

How do I talk to my coworkers about unionizing?



Make a list of coworkers

This list should be a shareable, easily-created document that helps you keep track of everyone in your organizing efforts. With this list, you can see who are potential leaders and help take the burden off of other organizer's shoulders by bringing in new people.



And remember, this list and all of your organizing efforts should be done securely so the boss doesn't find out.

Map your workplace

Mapping is the process in which you determine who is supportive of the union, who is in what friend group, and who are the leaders of those groups to understand where you need to focus your organizing efforts.

We need to keep in mind that we can't win unless we know everyone in the workplace, how they feel about organizing, and who they can recruit from their social groups.

This is about worker solidarity, and embracing a newfound network of democratically organizing together.

*Check out our template to get started:
dsasf.org/mapping-template*

1-on-1 Conversations

Connect on the issues

Try and maintain a conversation where the other person talks **80% of the time**.

Ask **open-ended questions** like, “What do you think about our workplace?”

Offer how issues have affected you personally so you can develop a closer, trusting relationship. Ultimately, this conversation should help lead your coworker to identifying who created these issues: **the boss**.

Explain the upcoming action that you want them to join. With that trust you've built, you can then connect their motivation with that action.



Make the ask

Now is the part to ask your coworker directly: **“Are you committed to take part?”**

Stay away from general phrases like: “Do you think you can make it?” or “Will you think about coming?”

You want to use **definitive phrases** as to not confuse their intent: “We’re going to the office together on Tuesday. Can we count on you to come with us?”

Talk through the fear

One of the more important questions you will face is: **“What is the boss going to do to discourage or intimidate us?”**



The boss is going to tell us that this isn't the way to solve the problem and we're being disruptive. They are only saying that because we have found out we are collectively stronger than they are. There are no promises, but we are stronger when we are united in our effort to control the means of our work.

If they say no...

If your coworker says no or is unsure, don't brush them off or dismiss their concerns—**acknowledge and empathize with them.**

Everyone reacts differently, and that's OK!

You can circle back to them or have someone else speak with them if you aren't getting through successfully. Finding someone who has a strong relationship with this person can help move them through their fear.

You want to build trust with your coworkers and have them realize the importance of organizing with **everyone!**

Let's organize together.

We will help you organize or provide you with more resources. Let's get together to build a better world for all workers. Learn more at dsasf.org or email us at labor@dsasf.org

*Labor donated by DSA SF members.
Illustrations by davidhellman.art.*