

## Guidelines for Effective Political Dialogue

### Drawing on principles of Nonviolent Communication

<b>Avoid</b>	<b>Employ Instead</b>
<p><i>Avoid language that describes people's character. Adjectives which malign character include: arrogant, cynical, selfish, ignorant, spineless...</i></p> <p>Labeling reduces a human being to a one-dimensional entity, e.g. <i>ideologue, hawk, chameleon, demagogue, hypocrite.</i></p>	<p><i>Describe why the actions don't serve needs. What consequences may result from those actions?</i></p> <p>e.g. "I'm concerned that failure to support an increased minimum wage will increase stress and hardship among employees".</p>
<p><i>Don't state judgments as fact.</i></p> <p>e.g. "Increasing the minimum wage will drive some owners out of business"</p>	<p><i>Own your judgments.</i> "My interviews with a dozen business owners have led me to conclude that some businesses will close"</p>
<p><i>Avoid assuming (bad/selfish) intentions of the person</i> e.g. "The owners care more about their profit than they do their employees livelihood".</p>	<p><i>Focus on understanding the needs that motivate the other person</i> e.g. "Are you wanting to find a way that safeguards the success of your business in the event you have to pay higher wages?"</p>
<p><i>Don't get stuck on one strategy</i></p> <p>e.g. "If this measure succeeds, I'll have to lay off employees"</p> <p>e.g. "If you are serious about working people being able to live in SC, you need to support the minimum wage increase."</p>	<p><i>Tune into your own and the other's needs and together look for a strategy that satisfies both.</i></p> <p>"If this measure succeeds, I'm going to need to increase business. Would you commit resources to a "Buy Local" campaign?</p> <p>"If this measure fails, we need to do something. Would you consider supporting rent control</p>

**Continue the dialogue with requests that elicit further cooperation. Possible requests:**  
 Would you be willing to hear another strategy that I think would meet your both our needs?  
 Would you be willing to examine the evidence with me to see if that strategy is effective in meeting your needs as well as mine?  
 Would you be willing to hear why I make that interpretation?