

HOW TO HAVE AN



ORGANIZING CONVERSATION

An organizing conversation is different from other conversations. It ends with an ask for your coworker—be it to sign a union card or come to a meeting. It's a structured conversation that moves coworkers to action, and gets them to realize:

- They care about a problem.
- There is a decision maker who has the power to fix the problem.
- The decision maker won't fix it until someone pushes them to.
- If your coworker wants the problem fixed, the answer is collective action.

AHUY is the structure we use for organizing conversations.

**AHUY:
ASK/AGITATE
HOPE
URGENCY
YOU**

Ask/Agitate: Ask lots of questions to learn and listen. If you could wave a wand and change your workplace, what would you change? Do you think the company can afford to pay us more? What do you think it will take to win it?

Hope: We have a plan and we can win. Here are the steps we are taking to win our union:

- **WHEN 30%** of our coworkers sign union cards, we go public.
- **WHEN 50%** of our coworkers sign union cards, we rally.
- **WHEN 70%** of our coworkers sign union cards, we demand recognition and file for an election.

Urgency: We are organizing to win a contract, a written guarantee of our wages, benefits and working conditions. You see auto workers standing up across the country. The time is now, we have the power and the momentum.

You: Will you Stand Up for XYZ issue and our union? Will you Stand UP with me and sign this card? Who else can you talk with in your department and shift?

RESPONDING TO YEAH-BUTS...

When we motivate our coworkers to take action on issues they care about, concerns will come up that we help them work through. We call these concerns Yeah-Buts. There are three kinds - Fear, Uncertainty, Doubt or FUD - and they're often driven by false information from the boss. Here are three examples:

FEAR: I'm afraid the plant will close.

UNCERTAINTY: Can we lose what we already have?

DIVISION: Our contract will be dictated by Detroit.

We help our coworkers overcome the Yeah-Buts through a method known as **AFFIRM, ANSWER, REDIRECT**. Here's how it works:

AFFIRM

Validate their concern. "I hear you. I don't want to lose what we have. I want to win more, too."

ANSWER

Give a truthful, concise answer. Don't be evasive.

"When we win our union, the company cannot legally make our working conditions worse while we're bargaining for our contract."

REDIRECT

Bring it back to the issue and the plan to change it.

"Winning our union is how we win more. When we join together in the union, we have the power to make change for the better."

TIPS FOR ONE-ON-ONE

CONVERSATIONS:

Be confident: Taking collective action to improve your workplace is something to be proud of!

Be curious: Try to get to know your coworkers and learn about their work lives. Successful organizing is based on building relationships.

Be comfortable being uncomfortable: There will be some discomfort in moving your coworkers to action. Don't shy away from it, embrace it, and you'll get more comfortable with every conversation you have.

Leave long pauses to give your coworker a chance to talk.

Make a follow-up plan: When someone commits to a task, give a date and time that you'll check in with them to see how it went.

