



EXERCISE: PRACTICE THE ORGANIZING CONVERSATION

It can feel awkward at first, encouraging your co-workers to get mad and challenging them to face their fears. But like anything, it gets easier with practice.

If you're reading this in a workshop or as a group, pair up and practice the conversation. Take turns playing the role of organizer. If you're reading this on your own, ask an experienced organizer to be your partner, or recruit a friend or family member to try it out.

REMEMBER THE STEPS

Ask about the other person's real job, whatever it is. Pretend you work there too, but you don't know much yet—maybe you're new. Have him give you a plausible setting for the conversation, such as the lunchroom. Ask him to do his best to answer your questions honestly, as if this were for real.

Start with **issues**. Ask as many questions as you can think of, to find out what he loves and hates about the work, what's changed over time, what he would fix if he had a magic wand. Don't rush.

When you think you've zeroed in on the issue he cares about most, move into **agitation** and **laying the blame**. See if you can get him to say out loud that he's ready to do something to solve this problem, and to name who's responsible.

Move into a **plan to win**, and inspire him with the idea of strength in numbers. Ask him to **commit** to a specific action. Do some **inoculation** about the risks and ask him to recommit. Set a **follow-up plan**, when you will be back in touch.

HOW DID IT GO?

Afterwards, debrief with your partner. Find out how he felt about the conversation.

- Did you correctly identify his top-priority issue?
- What else could you have asked about?
- What parts of the conversation really made him think?
- What parts did he enjoy?
- If he agreed to take the action, why did he decide to do it?
- If he didn't, what could have made him reconsider?

