

What FEA Worksite Leaders Do

Worksite leaders work lead . . .

- A. a visible and active union at the school or worksite.
- B. actions to engage new employees and to establish union members as their first and best friends.
- C. efforts to turn potential members into members, members into activists, activists into leaders.
- D. activities to advocate for public education at the local, state and national levels.

Worksite leaders do this with the support of our union and working with a team of other worksite leaders and activist members. No single worksite leader is expected to do it all, do it all at once or do it all alone.

A. Worksite leaders lead a visible and active union at the school or worksite. They . . .

1. Participate as fully as possible in worksite leader meetings and trainings.
2. Educate on the contract and take appropriate actions to enforce it when necessary.
3. Have personal contacts at least once per year with all members/potential members within assigned “turf” to reintroduce themselves as worksite leaders, explain their role, listen for issues and interests and reiterate the importance of active union membership.
4. Implement a plan of regular two-way communication that includes some combination of: a union bulletin board, 10-minute “stand-up” meetings, using “union time” at staff meetings, printed or electronic bulletins, surveys or discussion groups on selected issues, social events, designated days or events for members to show union visibility and solidarity.
5. Maintain relationships with school or worksite administration through regular meetings and/or use of labor-management committees that are contractually or informally established.
6. Work with members/potential members to identify at least one issue or interest per year that can be addressed through collective action and develop and implement with them a campaign of activity to achieve desired results. (Issues or interest may be school- or community-based.)
7. Organize plans to have school or worksite participating in union-wide events and activities that include specific actions to involve the previously uninvolved or under-involved.

B. Worksite leaders lead actions to engage new employees and to establish union members as their first and best friends. They . . .

1. Personally say “hello” to each new hire within their first few weeks on the job, introduce themselves as union worksite leaders, deliver and explain contents of the new member packet and offer support to help them get acclimated and be successful on the job.

2. Establish a reliable system to become aware of each new hire as soon as possible.
3. Recognize new hires at first staff meeting or other appropriate gathering of colleagues.
4. Invite each new hire to a breakfast, lunch, coffee or other informal gathering where there is time to have a quality “union conversation,” i.e., active listening to uncover issues and interests of new hire, telling of “union stories” on the importance of membership and union activism.
5. Develop and implement a plan to have a personal contact twice per month during each new hire’s first year on the job. One contact per month is a simple drop-in visit (“Hi. How are you doing?”). The other contact per month shall have a specific purpose to impart useful information relevant to the person’s success on the job and/or familiarity with the union (the contract, current issues, history, professional development or training offerings, volunteer opportunities, social activities, etc.)
6. Arrange to have each new hire accompanied by one or more union members to a union meeting or event outside of the work day (membership meeting, union-sponsored training, issues-based organizing action, social event, affiliate conference, etc.)

C. Worksite leaders lead efforts to turn potential members into members, members into activists, activists into leaders. They . . .

1. Keep and help union continually update a roster of members/potential members that is complete as possible with hire date, contact information (including home phone and personal e-mail) and when possible history of union participation, volunteer interests, community involvement, etc.
2. Follow these general guidelines in regard to contacts with members/potential members:
 - Use open-ended questions to begin real conversations (vs. sales pitches) that uncover shared experiences and issues around which to organize.
 - Speak with own words and from personal experience with enthusiasm (“Union Story”)
 - Motivate and empower around issues-based union message (vs. selling benefits and services).
 - Use “I” messages, avoiding “you” messages as much as possible.
 - Deal with objections using the technique of “Feel, Felt, Found.”
 - Keep records of contacts after the fact, including time and date of contact, issues, outcomes (including appropriate “assessment”) and notes to guide future contacts.
3. Annually “map” the worksite and use information revealed to guide strategy for increasing membership and union involvement.
4. Have an ongoing membership recruitment plan that targets roughly 50 percent of all potential members for personal contact about joining the union and for ongoing efforts to build relationships and involvement in the union regardless of membership status.

5. Follow procedures prescribed for making personal contacts with members who have dropped their membership.
6. Involve other union members in carrying out the ongoing recruitment plan, based on the leadership qualities of these members, their personal union experiences, relationships with targeted potential members, etc.

D. Worksite leaders lead activities to advocate for public education at the local, state and national levels. They . . .

1. Communicate to members in every electoral cycle a list of union-endorsed candidates for office and be able to explain in own words reasons why and the endorsement process itself.
2. Offer support to members/potential members with voter registration and share instructions on voting in conjunction with every electoral cycle.
3. Keep and share when appropriate with members/potential members an up-to date roster with contact information of school board members and members of their delegations to the Florida Legislature and the U.S. Congress.
4. Regularly ask members/potential members to sign up for the FEA Action Center.
5. Organize plans to have school or worksite participating in union-wide events and activities focused on the legislative and electoral process, such as attendance at school board meetings, lobbying days, phone banks, neighborhood walks, GOTV, etc.
6. Include sign up for regular political action contributions through payroll deductions as one of the “ask” in contacts with new hires, in membership recruitment and issues campaigns and in regular communications at the worksite.

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