

Palestine solidarity at work 🦊 🇵🇸

Online version. Printable version [here](#).

General info about responding to bosses and building a workplace campaign. This is not legal advice.

In this guide

[Resources](#) 🔗

[Structured organising conversations](#) 🧠

[Workplace mapping](#) 🗺️

[Planning a workplace campaign](#) 📋

[Communication](#) 📡

[Delegate rights](#) 🦊

[Have you faced repercussions already?](#) ⚠️

[Quick tips](#) ⚡

[Suggested scripts for dealing with management/HR](#) 📝

Resources 🔗

- [Structured Organising Conversation for Palestine prompt](#) handout
- [Structured Organizing Conversations](#) guide from Action Network
- [Workplace mapping template ASU4P.xlsx](#)
- [ASUMembers4Palestine_Flyer.pdf](#)
- [Free speech at work? It's complicated](#) article from We Are Union
- [Secrets of a Successful Organizer Handouts | Labor Notes](#)
- [ASU motion for Palestine](#)

Structured organising conversations 🧠

We talk to our co-workers all the time, but organising conversations are more than just chatting or complaining, they are structured to lead to concrete action.

Structured organising conversations can still be fun, but there are key steps that will help to ensure they are most effective. Think of the structure like a map, it helps guide you!

Being prepared will ensure you have an effective organising conversation. Before having a conversation, check your surroundings for nearby managers and make sure to bring something to take notes with. Remember to be empathetic and be aware of body language and non-verbal cues. Give the person you're talking to lots of space to talk.

- [Structured Organising Conversation for Palestine prompt](#) handout
- [Structured Organizing Conversations](#) guide from Action Network

Tip: the “70-30 rule” Let them speak about 70% of the time and make sure you speak no more than about 30% of the time. These conversations are best done in-person.

Workplace mapping

Mapping is essential for examining the strengths and weaknesses of your workplace. Workplace mapping is the process of obtaining accurate and relevant information about the workforce in a systematic way. If done properly it can form the basis of most successful union activity including recruiting, communications, developing activists and campaigning around issues.

- See [Workplace mapping](#) for more info.
- See [Workplace mapping template ASU4P.xlsx](#) for a downloadable template.

Planning a workplace campaign

A successful workplace campaign relies on organising with your co-workers to build collective power.

You may wish to start by organising an open meeting with staff to discuss Palestinian solidarity at work. It's good to have some ideas/proposals prepared, but also it's important to be open to suggestions and to encourage this.

Prepare some basic information on the issue and examples of other workers taking action.

See the [flyer](#) linked in this document and see [Secrets of a Successful Organiser](#) below.

At the meeting you can brainstorm ideas, gauge how strongly held and widely held they are, and then collectively decide on your actions/demands.

Workplace action could look like:

-  Wearing badges or scarves
-  Flyers/posters
-  Organising to attend rallies/actions as a workplace bloc
-  An organising meeting
-  A forum
-  A petition

Demands could include calling on your employer to join the global Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) campaign. See the Workers in Palestine call to action for more:

<https://www.workersinpalestine.org/>

 Read [ORGANIZING ESSENTIALS](#) from Labor Notes and make sure you check out the full list of resources at [Secrets of a Successful Organizer](#) for practical guides to planning a workplace campaign and much more.

Tip: “Does it build power?”

Make sure whatever you do contributes to building your collective power as workers in the workplace. If your objective is making demands of your employer - eg. asking them to take a stand in support of Palestine - make sure the way you go about this builds the union in your workplace in which you build your power as workers and build your collective skills and capacity.

Things to consider:

Does your workplace have a uniform policy or a workplace behaviour policy? Make sure you read these. You will also want to familiarise yourself with your employer's disciplinary policy, and if you are covered by an Enterprise Agreement check this for any clauses on workplace behaviour and disciplinary procedures.

Communication

How do I find out who else is in the union at my workplace?

If you are a union member you have a right to know who your delegates are. If you are a member of ASU Vic Tas A&S branch you can contact the member contact centre to request this. If you are an elected workplace delegate you have the right to the list of members.

Communicating to members and non-members

Delegates have the right to communicate with union members and potential members (see next section on delegate rights). When using work channels - eg. email - you will still be subject to your workplaces' policies about staff conduct and any other policies. If you get into trouble, contact the union office immediately and see the [above section](#).

Choosing how to communicate

You should assume that anything you write on work communication channels - email, Teams, Yammer, etc. - may be read by your employer. Using your work channels can be useful for general and introductory communication, but you should aim to move to non-work platforms for organising - eg. [Signal](#), WhasApp, Slack, Discord, personal email addresses. This doesn't guarantee that what you say there will be private, there is always the chance that things can be leaked, so be mindful of this and set rules/expectations for using the platform.

Delegate rights

All elected union delegates are now covered by a minimum set of rights under changes to the Fair Work Act (federal industrial law).

The changes mean that delegates are entitled to:

- represent the industrial interests of members and potential members of the employee organisation (including in disputes with their employer)
- reasonable communication with members and potential members about their industrial interests
- reasonable access to the workplace and its facilities to represent those industrial interests.

Delegates employed by non-small businesses are also entitled to have reasonable access to paid time during normal working hours for workplace delegate training.

The changes also introduce new general protections for which penalties may apply. An employer must not:

- unreasonably fail or refuse to deal with the workplace delegate
- knowingly or recklessly make a false or misleading representation to the workplace delegate, or
- unreasonably hinder, obstruct or prevent the exercise of the rights of the workplace delegate.

More info here: [Unions and registered organisations changes - Fair Work Ombudsman](#)

Workplaces with enterprise agreements (EAs/EBAs)

Check your EA on the Fair Work Commission website for specific clauses relating to delegate's rights. [Find an enterprise agreement | Fair Work Commission](#)

Both the ASU Vic. Tas. Authorities and Services branch and ASU Vic. Private Sector branch have taken official positions in support of Palestine. This is union business and you have every right to communicate this with members and organise around the issue.

Have you faced repercussions already? 🚧

If you have received a formal or 'informal' warning make sure you document what has happened and speak to your union organiser or call the union office. Speak to your workplace delegate if you have one.

Management will always try to turn things into issues of individual behaviour and individual repercussion. Your job is to keep trying to bring it back to a management versus union issue. Wherever possible, report back to other union members what happens in individual meetings with management and don't agree to HR's inevitable attempts to say that your meetings with them are confidential. They want you to be isolated and alone - don't let this happen.

If you are being singled out by your employer, building a collective campaign can help make sure you're not facing this alone. There's nothing like a bad boss to help you organise and recruit. See [planning a workplace campaign](#) for more info.

Dealing with management/HR when you're in trouble

Quick tips ⚡

1. Don't agree to any meetings without union representation - either an organiser or a delegate. If they tell you that you can't have one, request them to state this in writing and contact the union office as soon as possible.
2. Don't let them rush you into meeting right away.
3. If you are part time (or work shifts) you only meet on your rostered time. You aren't going to volunteer your time to be berated.
4. While sorting out any dispute the status quo should remain... unless they have reason to believe there is a potential OH&S issue (and they need to argue it in writing).
5. Ask for an agenda and any allegations or 'evidence' in advance.
6. Insist on the principles of natural justice - you should know who has accused you and what you have been accused of.
7. If you meet with management, the union person is a representative with speaking rights, not just a support person.
8. You do not respond to any material that is presented at the meeting you are at. You only respond to material provided to you in advance.

Tip: Don't assume that everything that your HR manager says is right. Half the time they hope that putting something in writing and making it sound "official" will be enough to bring you into line. Workplace policies that they quote from will only be part of the story - there are also external workplace laws and rights that have to be considered.

See: [Suggested scripts for dealing with management/HR](#)

ASU for Palestine survey:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSek7uRBDVz2-LCFQJTgXzR_W5jdN96C3xuKPc_gKAprJ7820g/viewform

ASU Vic. Tas. Authorities and Service Branch:

1300 855 570

info@asuvictas.com.au

ASU Vic. Private Sector Branch:

03 9342 3300

info@asupsvic.org

Suggested scripts for dealing with management/HR

“What is the nature of the meeting”

“What will the meeting be about”

“Is this a formal meeting or a disciplinary meeting”

“I will need more time to prepare for this meeting, I will get back to you with a suitable time”

“Can you please provide me with (X companies) policy on disciplinary meetings”

“I won’t be participating in a meeting without my union rep, I will contact you with their availability”

“I feel coerced into this meeting”

“I won’t be signing that, so if that's all for today i'm going to get back to work”

“Can you please explain to me which policy this is in breach of?”

“How is this in breach of that policy”

“I would like it noted in the notes for today's meeting that i believe this is an unfair process/I have been denied the opportunity to reschedule the meeting/you have told me I am unable to have a support person”

Example of workplace noticeboard

