

Leader, Mobilizer, or Activist Identification

Based on what's in the scenario only:

Discuss the following in your small groups. Be prepared to defend your answers. There are correct and incorrect answers to these questions.

1. Who do you identify as the Leader who has moved people the most? Why?
2. Who is the mobilizer – actively working on the behalf of the union and carrying out actions that get others involved? Why?
3. Who is an activist – a pro-union supporter and may take action if asked? Why?
4. The BIG discussion - In what order should you be building relationships with your choices?

Scenario: High School Union Representation

You work for a union representing Jane McAlevey Memorial High School with about 1500 students and a faculty of over 100 teachers spread across various departments. Recently, the school has faced significant challenges due to budget cuts, leading to staff layoffs, increased class sizes, and stagnated salary increases that have barely kept up with inflation. The faculty is unhappy with their current contract settlement, and there has been a notable turnover in teaching staff this year, the highest in recent memory. With a new contract negotiation set to begin in four months, you have just been assigned to McAlevey High School and its membership. Your goal is to strengthen the union before these critical negotiations.

You meet with the outgoing union representative, who has left to pursue a position in another school district. Here's what you learn about potential leaders and influential figures among the faculty:

Sarah Johnson is a Social Studies teacher who has been at the school for eight years. She is well-liked by her colleagues, known for her engaging teaching style and her ability to connect with students. Sarah is active on social media, often sharing and promoting union events and initiatives. She hosts monthly meet-ups for teachers to discuss issues and organize social events, fostering a sense of community among the staff. Sarah also volunteers with community organizations and proudly wears her union pin at school events.

Mark Thompson is a Science teacher and head of the department, having worked at the school for over ten years. While he has never been openly supportive of the union, believing unions are unnecessary for educators, he recently showed a willingness to engage with colleagues on governance matters after being appointed by the administration to a curriculum advisory board. When the teachers learned about proposed changes to the science curriculum that conflicted with internal governance processes, Mark took initiative to coordinate a meeting. He

successfully gathered teachers' concerns and organized a petition which led to the administration shelving the controversial changes.

Linda Chen is a Math teacher who has been at the school for 12 years. She is a staunch union supporter and has served as a union representative in the past. Linda frequently mentors new teachers and offers guidance on navigating union issues. When Mark organized the meeting regarding the curriculum changes, Linda was key in rallying support among faculty, encouraging them to voice their opinions and ensuring significant attendance at the meeting.

Chris Patel is an English teacher who has been at the school for three years. Inspired by Linda, Chris has been an active member of the union, motivated to take part in various initiatives to strengthen faculty support. He often discusses union-related topics in his classes and encourages colleagues to get involved, although he prefers to stay behind the scenes rather than take on formal leadership roles.

Emily Rivera is the school's Art teacher, in her fourth year at the high school. Known for her creativity and ability to inspire her students, she supports union efforts but finds herself preoccupied with her own projects, leaving her little time to engage with broader faculty concerns. While she's pro-union and participated in the petition for the curriculum changes, she feels that others should play more active roles in organizing the faculty.

Things to Consider When You are Planning to Run a Campaign

Assessing Your Current Worksites:

1. How many people have been identified as trusted and respected by a number of people in the worksite/ local? (Leaders connect mobilizers into structures)
2. How many people are actively working in support of the union and have a group of folks that they influence? (Mobilizers get activists to show up and act)
3. How many people are ready to take pro-union action? (Activists see their relationship with the union as a participatory one)