

## THEORY

# AL FAZA'A (A SURGE OF SOLIDARITY)

A key segment of your supporters will only join at peak moments of your campaign — usually in response to an external event — and then disappear again. To win, you must be ready to make the most of this surge.

## CONTRIBUTED BY

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## “LIFTED BY A HUGE SURGE OF SUPPORT, YOU CAN TRANSFORM YOUR CAMPAIGN.”

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“Beware the level-headed person if they're angry.”  
—Arabic proverb

Most people do not feel the need to act in circumstances they see as normal. However, a specific event — a brave act of resistance; or a disputed election, corruption scandal, or police beating — can serve as an emotional trigger, moving people to respond en masse and join actions to address the problem. They come in large numbers, with new ideas and energy, and boost your campaign for a brief while. These moments are often amplified by media, particularly social media, as trending topics generate even more attention and interest in the campaign. People's enthusiasm is often momentary, however, which can make it difficult to retain their support once the external element of emergency that drew them to act recedes.

An example of this phenomenon is Greenpeace's "Jordan Is Not Nuclear" campaign, which sought to stop the construction of a nuclear facility in Jordan in 2011. The number of people who were active in the campaign prior to the Fukushima disaster of 2011, which saw the partial meltdown of a nuclear reactor in Japan following a major earthquake and tidal wave, was very small compared to the number of people who were inspired to act immediately following the disaster. Thirty thousand Jordanians, including many Jordanian tribes, joined the movement in the aftermath of the disaster. They joined *al faza'a* (a surge of solidarity) to save their country out of fear that a similar nuclear disaster might

## RELATED TOOLS

### Stories

- Battle in Seattle
- Battle of the Camel
- Brazil's Free Fare Movement
- Bring Back Our Girls
- Burmese Students' Long March
- Earth First!
- Fees Must Fall
- #GambiaHasDecided
- Honk at Parliament
- Manich Msamah
- Nuit Debout
- Québec Student Strike
- Stolen Gas Campaign
- Stop Praver Plan
- Taco Bell Boycott
- The Salt March
- #ThisFlag
- Welcome to Palestine
- Wisconsin Capitol Occupation
- #YouStink

### Tactics

befall them if the facility were built.

There are many other examples in recent history, including the public outcry at the 2012 gang rape in Delhi, the mass outrage after the self-immolation of the Tunisian street vendor that sparked that country's revolution and set off the Arab Spring, the Occupy Wall Street movement in the US, and so many others.

Al faza'a, in its traditional sense, is perceived as a positive trait among Arabs because it implies solidarity and friendship. Nonetheless, it presents challenges to modern campaigns because the vast majority of supporters are drawn by external events, and therefore may not share the strategic vision or values of your campaign. The key is to know what to expect and to make the most of the skills and talents that are suddenly available to you.

Lifted by a huge surge of support, you can transform your campaign from a specialist discussion going on behind closed doors among a small number of activists into a matter of public opinion (see: STORY: Stolen Gas Campaign). Use your strength of numbers to shift the balance of power and pressure decision makers to heed your demands. Also, seize the opportunity to identify potential leaders and activists and recruit them to your campaign.

Eventually, the surge dissipates, so it's wise to set your expectations early on. Instead of being disappointed when the momentum wanes, take advantage of the opportunity to build connections with those who have specific skills or networks that may support you later on (see: PRINCIPLE: Would you like some structure with your momentum?).

## LEARN MORE

Arab Spring: A Research and Study Guide  
Cornell University Library, 2011  
<http://guides.library.cornell.edu/c.php?g=31688&p=200748>

Solidarity with the Palestinian Popular Resistance  
Mondoweiss, 2015  
<http://mondoweiss.net/2015/10/solidarity-palestinian-resistance/>

Occupy Wall Street  
<http://occupywallst.org/about/>

- Cacerolazo (noise-making protest)
- General strike
- Hashtag campaign
- Hunger strike
- Lamentation
- Mass street action
- Occupation

## Principles

- Anger works best when you have the moral high ground
- Anyone can act
- Build people power, then negotiate
- Create many points of entry
- Define "hardcore" strategically
- Develop an inside-outside strategy
- Escalate strategically
- Expose inequality with a viral gesture
- Foster safer spaces
- Make new folks welcome
- The price of a successful attack is a constructive alternative
- Training for the win
- Use your radical fringe to shift the Overton window
- Would you like some structure with your momentum?

## Theories

- Action logic
- Cultural hegemony
- Direct action
- Hamoq and hamas
- New Pan-Afrikanism
- Palace coup
- Revolutionary nonviolence
- Strategic nonviolence
- The Global South
- The social cure

## Methodologies

- Art of Hosting
- Hardship to grievance
- Pillars of power
- Spectrum of allies
- SWOT

**TAGS**

Austerity, Climate justice,  
Colonialism, War and peace,  
Human rights, International  
solidarity, Corruption, Racial  
justice