ONE-TO-ONE RELATIONAL MEETINGS

One-to-one relational meetings are a way to build power through public relationships.

- **POWER** = the ability to make things happen the way we want them to.
  = organized people + organized money + organized ideas.
- **PUBLIC RELATIONSHIPS** are based in mutual self-interest and accountability.

The goal of a one-to-one relational meeting is

- to better understand the other person’s self-interest: the basic desires and passions that causes that person to act as they do.
- to determine if that person could become a leader or active participant in the work you’re involved in.

An effective one-to-one relational meeting

- has one and only one agenda item: to learn about the person’s self-interest. (No recruiting, informing, convincing, selling, preaching, or dating!)
- is scheduled intentionally and in advance, preferably in a neutral location.
- is usually between 30-60 minutes long.
- is focused on the other person. Follow the 70/30 Rule: listen 70% of the time, talk 30%.
- is about asking questions and sharing stories, following the rule Probe But Don’t Pry:
  ➢ Ask follow-up questions that get beneath surface-level explanation:
    How come you...? How did it feel when...? Was there a moment when...?
  ➢ Don’t go deeper than the person takes you, but if they open up a door to a tough place, and you think learning more will help you understand what motives that person to act, walk through that door boldly!

Five basic steps of a one-to-one relational meeting:

1. **INTRODUCTION**: explain who you are, who you represent, why you wanted to meet.
2. **WARM UP**: start from what you know about the person and what you have in common. Ask a few easy questions, and share a little about yourself in response. When in doubt, start with something like: “Tell me a little bit about yourself. How’d you get into this work?”
3. **DEEPER QUESTIONS**: after a few minutes, once you’ve got a rhythm going, start in with the “hows” and “whys.” Try to get a sense of how the person navigates challenging relationships, situations, and feelings. Use your 30% talking time to share personal stories and experiences that help make a connection or set up a follow-up question.
4. **OFFER AN INVITATION**: if the person shows potential, end with a modest invitation. Meet again? Come to a meeting or an event? Introduce to other leaders?
5. **EVALUATION**: take a few notes after you’re done (don’t take notes during the one-to-one). What is this person’s story? What matters most to them? What excites, angers, and motivates them to act? What do they want most / what is their self-interest? And: how did you do? What worked best? What do you want to do differently next time?

Adapted from the work of the Industrial Areas Foundation; more info at industrialareafoundation.org.