

ORGANIZING CONVERSATION GUIDE AND SAMPLE OUTLINE

Here are some guidelines for a productive conversation (or series of conversations) with a new colleague.

The Millennial generation grew up with a barrage of advertising and media spin. Thus, they are primed to recognize authenticity. Nobody should follow a script mechanically, of course. Talk with people like human beings! But think of this outline and script as a tool. The steps can help you move toward the goal, so your colleague isn't left feeling like her time's been wasted with an unproductive conversation. Done right, an organizing conversation leads to action.

Your job is mostly to ask questions. You want your colleague to realize:

- She cares about a problem
- There are tools to fix this problem
- If your colleague really wants these challenges fixed/solved, she has to join you and your other colleagues in taking action

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- Approach the interaction as a conversation and not a formal interview. Show genuine interest in your colleague's issues. Identify the values your colleague espouses- these are what will move them to action and engagement.
- Listen 80% of the time, Speak 20% of the time.
- Guiding questions may be used but avoid probing or leading statements.
- Let the participant responses guide the conversations just like a normal every day conversation.
- Don't use the conversation to answer your own theory. Use it to gain an insight into what is important to the community or the individual.
- Don't let these conversations become an opportunity for people to say what they think you want to hear.
- Find ways to build off previous conversations.
- Be comfortable with asking for further engagement in the association.

ORGANIZING CONVERSATION GUIDE AND SAMPLE OUTLINE (CONT'D)

1:1 CONVERSATION FORMULA (“ISAHUEY” MODEL)

INTRODUCTION

- Place the conversation in a clear context, let the person know why you’re interested in having the conversation (“I’m helping our union lead an effort to...”/“We’re eager to hear people’s perspectives on...”)
- Explain your role in the union/campaign/movement
- Establish a time frame for the conversation, if necessary (even a vague one)
- Make sure the person is comfortable enough to begin the conversation (if not, find a different space)

STORY (Elicit theirs and purposefully share your own)

- (Share, ask questions and prompt reflection 20% of the time, LISTEN 80% of the time) “Why do you do this work? What do you love about this work? How did you come to be here?”
- “When you have a particularly good/bad day, what tends to be the cause of that?”
- “If you could improve one thing about our school(s), what would it be?”

AGITATE

- “How does that make you feel? Is that frustrating?”
- “What is the impact on you? Your students? Your family?”
- “Who do you think has the power or authority to change this? Is this the way it should be?”

HOPE

- Explain what’s being done (or what can be done) to address or work on this/these issue(s)

URGENCY

- “Clearly, these issues aren’t going to change on their own... it’s time for people like you who really care to start leading a change. The longer we wait, the worse it gets. What’s the impact of doing nothing?”

EDUCATE

- Educate them on the union and what it’s doing (mission, vision, purpose, dues, victories, benefits, etc.)

YOU (and your call to action!)

- “With your help, we can make a change...but we can’t do it without you.”
- “Are you ready to take action to move a positive change forward?” (e.g. – meet again to continue discussion, join the union, sign a pledge card committing to further action, etc.)
- “Who else do you know that also cares about these issues? Can you put me in touch with them? Or would you be willing to talk to them and get back to me?”