



FOR A BETTER FUTURE



TALKING TO MEMBERS ABOUT A REAL COMMON SENSE ALTERNATIVE

DISCUSSION GUIDE FOR LOCAL UNIONS



Big, wealthy corporations have used the influence they hold over our political system to make life totally unaffordable for working people so that they can rake in massive profits. They use politicians, like Doug Ford, Justin Trudeau, and, now, Pierre Poilievre, to change the rules in their favour. Now, working people are angry at a system which is stacked against them—**and they should be!**

It's time to stop wealthy corporations putting profits ahead of people. It's time to stop their political friends from making it easy for them to do that. And it's time for a different kind of common sense—one that's rooted in solidarity and focused on the common good. We can create that future together.

To build that future, **we need to have tough conversations with our members** about what that future looks like, the obstacles in our path, and how we can get there together.

Use this guide...

to have a conversation with individual members, or in larger meetings. Encourage members to suggest alternatives to anti-union Conservative politicians.

TOPIC #1

Introduction

Approach the member and ask if they have a moment. Tell them you have something urgent to discuss.

"I don't know about you but I'm feeling that life's gotten really hard—the high cost of groceries and other things, rent increases, lack of affordable housing."

"I'm feeling frustrated that things have gotten worse and yet the rich just keep getting richer. Is that your feeling?"

"Who's to blame?"

If Trudeau comes up:

"Trudeau? Is that your sense?"

"I'm not going to argue with you: Trudeau has definitely not worked for us."



WATCH OUT FOR HATE!

During your conversations with members, watch out for the rhetoric of hate and division. To avoid blame for the crises they've caused, wealthy-corporations and their political friends use hate and scapegoating to divide working people.

Right now, migrants and foreign students are getting blamed, the same way people of colour and the LGBTQ community have been in the past. Work hard to build solidarity instead and remind members: just like in our unions, we're stronger when we stand together.



TOPIC #2

Corporate greed has caused this crisis

"I think the real cause of this crisis has been big wealthy corporations. Grocery stores like Loblaws increased prices on food, now I can afford to buy less and their profits skyrocketed."

"People keep blaming others (workers, unions, migrants, the LGBTQ community), but it just feels like a distraction—the problem we all share is corporations robbing more from us for themselves."

"What's the biggest impact corporate price-gouging has had on your family?"

Be patient, and help people find the words to discuss their problems

Grocery prices, housing, no good jobs—these issues are affecting everyone, do what you can to get them talking, and make sure to listen!

TOPIC #3

Don't let politicians off the hook

"One of the real reasons these corporations are able to get away with so much is because of politicians who work for them."

"They bend the rules, cut taxes for corporations, and attack unions to make themselves rich and us poor. On top of that, they cut money for things like our healthcare to try and privatize it like they have in the US."

"Doug Ford did it, cutting backroom deals with condo-developers, Justin Trudeau did it, buying oil and gas companies a massive pipeline, and now they want Pierre Poilievre to do it too—just like he's done over his 20 year career in politics."

"Because of his history working for corporations, I'm surprised so many people support Poilievre. Why do you think people want to give him a chance?"*

*Counter skepticism on Poilievre's record with facts—use the Fact Sheets available on FightForABetterFuture.ca—he works for them not for us!



TOPIC #4

Working together is the best way to build a better future

"By working together we won things that really improved our lives like..."

Choose some or all of the below:

...public health care designed to serve us all."

...a safety net if we were unemployed."

...social services that supported people in every community."

*...improved wages, benefits and job security through free collective bargaining"**

*Has your union won a good contract recently; or maybe you defended a member strongly through a grievance? Talk about how you worked together to win that!



"What I want is to start to build that Better Future here in our workplace/union. To do that, we need to stand together and fight for contracts we deserve in the workplace, and push all politicians to stop favouring corporations and start supporting workers!"

"What would it take for you to get involved in a fight like that?" What would we need to do to win?"*

*The biggest challenge will be overcoming apathy. "I don't have time / I'm not interested in politics / Things can't change" are all phrases said by people who are scared of losing. We need to convince them things can change. Think of struggles your union has won in the past as examples, and remember: you know your members/coworkers best—what has inspired them before? Talk about it!

TOPIC #5

Swing the conversation around to Pierre Poilievre.

“The main obstacle to that future right now is Pierre Poilievre. But even though he’s had a 20 year career in parliament working for corporations, lots of people are turning to him to dump Trudeau.”

“What do you think of him?”

The most important thing to do during this conversation is remain open and avoid condescension.

If your member says they like Poilievre because of his stance on immigration, dig deeper ask: “What sort of issues do you think his policies would address?” If they respond “Too much immigration has increased housing prices,” you’ve identified the real issue: **housing, not immigrants.**

Talk to them about the fact that the real reason our housing prices have increased is because the government stopped supporting public housing, and politicians, like Doug Ford, have given sweetheart deals to their developer friends. We can build housing we all desperately need, **and** ensure Canada remains a welcoming place for all people.

Keep this approach in mind during the conversation.



“The thing I think I worry about most is that Poilievre has flip-flopped on unions a lot. When he was in Harper’s cabinet, he pushed for US-style labour laws to try and bankrupt unions. Danielle Smith just put similar laws in in Alberta, and workers there are behind Ontario and BC in wages for the first time in over 3 decades.”

This is an important part of the conversation. Take time to make sure they understand how dangerous Poilievre is for unions.

If they respond “Poilievre has changed, he’s pro-union now!” Remind them of how hard he pushed to send Postal Workers back-to-work with a bad contract. When its time to deliver, Poilievre has shown he does not stand with working people.



“Electing any one politician won’t be a silver bullet, the key to building a Better Future will mean working together and fighting for more—in our union and in the streets—but if Poilievre wins, that fight is going to be even harder.”

“Do you think you’ll be supporting him?”

Again, for this part of the conversation, avoid condescension. Be patient, and continue to convince them—if they’re still talking to you, they’re open to changing their mind.




TOPIC #6

The Ask

“I think we agree that its time to start building — and fighting for — a better future for all working people. Will you join us trying to build that future?”

“Great. Here are some things we can do right now”

Based on your conversation, ask them to engage in the following as appropriate:

- **Anti-Poilievre Pledge** 
- **Join a Better Future Meeting** 
- **Take materials to talk to their co-workers** 
- **Connect them with election campaigns being run by your union (if any)**

Join us at

FightForABetterFuture.ca