



ANSWERING TOUGH QUESTIONS

On paper and in person, keep the focus on your message. When people come to you riled up over the spin from management, a good way to respond is “Affirm, Answer, Redirect.”

Affirm:

Let them know you’re listening, you understand, and their feelings are valid. Your co-workers may be scared or upset by what they’ve heard. Don’t get mad at them. It’s management’s fault, not theirs.

I hear you, I don't want to lose money either!

Answer:

Give a truthful, concise answer to the question. Don’t be evasive. If there’s a grain of truth to management’s message, say that up front.

Yes, it's true we wouldn't be paid during a strike. Going on strike is a serious decision that requires a majority vote—so we only do it if most people decide it's worth it.

If you don’t know the answer, don’t guess. Tell them you’ll find out and get back to them. Make sure you follow through, to maintain trust.

Redirect:

But once you’ve answered the question, don’t get bogged down in too much back-and-forth about it. Instead, be ready with a question that brings the conversation back to your message and points out what management is trying to distract them from.

If they're so concerned about our pocketbooks all of a sudden, why haven't they given us a raise for two years?

Remind your co-workers of the issues that inspired them to organize in the first place. Ask whether that’s changed. Steer the conversation back to the plan to win, and the next steps.

