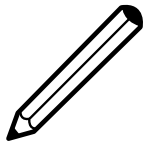




SECRETS OF A SUCCESSFUL ORGANIZER

ASSEMBLING YOUR DREAM TEAM



EXERCISE: WHY WE NEED LEADERS TO ORGANIZE

Imagine a scenario where there is an urgent need to take on a fight of some kind. For instance, suppose a well-loved leader in your workplace has been fired, and you're planning a sticker day to demand she be rehired. You have 24 hours to get the word out to everybody and get the sticker into everyone's hands:

Use the following questions to make a plan for your sticker day.

- **Total number of people** you want wearing the sticker: _____
- **How many departments?** Can you cover them all? Who moves around the worksite and can reach other departments?
- **How many shifts** are there? Who can get stickers to workers on each shift?
- **Where's the best place** to reach people before they start work? Where are all the entrances workers use?
- Are there groups of workers who **don't speak the same language?** Who can reach them?
- Can you get a sticker onto **everyone** by yourself, or with your current group of stewards?

If not, that's why we need to map and chart our workplace, then recruit enough leaders to reach every worker!





EXERCISE: IDENTIFYING LEADERS

Background:

You are a steward at the hotel where you work and are trying to restart a workplace committee. The committee used to have 10 members, but hasn't been meeting for a while.

You work in the banquet department and don't know many people in housekeeping. You would like to recruit some leaders from the housekeeping department to the committee.

Instructions:

Read the profiles of the contacts you make and the information they share with you. You have 10 minutes to determine who you think you want to recruit as a leader. Develop consensus in your group about who are the best prospects to recruit. Rate the three best prospects (1 = the best).

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Who is the worst possible choice to build the union? _____

Organizing is about making choices!

Contact 1 Brenda Hammond

Time at hotel: 9 years

Issues: She slipped on the floor and hurt her back, but the company cheated on her workers' comp claim.

I don't know who people look up to. It's not me. Nobody cares how I feel. I just organize the showers and birthday parties.

Sure, I have a list of everyone's numbers. I don't mind sharing it with you.

I'm just waiting for a better job to come along, then I'm leaving. I can't afford to make it look like I'm making trouble.



You should talk to Francis Powers. She's a real leader, although she has some screwy ideas.

Sally Rivera is a real fighter, but sometimes she just fights for herself. Sally is one of the younger workers. She likes to party a lot. I really respect Paula Harris.



Contact 2 Sally Rivera

Time at hotel: 4 years

Issues: The pace is too fast in housekeeping and workers have no voice.

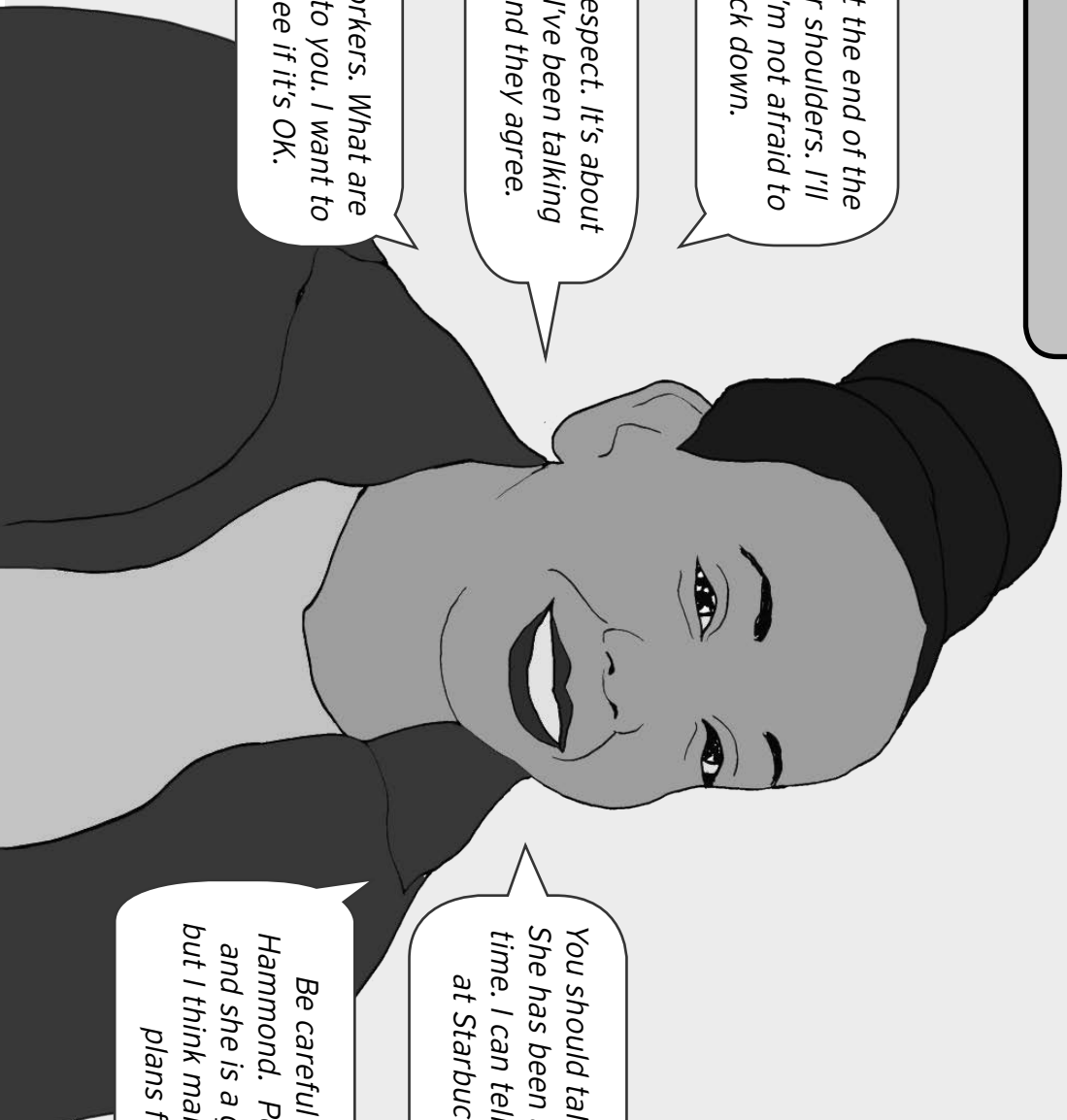
I told my boss I'm exhausted at the end of the day and she just shrugged her shoulders. I'll tell you one thing, I'm fed up. I'm not afraid to speak up and I won't back down.

We need power and we need respect. It's about time someone listened to us. I've been talking to some of my co-workers and they agree.

I mainly talk to the younger workers. What are their names? Let me get back to you. I want to check with them first and see if it's OK.

You should talk to Evie Winters. She has been around for a long time. I can tell her to meet you at Starbucks after work.

Be careful of Brenda Hammond. People like her and she is a good worker, but I think management has plans for her.



Contact 3 Eve Winters

Time at hotel: 12 years

Issues: The workload is too high.

They promised me a supervisor's job. I'm not getting involved until I know if I am going to get my promotion.

I'm not saying anything or doing anything until then. If it goes to one of their pets, I'll be mad as hell.

Brenda Hammond is a great worker, but a little shy. Powers is a great gal. A little nutty, but people follow her.

The younger women seem to stick together. They party a lot and Sally Rivera is their ringleader.

Everyone respects Paula Harris. She was employee of the year last year. You should see Helen Rockwell. She speaks her mind.



Contact 4 Francis Powers

Time at hotel: 8 years
Issues: Pace of work

We're just victims here. The managers only care about getting the most work done with the fewest amount of workers.

Some of these younger folks don't care either. They only care about having fun. Half the time I don't even know what they are talking about. Cindy Thomas is the one young person I do like. She is a real firecracker.

I really don't like Paula Harris, but I do respect her. Rockwell is a loudmouth just like Mary Smith.

Don't bother talking to any of the young workers. They don't take anything seriously.

Brenda Hammond and Evie Winters would be good leaders. Brenda got the shaft when she slipped and hurt her back. They made her come to work all doped up on pain medication!



Contact 5 Cindy Thomas

Time at hotel: 3 months

Issues: Disrespect from managers.

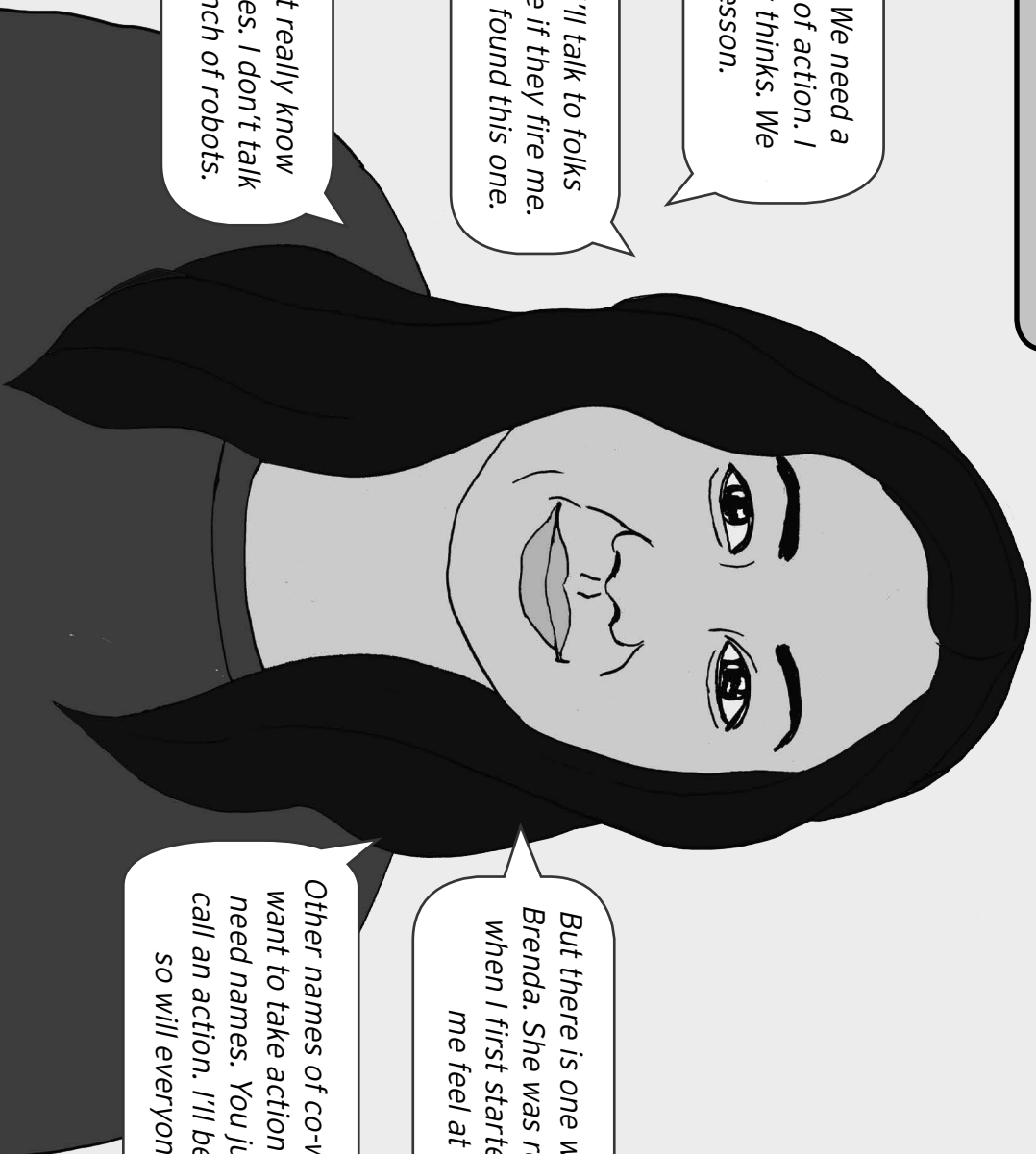
We need to shake things up. We need a work stoppage or some sort of action. I don't care what my manager thinks. We need to teach them a lesson.

Just give me the word and I'll talk to folks about walking out. I don't care if they fire me. I was looking for a job when I found this one.

Who would I talk to? Well, I don't really know their names, I just know their faces. I don't talk to them much. They are all a bunch of robots.

But there is one woman named Brenda. She was real nice to me when I first started. She made me feel at home.

Other names of co-workers who want to take action? You don't need names. You just need to call an action. I'll be there and so will everyone else.

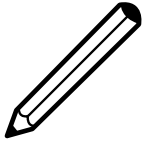




QUALITIES OF A GOOD ORGANIZER

- Effective organizers are **good at their jobs and respected** by the people they work with.
- They have the **trust of their co-workers**. Their opinions carry weight. When they offer advice, people listen.
- The best organizers are motivated by a **strong sense of justice** and clear principles.
- They're **responsible, honest, and compassionate**.
- They're confident, even **courageous**.
- Organizers must be **good listeners**. They know you don't have to be the most vocal to have the biggest impact.
- They **bring people together**, welcoming new co-workers on the job and looking for ways to involve every member.
- Organizers **move people to collective action**. They don't just solve problems alone—they equip their co-workers to solve problems together.
- They put the **interests of the group first**, ahead of their individual concerns.
- They don't operate as lone rangers. They **respect group decisions**.
- Good organizers are **knowledgeable about their contract**, but not afraid to admit when they don't know the answer.
- They can stay **cool under pressure** and handle stress and conflict.
- They're willing to **stand up to management**—and they can inspire others to stand up for themselves as well.

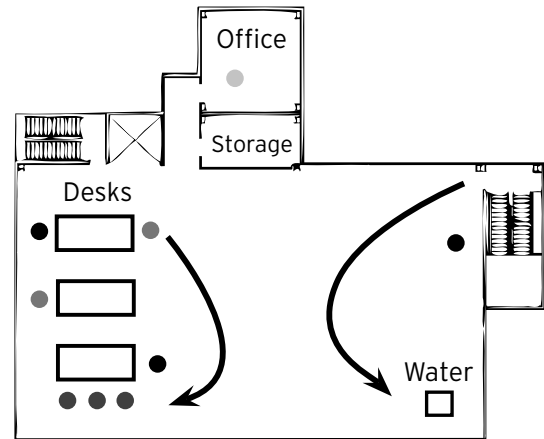




EXERCISE: MAP YOUR WORKPLACE

You will need:

- Butcher paper
- Color markers
- Sticky dots



- Union activist
- Supervisor
- Not yet involved

Start with the physical space. First, use a flipchart or large sheet of paper and a black marker to outline the area or building, showing entrances, exits, and windows. Label the offices, production lines, storage areas, shipping and receiving docks, lunchrooms, and bathrooms.

Add details such as machines, desks, and water coolers. If the building is large, make maps of different areas. Be sure the map is large enough to show the information clearly.

Add motion. Draw the flow of work or production, and/or the paths that different people take through the space regularly, in different colors.

Are there spots where the flow of work tends to get bottlenecked? These could be important pressure points. Who works there?

Are there places where people congregate, like the break room or the proverbial water cooler? These could be good places for outreach conversations, or group gatherings.

Add all the people. Sticky dots work well to represent workers. You might use different colors to indicate supervisors, union activists, various jobs, or shifts. Mark the dots with initials or names.

CAN YOU GET A LIST?

It's best to work from a list of all employees in your workplace or department (whatever you're mapping). Otherwise it's surprisingly easy to forget people, especially those you don't work closely with, part-timers, or those with unique jobs.

Maybe you can get this list from your union office, especially if you're a steward. If not, is there a list at work you can discreetly copy or take a picture of? The boss may distribute an emergency phone list, or post a schedule. Be resourceful.

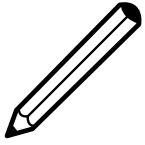




TEN QUESTIONS TO ASK WHEN MAPPING YOUR WORKPLACE

1. **Grapevines.** What paths do people travel? Who can walk freely through the whole workplace? How does news travel?
2. **Bottlenecks.** Are there spots where the flow of work gets bottlenecked? These could be important pressure points. Who works there?
3. **Work groups.** What work groups can we identify on this map? Consider the factors that determine who works together in your workplace, such as job, work area, and shift.
4. **Relationships.** Which work groups have contact with each other through their jobs? Which groups are hard to reach?
5. **Social groups.** What social groups can we identify on this map? For instance, who carpools together? Who speaks the same language? Who socializes at lunch or outside work? Who's related? Who are all the smokers?
6. **Group concerns.** For each work or social group, how does this group relate to management? What are the biggest problems affecting this group?
7. **Water coolers.** Where do people congregate? These could be good places for outreach conversations, or group gatherings.
8. **Broom closets.** Where can you talk out of sight of the boss?
9. **Hangouts.** Where do people go after work?
10. **As time goes by.** What on this map changes at different times of day, and at night if your workplace has night workers? How about on the weekends? Different seasons of the year?

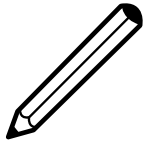




EXERCISE: DRAW YOUR OWN MAP

Refer to the handouts *Map Your Workplace* and *Ten Questions to Ask When Mapping Your Workplace*. Draw your own workplace map in the space below.





EXERCISE: MAKE A CHART, TOO

After making a physical map of your workplace, you can keep track of the essential information in a chart. Charts are easy to update and help you monitor your organizing progress and see where the gaps are.

Keep it simple. Create a spreadsheet, using a computer program such as Excel or Google Sheets. Enter one row for each worker, even people you don't have much information about. Make a column for each bit of information you want to track, such as:

- First name
- Last name
- Cell phone
- Email address
- Job title
- Work area
- Shift
- Date of hire
- Wage tier
- Language
- Top issue
- Union member?
- Steward?
- Contract action team member?
- Completed bargaining survey?
- Attended training on X issue?
- Attended rally on Y date?
- Signed up or recruited a new member?

Keep it up to date. Charts are only as useful as they are accurate. Print out a copy of your chart to carry around with you. Continually update it, and enlist co-workers to help. This can include filling in gaps in contact information, adding people who are missing from your list, and removing those who have quit, gone on leave, or changed assignments.

Make a wall chart. Also make a big version of your chart to display on the wall, with all the names grouped by work area, job, and shift. Color-code it to show your organizing progress, so you can see at a glance where your union is weak and where it's strong. For instance, highlight everyone who has committed to attend a rally, signed a petition, or worn a button. Put a dot beside the name of each steward, activist, or contract action team member.

SAMPLE CHART

First	Last	Work area	Job	Shift	Cell phone	Email	Wage	Steward	Safety petition 10/31	Grievance training 11/10
Wanda	Smith	X-Ray	Tech	Day	123-456-7890	wandasmith@123.com	\$15.02	X	X	
George	Hernandez	Med Rec	Clerk	Eve	234-567-8901		\$16.73		X	X



