

Individual Relational Meetings for LEE Members

What is an Individual Relational Meeting?

- A face-to-face meeting, usually lasting 30-60 minutes, with the purpose of establishing or deepening a public relationship that can lead to working together effectively.

Why do Individual Relational Meetings with LEE Members and Community Members?

- Many LEE members do not yet know each other, and do not know leaders in the communities where they live. We must build relationships with each other to build our capacity for collective action.
- When we are working across lines of different, it is particularly important to build trusting relationships rooted in common values and understanding of mutual interests before we try to move into action together.
- We can tap the collective passion and experience of our membership and allies to identify issues for action.
- We are not going to be able to achieve educational equity on our own. We need trusting relationships with allies who can help us understand the political context and can act in coalition with us to make the changes we all want to see.

General Format (varying depending upon context):

1. **Opening credential:** Share who you are, why you want to meet, and a bit about yourself that helps explain the context of the meeting.
2. **Breaking the ice:** Start with context-appropriate questions like: “What made you want to become a teacher?”
3. **Discover the person’s interests and leadership potential, and share your own:** What are the person’s top priorities and concerns that shape how they spend their time and energy, both in action and thought? What steps have they taken to solve these concerns? Getting at these issues requires both thoughtful questions based on active listening as well as reciprocal sharing of stories that model the type of answers you are curious to hear.
4. **Closing and Proposal of Next Steps:** Based on what you heard, are there any common interests that can be acted upon together? If so, propose them. If not, thank the person and agree to stay in touch. Potential next steps might be to connect the LEE member with another LEE member or community leader who shares a common interest, or to invite the person to a house meeting to meet other people interested in educational equity issues.
5. **Evaluation:** Is this person a leader with a following? Which stories did the person share that indicate this? What is the person’s top interest? Is there anyone you can connect this person to that can help him/her act more effectively on this issue? Can this person connect you with someone who can help your team act for educational equity?

Tips:

- Be interested. Be interesting.
- Practice and prepare stories that will be compelling and will illustrate the type of community action you might do together.
- Listen attentively, but also interrupt to ask questions or help shape a story.

Sample Invitation Script:

“Hi _____, I am a TFA core member from ‘XX, and I’ve been living in (this community) since XXXX. Through Leadership for Educational Equity, I am working with other TFA alumni and other community members to figure out how we can make the biggest possible impact for kids in the region. I would love to find a time to meet for coffee to hear about your experience and ideas that you have. Thanks so much.”