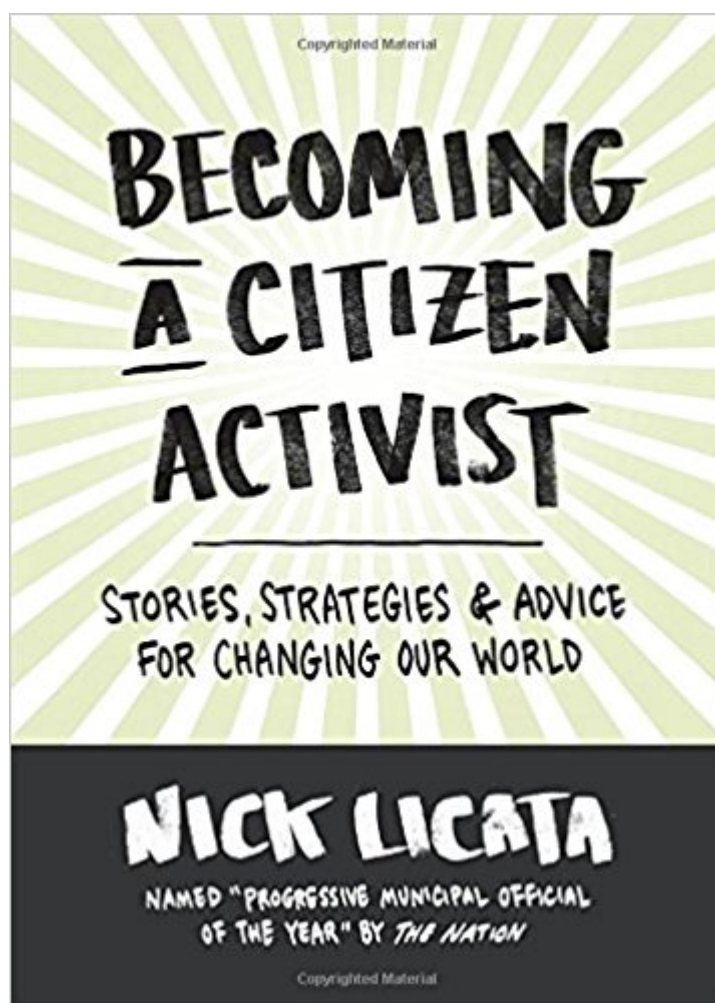


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# Becoming A Citizen Activist: Stories, Strategies & Advice For Changing Our World



## Synopsis

From post-inauguration rallies to #NoDAPL and the Black Lives Matter movement to the global Women's March on Washington, the people are exercising their power through protest and community organizing in a way that hasn't been seen in years. For those looking to organize for the first time or for seasoned activists looking to update their repertoire, the time is ripe for a playbook like *Becoming a Citizen Activist*. A longtime Seattle city councilmember and one of the city's most effective and inspiring leaders of progressive political and social change since the 1960s, Nick Licata outlines how to get organized and master the tactics to create change by leveraging effective communication strategies (such as creating community through online channels like Facebook and Twitter), how to effectively engage traditional media channels, and how to congregate local and national people power. Licata demonstrates by example that we can fight city hall. Balancing an idealistic vision of a better world with the clear-eyed pragmatism necessary to build it from the ground up, this smart and powerful book will empower any activist with the tools they need to effect change.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 224 pages

Publisher: Sasquatch Books (January 5, 2016)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1632170442

ISBN-13: 978-1632170446

Product Dimensions: 5.9 x 1.5 x 7.3 inches

Shipping Weight: 11.2 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.3 out of 5 stars 43 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #544,116 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #141 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > United States > Local #427 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Elections & Political Process > Political Advocacy #701 in Books > Politics & Social Sciences > Politics & Government > Public Affairs & Policy > Social Policy

## Customer Reviews

"*Becoming a Citizen Activist* is a handbook, not a party manual, but Licata pulls lessons from groups such as Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter and even the conservative Tea Party." —Crosscut "No matter who you are, you'll finish this book and be

inspired to head straight out to better your community and our world." —Pramila Jayapal, Congresswoman-elect, Washington state senator, and founder of OneAmerica

"Nick Licata is a rare combination of things: a thinker who knows grassroots activism, an idealist who can pragmatically wield power, and a politician who knows how to change culture. His compact book distills a career of great citizenship into simple lessons and memorable stories. I hope it inspires a new generation to become activists, in and out of office." —Eric Liu, founder and CEO of Citizen University

"With plenty of real-life examples, analyses on other movements, and personal stories from Licata's time on the Seattle City Council, 'Becoming a Citizen Activist' is a thorough book that provides an excellent crash course in political activism." —The Epoch Times

"Nick Licata knows that democracy isn't a spectator sport and that the voices of real people are needed to build the best nation possible. Through stories of successful campaigns, practical tips, and the sharing of hard won lessons, *Becoming A Citizen Activist* guides the reader in how they can be a part of making democracy work for everyone. An inspiring, must-read book for anyone who has ever dreamed of a better world." —Kristin Rowe-Finkbeiner, Executive Director of MomsRising

"As good a reflection on grassroots politics in the trenches as I've seen, Nick Licata's book shows how ordinary citizens can find their voices to actually change policy and how elected leaders like Nick can help them create these changes. Having known Nick for thirty years, I've always been amazed at how he's brought unlikely constituencies together, crossing liberal and conservative lines to achieve tangible political victories. His work and this book embody what I call radical pragmatism—not being afraid to pursue a far-reaching vision, but pursuing it in the most practical of ways, because if you're running a city your solutions have to work. I love the examples and stories, the interweave of past history and present challenges, and the sense of how change occurs on the day-to-day level. It's an invaluable guide for anyone working in their communities." —Paul Leob, author of *A Soul of a Citizen* and *The Impossible Will Take a Little While*

"Nick Licata has delivered a powerful book about becoming a citizen activist. As someone who spent most of my adult life in elected office, it is refreshing to see someone from the inside opening the playbook for those seeking civic change and social justice. Too many times we want the home run, when getting solid hits is the most effective way of enacting change. Nick has been extremely effective over his career by building coalitions and doing the background work that produces results. Sharing his wisdom is not likely to win friends within the halls of government, but I think it will help balance the scale for those working in the trenches." —Jim Hunt, former president of the National League of Cities and founder of Amazing Cities

"*Becoming a Citizen Activist* is a timely antidote to our

poisoned democracy. At a time when corporations are treated as supercitizens while most individuals think of themselves only as taxpayers, Licata shares inspiring stories about the power of people and valuable advice for taking back our government."

•Jim Diers, author of *Neighbor Power*"Becoming a Citizen Activist provides inspiration and nuggets of practical advice for anyone who wants to fight city hall and build a better world."

•Wendy Wendlandt, Chairman of the Washington Public Interest Research Group "Nick Licata is a treasure. In *Becoming a Citizen Activist* he shares the wisdom he has acquired through five decades of struggle to make the world a better place. Rich with uncanny insight and the right combination of realism and optimism, Licata has produced a book that should be mandatory reading for those seeking justice in this world. He shows that we can hold the power to make social change in our hands, if we use it and use it effectively."

•Robert W. McChesney, co-author, *People Get Ready: The Fight Against a Jobless Economy and a Citizenless Democracy*"With plenty of real-life examples, analyses on other movements, and personal stories from Licata's time on the Seattle City Council, *Becoming a Citizen Activist* is a thorough book that provides an excellent crash course in political activism."

•The Epoch Times"This spirited activists' manual provides many anecdotes of democracy in action and shows how every concerned citizen could find his or her political voice."

•Library Journal"Whether it's explaining the skills and tactics that activists will need to know and use while promoting their goals or presenting examples of successful citizen-led campaigns for social change, Licata effectively teaches his audience how, as ordinary citizens, they can change the world."

•HistoryLink.org" *Becoming A Citizen Activist* is Licata's attempt to share the lessons he's learned to help people effectively navigate city politics."

•The Nation"An inspiring and entertaining book about local activism."

•Dissent Magazine" A soft spoken recap of Seattle's progressive victories over the the last 30 years, complete with lessons learned."

•Seattle Met" In his new book, *Becoming a Citizen Activist*, Licata argues that everyone has the potential to make a difference, and shares success stories, practical tips for winning a campaign and insights into the inner-workings of power and politics."

•International Network of Street Papers"Fortunately for those seeking relevant political advice, former Seattle City Councilor Nick Licata has just published a handbook."

•In These Times"[Retirement is] not the end of Licata's social-justice crusade."

•Pittsburg City Paper"Brimming with inspiring stories on how people can take charge of their democracy."

•History News Network"Citizen engagement...[is] bringing greater equality to our city."

•Seattle Times “Enacting far greater change.”  
•Capitol Hill Seattle  
“If Bernie makes you want to change the world, then, Nick Licata can show you how to bring the revolution home.”  
•Southside Pride "Part technical guidance, part practical advice"  
•Athens Banner-Herald"...an informative presentation from Nick Licata"  
•The Red & Black"Practical advice from a long-term city councilman about how to lobby your elected officials and effect change in your neighborhood as well as nationwide."  
•NW Book Lovers "Becoming a Citizen Activist will tell you how to get to work on all levels of government, touching on real-life instructions for engaging your fellow citizens, communicating with politicians, and using the right tools to reach the right people."  
•BookRiot"[Licata] hopes his primer will take the next generation of citizens to become activists through a step-by-step method that leads to significant and lasting accomplishments."  
•Bowling Green State University News"It is inspiring to read about how everyday people like myself have been the catalysts for massive change at the local level, which has a direct and positive impact on thousands of other people and the environment."  
•Elephant "Becoming A Citizen Activist" is full of useful tips about how activists and allied politicians can collaborate on issue-oriented campaigns.  
•The Rag Blog

Nick Licata was an 18-year Seattle city councilmember. His election in 2013 broke all previous records for the highest votes received citywide for a city councilmember in a contested race.

A prolifically successful activist and decorated city officeholder shares the key touch points of his playbook so you can get started yourself. Licata has an unusual and what I think is unique point of view for writing these lessons; he's been winning both inside the system (on the Seattle City Council) and winning outside as an organizer for a few decades. The book is practical, not merely theoretical as I find too many of the current political advocacy books. He explains the mechanics of victories he's witnessed as well as the ones he'd led or participated in to illustrate specific tools and methods **that work**. He doesn't present them as one-size-fits-all; he understands from experience and points out that every situation will be a different set of challenges with different opportunities, but what this book delivers are guidelines and some rules you can riff off of in making good things happen. A four- or five hour read if you take notes, and a powerful starter kit to get citizens who care ignited with the most useful strategies and tactics that drive successful action.

Very smart, very specific book on how to influence your elected representatives. Nick Licata, the author, got an early start as an activist by publishing the alternative weekly Seattle Sun, then turned his talents to the other side of the equation as an elected official, serving nearly 20 years on the Seattle City Council (including as Council president). As a result, he knows how politicians think and how activists who want to influence them should think, and he informs his book with local examples of successful citizen-driven campaigns, like the effort to stop the University of Washington from obtaining its trademarked clothing from subcontractors who used sweatshop labor. Licata's book was written and published just before the 2016 Presidential election, but it's hard to imagine better timing. This book is on my shelf of potent manuals that every activist needs for the next few years.

Great resource. Practical advice. Insightful examples. The trick is how to take that first step. Towards that end, I started a study group. Friends of friends. We have 20 on the list, 5 to 7 show up each meeting. We use Slack for followup, coordination, etc. We each first picked a hyper-local (bite-sized) issue to work on. Mine is helping find a permanent home for a tool library. Another is improving our crosswalks in some critical areas. A third member is an organizer for March for Science. Etc. We discuss 1 chapter every two weeks. Brainstorm with each other, try to apply the lessons to our own work(s). In the future, we'll host guest speakers, experienced activists, electeds, policy people, to help lead discussions, advice, encouragement.

I wrote a book (BLUEPRINTS FOR A BETTER WORLD) which is aimed at redirecting the world from its current, destructive path, and I was in major need of some fresh ideas on how I can promote my obsession in life (which is to 'change the world'). Naturally, I was immediately drawn to the subtitle of well-known Seattle Politician, Nick Licata's book (Becoming a Citizen Activist) which is: STORIES, STRATEGIES, & ADVICE FOR CHANGING OUR WORLD. His book is well-written, and very entertaining, in addition to being very informative for people like me who really want to make meaningful changes in the world. Nick Licata speaks and advises from his personal experiences amassed over his entire lifetime, from his university days to present-time. He has been a driving force in gaining political victories for many controversial matters, including higher minimum wage & legalizing gay marriages (just to name a couple - there are MANY more). I'm sure that any reader would find the stories entertaining, but for me personally, I've gained invaluable strategies and ideas from this book to help make my own vision for a better future for mankind to come to fruition. Five Stars +++++

Chock full of lessons learned and key insights on strategy and tactics to build power from a proven activist and then long time Seattle City Council member. I spent 44 years in the labor movement, recently retired after 15 years as President of UFCW 21 in Seattle. How I wish such a book was available a long time ago! Eminently readable, steeped in the fights of our time, this couldn't be more timely. 5 stars and then some.-Dave Schmitz

This should be a required read for anyone wanting to get into political activism, run for office, or want to create change in their community but are not sure where to start. Especially helpful for anyone getting a start in Washington State politics. Clear, easy to understand and apply, and powerful examples

Small book. Found book to be less than robust. Elementary activism. Need more substance to effect change after 20th of 2017. Returned.

Great book. Gave it as gift to my daughters.

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