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

- **POWER** = the ability to act effectively in public = organized people + ideas + money.
- **RELATIONSHIPS**, in this context, 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, through asking questions and sharing stories, in order to identify people who are or could become leaders in the organizing work you’re involved in.

- **SELF-INTEREST** = the basic desires and passions that cause us to act as we do.
- **LEADERS** = people with followers, who others in the community look to for direction.

An effective one-to-one relational meeting

- is held with a leader, or someone you think could become one.
- is scheduled intentionally and in advance, in a neutral location.
- starts and ends on time: decide on a length of time in advance, usually 30-60 minutes.
- follows the **70/30 RULE** = listen 70% of the time, talk 30%.
- follows the rule **PROBE BUT DON’T PRY**
  - go deep, ask follow-up questions that focus on “why” more than “what”:
    - Why did you...? How did it feel when...? Was there a moment when...?
  - avoid gossip or drama, but if the person opens up a door to a tough place, and you think learning more will help to understand what makes that person tick and what motivates that person to act, walk through boldly!
- follows **FIVE BASIC STEPS**:
  1. **INTRODUCTIONS**: explain who you are, who you represent, and why you wanted to meet.
  2. **WARM UP**: ask some easy questions to get conversation going. Work from what you know about the person, including things you have in common.
  3. **DEEPER QUESTIONS**: once you’ve got a rhythm, start moving into deeper questions. Ask why the person did this or that? How did it feel? Ask for stories. Ask follow-up questions. Try to get a sense of how the person navigates challenging relationships, situations, and feelings.
  4. **CLOSING/NEXT STEPS**: plan to meet again? Invite to an event? Ask to be introduced to other leaders? Or, if the person isn’t showing potential, wrap it up.
  5. **EVALUATION**: take a few notes afterward. How did it go? Could the person be a leader? Info you want to remember? Things you’d do better next time?

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