

TWO MODELS OF UNION STRATEGY

Member Centered

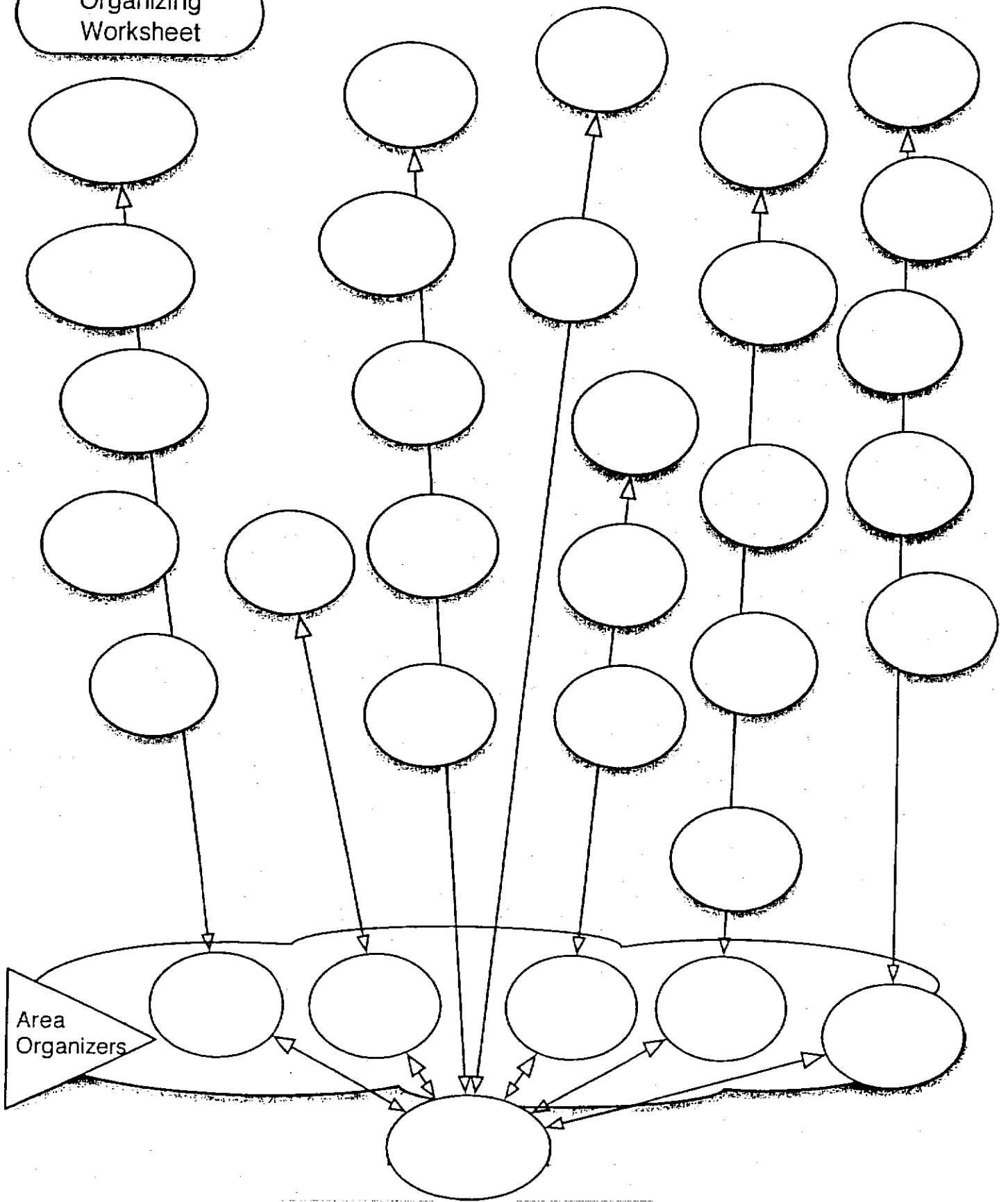
1. Independent of management, proactive.
2. Stimulates and involves members in problem solving in group process or collective action...
3. Not limited to grievances and the bargaining process.
4. Commitment to education, communications and members' active participation in union.
5. Development and dependence on members' skills and abilities.
6. Information sharing & open communications channels.
7. Decentralized organizational structure, based on enhancing union's power.

Staff & Leadership Centered

1. Dependent on management, reactive.
2. Union Leadership and Staff solve problems for members on basis of complaints or requests.
3. Total reliance on grievances and the negotiations process.
4. Passive membership.
5. Reliance on specialists, experts and union staff.
6. Secretive and closed communications channels.
7. Centralized and top heavy organizational structure, based on employer structure.

These models are not mutually exclusive but reflect a difference in emphasis.

Organizing Worksheet



ORGANIZING CONVERSATION OUTLINE

Step One: Get in the Door.

How will you introduce the conversation?

What will you say if the person says they don't have time or that they aren't interested?

Step Two: Get the Worker's Story and Find Issues.

What's a good way to get the person talking?

What open-ended questions can you ask to get the person talking about issues relevant to the union's campaign?

How will you ask about how the person is personally affected by the issues they raise?

Step Three: Educate.

What can you tell the person to show that their issues are shared by others?

How can you connect the person's issues to the union's campaign?

Step Four: Inoculate.

What negative things will the person likely hear about the union's campaign? From other workers / management / in the press?

What is the real story?

Step Five: Assess & Ask Them to Make a Commitment.

How will you ask if they support the union's campaign?

What will you ask them to do to make the campaign successful?

Step Six: Agitate.

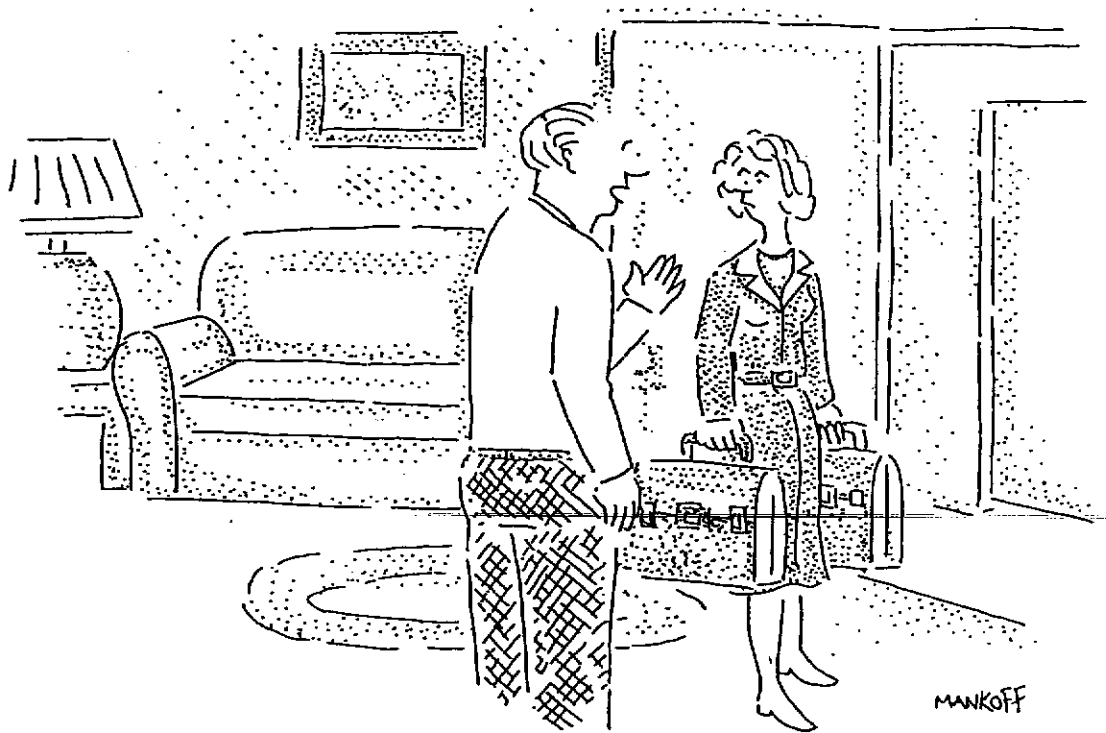
How will you respond when they say they can't make a commitment because they're too busy or because they need to think about it?

What will you say if they give you an iffy commitment like "I'll try to make it."

What information does the union need? Is your contact information for the person accurate (address / phone / cell phone / e-mail address)

How will you assess the conversation and to whom will you report how it went?

How will you assess your organizing?



"Hey! How about giving me some benchmarks?"

SMART GOAL-SETTING FOR UNION CAMPAIGNS

Set SMART Goals!

Specific

Measurable

Agreed-Upon

Realistic

Timely

Specific – If you set specific goals, you are better able to assess your progress, and you will know for certain if you attain it. With a general goal, it's hard to be motivated and you're likely to end up feeling uncertain or disappointed—even if you accomplish a lot!

A specific goal is an *objective* goal; meeting it is a question of fact, not opinion:

EXAMPLES:

General: "Begin negotiations as early as we can."

Specific: "Present our proposals to management by November 1."

General: "Get a lot of people to the school board meeting."

Specific: "Get 50 people to the school board meeting."

General: "Hold the line on health care."

Specific: "Don't make any changes in health coverage."

Measurable – Even if you set specific goals, you won't know if you're making sufficient progress toward them—and you won't know if you've achieved them!—if you don't develop a system for measuring success.

Using two of the examples above, the local might:

- Create a calendar of benchmarks that need to be met in order to be at the bargaining table by November 1: The meeting would need to be scheduled by October 15; the union would have to request a meeting date by October 1; the union would have to make a presentation to the school board on October 7; etc.
- Set daily goals for the number of members to sign a commitment sheet saying "YES! I'll be at the board meeting" –say 5 a day for ten days, ending a week before the event.

Agreed Upon – Especially in a volunteer organization, people will work harder for goals that they participated in setting! Dictated goals won't inspire anyone!

Compare:

- "The Exec Board is trying to double the union's PAC contributions this year; can you contribute \$20?"
- "We, the members of AFT Local 222, approve the following plan to double the union's PAC contributions:
 1. Ask every member to contribute \$20;
 2. Award a prize to members in the building with the largest average contribution;
 3. Put all union endorsements to a membership vote."

Realistic - A good goal is one that you reasonably believe you can achieve, given a solid and sustained effort. Setting a goal too high will just depress people, and setting it too low won't challenge you to do your best.

The best way to tell if a goal is realistic is to break down the steps you'll take to reach it, and ask if *those* are attainable. For example, it might be difficult to judge whether you can double your attendance at membership meetings, but if you break it down and realize it means that each building rep will need to talk to two people a week for four weeks, that might seem reasonable.

Timed – There's always a temptation not to set a date for a goal and say "let's just keep working until we get there!" This is usually just a way of avoiding pressure and responsibility. A deadline keeps you on task and motivates you to do the work necessary each step of the way.

