

Strategic Overview of The Humane League (2017)

Purpose

Reduce animal suffering by inspiring change at all levels.

Overview

Strategic planning at THL has two unique challenges. First, we have enjoyed the (fortunate) problem of very rapid growth over the last three years. Inevitably, as we put together three and five year goals, we are able to quickly meet and exceed them, sometimes within months! Second, the nature of our programmatic work—particularly the corporate campaigns—is unpredictable and difficult to plan around. Major campaign initiatives can last for three weeks, three months, or three years. For example, resources may need to be shifted to a ballot initiative on short notice. It's unclear whether the overarching projects, like the U.S. broiler campaign or the Mexico cage-free fight, will last for one year or three. For that reason, we tend to work from milestones that move the needle towards our overarching goals, with timelines being much less helpful for overarching campaigns. That said, individual projects, campaigns, or milestones are often time-bound, as are goals for individual staff members.

The major programmatic strategy is built around the following goals:

- Reform the U.S. broiler industry
- Enforce current policies (cage-free, gestation crate, etc.) via campaigns and ballot initiatives
- Launch the U.K. broiler campaign
- Influence opinion and behavior with our outreach and education programs
- End the use of battery cages worldwide
- Longer term: launch the broiler campaign in the E.U. and beyond

We also have a number of internal and movement building goals:

- Maintain high efficiency and morale at THL
- Grow our grassroots apparatus within the U.S.
- Expand leadership potential within the movement via our campus program
- Replicate our U.S. operation in the U.K., expanding aggressively until they are self-sufficient
- Inform our own work and provide useful resources to the movement via THL Labs
- Build a powerful, united campaigning movement around the world via the Open Wing Alliance
- Expand our base of donors so that we are not reliant on major grants to continue our work

We review our strategy and progress every several months with the leadership team. The last year has been largely static as we have focused on the broiler campaign, but there are major outstanding unknowns that could change things in the coming months/years:

- The success of the CA ballot initiative and the appetite across the movement for further efforts

- The potential for new kinds of ballot initiatives, i.e. broilers
- The length of time it will take to win policies from every major player on the broiler campaign—retailers and major chicken-based fast food chains in particular are a major x-factor here
- The number of companies who will require follow-up enforcement campaigns on cage-free or gestation crate policies (thus pulling resources from other things)
- The near-future viability of fish welfare campaigns (which is also based on the factors above)
- Potential breakthroughs in plant-based meats (say, if we had a veg chicken nugget that we could campaign to have replace traditional chicken nuggets in dining service locations, or a positive grassroots campaign to get a cheap version of the Impossible Burger at a fast food location, etc.)
- The success of initial campaigns in more speculative areas like Eastern Europe or South Africa will determine how quickly we want to send our resources into new initiatives in those regions
- New, convincing evidence about the relative value of individual outreach and education. This is currently an area where we are focusing less resources (relative to our budget) than we ever have before
- The relative value of more regional grassroots coordinators to remote volunteer coordinators
 - a. That is, does \$1 spent in one area or the other result in more of the outcomes we are looking for (number of volunteers, campaign actions, community events, etc.)
 - b. We're in the first year of the more remote program, so time will tell!

Every department (and employee) has their own set of goals. Below are some of the larger goals and milestones that we discuss within our leadership team:

Initiatives:

[Create major institutional policies](#)

[US Broiler Campaign](#)

[UK Campaigns](#)

[Mexico Campaigns](#)

[International Campaigns](#)

[Ballot Initiatives](#)

[Influence Attitude and Behavior through Outreach](#)

[Replicate THL in the UK](#)

[Grow the movement and base of support in the US](#)

[Growth in our volunteer base](#)

[Create new leaders via the Campus Program](#)

[Growth in donor base](#)

[Maintain high efficiency and morale within THL](#)

[THL is an excellent workplace](#)

Create major institutional policies

Key Objectives

- Reform the entire U.S. broiler industry by successfully campaigning against or working with every major food purchasing corporation
- Launch the broiler campaign in the U.K. and then expand it into the E.U.
- End the use of battery cages globally—Use the Open Wing Alliance to drive rapid change in Europe and Latin America; begin exploratory work in Asia and Africa
- Enforce cage-free campaigns where needed (note: we have started outreach on this to the companies who have forthcoming pledge deadlines, it's unclear what action, if any, will be needed from THL, so this plan will be updated to reflect that new information)

Key Performance Indicators

US Broiler Campaign

- Determine shared broiler ask (**achieved**)
- Milestone 1: first broiler victory (**achieved**)
- Milestone 2: first chicken-based restaurant policy
- Milestone 3: first major fast food chain (**achieved**)
- Milestone 4: 25 broiler victories
- Milestone 5: win policies from all major foodservice companies
- Milestone 6: win policies from all major coffee chains
- Milestone 7: first manufacturer policy (**achieved**)
- Stretch goal: first retailer win
- High-impact collaboration between departments (**achieved**)
 - Grassroots are the key pressure component of major campaigns
 - Corporate campaigns are a central part of the program work of the campus organizers

U.K. Campaigns

- A standard broiler agreement letter is signed by all major groups working on broilers in the U.K. (**achieved**)
- The first U.K. broiler campaign is launched in Q4 2017
- All major U.K. campaign targets are defeated in the cage-free initiative by Dec 2017
- Major retailers and restaurants in Ireland have adopted cage-free shell egg policies by July 2018

Mexico Campaigns

- Win a cage-free policy from Walmart
- Win a cage-free policy from Soriana
- Build momentum by achieving smaller victories
 - Milestone 1: 25 brands have policies (**achieved**)
 - Milestone 2: 50 brands have policies

International Campaigns

- OWA accelerates progress internationally via grants and training
 - Milestone 1: next \$100,000 in grants are administered (pending)
 - Milestone 2: second Summit to End Cages is held
 - Milestone 3: THL grants \$500,000 in 2018
- All major foodservice companies have global cage-free policies (**achieved**)
- All major hotel chains have global cage-free policies
- All major manufacturers have global cage-free policies
- All major European manufacturers to have cage-free policies
- All major French retailers to have European-wide cage-free policies
- Every major retailer in Poland to have a cage-free policy
- First cage-free policy in Latvia to be produced
- First cage-free policies in South Africa to be produced
- Every major retailer in Norway has cage-free policy
- Develop OWA presence in 5 new areas in need of cage-free work
- 2 retailers have cage-free policies in Mexico
- Japan has made cage-free progress
 - Milestone 1: 10 international companies have their global policies translated into Japanese
 - Milestone 2: First Japanese company to make native cage-free policy
- Stretch: First fast food chain to make global cage-free policy

Ballot Initiatives

- Support California Ballot Initiative
 - Send full time manager to organizer the signature gatherers for the campaign (**achieved**)
 - Donate \$45,000 to fully fund three signature gatherers (**achieved**)
 - Utilize our organizers in San Diego, San Francisco and LA to organize local signature gathering

Influence Attitude and Behavior through Outreach

Key Objectives

- Grow our social media footprint to generate as much 'free' engagement as possible.
- Continue to carry out our FB advertising campaigns at the same level of cost and engagement, constantly optimizing them (note: like last year, all expenses for this program are earmarked by donors who specifically want to fund this initiative).
- Transition mass grassroots outreach to volunteers and interns, with the exceptions of special opportunities (like Warped Tour) or other community building and volunteer training events. This is an area that is hard to plan for in the long-term as we feel that, in able to win, we must put most resources towards the 88% campaign for the foreseeable future. Additionally, we hope that the large-scale study being carried about by HL Labs will help us determine what percentage of our resources generally should be allocated to individual outreach.

Key Performance Indicators

Large-scale online outreach

- Click and conversion costs stay as low as possible, at least on par with years past
 - Explore AI software that may be able to take over most of this work from staff
- Continue pace of organic growth for our U.S. and LatAm Facebook pages
- Launch UK page (**achieved**)
 - Milestone: 100,000 followers

Grassroots outreach

- Transition most outreach activities to volunteers and interns (**achieved**)
 - Current results for 2017 through date of submission to ACE:
 - Presented Humane Education lectures to 6,478 students
 - Trained 771 individuals through an Effective Activism presentation
 - Handed out 156,694 leaflets with pro-veg messages
 - Distributed 40,816 Veg Starter Guides

Replicate THL in the U.K.

Key Objectives

- THL U.K. can act autonomously—communications and campaigns only need high-level support and are making their own day-to-day decisions
- THL U.K. becomes financially independent of the U.S. branch within 3 years
- THL has a growing volunteer/FAN base that is engaged in our campaign work

Key Performance Indicators

- Incorporate and invest \$665,000 into the organization's new account (pending)
- Milestone 1: UK first round of hiring is completed (**achieved**)
- Milestone 2: Alignment of broiler ask in U.K.
- Milestone 3: Hire second round of staff, including Development, Operations, and a campaigner in Ireland

Grow the movement and base of support in the U.S.

Key Objectives

- Build a well-trained and flexible base of activists around the country who can carry out campaign actions, outreach, community building, policy work, and more
- Expand our grassroots network outside of our current 'grassroots cities' with full-time directors and coordinators
- Create new leaders and human capital for the movement via our campus program

Key Performance Indicators

Growth in our volunteer base

- Growth in the U.S. Fast Action Network
 - Milestone 1: 5,000 members
 - Milestone 2: 7,500 members
 - Milestone 3: 10,000 members
- Growth in number of medium-level, reliable volunteers to 25 per grassroots director
 - Milestone 1: 20
 - Milestone 2: 25
- Growth in number of elite volunteers/interns per grassroots director
 - Milestone 1: 6
 - Milestone 2: 8
 - Milestone 3: 10
- Expand the National Volunteer Program
 - Launch free volunteer webinar training series (**achieved**)
 - Milestone 1: 3,000 U.S. members on mailing list outside of 'grassroots cities' (**achieved**)
 - Milestone 2: 5,000 U.S. members
 - Milestone 3: 7,500 U.S. members
 - Hire U.K. National Volunteer Coordinator (**achieved**)
 - Hire 2nd US National Volunteer Coordinator (**final interviews**)
 - Hire a Mexican National Volunteer Coordinator

Create new leaders via the Campus Program

- Rewrite campus curriculum to be focused on leadership development (**achieved**)
- Hire 60 student leaders for the 2017–2018 school year (**achieved**)
- Hold a training retreat for the student leaders (**achieved**)
- Evaluate the new, larger program to determine if we want to continue further investment in this area or if we see a less intensive way to find great people for the movement (i.e., a lighter touch, like the grassroots or national volunteer coordinator positions)

Growth in donor base

- 2017: Organic growth in donor base to over 4,000 (increase from 3,400 in 2016)
 - Total donors goal: 4,000 (\$1.72 million raised from individuals)
 - Major donors goal: 182 major donors (\$1.4 million—not including foundations)
 - Team Humane League has 300 members who raise over \$200k
- Become less reliant on major grants and aggressively build a broader base of support
 - Make a major investment in acquisition and development via a hired consulting firm
 - Milestone 1: Identify firm, create contract (**achieved**)
 - Milestone 2: Finalize acquisition lists
 - Milestone 3: Launch acquisition fundraising campaign in Dec, 2017

Maintain high efficiency and morale within THL

Key Objectives

- THL employees are highly efficient, happy, and proud to work at THL
- Overhead is limited and healthy; low performers are actively worked with to improve or they are replaced
- THL managers are all receiving a steady stream of feedback and improving in their skills

Key Performance Indicators

THL is an excellent workplace

- Our employee satisfaction survey shows high levels of staff morale and job satisfaction **(achieved 2016, 2017)**
- Our support staff and non-program teams are growing to meet the needs of the organization and to avoid overburdening current staff
- All “low-performing” staff will have raised their performance significantly or left (with “low performers” defined as staff who only sometimes meet goals and rarely exceed them, who do not demonstrate core values, and/or who would be relatively easy to replace with someone as good if they left)
- Approach to hiring, compensation, performance appraisal, recognition and promotions is equitable and consistent across managers
 - Managers meet weekly to discuss relevant issues and maintain focus on goals
 - Clear and accurate job descriptions are created for each employee, and are updated and referred to regularly
 - Each employee has their own SMART goals
- Management is high-quality
 - All managers have attended management training **(achieved)**
 - Team meetings follow a similar format to achieve the same general outcomes and are viewed in surveys as an effective use of time **(achieved)**
 - Each employee has a one-on-one check-ins weekly or biweekly, and they achieve the same general outcomes **(achieved)**:
 - advancing individual projects and balancing priorities
 - giving feedback for personal development (in both directions)
 - connecting personally
 - and (periodically) checking on progress toward goals
 - Our regular upward feedback survey shows improvement where needed and a consistent level of excellence

Employees have metrics to measure their own success

- Every employee has a clear idea of what success in their job looks like, using quantitative metrics whenever possible **(achieved)**
- Progress towards milestones is updated frequently and shared with the staff **(achieved)**
- Every department has SMART goals and a clear idea of success **(achieved)**

- [Humane League Labs](#) completes their two current projects on the value of online engagement and individual outreach (note: HLL is run independently by Harish Sethu from our board, he is the best person to engage about their plans)

Addendum: Short-term Goal Setting

As an example of the time-bound goals they set for their programs, THL has shared the following goals. They set these goals for their Mexico program in June 2017, with the aim of achieving them by the end of the year.

Mexico cage free campaigns: 5 wins

- Milestone 1: First campaign win
- Milestone 2: First major fast food chain
- Milestone 3: 3 fast food chain campaign wins
- Milestone 4: 5 fast food chain campaigns wins

Latin American corporate outreach: 10 cage free commitments

- Milestone 1: First cage free commitment
- Milestone 2: 3 cage free commitments
- Milestone 3: 6 cage free commitments
- Milestone 4: 8 cage free commitments
- Milestone 5: 10 cage free commitments

Growth in Fast Action Network Mexico members to 1,000

- Milestone 1: 200
- Milestone 2: 400
- Milestone 3: 600
- Milestone 4: 800
- Milestone 5: 1,000

Growth in elite online volunteers to 40

- Milestone 1: 10
- Milestone 2: 15
- Milestone 3: 20
- Milestone 4: 25
- Milestone 5: 30
- Milestone 6: 35
- Milestone 7: 40

Growth in standard online volunteers to 300

- Milestone 1: 160
- Milestone 2: 200

- Milestone 3: 250
- Milestone 4: 300