

ORGANIZING 101

Industrial Workers of the World

Participant booklet to accompany OT 101 Version 3.0, adopted in February, 2019
by the Organizer Training Committee of the Industrial Workers of the World.

Working Together - OTC Safer Spaces Policy

The IWW is committed to the fullest possible participation of all its members in the activities of the union. No one should be put off from participating because of the actions, attitudes or language of other course participants.

The OTC values the diverse knowledge, experience and skills that each member brings with them to the course. It is crucial that our trainings are free of harassment and that everyone feels safe and welcome to contribute.

Harassment

We will not tolerate harassment of any kind. Language which contains discriminatory references or which is abusive or threatening in any way must not be used and nor should jokes or comments which perpetuate discrimination.

If a participant feels that another participant is acting inappropriately, they are encouraged to discuss the matter with the person directly or to bring complaints to a trainer. The trainer will discuss the problematic behavior with the person in question. If the behavior does not improve, trainers may ask the participant to leave.

Trainer Expectations

Trainers are representatives of the OTC and are expected to model the respect and consideration that we expect from all participants. Trainers should encourage full and meaningful participation and foster a supportive environment.

Trainers are responsible for ensuring the training starts and ends on time and covering all important material.

Trainers have discretion regarding who is permitted in the training and are empowered to prevent people who have not met the relevant eligibility criteria or whose participation is problematic to attend or continue to participate.

If participants feel that a trainer has not upheld these standards they should direct their complaints to otc@iww.org.

Participant Expectations

Participants are expected to arrive on time, attend the entire training, and return from breaks promptly.

In order to create a safe, supportive environment in IWW trainings, participants shall:

- have equal opportunity to contribute without a small number of participants dominating the discussion.

- engage in discussion in a respectful, constructive manner. Respectful, reasoned disagreement and constructive criticism is encouraged, but arguments or put-downs will not be tolerated.
- avoid jargon as it is a barrier to good communication.
- limit cell phone use to urgent matters only.

Training participants should be able to speak openly about organizing. It is very important that confidential, personal, or sensitive information be respected and restricted to the training.

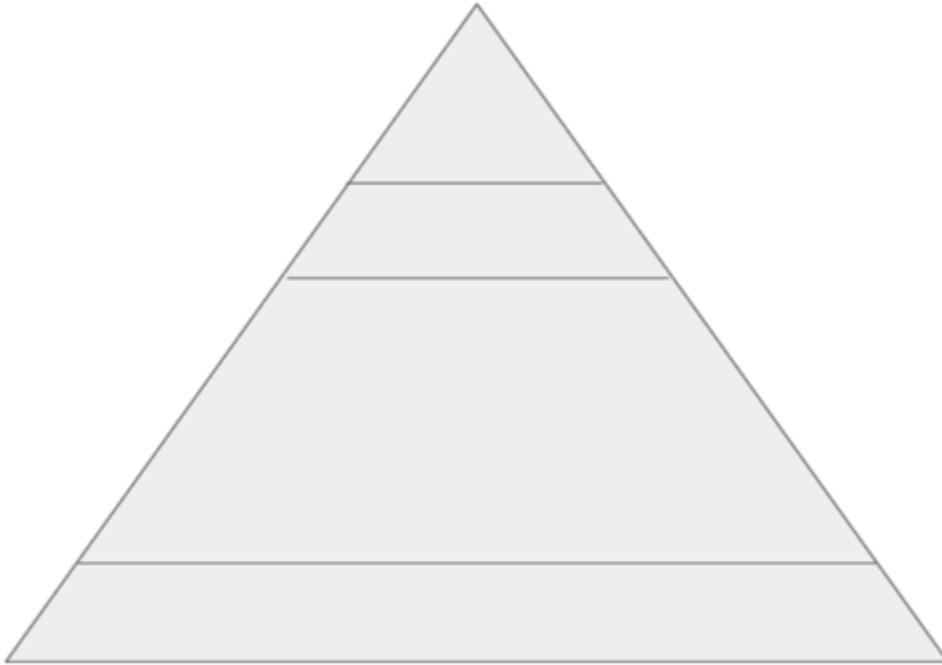
What has been outlined as guidance for behavior during the training is equally applicable to scheduled breaks.

What is a Union?

How do we (the IWW) define a union?

What is solidarity unionism?

Building the Committee



Gathering Contacts

Write down as many of your coworkers' names as you can remember.

What are some possible ways to gather contact information?



IWW Contact Sheet

Committee

Personal Info

Name: _____ Pronouns: _____
Cell Phone: _____ Home Phone: _____
Address: _____ City: _____ ZIP: _____
Email: _____ Social Media: _____

Work Info

Department: _____ Employment Type: _____
Position: _____ Shift: _____

Organizing Info

Committee Contact: _____
First contact date: _____ Assessment: **1 2 3 4 5**
Notes: _____
Second contact date: _____ Assessment: **1 2 3 4 5**
Notes: _____
Third contact date: _____ Assessment: **1 2 3 4 5**
Notes: _____

Assignments

Date: _____ Description: _____ Date Completed: _____
Date: _____ Description: _____ Date Completed: _____
Date: _____ Description: _____ Date Completed: _____

Notes:

Workplace Mapping

Sketch a rough draft of a physical map of your workplace

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to sketch a rough draft of a physical map of their workplace. The box occupies most of the page below the instruction text.

Social Charting

Sketch a rough draft of a social chart of your workplace

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for sketching a rough draft of a social chart of a workplace. The box is currently blank.

Identifying Leaders

Think of a social leader in your workplace. How do you know they are a leader?

What are some good and bad qualities of leaders, in relation to building the committee?

Positive qualities of leaders	Negative qualities of leaders

What happens if we don't involve leaders in the campaign?

One on One Meetings

What does AEIOU stand for?

What is the 80/20 rule and why is it important?

What should you do to prepare for a one-on-one?

What should you do after you have a one-on-one?

Setting Up a First Meeting

What are some dos and don'ts of setting up your first one on one with a worker?

Do	Don't

AEIOU: Agitation

Brainstorm some questions to use in agitational conversations:

AEIOU: Education

If Agitation poses a _____, Education explains how _____ is the answer.

Sometimes it's hard to know what to say in the spur of the moment. Come up with three examples of questions or stories that are intended to educate that you can fall back on when you are floundering.

1.

2.

3.

AEIOU: Inoculation

What does inoculation mean for organizing?

What do you think your boss might do when they find out there's union organizing going on?

What are some dos and don'ts of responding to the fear of firing?

Do	Don't

Things bosses will say...	Things bosses will say...
What is this kind of bosspeak called?	What is this kind of bosspeak called?

AEIOU: Organize

Why do we ask workers to complete concrete tasks?

What tasks could you ask a worker to complete?

Assessment system for each of our contacts:

1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	

AEIOU: The Union Makes Us Strong (aka “the pUsh”)

What should we do after we ask a worker to complete a task?

Why is pushing important for organizing?

How can we push in an effective, caring way?

Asking Workers to Join the IWW

What are some consequences of not asking workers to join the IWW?

What are the possible benefits of asking workers to join the IWW?

Why are dues important?

Committee Meetings

Essential components of effective committee meetings:

- Have an agenda. The purpose of the meeting should be clear. It should not turn into a gripe session or a pep rally. Don't try to cram too much into one meeting.
- Have concrete goals and outcomes.
- Keep the meeting short. Start and end on time. Allow for informal chatting afterwards, but no decisions should be made outside of the formal meeting.
- Meet at a convenient time and a neutral place. Avoid bars and even restaurants that might make some workers uncomfortable or be too noisy. Solicit the help of your branch to offer childcare if possible.
- Encourage participation. Nothing will kill committee interest faster than prolonged speeches. Instead, suggestions, discussion and participation by committee members will keep them interested and eager to make their contributions to the success of the campaign. Be sensitive to individuals from different social groups. If a worker or group of workers want the union to do something, try to make it happen. Make sure certain individuals (especially white men) do not dominate meetings.
- Have a chair and take minutes. Rotate these responsibilities among committee members, but don't sacrifice the strength of the meeting with someone who doesn't know how to chair. Work on training chairs. This might mean having co-chairs. It might mean letting individuals keep the stack for discussion. It might mean giving one on one trainings with future chairs. Remember, we want all members to be comfortable doing the various tasks of building the union.
- Be flexible. Allow your committee to take on its own culture and develop unique things about it that make it distinct and flow from the experiences of the workers involved.
- Always start meetings with agitation. Just as we start every one-on-one with agitation, beginning our meetings this way reminds us of why we do this work in the first place. Having this renewed sense of purpose can energize the group and focus your effort and attention on the importance and immediacy of building solidarity and worker power.

Labor Law in a Nutshell

What is the purpose of labor law?

Who does labor law benefit, and how?

US only: What are five considerations for filing a ULP?

(For trainings in Canada, use this space to take notes about labour law in the Canadian context.)

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Life of a ULP (US only)

Day 1: You file.

Day 2: Your boss gets a copy.

Day 10: Call the board, get an interview, file an affidavit.

Day 11-90: ???

Day 90: Board recommendation. Do they think you should pursue it?

If yes - they'll be your attorney, and you have an 80% chance of winning.

If no - you can withdraw, or you can ask for a reason why they recommend against it. Not both.

Day 180: Hearing with a judge.

Day 240: Legal arguments are due to the judge.

Day 320: Judge makes decision.

If you win:

60-day notice posting saying the boss won't do it again.

OR

Back to work order, if someone got fired.

OR

Back pay minus unemployment.

Direct Action

Scenario: You work at a local print shop with about 60 employees. We have a five-person committee and we are still under the radar from the boss. Our committee has identified some of the issues people are struggling with at work:

- Someone got fired for no reason
- Wages too low
- No extra pay on holidays
- Not allowed to turn on A/C in summer (even though machine works)
- Schedules aren't given until the last minute
- No healthcare coverage
- Often called in and sent home early when its slow
- Mandatory overtime at short notice when big orders come in
- Forced to work through lunch breaks
- There is an old, broken down machine in the back room that causes headaches when used
- Little to no training for new people

Which two issues should the committee take on first? Why?

Draft a demand to resolve the issue.

Roles for a successful March on the Boss:

-
-
-
-
-

A recipe for planning any action successfully

Component	Definition	Criteria / things to think about
Issue	What exactly is the problem? E.g. a problem with next week's schedule, a pay cut, or the boss mistreating a fellow worker	
Demand	What are you demanding that the boss do to fix the situation?	
Goal	What is the desired outcome of the action? This is broader than the demand. You could be thinking about growing the campaign by "showing the union" to your coworkers. Or you could be setting the boss up to fail so that people stop seeing him as Mr. Nice Guy.	Strategic; develops the campaign, and your coworkers, for the long-term
Target	Who are you demanding do something? E.g. boss, district manager, shift supervisor, owner...	
Tactic	How will you make the target do what you want? E.g. a march on the boss, work slowdown, refusal to use a certain piece of equipment	What is the most effective for the least resources?
Participants	Your fellow workers who are participating in the action with you (does not include outside/community support)	
Witnesses	Your fellow workers (and other bystanders, potentially) who are not directly participating in the action, but are watching it happen	
Results	What happened as a result of your action. Did you win the demand? Does the boss's counter-offer satisfy your objective?	Ideally meets your demand and goal as faithfully as possible
Follow-up	After the action has taken place, following up with the participants and the witnesses to see how the action impacted them. Also, following up with the target to ensure that they keep any promises they made in response to your action. Finally, reflecting on what you might do differently next time.	

Escalation	<p>If the demand is not met as a result of your action, what steps will you take to increase the pressure on the target to meet the demand?</p> <p>Escalation usually involves rolling out different tactics but can also involve using the same tactic but with more participants or a different target.</p>	
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Escalation

Winning on a demand will often involve rolling out more than one tactic. When taking on an issue, it is a good idea to have three escalating tactics planned out in advance, along a timeline.

Escalation campaign in the print shop:

First action:

Second action:

Third action:

In your own workplace

Think about your own workplace, and who is in charge of it (supervisors, managers, regional directors, owners, shareholders, etc.).

Insofar as these apply, what would bother those people the most?

- Would your boss (supervisor, etc.) be more upset by a \$500 loss in profits from a sip-in, or an occupation of their office for half an hour?
- By Yelp or Glassdoor reviews smearing the business as hostile to workers, or by posters in their home neighborhood describing them as tolerating sexual harassment?
- Would they be more panicked by 5 people flyering outside the business for three hours, or by workers completely stopping work for 30 minutes?
- By receiving notice a ULP has been filed, or by having workers work to rule?
- By an article in the *Huffington Post* about the organizing campaign, or by a sick-out?

Sustainable Committees

What does a functioning shop committee look like?

What are some ways a committee can “level up”?

Recommended reading: “Before you file for that election” on the blog Organizing Work (<http://organizing.work/before-you-file-for-that-election/>). Even though the focus is on preparing for an election, the article provides a comprehensive checklist of goals for every shop committee.

Next Steps

Get started

Now it's time for you to go out and start organizing your own workplace! Make a plan and team up with someone to check in on your plan.

In the next week I will...

In the next month I will...

The person I will check in on my plan with is...

Get in touch

Organizing should not be lonely. Though the IWW doesn't have paid organizing staff, there are many dedicated and experienced organizers who are more than willing to provide support, mentorship, and advice.

The Organizing Department Board (ODB) can team you up with a mentor:
organize@iww.org.

Your local branch should have an Organizing Department Liaison (ODL) and may also have an organizing officer or committee chair. If you aren't already in touch with these folks, get their contact info and record it here.

Branch Organizing Department Liaison:

Other contacts for organizing support in the branch:

Homework

Organizing can only be learned by actually getting out and trying it for yourself! In addition to the goals you set for yourself, here's some homework for you to do.

1. Write a list of all your coworkers, including whatever contact information you have. Identify gaps and make a plan to fill in at least two gaps per week.
2. Draw a physical map of your workplace. Meet with an organizing buddy and explain your map to them.
3. Draw a social chart of your workplace. Meet with an organizing buddy and explain your chart to them.
4. Start an organizing journal, keeping track of anything remotely organizing related each shift you work.
5. Identify the first person to have a one-on-one with. Meet with an organizing buddy and roleplay setting up the first meeting.
6. Prepare for your first one-on-one by reviewing all your notes about your coworker. Meet with an organizing buddy and roleplay your first one-on-one.
7. Have your first one-on-one. Focus on agitation and education. Take notes after the meeting. Meet with an organizing buddy after the meeting to talk about how it went.
8. Get in touch with the ODB to get connected with an organizing mentor. Keep lining up one-on-ones and go to your mentor for advice and support.

Organizer Training 101 Evaluation

What was your **favorite topic**?

Can you tell us why?

What was your **least favorite topic**?

Can you tell us why?

What was your **favorite activity**?

Can you tell us why?

What was your **least favorite activity**?

Can you tell us why?

Continued on back

Was this a positive experience for you? Yes/No

Can you tell us why?

Please check the column that best fits your feelings about each statement.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The trainers worked well together				
The training time was used well				
The food was good				
The location was accessible and pleasant				
I feel like I learned a lot				
I would like to learn more about these topics				
I feel motivated to organize				
I feel enthusiastic about the IWW				
The trainers were knowledgeable				
The trainers were respectful				

Would you like to provide some more feedback for your trainers or for the OTC?

Thank you for taking the time to provide us with valuable feedback. We hope you enjoyed your training, but most importantly we hope you will join us in the work of organizing the working class!