



INOCULATE YOUR CO-WORKERS AGAINST THE BOSS'S TACTICS

Whenever you take action at work, you can expect management to fight back. Inoculation is the part of the organizing conversation where you prepare your co-workers so they're not caught off guard.

1. Ask questions about how the boss will react.

Do you think the boss wants us to organize? Why not?

When he finds out we are organizing, how do you think he'll react?

What do you think he might do to try and stop us?

2. Discuss *how* the boss will fight.

- If you're preparing for a strike, expect the boss to hire extra security and threaten you with permanent replacements.
- If you're organizing your workplace for the first time, expect captive-audience meetings about union fines and fees. The week before the vote, your boss will beg you to give him a second chance.
- If you're planning a union sticker day, expect to be told you're not allowed to wear the sticker. In fact, any time you confront the boss with a new tactic for the first time, you will hear, "You can't do that."

3. Inform your co-workers what their rights are, and how to react when they're denied.

Federal labor law protects our right to wear a union button at work.

If a manager tells you to take off the button, write down the date, the time, and who witnessed it, and let your steward know.



4. Discuss *why* the boss will fight.

This step is most important. Help your co-workers understand that every workplace fight is about power.

We're not simply building power—we're taking power from our manager.

Any time we challenge the boss's control, we can expect resistance.

5. Recommit.

Ask your co-worker whether any of this has changed her mind:

Are you still serious about solving this issue by coming with us to deliver the petition?

If yes:

Great! We're meeting in the cafeteria on Thursday at 1:45.

Your co-worker has strengthened her resolve by making this commitment out loud to you—and to herself. Later you can remind her of this conversation.

If no:

What's holding you back?

It's OK if your co-worker expresses some doubts now. She's getting real with you. This gives you the chance to ask more about her concerns, address her fears, and remind her about the issue she cares about. If she doesn't take action, is that problem going to solve itself?

