

TOOLS

Listen Up! Improve One-on-One Listening Skills

Listening can be the best practice for one-on-one organizing conversations. Use good eye contact and some of the questions below to practice asking more open-ended questions, keeping the conversation going and learning more about others!



ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Yes/no questions won't get you very far if you are trying to get a conversation started.

- How long have you worked here?
- What do you do?
- How have things changed since you started working here?
- What changes would you like to see?
- What do you think is most important for us to work for and protect through our union?
- What do you think about ___?

The 70/30 Rule

Great things happen when the organizer spends most of the conversation listening to the person they are talking to.

Check yourself and make sure you are listening and asking questions 70% of the time and not talking more than 30% of the time.

ASK FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Don't talk to people like you are checking off boxes on a survey. Asking relevant follow-up questions shows you are listening.

- Why do you say that?
- Really! What do you mean by that?
- Tell me more about that.
- What happened after that?
- What did you do about that?
- Why do you think that is?
- How did that make you feel?
- What do you think should happen instead?
- How has that affected you and your family?

The Truth

Be careful about getting so caught up in needing to convince someone that you don't really get to know them. If you do that, you won't walk away with the truth about what really matters to them and what they think about organizing a union.

ASK WHY

Ask questions (instead of lecturing) about how we can make a difference by forming a union and what impact it will have.

- Why do you think the boss opposes workers organizing a union?
- Have you ever tried to do something about that (an issue or concern)?
- Do you think there's a difference between you going to HR and trying to solve that on your own versus if all of us together said it was a priority? Why?
- Why do you think the boss opposes workers organizing a union?
- Has anybody asked you to join before? What did you say? Why?
- What do you think your boss will say about us organizing a union?