

Your First 90 Days

Strategies for Success for New TALB Reps

1. **Visibility**— do your colleagues know you're the rep? You need to announce it, remind them, and have your names on TALB documents that you produce or post (You can add "Ask Billy-Bob if you have any questions" to TALB flyers). You have an important position, your teachers need to know who to turn to and that's now you.
2. **Learning**— you don't have all the answers but don't be afraid of the questions/issues of your colleagues. You are now part of a network of support at the TALB office and with fellow Reps. Get into TALB/working condition conversations, learn more about your site and turn to other Reps and TALB leaders and staff to learn different approach to school site issues.
3. **Building a Team**— A lonely Rep is an ineffective Rep. If you are the only one at your site active in TALB, you need to recruit. Remember, "no" simply means "not yet." Find out what is nagging at your colleagues and who is not afraid to express their opinions and you will have found another Rep. Meet with the other Reps or other leaders and friends on campus to discuss issues and possible responses. There is strength, and wisdom, when teachers work and strategize together.
4. **Early Wins**— Your credibility as a new TALB Rep will be improved if you can secure an "early win" with your colleagues. Find an issue that could be improved at your site; begin conversations with other teachers about it; strategize on your approach to your administrator who may have the power to make that change (TALB leaders and staff can be a great resource in developing these strategies); and then follow-through.
5. **New Relationship with Principal**— The most difficult thing to grasp is that the law recognizes you as equal to your principal when dealing with worksite and other representational issues. The law, and your union, will back you up on this. You do not approach your principal as a supplicant, but rather as an equal trying to resolve an issue amicably but resolutely.