

Our Shared Organizing Goals

Create a shared understanding of crisis and urgency

Member communication and engagement at center of everything

Make internal organizing a priority activity for all units in the local

Provide the resources to bargain the best possible contracts

Change priorities to spend more time on organizing and legislative activities.

Increase capacity to win for our members and our community

CWA

Become a Member:
tinyurl.com/UCWSignup

email: fairness@ucw-cwa.org
website: ucwtn.org

I Am My Sibling's Keeper: Why & How to Organize

A Communication Workers of America Zine

Special thanks to Gail Tyree, Enida Shuku, Dana Smith and other CWA leaders for sharing their expertise (which has been consolidated by Mia Romano and Emile Bowman, into this zine)

Please use it, share it, and organize!

WHAT IS LABOR ORGANIZING?

a member-led effort to advance common interests of workers - wages, benefits, working conditions, safety, etc. • it is talking to co-workers.

Why Do We Organize???

Build Worker Power!

earn more \$\$
+ benefits

Educate +
Learn
together

it's the ONLY right
workers in TN have

fight against
anti-worker legislation

???

What Are Our Goals?

organizing
should be our priority

Shared understanding
of crisis + urgency

member communication
+ engagement

pro-union



Organizing is not easy, it takes a lot of commitment, dedication, systematic work, empathy, and the belief that collectively we can bring upon change plus be able to show that to our members and ask them to play a role in building their union. This is where you start.



Service vs Organizing

Unions use an Organizing Model to win. NOT service model. The union does not DO things for you in exchange for dues.

Melanie Barron
@organizesouth

"The union" is an organization you build with your coworkers, not a service you receive. Say it again. And again. And again.

**WE ARE
STRONGER
TOGETHER!**



Be an activist! instead of an ally

Activists are
ACTIVE in the
cause

An ally is associated with another by some common purpose or idea. But it is passive-no action is required

It's like a gym membership—
it doesn't work to just pay the fee.

You have to show up and do the work!

Rank and File members have the same role as 'leaders'.

- Take collective action!
- Grow union power!
- Bring members into the solution!
- Share responsibility!

we
all:

4 Keys to a successful organizing program

organizing is Asking

Positive Message

organizing Committee

Systematic Use of Lists

Organizing is ASKING

People join the union because they are individually approached and asked to join. Make a direct ask! Think of all the people in a job unit interested but afraid to reach out – we do them a disservice in not asking them to join!

Types of ASKS:

- to join
- to take notes at a meeting
- to update lists
- to come to a meeting
- to make flyers
- to ask others to join or attend



Importance of Listening



★ Don't tell them what you think they want to hear or why you think they may be angry

Ask open-ended questions!

★ 70% listening, 30% talking. Make it about THEM and their issues

★ Then, in listening, we can identify key issues to agitate with- coming together is the solution!

★ Hear their issues and tie them to the vision and mission in organizing together!

Organizing Conversations

6 steps

Step 1:

Connect

Introduce yourself, why you're there, build a rapport. Draw out their values.

How long have you worked here?
What made you want to become a teacher?



Step 2:

Issues : Agitation

Engage their values (what's important to them); highlight the contradiction between their values and their reality. Find out what they wish was different about their work by asking open-ended questions, agitate about the way things are now, have them acknowledge that things need to change, and raise their expectations for how work could be!

If you could change three things about your job tomorrow, what would you change?

Do others in your unit have this issue?

Do you think it's fair that you <<issue>>?



Step 3:

Vision

Get them to BELIEVE. Present a vision for change. Tell them briefly why you joined UCW and give them the plan for changing the issues they brought up- be specific.

One person asking alone has little power. If you do nothing, then nothing changes. If you join together with your coworkers, you can win!



Step 4: ASK

Frame the choice and call the question.

"Are you ready to stand with your coworkers?"



Then wait, in silence, as they think and answer! Don't fill the silence.

* If they give reasons why they can't or won't join, see page 7!

Step 5:

Inoculation

ONLY AFTER THEY SAY YES/JOIN.

Help them prepare for what misinformation they might hear from the administration so they won't be caught off guard.

What do you think the boss will say? That's right, your boss doesn't want you to have a voice in your workplace.



Step 6:

Next Steps

Get a clear and specific commitment for what they'll do next.

Which three of your coworkers can you talk to by next week?

When is a good time to follow up on how that went?





Positive Messaging



Important to build a vision that is strong and positive!
Turn their negativity and complaints into positive action!

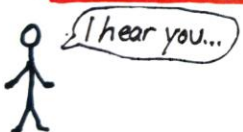
- Use messaging about standing stronger together- don't use guilt -
- Stick to the idea of group action compared to service/benefits -
- Understand and overcome objections- don't stay on the negative! -

"We have power in numbers!"

"Stand with your coworkers for POSITIVE change!"

Redirecting Objections

1. Empathize with them



2. Answer

Answer questions or objections briefly and honestly

3. REDIRECT!

Go back to their agitation, what is important to them (Their reason for objecting is probably their reason FOR joining!)

4. Ask again!

Ask them again to join. Or make a different ask to keep them involved

Don't let them stay stuck in the muck - take their negative views and show them a vision and solution through organizing with co-workers!

Common Objections

I can't afford dues.

I don't have time to commit.

Joining won't do anything.

I could get in trouble with my supervisor.

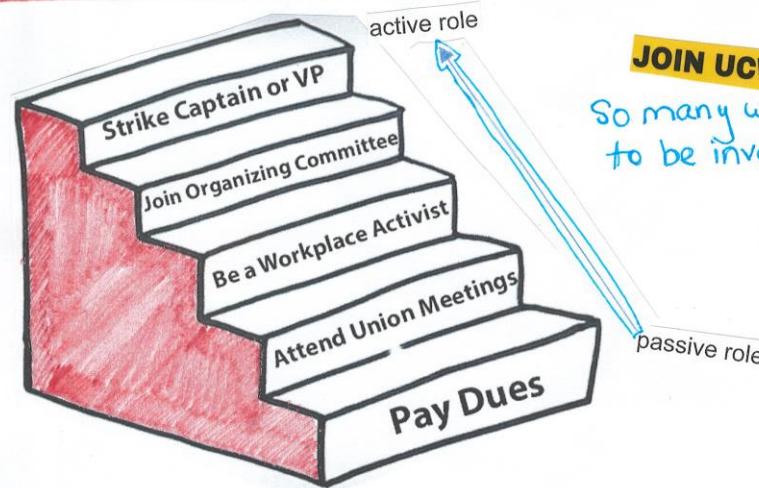
DEVELOP LEADERS

We need a **Unified** + engaged membership if we are to have the power to defeat anti-worker legislation and accomplish gains in our contracts.

privatization, outsourcing, right to work laws, attacks on dues deduction, banning collective bargaining, etc...

Invite your co-workers to Step Up ;)
their involvement, & build the union!

POWER IN UNITY



JOIN UCW

So many ways to be involved!

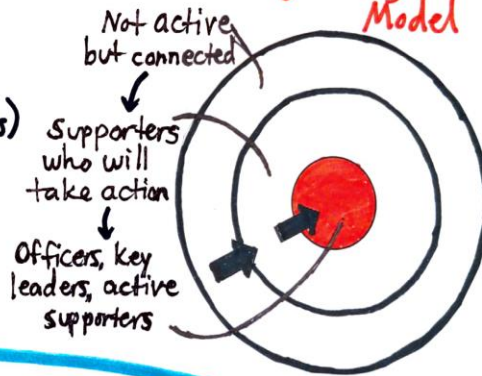
ORGANIZING COMMITTEES

- Committed activists in the workplace who meet regularly
- Focused on organizing- find and develop leaders, meet with targets, recruit
- Meetings have a set agenda and time

An OC Agenda:

- introductions, overview
- report on work since last meeting (sign-ups, assessments)
- update charts or lists
- plans for upcoming activities or conversations
- schedule next meeting

Bull's-Eye Organizing Model



Develop Leaders & Activists

Leaders are in all units - chart and find them!

A leader can MOVE people in the workplace (for or against our causes)

We need leaders - train them in the OC

Move supporters into activists and leaders

Ask people to do things to build their union

Developing activists is a PRIORITY of the OC- identify and recruit

Bring in people to be successful organizers and move UCW forward

Sometimes they say

I'm not a leader! I'm just...

They think they're not the person for the job but **THEY ARE!**

YOU have to make the **ASK!**

Systematic use of lists & assessment:



- Collect accurate contact information to connect with your co-workers
- Map your workplace
Mapping is the process of obtaining accurate and relevant information about the workforce in a systematic way. If done properly it can form the basis of most successful union activity, including recruiting, communications, developing activists and campaigning around issues!
- Track your Conversations and keep detailed notes!!!!
organize your list in a systematic way that makes sense for you- by physical location, shift time, relationships, etc.

Tools to chart and track conversations:

ActionBuilder.org: ask your organizer about access and training!

Google Sheets/Excel form (example below)

recommend this one!

After **Every** conversation, make assessments!

Rank the co-worker on the following scale:

1: In the union or expressing interest in joining the union.

2: some interest in joining/not against the union/ isn't interested right now

3: not interested in joining. Could even be hostile.

example chart

Name	Position and Unit	Campus Address	Rank	Conversation Notes
Justine Jones	Custodian, Admin Building	Herzog Building	1	new member. committed to meeting
Cara Chen	Business officer 1, Math Dept	423 Smith	3	anti-union
Andre Anderson	Grad Student, Philosophy	230 Dunn	2	Follow up on 8/19