



Frontline Leaders:

A Training Program



San Jose RRC – September 2017

Frontline Leaders



Introduction

The California Teachers Association exists to protect and promote the well-being of its members; to improve the conditions of teaching and learning; to advance the cause of free, universal, and quality public education; to ensure that the human dignity and civil rights of all children and youth are protected; and to secure a more just, equitable, and democratic society.

-Our Mission Statement

The success – or failure – of our advocacy rests upon having a robust network of frontline leaders at every worksite. This training program will help your local association develop this network.

Everything you need to present these lessons at your monthly Representative Councils is included in this packet. We encourage you to rotate the facilitation of each lesson so that more people can gain from the experience of training other adults in the labor movement.

You are very welcome to adapt these lessons to your needs. Please share your improvements so that all of us can benefit. Thank you!

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Lesson 1: Collective Bargaining

Objectives

- Leaders will share a common, *member-centered* definition of “collective bargaining”

Materials

- NEA definition of collective bargaining (handouts or overhead)
- Butcher paper or online bulletin board like Padlet (optional)

Step 1 (5 minutes)

- Have participants work in pairs or triads to develop a definition of *collective bargaining*.
 - (Optional: Write the definition on butcher paper or on a website like Padlet.)
- Have several people share out their definitions.

Step 2 (5 minutes)

- Share a copy of the NEA definition of collective bargaining (see page 2)
- Ask the group:
 - How is this definition different from what we brainstormed?
 - What are the strengths of this definition?
 - How closely does this match what we already do here?
 - Outside of this room, do our members have a good understanding of collective bargaining?
 - What % of members *should* understand collective bargaining?
 - *Facilitator note: Aim for a high number!*

Step 3 (5 minutes)

- With their original partners, have participants respond to the following question:
 - What steps can each of us take to help more of our members to understand collective bargaining?

NEA's Definition of Collective Bargaining

Collective bargaining – a mutual exchange of positions followed by agreement – enables a group of employees with a “community of interest” to negotiate a binding written contract with an employer. It gives workers a voice in their workplace and ensures that they are treated fairly.

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Lesson 2: Members are the Union

Objectives

- Leaders (reps and executive board members) will develop a member assessment tool to be used in their local association
- Establish the expectation in the local that assessment is ongoing throughout the year and done each year

Materials

- Google Form (<http://bit.ly/2wNL00I>)
- Butcher paper/markers
- Hand-out for creating a Google Form

Step 1 (5 minutes)

- Discussion – following up from previous lesson: ask “do our members know what collective bargaining is? How do we know without assessing our members?”

Step 2 (10-15 minutes)

- Show the Google Form and Butcher Paper (for low tech) for Assessing Members as an example.
- Have Reps generate their own questions that would be specific to their local for what they want assessed.
- Connect with what is going on with negotiations for the collective bargaining agreement (below are examples of questions that might be used).
 - Does the member know about the collective bargaining agreement?
 - Are members receiving regular communications from the union, such as a newsletter or bargaining update?
 - Are members participating in actions: wearing shirt? E-mailing? Etc.,?
 - Generate two additional questions from the group.

Step 3 (Optional – 5 Minutes)*

- Ask: do they know who are members and potential members?
- Show the CTA 360 App
- Provide form for getting access to CTA 360

*For Locals wanting to use CTA 360

Member Assessment

File Edit View Insert Format Data Tools Add-ons Help

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	A	B	C	D	E	F
	Member/Potential Member Name	Member? (Y/N)	Personal E-mail on file? (Y/N)	Home Phone/Cell Phone on file (Y/N)	Does the Member know about the Collective Bargaining Agreement? (Y/N)	Is the Member receiving the CBA update? (Y/N)
1						
2	Susie Smith	Y	N	Y	Y	N
3	Rakeem Brown	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
4	Jesse James	N	Y	Y	Y	Y
5	Cecilia Gonzales	Y	Y	Y	N	N
6	Doreen Thomas	Y	N	Y	Y	Y
7	Toni Cantor	Y	Y	N	Y	N
8	Ruth Mangetti	N	N	N	N	N
9						
10						
11						

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Lesson 3: Owning Your Collective Bargaining Agreement

Objectives

- Leaders (reps and e-board members) will connect the term "collective" with the idea that all members should own the CBA.
- Establish that each part of the collective bargaining agreement is connected to supporting the work of members in their workspace and support students in their learning

Materials

- YOUR Evaluation Article in the Collective Bargaining Agreement (one copy for each participant)
- Butcher paper and markers

Step 1 (15 minutes)

- Ask: what do members know about their evaluation process?
 - Do members feel that it's an opportunity for growth or is it punitive?
 - Do members own the evaluation process or is it done to them?
- Scavenger hunt on the evaluation process:
 - Timelines
 - How are Objectives selected
 - Subject to Grievance process
 - Process for an unsatisfactory evaluation
 - Any other questions that may be unique to that local's evaluation system

Step 3 (5-10 minutes)

- Ask: What is the process members can use to improve the evaluation system?
- What would members like to see to improve the evaluation system?
- Is the evaluation system working for all members? How do you know? (Connect back to Lesson 2 – Members are the Union & Assessing)

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Lesson 4: Supporting Your CBA

Objectives

- Leaders will develop multiple strategies for Collective Bargaining Agreement enforcement

Materials

- Sufficient copies of Scenarios #1 and #2

Step 1 (3 minutes)

- Group questions:
 - Why do drivers observe the speed limit?
 - [Possible answers: Safety, fuel efficiency, speeding tickets]
 - If there was no enforcement of the speed limit – no more law enforcement – would some drivers behave differently?
 - Who enforces the rules of our collective bargaining agreement?
 - If there was no enforcement of the CBA – no one sticking up for it – would some admin behave differently?

Step 2 (7 minutes)

- Tell participants that a “grievance” is a process used by union members to fix a violation of the CBA. A grievance is a way to enforce the contract.
- Provide each participant a copy of “Scenario – Anytown Elementary School.” Ask them to read it and respond to the questions on the page.
- Discuss the results, especially question #6 (“What remedy do we seek?”). Tell participants that these six questions are the basic information needed for a grievance.

Step 3 (5 minutes)

- Tell participants that grievances are an effective tool for enforcing the CBA, but there are other approaches, too.
- In pairs/triads, ask participants to read “Scenario #2 - Grievance Unresolved” and brainstorm possible solutions.
- Discuss ideas as a group
 - *Facilitator note: Teachers are allowed to wear buttons during Open House. Would this motivate some administrators to settle a small grievance?*

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Scenario #1 – Anytown Elementary School

This morning at recess an altercation occurred between several students. It quickly escalated to involve many students and resulted in one child going to the hospital. Principal Jan Roberts, worried about student safety, just announced that recess is canceled for the rest of the week.

Article IV (Hours of Employment) provides all unit members with, “A daily break of not less than ten (10) minutes each morning.” Teachers alternate yard duty supervision during recess so that everyone has a chance to use the restroom. Without a morning recess, they will lose their break.

Grievance Investigation Questions

1. *What is the complaint?*
2. *Who is involved (include administrators and witnesses)?*
3. *Where & when did the incident occur?*
4. *What provisions of the CBA are impacted?*
5. *How has the unit member been affected?*
6. *What remedy do we seek?*

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Scenario #2 – Grievance Unresolved

Unfortunately, we have not resolved our grievance over the loss of morning break time at Anytown Elementary School. The final step in the grievance process is *binding arbitration* where a neutral third-party will decide the outcome. We have a strong chance of winning, but arbitration is never a sure thing. The anticipated cost of the arbitration will far exceed the Association's requested remedy (total back pay of less than \$1200).

Open House is right around the corner and everyone is anxious to wrap up this dispute before the end of the school year. We need to pressure the District to reach a fair settlement. What can we do?

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Lesson 5: Overcoming Objections

Objectives

- Leaders (reps and executive board members) will learn strategies to overcome objections from potential members to union membership

Materials

- Secrets of a Successful Organizer:
 - Two ears, one mouth article (pg.38) (handout)
 - Answering Tough Questions - <http://www.labornotes.org/sites/default/files/62AnsweringToughQuestions.pdf> or <http://bit.ly/2wNndO9>

Step 1 (5 minutes)

- Briefly go over the “Two ears, One mouth” article. Explain that in organizing, we need to do less talking and more listening. (Reps and e-board members can read article on their own – but explain purpose of it.)
- Ask the whole group to identify what are the most important issues regarding having unions & teachers/educators unions in particular. Chart responses.
- Ask the whole group to identify arguments used by those who are anti-union and/or inactive/less engaged members.

Step 2 (10 minutes)

- Provide participants with the “Affirm-Answer-Redirect” hand-out
- Have each small group develop a script they would use from the charted responses from the pro-union list to provide counter statements to the anti-union argument by using “Affirm-Answer-Redirect” handout.
- Each small group will then role-play their script.

Step 3 (5 minutes)

- Select one or two groups to role-play for the large group
- Ask: large group for feedback on role play



ANSWERING TOUGH QUESTIONS

On paper and in person, keep the focus on your message. When people come to you riled up over the spin from management, a good way to respond is “Affirm, Answer, Redirect.”

Affirm: Let them know you’re listening, you understand, and their feelings are valid. Your co-workers may be scared or upset by what they’ve heard. Don’t get mad at them. It’s management’s fault, not theirs.

I hear you, I don't want to lose money either!

Answer: Give a truthful, concise answer to the question. Don’t be evasive. If there’s a grain of truth to management’s message, say that up front.

Yes, it's true we wouldn't be paid during a strike. Going on strike is a serious decision that requires a majority vote—so we only do it if most people decide it's worth it.

If you don’t know the answer, don’t guess. Tell them you’ll find out and get back to them. Make sure you follow through, to maintain trust.

Redirect: But once you’ve answered the question, don’t get bogged down in too much back-and-forth about it. Instead, be ready with a question that brings the conversation back to your message and points out what management is trying to distract them from.

If they're so concerned about our pocketbooks all of a sudden, why haven't they given us a raise for two years?

Remind your co-workers of the issues that inspired them to organize in the first place. Ask whether that’s changed. Steer the conversation back to the plan to win, and the next steps.





TWO EARS, ONE MOUTH

Organizing involves a lot more listening than talking. Try the 80/20 rule—listen 80 percent of the time, talk 20 percent. Or at least get your share down to a third: you have two ears and one mouth, so use them proportionately.

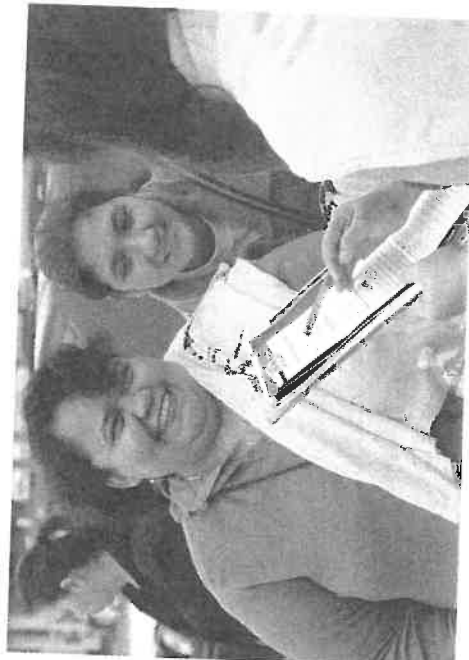
This can be hard, especially when you're excited, or when you have information that others lack. But listening is crucial if you're going to find out what makes someone tick.

Consider your own experience. How does it feel to be talked at by someone who only seems interested in the sound of her own voice? Or when a friend is so wrapped up in his own concerns that you can't get a word in edgewise?

When you got a chance to say what was on your mind, weren't you a lot more invested in the conversation and whatever came after it?

"You have to listen," says Maria Martínez, who was the chief steward in the meatpacking plant you read about in Lesson 1, where members organized against harassment. "It's really important to let people let out their feelings and for them to see that someone cares about what they have to say."

When your co-workers tell you what they care about, remember it.



UFCW Local 400 (CC BY 2.0) bit.ly/1oNT5dN

"Then you can ask them, 'What do you think we should do about it?' You can say, 'I think we should do this.' But I've learned it's more effective when the ideas come out of them."

To get the other person talking, ask open-ended questions. For example: "What would you like to see in the next contract?" Don't assume you already know the answer. Avoid questions that will probably get you a simple yes or no, such as: "Would you like a raise in the next contract?"

When your co-workers tell you what they care about, remember it. Later on, when you're asking them to take some kind of action, your success will depend on showing how that action relates to the issues that matter to them.



HOW TO BE A GOOD LISTENER

- **Avoid distractions.** Look the other person in the eye, and put your phone away.
- **Slow down.** Our brains process thoughts four times faster than spoken words. It's easy to skip ahead in a conversation, using your assumptions to fill in the gaps and plan your response. Resist this urge. Focus on what is actually being said.
- **Don't interrupt.** Take the time to hear the full story.
- **Keep an open mind.** Don't assume you already know what someone cares about. People will surprise you.
- **Don't fish.** Avoid leading questions like "Don't you agree that..."
- **Practice empathy.** Sometimes people need to let off steam. Don't discourage them. Your immediate task is to hear what they have to say, not to judge.
- **Show that you hear what they're saying.** React, ask follow-up questions, and repeat back what you understood. If you don't understand, ask.

- **Find common ground.** You don't have to agree with every point, but look for areas of agreement, and acknowledge where you differ.
- **Don't feel you need to sell something.** An organizer is not a salesperson. You're genuinely looking to learn the other person's point of view and create something new together.



Download this at
labornotes.org/secrets

Adapted from "Effective Listening"
 by David Kameron, *Steward Update*
Newsletter, Union Communication Services

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Lesson 6: Time Management

Objectives

- Leaders will learn to prioritize

Materials

- Time Management Scenario

Step 1 (5 minutes)

- Have participants sit in small groups
- Ask participants to read “Time Management Scenario” and respond to the prompt individually

Step 2 (5 minutes)

- Ask participants to then discuss ideas in small groups and see if a common group answer emerges

Step 3 (5 minutes)

- Share this suggested answer:
 - 1st: LaNiece – she is an influential person on campus and appears to be a non-member due to the Association’s benign neglect, not hostility to unions. Win over her support and the campus will follow.
 - 2nd: Raul – likely a blank slate who was not present for past union victories
 - 3rd: Betty – somewhat isolated from her peers
 - 4th: Pat – already a supporter & you’re going to see her all the time anyway
 - 5th Randall – unlikely you will change his mind anytime soon

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Scenario – Time Management

Your Association is preparing for negotiations next month. Your role as a Site Representative is to generate more interest and support for negotiations. As a busy educator, though, you have to prioritize who you will speak with in person.

Rank the following people in order of priority (first to last) and be prepared to explain your rationale.

Pat – Pat has taught at your school for 16 years. She has always belonged to the union, and usually stays after the staff meeting for the 10 minute union meeting. As your grade level partner, she does her share of the work and likes to “go with the flow.”

Raul – Raul is a first-year teacher. He is friendly towards his colleagues and very enthusiastic about his students.

LaNiece – LaNiece has worked at your school for about 4 years. You don’t know why but she has not joined the union. She is well-regarded as the faculty representative to the Parent-Teacher Club. She is Raul’s BTSA mentor.

Randall – Randall is the world’s best teacher... according to Randall. He’s frustrated that the union contract holds him back. He’d like to teach larger classes in exchange for more pay. He believes the contract props up mediocre teachers.

Betty – Betty has taught at your school for 31 years. She doesn’t have much use for Common Core – and the principal is intimidated by her – so she mostly does her own thing. Her students have painted over half of the murals on campus.

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Additional Resources

- **Additional Trainings**
Local, regional and statewide training opportunities occur regularly. Check with your CTA support staff or Service Center Council.
- ***Secrets of a Successful Organizer*** by Labor Notes
Learn how to identify key issues, inspire your co-workers and build campaigns. This is a great resource for creating more “mini-lessons” for your Representative Council.
- ***No Shortcuts: Organizing for Power in the New Gilded Age*** by Jane McAlevey
While much of the labor movement sputters, this book examines specific unions that have found a way forward.