



The International Campaign to Ban Landmines made their goal simple: Ban them. So far 111 countries have ratified the 1997 treaty banning landmines.

*“You can never really say what you’ve accomplished, or whether you’ve accomplished anything at all, unless you have very specific and quantifiable goals against which you can measure your effect.”*

*— Carl Safina,  
National Audubon Society*

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## CLEAR GOALS, MEASURABLE PROGRESS



*“People start from the wrong place and have the wrong goal. Ask yourself: what behavior do you want to achieve and by what degree. Is it doable...?”*

— Bill Novelli, AARP

Winning campaigns have clear, measurable goals. Ban landmines. Secure a federal management plan for North Atlantic swordfish (Give Swordfish a Break). Decrease litter on Texas highways (Don't Mess with Texas). Decrease incidents of drunk driving (Don't Drink and Drive). These are clear goals. A communications program can be put in place to support such goals.

We can measure our progress toward achieving these goals. How many countries have signed a treaty to ban landmines? How many chefs have said they won't serve swordfish until a fisheries management plan is in place? How much have we saved in Texas highway maintenance fees because fewer people are throwing trash out the windows of their cars? Are drunk driving-related accidents going down?

Many organizations were talking about the problem of landmines, and the toll they were taking on humans, especially children, around the world. But no one had

articulated a plan of action. Bobby Muller, who co-founded the International Campaign to Ban Landmines, was sitting in his office one night and said, “Why don't we just ban the goddamn things.” He'd just articulated his goal — so clearly that everyone understood what the International Campaign to Ban Landmines was out to do.

According to Bill Novelli of AARP, picking the wrong goal is one of the mistakes nonprofits repeat the most. “Too often, people create an elegant plan around the wrong premise or the wrong goal.”

“A successful campaign, no matter how we define it, has got to begin with very clear, realistic, measurable goals,” says Barbara Beck of the Pew Charitable Trusts. “Campaign goals that are not explicit and realistic are very hard to evaluate. You've got to evaluate so you can see where you've made mistakes. You need to know where the holes are. That's how we move forward.”

Jon Haber of Fleishman-Hillard reminds us that goals need to come before everything else, especially in coalition politics. “Is your goal to have a pure coalition of people you agree with or is your goal to save the trees? If your goal is to save trees, let's figure out how to do that, and it might mean picking up people who are not normally politically on our side, but will help us win.”