

# 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 [industrialareasfoundation.org](http://industrialareasfoundation.org).*