority and willingness to get them out of the way.	Backlash or threats Opposition hardens and can retaliate
<b>WEAR THEM DOWN</b> <i>Don't give ground until the critics get tired of the battle</i>	When you are confident about the "rightness" of the initiative. When time is on your side and progress is clear.	Criticism goes underground only to surface later
<b>WAIT IT OUT</b> <i>Stop arguing and let the initiative continue, slowly &amp; quietly</i>	When you have no tools with which to directly counter the opposition. When attacks are minor.	Patience is not rewarded Sponsors/backers lose interest Initiative loses momentum Team morale declines