

THINKING ABOUT QUITTING YOUR JOB? HERE ARE 5 THINGS YOU CAN DO FIRST.

If you're feeling frustrated at work, and thinking about quitting, chances are you're not alone. Workers everywhere are saying "enough" and mobilizing collectively to resign from their jobs in protest after decades of stagnant wages, unpredictable schedules, and lack of health care or paid sick leave. But for most low-wage workers without significant savings, quitting may not be an option. By organizing your workplace, you can win real, lasting improvements that allow you and your co-workers to flourish in your jobs. After all, it's your labor and cooperation that keeps the business running day after day.

1. TALK TO YOUR CO-WORKERS

Start by checking in with your co-workers to see how they're feeling and the types of issues they're facing. Consider inviting them out for coffee or a brief walk to explore their concerns in a more private setting.

You can start the conversation with general questions that aren't necessarily work related. How is their day going? How has work been? How are their family members or home life? Listen carefully to what they say, and follow up with them.



2. IDENTIFY AN ISSUE THAT IS DEEPLY OR WIDELY FELT

Through your conversations with co-workers, identify an issue that is deeply felt, widely felt, or both. What gets them the most fired up (deeply felt)? What's the issue that comes up most often (widely felt)? How upset are they over these issues? How do all of these issues connect?

Next, identify the key decision-maker who could realistically solve these problems—a manager, district manager, or the CEO—depending on your situation.

3. BRING TOGETHER LEADERS AND BUILD AN "ORGANIZING COMMITTEE"

One of the most important steps in building collective power is identifying workplace leaders. These tend to be great listeners who are well-respected, trusted, responsible, compassionate, and courageous.

Enlist these natural leaders to join your Organizing Committee, which is the core group of workers who will lead the charge in drafting your list of demands and bringing this list to management.



4. GET A MAJORITY OF YOUR COWORKERS TO SIGN A PETITION ADDRESSING THE ISSUE

A petition is a short letter that includes a list of demands for improving the workplace. These are the issues that a majority of your colleagues are concerned about, like COVID-19 protections, paid sick leave, or higher wages. The letter should include a bit of backstory explaining why you've arrived at these demands, followed by a clear and concise list of demands. This will focus your employer's attention and leave no room for ambiguity.

Finally, get a majority of your co-workers to sign it. If you work in the private sector, demands you make for your boss about wages, hours, benefits, or specific workplace conditions are protected by the National Labor Relations Act Section 7 (as long as they're presented collectively). This should be noted in your petition, to remind your employer that the law is (officially, at least) on your side.

That said, we live in an era where labor law is notoriously weak, allowing employers to feel empowered to fight back against efforts to organize. You should always be prepared to protect yourselves by showing strength in numbers and controlling the public narrative around your petition.



5. COLLECTIVELY PRESENT YOUR PETITION TO YOUR BOSS

Present your signed petition to your boss as a group. Show that you're a united front and you're not backing down!

To help shape the public narrative around your campaign, you might consider circulating a petition online at the same time. Alert the media and tell them your story.

Public pressure motivates employers to act and helps deter bad behavior. Make it clear that you're prepared to escalate your tactics if your demands are not met within the desired timeframe.

Some workers will win immediate demands and may stop there, while some might go further and consider joining a union and negotiating an official contract.

The team of organizers at the Emergency Workplace Organizing Committee (EWOC) are posed to assist with each of these steps, but most importantly, we're here to help with questions of "what's next?" How do you win with collective action?

How do you keep momentum up? How do you ensure your workplace stays "organized" and conditions don't revert?

**READY TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP?
GET CONNECTED WITH AN ORGANIZER.**



EMERGENCY WORKPLACE ORGANIZING

workerorganizing.org

A joint project by Democratic Socialists of America and UE Union