AI FOR NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERS · SESSION 4 OF 5

AI for Community Organizing

Using AI to research issues, map power, run better meetings and move group projects forward.

A companion series for Neighborhood Leadership Cleveland participants



Organizing is relationships. AI can clear time for them.

Every hour AI saves on agendas, minutes and research is an hour back for door-knocking, one-on-ones and showing up.

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Where AI saves organizers time

Meetings

Draft agendas, turn rough notes into minutes, list follow-ups with owners.

Research

Summarize a long city report or explain a policy in plain language.

Writing

Letters to officials, testimony, newsletters and grant drafts.

Planning

Break a project into tasks and a timeline you can track.

Surveys

Sort open-ended survey answers into themes. Remove names first.

Reaching everyone

Translate and simplify so every neighbor can take part.

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The organizing cycle, with AI in its place



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Mapping power on an issue

- Use this for the "understanding systems" and "power" parts of NLC.
- AI gives you categories and questions, not verified names.
- Confirm every current officeholder on official websites.

POWER MAP PROMPT

```
I am organizing neighbors in [neighborhood],
Cleveland, about [issue, such as vacant lots
or traffic safety].

Help me build a power map:
- the types of decision-makers (city
departments, council, county, institutions,
businesses, community groups)
- what each one can actually do about this
issue
- questions I should research to confirm who
holds each role today

Put it in a table.
```

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Turning your story into testimony

- Your voice is the point. Tell AI to keep your words.
- Public comment is often limited to 2 or 3 minutes. Ask for timing.
- Practice out loud. Edit anything that does not sound like you.

TESTIMONY PROMPT

```
Help me turn my experience into 2 minutes of
public testimony for City Council about
[issue].

My notes: [your notes, without neighbors'
private details]

Keep my words and voice. Organize it as:
1. Who I am and where I live
2. What happened
3. What it costs our block
4. What I am asking council to do
```

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Managing conflict and change

Rehearse a hard talk

Ask AI to role-play a frustrated neighbor so you can practice staying calm.

Cool down a message

Paste a heated draft and ask for a firm but respectful version.

Set ground rules

Draft group agreements for meetings, then adopt them together.

See both sides

Ask AI to summarize each side of a disagreement fairly.

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Group project planner

1

Name the goal

What change do we want, for whom, by when?

2

Sharpen it

Ask AI to rewrite it as a specific, measurable goal.

3

Break it down

AI lists tasks. The group assigns owners and dates.

4

Track weekly

Update a shared list. Ask AI to summarize progress.

5

Share results

Draft the graduation presentation with AI support.

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Who does what

AI can

- Draft, summarize and organize
- Explain how systems work, in general terms
- Brainstorm tactics and questions
- Translate a first draft
- Keep task lists tidy

Only people can

- Build trust and knock on doors
- Carry the history of the neighborhood
- Decide what the community wants
- Hold each other accountable
- Stand at the podium and speak

ACTIVITY · 25 MIN

Power map sprint

1. Teams pick their NLC group project issue.
2. Run the power map prompt.
3. Verify at least three roles on official websites.
4. Circle the one decision-maker to approach first.
5. Draft a one-paragraph ask to that person with AI.

DEBRIEF QUESTIONS

What did AI get right?

What did it get wrong or leave out?

What do you know from the neighborhood that AI could not?

Who will make the first contact, and when?

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What to remember

- Listening stays human. AI handles paperwork.
- Use AI for categories and questions, then verify names.
- Keep your own voice in testimony.
- People decide and people hold each other accountable.

Next session: Using AI responsibly.

KEEP LEARNING

Community Tool Box

Organizing and planning guides · ctb.ku.edu

Cleveland City Council

Find your ward and agendas · clevelandcitycouncil.org

NLC Toolkit page

All resources in one place (shared by your facilitator)