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CORPORATE REFORM DISCUSSION GROUPS

One of the first steps to changing how corporations interact (and interfere) with democracy is to create the space for serious conversations about the breadth and depth of the impacts of corporate power as well as to provide people with information about meaningful and attainable solutions. This is a guide to help you organize a corporate reform discussion group in your community.

DECIDE ON YOUR FORMAT. Citizen Works has designed two different discussion groups; there is a series of three discussions for folks that want to delve more deeply into the corporation, and a one-time discussion for those who are interested a broad overview of corporate power. Decide which is appropriate for your community. You should also decide on the format for your discussion; it can be a casual conversation, like a book club, a more facilitated conversation or you could incorporate a presentation from a local expert or someone who is willing to do a bit more research on their own.

DETERMINE THE LOCATION AND DATE. Your living room is a great place for a discussion, but you could also consider the local library, community center, or coffee shop. Churches sometime offer up their space during the week. Work to find a location that has parking or is accessible by mass transit.

DOWNLOAD THE MATERIALS. Go to www.citizenworks.org to access the readings for your discussion group. There is also a list of suggested discussion questions. You can also register your discussion group here so we can keep track of these conversations and send more information as it becomes available.

INVITE PARTICIPANTS. Make a list of people you think would be interested. It's ok to just invite your friends, but you could also consider inviting other people from the community who might be interested in issues of corporate power. People from local churches, progressive groups, unions and business leaders would add important perspectives to this discussion. We recommend calling people because email is easy to ignore and personal calls are, well, more personable. Work to get a commitment! Most people lead very busy lives, but these conversations are critical to our democracy and our future so encourage people to make time.

FOLLOW UP WITH PARTICIPANTS. Make sure that everyone has the readings a few weeks before the discussion. It is also a good idea to send email reminders a week before, again a day or so before the discussion and call people the night before the event.

TAKE CARE OF LOGISTICS. Include directions to the discussion, bring extra copies of the readings, and perhaps provide food.

ENJOY the discussion!

LET US KNOW WHAT HAPPENED. Send the corporate reform team at Citizen Works an update of your discussion (202.265.6164; Jen Tucker, jtucker@citizenworks.org; Katie Selenski, kselenski@citizenworks.org). We want to help connect corporate reformers across the country.