

Blended Organizing Using Organizing Pathways



Welcome: Learning Goals



1. **You will understand** the concept of an Organizing Pathway (aka Supporter's Journey) and how it helps integrate digital and in-person organizing
1. **You will learn** how applying one can help strengthen organizing campaigns
1. **You will be positioned** to adapt an Organizing Pathway to your own organizing

**How do you define
organizing?**

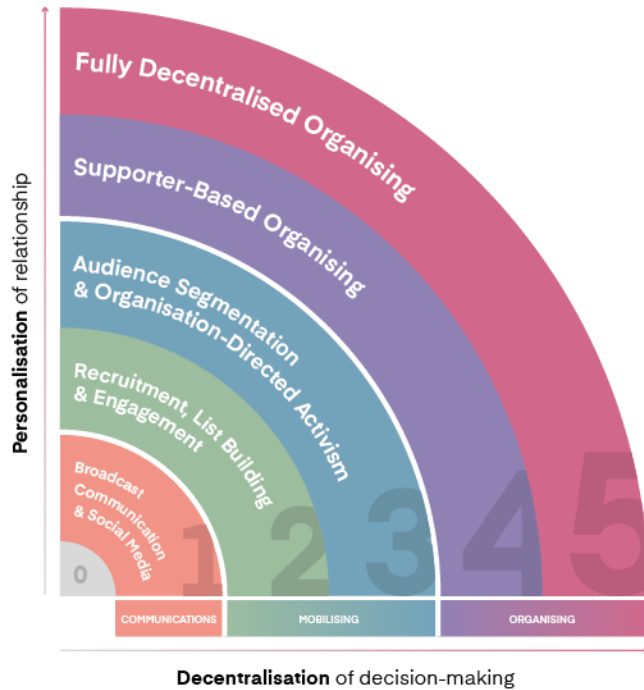
What is Organizing?



Organizing...

1. **Built** on relationships
1. **Develops** the skills and expertise of members, via “leadership development”
1. **Helps** members contextualize their own experiences and builds a vision for taking action for a better future

Why “blended organizing”?

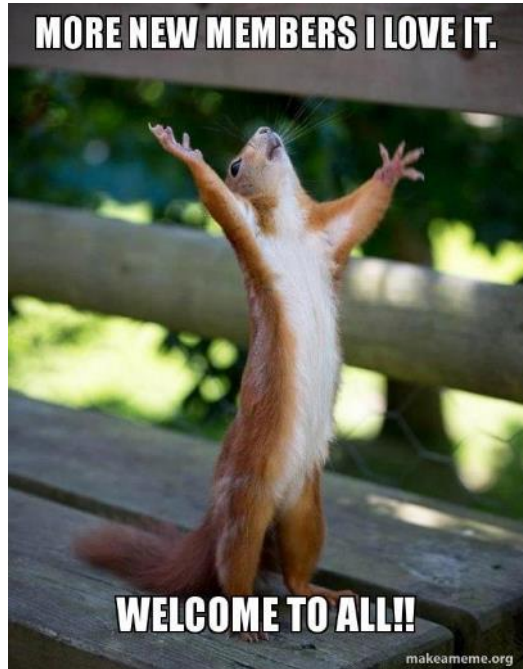


BLENDED ORGANIZING

1. **Recognizes** the power inherent in personal interactions and relationships.
2. **Recognizes** that in-person work often uses digital tools.
3. **Puts the emphasis** on the organizing rather than the mode by which it is carried out.

The Problem of Scale

The Problem of Scale in Organizing



What comes to mind

When I say “the problem of scale”?

When you think of how your or other organizations have addressed it?

The Problem of Scale in Organizing



Two Elements for Success

What can we do to support more staff, volunteers, and/or leaders?

What should always be at the center of your organizing work, at the center of support and solutions?

The Problem of Scale in Organizing



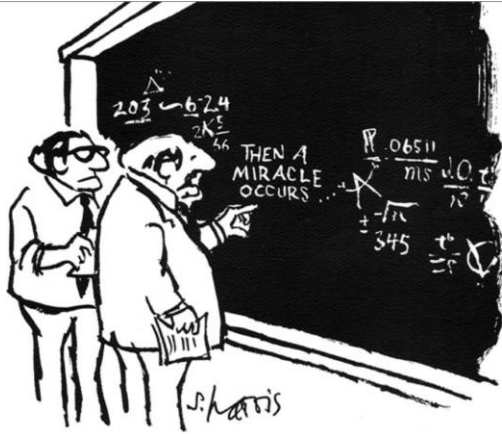
Centering Your Members

In blended organizing an essential tool for ensuring that you center you members in your work is...

The Organizing Pathway

The Problem of Scale in Organizing

The Organizing Pathway



1. Where does it start?
1. What is the final stage?
1. What happens between the start and final stage?

The Problem of Scale in Organizing

The Organizing Pathway United for Respect Edition

1. What does it include from what you know about how organizing works?
1. Why do you think UFR chose the final stage that they did?
1. What about each interim step helps get people to the final stage?



The next 15 slides are from a training deck prepared by Online 2 Offline Strategies (O2O Strategy) and presented to Lab members in December 2020. You can find O2O Strategy here: <https://o2ostrategy.org/>

Case Study - UER + Toys 'R' Us

Case Study: Toys R Us



Quick Context



Buy Out



Toys R Us was bought by three Wall Street firms in 2005 through a leveraged buyout

Store Closures



All stores in the US were closed by June 30.

Bankruptcy



The company was five billion dollars in debt and filed for bankruptcy

Lo' and behold...

THE WORKERS WERE SELF-ORGANIZING

This Dead Giraffe Society Facebook group was key factor in connecting the workers to each other. It was small before all this hit all the news cycles and then in a matter of weeks grew to 20K workers 2/3rds of Toys r Us's workforce as more and more workers were looking for answers and ways to connect. For once the Facebook algorithm helped.

So UFR organizers joined the group and had some toys r us workers they had already found and were talking to join the group, asked those workers to become friends with moderators, and used this group as a way to identify who wanted to take action. UFR moved people from DGS into UFR groups. They didn't want to disband or take over group, they just wanted to move people to take action.

Group by Dead Giraffe Society

Joined ▾ Notifications ✓ Share ↗ More ⋮

About This Group

Description

A group dedicated to former Toys R Us employees around the world who remain proud to have called Geoffrey the Giraffe their boss.


Whether you were at the original Headquarter location in Paramus, the more recent HQ in Way... See More

Group Type

Custom

Members · 15,070

GROUP BY

 **Dead Giraffe Society**
Community Organization
818 like this

ADD MEMBERS

Enter name or email address...

CREATE NEW GROUPS

Groups make it easier than ever to share with friends, family and teammates. [Create Group](#)

Here's the Organizing Pathway again



REACH OUT

CONNECT

ENGAGE

ACTIVATE

LEAD

REACH OUT

This is a screenshot Facebook Messenger exchange between a UFR worker-volunteer and a Toys 'R' Us worker.

A key element of the exchange is to validate how the TRU employee is feeling, and then to build trust by signalling empathy with where she's at.

Hey Amanda! I saw your comments in Dead Giraffe Society. It's absolutely ridiculous that the execs are walking away with millions and the bonuses to store staff are so measly or nonexistent UGH. how long have you worked at TRU?

Going on 4 years

Wow you must be heartbroken 😞 how is the store closure affecting you and your family? you hanging in?

It's rough, this was my career. I'm 32 year old, a single mom, living at home with my parents. I had literally just got back in my feet when this happened

How are you?!

Oh my gosh, that's so tough especially being a single mom. Sending you my love dear 🤗

Thanks love, I appreciate you reaching out

CONNECT

A key ask in moving from reach out to connect was joining a UFR private Facebook Group. Folks who said yes were introduced to the existing members like this.

What are some of the things that Aneta is doing to help Amanda build connections with the existing members?

- A. She's asking people to welcome her
- A. She's making sure Amanda is tagged, so she'll see the welcomes in her notifications.
- A. She's giving folks in the group a little background on Amanda.



Aneta [redacted]

Admin · April 5 at 3:37pm



Everyone please welcome Amanda [redacted] our movement. She's from Texas and has been at Toys R Us for almost four years. Amanda is joining our campaign to demand the executives pay their workers fair severance packages!



Amanda Parrott, Joanna Chambers and 3 others

3 Comments



Like



Comment



Amanda [redacted] Danielle Cooley


Like · Reply · 3d



Joanna [redacted] Welcome!!!  1

Like · Reply · 3d



Mary [redacted] Welcome from one TRU at  to another.

Like · Reply · 3d

ENGAGE

Engagement is part connecting and part activation. You are feeling out the people who've come this far to see what more they are willing to do and/or what their attitude to the situation is.

What would be successfully moving a person from engagement to activation look like? What would be a reasonable thing to ask here?

It's crazy....all I really want is my freaking vacation time paid out. I EARNED that Last year

that's totally unfair. you know in california they have better laws that require employers to pay out vacation in event of mass layoffs. you're not so lucky in texas 😞

Yea. I wish we could do something to shake the system up, but I'm only one person ya know


yeah but if one person each gets one more person then we build a movement!

Very true....should we start be emailing or congressman or state representatives?

ACTIVATE & LEAD

Remember Amanda?


As a result of her connection and engagement, she's now been activated. Not only is she writing to her Congressman, she's finding other TRU workers to bring into the group, AND she's asking for people to pledge to take action.

 **Amanda** [redacted]
New Member · April 5 at 5:21pm


Dear Congressman,
I'm writting you on behalf of the thousands of employees who have lost their jobs with Toys'R'us due to company bankruptcy. I want to obtain severance payouts and want to work with Congress to regulate leveraged buy outs and private equity. On the eve before filing bankruptcy, Toys'R'us executives received million dollar bonus checks in hand. This is not only unethcal, but extremely irresponsible. The


 **Amanda** [redacted] Who pledges to follow suit in their state?!
Like · Reply · 1w



 **Shelleda** [redacted] Me   4
Like · Reply · 1w


 **Amanda Parrott**
New Member · April 5 at 4:06pm



Hey guys I'd like everyone to welcome my co-worker [Nicole Danielle Cooley](#)!! She has been working alongside me at ToysRus for several years. She is a mother of two children AND a mother-to-be and losing her job without notice, like so many of us!! Keep her in the loop of petitions, updates and anything that may help her!!



 You, [Joel Gabriel](#), [Eric Schlein](#) and 9 others · 7 Comments


 Comment


 **Aneta Molenda** Welcome to our movement Nicole. We got your back!
Like · Reply ·  1



 **Joanna Chambers** Hey! Welcome, and Im so sorry you guys are having to go through this. It is not easy at all!!
Like · Reply · 3d


 **Lily Wang** Welcome Nicole!
Like · Reply · 

 **Angela Ronquille Williamson Lopez** Hey Nicole!
Like · 

 **Mary Robin West Torre**



 **Melinda Bunt** Welcome Nicole
Like · Reply ·  3d

 **Eddie Iny** Hey Nicole!
Like · Reply · 16h

LEAD

Here are in-person actions that TRU employees took. This is some of them at hearings on the store closures



LEAD

This is TRU employees at the office that oversees the pension investments for Oregon Public Employees - they invested in private equity firms - and at the HQ of the private equity firm that owns TRU.



Thousands of Toys R Us workers are getting severance, following months of protests

The owners of the defunct toy chain have agreed to give out \$20 million to laid-off employees.

By Chavie Lieber | @ChavieLieber | Chavie.Lieber@Vox.com | Nov 21, 2018, 12:00pm EST



Toys R Us closed down 800 stores over the summer for good, and more than 30,000 workers were left without severance. | Jack Taylor/Getty Images

Elizabeth Warren's latest Wall Street enemy: private equity

The Massachusetts Democrat says she wants to stop "Wall Street looting."

By Emily Stewart | Jul 19, 2019, 4:20pm EDT

MOST READ



The House just voted to hold AG William Barr in

And... the work of showing up and protesting at stores, at hearings, at pension boards, at Congressional Hearings, at campaign events, had an impact.

THE NEW TOYS R US HAS COMMITTED TO

- ☑️ **prioritize hiring former Toys R Us employees**
- ☑️ **commit to job standards close to UFR's Principles for Quality Jobs**
- ☑️ **establish a board of TRU employees to advise the CEO on workplace issues**

UNITEDfor
RESPECT

VICTORY!!!

\$22 M

to TRU workers from private equity fund

Business

Toys R Us workers are training Sears workers to fight for severance



washingtonpost.com...

So, how many organizers does it take...

4,700+

One-on-one conversations

72 total offline actions

26 meetings with electeds

28 direct actions (6 with staff, 22 without)

18 pension fund meetings

100%

A success!

A. Two.

UFR had other staff involved in part of the fight as well - the digital team, for example - but it was **only two full-time** organizers.

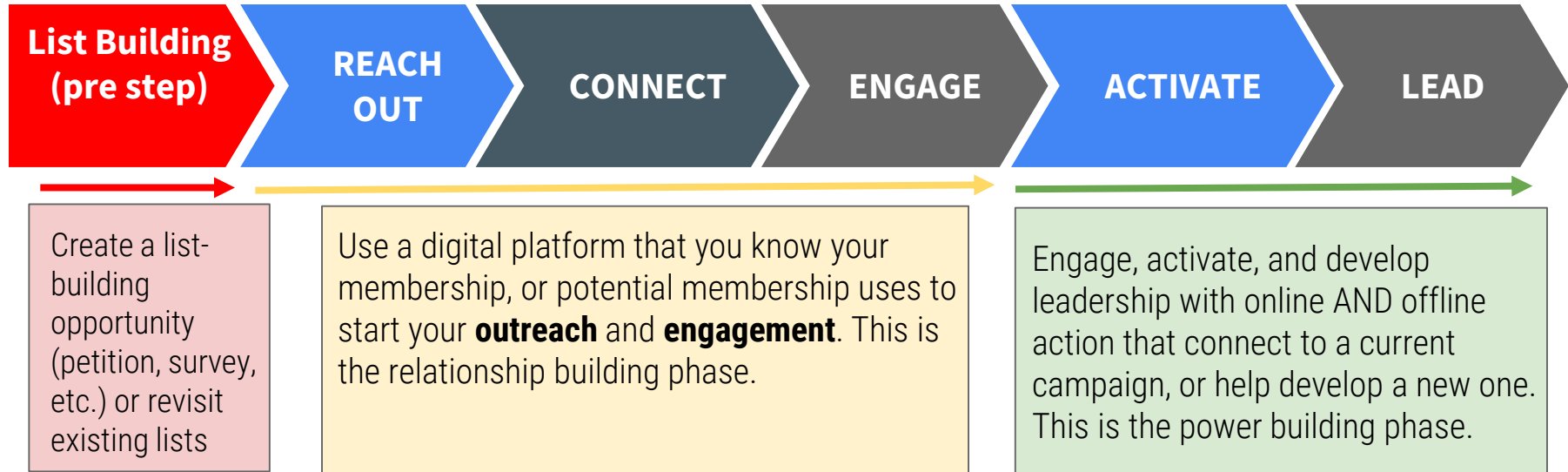
Case Study Debrief

Debrief Questions - Small Groups

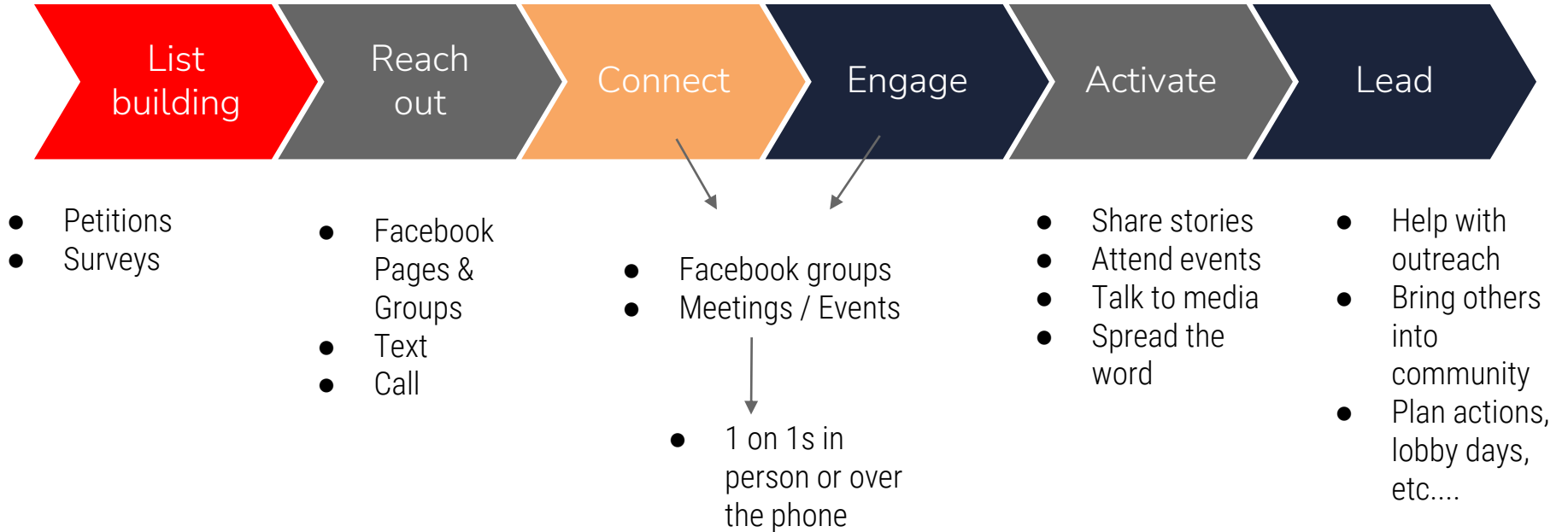
1. How did UFR solve the scale problem?
2. How would you say each step contributed to a successful journey?
3. What combination of in-person and digital tools would you like to try, based on what you saw here?

Blended Organizing at UER

ORGANIZING PATHWAY



UFR Organizing Pathway



UFR Organizing Pathway



List building

How do you build a list?

- Tabling
- Intake Sessions for Services
- Petitions
- Surveys
- Facebook Ads
- Voter Files

UFR Organizing Pathway

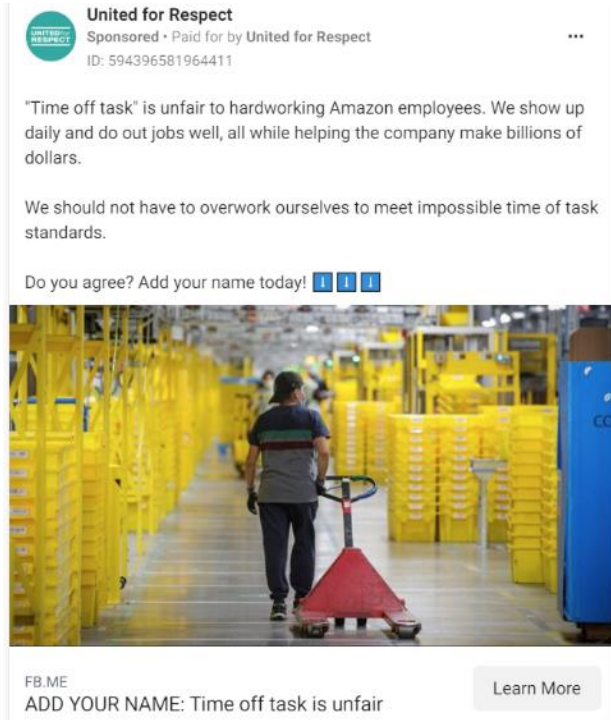


Reach out

This part is tricky

- Call through your contact list
- Email petitions signers
- Text your hot contacts
- Use FB messenger to engage active participants

UFR Organizing Pathway




United for Respect
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ID: 594396581964411

"Time off task" is unfair to hardworking Amazon employees. We show up daily and do our jobs well, all while helping the company make billions of dollars.

We should not have to overwork ourselves to meet impossible time of task standards.

Do you agree? Add your name today! [f](#) [i](#) [i](#)



FB.ME
ADD YOUR NAME: Time off task is unfair [Learn More](#)

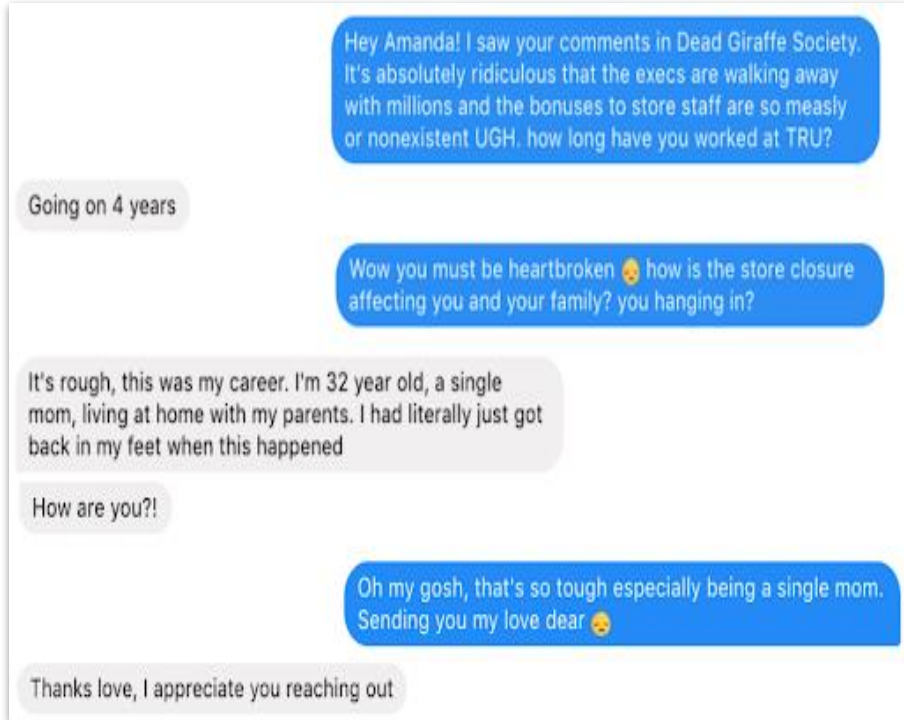
Digital List Building

Here UFR is using Facebook Ads to find hand-raisers from Amazon warehouse workers.

They are looking for people concerned about “time off task”, a performance metric Amazon uses for its warehouse workers.

They try to start follow-ups with petition signers no more than 7 days after they took action.

UFR Organizing Pathway



Reaching out to hand raisers

UFR like to text them and ask a Q about their work or to the issue that they signed the petition around. You'll have to play with the language to get strongest reactions.

UFR Organizing Pathway

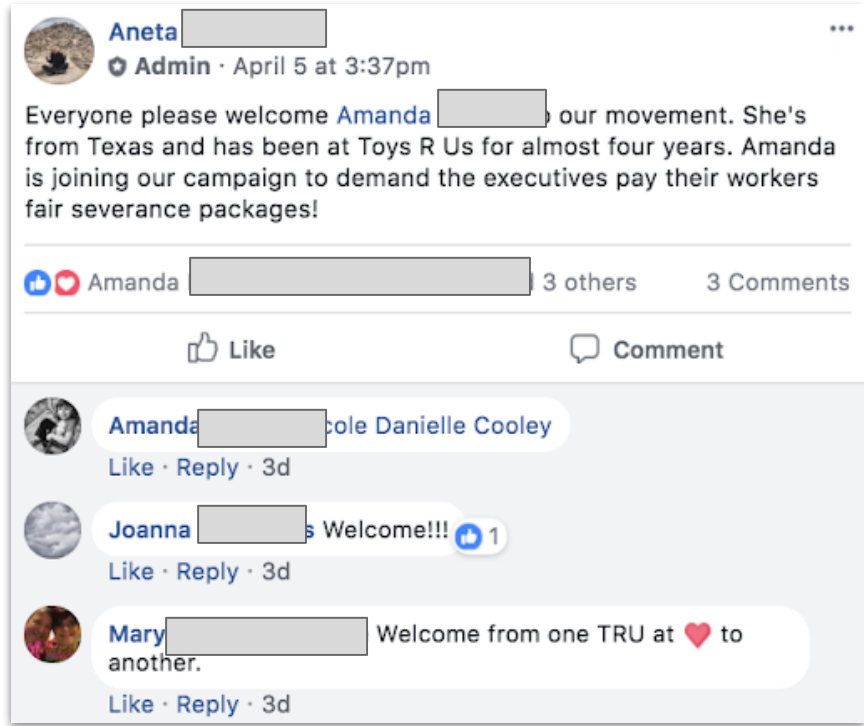


Connect

Connect people to the organization and to each other

- Get them to join your digital community
- Get them to attend a Zoom or conf call
- 1:1 with an organizer

UFR Organizing Pathway



Engage and Assess

The person who brings a person to the UFR FB group also introduces them to the group via a welcome post. Name, location, and what they want to see changed at the company are all included in the intro along with a request to welcome them via the comments.