

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING: WHAT IT IS AND HOW IT WORKS

Collective bargaining gives educators a voice. Through collective bargaining, NEA members negotiate for more than their own economic security. They are also winning victories for students to improve student learning and development, like smaller class sizes, increasing real learning time by reducing the number of standardized tests, and more recess time. The collective bargaining process enables educators to work together so that everyone connected to a school benefits – students, educators, administrators, parents, and the community as a whole.

A SHORT HISTORY OF BARGAINING IN THE UNITED STATES

The National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), first passed in 1935, guarantees the right of private sector employees to organize and collectively bargain. The NLRA only covers workers in the private sector.

In the decades following the NLRA's enactment, many states passed similar laws to regulate organizing, bargaining, and settling disputes for working people in the public sector, including public education employees. The nation's first collectively bargained agreement with public school teachers was signed in 1962 in New York City. Currently, teachers in 34 states and the District of Columbia have the legal right to bargain; education support professionals in 31 states plus D.C. have that right, as do some higher education faculty in 28 states plus D.C. In many other states that do not have collective bargaining statutes, limited bargaining takes place in some or all categories of education employees. Bargaining in public education is prohibited in only seven states.

COLLECTIVE BARGAINING IS GOOD PUBLIC POLICY

Collective bargaining in education offers an organized and transparent system to improve student learning and the overall environment in public schools, and helps ensure that educators receive a professional level of pay. When educators and management can come to agreement on salary, benefits, and working conditions – while also improving teaching and learning conditions – everyone benefits. And in the healthiest education environments, positive union-management relations is a continuous process – often carried out monthly through a joint labor-management committee.

In states without collective bargaining rights, education employees and their associations can still collaborate with school districts, and advocate at the state and school district level for improved student learning conditions and educators' professional growth.

THE BENEFITS OF BARGAINING/ADVOCACY

Collective bargaining gives educators a voice in their workplace. It helps assure fair wages and benefits, improving teacher recruitment and retention. Educators also negotiate better teaching and learning conditions. That means that everyone connected to the school – students, teachers, education support professionals, administrators, parents, and taxpayers – benefit from it. Specifically, collective bargaining:

Improves teaching and learning. Teachers' working conditions are students' learning conditions, so by addressing school and classroom issues, everyone gains. Educators and their unions are leveraging their collective power in new ways to implement educator-led solutions that work for all students. Educators are bargaining on issues that go beyond salary, benefits, and working conditions. They are bargaining over class size limits, increased time for teachers to share effective classroom practices, guaranteed recess periods, induction and mentoring, professional development, restorative practices, and school-related health and safety issues. Even in a non-bargaining setting, associations can collaborate with school districts to meaningfully address these issues.

Ensures fair employment procedures. A collectively bargained contract ensures that all employees are treated fairly because both parties have discussed and agreed upon rules and procedures for the workplace. Employees and managers understand what steps will be used to resolve employee grievances, lay off workers, or settle disputes. Contracts and/or state laws may also set forth processes and principles for conducting teacher evaluations that are comprehensive, meaningful, and fair, and improve both teacher practices and student learning.

HOW DOES COLLECTIVE BARGAINING WORK?

Bargaining: step by step

Collective bargaining is a process through which the employee union and employer representatives exchange ideas, mutually solve problems, and reach a written agreement. The resulting approved contract binds both groups. Each round of successor negotiations affords the parties the opportunity to revisit existing agreements.

While there are many local variations, here is how the collective bargaining process typically unfolds in public education:

1. **Preparing for bargaining.** Both sides form bargaining teams and gather information. The union's team usually is selected through a process outlined in the union's constitution and/or by-laws, while the management team is designated by the employer. The union leadership meets with its constituents and/or conducts surveys to identify and then prioritize issues. During this assessment phase, each team also analyzes the current collective bargaining agreement to identify areas they want to improve, including concerns that have surfaced through the grievance process. The local will hopefully reach out to community partners, including parents, to seek input on some proposals.
2. **Conducting negotiations.** At the beginning of bargaining, the teams agree on ground rules, meet at an agreed upon location, and start negotiations. Some contract provisions remain the same from contract to contract. The parties may modify other sections and either side may propose a new bargaining topic. State law and court cases determine the mandatory, permissive, and prohibited subjects of bargaining.
3. **Ratifying the contract.** When the union and employer teams have reached a tentative contract agreement, they review the proposal with their respective constituency groups.

The union holds a ratification meeting where employees – typically dues-paying members only – have the opportunity to ask questions and offer opinions on the tentative contract agreement. Individuals are then asked to vote, usually by secret ballot, on the tentative agreement. Absentee ballots may also be available so that everyone has an opportunity to vote. A majority of votes determines if the contract is ratified or rejected.

The management team generally seeks approval from the school board.

If the tentative agreement is ratified by both sides, then the parties have a new (or successor) agreement. If the tentative contract agreement is not ratified – by either party – the teams usually go back to the bargaining table and continue negotiations. They negotiate until they are able to bring back a new tentative agreement for a vote.
4. **Resolving a contract dispute.** If the parties are not able to reach an agreement, state law generally specifies how the dispute can be resolved. Usually the parties can use mediation, arbitration, and/or a strike or lock out to reach an agreement. Strikes are unusual in public education but are allowable in a number of states.
5. **Changing or clarifying the contract.** With the agreement of both parties, any section of a ratified contract can be revised during the term of the contract. In many districts, labor and management representatives meet regularly during the term of the contract to talk about and resolve issues of mutual concern, often through an established joint labor-management committee. In addition, either at the bargaining table or during the life of a successor contract, the parties can create Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) related to a specific issue. The benefit of the MOU is that it gives the parties an opportunity to reach a temporary agreement on an issue that is important to both the union and the employer.

THE UNION IN YOUR SCHOOL

1. **Meet your Association/building representative (AR).** If your local Association is not part of the school orientation, the Association will often have a table at the meeting. Meet your Association representative/steward, who works in your building. Make sure you have that person's contact information, as well as that of the the state affiliate's staff person, often called a UniServ, who provides support to the local membership.
2. **Contact your AR if you need assistance or have a question.** If you have a concern, contact your AR as soon as possible. She/he may be able to answer your question, resolve your concern or, if necessary, refer you to the local president or the UniServ for further assistance.

3. **Read your contract and understand your rights.**

Read your collective bargaining agreement or, in states without bargaining rights, your relevant policy guidelines. Be aware of your rights. If you have questions, ask your Association representative or more experienced colleagues. Attend local Association meetings.

The Association exists to help you and your students – and is stronger if you are involved!

Virginia Collective Bargaining Law

Source Link: <https://www.billtrack50.com/BillDetail/1167169/18349>

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of Virginia:

1.1. That 40.1-55, 40.1-57.2, and 40.1-57.3 of the Code of Virginia are amended and reenacted as follows:

40.1-55. Employee striking terminates, and becomes temporarily ineligible for, public employment.

A. Any employee of the Commonwealth, or of any county, city, town or other political subdivision thereof, or of any agency of any one of them, who, in concert with two or more other such employees, for the purpose of obstructing, impeding or suspending any activity or operation of his employing agency or any other governmental agency, strikes or willfully refuses to perform the duties of his employment shall, by such action, be deemed to have terminated his employment and shall thereafter be ineligible for employment in any position or capacity during the next twelve 12 months by the Commonwealth, or any county, city, town or other political subdivision of the Commonwealth, or by any department or agency of any of them.

B. The provisions of subsection A shall apply to any employee of any county, city, or town or local school board without regard to any local ordinance or resolution adopted pursuant to 40.1-57.2 by such county, city, or town or school board that authorizes its employees to engage in collective bargaining.

40.1-57.2. Collective bargaining.

A. No state, county, municipal city, town, or like governmental officer, agent, or governing body is vested with or possesses any authority to recognize any labor union or other employee association as a bargaining agent of any public officers or employees, or to collectively bargain or enter into any collective bargaining contract with any such union or association or its agents with respect to any matter relating to them or their employment or service unless, in the case of a county, city, or town, such authority is provided for or permitted by a local ordinance or by a resolution. Any such ordinance or resolution shall provide for procedures for the certification and decertification of exclusive bargaining representatives, including reasonable public notice and opportunity for labor organizations to intervene in the process for designating an exclusive representative of a bargaining unit. As used in this section, "county, city, or town" includes any local school board, and "public officers or employees" includes employees of a local school board.

B. No ordinance or resolution adopted pursuant to subsection A shall include provisions that restrict the governing body's authority to establish the budget or appropriate funds.

C. For any governing body of a county, city, or town that has not adopted an ordinance or resolution providing for collective bargaining, such governing body shall, within 120 days of receiving certification from a majority of public employees in a unit considered by such employees to be appropriate for the purposes of collective bargaining, take a vote to adopt or not adopt an ordinance or resolution to provide for collective bargaining by such public employees and any other public employees deemed appropriate by the governing body. Nothing in this subsection shall require any governing body to adopt an ordinance or resolution authorizing collective bargaining.

D. Notwithstanding the provisions of subsection A regarding a local ordinance or resolution granting or permitting collective bargaining, no officer elected pursuant to Article VII, Section 4 of the Constitution of Virginia or any employee of such officer is vested with or possesses any authority to recognize any labor union or other employee association as a bargaining agent of any public officers or employees, or to collectively bargain or enter into any collective bargaining contract with any such union or association or its agents, with respect to any matter relating to them or their employment or service.

40.1-57.3. Certain activities permitted.

Nothing in this article shall be construed to prevent employees of the Commonwealth, of its political subdivisions, or of any governmental agency of any of them from forming associations for the purpose of promoting their interests before the employing agency and, if they are employees of a county, city, or town or local school board that has, by a local ordinance or resolution as provided in 40.1-57.2, authorized its employees to engage in collective bargaining, from doing so as provided in such ordinance or resolution.

2. That the provisions of this act shall become effective on May 1, 2021.

Bargaining for the Common Good



Why Bargaining for the Common Good?

This is a moment of incredible, rapid change and challenges. Powerful individuals and corporations are taking over public services, profiting while draining the resources we have to spend on the essential needs of our communities like education and healthcare. Universities have begun serving corporate interests more than the common good. Wealthy, private investors and corporate landlords took advantage of the Great Recession to drive our national housing crisis, threatening the middle class and working families. Climate change and environmental racism threaten our homes, livelihoods, and the very existence of our communities, particularly communities of color.

We must unite to take on these challenges. Union members are recognizing their dual roles as both workers and key leaders in their communities. In a changing and stratified economy, we are expanding collective bargaining to address the challenges we face as workers, neighbors, and families. Labor and community organizations are collaborating to advance unified demands that are relevant to both workers and the broader community.

This way of coming together is called **Bargaining for the Common Good (BCG)**. Common good bargaining updates a long history of partnering to advance common goals through and beyond the bargaining process. A new generation of activists is building on that legacy to create a movement that confronts concentrated economic power, and the urgent environmental, social, and political challenges it has raised. In 2019, we saw the power and energy of BCG in the Los Angeles and Chicago teachers' strikes that brought community members to the bargaining table with unions and thousands of community and union members into the streets to take on corporate power, and fight for the schools, housing, and cities we all deserve. Across the country, unions and community organizations are working together to advance demands that defend and empower whole communities.

How are unions and community groups *Bargaining for the Common Good*?

At the center of BCG campaigns are intentional, long-term alignments between unions and community organizations. We connect at all levels, starting with membership, to build strong, lasting partnerships based on trust and an understanding of shared concerns, challenges, and goals. BCG campaigns are centered around joint community-labor planning that brings diverse partners to the table in union bargaining, builds power, and addresses the crises we all face. BCG work centers racial justice because we must collectively confront structural racism to create a powerful, unified movement.

Building strong, sustainable relationships isn't easy. Effective BCG campaigns require unions to educate their members about their dual identities as workers and community members, seeing bargaining process as a tool that engages both. Community organizations must educate members about unions and how they can bargain together. Both groups must work to overcome any historic animosity or mistrust to develop a shared framework, from membership to leadership, that sees corporations and the wealthy elite as the perpetrators of injustice in our communities and workplaces.

How can I find out more?

Check the resources at www.bargainingforthecommongood.org, and sign up there for our listserv to be notified about our convenings, which create space for local unions and community groups to build partnership and learn how to create BCG campaigns together.



GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY
*Kalmanovitz Initiative
for Labor and the Working Poor*

RUTGERS

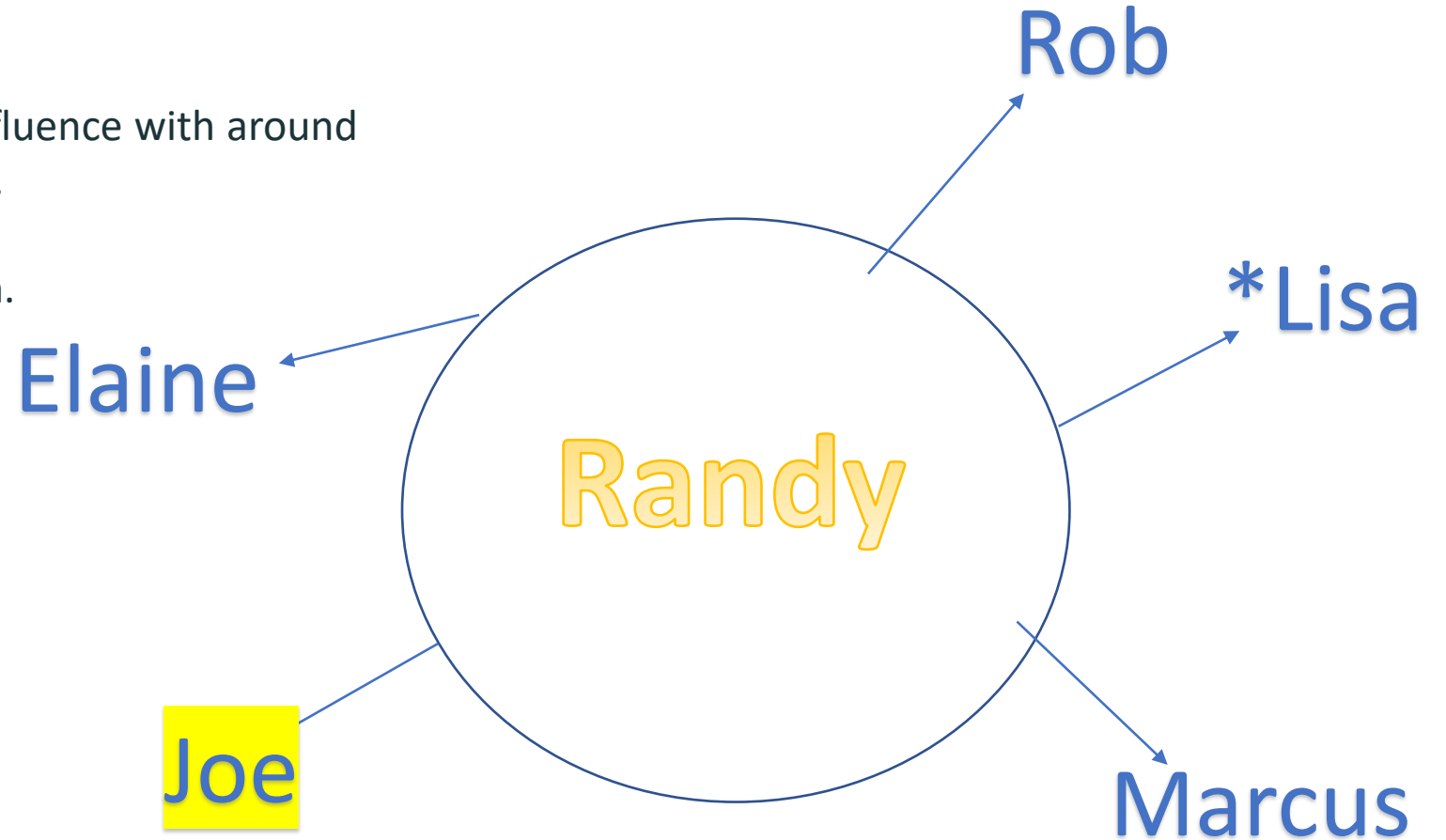
School of Management
and Labor Relations

Center for Innovation in Worker
Organization

Mapping My Worksite

Worksite: _____

1. Place the name of someone who is trusted and respected in a circle.
2. Write the names of people they have influence with around the circle and connect them with a line.
3. Repeat until you place everyone you can.



Key: Member *New Hire

POWER - People Organizing With Effective Results

During Conversations:



Validate
coworker issues.



Provide a
solution on
how to work
together.



Create urgency
to act now.



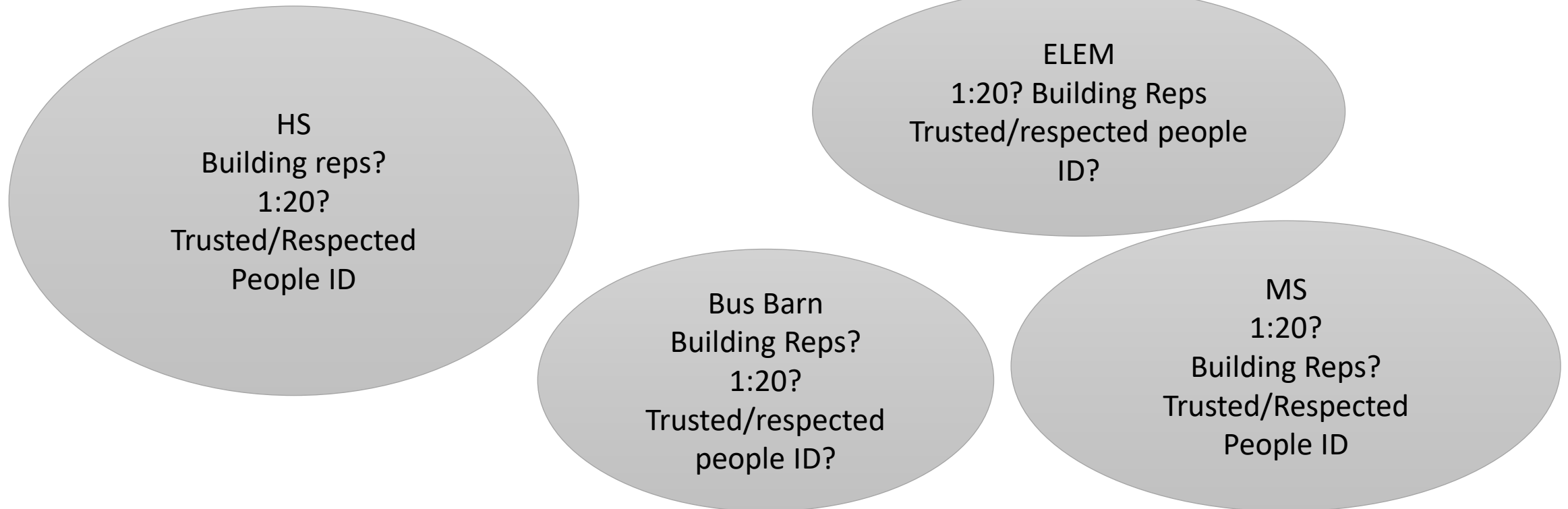
Educate what is
being done or
could be done to
address an issue.



Ask for a
meaningful
commitment.

For Presidents, Map Your Local

- Density (% of potential bargaining unit)
- Buildings with reps
- Do your reps meet the 1 rep for 20 people in a building.



School Board Assessment

Map your school board's support of Collective Bargaining

Extremely Influential					
Somewhat influential					
Influential					
Not very influential					
Not influential					
	Outspoken Champion	Supporter	Neutral or unknown	Opponent	Actively Opposed

Individual (Organizing) Conversations

A framework

- The essential basic tool of organizing is the individual meeting/conversation
- The “radical” tool of relational organizing
- Also called the relational meeting, one-on-one, organizing conversation
- It is itself an “action” – the “action” is to build a relationship around self-interest
 - Story
 - Passion
 - Vision
 - Values
 - What motivates them
 - What they will act on
- Essentials of an individual meeting
 - Short – 15-25 minutes
 - Do not need to get to everything in the first meeting
 - Close with conscious curiosity – they will want to meet with you again
 - Deliberate
 - Not limited to chit-chat or small talk
 - Not about “selling” the Association
 - Not about a “task”
 - Not about the immediate
 - It is person-centered
 - It is about listening and trying to see the world from their perspective
 - It is about probing
 - Agitation (around their interests), not irritation (around your interests)
 - Taking people deeper
 - A conversation, not a script
 - It is about extending an invitation
 - Calculated vulnerability
 - It involves risk on both sides – when someone invites you to “go in”
 - Let people know you are on their side
 - Enter as a relative stranger, leave with the beginning of a public friendship
 - Be a real person with your own story and be willing to tell your story to build the relationship
 - Leads to another meeting
 - Look for energy, cut your losses if there is none
 - ***Eventually leads to action***

Self-interests and individual meetings are about building a collective (an infrastructure) that will grow the organization and foster solidarity among colleagues.

One on One Conversations & Assessments

Effective organizing means building relationships, one at a time and over time, through structured one-on-one conversations. Organizing conversations are the most effective way to gather information, identify employees' concerns and issues, share factual information, inoculate against other campaigns, move members to action and ultimately effect positive change and grow membership.

Purpose of the Organizing Conversation

- Develop a positive, trusting relationship with the other person.
- Listen
 - To identify concerns and issues
 - Identify leadership and relationships
- Assess employees on a variety of factors and issues
- Move into action

How to Have an Organizing Conversation

Introduction

Who you (organizer) are and why the conversation is important

Ask Questions/Listen

What does the individual or group of individuals do at work, what is it like to work there, what is good about the job and what is not good? A good organizer uses the 80/20 or 70/30 rule of listening to talking.

Educate

Give factual information to bargaining unit members on issues, actions and other pertinent information.

Agitate

Why are things the way they are, and who makes these decisions? How would things be better if you had a voice in making these decisions?

Inoculate

Provide clear expectations for likely outcomes and messages that will come from the opposition. Provide factual and evidence-based refutations.

Invitation to Action/Assessment Question(s):

Move the employee to action:

- | | |
|--|--|
| • Recruit membership | • Sit on Association or external committees |
| • Schedule appointments for additional conversations | • Serve as Association Rep. (or other formal or informal position) |
| • Attend a meeting | • Political campaign |
| • Sign a petition | • ??? |
| • Wear a button | |

The One-on-One Relational Conversation

- **Arrange A Time to Talk:** Where possible, arrange a "protected few minutes" to talk with your colleague.
- **Location:** Choose a comfortable location. Sometimes the classroom or staff lounge isn't the best place to talk.
- **Relax:** Begin with light conversation. (*"How's your week going?"*)
- **Focus:** Frame the purpose of the meeting: *"I'd like to get your input and learn about your concerns this year, get a sense of what's important to you"*.
- **Be Flexible:** Don't dictate the program--ask them.
- **Obey the 80-20 Rule:** *Listen 80% of the time, talk 20%.* Give them opportunities to speak by asking open-ended questions (e.g. *"What are your greatest concerns about your job?"*) and encouraging them to expand on remarks.
- **Networks:** Ask about social networks. e.g. *"Do you think others in the team/department would agree?" "Should I talk to that person?" "Is there someone who you or others turn to for advice?"*
- **Future:** Where appropriate, invite the contact to participate in future meetings, events, etc.

Tips

- People will respond in their own way. Body language varies as well. Don't be frustrated by the variety.
- Do not argue with the interviewee.
- Don't lie or invent answers. If you don't know something, it's OK to admit it and say, "I'll get back to you."
- Don't talk more than you listen. (The "80-20" rule: Listen 80%, Talk 20%.)
- Do Make Encouraging Remarks (*I See, Uh Huh, Right...*)
- Do Give Non-Verbal Acknowledgment (Nod, Match Facial Expressions, Open and Relaxed Body Posture, Eye Contact)
- Do Invite More Information, If Required, For Understanding
- Do Reflect What You Observe Or Hear And How You Believe The Speaker Feels
- Don't Interrupt
- Don't Change Subject
- Don't Rehearse In Your Head
- Don't Interrogate
- Don't Teach Or Lecture

Social Policy

Organizing for Social and Economic Justice

WHAT IS ORGANIZING?

By Marshall Ganz

[2005 revision, originally published in 32 (1) SOCIAL POLICY 16 (Fall 2002)]

Marshal Ganz grew up in Bakersfield, CA, son of a Rabbi and school teacher. He was a Student Nonviolent Coordinating Council Mississippi field secretary, spent 16 years with United Farm Workers Union where he learned labor, community, issue and political organizing, became UFW Organizing Director and for eight years was elected to its national executive board. In 1991, he returned to Harvard College to complete undergraduate work in American history and government. He is Lecturer in Public Policy at Harvard's Kennedy School, has received awards for his teaching, and has published articles in his field in popular and academic journals.

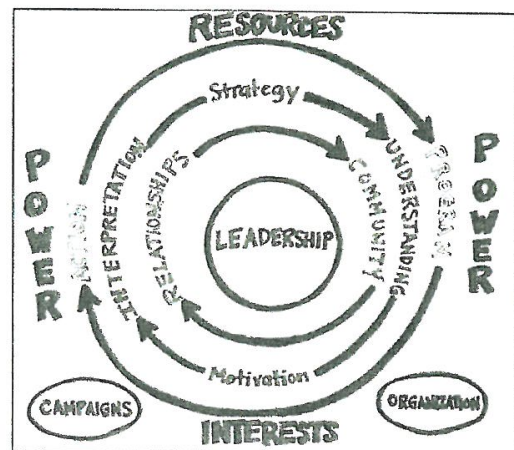
Organizers identify, recruit and develop leadership; build community around leadership; and build power out of community. Organizers challenge people to act on behalf of shared values and interests. They develop the relationships, understanding, and action that enable people to gain new understanding of their interests, new resources, and new capacity to use these resources on behalf of their interests. Organizers work through "dialogues" in relationships, interpretation and action carried out as campaigns.

Organizers interweave relationships, understanding and action so that each contributes to the other. One result is new networks of relationship wide and deep enough to provide a foundation for a new community in action. Another result is a new story about who this community is, where it has been,

where it is going -- and how it will get there. A third result is a strategy envisioning how a community can turn the resources it has into the power it needs to get what it wants. An a final result is action as the community mobilizes and deploys its resources on behalf of its interests -- as collaboration, claims making, or both.

Organizers develop new relationships out of old ones - sometimes by linking one person to another and sometimes by linking whole networks of people together.

Organizers engage people in interpreting why they should act to change their world -- their motivation -- and how they can act to change it -- their strategy.



Organizers motivate action by deepening people's understanding of who they are, what they want, and

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why. Mobilizing feelings of hope, anger, self-worth, solidarity, and urgency, they challenge feelings of fear, apathy, self-doubt, isolation, and inertia that inhibit action.

Organizers engage people in articulating why they should act as a shared story of the challenges they face, why they – and others – must face up to them, and where the hope is – rooted in understanding who they are, where they want to go, and why they want to get there.

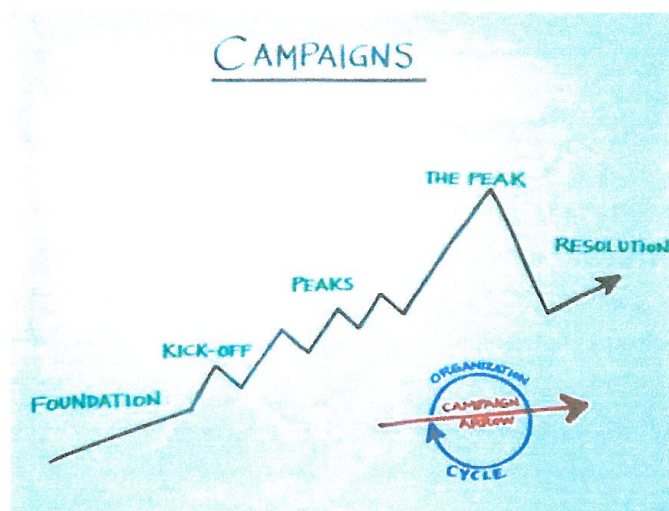
Organizers engage people in understanding how they can act by deliberating about their circumstances, reinterpreting them to identify new opportunities, and strategizing to make creative use of their resources.

Organizers challenge people to take the responsibility to act. Empowerment for a person begins with taking responsibility. Empowerment for an organization begins with commitment: the responsibility its members take for it. Responsibility begins with choosing to act. Organizers challenge people to understand, but also to commit, to act and to learn how to act effectively.

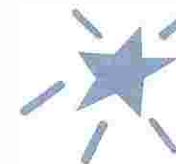
Organizers work through campaigns. Campaigns are highly energized, intensely focused, concentrated streams of activity with specific goals and deadlines. People are recruited, programs launched, battles fought and organizations built through campaigns. Campaigns polarize by bringing out those ordinarily submerged conflicts contrary to the interests of the constituency. One dilemma is how to depolarize in order to negotiate resolution of these conflicts. Another dilemma is how to balance campaigns with the ongoing work of organizational growth and development.

Organizers build community by developing leadership. They develop leaders by enhancing their skills, values and commitments. They build strong communities through which people gain new understanding of their interests as well as the power to act on them -- communities which are bounded yet inclusive, communal yet diverse, solidaristic yet tolerant. They work to develop a relationship between a constituency and its leaders based on mutual responsibility and accountability.

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A Message From the Author:

The decision whether or not to join a union organizing committee is an important one. I faced this decision when I was working in a plant years ago.

The staff organizer told me that to win we needed a committee of employees, but I wasn't sure I would be a good committee member. I was pretty shy, had just a small group of friends and didn't know very much about unions. It seemed to me that it might be better if I just signed a union card and left the committee work to others. In the end, though, I decided that if I really wanted to have a union, I needed to jump in and help out by joining the committee.

All these years later, I can say that joining the committee is one of the best decisions I ever made. It was hard, and took time, but eventually we did win. I still feel pride in having helped improve the conditions for myself and my co-workers and many others who came later. Even more, I had an experience I will always cherish.

I got to know and appreciate my fellow employees on a deeper level than ever before. I

forced myself to learn new things and develop new skills. I found ways to express what I was learning and to share my ideas with others. I met some fascinating and admirable union representatives. And I had an awful lot of fun in the process.

At first I had a hard time stating my opinions publicly, especially when my managers did not approve or agree. But I found that by speaking from the heart I earned the respect of my co-workers. Most surprising to me, my managers confided to me sometime later that my leadership in the union organizing effort actually earned me their respect as well.

The reason I am writing this book is to share with other people some of what I learned not only during my first campaign, but throughout my career as a union member, staff organizer, regional organizing director and most recently as National Organizing Director of the AFL-CIO.

I believe that since we spend so much of our lives at work, we should take all possible steps to achieve fulfillment and respect on the job. We don't have to accept things as they are. **By organizing a union we can reach higher.**

Welcome to the union!

— *Richard Bensinger*





It's Your Union

The first thing you need to understand as an organizing committee member is how important you are. **Without a committee (or leadership group by some other name), there is no organizing campaign.** Simple as that.

I learned this personally when I helped to organize my own workplace, a sporting goods factory in the West. Although I liked certain aspects of my job, such as the pay, I was concerned that management wasn't doing what it should to make our jobs safe. It seemed like our voices were not being heard. A member of my family said, "Stop complaining and call a union." Although I had some skepticism, I did call, and soon an organizer came to visit me.

My request to the organizer was simple: "Form a union at our company."

His response was equally direct: "It's your union, and you'll have to organize it. All I can do is give you support and advice."

It was news to me that the union is actually the employees joining together to create their own organization.

Of all the things I have learned since that day, this is the single most important concept. The reason the committee is so important is because *it is YOUR union*. No one can build it for you. No one can run it for you. No one can define it for you. It's your union and it's what you make it.

As your committee grows and develops and gains confidence, your union is born.





The Bigger the Better

The organizing committee is equally essential whether the workforce has 10 people or 10,000 people.

As a rule of thumb, the committee should consist of a minimum of 10 to 15 percent of the workforce. In a unit of 30, there should be at least 3-5 people on the committee. In a unit of 1,000, the committee should have at least 100 members.

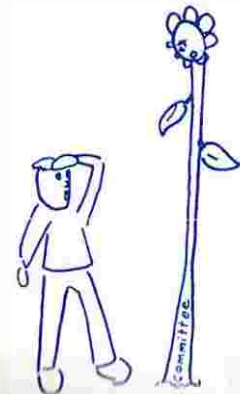
I learned this lesson the hard way when I was organizing my workplace. I got together five of my friends at work, and we decided that we would be the committee. Well, 5 out of 550, that's barely one percent. When we tried to get union cards signed, we couldn't even get 20 percent of the workforce to sign. We ended the campaign. The organizer left, and told us to call back when we could get a large enough committee together.

A few months later, a woman working near me had her hand literally torn off by a plastic extruding machine we had complained about. Outraged, we called a meeting at a nearby farmhouse, and 100 people showed up. Out

of this group, 60 joined the committee. We found volunteers in each department and work area, who each agreed to talk to 5 to 10 others. Within a week, 65 percent of the plant had signed cards and our campaign was off and running.

Although getting cards signed is only one of the many tasks of committee members, this experience showed me how important it is to have a large committee.

The size of the organizing committee also has a lot to do with how fast a campaign moves forward. If an organizing drive bogs down, more often than not, the committee is too small. On the other hand, a large committee can greatly reduce the length of time of an organizing campaign, particularly in the period leading up to either a demand to the employer for voluntary union recognition or a petition or application to a government agency for an election.

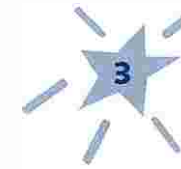


The bigger the better

Routes to Recognition

The critical role of a large, representative organizing committee remains the same whether employees are pursuing an election or non-election route to union certification, in the public or private sector.

Do not make the mistake of minimizing the importance of the committee simply because your employer has agreed to voluntary recognition or a card-check. Remember that your ultimate goal is not to get cards signed; **your goal is to build an organization of, by and for the employees.**



Create a Culture of Inclusiveness

A large committee is one key ingredient for a successful campaign. A representative committee is another.

A union is not an exclusive club. Your organizing committee should exemplify a culture of inclusiveness that welcomes all people, regardless of their job title or social grouping. Everyone should feel needed and valued, and everyone should have a voice.

The committee **should** be fully representative of the workforce, including:

- ★ work areas
- ★ departments
- ★ job titles
- ★ ethnicity
- ★ age
- ★ gender
- ★ length of service

When the committee is representative of everyone, the employees will see more

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clearly that the union is truly their own organization. If certain departments or

groups are left out, your union may be weakened and appear selective in who it really wants to represent.

A recent campaign I was involved in is a good illustration of this point. The vast majority of employees were professionals working in a large office. A block away was a separate unit where people did a completely different kind of work. Since we had a big committee in the main worksite, the employees were inclined to give up on the smaller site, especially since it appeared to be unsupportive of the union effort, and it wasn't clear if these workers would be included in the unit.

The organizers persuaded the committee members to reach out to that isolated unit, and managed to recruit a couple of committee members. Although these committee members did not gain a majority as we did in other departments, they did garner substantial support. When the employer insisted on including this department in the voting unit, hoping to dilute our majority support, we agreed to include them. This proved important to our victory and to building an inclusive union. If we had ignored this group until after filing the election petition, it would have been much harder to win their support.



There are always some departments with less union support than others. If you happen to work in one of them, don't get discouraged. Just get as much support as you can, and the stronger departments will counterbalance the weakness in your area.

During an organizing campaign in the West, the company had a small number of non-English speaking people. Although this was only a small group, and they appeared to be resistant to the union, we never gave up on recruiting committee members from their ranks. When we won the election by only two votes, it became clear how important it was that our committee included everyone.

Welcome!

Bienvenue

Willkommen

Bienvenido

Welkom

Bem-vindo

Velkommen

Benvenuti

A Plan for Organizing 2 Bargain

Story - Issue and Win

What is the story you want people to tell about your Local and this campaign?

Our story is ...

What is the issue that you will organize around? What do your people want to change?

Our issue is...

What would it look like if you achieved positive change on this issue? This is a concrete goal that can be measured and has a date. This win will directly address the issue and make a significant, visible change in the lives of your people. It “proves” the story you want to tell.

Our win is...

Core Leadership Team (Structure) Members

Who are the key people that will lead the actions and shape the plan?

[illegible]

Resources

What resources will you be able to use to gain power and work towards your win?

- **People** - Specific and intentionally identified people who can help you achieve the change you want to see. **May be exhaustible. **
- **Expertise** - Key, specialized knowledge that is used to support the change you want to see.
Where is it, how do you get it, how do you communicate it, how do you use it?
- **Durable** - Does not go away (meeting space, research)
- **Exhaustible** - One time use, need to be replenished, need a sustainability plan (money, time)

People
Expertise
Durable Resources
Exhaustible Resources

Overall Strategic Planner

- What foundation do you need to build before beginning your plan (recruit leaders, gather resources, etc.)?
- What will you do to kick-off your campaign and gear up for the first tactic?
- What tactics will you take to reach the win? What structures will you build around each tactic?
- How will measure BOTH growth and strength at each step?

Foundation		
Kick-off		
Tactic 1		
Tactic 2		
Tactic 3		
Tactic 4		
Tactic 5		
Win		

Kick-Off	
Kick-Off Goal	
Leaders/ Structures	
Participants	
Date(s)	
Location(s)	
Recruitment and Communication Plan	
Resources and Supplies	
Measurable Growth and Strength Data (Qualitative and Quantitative)	

Debrief

Tactic 1	
Tactical Goal	
Leaders/ Structures	
Participants	
Date(s)	
Location(s)	
Recruitment and Communication Plan	
Resources and Supplies	
Measurable Growth and Strength Data (Qualitative and Quantitative)	

Debrief

Tactic 2	
Tactical Goal	
Leaders/ Structures	
Participants	
Date(s)	
Location(s)	
Recruitment and Communication Plan	
Resources and Supplies	
Measurable Growth and Strength Data (Qualitative and Quantitative)	

Debrief

Tactic 3	
Tactical Goal	
Leaders/ Structures	
Participants	
Date(s)	
Location(s)	
Recruitment and Communication Plan	
Resources and Supplies	
Measurable Growth and Strength Data (Qualitative and Quantitative)	

Debrief

Tactic 4	
Tactical Goal	
Leaders/ Structures	
Participants	
Date(s)	
Location(s)	
Recruitment and Communication Plan	
Resources and Supplies	
Measurable Growth and Strength Data (Qualitative and Quantitative)	

Debrief

Tactic 5	
Tactical Goal	
Leaders/ Structures	
Participants	
Date(s)	
Location(s)	
Recruitment and Communication Plan	
Resources and Supplies	
Measurable Growth and Strength Data (Qualitative and Quantitative)	

Debrief