

# Chapter 3.

## LISTEN: THE ROLE OF MEMBER PARTICIPATION AND BASIC UNIONISM IN ORGANIZING <sup>1</sup>

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“Actually, you do more organizing with your ears than with your tongue.”

— Saul Alinsky, organizer and founder of the Industrial Areas Foundation <sup>2</sup>

“Don’t tell the people—ask them.”

— Fred Ross, Sr., labor and community organizer <sup>3</sup>

### INTRODUCTION.

**T**hrough organizing, people band together and build power to achieve their mutual interests. Organizing can be an extremely powerful tool for change. The uses of organizing to create positive change can range from general societal reform, to organizational development, to attaining specific, concrete objectives (like securing employer concessions in bargaining). Success in any of these efforts requires unions to build strong, powerful organizations. To broadly serve their members’ legitimate interests and the common good, *unions need sustainable power!* However, to really be effective, union organizing cannot rely on power over others to manipulate them or to promote narrow, short-term, or selfish interests. Unless unions build and apply power effectively, their organizing will fail to develop the capacity needed for long-term progress and to attain members’ immediate goals.

By necessity, all really effective organizing involves building the power to accomplish something. Thus, effective organizing must be motivated by some variation of what this GUIDE terms, “organizing for power.” Organizing for power ensures an outcome: **Power!** Its conscious, express purpose must be to build and maintain the sustainable power necessary to accomplish something over the long-term.

At the same time, all really effective organizing must employ a methodical, systematic process. It must utilize a self-conscious, self-critical method consisting of a procedure for: identifying desired results; determining how to achieve the results; taking necessary steps or actions; and thereafter, assessing the extent to which these steps actually achieved the desired results. Organizing practice repeatedly demonstrates that methods successful in creating the long-term, sustainable union power are cyclical processes involving: problem-solving, options and potential solution identification, causal, strategic consideration, deductive, inductive, analogy thinking, and—finally—solution testing. Thus,

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<sup>1</sup>The “Listen” menu of this DVD can start a presentation on the COG method’s LISTEN step and the “Basic Unionism” concepts discussed in this Chapter. The DVD’s “Presentations” folder includes a copy of the presentation file.

<sup>2</sup>SANDERS, CONVERSATIONS WITH ALINSKY, *supra*, p. 50.

<sup>3</sup>ROSS, AXIOMS FOR ORGANIZERS, *supra*, p. 20.

effective organizing methods must apply some variation of the Constant Organizing Goals method—the COG method.

The COG method is the heart of our approach to organizing. It is a continuous process for constant progress and improvement. It can be characterized as: A logical, sequential, ongoing tool for achieving union objectives. At its most effective, organizing consciously employs continuing cycles combining: **LISTEN**; **PLAN**; **ACT**; and, **EVALUATE**. Repetition of the logical sequence of steps of this cycle ensure that a union’s organizing efforts will be successful and that it will make progress toward attaining its organizational goals. Perhaps most important, the COG method creates a “learning organization,”<sup>4</sup> which can and does learn from its mistakes and from its successes. In organizing for power, **LISTEN** is the first—and arguably the most important—step in a COG cycle.

## A.

### **CONTROL AND DEMOCRACY IN ORGANIZING: WHO DO UNIONS LISTEN TO?**

The utility and importance of a union *listening* to its own members may appear self-evident. Regardless of their approach, working organizers understand *listening* to be of paramount importance. The reason is “‘Organizations are made of conversations’. . . : a simple phrase to capture a basic truth.”<sup>5</sup> Conversations—at an organization’s governance board, staff, and membership meetings, in its work group, task force, and planning meetings; in gripe sessions and water-cooler chat; in the form of questions, complaints, or feedback; during the giving and taking of directives, *etc.*, through memoranda, e-mail, telephone conversations, and traditional face-to-face exchanges—determine more about the functioning of any organization than its formal organizational structure or mission statements. And conversations are even more important in membership and social change organizations, like unions. The quality of these conversations and what is learned from them are profound determinants of the quality of a union and of what it is capable of accomplishing. That is why the first step in the COG method is “**LISTEN.**” *Listening* is how unions learn from their conversations. *Listening* permits unions, leaders, staff, and members to come together and to coordinate their thoughts and efforts in a versatile, effective, intelligent manner. Unfortunately, *listening* to a union’s membership does not assume the same importance in all approaches to union governance and organizing.

Some unions primarily listen to and are directed by their own leaders. In some unions, top-level officials and staff determine the union’s goals and objectives. They set the union’s priorities, decide upon its strategies, and select the union’s tactics. Top-level officials and staff make both policy decisions as well as the strategic and tactical decisions for the union and its members. In organizing situations, this approach relies upon both experienced, dedicated union officials and skilled, capable staff to “call the shots.” Once they have made the decisions, the officials and staff *generalissimos* “activate” the rank-and-file union members in mobilization actions.<sup>6</sup> Proponents of this approach exclude rank-and-file workers from the processes of deciding upon goals, selecting objectives, and formulating strategy. In this top-down approach, the workers’ function and role in union organizing is

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<sup>4</sup>See *e.g.*, PETER M. SENGE, *THE FIFTH DISCIPLINE: THE ART AND PRACTICE OF LEARNING ORGANIZATIONS* (N.Y., Doubleday, 1990); PETER M. SENGE, *et al.*, *THE FIFTH DISCIPLINE FIELDBOOK: STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING A LEARNING ORGANIZATION* (N.Y., Doubleday, 1993).

<sup>5</sup>See DAVID PERKINS, *KING ARTHUR’S ROUND TABLE: HOW COLLABORATIVE CONVERSATIONS CREATE SMART ORGANIZATIONS*, p. 17 (Hoboken, N.J.: John Wiley & Sons, 2003).

<sup>6</sup>The approach has also been referred to as “official directed,” “leader controlled,” and “business unionism.” A similar, if not identical, approach was practiced by the AF of L under the label of “pure and simple unionism.”

limited: They are merely mobilized to carry-out the union’s organizing tactics. In top-down campaigns, rank-and-file union members serve as little more than the “cannon fodder,” in an “army willing to risk arrest.”<sup>7</sup> Participatory democracy—union members making their own decisions and taking responsibility for their own actions—is not a significant element of the top-down approach. Under the leader-driven top-down approach, the officials at the top of a union organization hierarchy make the critical decisions necessary to direct “their unions.” The function of “union democracy” consists solely of free and fair internal governance procedures—including direct election of at least some union officials.

The top-down approach unquestionably places over-riding emphasis on the *union* in “union democracy.” The approach presumes that union leaders and staff have superior knowledge, more skills, and better capabilities to make decisions than their rank-and-file members. While assuming the superiority of officials over members, the top-down approach is not completely devoid of merit. In organizing situations, the top-down approach maximizes Expert Power derived from union officials’ experience and strategic judgment. It also maximizes union staff’s analytical strengths and their practical skills in formulating strategies and selecting tactics. More than anything else, this approach places great value on efficiency. And, under favorable circumstances, it can be an effective organizing approach—if short periods of sustained mobilization are all that is required.

Alternatively, some unions emphasize the *democracy* in “union democracy.” In these bottom-up approaches,<sup>8</sup> unions primarily listen to and are directed by their members. Bottom-up approaches balance the tension between strategic leadership and participatory democracy differently. The COG method allocates more control and more responsibility to the union’s members. Organizing for power using the COG method—like most other bottom-up approaches—maximizes Referent Power derived from union members’ own collective power and commitment. The implications of this divergency between reliance on Expert or Referent Power are not merely academic or theoretical. Obviously, the tension between strategic leadership and participatory democracy—the most obvious difference between these approaches—focuses on who will decide the union’s goals, its organizing objectives, and its strategies and tactics: The union’s top-level leadership and staff *or* the union’s rank-and file-members in partnership with leadership and staff? However, setting organizing policy and direction of strategic and tactical decisions is not merely a matter of control. The differences between the two approaches have profound impacts on union power. Ultimately, member commitment built through Referent Power is simply a more potent, more robust, more versatile driving force in organizing than Expert Power. As a consequence, bottom-up approaches place great value on power and commitment than on efficiency. Of course, these differences in approach and source of empowerment have significant implications for a union’s organizing methods, the availability of organizing skills and experience, and its members’ commitment to long-term activism.

And at least at their extremes, the two approaches are radically different when it comes to what they mean by “organizing.” In top-down approaches, organizing means “mobilizing” only, without emphasis on participatory democracy or on public relationship<sup>9</sup> building between and among union

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<sup>7</sup>Teresa Sharpe, *Union Democracy and Successful Campaigns*, in, RUTH MILKMAN & KIM VOSS (eds.), *REBUILDING LABOR: ORGANIZING AND ORGANIZERS IN THE NEW UNION MOVEMENT* p. 64 (Ithaca, N.Y., Cornell Univ. Press, 2004).

<sup>8</sup>The approach has also been referred to both as “member-directed,” or “rank-and-file controlled,” unionism and as “solidarity” or “social” unionism.

<sup>9</sup>For a more extensive discussion of the role of public relationships in building union power, see CHAMBERS, *ROOTS FOR RADICALS*, *supra*, chapter 4, pp. 73–79.

leaders, union staff, and union members. Mobilizing union members accomplishes goals and objectives established by their leaders. However, mobilizing works best when the goals and objectives to be accomplished are instrumental and short-term. Alternatively, in bottom-up approaches, organizing means more than mere mobilizing. It means organizing for power to build, target, and apply power for long-term, sustainable action. In union organizing, long-term, sustainable action depends on participatory democracy and public relationship building among union leaders, union staff, and union members. Organizing is directed at goals and objectives union members establish for themselves and which they achieve through their own collective efforts. Organizing is not limited to immediate or near-term concrete objectives. Organizing can also accomplish difficult, broad, long-term goals. In fact, where unions must overcome the strident opposition of determined adversaries or address significant and widely divergent member interests, only organizing can achieve union goals and objectives. Where real power and sustained commitment are required, mobilizing simply lacks the range of tools need to do the job.

## **B.**

### **CONTROL AND POWER IN ORGANIZING: WHY SHOULD UNIONS LISTEN TO MEMBERS?**

All organizing depends on people power to achieve goals and objects. Both top-down and bottom-up organizing share this conviction.

However, the importance of a union's *listening* to its members is confirmed by the very nature and function of "organizing." By its very nature, organizing assumes the use of bottom-up people power. Expressly or implicitly, this fact is illustrated by the definition many of the most prominent figures in American's labor and community movements use to define organizing. For example:

Saul Alinsky said: In organizing, "[i]t doesn't matter what you know about anything *if you're not communicating with your people*. In that event you are not even a failure, *you're just not there!*"

Si Kahn concluded: "Organizing is *people working together* to get things done."

Ernesto Cortes wrote: "Organizing is a fancy *word for relationship building*."

Marshall Ganz wrote: Organizing "*develop[s] the relationships*, understanding, and action that enable people to understand their interests, new resources, and new capacities to use these resources on behalf of their interests."

Dan Leahy asserted "Organizing is the creation of democratic organizations through which working people can generate their own power so they can protect and promote their self-interests."

Marshall Ganz wrote: "Organizing gives voice to the voiceless, empowers the powerless, and makes the old respond to the new. It is based on the belief that change comes when those who wish for it take the responsibility for making it happen. It grows out of understanding that the best way to prevent the abuse of power is to make it accountable to those whom it is supposed to serve. It is America's history at its best. It is the Boston Tea Party, the Abolitionists, the Suffragists, the Populists, the union organizers, the civil rights workers. Organizing is democracy in action."

Certainly these definitions emphasize the utility and importance of a union *listening* to and building public relationships with and among leader, staff, and members. Moreover, bottom-up, member-directed organizing holds a numbers of clear advantages over top-down, union official-directed approaches. In organizing for power using the COG method, we have repeatedly observed that *listening* to members:

- ▶ Enhances union members’ sense of confidence and self-sufficiency;
- ▶ Instills a belief in member ownership over the direction and outcomes of union activities;
- ▶ Stimulates members’ creativity and innovation;
- ▶ Builds union members’ trust and acceptance of their union;
- ▶ Promotes member involvement in the union actions, programs, and governance;
- ▶ Increases member tolerance for reasonable, calculated risk;
- ▶ Increases member willingness to engage in managed conflict;
- ▶ Introduces an institutional structure for further public relationship building and advocacy; and
- ▶ Establishes the foundation for sustained long-term activism.

In organizing for power and the COG method, these results consistently occur when unions *listen* to their members to direct union organizing efforts. In the COG method, unions *listen* to their members consciously intending to empower their organizing efforts. Thus, in the simplest terms, union member commitment fuels union action. *Listening* to the members builds unions’ power to take action!

Our experience is not unique. One veteran labor organizer and noted academic, Marshal Ganz, summarized his own successful organizing experiences by concluding that organizing “develop[s] the relationships, understanding, and action that enable” effective organizing campaigns. Ganz asserts that: “Organizers interweaving relationships, understanding and action so that each contributes to the other. One result is a new network of relationships wide and deep enough to provide the foundation for a new community in action.” He concludes, “[o]rganizers identify, recruit, and develop leadership; build community around leadership; and [then] build power out of community.”<sup>10</sup> Nation-wide empirical studies of organizing confirm these conclusions. Such studies demonstrate that the public relationships built out of rank-and-file member involvement, control, and responsibility are essential to success in organizing campaigns. Unions consistently win in member-based organizing.<sup>11</sup>

Certainly, top-down, official-directed unions can—and have—built power. However, all unions must *listen* to and establish public relationships with their members to maintain power and to generate the sustained commitment that actually builds long term power. Given this reality, organizing for power depends on *listening* from the very beginning: It recognizes *listening* to a union’s members is an essential aspect of the “*relational* function” of all good organizing. It originates with a union’s commitment to really *listen* to and understand its members’ visions, interests, and goals. The COG

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<sup>10</sup>M. Ganz, *What Is Organizing?*, 32 (1) SOCIAL POLICY 16 (Fall 2002), in Appendix 1, *infra*.

<sup>11</sup>See, e.g., K. Bronfenbrenner & R. Hickey, *Changing to Organize: National Assessment of Union Strategies*, in RUTH MILKMAN & KIM VOSS (eds.), *REBUILDING LABOR: ORGANIZING AND ORGANIZERS IN THE NEW UNION MOVEMENT* pp. 24–29, 33, 40–55 (Ithica, N.Y., Cornell Univ. Press, 2004). The nation-wide organizing results assessed in this study clear confirm that “multi-faceted, comprehensive organizing tactics” (like those inherent in the COG method) uniformly produced a 100% union success rate in NLRB contested representations. This success rate held regardless of bargaining unit characteristics or the virulence of the employers’ anti-union behavior.

method starts out with the conscious effort to establish strong public relationships with and among leader, staff, and members.

## I. LISTEN IS THE FIRST STEP TO ORGANIZING.

The first step in a COG cycle, **LISTEN**, is the critical starting point of all effective organizing efforts, regardless of purpose. Saul Alinsky suggests the importance of the **LISTEN** step by observing that “over and above [strategic and tactical] devices” successful organizing depends upon “acceptance” by the people you are trying to organize. “[T]he ultimate key to acceptance . . . is respect for the dignity of the individual[s] you’re dealing with.” He continued, “The first thing you have to do . . . is *listen*, not talk, and learn to eat, sleep, breath only one thing: the problems and aspirations of the community” of people you are trying to organize. Alinsky then concluded:<sup>12</sup>

Because no matter how imaginative your tactics, how shrewd your strategy, you’re doomed before you even start if you don’t win the trust and respect of the people; and the only way you get that is for you to trust and respect *them*. And without that respect there’s no communication, no mutual confidence and no action. That’s the first lesson any good organizer has to learn, I learned it Back of the Yards. If I hadn’t we would never have won, . . .

In a COG cycle, this initial **LISTEN** step gains unit members’ acceptance by cultivating their respect and trust. In other words, unions and their organizers develop relationships with and among their unit members by *listening*. Like nearly all other activities in organizing, *listening* has a specific purpose. Certainly, union organizers *listen* to learn. But they also *listen* to build Referent Power from relationships with and among members based on the members’ *shared* core-values, interests, and goals. For this reason, the reciprocal relationship built upon trust and respect between members and their union is a public relationship, both in practice and by definition. Organizers *listen* to build these powerful *public* relationships. Marshall Ganz asserts that:<sup>13</sup>

Organizers interweave relationships, understanding and action so that each contributes to the other. One result is new networks of relationships wide and deep enough to provide the foundation for a new community in action. Another result is a new story about who this community is, where it has been, where it is going—and how it will get there. A third result is action as the community mobilizes and deploys its resources on behalf of its interest—as services or as advocacy.

At its simplest, *listening* to build power and public relationships is a sharing of “stories” with and between the members and the union’s officials, organizers, and activists.<sup>14</sup> The **LISTEN** step consists of exchanging those meaningful things about our working lives, problems, and aspirations with one another. At its best, this exchange occurs when union activists are face-to-face with the people they are listening to and when they use relationship building methods like “one-on-one conversations” and listening techniques like “Directed Active Listening.”<sup>15</sup> In these conversations, the

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<sup>12</sup>E. Norden, *Playboy Interview: Saul Alinsky*, 19(3) PLAYBOY MAGAZINE 59, p. 76 (Mar. 1972) [emphasis added] in [Appendix 3](#), *infra*.

<sup>13</sup>M. Ganz, *What Is Organizing?*, 32 (1) SOCIAL POLICY 16, *supra*, in [Appendix 3](#).

<sup>14</sup>The [Step-By-Step Analysis in an Organizing Campaign](#), in [Resource Document 6](#), *infra*, and [A Relational Tools Planning Progression](#), in [Resource Document 1](#), *infra*, can assist organizing teams to learn members’ stories and to formulate the “greater” story of the union, itself.

<sup>15</sup>Directed Active Listening and other methods and techniques used in the COG **LISTEN** step are discussed in detail in

organizer and the other person exchange “stories.” However, these conversations are not just “telling stories.” Organizers probe not only “how” the other people came to be who and what they are, but also the “why.” Through the exchange of “stories,” organizers learn the critical events that determined peoples’ values, hopes for the future, and understanding of the union role in their employment lives. Often, the “why” of these stories involves memories and understandings of peoples’ ancestry or their families’ immigration, their personal family histories, and the patterns and events of their work lives. In exchange, organizers reveal much the same information about their own story. The “what” and the “why” about *both* the organizer and the other person makes them who they are. In these conversations, organizers try to uncover the other person’s “cold anger” or “joyous passion” about their lives. In the process, organizers share their own passions and “cold anger.” This “cold anger” and “joyous passion” connect both unit members and organizers to the “greater good” promoted and achieved by unions’ organizing campaigns.

Marshall Ganz describes the exchange of “stories” between organizers and other people as a first step in: “challenging people to act on behalf of shared values and interests.” Through face-to-face listening, Ganz suggests organizers “developed the relationships, understanding, and action that enable people to gain new understandings of their interest, new resources, and new capacity to use these resources on behalf of their interests. Organizers work through ‘dialogues’ in relationships, understanding and action. . . .”<sup>16</sup>

Through the sharing of stories, the union and its organizers *listen* to unit members to identify their values, their interests, their goals, and their vision of the desired future. By *listening*, a *union learns* what its members want the mission of the union to be. Through *listening*, these stories build into a “greater story”: A union can learn and develop the story common to its membership. In exchange, the organizers share their own values, interests, and desired futures. And both unit members and the organizers also share their history and heritage. By exchanging their own stories with bargaining unit members, *the union’s organizers can teach, lead, and inspire the union’s members to action.*

In the COG method’s **LISTEN** step, unions learn their members’ *greater story*. Through *listening*, unions learn, establish, build, and maintain the *greater story* of the union itself.<sup>17</sup> In itself, this has considerable worth. However, through the **LISTEN** step’s processes of listening, exchanging, teaching, and leading, unions accomplish a critical outcome. These processes establish the fundamental positions of the union. These fundamental positions hold two critical implications for union organizing.

Initially, it is important to recognize that these fundamental positions determine a union’s basic purpose and orientation, its values, its missions, its very *raison d’etre*. They answer the big question: “Why?” These fundamental positions are basic principles to which a union’s membership has committed itself. Fundamental positions are largely independent of the external circumstances of

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part IV of this Chapter, *infra*. See also the exploration of union listening methods, in [Appendix 7](#), *infra*, and the union relational meeting documents, in [Resource Document 1](#), *infra*.

<sup>16</sup>M. Ganz, *What Is Organizing?*, 32 (1) SOCIAL POLICY 16, in, [Appendix 3](#), *infra*.

<sup>17</sup>A cogent concrete example may be more meaningful than the abstract description presented here. In his book *GOING PUBLIC*, Michael Gecan tells the “greater story” of several Industrial Areas Foundation (IAF) community organizations in the northeast. The clear, quite readable story Gecan recounts not only describes the IAF’s approach to organizing, it also captures the IAF’s relational organizational values and its public citizenship ideology.

workplace and of the internal circumstances of the union.<sup>18</sup> A union’s fundamental positions are determined by and consist of basic choices about the union’s vision, values, and mission.

Through actions in the COG method’s **LISTEN** step, unions discover and share in their members’ visions. Visions are distinct, compelling mental images of a desired future people really want to bring into being. Vision answers the question: “*What do we want the future to be like?*” Ed Chambers, the current head of Saul Alinsky’s IAF, notes “[t]he constant tension between the world as it is and the world as it should be is the primary motivation leading people [who act as organizer and grassroots activists] to seek the common good.”<sup>19</sup>

Through actions in the COG method’s **LISTEN** step, unions discern and frame their members’ core values. Core values are reasons people hold a particular desired future dear. They are inherent guiding principles. Values answer the question: “*What do we care about most deeply?*”

Union members’ vision and core values will define, empower, and constrain the union’s organizing actions. While union members’ visions and core values may be more or less unconsciously held, they will help determine and circumscribe the organizing actions a union’s membership will commit to and support. Through *listening*, organizers can help union members discern consciously recognize their own visions and core values. Organizers can teach and lead members to formulate, assimilate, and actualize their collective visions and core values in a way that maximizes unions’ ability to take effective action, bring about meaningful change, and achieve real progress.

Through actions in the COG method’s **LISTEN** step, unions identify their members’ positions, attitudes, and beliefs about their union’s purpose and mission. The mission is a timeless collective understanding regarding the union’s purpose and reason for being. A union’s mission is built on members’ collective visions and core values. Mission answers the question: “*Why have come together for action?*”

Union members’ views about their union’s purpose and mission will establish the direction of the union’s organizing actions. As a result, the members’ fundamental position on its mission determines a union’s intrinsic direction. The philosopher, Martin Buber, described the nature and force of “intrinsic direction” by observing that: “Direction is that primal tension of the human soul which moves it at times out of the infinity of the possible to choose this and nothing else, and to realize it through action.”<sup>20</sup> While union members’ may have strongly held initial views, through *listening*, organizers can help union members form realistic and ambitious expectations about their union’s purpose and mission.

Perhaps, the nature of these fundamental positions can be better understood from examples of concrete decision options and choices:

Vision: *Will our union bring about a better workplace, a better society? Or will the union only attempt to bargain wage increases?*

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<sup>18</sup>The social sciences refer to this independence as “relative autonomy” because the influence of external circumstances or causal forces is both weak and indirect.

<sup>19</sup>CHAMBERS, *ROOTS FOR RADICALS supra*, pp. 23 – 24.

<sup>20</sup>MARTIN BUBER (Maurice Friedman, trans.) *DANIEL: DIALOGUES ON REALIZATION* (NY: Holt Rinehart & Winston, 1964).



Values: *Are our union members actually committed to the principle that “an injury to one is an injury to all”? Or should each of us pursue our own self-interest regardless of its affect on our colleagues?*

Mission: *Is the union’s purpose to bargain a contract? Or is the union’s mission to act as the voice and guardian of all members of the union across the full range of their employment and professional interests?*

In combination, members’ vision and core values and their views about their union’s mission comprise a basis for dealing with reality and an impetus to change that reality into a better future, into the world as it should be. They compel action consistent with the union’s fundamental positions.

Thus, operation of fundamental positions holds a second critical implication for union organizing. It is equally important to recognize that a union’s fundamental positions guide the more concrete positions governing union organizing activities, *i.e.*, a union’s goals and objectives. A union’s fundamental positions direct union leaders’, strategists’, and organizers’ actions as organizing progresses. They clarify the implications of organizing decisions and provide a basis to guide decisions and choices to appropriate outcomes. A union’s fundamental positions provide the bounds and cohesion needed to bring both immediate and long-term order out of the seeming chaos of an organizing campaign. A union’s fundamental positions clearly define the desired outcomes and results of a union’s actions. The clarity of the outcomes set by a union’s fundamental positions can and should guide organizers’ decisions and choices at each step in an organizing campaign.

## II.

### **BASIC UNIONISM VALUES ARE A CRITICAL COMPONENT OF ORGANIZING.**

A union organizing campaign begins with the current reality of the workplace, the world as it is. Helping people understand the real causes of workplace problems is an important function of all organizing. Through their organizing efforts, unions assist those they represent in understanding the true causes of workplace and management problems. Union organizing also helps people realize that they have the power to solve these management problems. Organizing helps people realize that they even have the power to transform their jobs and worksites into humane, rewarding places to work. Organizing for power using the COG method refers to this process as the “*interpretive function*” of organizing.

Organizing provides employees with appropriate expectations and standards for how their workplaces should function and be managed. It gives them the tools to assess their own work situation. It also raises employees’ legitimate expectations regarding their own role and authority in American employment relations. Organizing uses the principles and values of basic unionism to accomplish these functions. An important part of the focused *listening* between unit members and the organizers is sharing their values, history, and heritage, not only as people, but as working colleagues and as unionists and members of the labor movement. In union organizing, success depends upon fidelity to the values of “basic unionism.” The exchange of stories in the COG **LISTEN** step plays a critical role in a union’s fidelity to union values as well as instilling and nurturing these values among unit members. In effective organizing, values are not mere abstract convictions. They are the foundations for effective organizing. In union organizing, the values that drive commitment are the values of basic unionism. These values motivate, empower, and direct organizing. They are the ethos—the moral traditions and gauges—that moves us to act. Perhaps, even more important, these values give our organizing heart and soul. Fidelity to these values gives our actions great worth.

Effective organizing is always founded on commitment. Commitment originates from the values of basic unionism. Basic unionism is an integral element of the reciprocal relationships which build Referent Power. At an organizational level, the five Constant Organizing Goals provide a consistent, continuing compass to guide unions through the labyrinth of these organizing efforts. The five COGs provide a value-base standard for assessing and adapting both a union's immediate organizing campaign and the success of its long-term member representation.

In the COG **LISTEN** step, people share their own values and interests. In turn, organizers combine and guide member values and interests with the core-values of basic unionism shared by their union brothers and sisters. In this way, organizers inform and direct union actions. However, these values can only be identified and reinforced by conscientious, authentic *listening*.

## **A.**

### **BASIC UNIONISM ADVANCES ORGANIZING BY IDENTIFYING TRUE WORKPLACE PROBLEMS.**

#### **1. Understanding Workplace Problems.**

You would not be reading this GUIDE if you didn't have a workplace problem or a problem employer. It may be an district administrator who supervises the people you represent. It may be your own manager. Regardless of who the boss is, employers often try to make us believe that our problems are merely personal. One does not have to go far to identify concrete instances of the behavior. The hypothetical examples about the "Columbia State Teachers Association" (CSTA) and "Columbia Staff Union" (CSU) which follow illustrate the problems.

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#### **Example 3.1**

##### ***Personal or Workplace Problems***

CSTA Regional Manager calls a staff person, Barbara, into her office and writes her up for missing a staff meeting. Barbara explains that she missed the meeting because she had an emergency bargaining session in one of her union locals. The Regional Manager says she's sorry, but she can't bend the rules for one person. As Barbara leaves the Regional Manager's office, she thinks: "This isn't fair. It isn't just me, it's all the staff. Everyone's workload is so heavy that they can't do everything and have had to miss at least one staff meeting." And it isn't just Barbara's Region. Many of the employer CSTA's staff (and many of the staff in neighboring states) have workloads that are so heavy that they don't have enough time to do all their assigned responsibilities as well or as thoroughly as they would like.

As another example, the employer CSTA's bargaining team tells your team that CSU's unit members will have to take a pay cut, or a take-back in health benefits, or an increase in working hours [or fill in your own example of a regressive bargaining proposal here]. They explain that: "THE TEACHERS' don't make this kind of money, or don't have these benefits, or work these kinds of hours etc. Therefore, you shouldn't either."

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These two situations don't involve just one person's problem or a problem only for your bargaining team, or even a problem for just your own staff union. Managers and employers throughout the country are taking the same position. Nonetheless, we all have a right to reasonable work loads that allow staff the time and opportunities to engage in vigorous advocacy and to represent our members well. We earn and deserve the wages, hours, and benefits that we have bargained in our contracts. So do our families. And our families deserve their right to spend a little free time with us. Thus, these two situations are clearly "management problems," *i.e.*, problems created by bad or ineffective management.

When faced with management problems like these, most people feel they have been treated unfairly. Initially, some fly into a rage or start loudly criticizing "stupid regressive" management. Not only can this approach be personally dangerous, but it's generally not effective. Managers jealously guard their authority in the workplace. When you begin to question authority, you become a threat. In all too many of NEA's affiliates, the moment you start to question authority, you become a troublemaker and a problem employee in the eyes of the employer Association's management or leadership. If you have never made any waves at work before, you may be shocked, hurt, or angered by how quickly management or leadership turns against you. This is one more reason not to act alone. This is one more reason to begin to talk to your colleagues. You can't solve these problems by accommodating the Manager, by making a personal protest, or even through individual bargaining. *There are problems common to us all and they are subject to solution by all of us acting in a common concerted effort!*

So you have a problem, where do you begin? *Ask questions & listen to the answers!* Talk to your colleagues and ask them what they think about what's happening lately. What do they think about the problems you're concerned about? Listen to what others have to say. Get their views and opinions. Most people think of an organizer as an agitator and a rabble-rouser (and certainly there are times when an organizer does get to do those things). However, a good organizer is first and foremost a person who asks good questions and carefully listens to the answers. Good organizers—as good listeners—really hear and attempt to understand the person with whom they are conversing. Having listened well, organizers are able to express not only their own views and feelings but those of all the people who conferred with the organizers. At this point, organizers begin to engage in their leadership and teaching functions. They begin to communicate the union's immediate message and they expressly build the connections that forge the public relationship between the person and the union. This simple process of "*Asking questions & listening to the answers*" is the basic mechanism used by unions in the COG method's **LISTEN** step.

## 2. Solving Workplace Problems.

Unfortunately, the Barbara problem and the regressive bargaining examples suggested above are so common that they provide intuitive illustrations of problems facing staff unions everywhere.

The solutions to employee workplace problems that may first seem to be personal are usually collective. Individual unit members and unions have used many tools to attempt to solve workplace problems. Obviously some of these tools are far more effective than others.<sup>21</sup> The rest of this GUIDE explains how we can begin to solve such problems—*successfully*—each and every time through

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<sup>21</sup>Appendix 3 to this GUIDE, *infra*, identifies and assesses the effectiveness of the five most common and widely used methods, or "tools," for resolving workplace problems. That analysis demonstrates that organizing is, by far, the most powerful method for solving problems and resolving disputes in the workplace.

organizing. We begin by introducing the critical role of member interests and values as well as the values and principles of basic unionism as an effective use of the organizing tool.

## B.

### **STRONG UNIONS ARE MEMBER DRIVEN.**

It is import for unions and their organizers to understand the nature of these values. In real life, people don't pay union dues because they want to announce to the world that they are a part of the union movement. They pay union dues because they understand and believe that being members of strong, active unions are in their own best interests. In real life, people do not go on strike for a 2% raise. However, people will fight for justice and respect. People will fight for control over their working lives. And people will fight for a fair, living wage.<sup>22</sup> America's greatest labor agitator, Mother Jones,<sup>23</sup> made the same point in her speech to promote the AFL's 1919 steel industry organizing effort.

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#### Example 3.2

#### ***We Are Striking for Bread, for Justice, for What Belongs to Us.***

Mother Jones began: “[I] was in Moneses [Pa.] and 18,000 men came to a meeting.” She explained that steel company bosses had deceived them with a bribe of near worthless stock and then beaten their strike. She continued: “Some of them were worn out, some had hopes for another day. Some had their backs bent with the burden of years and the whip of the master. But they all came [to the union meeting] believing there was a new message for them.” Some urged them: “Now you must be peaceful. We must have peace.” In explaining iron and steel workers’ massive support for the organizing effort, Mother Jones admonished those urging moderation: “[I] want to tell you we’re not going to have peace, we’re going to have hell! Strikes are not peace. We are striking for bread, for justice, for what belongs to us.”<sup>24</sup>

Figure 3.1

Mary Harris "Mother" Jones



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<sup>22</sup>Similarly, the American colonists did oppose the Stamp Act of in 1765 because it placed a three pence duty on all newspapers, business documents, and “every skin or piece of vellum or parchment, or sheet or piece of paper [used in] . . . any court of law within the British colonies and plantations in America. . . .” As every school child knows, the American Revolution was fight and won on the basis of: “No taxation without representation.” For a fascinating examination of the issue framing and organizing for power that made the success of the American Revolution possible, see PAUL LEWIS, *THE GRAND INCENDIARY: A BIOGRAPHY OF SAMUEL ADAMS* pp. 34–35, 43–54, *passim* (NY: The Dial Press, 1973).

<sup>23</sup>Mary Harris Jones, universally known to American working men and women of the last Century as “Mother Jones,” was a labor organizer, agitator, and—by her own admission—“hell raiser.” She organized for the United Mine Workers (UMW), the International Workers of the World (IWW), and the American Federation of Labor (AF of L). She was the champion of the oppressed and the darling of the UMW and the rank-and-file mine worker. And she was a socialist. A powerful orator, she probably best known for her admonition: “Pray for the dead but fight like hell for the living.” See generally, PHILIP S. FONER (ED.), *MOTHER JONES SPEAKS: SPEECHES AND WRITINGS OF A WORKING-CLASS FIGHTER* p. 34 (N.Y.: Pathfinder, 1983). See [Mother Jones, Excerpts from Her Speeches](#), in [Appendix 5](#) to this GUIDE, *infra*.

<sup>24</sup>FONER, *MOTHER JONES SPEAKS supra*, p. 392.

People participate in union tactics because they believe that their union is “in the right” and because it is in their self-interest to do so. People *will* fight for their values, their beliefs, and their self-interests.

As a result, effective unions always organize around their members’ shared-values, beliefs, and interests. These values, beliefs, and interests serve as the basis for union goal setting, strategic planning, and action on behalf of their members. Many of the values and beliefs now shared by your union’s members are probably the basis for union power and sustained union organizing. However, you will not know until you ask them. *Listening* is the first and most important step.

One way to understand the special, invaluable nature of good union values is through our members’ answers to questions such as:

“What story do we have to tell?” “What is our history?” “What is our heritage?” “What is our vision of a better workplace, society, or future?”

“What are our values?” “What should our values be?” “What could we do to make them a reality?”

“What is our mission?” “What should our mission be?” “What could it be in the future?”

“What are our goals?” “What should our goals be?” “What could we do to attain these goals?”

“Who are our constituents?” “Who should our constituents be?” “What could we do to better represent them?”

“What should we do to solve our workplace problems?” “What things need to change to make our work lives better, more productive, and more rewarding?”

For staff, good union values are reflected in how and why they answer questions such as:<sup>25</sup>

*“Why are we doing this union staff work?!?” “What do we enjoy about this work?” “What things are objectionable about staff work?” “What can we do to make staff work more rewarding?”*

Whether these questions are explicit or implicit, union values are found in both the general answers to these questions and the commitment to a process which finds answers by asking the people affected. The answers union members give to these kinds of relational questions disclose their shared values and interests. As we observed before, people will not go on strike for a 2% raise, but they will wage revolution to uphold the value of “No taxation without representation.” Unions don’t discover unit members’ critical interests by merely surveying them on: “What should our bargaining proposals be?” These relational answers to questions like those above give unions a foundation on which to build their organizing. However, union members will fight for the values and interests which form the basis for these answers. Mother Jones may have articulated the critical distinction when she observed: “I want to say to you, we are dealing too much with the *intellect*.” A union that “does not *deal with the heart* of man will perish.”<sup>26</sup> But people will fight for “bread, for justice, for what belongs to them.”<sup>27</sup>

Many unions have answered these questions by formally *listening* for, adopting, and publicizing the shared “core values” of the union and its members.

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<sup>25</sup>CSO’s, *Organizing a Stronger CSO Project* illustrates the utility of asking these questions and listening to the answers. See [Organizing a Stronger CSO Through Core Values](#) project, in [Appendix 4](#), *infra*.

<sup>26</sup>Quotation adapted from Mother Jones’ observations about the United States. See FONER, *MOTHER JONES SPEAKS*, *supra*, p. 233 (emphasis added).

<sup>27</sup>FONER, *MOTHER JONES SPEAKS*, *supra*, p. 392.

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### Example 3.3

#### ***We Know Our Core Values, What Are Yours?***

For example, the members of the Washington Education Association Staff Organization adopted the three values statements.<sup>28</sup> These value statements are based on the shared, core-values of:

- “Collective Action”;
- “Integrity”; and
- “Leadership.”

Similarly, California Staff Organization had agreed that the following are its shared, core-values:<sup>29</sup>

- “Advocacy of member interests”;
  - The success of and “commitment to Public Education”;
  - The solution of problems and attainment of objectives “through Organizing and Relationship Building”;
  - A “commitment to Social Justice”; and
  - “Solidarity” among its own members and all working people.
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Other unions have adopted additional core values or articulated them in other ways. Some unions have adopted codes of conduct or principles which guide and direct their members’ working lives. Ideally, these principles codify the values generally shared by their members. Often these codes expressly delineate how union members should treat one another with the object of promoting solidarity. The California Staff Organization’s Code of Conduct<sup>30</sup> is an example. Other unions formulate such statements of principle to provide unions and their members a guide for not only “talking the talk,” but also “walking the walk” of basic unionism. THE TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE INTERNATIONAL LONGSHORE WAREHOUSE UNION is a good example of this approach.<sup>31</sup> Nonetheless, it is core values of this sort that make good effective unions exceptional and worthwhile. These same core values are also the foundation for their success.

Values, interests, and behaviors determine what unions want to accomplish and the method they use to do it. In effect, these values determine how we respond to workplace problems. These values determine why and how we represent our members. They determine our members’ goals and our unions’ objectives. They also guide how unions and their members understand and resolve workplace problems. Members’ commitment to their shared core-values makes unions that *listen* extraordinarily powerful.

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<sup>28</sup>Resource Document 3, *infra*, reproduces the complete statement of WEASO’ Core Values.

<sup>29</sup>Resource Document 3, *infra*, reproduces the CSO Constitution’s Preamble, CSO’ core-values statement.

<sup>30</sup>See California Staff Organization’s Code of Conduct in Resource Document 3, *infra*.

<sup>31</sup>See International Longshore & Warehouse Union’s, THE TEN GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE ILWU in Appendix 5, *infra*.

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## C.

### **EFFECTIVE UNIONS VALUE**

#### **DEMOCRACY, SOCIAL JUSTICE, ADVOCACY, AND COLLECTIVE ACTION.**

Good, effective unions are values-based, advocacy organizations. Their actions and programs are directed and driven by their values. Simple enough, but what do we mean by values? A dictionary defines the term “values” as:<sup>32</sup>

- “1. that quality of a thing according to which it is thought of as being more or less *desirable, useful, estimable, important*, etc.
- “2. that which is *desirable or worthy of esteem for its own sake*; thing or quality *having intrinsic worth*;
- “3. the *social principles, goals, or standards held or accepted by an individual, class, society*, etc. . . .”

Certainly, most people and even many organizations have values. However, what makes good effective unions exceptional and worthwhile is the nature of their values. The critical difference between good unions and other organizations is the meaning and content of “*the social principles, goals, or standards held or accepted*” held by unions and their members. These values are “*worthy of esteem for their own sake.*” They “*have intrinsic worth.*” And the unions which adhere to and practice the “*social principles, goals, and standards*” of basic unionism are also “*worthy of esteem.*” These are the things that cause their unions to be held in *high esteem* and recognized as “*desirable, useful, and important.*” Since modern American unions began some two hundred years ago, their values and actions have reflected the best of society and—unfortunately—some of the worst of society.

Thus, “good values” are not automatic. No authority can tell what your values should be or what values your members should hold or what values your union should advance. What we can tell you is that *some values promote organizational strength* and effective organizing. Most strong, effective unions have these values. These values that build power, these positive values, can be referred to as core-union values or the values of basic unionism. In one way or another these basic union values share four characteristics. At their most powerful, these values are:

- ▶ **Democratic**, enabling the broadest participation by all union members;
- ▶ **Equitable**, acknowledging everyone’s equality of worth;
- ▶ **Liberating**, promoting freedom from oppressive, demeaning, and debilitating conditions; and
- ▶ **Life affirming**, enhancing and enabling people’s full human potential.

The following describes some of the most common core-union values.<sup>33</sup> It also compares core-union values to the values commonly exhibited by all too many employers.

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<sup>32</sup>WEBSTER’S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY (Third College Edition Simon and Schuster, Inc. 1988) [emphasis added].

<sup>33</sup>Appendix 5, *infra*, includes several primary sources from which principled unions, their leaders, and their members derive their core values. While significant in their own right, these historical sources are useful today. Through an understanding of the origins and history of our values, we can better understand the nature, function, and importance of these values. Additionally, we should also understand that the union movement has a history and that today’s unionists “stand on the shoulders” of many brave, intelligent, dedicated leaders.

## 1. Unions Value Solidarity.

Perhaps the most important of these core-union values is: “An Injury to One is an Injury to All.”<sup>34</sup> This premise of basic unionism is a fundamental value of good, effective unions and a shared commitment of their members.<sup>35</sup> “An Injury to One is an Injury to All” means that:

- ▶ Employer mistreatment of **any individual worker** is inherently mistreatment for **every** worker: By necessity, the common interest of employees means that any detrimental employer conduct not only injures its direct target, but it disadvantages every other worker, too.
- ▶ All workers must come to the support and defense of fellow workers who are threatened: If I tolerate mistreatment of my colleague, it invites the employer to mistreat me.
- ▶ Only a collective, concerted response to the employer can adequately defend the injured employee and protect us all. The relatively more powerful position of the employer can only be balanced and overcome through a collective action by all employees.

Using the simplest moral terms, union leaders have long recognized that “true unionists” are their brother’s keepers: The young, the strong, and the highly skilled have the obligation to use their power to aid their weaker, older, less skilled union brothers and sisters.<sup>36</sup> Thus, “An Injury to One is an Injury to All” means that **solidarity** among employees is acting in everyone’s collective self-interest. Every union member must answer the question: “Do we hang together or do we hang alone?” Solidarity gives us the answer: “An Injury to One is an Injury to All” is the only way to avoid the noose. Admittedly, solidarity is not a value unique to unions. However, the value is most prevalent and most pronounced in our union culture.

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### Example 3.4

#### **Solidarity**<sup>37</sup>

“Picture this: It is about 10 o’clock on a cool Fall night at the old Seattle grain dock in September 1951. The little apron and its small bull rail are bathed in the glare of the lights from the dock and the ship alongside. The air is full of the rattle of steam winches.

“An old man walks slowly toward the pay phone at the end of the dock. ‘Where you going, John?’ the hatchtender asks. ‘Son’a bitch fired me’ the old man replies. The hatch-tender walks to

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<sup>34</sup>The value of solidarity is a most dearly held, longstanding core union values. To be effective, all unions must value, practice, and promote solidarity. However, the IWW constitution, with its motto, “An injury to one is the concern of all” is certainly the most famous source for the value of solidarity. See PHILIP S. FONER, 4 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT IN THE UNITED STATES p. 37 (NY: International Publ., 1998). Mother Jones cogently explained the value and the necessity of solidarity in organizing. See [Mother Jones, Excerpts from Her Speeches](#), in [Appendix 5](#), *infra*.

<sup>35</sup>See [Mechanics’ Union of Trade Associations, Preamble to the Constitution](#); [Industrial Workers of the World, Preamble to the Constitution](#); [International Longshoremen’s & Warehousemen’s Union Local 10, Preamble to the Constitution](#); [International Longshore & Warehouse Union, The Ten Guiding Principles of the ILWU](#); [Harry Bridges: In His Own Words](#); [A. Philip Randolph, Excerpts from His Speeches and Writings](#), in [Appendix 5](#), *infra*.

<sup>36</sup>Charles Moyer, one the presidents of the Western Federation of Miners, was an early proponent of this obligation. He also urged his better paid, more skilled members to support unskilled workers and warned that organized labor is only as strong as the least able, least powerful worker. He continued: “‘The unskilled now constitute [the] weakest link in the chain of the labor movement. It is our duty to strengthen it.’” MELVYN DUBOFSKY, WE SHALL BE ALL: A HISTORY OF THE INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD p. 59–60 (NY: Quadrangle Books, 1969).

<sup>37</sup>Art Mink, *Solidarity*, 15(3) THE RUSTY HOOK 3 (Fall 2006) [emphasis added]. THE RUSTY HOOK is published by the Seattle ILWU-Pension Club.



the hatch combing and yells down, ‘They fired old John!’ Eight young stevedores come boiling up out of the hatch as if he had said the ship is on fire. ‘Call me a replacement, too, John,’ the first one up says. ‘And me.’ ‘And me.’ It was a chorus.

“The foreman hurries to John’s side and taking him gently by the arm leads him away from the phone. Then the foreman pulls a sack of wheat off the waiting sling load puts it against the wall and helps John sit comfortably on it. The foreman then helps John’s partner hook up the waiting sling load. Everybody goes back to work.

“[This was 1951,] I was a casual [employee] working out of the Local 9 warehouse hall and watched this little drama from the warehouse door, leaning on the handles of a hand truck loaded with 5 catch-weight sacks filled with 700 pounds of wheat for the ship alongside. That was an outfit I wanted to be part of!

“[It is 2006 and I still remember that night 55 years ago and the thrill of solidarity in action.”

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The true story of old John’s return to work in Example 3.4 certainly illustrates the core union values of solidarity and “An Injury to One is an Injury to All.” As important as this lesson is, the eight young stevedores’ willingness to risk their own jobs and their courage in facing down the boss in old John’s defense shows the tremendous power of instinctive, spontaneous public organizing Action. Such instinctive, spontaneous action is only possible when unions create a culture of organizing.

The value of “An Injury to One is an Injury to All” is a recognition of an inherent and inextricable conflict. This conflict exists between the values, interests, and operating behaviors of unions and the opposing values, interests, and operating behaviors of employers. These employer values are grounded in three fundamental premises:<sup>38</sup>

- ▶ The employer belief that the worker needs to be directed and controlled by “better, smarter” people (*i.e.*, owners, supervisors, managers, planners, and expert consultants);
- ▶ The employer rationalization that it is appropriate to exploit the value of the employees’ labor because—as “better, smarter” people—supervisors, managers, and owners give the worker necessary direction;<sup>39</sup>and
- ▶ The employer assumption that both society and the workplace consists of no more than aggregations of atomized, self-interested individuals driven by market dynamics of “profit maximization” and selfish personal gain.<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>38</sup>In 1911, Frederick Taylor wrote THE PRINCIPLES OF SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT, which purported to scientifically prove the superiority of management control over the work lives of employees. These three principles were so central to Taylor’s PRINCIPLES OF SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT that they, became known as Taylorism. See generally [Taylorism and the War on Workers’ Self-Determination](#), in [Appendix 5](#), *infra*, which discusses the repressive and dehumanizing nature of Taylorism and management domination of the workplace.

<sup>39</sup>Economic history convincingly demonstrates that division of labor in industrial economies was not driven by “a technically superior organization of work, but for [the desire for] an organization that guaranteed to the entrepreneur an essential role in the production process” and that “the origin and success of the factory lay not in technological superiority, but in the substitution of the [owner’s] for the worker’s control of the work process and the quantity of the output. . . .” Marglin, *What Do Bosses Do? The Origins and Functions of Hierarchy in Capitalist Production*, in ANTHONY GIDDENS & DAVID HELD, CLASSES, POWER, AND CONFLICT: CLASSICAL AND CONTEMPORARY DEBATES (Berkeley, Ca.: Univ. Calif. Press, 1982). See generally [Taylorism and the War on Workers’ Self-Determination](#), in [Appendix 5](#), *infra*.

<sup>40</sup>The essence of individualism and the notion of “individual rights” is this sharp differentiation of one’s interest from

These three premises are inherently oppressive and exploitive. The values of most employers, most bosses, and of their tool—the scab<sup>41</sup>—are reflected in the cynical, individualistic shibboleths: “Divide and Conquer” and “Every man for himself!”

Unions (most members of their bargaining units) stand in direct opposition to each of the three premises. In contrast, the union rallying cries are “Solidarity forever!” “We shall not be moved!” and “The Union makes us strong!” Because of the fundamental difference between union and employer values, conflict between management and employees in the workplace is both *natural* and *unavoidable*.<sup>42</sup> In a non-union workplace, the employer’s power predominates. Employers can and do routinely attempt to force worker compliance with all sources of positional power (Legitimate, Reward, and Coercive Power). Through *the power-over*, employers can divide and conquer or force each worker to represent him or herself as a single individual. Without *the power-to* of a union, without a union’s ability to protect the workers or to equalize their power through solidarity and collective action, no one single employee can ever counteract their employer and guarantee industrial justice for all. In a non-union workplace, employers can create a sense of fear and powerlessness to divide workers and create advancement opportunities for manager “want-to-be’s” and scabs.<sup>43</sup>

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the interests of others. Individualism means insistence on pursuing objectives without interference from others, either individually or collectively. The proponents of individualism hold that their own self-interest is always legitimate and ought to be the primary guide to human behavior. They justify this claim through the notions of individual rights.

Unions have long objected to the outmoded employer obsession with “individualism” and “individual rights.” Unions have long understood that, in an industrial society individual rights are impossible without a social organization that combined workers (and managers) into productive efficient organizations. And they understand that workers need the solidarity created by unions to balance the power of the owners of these organizations. Unions have rightly understood the inherently self-serving nature of employers’ cynical doctrine of “every man for himself” and that the doctrine only serves to exploit the “defenselessness of the individualized worker.” [Taylorism and the War on Workers’ Self-Determination](#), in [Appendix 5, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>41</sup>The term, “Scab,” is common workplace parlance. While informal usage, it is both succinct and accurate in describing certain individuals. THE LEXICON OF LABOR defines a scab as: “Someone who takes a striker’s job, works behind a picket line, or refuses to go on strike with co-workers.” EMMETT MURRAY, THE LEXICON OF LABOR (New York: The New Press, 1998). WEBSTER’S NEW WORLD DICTIONARY defines a scab as: “A workers who refuses to join a union, or who works for lower wages or under different conditions from those accepted by the union; a worker who refuses to strike or who takes the place of a striking worker.” Strikebreaker, blackleg, and rat are common synonyms.

<sup>42</sup>See Mechanics’ Union of Trade Associations, [Preamble to the Constitution](#); The Knights of Labor, [Preamble to the Constitution](#); Industrial Workers of the World, [Preamble to the Constitution](#); International Longshore & Warehouse Union, [The Ten Guiding Principles of the ILWU](#); Harry Bridges: [In His Own Words](#).

<sup>43</sup>Basic unionism suggests that Jack London’s definition of the scab is not only more prosaic but also more informative than the dictionary definition noted in footnote 34, *supra*. London’s sense of solidarity lead him to observe this about scabs:

“‘After God had finished the rattlesnake, the toad, and the vampire, he had some awful substance left with which he made a scab.’

“‘A scab is a two-legged animal with a corkscrew soul, a water brain, a combination backbone of jelly and glue. Where others have hearts, he carries a tumor of rotten principles.’

“‘When a scab comes down the street, men turn their backs and angels weep in heaven, and the devil shuts the gates of hell to keep him out.’

“‘No man (or woman) has a right to scab so long as there is a pool of water to drown his carcass in, or a rope long enough to hang his body with. Judas was a gentleman compared with a scab. For betraying his master, he had character enough to hang himself’” A scab has not.

“‘Esau sold his birthright for a mess of pottage. Judas sold his Savior for thirty pieces of silver. Benedict Arnold sold his country for a promise of a commission in the British army.’ The scab sells his birthright, country, his wife, his children and his fellow men for an unfulfilled promise from his employer.

“‘Esau was a traitor to himself; Judas was a traitor to his God; Benedict Arnold was a traitor to his

## 2. Unions Value Democracy.

Democracy has been a cherished and long-standing union core-value. Many in the U.S. labor movement have organized around this core-value, as a political, a social, and an economic principle.<sup>44</sup> Throughout the history of the labor movement, unions have defined themselves in terms of democratic values.

Political democracy has one of its most powerful and loyal supporters in organized labor.<sup>45</sup> The merit of democracy in the national, state, and local political areas needs no justification here. It a good thing and unions have “been for it” since the Mechanics Union of Trade Associations in 1830s.<sup>46</sup> While its merits need no defense, three aspects of democracy have particular relevance to unions and to organizing.

### a. Strong Unions Value Political Democracy.

The first aspect of democracy is the value of political democracy. Political democracy—both in the national body politic and in their own internal governance—is a long-held union value and an integral part of union heritage. The duty to question authority is an integral part of the political democracy tradition.<sup>47</sup> Each citizen and each union member has a responsibility—a duty—to think and independently arrive at the decision or judgment regarding the matters at issue in the larger society and in their own union. Cornel West observes: “Democracy is always a movement of an energized public to make elites responsible.”<sup>48</sup> Only an energized public capable of making ruling elites responsible for their decisions and actions and answerable to us can prevent despots, dictators, plutocrats, oligarches, or theocrats from killing our democracy. The duty to challenge authority is an integral core-union value.

Unions depend on political democracy to preserve their interests and to prosper in the society as a whole. Effective organizing requires that unions’ own internal governance procedures and practices operate democratically.<sup>49</sup> To build Referent Power with members, union leaders and

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country; a scab is a traitor to his God, his country, his family and his class’.”

Jack London’s essay, *The Scab*, in [Appendix 5, \*infra\*](#), explores the nature of destructive conflict introduced into the “workplace community” by strike breakers, scabs.

<sup>44</sup>See International Longshoremen’s & Warehousemen’s Union Local 10, [Preamble to the Constitution](#); International Longshore & Warehouse Union, [The Ten Guiding Principles of the ILWU](#); [Harry Bridges: In His Own Words](#); and [A. Philip Randolph, Excerpts from His Speeches and Writings](#), in [Appendix 5, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>45</sup>Unions have been among the most loyal, tireless, and longstanding fighters in the struggle for democracy. Nonetheless, even in the union movement, democracy has been perplexing and, occasionally, elusive. In part, this may be due to the multiple facets of the Democratic experience. Democracy operates both as a means (*i.e.*, procedure or process) for decision-making and as one particular allocation of power (*i.e.*, a form of social ordering).

<sup>46</sup>Political democracy in the form of “equal citizenship” was a core of the Mechanics Union of Trade Associations. In this regard, it was an active part of the “decisive impetus” of the nation-wide democratic upheaval led by Andrew Jackson. SELIG PERLMAN, *HISTORY OF TRADE UNIONISM IN THE UNITED STATES* pp. 9–13 (New York: MacMillan Co., 1923).

<sup>47</sup>See CORNEL WEST, *DEMOCRACY MATTERS: WINNING THE FIGHT AGAINST IMPERIALISM* pp. 15–17 (New York: Penguin Press, 2004). West describes this duty as the “Socratic tradition” of democracy, a “commitment to questioning—questioning of ourselves, of authority, of dogma, of parochialism, and fundamentalism.” He continues: “The Socratic commitment to questioning requires a relentless self-examination and critique of institutions of authority, motivated by an endless quest for intellectual integrity and moral consistency.” *Id.*, p. 16

<sup>48</sup>WEST, *DEMOCRACY MATTERS*, *supra*, p. 68.

<sup>49</sup>Many commentators believe that—despite facing massive and often violent employer opposition—the strength and resilience of many CIO union locals in the 1930s and beyond resulted from the rank-and-file activism of their members.

organizers must act as role models. In fact, union leaders have few other roles as important as modeling the practice of democracy in their own union governance. Certainly, the vast majority of unions and rank-and-file union members value and support political democracy in their own internal governance.<sup>50</sup> They see no legitimate distinction between internal union democracy and political democracy in the larger society outside their own union. In fact, one complements the other. One of the compelling justifications for industrial democracy is that unions help promote democracy throughout the larger society. If unions engage their own members internally by practicing internal union democracy and demanding industrial democracy in the workplace, then union members will engage in and promote democracy, and if they are engaged in the union, they will be engaged in the broader political processes of American society.

Certainly, good unions are dedicated to political democracy in their governance operation, but the value is not limited merely to internal union politics. Participatory democracy is essential to powerful, effective organizing campaigns. Unions' power and the strength that originates in their capacity to mobilize comes from participatory democracy.

### **b. Strong Unions Value Industrial and Economic Democracy.**

The second aspect of democracy is the value unions place on industrial and economic democracy. By extension from political democracy, unions seek to extend democracy to govern decisions about the operation of the workplace.<sup>51</sup> Economic and industrial democracy have long been a central tenant of union ideology.<sup>52</sup> Early trade unionists were committed abolitionists. Historically, unions have opposed slavery in all of its forms including the “wage-slavery” of the unregulated labor market of capitalism. Unions have also opposed the last vestiges of feudal relations, the notion of the

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These locals were organized by union members who insisted on their inalienable right to participate in the key decisions of their unions and actually practiced the principle that, “We are all leaders.” See generally, STAUGHTON LYND (ed.), “WE ARE ALL LEADERS”: THE ALTERNATIVE UNIONISM OF THE EARLY 1930S (Champaign, IL.: Univ. Illinois Press, 1996) (assessing so-called “community-based,” “alternative,” or “solidarity” union locals of the 1930s). Emphasizing “local autonomy and community-level organization,” these locals “opposed bureaucratic unionism” that had marked both the A.F. of L.’s “pure and simple unionism” and the top-down, official directed unionism of many CIO internationals and, later, of the AFL-CIO. The rank-and-file activism of these union locals “was democratic, deeply rooted in mutual aid among workers in different crafts and work sites, and politically independent. The key to value system of [the] alternative unionism [practiced in these locals] was its egalitarianism.” Lynd, *Introduction, in*, WE ARE ALL LEADERS, *supra*, pp. 3–4.

<sup>50</sup>Certainly, internal union democracy is the official policy of nearly all unions. However, the degree to which unions translate this formal policy into day-to-day action is always an open question. Nonetheless, the extent that a union practices democracy and how it actually implements democracy practices present a range of possible alternatives. While range of possible alternatives is wide, their effects are critically important. The seamless connection between internal union democracy and external societal democracy is readily apparent, if not always achieved. Best treatments of union democracy are: STAUGHTON LYND, SOLIDARITY UNIONISM: REBUILDING THE LABOR MOVEMENT FROM BELOW (Chicago, IL.: Charles H. Kerr Publishing, 1992) (analyzing contemporary forms of solidarity unionism), M. PARKER & M. GRUELLE, DEMOCRACY IS POWER: REBUILDING UNIONS FROM THE BOTTOM UP, pp. 11–84 (Detroit: A Labor Notes Book, 1999), and HERMAN BENSON, REBELS, REFORMER, AND RACKETEERS: HOW INSURGENTS TRANSFORMED THE LABOR MOVEMENT (Bloomington, IN.: 1<sup>st</sup> Book Library, 2005) (a history of the struggle for union democracy).

<sup>51</sup>The best unions not only demand democracy in the workplace, they practice it in their own internal operations. Probably, no union better excels at putting the values internal union democracy into practice than the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. Certainly, no one has better explained utility of internal union democracy than its founder, Harry Bridges. See [Harry Bridges: In His Own Words](#), in [Appendix 5](#), *infra*.

<sup>50</sup>Photograph of pickers in Rochester’s 1946 General Strike from the Harold Lara Collection. Used with permission of the City of Rochester, New York.

<sup>52</sup>See, e.g., CHRISTOPHER TOMLINS, THE STATE AND THAT UNIONS: LABOR RELATIONS, LAW, AND THE ORGANIZED LABOR MOVEMENT IN AMERICA pp. xi–xiv, 95 (New York: Cambridge University press, 1985).

master-servant relationship which too often dictates the operation of the American workplace and the vestiges of which permeates American employment law. Consequently, unions challenge employers' claims that payment of wages grants them an ownership right over the labor of their employees. The value of economic or industrial democracy holds that:

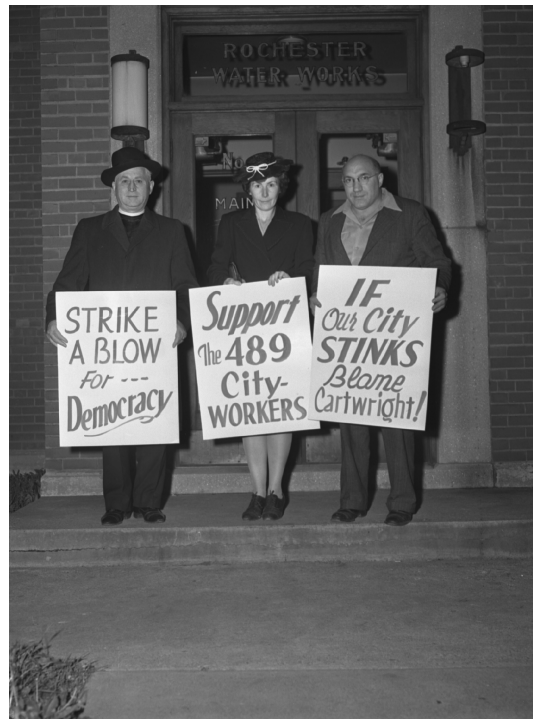
- ▶ Human labor is not a mere commodity that can be bought and owned through payment of wages;
- ▶ Employers hold no "property rights in the labor . . . of another."<sup>53</sup>

Unions oppose both the societal economic ordering and particular employment structures and incentives which treat a person's work like a fungible commodity. Unions oppose hierarchical workplace governance which assumes either that employers and supervisors are "better, smarter" people or that they have a property right over the work of their employees. These practices deny the fundamental humanity, labor dignity, and innate intelligence of working people. Conversely, democracy depends upon recognizing the humanity of individuals in all their life activities. It depends on "dialogue, resistance and hope," which, Cornel West writes, "is the very lifeblood for a vital democratic citizenry." Unions have long championed these values of industrial and economic democracy.

### **c. Strong Unions Value Social Democracy.**

The third aspect of democracy is the value of social democracy. Equal rights and an open society form the foundation for social democracy. West describes social democracy as a "democratic dialogue" that can exist only when society "is open to the humanity of individuals and to the interiority of their personalities."<sup>54</sup> Unions hold that true democracy, this "democratic dialogue," depends on education and the open flow of ideas. The dictates of an open society require **THE PEOPLE** to be as fully informed as possible. Similarly, unions believe in the innate human capacity for resolving problems, particularly through the power of cooperation, sharing, and collective action. Critical reflection and analysis depend on social democracy. Consequently, unions have consistently supported a free public education system. Union support for public education was, and continues to be, grounded in the understanding that education is both key to economic advancement and a powerful device for

**Figure 3.2**  
**Strike a Blow for Democracy** <sup>50</sup>



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<sup>53</sup>This quotation by Andrew Furuseth, one the leaders of California Federation of Labor at the turn of the Century, illustrates labor's historic position and agitation on this issue. See Andrew Furuseth, *Government by Injunction—The Misuses of Equity Power* (circa 1910), quoted in, THOMAS R. CLARK, *DEFENDING RIGHTS: LAW, LABOR POLITICS, AND THE STATE IN CALIFORNIA, 1890–1925*, p. 133 (Detroit, Wayne State University Press, 2002).

<sup>54</sup>Which West describes as "free self-creation" that "take seriously [the] quests for wisdom and justice." WEST, *DEMOCRACY MATTERS*, *supra*, pp. 110–101.

social leveling. Unions—particularly unions of public education employees—value ideas. Unions also understood that an educated electorate is essential to self-determination in a democratic society. Unions share the conviction that “Power has only one duty—to secure the social welfare of the people.”<sup>55</sup> In this regard, Cornel West recognizes that “the voices of our great democratic truth tellers” demonstrate that “[d]emocracy is not a system of governance, as we tend to think of it, but a cultural way of being.”<sup>56</sup> Unions have a long and valued tradition based on this commitment: They turn it into a battle against injustice.

### 3. Unions Value Justice, the Common-Good, Sharing, and Community.

Justice, altruism, and a belief in the merit of the common-good are also critical union core values.<sup>57</sup> Unions have concern for humanity and the welfare of others. Unions hold that collective, community interests have as much, if not more, merit than self-interest. Unionists supported enactment of child labor laws and countless other social justice causes that help to create a more just and democratic society. Cooperation and sharing are fundamental tenants of basic unionism. As Martin Luther King, Jr. observed: “Power without love is reckless and abusive. . . and love without power is sentimental and anemic. Power at its best is love implementing the demands of justice.”

### 4. Unions Value Advocacy.

Unions also value engagement and agitation.<sup>58</sup> These are that part of our intellectual life where vitality is located. It is where ideas are born, bred, and brought forth. Thus, unions are committed to Advocacy, both on behalf of their own members and the less powerful in society. They support popular pressure in the democratic tradition. As such, unions value peaceful, collective action to obtain justice and create progress. Unions hold that constructive, managed conflict is often needed to preserve and promote the “right” and it is a worthy action. As Alinsky advised, conflict is the vital core of an open society.<sup>59</sup> Again, Frederick Douglass’ oft repeated observation about advocacy and struggle capsulizes the salient point. He observed:<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup>A conviction originally articulated by the Nineteenth Century English prime minister, Benjamin Disraeli, in his book SYBIL OR: THE TWO NATIONS, book IV chapter 15 (London: 1845).

<sup>56</sup>WEST, DEMOCRACY MATTERS, *supra*, p. 68. West describes this duty as the “Prophetic tradition” of democracy. In America, the democratic tradition experienced a “deepening” which “is simply not a matter of expansion of Civil Rights and liberties for all Americans. . . .” For West, the American democratic tradition entailed “the recasting of the contours of democratic vision and the re-creating of the contents of democratic modes of existence.” This heritage reflects the commitment to simultaneously embrace the values of “robust dialogue,” “sustained resistance” combined with “patient resilience,” and “indistinguishable hope.” *Id.* Pp. 92–93.

<sup>57</sup>Not only do unions value justice, sharing, and common good, they understand the need to fight for these fundamental values. See, e.g., [Mother Jones, Excerpts from Her Speeches](#); [Walter Reuther’s “We Shall March Together” speech](#); [Harry Bridges: In His Own Words](#); and [A. Philip Randolph, Excerpts from His Speeches and Writings](#), in [Appendix 5, \*infra\*](#). While these core-values are central to the union ethos, they have never been more eloquently articulated than they were in [Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s “Four Freedoms” speech](#), in [Appendix 5, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>58</sup>Harry Bridges clearly and definitively articulated the relation between labor power, union representation, and organizing. See [Harry Bridges: In His Own Words](#), in [Appendix 5, \*infra\*](#). Nonetheless, labor probably know no truer and more dedicated advocate than Mother Jones. She not only could mobilize downtrodden and fearful, but she show how one person could make a difference with a little courageous and a lot of perseverance. See, e.g., [Mother Jones, Excerpts from Her Speeches](#), in [Appendix 5, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>59</sup>[Norden, \*Alinsky Playboy Interview\*](#), 19(3) PLAYBOY MAGAZINE, at p. 170, in [Appendix 3, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>60</sup>Frederick Douglass, Letter to an abolitionists associate, 1849.

Let me give you a word on the philosophy of reform. The whole history of human liberty shows that all concessions yet made to her of August claims have been born of earnest struggle. The conflict has been exciting, agitating, all absorbing, and to the time being putting all other tumults to silence. It must do this or it does nothing. If there is no struggle there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, yet depreciate agitation, are men who want rain without thunder and lightning. They want the ocean without the roar of its many waves. The struggle may be a moral one; or it may be a physical one; or it may be both moral and physical; but it must be a struggle. Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did any and never will.

Unions value cooperative, collective, concerted action because it is an essential vehicle to achieve a just society.

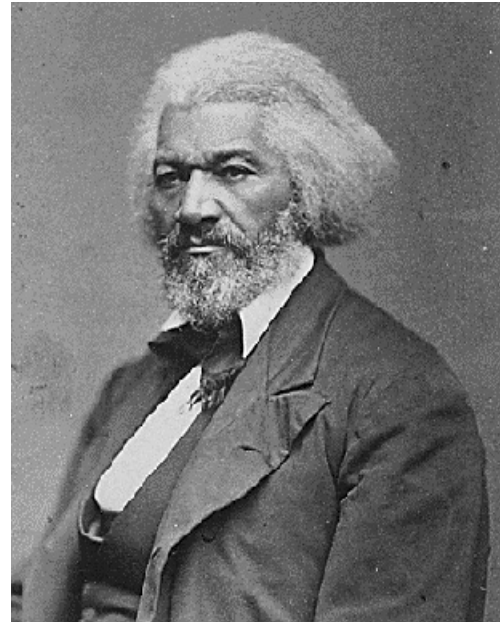
## 5. Unions Value Compromise.

Another core-union value is compromise. For unions, the value of compromise is based on the belief that, “Men can live together and succeed in accomplishing things cooperatively only if they have the patience and the intelligence to compromise.”<sup>61</sup> Unions value compromise as a method of practical problem-solving and a tool for incremental and ongoing progress. This method results in working solutions which will be revised in light of further experience. This value eschews absolute victories based on uncompromised, uncompromising political or ideological principles.<sup>62</sup>

## 6. Unions Value Labor Dignity.

Moreover, unions respect the value of work. Unions understand that there is intrinsic value in human labor.<sup>63</sup> Unionists take pride in their own work and they acknowledge the merit of other people’s. The shibboleth “A fair day’s wage for a fair day’s work” has long been a fundamental union core-value.<sup>64</sup> Traditionally, the union battle cry was as much about the merit and quality of the work as it is about the adequacy of the pay. This core-value recognizes that decisions regarding the quality and quantity of a person’s work are not the exclusive prerogative of the employer. The value asserts that

**Figure 3.3**  
**Frederick Douglass (1818-1895)**



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<sup>61</sup>Randall, *On the Importance of Being Unprincipled*, 7 (2) THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR (Spring 1938), in [Appendix 5, infra](#). Randall’s article explores this tension between compromise (referred to by Randall as “political intelligence”) and political or ideological “principles” in detail.

<sup>62</sup>See DAVID BRODY, IN LABOR’S CAUSE: MAIN THEMES IN THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN WORKER p. 87–88 (NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 1993).

<sup>63</sup>See Mechanics’ Union of Trade Associations, [Preamble to the Constitution](#), in [Appendix 5, infra](#).

<sup>64</sup>Wellman quotes a charter member of the International Longshoreman and Warehouse Union and a CIO militant as: “In spite of all my contempt and hatred for the goddamn ship owners, once I took a job, I felt an obligation to work. I don’t understand the guy that took a job and didn’t want to do a goddamn thing.” The longshoreman continued: “I figured if you went to work, you know, you put in some work. You don’t kill yourself, but you work.” DAVID WELLMAN, THE UNION MAKES US STRONG: RADIAL UNIONISM ON THE SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT p. 183 (Cambridge, U.K: Cambridge University Press, 1995).

employees—the people who actually do the work—have an equal stake in the decision making. Responsibility for this equal stake in the outcome requires that employees actually perform their work according the safety, quality, and quantity standards they set in their own the codes of conduct. In their common interest, the people actually doing the work develop these “codes” to specify and regulate day-to-day work practices and expectations.<sup>65</sup>

In theory, this core-value of labor dignity is simple. In practice, the codes of conduct specifying day-to-day work standards and expectations required to implement the core-value are more complex. By necessity, adherence to the core-value requires standards for self-regulation and accountability. Under these codes of conduct, union members “will actively cooperate with management to get the job done. They recognize that everyone—labor and management—has a stake in honest work and producing a high quality work product. For labor, this stake goes beyond mere job security: It reflects the traditional value of professional pride-of-workmanship. Wellman concludes: “By recognizing the legitimacy of these principles, management is, in effect, acknowledging the personhood or the citizenship rights”<sup>66</sup> of the employees. On the other hand, however, “when supervisors act unilaterally, disregarding” these standards for self-regulation and accountability, “work stops, and class antagonisms erupt. Business as usual ceases and class relations become hostile; the principles for self-regulation are transformed into standards for resistance.”<sup>67</sup>

## 7. Power and the Relational and Interpretive Functions of Values.

Obviously, the six areas of positive union values discussed above are not the only values held by unions. Nor are they the only values that facilitate strong, effective, member-responsive organizations. However, promoting these positive values of basic unionism held by your own members and assisting them to recognize these values and identify their own shared core-values is the key to building a union’s organizational power.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup>WELLMAN, *THE UNION MAKES US STRONG* pp. 178– 199, describes two “rules of working etiquette” or codes of conduct, referred to as “watch the game” and “do the right thing,” which govern longshoremen’s day-to-day work on the docks. “Watch the game” is an admonition from one longshoreman to another to observe worker developed safely rules. But it extends beyond work safety, “[t]he ‘game’ is everything. In addition to safety, it is politics, productivity, and community. Watching the game therefore means being aware: being alert to activities that are dangerous to the union; and being alive to options for survival. Translated into a different language, watching the game is being socially conscious. Longshoremen who watch the game are therefore said to be ‘doing the right thing.’” *Id.* p. 182.

Wellman also observes that the work of West coast longshoremen “entails cognitive work and is mostly unsupervised, longshoremen have considerable latitude for determining the quality and pace of work. But there are also limits. A certain degree of productivity must be met and an agreed-upon level of quality.” He continues: “There is a tension, then, between freedom and restraint.” “The dynamic between freedom and restraint makes a kind of working etiquette necessary for waterfront work to be accomplished. Longshoremen must know how to work with freedom, without abusing it. The collectively bargained contract establishes only the outer limits of permissibility. Thus, over the years, rules have emerged for how to maneuver the limits of freedom on the job.” *Id.* p. 182. In these regards, the work of the longshoreman is similar—but certainly not identical—to that of NEA affiliate primary contact staff (*i.e.*, *UniServ Directors, Staff Consultants, Regional Organizers, etc.*). “‘Do the right thing’ . . . is used in numerous contexts. . . . ‘Doing the right thing’ on the job means, among other things, to ‘do the job right.’ It also means ‘working union.’ ‘Working union,’ refers to figuring out solutions for problems and coming up with solutions that do not sabotage the union or the men. ‘Working union,’ then, is one aspect of ‘doing the right thing.’” *Id.* p. 183.

<sup>66</sup>Wellman, *The Union Makes Us Strong* p. 193.

<sup>67</sup>WELLMAN, *THE UNION MAKES US STRONG* p. 193.

<sup>68</sup>See [Organizing a Stronger CSO Through Core Values](#) Project, in [Appendix 4, infra](#), for a case study of this kind of organizing effort.



Even the six values discussed in this GUIDE are not always simple. The potential for a conflict exists even among the values of basic unionism. For example, there is always a tension between the values of advocacy and compromise. As a general matter, effective unions do not compromise on the value of advocacy for their members. Nonetheless, collective bargaining and the current system of union representation in the United States necessitate compromise with the employer. Certainly, this compromise does not mean “selling out” or making “accommodations” with the employer that are not solely and exclusively in the interests of the union’s membership.

While true in the abstract, these broad generalizations may be distinctively unhelpful in day-to-day decision making. We believe the only way to deal with these tensions and avoid fatal contradictions is to rigorously think-through day-to-day problems and balance the positive values of basic unionism. Of course, this requires that unions know “where they are going.” And this means that unions must have express, clearly articulated goals and objectives to guide their conduct.<sup>69</sup> Resolution of potential value conflicts requires unions and their members to interpret their interests, goals, and moral choices and then act together to promote their values in their own workplace and the world beyond it.

### Example 3.5 A Graphic Illustration of Union Core Values

Many unions have and continue to accentuate their core values to cement members’ support and to build power. The organizing approach used by the Industrial Workers of the World provides classic example. The IWW’s “What We Stand For,”<sup>70</sup> illustrated in Figure 3.4 at the left, simply identifies the IWW’s core-values and presents them in a clear, persuasive graphic form. However, the illustration does not merely educate observers by identifying nine of the core values on which the IWW “stands.” It also agitates for worker solidarity with the admonition to “Think it over” and then join the IWW in fight to retain the “full product” of their own labor.

Figure 3.4  
IWW Core Values



Certainly, union values play a critical role in guiding both union decision making and union conduct. However, the role of values and basic unionism extends beyond their function as a moral compass for union action. Members’ core-values and the values of basic unionism are powerful motivational vehicles for mobilizing peoples’ sense of right and wrong. By engaging their sense of right and wrong, core-values and the values of basic unionism motivate people to act. They motivate people to join with others and participate in the union’s concerted activities, not only to redress their personal grievances, but also to set things right. These relational and interpretive functions of core-values play an essential role in building union power through organizing.

<sup>69</sup>In Chapter 4 Plan: Strategic Navigation, *infra*, this GUIDE assists unions in navigating toward their objectives through a rigorous planning process.

<sup>70</sup>Reprinted courtesy of the Industrial Workers of the World.

## D.

### **GOOD UNION VALUES ARE EVIDENCED IN THE HISTORY AND HERITAGE OF AMERICA'S UNIONS.**

Strong, effective unions are value-based organizations that rely on organizing to achieve their goals and objectives. The evidence for this fact need not be understood from an abstract discussion of core-values alone. This fact can be illustrated by another approach to understanding union core-values—labor history. America's unions have long held several consistent, recurring values or policy objectives in common. Historically, these common shared-values tell unions' "greater story."

#### **1. The Heritage of the Labor Movement Supports Democratic Values.**

Common union policy objectives illustrate the core-union values of basic unionism. Unions have consistently supported the democratic values of "free speech" and "freedom of association."<sup>71</sup> In fact, the modern conception of freedom of speech may owe its very existence to the free speech fights of one union, the International Workers of the World. Between 1909 and the start of World War I, the IWW waged an ongoing battle to defend union organizers' and citizens' free speech across the country.<sup>72</sup> For the IWW, "the first great struggle" "was for the free speech necessary to spread and organize."<sup>73</sup> Like many other unions both before and after, the IWW also fought for the right to organize embodied in the freedom of association.<sup>74</sup> In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the labor movement attached its cause to American's "republican heritage—to equal rights, to citizenship, to the vision of a virtuous society of independent producers."<sup>75</sup> "[O]rganized labor has never abandoned what was essential in the pure-and-simple formulation. . . . [of] the republican values of the larger society."<sup>76</sup>

**Figure 3.5**  
**CIO's Anti-Discrimination**



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<sup>71</sup>See BRODY, IN *LABOR'S CAUSE* p.85 (In 1834 the Declaration of Rights of the General Trade Union of Boston advocated the "republic[an] form of government under which they associate, [which] requires that they should state to their fellow citizens, the motives which actuate" the union.)

<sup>72</sup>For example, Missoula in 1909; Spokane from 1909 to 1910; Fresno in 1910–1911; Aberdeen in 1911–1912; San Diego in 1912; Kansas City in 1914; Everett in 1916. See FONER, 4 *HISTORY OF LABOR MOVEMENT* pp. 172–173.

<sup>73</sup>RICHARD O. BOYER & HERBER M. MORAS, *LABOR'S UNTOLD STORY* p. 173 (NY: United Electrical Workers of America, 1955). "It was generally held, particularly in the West, the First Amendment did not apply to the IWW because its cowboys, lumberjacks, and minors were un-American. The IWW fought for free speech by exercising it, and exercising it on such a wholesale scale wherever it was threatened that the jails bulged and the streets echoed with the forbidden word until the authorities rued the day they had ever banned it."

<sup>74</sup>See FONER, 4 *HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT* p. 172.

<sup>75</sup>Brody, In *Labor's Cause* p.85. Trade societies before the Civil War "emphasized the rights of man in general and social equality in particular. . ." Trade unions and their wage earning members relied on the "abstract notions of the equal citizenship contained in the Declaration [of Independence], and . . . then proced[ed] to search for the remedies to which would square reality with the idea. Hence, it was that the aspiration toward equal citizenship became the keynote of labor's earliest political movement." PERLMAN, *HISTORY OF TRADE UNIONISM* p. 10.

<sup>76</sup>BRODY, IN *LABOR'S CAUSE* pp.88–89.

## 2. The Heritage of the Labor Movement Advances Education.

Almost from the beginning union leaders demanded free public schools.<sup>77</sup> Many unions have also vigorously supported both free, universal education for all children and state funded adult education.<sup>78</sup> This Support for publicly financed education has been a prominent part of union policy as early as the pre-Civil War trade societies and the Knights of Labor.<sup>79</sup> The IWW, the AFL, and the CIO—each in turn—continued to demand free public education for all children.<sup>80</sup> Nation-wide, unions also supported raising the compulsory attendance age of the states’ “school leaving laws” to extend public educational opportunities to all children.<sup>81</sup> As public education comes under increasing attack and privatization or for-profit schools are increasingly the vogue, only the labor movement can be counted on to consistently uphold the true American value of a free public education for all.

Adult education,<sup>82</sup> and in particular peer education of workers by their union colleagues, has long been a prominent element of the union movement. In fact, what has now become known as “popular education” has been a key element in successful organizing from the beginning. “Precious little social change in the world has occurred that has not involved education, except that which has come from the barrel of a gun. People’s knowledge and understanding of their world is the consequence of education, regardless of its source.”<sup>83</sup> For unions, education is an integral component of their general efforts for social transformation, a part of their quest to create a better world for ordinary people.<sup>84</sup> Perhaps carrying this conviction to an extreme, as early as the 1890’s one labor

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<sup>77</sup>In America of the early 1800’s, schools charged enrollment fees which most working people often could not afford. In 1827, William Heighton (one of the founding leaders of the Mechanics’ Union of Trade Associations) argued for free public schools in a pamphlet entitled, “An Address to the Members of Trade Societies and to the Working Class Generally.”

<sup>78</sup>Some of the most simple and most stirring justifications for universal, free public education can be found in the advocacy of Mother Jones. Mother Jones viewed education as a critically important social goal. FONER, *MOTHER JONES SPEAKS* pp. 250, 273. She also viewed education and the availability of schools as a measure of successful union organizing. *Id.*, p. 378.

<sup>79</sup>See PERLMAN, *HISTORY OF TRADE UNIONISM* pp. 14–16 and on trade union support for free universal education before the Civil War. See DAVID MONTGOMERY, *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF LABOR: THE WORK PLACE, THE STATE, AND AMERICAN LABOR ACTIVISM, 1865-1925*, p. 167 (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1999) and FONER, *2 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT* pp. 75–76 for the Knights of Labor’s support universal and for adult education.

<sup>80</sup>See LEE BALLIET, *SURVEY OF LABOR RELATIONS* p. 23 (Washington, D.C.: Bureau of National Affairs 1981); FONER, *4 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT* p. 172 for the IWW support for education on economic theory and industrial relations and THOMAS R. BROOKS, *TOIL AND TROUBLE: A HISTORY OF AMERICAN LABOR* pp. 25, 153–154 (2d ed. NY, NY: Delacortes Press, 1971) on the AF of L and the CIO support for education.

<sup>81</sup>MONTGOMERY, *THE FALL OF THE HOUSE OF LABOR* p. 167.

<sup>82</sup>On labor’s support for adult education, see BALLIET, *SURVEY OF LABOR RELATIONS* p. 23 and FONER, *4 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT* pp. 75–76 on the Knights of Labor; FONER, *4 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT* p. 172 on the IWW. The position of organized labor’s support for adult education has been wide and varied. For example, during the later part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century first two decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century in California, the California Federation of Labor played a prominent role in campaigns to guarantee and extend the availability of University Extension courses for working people. See CLARK, *DEFENDING RIGHTS* pp. 129, 206 and the authorities cited therein.

<sup>83</sup>J. Hurst, *Popular Education, Labor, and Social Change*, in, LINDA DELP, MIRANDA OUTMAN-KRAMER, SUSAN J. SCHURMAN, KENT WONG, (eds.), *TEACHING FOR CHANGE: POPULAR EDUCATION AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT* p. 9 (Los Angeles, Ca.: UCLA Center for Labor Research and Education, 2002. Hurst defines the term as: “Popular education is at heart the empowerment of adults through democratically structured cooperatives study and action, directed towards achieving a more just, equitable, and peaceful societies. It seeks to build people’s capacity to create democratic social change through education.” *Id.*, p. 11.

<sup>84</sup>Hurst, *Popular Education, Labor, and Social Change*, in, DELP, *TEACHING FOR CHANGE* pp. 12–13. Brookwood Labor College, one of the most prominent schools in the American labor college movement of 1920’s and 1930’s,

leader, Peter J. McGuire, saw unions not as ends in themselves but as a means “to educate our class, to prepare it for the changes to come . . .” from union led societal reforms.<sup>85</sup> Elaine Bernard of the Harvard Trade Union Program, asserts a more contemporary view concluding: “The real power of popular education is. . . its content. The core content of popular education is critical thinking and empowerment.”<sup>86</sup>

As a result, adult peer education also functions as a part of organizing’s impetus to action.<sup>87</sup> In the COG method’s **LISTEN** step, organizing begins with people’s own experiences. Elaine Bernard asserts, popular education gives union members “**the tools to analyze their situation and to take action to transform themselves and their conditions.**” For organizers and labor educators, she continues:

[P]opular education helps us generate an assertive, critical thinking, united workforce that participates in unions. This kind of participation can make unions the vital, democratic, collective organizations they need to be to forge a community of interest among workers and to fight for rights in the workplace and justice for working people in the broader society.<sup>88</sup>

In this regard, unions have a long tradition of employing education as a means of raising bargaining unit members’ expectations, expanding their understanding of shared-values and common interests, and challenging them to act through their collective power. The enduring truth of Paul Christopher’s observation on the role and function of education capsulizes its ultimate value in organizing: “New unions do not become established unions without workers’ education. The need for a continuing simple program of basic education in the everyday problems a local union must meet and overcome is demonstrated by the long list of local unions that ‘used to be.’”<sup>89</sup>

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succinctly articulated the objective of popular education as follows: “Brookwood thinks of the labor movement both as a practical instrument by which workers achieve higher wages, shorter hours, and better conditions of work and as a great social force having as its ultimate goal the good life for all men in the social order free from the exploitation and based on control by the workers. Brookwood frankly aims to aspire and treating its students for activity in a militant labor movement.” *Id.*, p. 14–15, *quoting*, *The Brookwood Bulletin* (1932–33).

<sup>85</sup>BRODY, IN *LABOR’S CAUSE* p. 94. McGuire was one of the founders of the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners in 1881.

<sup>86</sup>E. Bernard, *Popular Education: Training Rebels with a Cause*, in, DELP, *TEACHING FOR CHANGE* p. 7. This GUIDE is predicated on the conviction that “*Strategic Thinking*” is one of three preconditions essential to the understand required for effective organizing. The three essential preconditions for this understanding are:

- Subject matter **Knowledge** of organizing concepts, principles, dynamics, and practices: The *Know-what* need to organize.
- Insights and skills from experience or **Practice** developed out of organizing activities, processes, and practices: The *Know-how* gained from the experience.
- Disposition to **Strategic Thinking** to promote and maintain integrated patterns of thought and behavior for mindful assessment, reasoning, judgment, problem-solving, and decision making: The *Know-whether* determined by mindful reasoning and decision making.

<sup>87</sup>J. Hurst, *Popular Education, Labor, and Social Change*, in, DELP, *TEACHING FOR CHANGE* p. 12.

<sup>88</sup>E. Bernard, *Popular Education*, in, DELP, *TEACHING FOR CHANGE* p. 7 [emphasis in original].

<sup>89</sup>S. Williams, *Highlander and Labor: Building on the Past, Looking to the Future*, in, DELP, *TEACHING FOR CHANGE* p. 7 [emphasis in original]. Christopher made the observation in 1945 as the CIO’s Tennessee regional director.

### 3. The Heritage of the Labor Movement Advocates Social Reform.

Unions have also been prominent supporters of social reforms at both the federal and the state levels. Nationally during the late 19<sup>th</sup> to the middle of 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries, unions supported—and frequently led—the efforts for progressive legislation and reforms,<sup>90</sup> including minimum wage laws, child labor laws,<sup>91</sup> the eight-hour work day laws,<sup>92</sup> labor relations laws,<sup>93</sup> equal pay laws for women.<sup>94</sup> During this period, many unions also lead progressive reform movements in their states.<sup>95</sup> Labor has long opposed racial and other forms of discrimination (as figure 3.5 illustrates). Certainly, there have been notable exceptions to the generally enlightened and progressive social and political positions of organized labor, particularly on matters of racial justice.<sup>96</sup> Nonetheless, many unions also have a long history of support for equal rights for women, and for racial and ethnic minorities.<sup>97</sup>

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<sup>90</sup>Even during its leadership by Gompers, the AF of L did not totally abstain from support of social reform. The AF of L endorsed and lobbied for reform of child and prison labor, as well as reforms of the political system, such as initiative and referendum. *See generally* JULIE GREENE, *PURE AND SIMPLE POLITICS: THE AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM, 1881–1917*, pp. 81–82 (NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1998).

<sup>91</sup>MONTGOMERY, *THE FALL OF LABOR* pp. 167–168; R Walker, *The AFL and Child-Labor Legislation: An Exercise in Frustration*, 11 (3) *LABOR HISTORY* pp. 344–366 (Fall 1961).

<sup>92</sup>*See* BALLIET, *SURVEY OF LABOR RELATIONS* pp. 18, 23–25 for support of eight-hour day laws by the National Labor Union in the 1860's; Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions and the Knights of Labor in the late 1880's; and the AFL. *See generally* GREENE, *PURE AND SIMPLE POLITICS* pp. 81, 87.

<sup>93</sup>*See* BALLIET, *SURVEY OF LABOR RELATIONS* pp. 32–34; Greene, *Pure and Simple Politics*, pp 81, 84–85, 246–248; FORBATH, *LAW AND THE LABOR MOVEMENT* pp. 119, 164–165; CLARK, *DEFENDING RIGHTS* pp. 85–89, 100–105, 112–125, 225–229.

<sup>94</sup>*See* BALLIET, *SURVEY OF LABOR RELATIONS* p. 18 for support of equal pay for women by National Labor Union; KIM MOODY, *AN INJURY TO ALL: THE DECLINE OF AMERICAN UNIONISM* p. 23 (London, Verso, 1988) for the CIO's formal policy of egalitarianism regarding female membership and equal pay for equal work.

<sup>95</sup>In California, for example, organized labor prominently supported numerous progressive reforms between early 1900s and WWII. Some of these reforms—like repeated sponsorship of the anti-injunction legislation to prevent judicial interference in free speech, picketing, and strike efforts—directly benefitted organized labor. *See* CLARK, *DEFENDING RIGHTS* pp. 85–89, 100–105, 112–125. *However, many labor supported economic and social reforms went well beyond the immediate concern of unions and the direct self-interest of their members.* These reform efforts to defend the interests of workers (both unorganized and union represented), farmers, and consumers included: *school reforms* (e.g., free public education and textbooks for all children and adults education; school improvement); *social reforms* (e.g., state financed health insurance, public works, municipal ownership of public utilities; civil service reform); *workplace reforms* (e.g., workmen's compensation; protective labor legislation for women and children; universal eight-hour day laws; minimum wage laws for both men and women; unemployment insurance; implementation of state investigative and regulatory agencies responsible for work to place conditions, sanitary conditions, and an array of safety concerns); *justice reforms* (e.g., funding for public defenders; removal of property qualifications for jurors); *political reforms* (e.g., women's suffrage, abolition of the poll tax, adoption of the initiative, referendum, and recall provisions) . *See* CLARK, *DEFENDING RIGHTS, supra*, pp. 40, 125–131, 206 and the authorities cited therein; WILLIAM E. FORBATH, *LAW AND THE SHAPING OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT* pp. 119, 164–165 (Cambridge, Ma.: Harvard Univ. Press, 1991).

<sup>96</sup>Unfortunately, the AF of L's actions on both equal rights and on organizing black and female workers were less enlightened. From the late 1880's, the AF of L maintained a formal policy supporting equal rights: "The A.F. of L. affirms that one of the cardinal principles of the trade union movement is that the people most organize, unite and federate, irrespective of creed, color, sex, nationality or politics." FONER, *2 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT* pp. 367–368. Despite this policy, for most of its history, AF of L tolerated racial and sex-based exclusionary membership policies by its affiliates and the odious practice of maintaining segregated membership through "auxiliary" unions. HARRIS, *KEEPING THE FAITH*, pp. 6–10, 23–25; JERVIS ANDERSON, *A. PHILIP RANDOLPH: A BIOGRAPHICAL PORTRAIT* pp. 90–92, 209–211, 285–295 (Berkeley, Ca.: Univ. Calif. Press, 1986); FONER, *2 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT* pp. 195–204, 345–361, 364–368; MELINDA CHATEAUVERT, *MARCHING TOGETHER: WOMEN OF THE BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS* pp. 3–4, 74–75, 93–94 (Chicago, Il.: Univ. of Il. Press, 1998).

<sup>97</sup>Broad-based unions like the National Labor Union in the late 1860's and later the Knight of Labor sought to create

## E.

### **THE VALUES OF LABOR CONFLICT WITH THE VALUES OF EMPLOYERS.**

The best of union core-values stand in marked contrast to the self-interested, short-sighted orientations of many employers. The fundamental divergence or conflicts between the values and interests of unions and employers are inherently structural. These conflicts reflect the extremes of fundamental societal tensions. They are inherent in the prevailing American employment relationship itself. The existence of these fundamental, structural conflicts has significant and reoccurring effects on union organizing. Most immediately, these conflicts are frequently reflected in the day-to-day operating behavior of unions and employers. Table 3.1, below, illustrates the divergences between prototypical union and employer values and interests. While the divergences illustrated in Table 3.1 represent polar extremes on a continuum, each dimension finds real life manifestations in the best unions and the worst management.

Generally, the day-in-day-out operating behaviors of labor and management are also quite different. Moreover, in reality, workplaces differ widely. Some unions closely reflect the ideal. From day-to-day, the operations of others unions may actually reflect only some of these values or inconsistently act on them. The same is true for employers. The operating behaviors of some employers are every bit as bad as the prototype “worst employer.” As a result, organizers must assess their own organizing environment to determine the operating of both their union and the employer. One of the implications of the divergency between unions and employers operating behaviors is that, when employees deal with employers as individuals, their working conditions will tend to get *worse* rather than better. In order to create a balance of power with the employer, employees must act together in the workplace. This dynamic gives the values of solidarity and “an injury to one is an injury to all” their overwhelming worth and power. Table 3.2, below, illustrates the divergences between unions and employers operating behaviors.

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all-inclusive labor solidarity and at least voiced the need for unity in the struggle against management, regardless of sex or race. In particular, the Knights actively recruited black workers. FONER, 2 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT pp. 56–57, 64–74; WILLIAM H. HARRIS, KEEPING THE FAITH: A. PHILIP RANDOLPH, MILTON P. WEBSTER AND THE BROTHERHOOD OF SLEEPING CAR PORTERS 1925–37, pp. 5–6 (Il.: Univ. Illinois Press, 1991).

Unfortunately, the AF of L’s less than enlightened inaction on equal rights and on organizing women and minority workers marked an aberrant departure from labor’s generally progressive positions on the issues. Even during the hegemony of the AFL, a small number of AF of L unions worked to represent and extend equal rights (e.g. the Western Federation of Miners and the United Mine Workers of America) as, of course, did the AF of L unions that primarily represented minority workers (e.g., the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters). See [A. Philip Randolph, Excerpts from His Speeches and Writings, in Appendix 5, infra](#). FONER, 9 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT, *supra*, pp. 326–327. These enlighten unions also included the AFL’s critics and rivals (like the IWW first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century and the Trade Union Educational League in the 1920’s) and prominent international unions (like the Amalgamated Association of Iron and Steel Workers in the 1880’s).

Following the AF of L era, a majority organized labor voiced the need for worker unity, regardless of sex, race, or origin. The Congress of Industrial Organizations in the 1930’s and 40’s. Individual union leaders also fought for equal rights—if unsuccessfully—against the tide of exclusion. Eugene Debbs’ work in the American Railway Union is but one of the shining examples. See *generally* BOYER & MORAIS, LABOR’S UNTOLD STORY, pp. 32–33, 291; MONTGOMERY, THE FALL OF LABOR pp. 30, 84–85; FONER, 2 & 9 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT pp. 254–257 & and p. 327, respectively; MOODY, AN INJURY TO ALL pp. 21, 23. At various times both the IWW and the CIO denounced the AFL’s practices and policies of discriminating against blacks and the foreign born. See FONER, 4 & 9 HISTORY OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT *supra*, pp. 37, 327, *respectively*; ANDERSON, A. PHILIP RANDOLPH, *supra*, pp. 90–92, 296; HARRIS, KEEPING THE FAITH, *supra*, pp. 199, 214. Since the mid-1960’s the AFL-CIO has actively supported civil right legislation. See, e.g., the excerpts from [Walter Reuther’s speech to the 1957 NAACP Annual Convention](#) and [George Meany’s Testimony in Favor of Civil Rights Act of 1964, in Appendix 5, infra](#), for the AFL-CIO’s support for equal rights and nondiscrimination.

**Table 3.1**  
**Divergent Values and Interests: Unions vs. Employers**

<i><b>INTEREST OR VALUE</b></i>	<i><b>THE UNION IDEAL</b></i>	<i><b>THE WORST MANAGEMENT</b></i>
<i><b>System orientation is . . .</b></i>	Inclusive	Exclusive
<i><b>System focus is . . .</b></i>	Community of Workers	Collection of Individuals
<i><b>Conduct is . . .</b></i>	Objective treatment, uniform equal treatment for all	Subjective treatment, case-by-case differences and disparities
<i><b>Motivation is . . .</b></i>	Inquisitive (meaningful work)	Acquisitive (“bottom line” profits)
<i><b>Primary value is . . .</b></i>	Collective (“An Injury to One is an Injury to All”)	Individualistic (“Rugged Individualism”)
<i><b>Decision making approach is . . .</b></i>	Democratic	Authoritarian
<i><b>Workplace goal is . . .</b></i>	Professional discretion over each person’s own work	Absolute control over the whole work site and all workers’ performance of their jobs
<i><b>Work compensation objective is . . .</b></i>	High pay, good benefits, decent working conditions	Minimally acceptable pay, benefits, and working conditions
<i><b>Work quality objective is . . .</b></i>	Highest quality possible: Pride of workmanship is more important than profitability	Minimally acceptable quality: Efficiency, profitability is more important than workmanship
<i><b>Tactical orientation is . . .</b></i>	Unity and solidarity	Divide and conquer

Certainly, these are examples of the most common union values. However, essential to core-union values is the belief that rank-and-file union members can and should identify their own core values and the purpose and mission of their own unions. Union members ought to identify and adopt the principles, standards, or qualities they consider worthwhile or desirable. The ability to reach a consensus on shared values ideals, customs and institutions of a society makes unions strong and effective.

**Table 3.2**  
**Operating Behaviors: Unions vs. Employers**

<i>Ideal Union Behaviors</i>	<i>Worst Employer Behaviors</i>
Encourage workers to use their discretion and imagination to collectively “think through” how to perform work or solve problems as they arise: “Act on personal initiative.”	Order workers to comply with procedures and policies developed from above by the boss to perform work and react to problems as they arise: “Follow orders.”
Promote working together with other employees as equals with diverse skills and interests.	Defer to authority in a hierarchal managerial scheme.
Seek the common good for all employees, clients, the enterprise.	Seek only what is good for the boss personally.
Use problems to improve worker skills and the productivity of the enterprise.	Avoid problems and shift responsibility to others.
Help and teach fellow workers, as equals.	Evaluate and control workers, as subordinates.
Assume responsibility and concern for the interests of fellow employees as well as the long-term health and productivity of the enterprise.	Promote the interests of the boss and the short-term profitability of the enterprise.

### III.

## THE VALUE OF ORGANIZING AND THE ATTITUDES OF THE ORGANIZER: BASIC UNIONISM IN ACTION.

“Don’t mourn for me—organize!”  
 — Joe Hill, IWW Organizer shot by the bosses for his trouble

### A.

### **ORGANIZING REFLECTS UNION-CORE VALUES.**

For unions, the word “organizing” has a special meaning. It refers to activities that encourage people to act collectively rather than as individuals. To have a union in the first place, we must *organize* by getting the employees to act collectively by selecting a union as their “exclusive representative.” To then exercise their collective power, exclusive representatives must cultivate and maintain the members’ commitment and spirit of collective action. If not, the union will eventually fall apart. For this reason, unions must *constantly organize* to build solidarity. Certainly, for a union to grow, it must organize new members. However, we don’t organize to attract new members so that they can pay dues or increase market share. We organize for a far more important reason. We organize to build power and join together in the collective spirit of union solidarity. And, in doing so, we attract new members. Building power and creating solidarity require real organizing. Transforming unions into strong, effective organizations is—and should always be—**THE REASON** to organize. This is true



even where fair share payments<sup>98</sup> keep membership numbers—or at least dues levels—high. Member solidarity and participation is the basis for true power. Injustices in the workplace can only be eliminated if we *organize* our members to take collective action. The values on which it is based are as important for union organizers as they are for unions themselves. Union organizing is done by real people with other people, not by structures on a union’s organizational chart with the abstract concept of a bargaining unit.

## **B.**

### **THE MOTIVES AND ATTITUDES OF THE ORGANIZER REFLECTS UNION-CORE VALUES.**

The motives and attitudes of good organizers also reflect union-core values. In general, organizers must:

- ▶ Carefully consider and assess<sup>99</sup> the constraints and opportunities for collective action that confront a union;
- ▶ Select those opportunities that offer the best likelihood for advancing the interests of the union and its members: (*i.e.*, those issues which are most probably winnable) and ;
- ▶ Recognize that some situations or issues do not lend themselves to organizing and should be dealt with in other ways.

These considerations and organizers’ motives and attitudes determine union organizing action.

There are many principles that should shape and guide organizers’ motives, attitudes, and ultimately, their actions. The following six principles are some of the most important.

#### **1. Observe the Alinsky Iron Rule.**

The First of these essential principles governing organizers’ conduct is Saul Alinsky’s “Iron Rule”:

**“Never do for others what they can do for themselves!”**

Organizers only reduce union members’ power by doing the things that they could do for themselves. For that reason, the credit for an organizing success usually goes to others—and appropriately so. Recognition for success motivates unit members to take further action on behalf of their union. Additionally, the unnecessary service involved in doing for members that they could do for themselves diverts time and energy which organizers could devote to more demanding issues or problems.

#### **2. Observe the Essman Corollary to the Iron Rule.**

The Second Principle is the Jim Essman corollary to Alinsky’s “Iron Rule”:

**“Never do for others what they are unwilling to do for themselves!”**

Organizers reduce both their own and union members’ power by doing the things that the members won’t do for themselves. If a union’s members think something is not worth doing, it’s not. The members’ appraisal may be short-sighted, ill-advised, even just plain mistaken, but it is never

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<sup>98</sup>So-called “agency fees” or other organizational security payments.

<sup>99</sup>See [Strategic Thinking Beyond Patterned Responses: An Analysis for Organizers](#), in [Appendix 15](#), *infra*.

WRONG. Doing things for members that they can—but won't do for themselves—transforms an organizer from a valued teacher and leader into an unvalued servant.

### 3. Make the Union Stronger.

The Third Principle is that the organizers' overriding objective should be to use organizing to make the union powerful and more effective. An organizer's reward consists of seeing the union grow and enhance its abilities to represent members' interests more effectively. For that reason, good organizers focus on how an organizing effort can be used to improve and strengthen the union. Good organizers think through the situation before launching any particular organizing activity. For example, good organizers consider:

1. What effect will this particular organizing activity have on the power and the values of the union?
2. How will this particular organizing activity strengthen the union?
3. What will the union be able to do through this particular organizing activity that it cannot do now—or cannot do *well* now?
4. Will the union be in a better position in the future to deal with situations similar to the one it is facing now without an organizer's help?

Good organizers find acceptable answers to these “why” questions before they even begin to consider the “how” questions about employing organizing strategies and tactics.

### 4. Create, Target, and Manage Conflict.

The Fourth Principle is that organizers must willingly create, target, and manage conflict. Gloria Steinem observed: “Power can be taken, but not given. The process of the taking is empowerment in itself.” For this reason, conflict is an essential and an inherent element of progressive change. Conflict is nearly always required to overcome the threats and obstacles created by employer adversaries. Good organizers use conflict to create cohesion within their unions that can seldom—if ever—be achieved through any other means. As a result, successful organizers learn to value and manage conflict. Organizers' attitudes about conflict are critical. Effective organizers view managed conflict as an important tool for change:

- An organizer must view conflict as a constructive rather than a destructive force that—properly managed—can be utilized to achieve organizational gains no other means can provide.
- An organizer must have the ability to stimulate and direct the collective energies of a union while simultaneously creating and managing the conflict necessary to overcome adversity.
- An organizer must be comfortable with and value conflict as an opportunity for progress.

Such learning will come more readily if both organizers and the unit members being organized realize they are not alone. They are both a part of a larger group of people who have:

- ▶ Chosen to take risks;
- ▶ Decided when and how to take the risks; and
- ▶ Risked the act of creating and managing conflict together.

## 5. Make the Union a “Learning Organization.”

The Fifth Principle is that organizers must help, teach, motivate, and lead their unions to learn. A prominent organizational development analyst, Peter Senge, concludes that “ Organizations learn only through individuals who learn. Individual learning does not guarantee organizational learning. But without it no organizational learning occurs.”<sup>100</sup> In order for a union to learn, its organizers *must think!*<sup>101</sup> And good organizers use the values of basic unionism to inform and direct their decisions and analysis. In one way or another, they must employ certain “core disciplines” of thoughtful, rigorous, systematic, insightful, methodical, vigorous, decisive, and accountable reasoning, analytic, and decision making processes. Describing this approach to decision making and analysis as “systemic,” Senge suggested that these core disciplines include:<sup>102</sup>

- Personal Mastery: Developing the capacity to clarify what is most important to us, and to achieve it.
- Mental Modeling: Developing the capacity to reflect on our assumptions and internal pictures of the world to see how they shape our actions.
- Shared Visioning: Building a sense of commitment in a group based on what people want to create.
- Team Learning: Developing the capacity for collective intelligence—balanced inquiry and advocacy.
- Systems Thinking: Developing the capacity for putting pieces together and seeing wholes.

This later discipline, “Systems Thinking,” is a critical intellectual discipline that brings the other four disciplines into practice.<sup>103</sup>

Systems Thinking is the conceptual cornerstone that underlies all of the five learning disciplines. Systems Thinking is a discipline for seeing wholes. Systems Thinking enhances organizational learning by moving learning and evaluation of an organization’s activities and effects from a primarily linear perspective to a capacity to perceive and act *systemically*. Systems Thinking is

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<sup>100</sup>SENGE, THE FIFTH DISCIPLINE, p.139; see also SENGE, *et al.*, THE FIFTH DISCIPLINE FIELDBOOK.

<sup>101</sup>We advocate thinking strategically (*i.e.*, use of thoughtful, rigorous, systematic, insightful, methodical, vigorous, decisive, and accountable reasoning, analytic and decision making processes). Others have described a similar process as “mindfulness” and “reflective intelligence” *See, e.g.*, ELLEN J. LANGER, MINDFULNESS (NY: Addison-Wesley Pub. Co., 1989) and DAVID N. PERKINS, OUTSMARTING IQ: THE EMERGING SCIENCE OF LEARNABLE INTELLIGENCE (NY: Free Press, 1995), respectively. In explaining a “reflective view of intelligence,” Perkins demonstrates that good thinking—mindful, reflective intelligence—is learnable: “people can learn to think and act much more intelligently.” Perkins emphasizes that good thinking depends a number of characteristics including good “mental management” (*i.e.*, “knowing what questions to ask yourself, using problem-solving strategies, monitoring and striving to direct and improve your own thinking”). To learn and practice good “mental management,” Perkins advocates use of what he refers to as “mindware,” which is “anything a person can learn—a strategy, an attitude, a habit—that extends the person’s general powers to think critically and creatively.” This GUIDE advocates, applies, identifies, describes a wide variety of “Thinking Tools.” These Thinking Tools direct, guide, organize, and support thought processes for thinking strategically. *See generally* [Chapter 10 THINK: STRATEGIC THINKING AND THE USE OF THINKING TOOLS IN ORGANIZING](#), *infra*. As such, they are “mindware” under Perkins’ definition. *See also* PERKINS, OUTSMARTING IQ, pp. 13, 99.

In [Appendix 15](#), we identify common “thinking problems,” elaborate on the characteristics and dimensions of effective thinking, and describe how unions can develop a “thinking culture” to assure organizing success.

<sup>102</sup>SENGE, THE FIFTH DISCIPLINE pp. 57–272.

<sup>103</sup>*See* [Systems Thinking: Working Documents](#), in [Resource Document 4](#), *infra*.

a conceptual framework, a body of knowledge, and a set of Thinking Tools. Systems Thinking makes patterns clearer and helps us see how to change these patterns effectively. Systems Thinking permits unions to understand the structures that underlie complex situations, discern the dynamics operating in particular social systems and organizations, and differentiate high from low leverage change mechanisms. To do so, Systems Thinking offers a language that begins by restructuring how we think. Today, Systems Thinking is needed more than ever because we are becoming overwhelmed by complexity. The purpose of Systems Thinking is to:

- ▶ Learn to work with the forces of systems rather against them; to better navigate systems completely.
- ▶ Discover the systemic structure behind problems.
- ▶ Tell compelling stories that describe your picture (mental model) of a system.
- ▶ Capture and understand other people's mental models.
- ▶ Foster team learning through state-of-the-art tools and methodologies.
- ▶ Identify higher leverage interventions that solve problems so they stay solved by better anticipating the intended impact and unintended consequences of our choices.
- ▶ Understand the choices rather than the answers imbedded in divergent problems.

To promote organizational learning, an effective organizer acts as a teacher and a leader who:

- Understands how we create our own futures.
- Gives voice and attention to the long-term.
- Sees “the big picture.”
- Appreciates the interdependencies.
- Works with the forces in the organization's environment, where possible, rather than reflexively opposing them.
- Anticipates unintended consequences.
- Focuses on the causes of problems by identifying both structures and the people who control them.
- Applies pressure, not blame, on the leverage points required for change and progress.
- Recognizes the choices rather than the answers imbedded in divergent problems.

To be effective, organizers must avoid common “Thinking Problems.”<sup>104</sup> Systems Thinking helps organizers over-come the readily avoidable constraints on union advocacy created by these Thinking Problems. Only by mastery of this Fifth Principle's core disciplines can our unions truly become “learning organizations.” The union's organizers must play the key role by helping, by teaching, and by leading their unions to learn through building organizational strength based on true listening and exchanging stories.

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<sup>104</sup>See *Strategic Thinking Beyond Patterned Responses: An Analysis for Organizers*, in *Appendix 15*, *infra*.

## 6. Get Gratification by Building, Not Directing, the Union.

The Sixth Principle is that organizers must obtain their gratification from building rather than directing. Those of us who choose to function as organizers within our unions may need to examine how we derive or will derive our ego satisfactions. While our role may be highly visible in unions where the organizing concept is new, building strength and capacity in our members and our union requires us to keep a low profile and act without public accolade. An organizer's ego satisfaction comes from seeing organizations learn to move themselves and the personal knowledge that he or she had a hand in that growth and movement.

People whose ego needs compel them to seek a public notoriety or acclaim generally do not make good organizers. Their incentive structures lead them to trade strength—inherent in building collective power—for their own public aggrandizement.

### C.

#### **UNION LISTENING GROUNDED ON BASIC UNIONISM INFLUENCES BEHAVIOR.**

In effective organizing, “listening” is not a one-way process. Unions and their organizers must use the dynamic nature of members’ stories to “lead,” in the best sense of the word. Union leaders and organizers tell their own stories to teach and to lead members for specific, predetermined purposes during these exchanges. In this way, union organizers and leaders can use the “listening ↔ story sharing” process to influence the aspirations, views, and the behaviors of their members. In turn, members influence the mission, objectives, and strategies of the union. In effect, this dynamic interchange of evolving stories between members and union organizers is the essential first step to becoming a learning organization and a strong effective union. Organizers use the process to lead through education and agitation.

Through the sharing of stories, the union and its leaders, organizers, and activists listen to unit members to identify their interests, their values, their goals, and their vision of the desired future. In exchange, the organizers share their own values, interests, and desired futures. And both unit members and the organizers also share the history and heritage of their own lives, their union, and that of the labor movement. Organizers also encourage unit members to understand that—in solidarity with others—they have the power to act, to effect change. In these teaching and leading actions, organizers function as a kind of catalyst by bring and binding together two elements. In describing these teaching and leading activities, Marshall Ganz identified both elements: “Organizers work with people to interpret *why they should act* to change their world. . . .”Ganz calls this element “motivation.”Organizers also assist people to understand “*how they can act* to change. . . .” their world. Ganz calls this element “strategy.” He continues:<sup>105</sup>

Organizers motivate action by deepening people’s understanding of who they are, what they want, and why. Mobilizing feelings of anger, courage, hopefulness, self-worth, community and urgency, they challenge feelings of fear, despair, self-doubt, isolation, and apathy that inhibit action. They help people articulate their values as a shared story of challenges they face, why they must face them, and why others should help—rooted in who they are, where they’ve been, and where they want to go.

By exchanging their own stories with bargaining unit members, *the union’s organizers can both teach and lead*. In large part, by “leading” organizers perform an education function. Organizers educate the

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<sup>105</sup>M. Ganz, *What Is Organizing?*, 32 (1) SOCIAL POLICY 16, *supra*, in [Appendix 3](#).

people they are conversing with to build the solidarity which is the basis for successful organizing. Jim Sessions, described the process as follows:<sup>106</sup>

Some of the workers who came to Highland [school when I was there] were not accustomed to sitting in meetings and speaking out publicly. . . . That’s frightening and intimidating for lots of people, especially those where we work in southern Appalachia. So we started with something people feel comfortable with, just telling stories and swapping yarns to build trust and to look for an opening to a personal experience that’s going to be relevant to everybody. . . . Once you got them to finally open up and talk about what they cared for their families, and what they hate about their jobs. . . then the organizers could build a campaign around what people felt strongly about.

What you might call popular education or peer learning is the basis of solidarity. A campaign is not going to win without it. We’ve seen campaigns fail because there was not that solidarity among the rank and file. The reason is that the campaign was never built on what the workers really care about. And organizing that is not built on solid education and leader development is going to be failed organizing. So they’re together, but they’re not the same. One has to lead to the other or its not any good, and one that tries to do it without the other is going to fail. Education and organizing need each other.

To effectively lead, organizers must not only draw people out in conversation. To promote both a union’s immediate message and build a long term public relationship, organizers must also teach and educate by helping people understand the deep meaning and significance of events in their day-to-day work lives and their power to make their working world over as it should be. To be effective, this dynamic interchange between the members and organizers must be authentic *listening* and sharing.

In this regard, organizers recognize that certain behaviors promote the solidarity that forms the foundation for effective organizing and strong unions. Other behaviors undermine and inhibit solidarity and collective action. Table 3.3 contrasts the behaviors that promote solidarity with those that undermine collective strength.

**Table 3.3**  
**Solidarity: Behaviors that Promote vs. Undermine**

<b><i>Solidarity Promoting Behaviors</i></b>	<b><i>Solidarity Undermining Behaviors</i></b>
Seeking the “common good” for all	Seeking what is good for you, personally
Straight forward, dealing directly with colleagues over problems	Dealing with management over problems between colleagues
Supporting and defending colleagues: “An injury to one is an injury to all”	Criticizing colleagues behind their backs: “An injury to one can move me up in the hierarchy”
Acting collectively	Acting alone
Looking first to interests of colleagues	Looking first to interests of management

<sup>106</sup>S. Williams, *Highlander and Labor*, in, Delp, TEACHING FOR CHANGE, pp. 20–21. Mr. Sessions is the former Director of the Highlander Research and Education Center, one of the oldest, most prominent labor and civil rights popular education institutions.

Unions and their organizers must actively promote solidarity building behaviors in their stories, their personal conduct, and the activities of their unions. Unions’ organizers understand that, to teach and lead, they must encourage the behaviors that promote solidarity. Conversely, they must educate members and deter the behaviors that undermine and inhibit solidarity and collective action.

## IV. THE METHODS FOR LISTENING: INCORPORATING BASIC UNIONISM INTO ORGANIZING ACTION.

“Organizing is teaching.”  
— Richard Harman

Conceptually and as matter of policy, the COG **LISTEN** step cannot—should not—occur in a union’s office or governing board’s meeting room. Listening occurs where a union’s membership works, socializes, and relaxes: It occurs in union members’ real lives. Organizers have to go there to Listen. Luckily, organizers don’t have to go far to listen. The union members are all around them. Simply, unions must listen in the places where members live their lives, not in the artificial, limited venue of a union meeting. How do unions make *entré* into their members’ real lives?

### A. **UNIONS MUST ACT TO CREATE THE STRUCTURES NECESSARY TO DO UNION LISTENING.**

In the COG method, *listening* must occur with union members directly.

If your union is not already routinely implementing the COG **LISTEN** step, you will be surprised how easy it is to get started. All you have to do is seek out someone you already know and have an authentic conversation, not an interview or an interrogation, but a simple, every day, authentic conversation. Often, unions start the COG **LISTEN** step with their unions’ own leadership. It is not uncommon for a union to begin the process of building public relationships with its own officers and governing board.<sup>107</sup> This approach serves two functions. First, it provides union governing board members a first-hand demonstration of the immediate value of building public relationships and the COG **LISTEN** step. Second, it educates the union’s governing board of members on how to employ the COG *listening* process and how to conduct one-on-one conversations and other relational meeting techniques.

Many times, unions begin COG *listening* and building public relationships with their members by focusing on an immediate problem or issue. Often the problem or issue concerns management problems (like the Barbara workload problem or the regressive bargaining issue used as examples earlier). In their conversations with members, organizers soon discover that some people are more concerned about these problems than others. Many of the most concerned people will want to do

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<sup>107</sup>For example, CSO’s “Organizing a Stronger CSO Project” began with a series of one-on-one conversations among the members of its Rep Council. These conversations were based on a small number of structure to questions designed to focus Rep Council member’s attention on how to build a new stronger more effective union. See [Organizing a Stronger CSO Project](#), in [Appendix 4](#), *infra*.

something about these problems. Unions ought to recruit these people to form the initial core of their organizing teams. The process is simple. You merely invite the most interested people to have coffee or lunch with you and then ask, “What do you think we should do about this?” If they are really willing to do something—not just complain—you are ready to begin the next steps in organizing.

Many unions routinely engage in *listening* to their members through the COG method. They already understand the value of public relationship building. They have already experienced how *listening* builds power. If only indirectly or instinctively, most unions have already begun the process of establishing public relationships with their members at least in some way. Almost by necessity, unions must have some degree of member contact, however sporadic or *ad hoc*. Increasingly, many unions already have some organizational structure on which to institutionalize the COG method’s **LISTEN** step by building public relationships with and among their members.

If your union does not routinely engage its members in COG *listening*, it can turn this deficiency into an advantage. It can set up an effective, appropriate organizational structure for both COG *listening* and further organizing correctly from the beginning. The following discussion explains how to set up an organizational structure for union organizing and how to staff it. The discussion also suggests how to implement effective, appropriate procedures for organizing.

The discussion outlines a simplified seven (7) step progression for structuring, staffing, and operating union organizing teams. If your union already has an organizing structure in place, the following discussion can assist you in evaluating your existing structures and procedures. Assess your existing structures and procedures and determine if they accomplish the functions outlined in the following seven step progression. If not, consider adapting your existing structures and practices to accomplish all these functions.

## 1. Step 1: Unions Must have an Organizational Structure to Listen and Organize.

In general, COG *listening* is probably not much different than any other service or function that a union provides. Most of the time, unions act and deliver services through volunteer committees. Effective unions do their COG *listening* in the same way.

All unions should have an active organizing team which operates as one of the union’s standing committees. This approach maximizes the likelihood that the organizing team will function on a continuous basis, not just after negotiations have “gone bad.” Effective unions organize 365 days a year. While it’s never too late to begin organizing, unions that plan and act for organizing early have a decisive advantage. Unfortunately some unions don’t begin to organize until after they submit their initial proposals or after their negotiations have reached a deadlock. This needless delay reduces unions’ capacity to obtain bargaining concessions, wastes members’ labor power, and undermines members’ trust and confidence in the union. The “*Constant*” in the Constant Organizing Goals method means just that: It describes the *constant, continuous* organizing required to build strong unions.

Nearly always, unions need structure to do constant, continuous organizing. That said, unions should not permit structure to get in the way of actually accomplishing something. If, in a particular union, an ongoing but *ad hoc* or informal structure works best, who are we to argue?

Many unions already have active, functioning organizing teams (a bargaining support team or some other team or committee for organizing). In these unions, governance need do little more than tell them “to get going.” All a union has to do is to make *public* relationship building an official priority, assign organizing team members responsibility for organizing with unit members, provide the



organizing team some training on the COG **LISTEN** step and the procedures used to listen, give them a little organizational support and resources, and tell the team to go out and *listen* to the members.

However, some unions do not already have an organizing team. Or their organizing team may not function on a routine, systematic, day-to-day basis. In these situations, union governance should adopt the following actions.

First, the union's governance should establish a "core team" or organizing "cadre."<sup>108</sup> This group develops the foundations necessary for subsequent organizing. And then the core team must report back to the union's governance body about what they have accomplished.

Depending upon the size of a union's membership, this core team should consist of no more than five (5) to ten (10) active union members. Even in a small union, fewer members tend to be overwhelmed by the work. However, extremely small core team are generally unable to effectively command the interaction, collaboration, consultation, and constructive criticism which maximizes the *gestalt* inherent in a collective thinking process.<sup>109</sup> Extremely large core team also have limitations. Larger teams are often unwieldy. The need to accommodate staff schedules becomes just too complex. Even setting meeting dates becomes an ordeal. Member absenteeism precludes unanimity and accountability. Meetings drag on too long. Large core team make the process of reaching decisions on necessary action exponentially harder. Core teams are often the nucleus for the larger organizing team or committee. As their organizing actions increase in frequency, scope, and intensity, active unions need more organizers (than the limited number of core team members).

Unions also need to determine the relationship between their organizing team and the other union committees which routinely provide member services.<sup>110</sup> Certainly, the most important of these other committees are the union's bargaining team, grievance committee, and communication committee.<sup>111</sup> The relationship and interaction among these committees involves allocation of responsibility and authority. Simply, this involves: Who does what? And who is in charge? In democratic unions, the membership and governance bodies' elected members are "the Boss." Consequently in most NSO-affiliate unions, these issues of responsibility and authority are less a matter of who's the boss than they are a function of who sets the direction.<sup>112</sup> Effective unions

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<sup>108</sup>In its issue organizing training, NEA used the term, "cadre," to describe the core team. See NEA, ISSUE ORGANIZING, Trainer Manual Appendixes B & C, pp. 2-B-3-B, 6-C, chart 11.

<sup>109</sup>Collective thinking—the pooling of mental effort—is an interactive process of bringing multiple minds together for exploration, assessment, judgment, problem-solving, and decision making in a versatile, intelligent, effectively functioning collaboration. Other analysts have explored the power of the process using the terms, "organizational intelligence" and "distributed cognition." See generally PERKINS, KING ARTHUR'S ROUND TABLE p. 4; GAVRIEL SALOMON (ed.), DISTRIBUTED COGNITIONS: PSYCHOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONSIDERATIONS (Cambridge Univ. Press, 1996). See also [Chapter 10 THINK: STRATEGIC THINKING AND THE USE OF THINKING TOOLS IN ORGANIZING](#), *infra*.

<sup>110</sup>A model [Union Organization Chart for an Organizing Campaign](#), in [Resource Document 6](#), *infra*. illustrates a model union organization and the structural relationship between its organizing team, bargaining team and communication committee. The Organization Chart divides a series of hypothetical tasks among an internal and an external organizing groups and suggests the tactical actions implied by each of the tasks.

<sup>111</sup>All union should have standing committees that perform these three functions, on a continuing 365 days-a-year basis.

<sup>112</sup>Effective, democratic unions avoid the traditional "command and control hierarchy" employed by the military and by some governmental and corporate business organizations. The command and control hierarchy approach to—or, more properly divergence from—collective organizational intelligence assumes that the thinking is the prerogative of those at the top levels of the hierarchy and the doing is performed by those at the bottom, who perform on an unquestioning, virtually

understand that organizing—not bargaining, contract enforcement (and other litigation), or communications—creates the essential conditions for the union to make progress. Therefore, their organizing teams determine the direction of the union’s actions and then lead other functions of the union. Certainly, however, the union’s membership and elected governance officials make the final decisions.

As organizing progresses and unit members’ involvement and interest increases, unions frequently find it necessary to form organizing team sub-committees (or small teams or informal groups) to conduct certain specific activities required during an organizing build-up or campaign. Common examples include: conducting an all member canvas; researching the justification or factual foundation for particular union objectives or bargaining positions; meeting with other unions in the workplace to establish coalitions and alliances; contacting specific community groups to begin the process of public relationship building; *etc.* To effectively conduct a program of systematic, comprehensive COG *listening*, however, the group doing the work gradually must increase in size due to the magnitude of the task. Core teams just can’t do all the work alone.

## 2. Step 2: Unions Must Select Competent, Motivated People to Listen and Organize.

Obviously, the second step is to identify the people unions want to serve on their core teams (and later, on their organizing team). Unions must exercise care in selecting organizing team members. This admonition is particularly applicable to core teams. The need for care and concern in selecting organizing team members results from both the personal traits and characteristics of potential organizing team members and—perhaps even more important—the nature of the organizing tasks they will be required to do.<sup>113</sup>

### a. The Primary Task of Organizing Team Members Is to Listen.

Organizing, based on ever continuing COG cycles, ensures that unions actually achieve their objectives. Union organizing teams do most of the work—the individual, discrete tasks—needed for the COG cycles to operate and to make the coordinated, continuous progress organizing promises unit members. Remember that each Constant Organizing Goals cycle is a systematic series of simple steps.

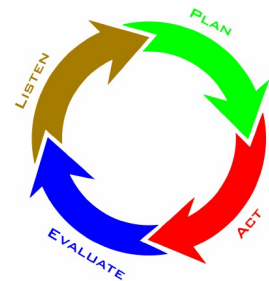
First you:

**LISTEN → PLAN → ACT → EVALUATE**

Then you:

**LISTEN → PLAN → ACT → EVALUATE**

All over again.



**LISTEN** is the first and in many ways most important of these steps. Organizing team members must be able to clearly understand and willingly accept the purpose of *listening* in the COG method. COG *listening* is not merely a matter of “following along” in a conversation with a unit member. COG *listening* is not merely a matter of finding out “who members are,” as people. It’s not about relationships in that sense. COG Listening is about helping members bring into the “public” certain

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mindless basis. Effective unions employ control and decision making processes typified by skill and discretion distributed among multiple levels, which encourage multiple ways and approaches to intelligently respond to a situation. Such a distributed decision making process functions through the exercise of discretion within the predetermined scope of a union leader’s, team’s, or individual members’ authority, always reinforced by routine, consistent accountability mechanisms.

<sup>113</sup>The characteristics necessary to effective organizing team members is discussed in more detail later in this Chapter.

important, valuable aspects of their “private” selves. This aspect of COG *listening* focuses on an active interaction between organizing team members and the people they are “organizing.” These organizing conversations are about the critical things in each person’s private life that makes them who they are, as working professionals and as union members. In so doing, organizers learn what their members want (*i.e.*, their interests and goals) and what work they are to do to achieve their desired vision of the future. And, ultimately, based on the public relationships built in the process, organizers can mobilize the members to act and deploy their resources on behalf of their own interests.

However, these conversations between organizers and unit members are not interviews or exhortations to action. They are certainly not interrogations. The process is more sophisticated. Certainly, organizers “lead” in the conversations. That is, they arrange the conversations with a predetermined purpose. And they direct certain aspects of the conversations by promoting and encouraging core-union values and solidarity building behaviors. Nonetheless, the conversations are genuine exchanges. By exchanging their “stories” both the organizers and the other participants reveal “The What.” “The What” is the critical events that shaped and determined their employment lives and union expectations. These stories often reveal “The Why,” as well. “The Why” in these stories involve the root causes that determined the patterns and events of their work lives. The “what” and the “why” about *both* the organizer and the other person makes them who they are. In these conversations, organizers try to uncover the “cold anger” or “joyous passion” that drives people to work and to take risks to achieve something more in their lives. In the process, organizers share their own passions and “cold anger.” This “cold anger” and “joyous passion” connect both unit members and organizers to the “greater good” promoted and achieved by unions’ organizing campaigns. It is “basic unionism” in action. Beyond simplistic descriptions of this kind, the nature of this critically important organizing task is difficult to explain, but the people who can do it well have a certain almost instinctive sense of connection. This sense of connection is the “*IT*” of organizing.

In selecting union organizing teams, unions must select people who have the “*IT*”—the intangible, almost indescribable, thing that drives organizers to do this work.

### ***b. Certain Characteristics are Desirable in Organizing Teams.***

Effective organizing always requires commitment from both a union’s leaders and its members. The process of securing commitment should begin with the organizing team. Organizing team members should be committed to one another and to their union. Organizing team members must want to make the union stronger and more powerful. They must be people who want to know and understand the dynamics of change and power. But, more important, organizing team members must also demand that the union transform this knowledge and understanding into accomplishment. They must also be people in the bargaining unit who actually “get things done.”

Union organizing teams must include people who are recognized as the natural opinion leaders of rank-and file-bargaining unit members. This is particularly true of a newly functioning core team. Organizing team members must be people who have a vision for the union and a desire for change. Organizing team members must be people who will accept responsibility with accountability. These people are generally the unit members who want to organize. While desirable, it is not essential that they have prior organizing experience. Organizing principles, dynamics, and practices can be taught.

Additionally, union organizing teams should be representative. To the maximum extent practical, Organizing team membership should reflect the membership of the union, in all its diversity. Organizing is an inclusive process and the membership of the organizing team should reflect this inclusiveness.


**c. Certain Characteristics are Undesirable in Organizing Teams.**

Organizing means intense involvement. Organizing is a time-consuming activity. Organizing requires ongoing, occasionally exhausting commitment. Unions’ elected governance members often lack the interest and commitment to be effective organizing team members. They almost always lack the time. Consequently, unions should staff their organizing teams with members who don’t have any current governance responsibilities.

The essential engine of change in organizing is planned, focused, and managed conflict. Nonetheless, organizing teams don’t need and can’t afford the “bomb throwers” in our units. Such people cannot lead or be led. While ostensibly espousing a desire to contend with the bosses, many of them cannot comprehend the utility of well-planned and rigorously managed conflict. Frequently, the bomb throwers are actually unwilling to take personal risks. For them, planned and managed conflict means planning for someone else to engage in the conflict and managing not to be present when it happens. Union organizing teams must not have one other fatal handicap: Their members cannot be “conflict challenged.” Consequently, unions must assess the motivational drives of potential organizing team members.

The late Abraham Maslow advanced several critical insights into the dynamics of human motivation. He described motivation and its resultant behavior as flowing from internal responses to the basic needs of the human organism. Maslow recognized that there were a variety of basic human needs and that they could be arranged in a hierarchy, according to individuals’ relative propensities.<sup>114</sup> Table 3.4, below, illustrates the relationship between these basic needs and their gratification.

**Table 3.4  
Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and Their Gratification**

<i>Level</i>	<i>Need</i>	<i>Gratification</i>
	<b>Self-actualization</b>	Doing whatever is needed to reach one’s full potential as a person. To develop your own individuality.
	<b>Ego &amp; esteem</b>	Respect and liking for self and others. Strength competence; freedom and deserved fame.
	<b>Belonging &amp; Love</b>	Membership, acceptance, belonging, feeling loved and wanted.
	<b>Safety</b>	Protection from physical or psychological threat. Fear and anxiety. The need for order and structure.
	<b>Physiological &amp; Survival</b>	Related to physical survival: food, water, shelter, sexual reproduction, etc.
<b>HIGHEST</b>		
<b>LOWEST</b>		

Maslow’s hierarchy permits human motivational needs to be represented as sequential layers. Higher motivating factors (e.g., Self-actualization,<sup>115</sup> Ego and esteem<sup>116</sup>) only become potential drives as

<sup>114</sup>See ABRAHAM MASLOW, MOTIVATION AND PERSONALITY pp. 16–22 (2nd ed., N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1970).

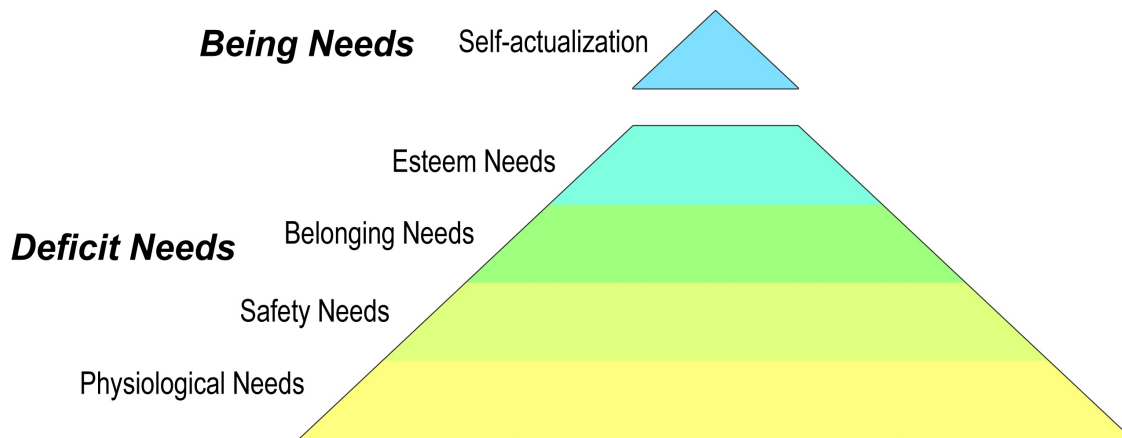
<sup>115</sup>“Self-actualization” is the pinnacle of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs. Maslow characterized Self-actualization as “the quest of reaching one’s full potential as a person.” Maslow asserted that the needs of self-actualized people tend to include:

individuals fulfill the more basic, “lower” needs (e.g., Belonging & Love,<sup>117</sup> Safety,<sup>118</sup> Physiological & Survival<sup>119</sup>). Thus, people cannot “actualize” their “higher” motivating factors without first satisfying the need on the next lower level.

For this reason, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is often depicted as a pyramid like that shown in Figure 3.5, below. Initially, Maslow asserted this pyramid consisting of five levels: The four lower levels are grouped together as “deficit needs” and the top level is referred to as “being needs.” Maslow posited that “deficit needs” can be satisfied, but “being needs” are a continuing driving force. The basic idea of this hierarchy is, that higher needs come into focus only after all needs lower in the pyramid have been met. As the double headed arrow in Table 3.4 suggests, *growth forces* result in upward movement on the hierarchy, whereas *regressive forces* cause a recurrence of unmet “prepotent” needs lower in the hierarchy. More simply stated: In the workplace, regressive management can push employees back down the pyramid.

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**Figure 3.6**  
**Pyramid Representing Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs**




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For organizing purposes, the critical consideration in selecting organizing team members is to “guesstimate” their motivational needs. For example, in every union, there will always be someone whose response to conflict is: “Why can’t we all get along?” On its face, these people have a motivation deficit, an unmet “Belonging Need.” Maslow observed that such people will act to fulfill

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Truth; Justice; Wisdom; Meaning.

<sup>116</sup>Maslow characterized “Esteem Needs” as the need to feel important. Theorists classify esteem needs as internal or external. Internal esteem needs are those related to self-esteem such as self respect and achievement. External esteem needs are those such as social status and recognition.

<sup>117</sup>Maslow characterized “Belonging Needs” as the first level of higher level needs are social needs. Social needs are those related to interaction with other people and may include: Friendship; Belonging to a group; Giving and receiving love.

<sup>118</sup>Once physiological needs are met, Maslow believed people’s attention turns to safety and security in order to be free from the threat of physical and emotional harm. “Safety Needs” can be characterized as needs fulfilled by: Living in a safe area; Medical insurance; Job security; Financial security; *etc.*

<sup>119</sup>Maslow characterized “Physiological Needs” are those required to sustain life, such as: Air; Water; Food; and Sleep. According to Maslow’s theory, if these fundamental needs are not gratified, then a person will be compelled to satisfy them.

their motivational deficits. People who have a need to belong, who want to be “loved,” will take great pains to achieve this response from others, *including their employer*. Unit members whose motivation is to satisfy a deficit in their “Belonging Needs” are generally poor choices for organizing team members.

It should be apparent, that the best choices in organizing team members are the people whose primary motivational needs move them to challenge the *status quo*, not to “get along.” Rather, organizing team members’ should be the “lean and hungry” unit members. Specifically, optimal organizing team members have a need to fulfill the material components of their “Physiological Needs” and the intangible aspects of their “Safety Needs.” The material components of a person’s Physiological Needs can be simply described as a need for “**MORE!**”<sup>120</sup> Organizing team members should want more money, more and better benefits, more control and discretion over their work, more power, and “**MORE!**” of everything from their employer.<sup>121</sup> Organizing team members should also be motivated by their Safety Needs. Maslow categorized Safety Needs as a motivation to obtain: security; stability; protection; freedom from fear, anxiety, and chaos; need for structure, order, law, and limits, *etc.* In the workplace, these Safety Needs translate into a desire to live and work in a safe area, to enjoy adequate medical care and financial security. People motivated by Safety Needs will demand tangible benefits like medical insurance and job security. They will fight for intangibles like professional autonomy over their own work and control over workplace decision making. Obviously, these motivations are desirable in organizing team members.<sup>122</sup> While useful in this discussion, Maslow’s hierarchy of needs is not really a diagnostic instrument for assessing needs deficits and selecting potential organizing team members. We alluded to the concept only as a Thinking Tool<sup>123</sup> to emphasize the critical need to thoroughly and explicitly consider the motivations of potential team members. We intended this discussion to focus attention on unions’ need to make “guesstimate” about what motivates the people who may be potential union organizers and activists.

How do unions “guesstimate” the motivational needs of the potential organizing team members? They ask them. Simply, organizers assess the suitability of potential team members by learning their “story.” Nearly all unions first implement COG *listening* by training core team members in the process. They take the first steps in organizing by establishing public relationships with potential organizing team members.

### 3. Step 3: Unions Must Have a Budget to Listen and Begin Organizing.

All unions must also take a third step toward organizing. This step is to give the organizing team an adequate budget. Even in a volunteer organization, like a union, things cost money. Organizing team members must have at least a small budget to fund their travel expenses and other expenses.

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<sup>120</sup>The acronym “**MORE**” spelled backwards provide a handy acronym for the scope of all unions’ member representation responsibilities: First, **E** for **E**ducate, **R** for **R**epresent, **O** for **O**rganize, and then **M** for **M**obilize.

<sup>121</sup>In 1893, Samuel Gompers articulation of the concept stands as one of the best: “We want more school houses and less jails; more books and less arsenals; more learning and less vice; more constant work and less crime; more leisure and less greed; more justice and less revenge; in fact, more of the opportunities to cultivate our better natures, to make manhood more noble, womanhood more beautiful and childhood more happy and bright. These in brief are the primary demands made by the Trade Unions in the name of labor. These are the demands made by labor upon modern society and in their consideration is involved the fate of civilization.” Gompers, 3 Gompers Papers, Addresses (Aug. 28, 1893).

<sup>122</sup>MASLOW, MOTIVATION AND PERSONALITY, p. 18.

<sup>123</sup>See [Chapter 10 THINK: STRATEGIC THINKING AND THE USE OF THINKING TOOLS IN ORGANIZING](#), *infra*.

#### 4. Step 4: Unions Must Develop A Time Line to Listen and Begin Organizing.

The fourth step to *COG listening* (and all other phases of the organizing process) is to develop a time line for actions. Organizing is a time-based activity. Effective unions employ calendars, time lines, and other devices to insure that their Actions are accomplished within a reasonable time.<sup>124</sup> Time-based planning is particularly important with open-ended union actions, like the scheduling and conducting of one-on-one conversations and small-group meetings necessary for *COG listening*.

#### 5. Step 5: Unions Must Adopt Accountability Procedures.

Effective unions take a fifth step in their preparation for *COG listening* and later organizing. Their governing bodies adopt accountability policies covering all aspects of their organizing efforts.

Through accountability policies, unions authorize their organizing teams and delegate them the responsibility for accomplishing each necessary organizing task. Under such policies, the people responsible for executing particular actions are made expressly accountable. This function puts union leadership, organizers, and bargaining unit members on notice regarding who is responsible for doing what and the date when it must be accomplished. Accountability is an essential condition for success in all union activities. Accountability is particularly necessary in open-ended union actions, like those in the *COG* method's **LISTEN** step.

Accountability policies also require unions to implement procedures for assessing accountability. Accountability assessment procedures require unions to take thoughtful, rigorous, systematic, insightful, methodical, vigorous, and decisive Actions to get things done. For example, effective unions set deadlines for the scheduling and completing the one-on-one conversations needed to build essential public relationships with unit members and determining their interests and goals.<sup>125</sup> Accountability policies and procedures ensure that unions have thought through what steps are needed to accomplish necessary organizing tasks and that their organizing teams actually complete these tasks on a timely basis.

#### 6. Step 6: Unions Must Conduct Regular Member Communications.

Effective unions complete the *COG listening* by reporting what they have learned back to their members. One of the tasks necessary in all organizing is communicating information to unit members in a responsive, timely manner. “[phone trees](#)” are the time-honored method for “notice communications,” the kind of communications needed to give unit members notice of an event. The phone tree process uses one responsible organizing team member to initiate the information with a telephone call.<sup>126</sup> In turn each unit member passes the information on to another. To ensure that the message was accurately communicated, the last unit member in a tree calls the organizer who initiated the message and repeats it. This procedure is accountable: It ensures the message gets out and it permits assessment. The reporting at the end of the phone tree ensures that the message was accurately delivered to each bargaining unit member.

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<sup>124</sup>See model Listen Time Line N° 5 for union public relationship building under the *COG* method's **LISTEN** step Model Union Organizing Time Lines N° 1 – N° 11 in [Resource Document 7](#), *infra*. These Resource Documents also contain a model union Organizing Calendar. Organizing calendars provide an alternative method for time-based planning and implementation of organizing Actions.

<sup>125</sup>This Guide discusses the identification of unit members' interests and goals in its analysis of the distinction between goals and objectives in *COG* method's **PLAN** step, in the next chapter, [Chapter 4](#).

<sup>126</sup>See the examples of [phone trees](#) in [Resource Document 6](#), *infra*.

Effective unions do not limit their member communication to notices. Union members want—and have a legal right to—know about the operations of their union. Effective unions use these mandated communications to their advantage. For example, the National Labor Relations Act’s Duty of Fair Representation entitles unit members to information on the progress of bargaining. Unions can communicate the same factual information required by the Duty of Fair Representation in a way that constantly builds the union’s Referent Power, increasing its members’ commitment and solidarity.

Procedures for assessing accountability apply the COG EVALUATION step on a routine, systematic, rigorous, methodical basis. “Reporting Back” through the routine use of tallies and accountability forms is the foundation for assessing accountability. The importance of accountability assessment procedures and practices cannot be overstated. For this reason, we have attempted to provide samples of exemplary forms and other accountability documents for each step in the organizing process. For example, to ensure accountability in building public relationships many unions use forms like those attached in [Resource Document 1](#), *infra*.

## 7. Step 7: Unions Must Start Listening and Begin Organizing.

In all unions, the final step is to start! Unions should understand that they can never put the perfect organization in place. They will never find the perfect collection of core team members. Unions will never have enough money to do everything that needs to be done. Nonetheless, unions have to work with what they’ve got. The initial structure, the first group of team members, the first budget may not be “ideal,” but they can be made to work. All that is required is effort and accountability. All organizing is “reorganizing.” As unit member involvement and interest increases, the underpinnings of the organizing effort also increase. The ultimate objective of organizing is to ensure that a union’s members know that they own their union. It’s not “THE UNION. . . .” It must always be “MY UNION. . . .” and “OUR UNION. . . .”

### B.

## **ONE-ON-ONE CONVERSATIONS ARE THE FIRST STEP IN UNION LISTENING.**

Real organizing—the kind that builds power and that creates sustained commitment—can be accomplished only on a face-to-face basis. It requires unions to meet with and listen to their members, face-to-face. The most effective way to meet with members is the one-on-one conversation.<sup>127</sup> And, it requires unions to listen actively to their members in these face-to-face meetings. The most effective way to listen to members is “Directed Active Listening.”<sup>128</sup>

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<sup>127</sup>One-on-one conversations are also referred to as “one-to-one conversations,” “one-on-one meetings,” “individual meetings,” “relational meetings,” “one-on-one interviews,” and just plain “one-on-ones.” Jim Essman’s article describes the purpose of One-on-One Conversations and how these conversations are practiced. See [Jim Essman, \*One-on-One Interviews\*](#), SUNRISE p. 4 (Jan/Feb 1992) in [Appendix 7](#), *infra*. For a detailed examination of the principles and practices of the one-on-on, see [Appendix 7](#), *infra*, and the [Model Union Relational Meeting Documents](#), in [Resource Document 1](#), *infra*. Certainly, however, employing one-on-one conversations to build strong relationships is neither new nor unique to union organizing. Samuel Adams used the same techniques in organizing and agitating for the American Revolution. See LEWIS, *THE GRAND INCENDIARY*, *supra*, pp. 244, 250, 277–279.

<sup>128</sup>By “Directed Active Listening,” we refer a structured approach to listening and conducting conversations. Directed Active Listening is a process for listening and responding to another person that improves mutual understanding, increases engagement, and builds mutual trust. Directed Active Listening is purposeful: It is specifically intended to build a public relationship between union leaders, organizers and other people, based on basic union values for the purpose of learning. Directed Active Listening also promotes the *interpretive* function of organizing actions, by effectively permitting



## 1. Unions Must Organize in Face-to-Face Meetings.

Your union can engage in a structured discussion with your members to determine what values they share, what goals they have in common, and what interests they will pursue together. Such a discussion often begins with one-on-one conversations among your unions' officers and leaders. Unions then expand the public relationship building process to the unions' membership as a whole using one-on-one conversations, all members canvases,<sup>129</sup> and other relational meeting skills. The key components of this discussion are:

1. Identify a couple (but no more than a half dozen) open-ended questions for the one-on-one conversations. These questions should focus on feelings about work and the union. For example:
  - *“What motivates you in the work you do?”*
  - *“What kind of union do you want?”*
  - *“What does our union do well?” “Not so well?”*
  - *“What should our union be doing?”*
  - *“How should our union do it?”*
2. Thoroughly train the leaders, organizers, and other union activists initiating these discussions in one-on-one conversation and other relational meeting skills. Ideally, organizers should try to have as many one-on-one conversations with as many people as possible. Having a lot of one-on-one conversations is the only way to learn to do them well. But, before they become comfortable with the process during the initial stages of the COG **LISTEN** step, each organizer could be responsible for as few as five to ten one-on-one conversations. This way, inexperienced organizers will not feel overwhelmed or fall prey to the inevitable anxieties about doing one-to-ones. Unions must acknowledge that one-on-one conversations “are *scary for everyone* because they require making oneself vulnerable to uncertainty, but are potentially very rewarding for the same reason.”<sup>130</sup> In itself, overcoming the anxiety associated with doing one-on-ones can be an empower victory for union leaders and members new to organizing.
3. After completing the initial one-on-one conversations, thoroughly debrief the leaders, organizers, and other union activists on both the results of the conversations and the procedures used in the COG *listening* process. Prepare a summary of the information collected.
4. Hold a general membership meeting to discuss the results of the one-on-one conversations. The following questions illustrate issues for discussion:
  - *“To what extent are the results an accurate reflection of our collective feelings?”*
  - *“Based on our discussions, what do we value as a union?” “What goals should we set?”*

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organizers to teach and lead. See [Directed Active Listening: A Structured Approach to Union Listening](#), in [Appendix 7, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>129</sup>For a detailed examination of the principles and practices of the all member canvas, see the **LISTEN** Methods: [Union Relational Meetings documents](#), in [Appendix 7, \*infra\*](#), and the [model union relational meeting documents](#), in [Resource Document 1, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>130</sup>Marshall Ganz's observations in [About One-on-Ones](#) (emphasis in original), in [Appendix 7, \*infra\*](#).

5. Prepare a final report of the conversations and have a membership vote to adopt it as the basis for strategic planning of the organizing effort.
6. Based on the results of the conversations, develop a plan of action for the next step(s) in the organizing effort.
7. Recruit volunteers to assist in implementing the action plan.

Many effective unions complement one-on-one conversations with broader-based, more systematic methods in order to learn their member's interests, their values, their goals, and their vision of the desired future. Initially, many effective unions expand the scope of their listening efforts with a variety of small-group or relational meeting listening methods, these often include small group meetings.<sup>131</sup> House meetings<sup>132</sup> also offer an effective method for listening to members on a group basis. House meetings have the advantage of providing a pleasant, relaxing means of building public relationships with other union members (or people in the union's environments).

When employing these methods for *listening* to their membership and all other union action, effective unions ensure that systematic feedback and accountability mechanisms are always included. For example, the union activists conducting the one-on-one conversations should routinely summarize the outcomes of the one-on-one conversations in writing on reporting forms. Similarly, union leaders, organizers, and other activists conducting one-on-one conversations should also routinely report a tally of the number of one-on-one conversations they conducted.<sup>133</sup>

## 2. Unions Must Organize Using Directed Active Listening.

In *COG listening*, one-on-one conversations are generally a union's core team or organizing team's first task. They are always its most powerful tool for organizing. One-on-one conversations also provide the best example of how *COG listening* builds public relationships. As discussed earlier, through one-on-one conversations (and other relational meeting techniques), unions *listen* to people's stories to discover "The What" and "The Why" of their lives. These stories involve a dynamic interchange of information, values, and emotions. They contain the information organizers need to challenge people to act on behalf of shared values and interests.

"Directed Active Listening"<sup>134</sup> is the technique organizers use to make one-on-one conversations and other relational meeting methods successful. To effectively build long term public relationships, the dynamic interchange between the members and organizers must be authentic listening and sharing. However, organizers also lead the conversation and promote their union's immediate message. Effective organizers accomplish both of these tasks through Directed Active Listening techniques. Directed Active Listening teaches organizers to actively listen and to both teach and lead. It not only aids organizers in listening more effectively, the process conveys the organizer's sincerity and the authenticity of the listening. And the process instills in the other person a feeling of trust toward the union.

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<sup>131</sup>The types and purposes of small group meetings are discussed in [Appendix 7, \*infra\*](#), and the [Union Relational Meeting Documents, in Resource Document 1, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>132</sup>The "house meeting" process is discussed in [Appendix 7, \*infra\*](#), and the union relational meeting documents, in [Resource Document 1, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>133</sup>A model One-on-One Meeting Tally Reporting Form is in the union relational meeting documents, in [Resource Document 1, \*infra\*](#).

<sup>134</sup>See [Directed Active Listening: A Structured Approach to Union Listening, in Appendix 7, \*infra\*](#).

## C.

### **AFTER ONE-ON-ONES, UNIONS EMPLOY LARGE-GROUP APPROACHES TO LISTENING.**

Once unions have firmly established public relationships with their members through small-group relational listening methods, more encompassing approaches are appropriate.

Member surveys<sup>135</sup> are the most common large group approach for broad-based, systematic assessment of members' interests, their values, their goals, and their vision of the desired future. Member surveys are a common tool because they can be quick and easy to conduct. They have the advantage of reaching all members of the union, but suffer from their inherently impersonal nature.

An all member canvas is the single most effective tool for *listening* and public relationship building. In an all member canvas, unions expend the scope of their organizing by conducting at least one—and ideally a few—one-on-one conversation with every member of their bargaining unit.

Unions have also employed sophisticated social science large-group approaches for both *listening* to union members (or community leaders) and planning. Many of these approaches are “expert models.” Generally, what that means is that consultants charge substantial fees to operate the model for the union. Since these approaches (and the consultants that operate or provide them) attempt to solve the union’s need for feed-back from large groups of its members, we classify their problem-solving method as “Service.”<sup>136</sup> Many social science-based approaches can and do work effectively to provide unions with valuable information about their members. However, almost without exception, Service problem-solving methods involve the paid consultant doing what they think is best for the union. The most lucrative markets for these social science-based approaches are corporations. As a result, these methods are often heavily influenced by or grounded in corporate ideology and methods. Even at their best, most of the social science-based approaches generally articulate their process in corporate parlance, from corporate perspectives, for corporate purposes. Often, the consultants who deliver these services cannot shift their orientations and adapt their models or techniques to the fundamentally different needs and motivations of union clients. Many, but not all, of these approaches also violate the Alinsky Iron Rule: Paid consultants nearly always do things that the union and its members could have done for themselves or learned how to do with a little effort.

These caveats aside: Over the last few decades, some organizers have effectively adapted social science methods and “expert” approaches to unions’ needs. For example, special types of conferences have proven useful in moving unions, other organizations, and communities toward common visions, identifying differences, or resolving conflicts. In some cases, these social science approaches have assisted organizers in building on unit members’ shared values, commonalities, and interests. These conferences include “search conferences,”<sup>137</sup> “collaborative communities,” “strategic futures conferences,” “visioning meetings,” and “future searches.”<sup>138</sup> The advocates of such

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<sup>135</sup>For two examples of members surveys, see the [model union relational meeting documents](#), in [Resource Document 1](#), *infra*.

<sup>136</sup>See Lindquist, [Organizing Approaches: Common Methods for Resolving Disputes](#), in [Appendix 3](#), *infra*.

<sup>137</sup>See M. EMERY (ed.), *PARTICIPATIVE DESIGN FOR PARTICIPATIVE DEMOCRACY* (Canberra: Australian National University, 1993); M. EMERY & R.E. PURSER, *THE SEARCH CONFERENCE: A POWERFUL METHOD FOR PLANNING ORGANIZATIONAL CHANGE AND COMMUNITY ACTION* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1996) on the principles and procedures for search conferences.

<sup>138</sup>See M. WEISBROD (ed.), *DISCOVERING COMMON GROUND* (Berrett Koehler, 1992); M. WEISBROD & S. JANOFF, *FUTURE SEARCH: AN ACTION GUIDE TO FINDING COMMON GROUND IN ORGANIZATIONS AND COMMUNITIES* (N.Y.: Berrett

conferences hold them to be catalysts for change and community building, applicable to for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, industries, in fact for any identifiable group with a common concern. Many in the union movement have come to share this belief.

More recently, a different approach, referred to as “Appreciative Inquiry,”<sup>139</sup> has increasingly gained favor with organizational change theorists, organizational consultants, and some progressive unionists.<sup>140</sup> The advocates of Appreciative Inquiry describe the process as “a way of thinking, seeing, and acting for powerful, purposeful change in organizations.”<sup>141</sup> Appreciative Inquiry is a form of action research for organizational change based on a process of creating new theories/ideas/images that aid in the developmental change of an organizational system.<sup>142</sup> It is driven by identifying “what is”; envisioning “what might be”; and dialogue about “what should be.” Appreciative Inquiry is based on two assumptions:

- What you want more of already exists in all organizations; and
- By encouraging participants to generate images of their desired organizational possibilities, they can affirm the forces that give life and energy to an organizational system.

The key data innovation of Appreciative Inquiry is the collection of people’s *stories* about something *at its best* (e.g., teamwork, leadership, union organization, solidarity, or other practices which have functioned successfully or in an optimal manner). For example, if the desired innovation is:

- *Improving team work*, Appreciative Inquiry collects stories of people’s best team experiences;
- *Organizational development*, Appreciative Inquiry asks people to relate their peak experience in that organization; or
- *Enhancing leadership*, Appreciative Inquiry collects stories of leadership at its best.

Under the Appreciative Inquiry approach, the participants collectively discussed the stories to create new, generative ideas or images that facilitate change. In practice, the Appreciative Inquiry process functions like a codified series of union house meetings. While the consultants who market the services to not generally do so, Appreciative Inquiry sessions could be conducted in union members’ homes. Thus, Appreciative Inquiry can often provide a thoughtful, systematic, and accountable approach to a powerful listening activity, the house meeting. However, house meetings are commonly facilitated by union organizers and rank-and-file union members. As such, Appreciative Inquiry has

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Koehler, 1995) on the principles and procedures for future searches.

<sup>139</sup>See, e.g., D.L. COOPERRIDER, *et al.* (eds.), *APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY: RETHINKING HUMAN ORGANIZATIONS TOWARD A POSITIVE THEORY OF CHANGE* (Champaign, IL: Stipes Pub. Co. 2000); S. SRIVASTVA & D.L. COOPERRIDER (eds.), *APPRECIATIVE MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP* pp.91–125 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass 1990); Barrett, *Creating Appreciative Learning Cultures*, 24:2 *ORGANIZATIONAL DYNAMICS* pp. 36–49 (Fall 1995); Bushe, & Pitman, *Appreciative Process: a Method for Transformational Change*, 23(3) *ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT PRACTITIONER* pp.1–4 (1991).

<sup>140</sup>For example, in March 2004, NSO’s Western States Coordinated Bargaining Council employed an Appreciative Inquiry search with some success to enhance the CBS’s development, to make it more effective and productive, and to improve its ability to serve the interests of the members of NSO’s affiliates.

<sup>141</sup>Hall & Hammond, *What is Appreciative Inquiry?*, in, S. HAMMOND, *THE THIN BOOK OF APPRECIATIVE INQUIRY* (Plano, Tex.: Think Book Publishing Co., 1996). Advocates of appreciative inquiry propound the “heliotropic hypothesis” which argue that social systems evolve toward the most positive images they hold of themselves. Cooperrider, *Positive Image, Positive Action: the Affirmative Basis of Organizing*, in, SUSAN SRIVASTVA & DAVID L. COOPERRIDER (eds.), *APPRECIATIVE MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP* pp.91-125 (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass 1990).

<sup>142</sup>See D. L., Cooperrider, & S. Srivastva, *Appreciative Inquiry in Organizational Life*, in, W. PISMIRE & R. WOODMAN (eds.), 1 *RESEARCH IN ORGANIZATION CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT* pp. 129-169 (Greenwich, CT: JAI Press 1987).

the merit of all such disciplined approaches, but it is an activity that could be conducted by the union without the need for paid consultants to preside.

Regardless of the large-group approaches a union may wish to employ, it is critical to understand that large-group listening methods have limited utility and application. They cannot be truly effective until a union has first firmly established public relationships with its members through small-group relational listening methods. Small-group relational listening methods, like one-on-one conversations, are the first step. Large-group, more encompassing approaches are only useful and appropriate after a union has already built public relationships with its own members (and, as organizing progresses, the members of its workplace and community environments).

#### **D.**

### **ORGANIZING IS NOT JUST ABOUT “LISTENING”: IT REQUIRES “ACTION” TO CREATE AN OUTCOME.**

Organizing for power using the COG method is not just about the process of listening and practicing the relational **LISTEN** step techniques discussed above. Listening to members, even building public relationships with members are not ends in themselves. These *Relational* functions of organizing are necessary—but not sufficient—conditions for building Referent Power. Organizing requires more: It requires concrete action to cause a specific outcome. By focusing on the specific desired *outcome* of a particular campaign, organizing for power builds the sustainable union power necessary to achieve union members’ shared goals based on their mutual self-interests. At the same time, organizing for power builds unions’ capacity to apply principled power over the long-term. Values like those discussed in this Chapter are a very large part of what makes a union’s power principled.<sup>143</sup> These relational techniques are an integral part of the COG method’s practical *process*. And, the COG method is the system that ensures continuous progress from this principled power.

Issue organizing advances the COG’s methods process beyond merely listening. Relying on the public relationships created through relational **LISTEN** step techniques, organizing for power creates, targets, and then manages conflict. In this way, issue organizing applies union members’ own inherent, but often untapped, power. Unions mobilize their members (and allies) to engage in collective concerted actions to create managed conflict with their unions’ adversaries. Progress is created by the conflict. The *process* of issue organizing<sup>144</sup> is as simple as it is effective. Alinsky summarized it as: “*Pick the target opponent, freeze the issue, personalize the issue, and polarize the issue.*”<sup>145</sup> In

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<sup>143</sup>Alinsky explored the issue of principled power by framing the issue as follows:

Whenever we think about social change, the question of what and how, or means and ends, always arises. [When t]he man of action views the problem; he thinks only of his actual resources and the possibilities of various choices of action. He asks of ends only whether they are achievable and worth the costs; of means, only whether they will work.

S. Alinsky, “*Of Means and Ends*,” 22(2) UNION SEMINARY QUARTERLY REV. 107, at p. 170 (January 1967), reprinted in, *RULES FOR RADICALS: A PRAGMATIC PRIMER FOR REALISTIC RADICAL*, p. 24 (NY: Random House, Inc., 1971; Vintage Books ed., 1989), in [Appendix 3](#).

<sup>144</sup>See ALINSKY, *RULES FOR RADICALS*, *supra*, pp. 130–138; see also Michael Arisman, “Alinsky for Staff Organizers” (a definitive and enduring treatment of issue organizing in public education area); [Framing Organizing Communications in Appendix 3](#), *infra*. The “Listen” menu on this DVD can start a presentation on the “issue organizing” concepts discussed in this Chapter.

<sup>145</sup>ALINSKY, *RULES FOR RADICALS*, *supra*, p. 130.

inducing members to mobilize for action, issue organizing relies on the public relationships with members. However, these relationships alone are not sufficient. Before they are prepared to engage in collective concerted actions, members must first be educated on the need to take action. Unions provide the needed education and motivation through the *interpretive* functions of organizing. Union members' shared values and the core values of basic unionism provide the foundation for this education. Values connect relationships and education to action. Thus, the issue organizing process is driven by the Educate → Agitate → Evaluate → *then* Escalate dynamic.

The *end*—the organizational purpose of the listening and the public relationship building—is concrete action to cause a specific *outcome*. Together, organizing for power and the COG method create a cogent, consistent, mutually reinforcing approach for building and applying union power. In combination, organizing for power using the COG method unites and balances *ends* and *means*. Together, organizing for power and the COG method combine *outcome* and *process* in a systematic unity of purpose, direction, and action.

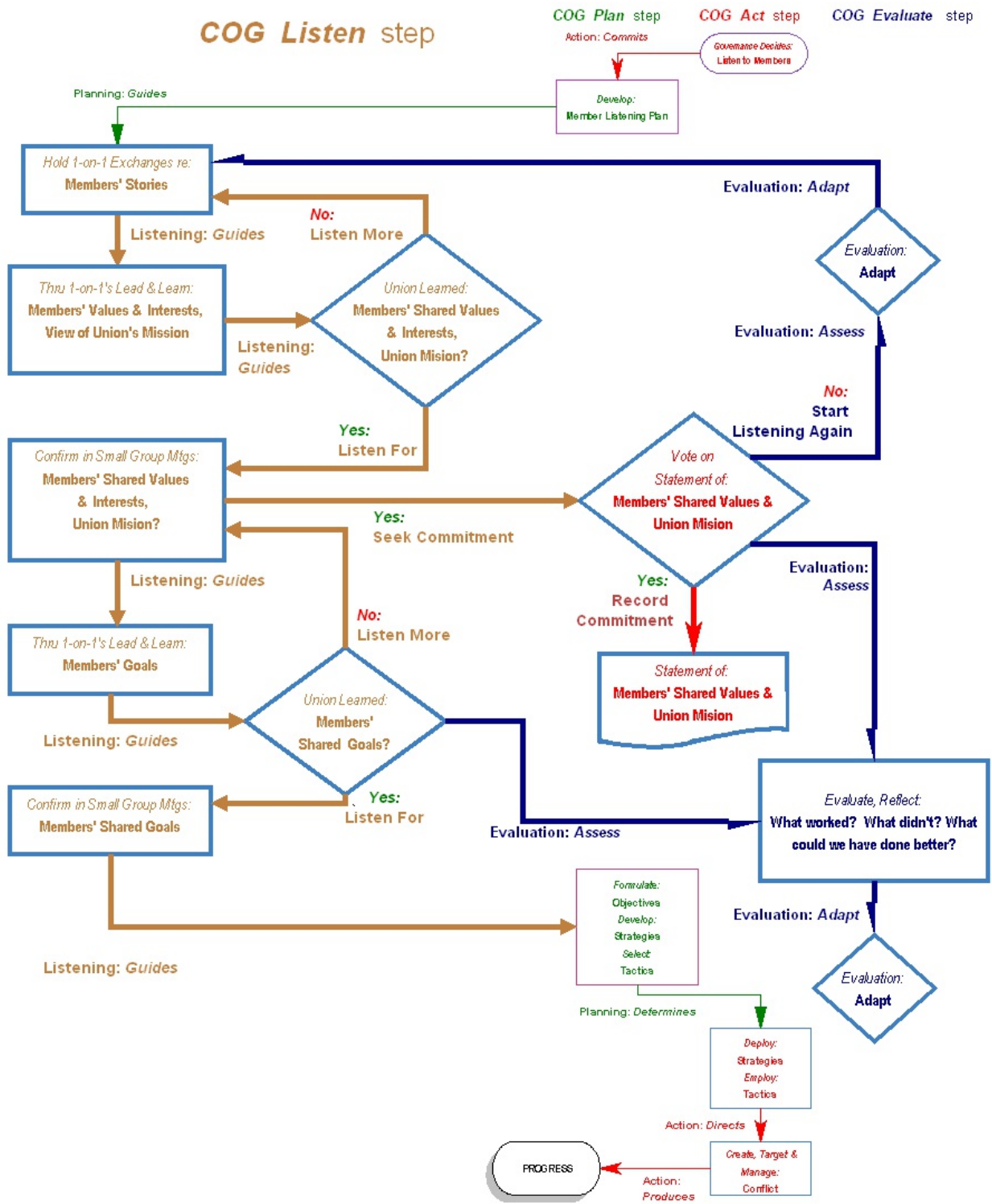
While issue organizing is simple and effective, its proficient execution requires knowledge and experience. The challenges for organizers are to understand: which *opponents to target*; how and when to *freeze* the right organizing issue; and then, how and when to induce members to mobilize in a specific action that might be effective in influencing the *targeted opponent*. The remainder of this GUIDE explores solutions to these challenges.

## CONCLUSION

Through *listening* unions leaders and organizers build public relationships with and among union members (and others in their organizing environments). In the COG method's **LISTEN** step, unions learn about their members and they come to understand their members "stories." They discover their members' interests and goals and their visions for a desired future. Through *listening* unions learn what their members see as the mission of the union. Once a *union has learned* what its members want the mission of the union to be, it has completed the first step to organizing its members. Through *listening*, these stories build into a "greater story": A union can learn and develop the story common to its membership. Again, effective unions organize their members around their shared-values. And again, good union organizers can teach and lead their members by sharing their own values, by recounting the history and heritage of both their own lives and the labor movement, and by exchanging their own stories with bargaining unit members. Once a union has *listened* and learned, it can move to the next step in COG method, the **PLAN** step.

The concepts and procedures discussed in this Chapter can be learned and understood in a variety of ways. The authors have often found graphic representations helpful. Using a flow diagram, Figure 3.6, below, summarizes the processes, procedures, and actions which often occur in the **LISTEN** step of the Constant Organizing Goals method. This diagram provides an alternative for "visualizing" the procedures discussed in this Chapter and illustrates **LISTEN** step's place in the organizing process.

**Figure 3.7**  
**A Summary of the Listen Step in the COG Method**



Please understand, *this flow diagram is fundamentally flawed*. The same is true for the other flow and process diagrams used in this GUIDE. The flow diagrams in Figure 3.6, below, is a *representation* of the process(es) that occur in the **LISTEN** step of the COG method, *as discussed in this Chapter*. It is only a representation of the **LISTEN** step process, not the actual process, itself. The **LISTEN** step process an organizer actually uses is (or should be) different. The **LISTEN** step's actual process and the actions within this overall *listening* process are purpose-driven. Their purpose will and should vary from one organizing campaign to another. The actual **LISTEN** step process and actions will vary from one organizing adversary to another, one union local to another, one place to another, and one time to another. They should also vary from one organizer to another. The processes, themselves, may be more or less complex. They are also enriched by timing and context. Again, this GUIDE's flow and process diagrams are only representations to assist in summarizing and in understanding the steps of the COG method and the other processes explored in this GUIDE. They can be effective, insightful Thinking Tools.<sup>146</sup> But they are only tools: They are not the process itself.

In COG method's **PLAN** step, unions put to work what they learned in the **LISTEN** step to navigate toward successful achievement of their goals. This GUIDE explores the next step in organizing—planning through “strategic navigation”—in the next [chapter](#).

## What Do We Do Now?

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“To accomplish great things, we must not only act, but also dream; not only plan, but also believe.”

— Anatole France, French Writer, Nobel Prize for Literature winner 1921<sup>147</sup>

“The duty of the organizer is to provide people with the opportunity to work for what they believe in.”

— Fred Ross, Sr., labor and community organizer<sup>148</sup>

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<sup>146</sup>See [Chapter 10 THINK: STRATEGIC THINKING AND THE USE OF THINKING TOOLS IN ORGANIZING](#), *infra*.

If the flow diagram in Figure 3.6, below, is a useful a tool to understand the **LISTEN** step, you are probably already asking yourself a number of questions. Some of these questions always go to general application: *e.g.*, **Who** are we organizing? To do **What?** **By When?** **Who** will oppose it? **Why** do they care? **How** can we succeed? Other questions relate directly to the **LISTEN** step: *e.g.*, How does/should this representation of the **LISTEN** step apply in our organizing? Why are we *listening*? To who? For what? How must we adapt our *listening* process to fit our purposes in this organizing campaign? Where was the representation too simple or too complex? What changes in the process must be made to reflect our local's membership and union environment? To reflect the membership's workplace? What does the representation attempt to explain that could be conveyed better in another way? Your answers to questions like these are what make Thinking Tools powerful levers for to secure progress and to build power.

<sup>147</sup>ANATOLE FRANCE, *Introductory Speech at a Session of the Académie Française (24 Dec. 1896)*, ON LIFE & LETTERS: WORKS OF ANATOLE FRANCE IN AN ENGLISH TRANSLATION (ed. J. Lewis May and Bernard Miall, NY: Dodd, Mead & Co., 1924).

<sup>148</sup>ROSS, AXIOMS FOR ORGANIZERS, *supra*, p. 6.



Union members want their unions to act, to actually accomplish something significant and to promote their own interests. However, for unions to succeed, they must not only plan and act. They must build their actions from members' values, beliefs, and aspirations. Powerful campaigns must capture members' imaginations and advance their dreams. It all begins with learning the values they believe and then creating opportunities for them to act on their own values and beliefs.

In this Chapter we have attempted to convey conceptual "knowledge" about tapping into member values with relational organizing methods. However, unless you translate knowledge into mindful, well-considered action, nothing will actually be accomplished. What would be the point of even the most well-executed organizing activities, if your members don't care what their union is doing?

Your mindful, well-considered action should be informed by the "driving dynamic" of organizing with the progression: Educate → Agitate → Evaluate → *then* Escalate.

## **A.**

### ***EDUCATE ABOUT LISTENING AND VALUES.***

Recognizing that all effective action begins with education, sometimes that education involves unions learning from their members. The process of building strong, binding relationships with members is one example. Effective organizing action depends on learning members' core values, beliefs, and aspirations. In particular, unions must understand members' aspirations for "The World As It Should Be." Your organizing team needs to get started by listening to the union's members:

- ✓ Review step 2 on connecting with and listening to members in this GUIDE's [Step-by-Step Analysis in an Organizing Campaign](#).<sup>149</sup>
- ✓ Review this GUIDE's [Appendix 6](#) on the use of story in organizing.
- ✓ Hold a [dialogue](#) with your organizing team to review and discuss:
  - This Chapter, focusing on how to learn members' core values and beliefs through relational organizing methods and techniques. Your organizing team should discuss why connecting with and listening to members builds the Referent Power needed to influence the outcome of the union's organizing campaigns.
  - Union core values. This GUIDE's [Appendix 5](#) compiles a range of core values statements from contemporary and historical union sources. Given its democratic union orientation, [The Ten Guiding Principles of the ILWU](#) merit particular attention.
- ✓ Hold a [dialogue](#) with your organizing team to review and discuss the [progression of actions](#) for relational organizing methods and techniques in this GUIDE's [Resource Document 1](#). Consider:
  - Why and how this progression can reduce the inertia inherent in holding one-on-one relational conversations and small group meetings.
  - How to implement a process for [recording](#), compiling, and [discerning](#) the results of the relational meetings.

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<sup>149</sup>You can also access this GUIDE's [Step-by-Step Analysis in an Organizing Campaign](#) from the "Plan a Campaign" button on the opening page of this DVD.

- How your union can use the results of these relational meetings to build greater member commitment to the union’s organizing campaigns and long-term Relational Power.

## **B.**

### **AGITATE TO LISTEN TO MEMBERS ABOUT CORE VALUES.**

After educating about union values and relational organizing, your organizing team must agitate to use these tools. The following actions help build union Referent and Expert Power:

- ✓ Hold a **dialogue** with your organizing team about:
  - The relational organizing methods, techniques, and tools advanced in this GUIDE.
  - Their own core values, interests, and visions for a better future — The World As It Should Be.
  
- ✓ Schedule and hold **one-on-one conversations** and **small group meetings** with your union’s members to:
  - Learn about and discuss their own stories, focusing on: What gives your members professional joy and satisfaction; what motivates their work; what interferes with their efforts or should be changed; and what they hope to accomplish through union representation. These conversations constitute your members’ “story of self.”
  - Identify their shared core values.
 

In **Resource Document 3**, this GUIDE illustrates typical staff union core values through examples from the core values of the California Staff Organization (CSO) and the Washington State Education Organization (WEASO). CSO’s, **Organizing a Stronger CSO Through Core-Values**, suggests how one staff union conducted its own core values project.
  
- ✓ Hold a **dialogue** with your organizing team to review the one-on-one conversation and small group meeting results of the core values conversations with union members:
  - Implement a process for **discerning** the results of these conversations about story and core values.
  - Summarize what your union’s members told the organizing team (and each other) about their stories in a public narrative about your members “greater story,” their “story of us.”
  - Summarize what your union’s members told the organizing team (and each other) about their core values.
  - Validate what your organizing team heard about union members’ story and core values through followup small group meetings with union members.
  
- ✓ Prepare a final statement of your members’ core values and conduct a process that permits the membership to formally adopt their core values statement as one of the union’s governing documents.

## C.

### **EVALUATE YOUR PROGRESS IN LEARNING MEMBERS' VALUES.**

Conduct another **After Action Review** (AAR) with your organizing team to take full advantage of their collective intelligence. Assess and adapt each action your team took to identify your union members' core values using the essential seven questions:

1. What were our desired outcomes?
2. What were our actual outcomes?
3. Why were the actual outcomes different from those we anticipated in our planning?
4. What should we maintain to continue to make progress?
5. What should we change to continue to make progress?
6. What did we learn?
7. How can apply what we learn to our future actions?

An AAR **dialogue** based on these questions permits your union to take full advantage of the organizing team's collective intelligence. The development of **dialogue skills** will also permit your team to function more effectively in other organizing tasks.

Of course, your AAR ought to focus on the practices and outcomes of your own organizing actions. Therefore, also consider:

- ✓ How did your organizing team approach and work with members' in using relational meeting methods, techniques, and tools?
- ✓ What did your organizing team learn about your union members' core values?
- ✓ How can your union members' core values be used and incorporated into future organizing?
- ✓ How could your organizing team have improved its development and implementation of accountability procedures for each team member's assigned responsibilities related to relational organizing techniques and tools?
- ✓ How can your organizing team improve evaluation of the tasks and actions it used in relational organizing?

Your organizing team ought to keep **records** of the situation present in its immediate organizing environments and what it learned from the AAR.

## D.

### **ESCALATE LISTENING ACTION TO LEARN MEMBERS' GOALS.**

To ensure the progress—and ultimately the success—of your organizing campaign, your union must take further actions to understand and build Referent power using relational techniques and tools:

- ✓ Hold a **dialogue** with your organizing team to review and discuss part II. B. *Understanding Where Members Want to Go: Differentiating Goals and Objectives* of this GUIDE's **Chapter 4**. Your organizing team should clearly understand the role and function of member goals in an organizing campaign.

- ✓ Review step 2 on discerning members’ goals in this GUIDE’s [Step-by-Step Analysis in an Organizing Campaign](#).
- ✓ Schedule and hold followup [one-on-one conversations](#) and [small group meetings](#) with your union’s members to share what your organizing team learned about:
  - How your members’ own stories (*i.e.*, their story of self) form a collective, shared greater story of us, as a union.
  - Their immediate and long-term workplace and professional goals.
    - As an example, the [Purposes and Goals Article of the Constitution](#), in this GUIDE’s [Resource Document 4](#), illustrates the long-term goals of the California Staff Organization. The [Goals, Objectives, Strategies, and Tactics Planning Worksheets](#) in this GUIDE’s in [Resource Document 6](#) provide forms that may be useful in recording and formulating members’ goals.
  - [Record](#) what the organizing team learned about your members’ stories of self and stories of us.
- ✓ Review the results of the followup conversations with your union’s members:
  - Implement a process for [discerning](#) the results of these conversations.
  - Summarize what your union’s members told the organizing team (and each other) about their goals identification.
  - Implement a process for [discerning](#) the results of your members’ stories of self and their stories of us. This process should produce a public narrative about their collective, “story of now” (*i.e.*, what they—together—can do to make the World As It Is into the World As It Should Be).
  - Validate what your organizing team heard about union members’ story of now and their goals, through followup small group meetings.
- ✓ Assess and adapt your organizing team’s framing of your union’s problems as an “organizing issue,” informed by another review of step 3 of this GUIDE’s [Step-by-Step Analysis in an Organizing Campaign](#).
- ✓ Hold an AAR [dialogue](#) with your organizing team to evaluate your escalated actions to learn members’ collective, story of now and the identification of members’ goals.<sup>150</sup>

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<sup>150</sup>For more information about the concepts discussed in this Chapter, contact Bob Lindquist at (310)753-8121 or [org4pwr@gmail.com](mailto:org4pwr@gmail.com).

