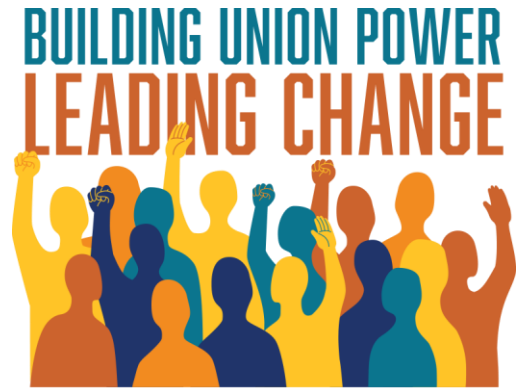


Who Really Leads:

Identifying Who Moves People to Build Power

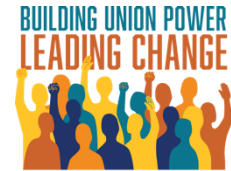
Manuel Santillan, UPR, OPEIU Local 30

Rick Campbell, Internal Organizer, SEIU Local 49



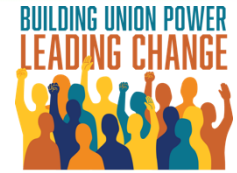
UNION DELEGATE CONFERENCE 2026





Workshop Norms

- Devices off and away or on silent
- If you need to take a call, leave the room
- Limit sidebar conversations
- Manage your own comfort



Workshop Outcomes:

- ✓ Understand the difference between strong union leaders and other roles
- ✓ Understand best practices of leadership identification
- ✓ Make a game plan for leadership identification back at your worksite or facility

Workshop content based on:

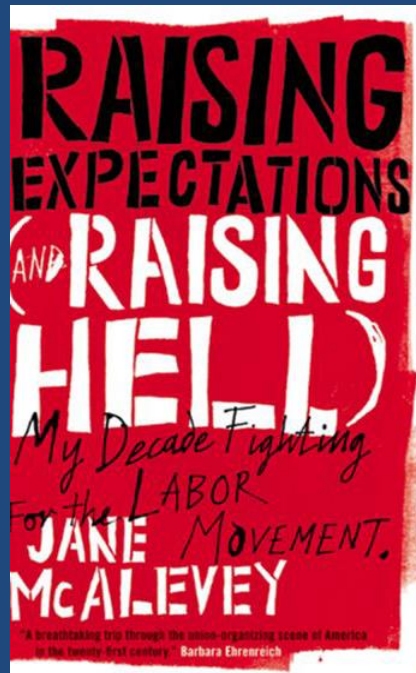
UC BERKELEY
LABOR CENTER
Skills to Win Workshop



And Coalition Joint Staffing Leader ID Blitzes



Books by Jane McAlevey:



IN THE NEW GILDED AGE

JANE F. McALEVEY

A Collective Bargain
Unions,
Organizing,
and the
Fight for
Democracy
Jane
McAlevey

RULES
TO
WIN
BY

Power &
Participation
in Union
Negotiations

JANE F. McALEVEY & ABBY LAWLOR

4 Core Concepts

1. **Leaders** vs. **Activists**

Today's focus: **Leaders** vs. **Activists**

2. **Structure** vs. **Self-Selecting**

3. **Majorities** vs. **Minorities**

4. **Organizing** vs. **Mobilizing/Activism**



What makes a strong union leader?

- ✓ **Leaders have followers**
- ✓ **Union leaders organize people to overcome their fears and take collective action to win shared goals**



Pitfalls of Leader Identification

**Asking our
friends or
people who
resemble us**

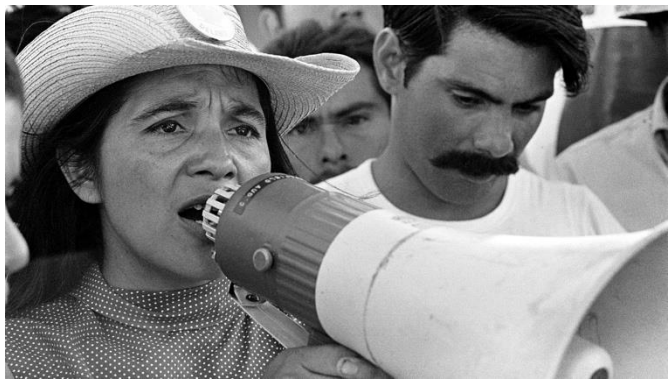
**Recruiting the
“last person in
the room”**

**Recruiting
grievants**

**Not including all
worksites,
demographics,
shifts, etc...**

“Tag, your it!”

**Assuming a
volunteer is a
leader**



Leaders

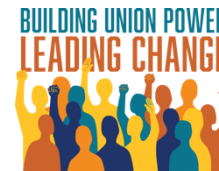
- ✓ Leaders have followers
- ✓ Union leaders organize people to overcome their fears and take collective action to win shared goals

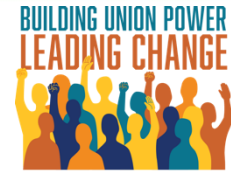
vs



Activists

“a person who believes strongly in political or social change and takes part in activities such as public protests to try to make this happen.”





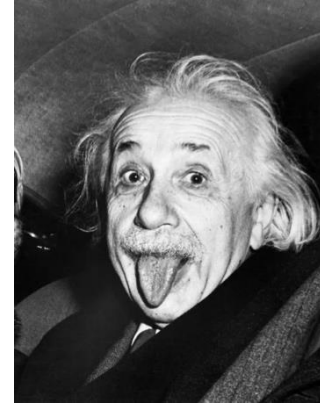
Leaders vs Activists

Leaders	Activists
Often have to be recruited	Often volunteer on their own
Can move people to overcome fears and reservations	May struggle to move or persuade people
When they speak, people listen	When they speak, some listen and some do not. Some people may be annoyed.



Connector

- ✓ Popular
- ✓ Organizes social activities
- ✓ Helps build community



Subject-Matter Expert

- ✓ Very knowledgeable about a set of topics
- ✓ People go to them for advice on those topics

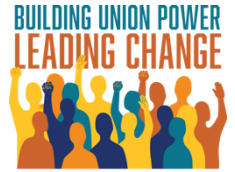
Leadership Identification Exercise

BUILDING UNION POWER
LEADING CHANGE



UNION DELEGATE CONFERENCE 2026

Which worker has the most leadership potential?



Yolanda Williams



Tianna Moore



Audrey Phillips



Jasmine Gutierrez



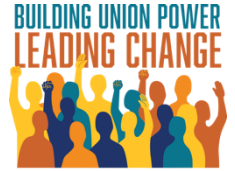
The answer is...

Tiana Moore has the most potential to be a strong union leader



- Leader
- Activist
- Subject-Matter Expert

Which worker has the most leadership potential?



Yolanda Williams



- Connector
- Activist?

Tianna Moore



- Leader
- Activist
- Subject-Matter Expert

Jasmine Gutierrez

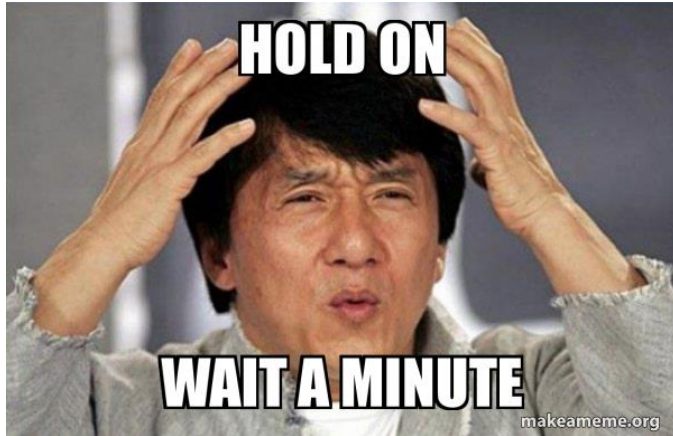


- Activist
- Connector

Audrey Phillips



- Subject-Matter Expert
- Connector
- Activist?



Tiana is anti-union...

- ❖ **We need to know who the leaders are and...**
- ❖ **We need a plan to bring them into the union family or work around them**

So... are we done?!



How do we know who the leaders are in a worksite?



- ❖ We ask their co-workers
- ❖ And we test their leadership

Blitzing for Staffing Champions



Leader identification questions that DON'T work

1. Who hates the boss the most?
2. Who is the loudest?
3. Who organizes social events?
4. Who do people go to when they are in trouble?
5. Who is your leader?



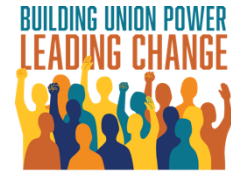
“Who do you most trust and respect?”

- Who are some of the most trusted and respected SEIU members in your UBT?
- What makes you say _____?
- Is there anyone else, besides _____?
What makes you say _____?



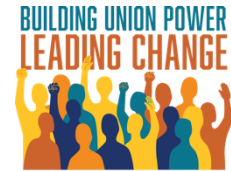
Blitzing for Staffing Champions





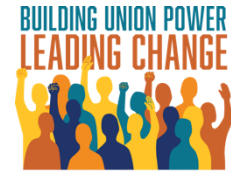
Name	Visited	Identified as a leader...									
Amy Bonilla	😊										
Audrey Phillips		❤️									
David Matthews											
Chris Murphy	😊										
Edith Garrity											
Jasmine Gutierrez		❤️	❤️								
Lisa Mancuso		❤️									
Maria Waldorf											
Peter Potrovsky											
Sue Peterson	😊										
Tianna Moore		❤️									
Vickie Marshall											
Yolanda Williams		❤️									

Day 1



Name	Visited	Identified as a leader...									
Amy Bonilla	😊										
Audrey Phillips		❤️	❤️								
David Matthews											
Chris Murphy	😊	❤️									
Edith Garrity											
Jasmine Gutierrez	😊	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️					
Lisa Mancuso		❤️									
Maria Waldorf	😊										
Peter Potrovsky											
Sue Peterson	😊										
Tianna Moore		❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️						
Vickie Marshall	😊										
Yolanda Williams		❤️	❤️								

Day 2



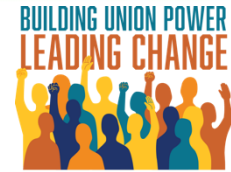
Name	Visited	Identified as a leader...									
Amy Bonilla	😊										
Audrey Phillips		❤️	❤️								
David Matthews	😊										
Chris Murphy	😊	❤️									
Edith Garrity											
Jasmine Gutierrez	😊	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️					
Lisa Mancuso	😊	❤️									
Maria Waldorf	😊										
Peter Potrovsky	😊										
Sue Peterson	😊										
Tianna Moore		❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️	❤️
Vickie Marshall	😊										
Yolanda Williams	😊	❤️	❤️	❤️							

Day 3

What happens after the blitz?

- ❖ Follow-up with identified leaders
- ❖ Ask them to take a leadership role
- ❖ Test their leadership





Recruiting an Identified Leader

Have a quality
organizing
conversation

Offer a compelling
why them that
connects to their
issues

“Your co-workers
have said you are one
of the people they
most trust and
respect.”

“Can your co-workers
count on you to be
the staffing champion
for your UBT?”

Acknowledge, Answer
and Redirect
reservations

Be clear about the
commitment and
expectations

“If not you, who do
you trust to lead this
work?”

Feedback and Next Steps

What was good and what needs to improve about this workshop?

How will you apply this back home?

- What is a leadership role for which you need to recruit?
- Make a plan to have one on one conversations with a super-majority of the workgroup:
 - How many people are there?
 - How will you reach them?
How long will it take to talk to a majority of people?
 - Who can help you?
- How will you test the leadership of your identified leader(s)?

