



Engaging Young Workers





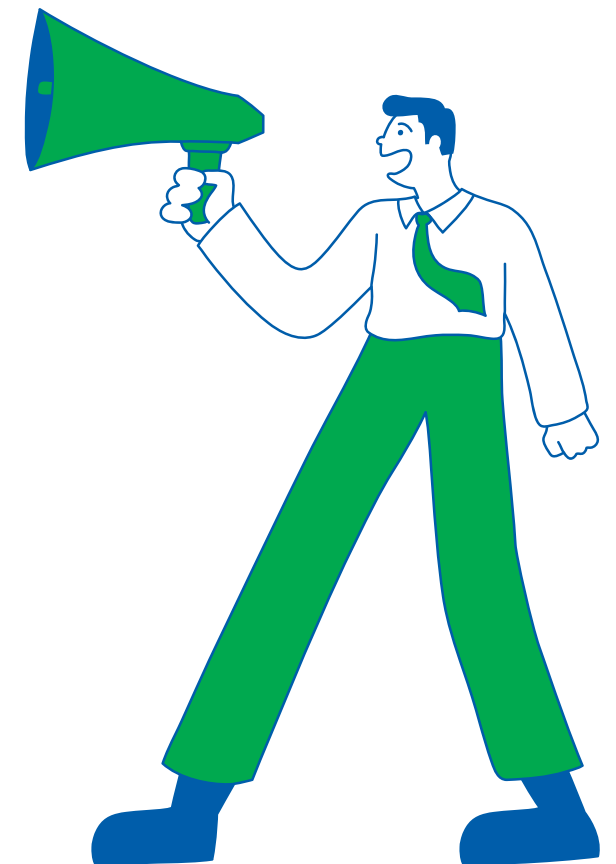
Learning Objectives

Participants will be able to...

- describe why it is important to include young workers in the bargaining process;
 - discuss ways to integrate young workers into contract campaigns;
 - differentiate between engagement and involvement;
 - recognize how layoffs uniquely impact young workers.
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Agenda

- Priorities in bargaining
- Involving young workers in the contract campaign
- Benefits & challenges
- Member education & layoffs
- Engagement
- Knowledge check





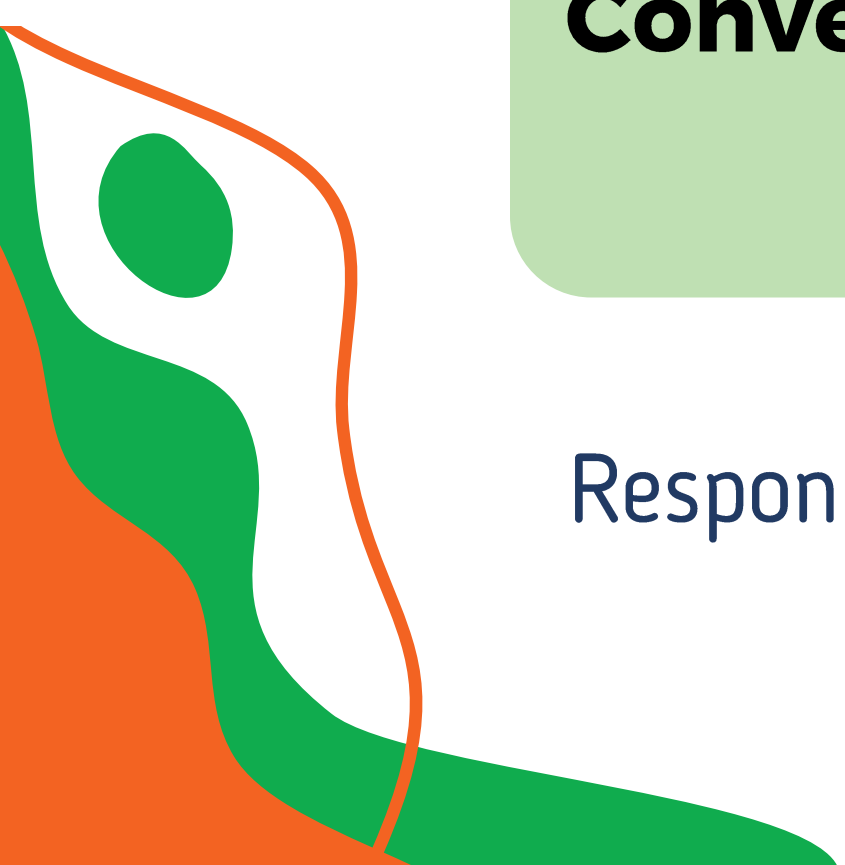
What are your priorities at work right now?

What about when you first entered the workforce?

Think back to when you were early in your career.



**The priorities of young workers can vary.
Learn about the issues that concern young
workers through...**



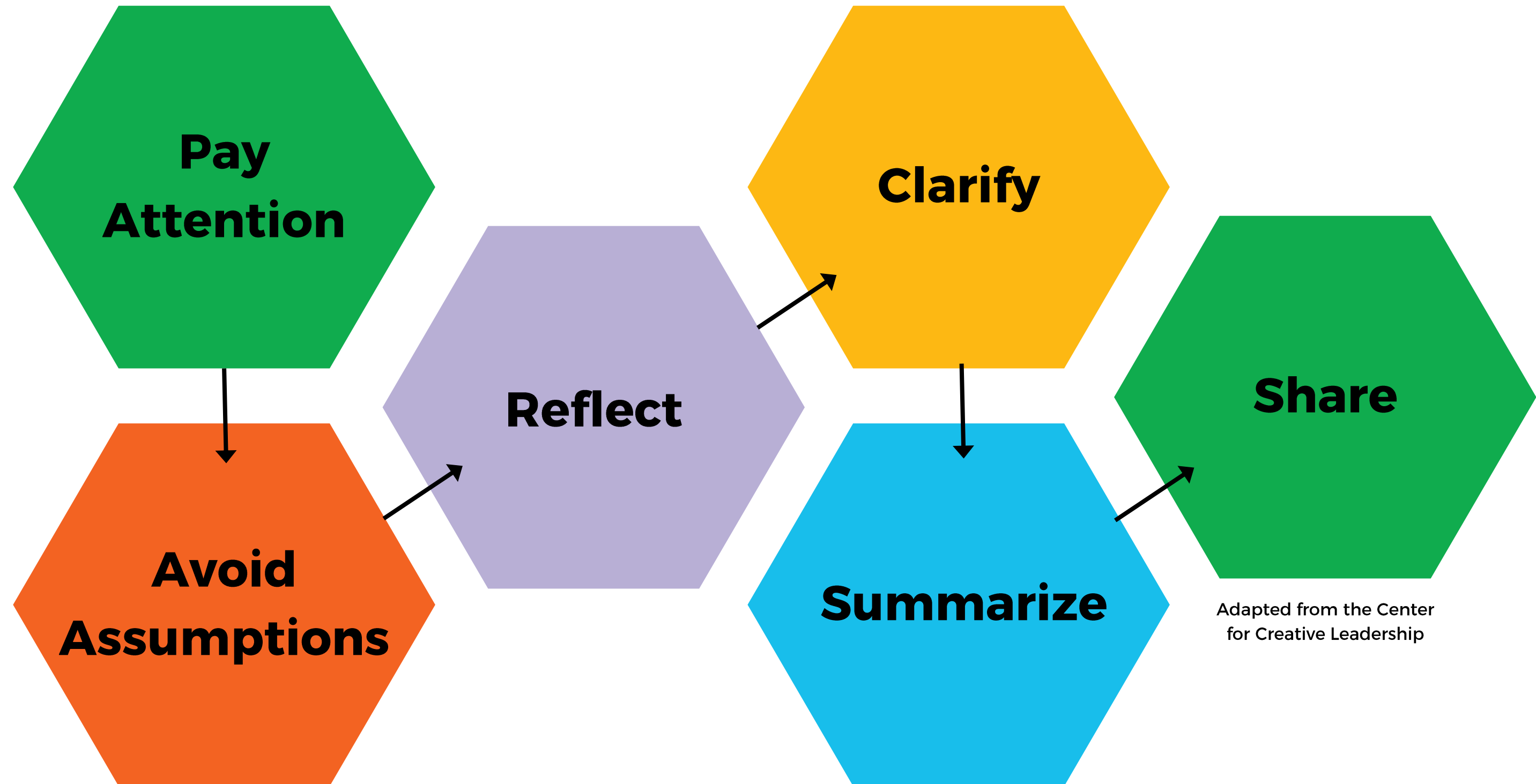
**One-on-One
Conversations**

**Bargaining
Surveys**

**Listening
Sessions/Union
Meetings**

Responses should be representative of the demographics of the bargaining unit.

Active Listening



Adapted from the Center
for Creative Leadership

Identify young worker's priorities, skills, interests and needs.



Getting Young Workers Involved

**Bargaining
Team**

**Contract /
Member Action
Team**

Committees



Young workers can strengthen our contract campaign in roles that are aligned with their strengths and interests.

Keep in Mind...

Connection

- Tasks that encourage connection.
- Connect them with M/CAT members.

Guidance

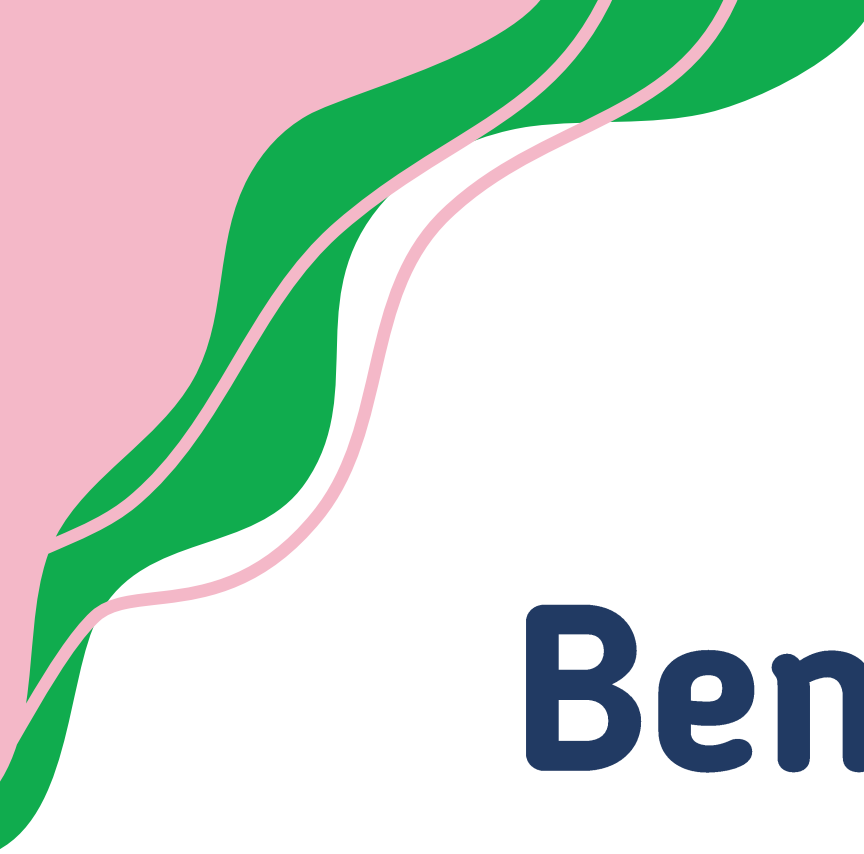
- Describe the bargaining process.
- Give context & explain M/CAT tasks.

Agency

- Offer choice in how they get involved.
- Encourage creativity in their tasks.

Sense of Value

- Fight for their issues at the table.
- Value youth feedback & contributions.



Benefits of Engaging Young Workers in Bargaining ...Challenges?



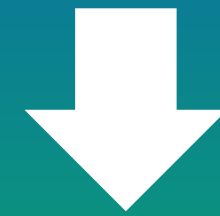
Reframing Challenges

Unfamiliar with
bargaining



Open minded,
new perspectives

Aggressive,
strike happy



Action oriented,
enthusiastic

Generational Differences

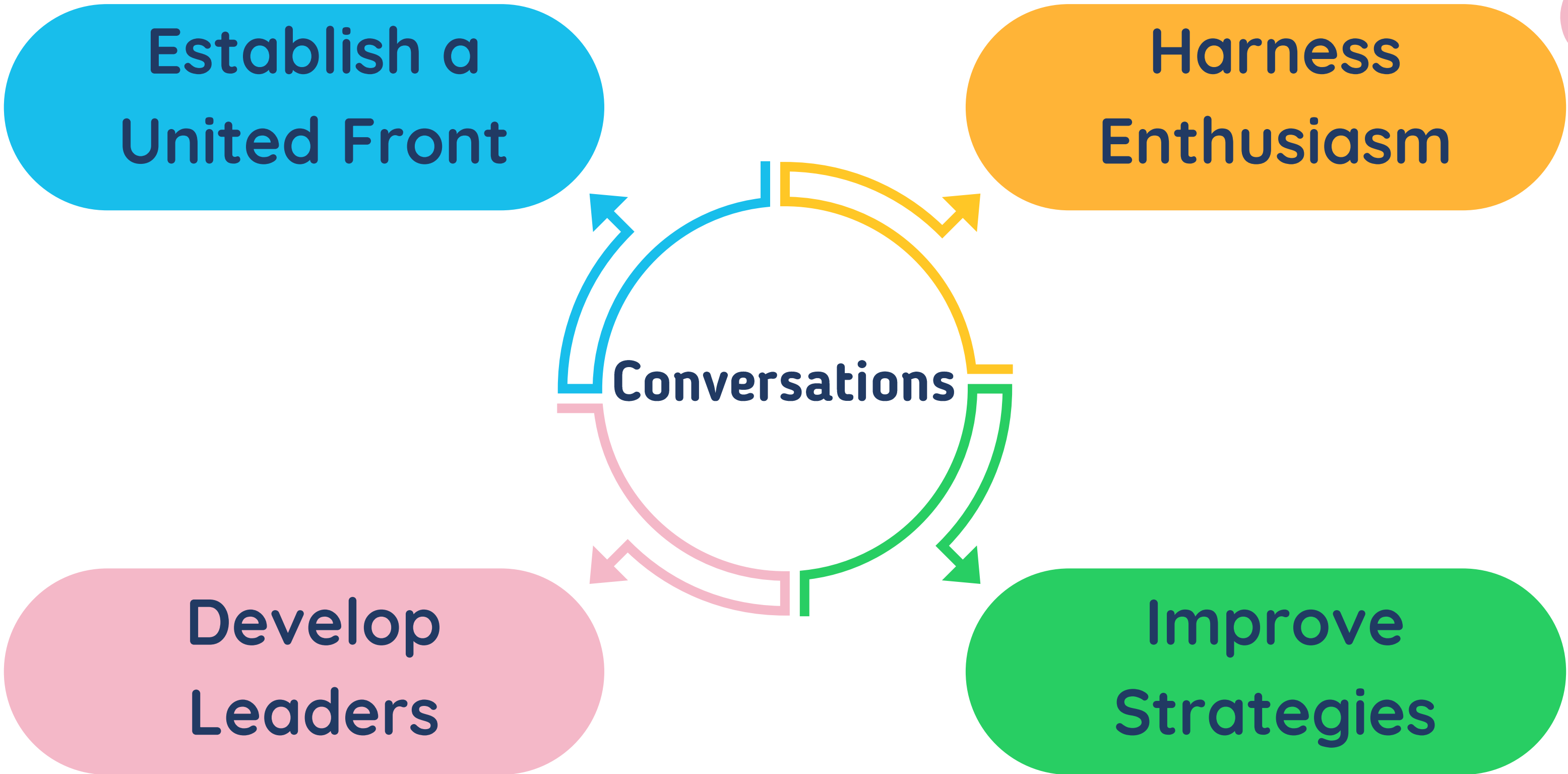


Why Engage Young Workers

**Establish a
United Front**

**Harness
Enthusiasm**

Conversations



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graph TD; C((Conversations)) -- blue --> A(Establish a United Front); C -- yellow --> B(Harness Enthusiasm); C -- green --> D(Improve Strategies); C -- pink --> E(Develop Leaders);
```

**Develop
Leaders**

**Improve
Strategies**

Member Education

Education can help young workers who are new to bargaining feel engaged and informed.

- Discuss the process and timeline.
- Address misconceptions.
- Develop activists & leaders.



Layoffs & Young Workers

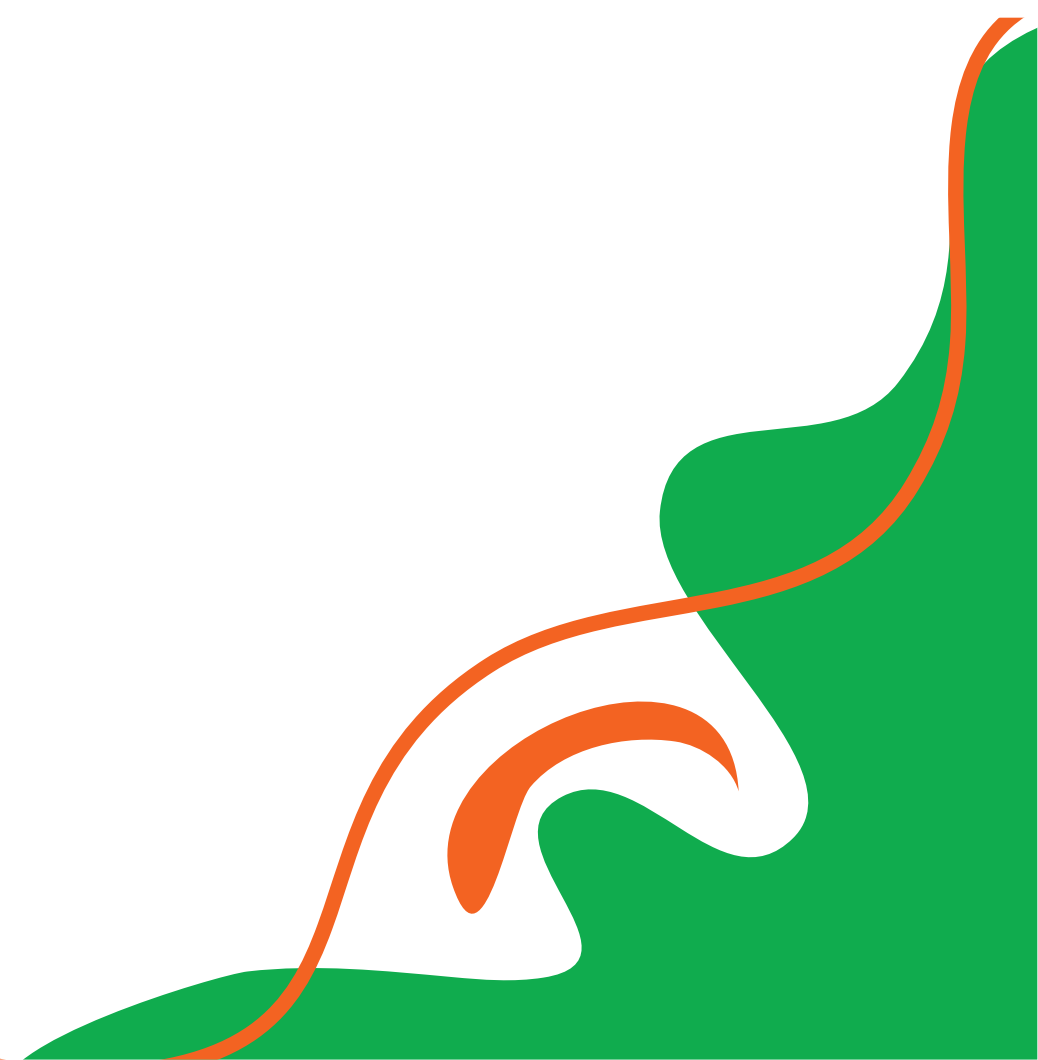
Young workers are often vulnerable because layoffs are typically based on seniority.

- Check in and listen to their concerns.
- Provide education on the layoff process.
- Connect them with resources and support.
- Involve them in impact bargaining.





Engagement



Principles of Engagement



Develop Relationships

- Invest in the person, not just the worker
- Build trust through consistency
- Create open lines of communication



Meet People Where They Are

- Physical and virtual spaces
- Engagement asks aligned with their knowledge, interests, skills, and capacity
- Provide information & guidance



Cultivate Sense of Belonging

- Create opportunities for peer-to-peer connection
- Use inclusive language
- Plan activities that build community



Elevate Youth Voices

- Listen
- Value the insights of young workers
- Encourage youth contributions in the workplace and our union

Knowledge Check

Youth Toolkit



Creating a Youth Talent Pipeline

Creating a youth talent pipeline into public service jobs offers the promise of filling vacancies and growing our union at the same time.

Wondering where to start or how to connect with young people? Begin by exploring our guidance on [Youth Outreach & Engagement](#). Then, choose an age group for information and ideas on appropriate career exploration approaches, partnerships and tips that keep our union at the center.

Already have young people in your workplace? Find ways to relate to them in our advice on [Engaging Young Workers](#). Also, check out the [Resource](#) section to quickly access any of the referenced tools. It's all just a click away!

Youth Outreach & Engagement

Elementary
School

Middle
School

High
School

Older
Youth

Engaging Young Workers
on the Job

Resources

Check out the toolkit at afscmestaff.org or email us at research@afscme.org to connect with the Job Training & Development Center.

INCLUSIVE LANGUAGE

Our language choices can help people feel welcomed. Using inclusive language in our youth outreach helps cultivate a sense of belonging and allows young people to easily in an AFSCME-represented workplace. If you're having a conversation with young people, do your best to avoid assumptions about your audience.

For instance, terms like "couples," "other family members," "general," "gender-neutral terms," "individuals and groups that represent," "spirit animal," and can fail to recognize the diversity of our workforce.

As you adapt inclusive language, it may not get it right every time, so change with it. Apologize if you make a mistake.

Inclusive language "acknowledges diversity, conveys respect to all people, and is welcoming to everyone."

Learning Lingo, Sharing Slang: A Youth Outreach Game

Have you ever been confused by the slang young people are using?

Use this game with school as a fun way to learn about the slang young people are using.

PLANNING A JOB SHADOW DAY

Planning
Keep safety and the goals of the program and your shadow in mind when planning a job shadow day.

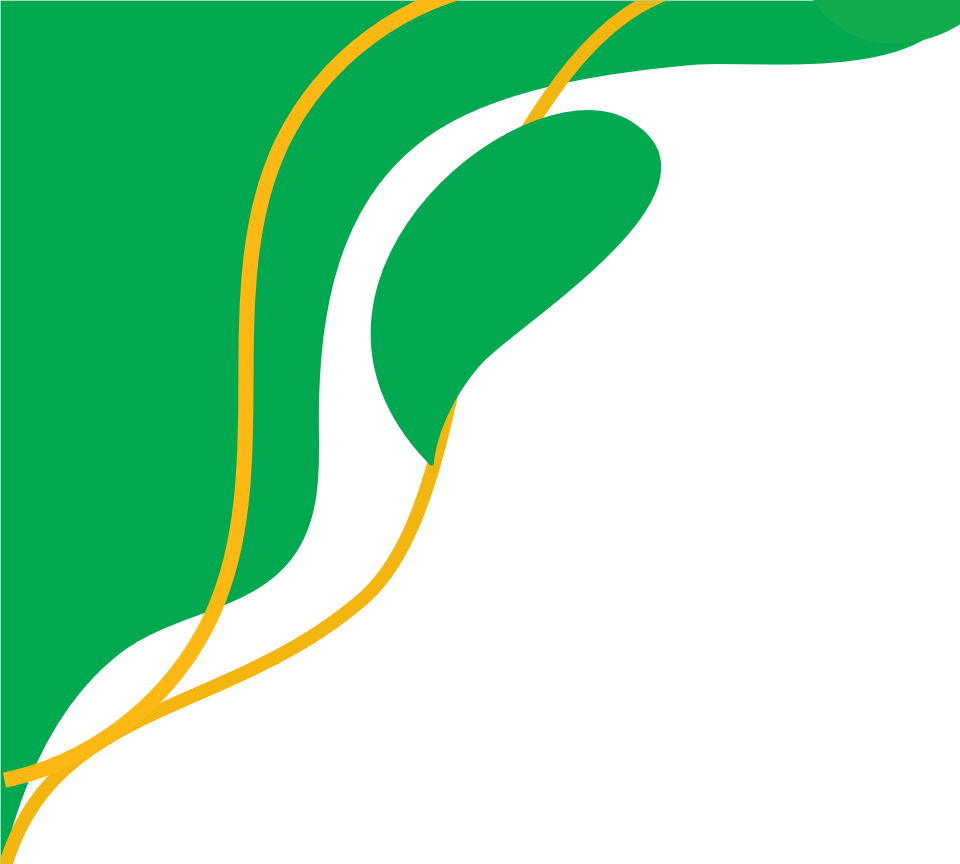
Schedule
Align schedules with your worksite hours. Give yourself time to prepare before your shadow arrives and to wrap up any work between their departure and the end of your day. Be mindful of your shadow's schedule too; student shadows may have classes or after-school activities.

Activities
Select one or two activities and a backup for each time slot. Choose activities that are age appropriate and aligned with your program goals (i.e. recruitment, career exploration). Increase the number of breaks and snacks offered to younger shadows.

Safety
Discuss safety precautions relevant to your workplace at the beginning of the day and provide reminders when necessary.

Communication
Appropriate communication with all partners before, during and after a job shadowing day allows your event to run smoothly and can help you make the most of your program.

Hosts Make sure hosts are prepared with an agenda and back up activities. Hosts can explore the resources in this toolkit for guidance on engaging young people in the workplace.	Shadows Share day-of expectations with shadows. Communicate logistics like schedule, dress code, and lunch plan. Discussing a shadow's goals early in the process can help them prepare questions for their day.
Co-Workers & Employers Educate everyone on the benefits of the program and share an agenda for the job shadowing day. Seek approval before involving your shadow in a meeting or activity with other people in your organization.	Stakeholders Stakeholders may include the shadow's family or guardians and partnering organizations like schools or community-based organizations. Communicate with these partners around issues like scheduling, transportation, and program requirements.



Questions?



Thank you

September 2025