

# What Sign Language Interpreters Can Learn from Community Organizers

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**Duluth MLK**  
**Twin Ports Holiday**



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# Leadership vs. Organizing

The leader goes on to build power to fulfill his [or her] desires, to hold and wield the power for purposes both social and personal. The organizer finds [her or] his goal in creation of power for others to use.

~Saul Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals*



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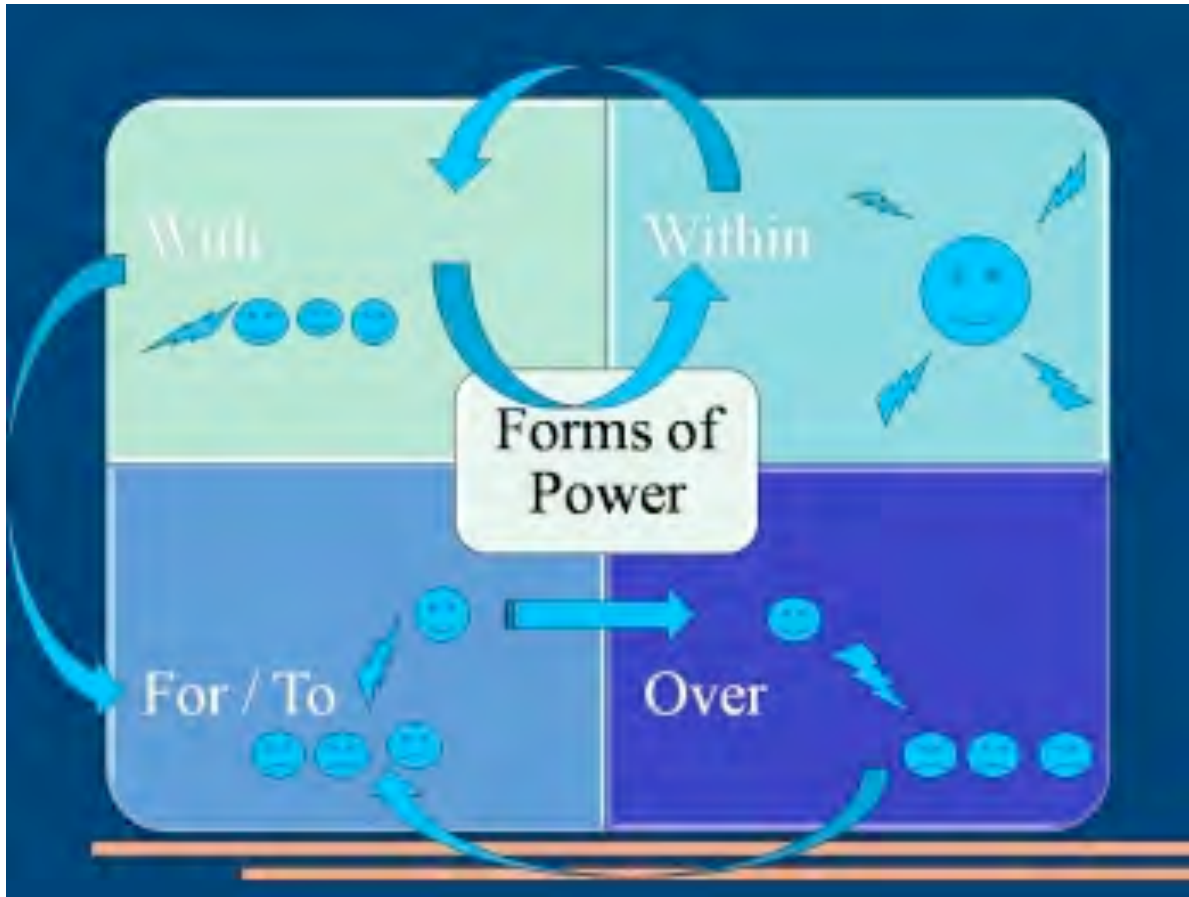
# More than Language



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# Understanding Power Dynamics



# Identifying the Players

**Connector**



**Maven**



**Salesperson**



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# Types of 1-to-1 Conversations



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# Individual Relational



- What brought you to the place where you are now?
- Where do you get your energy?
- What makes your leadership work?
- What are you reading/viewing these days?
- Why do you do (a certain practice)?
- Anything you want to know about me?
- Who else should I meet with?



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# Recruitment/Lobbying



- Be prepared
- Legitimize yourself
- Listen
- Agitate
- Get commitment
- Follow up



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# SWOT Analysis

## (Exploring our Inner Mavens)

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
INTERNAL	
EXTERNAL	
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS

- What are the internal strengths of our field/organization?
- What are the internal weaknesses of our field/organization?
- What are the opportunities that exist outside of our field?
- What are the threats that face our field?
- Who else should I talk with?



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# Strengths

- More data and academic scholarship
- Legislation supporting our profession
- Power to the people!!!
- More avenues for dialogue than before
- Interpreters are passionate about their work
- Encouraging growth in the community
- More visible in media
- Recognize the need for teaming/DIs etc.



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# Weaknesses

- Not enough to meet the needs
- Too many hearing white women
- Resistance to and lack of opportunity for DIs
- Still need to improve on discussing work without taking it personally
- Lack of compassion for ourselves (My work is not who I am)
- Need some “Mad Men”



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# Opportunities



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# Opportunities



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# Threats



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# Strengths

- People power (with passion)
- Values- Understanding, what they bring to the community, DeafHeart
- Train each other
- More CDIs
- Elevated discourse about our work
- Diverse experiences coming into the field
- Gregarious / History of change



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# Strengths

- Infrastructure (RID – other avenues for communication)
- Deep love of languages
- More legitimate
- More visible
- More academic research
- More ambassadors of interpreting
- Strong Deaf leaders as allies/Deaf mentors



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# Weaknesses

- More improvement in talking about the work
- More effective screening process for placement
- Too myopic
- CDIs not used enough
- Is there respect for the diversity of language choices by Deaf/deaf people?
- Experienced interpreters not always welcoming of new interpreters



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# Weaknesses

- Tendency to complain without being solution oriented
- The induction challenge
- Inertia of the status quo
- No consistent standards
- Government decision on standards



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# Practicing Individual Relational



- What brought you to the place where you are now?
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- Anything you want to know about me?
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# Practice SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
INTERNAL	
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# Social Fabric

Meet, Make, Create.



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