



EXERCISE: IDENTIFYING LEADERS

Background:

You are a union steward at the hotel where you work and are trying to restart a workplace committee. The committee used to have 10 members, but hasn't been meeting for a while.

You work in the banquet department and don't know many people in housekeeping. You would like to recruit some leaders from the housekeeping department to the committee.

Instructions:

Read the profiles of the contacts you make and the information they share with you. You have 10 minutes to determine who you think you want to recruit as a leader. Develop consensus in your group about who are the best prospects to recruit. Rate the three best prospects (1 = the best).

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Who is the worst possible choice to build the union? _____

Organizing is about making choices!

Contact 1 Brenda Hammond

Time at hotel: 9 years

Issues: She slipped on the floor and hurt her back, but the company cheated on her workers' comp claim.

I don't know who people look up to. It's not me. Nobody cares how I feel. I just organize the showers and birthday parties.

Sure, I have a list of everyone's numbers. I don't mind sharing it with you.

I'm just waiting for a better job to come along, then I'm leaving. I can't afford to make it look like I'm making trouble.

You should talk to Francis Powers. She's a real leader, although she has some screwy ideas.

Sally Rivera is a real fighter, but sometimes she just fights for herself. Sally is one of the younger workers. She likes to party a lot. I really respect Paula Harris.



Contact 2 Sally Rivera

Time at hotel: 4 years

Issues: The pace is too fast in housekeeping and workers have no voice.

I told my boss I'm exhausted at the end of the day and she just shrugged her shoulders. I'll tell you one thing, I'm fed up. I'm not afraid to speak up and I won't back down.

We need power and we need respect. It's about time someone listened to us. I've been talking to some of my co-workers and they agree.

I mainly talk to the younger workers. What are their names? Let me get back to you. I want to check with them first and see if it's OK.

You should talk to Evie Winters. She has been around for a long time. I can tell her to meet you at Starbucks after work.

Be careful of Brenda Hammond. People like her and she is a good worker, but I think management has plans for her.



Contact 3 Eve Winters

Time at hotel: 12 years

Issues: The workload is too high.

They promised me a supervisor's job. I'm not getting involved until I know if I am going to get my promotion.

I'm not saying anything or doing anything until then. If it goes to one of their pets, I'll be mad as hell.

Brenda Hammond is a great worker, but a little shy. Powers is a great gal. A little nutty, but people follow her.

The younger women seem to stick together. They party a lot and Sally Rivera is their ringleader.

Everyone respects Paula Harris. She was employee of the year last year. You should see Helen Rockwell. She speaks her mind.



Contact 4 Francis Powers

Time at hotel: 8 years

Issues: Pace of work

We're just victims here. The managers only care about getting the most work done with the fewest amount of workers.

Some of these younger folks don't care either. They only care about having fun. Half the time I don't even know what they are talking about. Cindy Thomas is the one young person I do like. She is a real firecracker.

I really don't like Paula Harris, but I do respect her. Rockwell is a loudmouth just like Mary Smith.

Don't bother talking to any of the young workers. They don't take anything seriously.

Brenda Hammond and Evie Winters would be good leaders. Brenda got the shaft when she slipped and hurt her back. They made her come to work all doped up on pain medication!



Contact 5 Cindy Thomas

Time at hotel: 3 months

Issues: Disrespect from managers.

We need to shake things up. We need a work stoppage or some sort of action. I don't care what my manager thinks. We need to teach them a lesson.

Just give me the word and I'll talk to folks about walking out. I don't care if they fire me. I was looking for a job when I found this one.

Who would I talk to? Well, I don't really know their names, I just know their faces. I don't talk to them much. They are all a bunch of robots.

But there is one woman named Brenda. She was real nice to me when I first started. She made me feel at home.

Other names of co-workers who want to take action? You don't need names. You just need to call an action. I'll be there and so will everyone else.

