**AHUY Lesson (60 minutes)**

How do we identify what issues people care about and what obstacles are holding them back?

We have to talk to them!

**How to Be a Good Listener (5 minutes)**

**Refer to Talking to New Educators & New Hires slide.**

Has anyone heard of the 80/20 rule for conversations? Anyone know what that is?

We should be listening 80 percent of the time and talking 20 percent of the time. One of the most important parts of an organizing conversation is active listening.

So what are some good rules for active listening?



*Direct participants to the handout* How to Be a Good Listener

**[Rather than walking through the entire handout, feel free to use the following points]**

*Points to hit—don’ts:*

* Don’t assume you know the answers to questions. Let people tell you what they think is important. It might not be what you think.
* Don’t ask questions that are really statements: “Don’t you think what we need to do is go on strike?”
* Don’t go fishing—running through a laundry list of questions or issues: “So do you want higher wages, better health insurance, smaller class sizes?”
* Don’t talk like a salesperson: Selling union benefits that only a small number of teachers and school employees think they will need or use (example, liability insurance) might convince them they *don’t* need to be involved. Example: “All you need is one student making a complaint...”

*Points to hit—do’s:*

* Do listen more than you talk (80/20)
* Do slow down. Don’t rush through the conversation to get to the “ask.”
* Do show you are listening by acknowledging what the other person says. Ask follow-up questions.
* Do practice empathy. When people tell you what they’re upset about, acknowledge their experience. Don’t judge or dismiss it.

**AHUY Introduction (5 minutes)**

Nobody should follow a script mechanically. We need to talk to people like human beings. However, organizing conversations are not gripe sessions.

An organizing conversation has specific goals: to identify the issues this person cares about, connect them to a plan of action, and get this person to commit to participating. The organizer follows a structure we call a “rap.”

We want our co-workers to realize:

* + - They care about a problem.
    - There is a decision-maker who has the power to fix this problem.
    - The decision-maker won’t fix it until someone pushes them to.
    - If your co-worker really wants this problem to be fixed, they have to join you and other co-workers in taking action.

*Direct participants to the* **AHUY** *worksheet and review it.*



AHUY is an acronym we use to remember the steps in the organizing conversation.

**Ask/Agitate/Anger:** Ask questions, identify issues, and tap into righteous anger.

**Hope:** Share your plan to win or examples of success.

**Urgency:** Now is the time to act.

**You:** Can we count on you?

Having an organizing conversation is a skill. It gets easier the more we practice it!

Remember the 80/20 rule?—we should spend the majority of our time listening. So where in this rap are we going to spend the majority of our time?

In the “A” part—Ask/Agitate/Anger—this is where you uncover what really gets under your co-worker’s skin while identifying what might be holding them back from getting involved. Try to tap into the anger they feel at injustice and to get them to say what it’s going to take to make a change.

To do that, good listeners ask good questions.

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**Practicing Asking Questions (10 minutes)**

**(Note: This is approximately the 1-hour mark. Based on 2018 Welcome Program participant and facilitator feedback, you may wish to have leaders get up and move around.)**

Let’s practice our listening skills.

*Have participants break into pairs.*

You’re going to start a conversation and get to know this person. Try to identify their number-one workplace issue and find out as much as you can… by only asking questions.

It’s important that we use open-ended questions. Does anyone know the difference between open and closed questions?

Closed questions are yes/no questions. Open questions require fuller responses.

**Examples:**

* + - Closed question: “Do you like where you work?”
    - Open question: “What do you like about your job?” So, for this exercise we want to use open questions.

*Give them 3 minutes apiece, then tell them to switch and the other person will ask questions.*

*Bring the whole group back together. Discuss:*

How did that go? What did we learn?

**Types of Questions (5 minutes)**

Nobody likes to be talked at or told what to think, but you can go really far in a conversation just by asking the right questions.

Let’s review and brainstorm types of questions that are useful for having organizing conversations.

**Intro questions:** What are some good questions to start a conversation?

*(Brainstorm.)*

*Examples:*

* + - How is your day going?
    - How long have you worked here?
    - How have things changed since you started?

**Agitating questions:** Once the other person has mentioned some issues, what are some agitating questions you could use to get this person fired up and figure out how strongly they care about an issue? *(Brainstorm.)*

*Examples:*

* + - Is that okay with you?
    - How long has that been going on?
    - Is that how you would do things, if you were in charge?
    - What would need to change to make your job more fulfilling?
    - What would need to change for you to feel respected at work?
    - Why do you think we’re having this problem?
    - What does this mean for students?

**Polarizing questions:** What are good polarizing questions you could use to get your co-worker to lay the blame for the problem, and move towards getting a commitment to action? *(Brainstorm.)*

*Examples:*

* + - Who is in the position to fix this? What would they have to do?
    - How much longer are you willing to put up with this?
    - Is that ever going to get better if we do nothing?

**Inspiring Hope, Creating Urgency, and Calling the Question (5 minutes)**

What examples can we share to inspire hope? *(Brainstorm.)*

**Key Point**

A great way to inspire hope is to have a plan. It’s the difference between praying it doesn’t rain and having ponchos and umbrellas ready to go. Having a plan inspires confidence.

The next step is the U in AHUY (urgency), connecting the plan to win to the need for immediate action:

* + - We can’t sit on problems.
    - We have a timeline and we have to show the boss we are serious.

Getting a commitment is the “You” in AHUY.

What kinds of questions can we use to ask for a commitment? *(Brainstorm.)*

* + - Can we count on you?
    - Are you on board?
    - Are you coming to the meeting?

Don’t shy away from being direct. Don’t move on until you get an answer.

**Example Roleplay (5 min)**

You will have a chance to practice an organizing conversation in pairs, but first let’s do a test run of what we’ve brainstormed.

**[Ideally you have prepared an experienced rank and filer to play the role of the organizer. They should be prepared to get to an “Ask.” If not, then the facilitator should play the organizer. Either way, recruit a volunteer on the spot to play the role of the other worker.]**

*Role-play the organizing conversation to model for participants what we are asking them to do in the next exercise.*

*Then debrief:*

* + - What did you see? (Walk through how the organizer applied each step of A.H.U.Y.)
    - What kinds of questions did you hear?
    - What might you have done differently?

**Key Point**

What makes an organizing conversation different from a gripe session is that we plan a solution and end with an ask.

If we want to have quality conversations, we need to think about when we can reach people, when they will have time to talk. What are good times to catch teachers and school employees? *(brainstorm)*

Examples: Before school, during lunch, during prep time.

Sometimes if the conversation is critical, you need to set up a meeting after school, at a coffee shop, or at someone’s house.

**Roleplay (20 minutes)**

*Ask everyone to pair up to practice the organizing conversation. Explain that one person will play the organizer, and the other will be the worker. After 10 minutes you will let them know its time to switch roles and repeat the exercise.*

*Give the organizers a prompt, such as that they are trying to get this worker to sign a petition, come to a meeting, or wear a button about a certain issue. If possible, draw your prompt from a story already shared or discussed in the workshop.*

*After 10 minutes remind the pairs to switch.*

**Debrief the Roleplay (10 minutes)**

*Bring everyone back together as a large group.*

* + - What was most challenging about the conversation?
    - Do you think you got a sense of what the member’s issues and concerns were? How did you do this?
    - What were some of the things you said that were effective in educating and agitating around the issue? What else could you have said?
    - How did you specifically ask for the person’s commitment to participate? Did you get a firm commitment?