

TIPS

Tips for Effective Communication

Successful organizing requires good communication. What we say will be challenged by people who don't want us to form a union. Therefore, in every aspect of an organizing drive, from conversations among co-workers to outreach to the community, how we frame and deliver our message is crucial to winning.

✓ WRITE IT DOWN

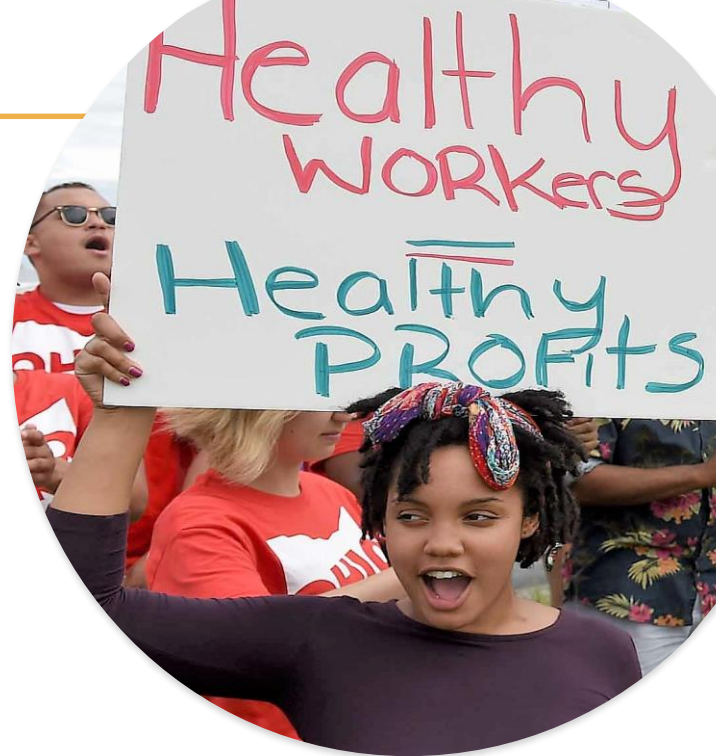
Putting pen to paper forces us to think about the words we are using. Who are we trying to reach? How will this sound to others? Write it down to be clear and help the team be consistent.

✓ BE POSITIVE

Organizing campaigns almost always identify problems or things people want to change. Our message should focus on how things *should* be. What are we building and how will it make a difference?

✓ MOVE THE MIDDLE

Don't just "preach to the choir." Consider the perspective of someone who has *not* made up their mind. These are people who are not sure change is possible, have questions about how our union will work, or who may be fearful because of a negative employer campaign. Make an outreach plan for places where a positive union message needs to be heard the most.



A Message:

- helps us say what we are trying to accomplish and what difference it will make; and
- helps sort through the noise of misleading information and half-truths that come out during a campaign, helping people focus on what they care about.

✓ **EMPHASIZE ONE-ON-ONE CONTACTS**

The best method of delivering the positive union message is through one-on-one conversations. Use leaflets and social media to amplify face-to-face communications, not to substitute for them.

✓ **FACES OUT FRONT**

This is our union. The most effective print materials should include photos and testimonial quotes from our co-workers, not experts or union officials.

✓ **DON'T 'SELL' THE UNION**

Don't promote the union as a service or product, such as, "Here's what the union will do for you." That only validates the boss's false claim that the union is an outside organization. Use language to tell it like it is: "We are organizing *our* union to win respect and a say at work."

✓ **BE CONSISTENT**

An effective message is the clear, convincing and consistently repeated reason why we want to form a union. It is the basis for every house call, leaflet and worksite conversation, and the guide for all communications.

**Committee Leaders are
the Key to Success**

The Organizing Committee is central to any communications plan. Committee members:

- reinforce that the union is not an outside organization;
- keep the message consistent and grounded;
- reach out one on one to talk with co-workers; and
- tell their story and inspire others.