



## **Gaining Allies and Integrating Into Your Local Union**

An Ally is someone who will support and assist you. Alliance building takes time, effort, and commitment. Various types of communication and actions can be used to develop allies.

### **Be Active and Visible: Allies must first get to know you.**

1. Volunteer for any position (e.g. election committees, picnics, political activities, area standard events, member appreciation, banner work, voter registration, working the polls on Election Day for union candidate, etc.).
2. Attend your Local Union meetings regularly. The more familiar you become to others, the easier it is to form alliances.

### **Be Positive and Helpful: Allies need to see that you have a positive attitude.**

1. Commit to always being a part of the team and doing what is required to achieve the team's success. Look at the big picture and focus on doing what is best for everyone.
2. Be an ally by offering your support and assistance. For example, if a Brother or Sister is running for office or supporting a community activity, be there to assist.
3. Give credit and praise others for their ideas and suggestions.
4. Keep a positive focus. For example, if you and other Brothers or Sisters are trying to solve some problems, look for what might work in the future rather than what has not worked in the past.
5. Use positive language. For example, if you are given a difficult assignment, use language like: I will do my best, I will try, I think this is possible, etc.

### **Be Professional and Dependable: Allies need to know they can rely on you.**

1. Follow through and be someone others can count on. If you say you will do something, do it. People need to know they can depend on you to meet deadlines, fulfill commitments, etc. To establish trust, you must keep your promises.
2. Always meet (or exceed) productivity and quality expectations by doing your best work at all times.
3. Look like a professional at all times. Dress appropriately for the occasion.
4. Act like a professional at all times. Never participate in gossip or discuss the business of co-workers. This is a critical part of building alliances and getting alliances to trust you.
5. Show up on time and be accountable for your time. Let someone know in advance if you will be late, must leave early, or cannot help.

**Be Open and Approachable: Allies need to feel comfortable talking to you.**

1. Smile and/or look friendly. Allies need to know they can talk to you and they need to know that you will welcome a conversation.
2. Introduce yourself to potential allies so they can get to know you. In fact, be the first to make the introduction. If you are at a Union or Council event, approach your EST, organizers, etc., extend a handshake and say who you are: For example, “Hi, my name is \_\_\_\_\_. I’m a 2<sup>nd</sup> stage apprentice and I appreciate the good work you are doing for our membership.”
3. Listen attentively and be ready to comment on things that interest potential allies. People like to feel that they are being heard and this is one way to show it.
4. Maintain good eye contact. Look at potential allies during your discussion. People like to feel that they have your undivided attention, and they will notice if you are talking to them but looking around the room.