

Sample One-on-One Script

1. Introduce yourself and say why you're visiting.

If you know the person:

- *"Hi [name], I wanted to talk with you about CTA, our contract, and why we need to stand together now."*
- *"Hi [name], have you heard the latest news on [impasse, the union-busting proposal, etc.]? Let's talk about it for a minute."*
- *"Hey [name], I just want to make sure you are up to speed on important updates affecting our union and negotiations. Can you chat?"*

If you don't know the person:

- *"Hello [name]. I'm [your name], a member of CTA from [your site] and I was hoping we could talk about how things are going at work for you, and what's happening at the district and state levels that will affect us."*

Transition: Before I get to those updates, I'd like to hear from you!

2. Get to the person's concerns. Listen 80% of the time. Ask probing questions.

- Start with asking what they do and how it is going (if you don't know).
- Ask what they like about their work.
- Ask what they'd like to change or improve about their work.

3. Explore the issue the person cares about. LISTEN! Tie their concerns to our union's priorities/contract or collective strength. Union Vision & Message:

- Having identified the issue or issues the potential member cares about, ask more questions to get them to articulate what is unjust about the situation and what could be done about it.

Non-Member Union Message - *The good news is that because we have a union, we have a **voice** in the work we do! We **negotiate a contract** that ensures we have planning time, duty-free lunch, etc (plug in their issue.) Union leaders **have your back** if ever you needed advocacy or representation to make sure you are **treated fairly**. [Bring any particular concern back to how the union can fix it.]*

- State why you joined; your own experience is compelling.
- Explain that our union only represents fellow dues-paying members in grievances and binding arbitration.
- Explain some of the things that have been won or are being worked on through your union or a current campaign (have talking points about our union).

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- **Transition/ Dues** – *“The only way we can continue being successful at improving things at school is to have members involved and to have resources, which is why we have union dues.” Tell them the dues rate: \$39.24 (Instructional) \$19.99 (Support)*
- **These rates will not change this year.**

Member Union Message/Autopay - *We can all agree that educators’ working conditions are our students’ learning conditions. By having a union, teachers have a strong voice to fight for better teaching conditions. Decision makers in Tallahassee want to **silence our collective voice** with discriminatory legislation that applies only to teachers, not fire or police unions. It takes away our right to fund our union through payroll deduction and would decertify our union if we fall under 60% membership.*

- **Transition/Autopay** - *Educators in Hillsborough County will not be silenced! That is why we are re-committing to our union by signing up for Autopay. When the time comes you stand with me and recommit to your union?*

4. Ask for a commitment.

Unapologetically express that they should take a stand if they want a strong contract and serious voice for teachers/education support professionals. Here is an example ask, though everyone’s ask will sound different as they make it their own:

Can we count on you to stand with your colleagues and join your union?

If “Yes”:

Great! Here is the fast track form to join (help them fill this out, do not assume they will on their own). To really have a voice and a vehicle to make the changes you want, we need more than your membership — we need you to get involved. Can you:

- *Wear your t-shirt (button) on Tuesday when we bargain?*
- *Come to the meeting on _____?*
- *Introduce me to two of your colleagues to talk about getting involved with our union?*
- *Join a committee?*

If “No” or “Considering”:

Thanks for talking with me. Do you have any specific concerns or questions I can help with?

Be sure to leave the door open for a friendly return visit in the future.

5. **After the visit, reflect on how the conversation went and record your notes. Assess the person’s support and decide what might be a good next step.**

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What are the objections you have heard to joining our union?

1. Cost
2. Free Riders (I get the contract/benefits for free)
3. Bad or lazy worker
4. The union doesn't or can't do anything for me/about my issue/problem
5. Political objection
- 6.

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Overcoming Objections: Affirm—Answer—Redirect

AFFIRM: Let them know you're listening, you understand, and that their feelings are valid.

ANSWER: Give a truthful, concise answer to the objection, preferably one that is an "I" message that comes from your personal experience.

RE-DIRECT: Redirect the conversation back to the message and the ask of the conversation and re-ask.

Objections	AFFIRM	ANSWER	REDIRECT
Dues Costs: "I don't think it is worth being involved with the union because dues are so expensive."	I can understand why you would be concerned about dues.	The dues are _____. The way our dues work is _____.	There are two ways that we get our power as a union. Money and people.
Free Riders: "Why do I have to join? Because I do get the benefits without paying for it."	I can understand why you would feel that way.	Currently, (40% of members) of our colleagues pay dues to fund the bargaining of our contract. By law, without 60% there would be no benefits for anyone.	As you know, we are trying to solve (insert issue here) this year and our association is working hard to make sure we are able to function as professionals in our work. Since we agree on that, we need everyone involved to win this fight. Will you join?
Bad/Lazy Workers: "I have heard that unions have members who are incredibly lazy or bad teachers. Why would I be involved with a union that is just going to protect bad educators?"	I can understand your concern.	A union can't protect anyone that is unable or unwilling to do their job. It is simply about having a fair set of rules that apply to everyone.	There is a process of handling those unable or unwilling to do their job. It is a distraction to talk about the union protecting lazy workers rather than the issues that concern us. (Specify an issue you have heard.)

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<p>Futility: “Why should I be involved with the union? The union can’t do anything about classroom size.”</p>	<p>I can understand your concern. Classroom size can be a challenging issue to address.</p>	<p>In fact, union members have been able to get classroom size language into many of their contracts.</p>	<p>Right now that is a decision that is solely up to management. As a union if we fight together we can have a voice in decisions around classroom size. We deserve to be a part of the process.</p>
<p>Self-Interested: “I have heard that teacher unions care more about themselves than their students. I care about the kids, I’m not selfish.”</p>	<p>I can understand your concern.</p>	<p>There have been years of attempts to discredit educators. Human beings sometimes make mistakes, but no teacher got into this profession for the fame or fortune.</p>	<p>Teachers get involved in their unions because they do care and know that their working conditions affect the ability for their students to learn. States and countries with strong unions actually produce higher student achievement results. When educators come together and act as a strong voice for public schools, they are able to push for more school funding, adequate resources for struggling children, and state assessments that measure genuine student progress rather than good test-taking skills.</p>

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<p>Too Political/Liberal: “The association should stay out of politics. I’m a Republican, not a Democrat.”</p>	<p>That’s a completely valid feeling.</p>	<p>Because every decision about public schools is made by elected officials, we do endorse candidates and get involved in many political issues at the federal, state, and local level.</p>	<p>However, these decisions are made by members and any endorsement is based on a candidate’s support of public education and educators. We also legally can’t use member dues dollars for PACs and you are free to support whomever you think is best for education.</p>
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Answering the Hard Questions

Q. “How will I afford it?”

A. Many occupation groups pay dues that are twice ours. They do it because they realize that dues are an investment in their future welfare. For free legal protection, negotiations service, discount economic services, that is a pretty small investment. In fact, many members who take advantage of all the association special service programs, are making up all or most of the cost of their dues in money savings, not to mention higher salaries and better fringe benefits. They cannot afford not to join.

Q. “All of that is well and good, but I just don’t believe in joining anything. Why should I join?”

A. If that is how everyone felt, we would still be paying taxes on tea from England. Until employees organized and won tenure, how many were dismissed for unfair reasons? Until employees organized and lobbied collectively, where were salaries and benefits going? Until employees organized and entered the political arena, how many “letter writing campaigns” ended up in legislative wastebaskets? While some people say they do not like to join organizations, not too many people want to turn back increases that association lobbying has won. In short, some people would prefer to have it both ways – getting the benefits without the membership fee. Maybe it is time you gave some thought to supporting the organization that supports you in almost everything that affects your career or your teaching.

Q. “But I will not really have a voice in what the association does. Right?”

A. You have a voice and a vote every time your local takes action. You also have direct representation on the state delegate assembly, executive committee, and national representative assembly through the representatives you elect to office.

Q. “I do not see what FEA or NEA does that the local association cannot do . . . would it not be better to spend my money for a local association?”

A. If the local association were to attempt to provide legislative contacts, local dues would (probably) be \$600. Legislation is not produced just by writing letters to your legislative representative. It takes a powerful lobby team in the state capitol, too. A great deal of the information used by local associations is obtained (without charge) from FEA and NEA. Someone could be employed to gather these statewide statistics, but I doubt that many would want to foot the bill. NEA has been directly involved in union problems in many state, regional, and county workshops and conferences.

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FEA and NEA staff also participate in activities including crisis support, curriculum development, special services, membership promotion workshops, public relations support, and organizing workshops.

Q. “What if I do not agree with things the association does?”

A. Fine. That’s your privilege. But can you honestly say that you agree 100% with every activity of both the Senate and House of Representatives? You do not withhold your membership from these groups with which you do not agree 100%, nor do you give up your voting franchise.

Q. “Why should I join? I will get all the salary benefits anyway?”

A. Maybe. School boards are getting more and more sophisticated and want to know how many people the union represents. Representing some of the employees is not enough. Eighty percent is not enough. Is the union representing the overwhelming majority, if not all, of the people? If not, we all might lose in lobbying efforts this year. Joining shows the school board that all of us are together behind negotiations.

Q. “My wife (husband) also teaches. Why should we pay double dues?”

A. Because you are guaranteed double benefits. Membership is not altogether unlike an insurance policy. If one of you has an accident, it does not help if the other is covered. The same thing applies if one of you needs legal assistance. Membership benefits comes with membership. Unless both of you join, you are only giving half of your support to your own cause. We need strength and numbers in local negotiations and in state and national lobbying. Both of you have a big stake in the success of your union. Both should support it.

Q. “Why should I be involved in politics? I do not believe school employees should be involved in politics.”

A. You have a right to believe that, and you have a choice whether you want to contribute to the political action fund. You should know, however, that being in politics makes a difference. You only make things better when you work to make them better. Staying out of the system means you are ignored by those in the system. We aren’t being ignored by politicians anymore.

Finally, consider some arguments for the chronic non-joiner...

- Every employee not joining gives the school board some hope that many employees really are not behind the association. That can hurt everyone. It can mean the difference between an agreement reached reasonably and a school board that does not listen to its employees.
- People who do not join are freeloading off those who do. Those who join pay to support services for nonmembers. If nonmembers do not want to join, would they be willing to turn their salary gains back to the union to be distributed to the members who paid the freight?
- The same reasoning applies to employees protected by tenure and to employees receiving higher salaries because of money coming to the district from the state. Members paid for the political action, lobbying services that made those statewide gains possible. . . but everyone got the benefits.
- At some point, straight talk is needed with the chronic non-joiner. Whether that non-joiner wants to admit it or not, he or she is a parasite living off the commitment of others paying to support a strong organization. Whether they want to admit it or not, they are a possible reason why local school boards feel they can ignore legitimate employee demands.
- In short, we are all in this together; and the decision of one person to stay out of the organization has an impact on all of us. Maybe it is time we made that clear to nonmembers.

Important Tips for Success!

Always try to . . .

- Have a membership application with you.
- Know your prospective member.

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- Make appointments to discuss membership at a time when full discussion of issues is possible.
- Ask questions designed to involve the listener in thinking about the situation.
- Listen carefully to learn the biggest problem(s) or interest(s).
- When you find the key issue, stick with it.
- Show your personal conviction for membership.
- Be prepared to answer predictable questions.
- Work in pairs, but do not “gang up” on the potential member.
- Try to learn something about the potential member’s interests prior to meeting.
- Enlist help of those members who have a good rapport with a specific potential member.
- Ask for suggestions for improving the organized profession (make written notes).
- Enlist the help of those who enroll to get other potential members to join.
- If you cannot get membership at first discussion, make an appointment for another before leaving. Do not leave the membership application. Take it with you and make another appointment to meet again.
- Forward membership immediately to the local membership chairperson.
- Help potential members find information they seek.

Avoid...

- Knocking competing organizations.
- Flat contradiction. (You have a point there, but . . .)
- Entering into arguments.
- Giving up after one try.
- Begging for membership.
- Being afraid to ask. (You are serving the best interests of the potential member.)
- Dealing in personalities.
- Arguing in front of a group.
- Confronting a group of non-joiners about membership. Talk individually.

Breakout!

- 1) Each person in the group takes on a role:
 - a) Recruiter
 - b) Potential Member
 - c) Observer
- 2) Practice a scenario from the next page then debrief.
- 3) Switch roles and scenarios until each person has had a chance in each role.

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RECRUITING scenarios

THE 5 STEPS TO FACE-TO-FACE CONVERSATIONS

1. Introduction
2. Story
3. Vision
4. Ask (Use AAR when you encounter an objection)
5. Wrap up/follow up

SCENARIO #1

You have worked on the same team as Mr. Grumpster for the past two years. Mr. Grumpster cares a lot about his students but has seen an increase in lack of follow through on student behaviors and this really upsets him. When you ask him if he's ever considered joining our union, he said he doesn't see how the union can help with these behaviors in his classroom.

SCENARIO #2

You are having lunch with a coworker and the topic of union membership comes up. Mr. Diplomacy isn't interested in joining our union because he feels like it is too political and he isn't interested in getting involved in all that and supporting an organization that promotes candidates he doesn't want to vote for.

SCENARIO #3

You and Mr. Posh work together at your community's elementary school. Mr. Posh's children go to the school, and he is very involved in the school as both a parent and an employee. His students love him, and he is well-liked in the community. When you ask Mr. Posh to join, he refuses, saying he won't ever need to use the union.

SCENARIO #4

You had a new teacher transfer from another school this year. Mrs. Letdown had a bad experience with a principal at her previous worksite. She reached out to our union, but nobody ever got back to her. She is concerned about wasting money because, "The union doesn't do anything to help you when you really need it."

SCENARIO #5

Mrs. Longevity has been a teacher for the past 20 years. Although she loves her students and loves teaching, she is extremely disheartened by her salary. She considered joining our union but believes that the union only advocates for new teachers' salaries to increase while she hasn't received a raise in YEARS.

NEED A HINT? LOOK AT YOUR CHART TITLED "OVERCOMING OBJECTIONS TO MEMBERSHIP"