

INTERNAL ORGANIZING TECHNIQUES

DOCUMENT #10

RECRUITMENT IN LOCAL 809

Officers and Stewards from Local 809 held a meeting a few weeks ago to begin to prepare their strategy for upcoming contract negotiations scheduled to take place in 4 months.

During the meeting all of the officers agreed the best way to get the membership ready for contract talks would be to form an organizing committee. Officers felt strongly that members should be recruited to the organizing committee since there was lots of work to do and not enough stewards to do it all. Besides they believed this would be a way to involve members who didn't have time to be stewards but why may have time to be part of the organizing committee.

Since the two Units in this Local are located in different geographical areas the LEC thought it would be a good idea for each Unit to form its own mini-organizing committee. Unit stewards were delegated the responsibility of recruiting members from their own work area to form an organizing committee. The mandate of each committee was to find ways to involve members in the upcoming contract negotiations.

A follow-up meeting with the LEC and stewards was scheduled for three weeks later.

Three weeks later Unit Stewards met with the LEC to report on the progress and success they were having in forming their workplace organizing committees.

A spokesperson from Unit A reported the following:

Unit A Stewards met the day after the initial planning meeting with the LEC.

"One of us sketched a map of our workplace identifying individual members in different work areas. We then noted our members' job titles, approximate ages, sex, and race. We noted who in each work group we believed had leadership qualities. Using this information we targeted two members in each specific work area to recruit to the organizing committee. Before approaching these members we talked amongst ourselves and pooled our information about what we knew about these members. We discussed what we understood their issues were, what available time these members might have, and we talked about ways we could tap into their interests when recruiting them to work on the committee.'

"We knew that training and developmental opportunities were important issues to many clerical workers who feel they can't get out of the 'office/clerical' category."

"We knew that a number of workers, both male and female, with small children would welcome a flextime arrangement at the workplace."

"We knew that many members, particularly women, think the existing contract language on sexual harassment is weak."

"By the time we approached these members we knew a lot of information about them. We practiced our recruitment approach on each other and got feedback on how we could appeal to the interests of these members."

"We were pretty successful recruiting the members we targeted. We had good representation from all of the work areas by job title, gender and race. These members seemed interested in being part of the committee but wondered what they would be asked to do and how much time would be involved. We weren't certain ourselves so we invited them to an evening meeting at the Regional Office to discuss plans. Not everyone showed up and we knew interest was waning because 2 hours into the meeting we had lost 4 of our recruits. By the time the meeting was over we still didn't have a clear plan of action. When we followed up with these members a few days later they were less enthusiastic about being involved in the committee."

TASKS:

1. Select a reporter/recorder.
2. In your groups analyze the fact situation and determine:
 - a) Why did Unit A Stewards have such success initially recruiting people to the Organizing Committee? What are some important recruitment principles that these Stewards followed during their planning meeting?
 - b) What caused the new recruits to lose interest so quickly?
 - c) What did these Stewards need to do to maintain Organizing Committee members interest?

A spokesperson from Unit B reported the following:

"We did everything Unit A did but we went a few steps further. When we recruited our members to the organizing committee we asked them to attend a short (max, 1 hour) planning meeting. We knew that to effectively prepare for contract negotiations we had to know what the important issues were for the entire membership. The first organizing committee meeting with our new recruits was a productive working meeting. We asked the new recruits to take part in designing a survey that we would distribute to members. Within half an hour our new committee came up with a list of a range of issues members could choose from and rank according to their level of importance. This list actually became our survey questionnaire. By the time our first meeting ended 1 hour later Barbara volunteered to design the membership survey questionnaire on her computer. Sonja volunteered to draw a cartoon for the front cover of the survey. Chris and Peter agreed to take the final survey to a union printing firm and get enough copies made to distribute to the membership. Phyllis and Rafael offered to work on preparing a list of questions that members might ask committee people when they are distributing the survey."

"Our Organizing Committee met one week later. Peter had just picked up the survey at the printing shop and passed it around the table to Committee members. One of the stewards, who is not with us today, was chairing the meeting. Before anyone had a chance to give recognition and thanks to those who produced the survey the steward opened the meeting and quickly moved on to assigning tasks for distribution of the survey questionnaire. Some of the meeting was taken up reviewing possible questions members might have when they are asked to fill out the survey. Phyllis and Rafael had taken time before the meeting to prepare this list of possible questions so that committee members could practice their one-on-one communication skills. The chair cut our practice sessions short and seemed annoyed we were having such a good time with our role playing. He was pretty directive with Committee members. He told them word for word what he thought she should say when they met with workers about the survey. He ignored Barbara and Sonja who tried to suggest a different approach. This meeting didn't go as well as the first one. Committee members seemed less eager to agree to take on specific tasks that the Chair was directing them to do."

"The following week our Organizing Committee met again but the numbers had dwindled. Barbara and Peter gave notice that they had other commitments and would have to resign from the Committee."

TASKS:

1. Select a reporter/recorder.

2. In your groups analyze the fact situation and determine:

- a) What was significantly different about what Unit B Stewards did from Unit A Stewards once they initially recruited people to the Organizing Committee?
- b) What important thing was missed at Unit B's second meeting that was needed to motivate Committee members to stay involved?
- c) How did the Chairperson's leadership style affect the Organizing Committee group?

LEADERSHIP STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

S.A. G.A. G.D. S.D.

S.A. = Strongly Agree, G.A.= Generally Agree, G.D. = Generally Disagree, S.D.= Strongly Disagree

- | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1. | I create a climate in which activist members tend to be very cautious rather than risk-taking. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 2. | I feel that within our local we have too many meetings. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 3. | In most cases, I believe my members should be encouraged to determine for themselves how to accomplish their objectives and not rely upon me. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 4. | When I give an assignment, I am inclined to spell out quite clearly how the job is to be done. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 5. | I give activists a lot of freedom in carrying out Union activities. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 6. | I usually tell activists the goals and objectives that I want them to attain during the coming year. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 7. | My Staff Representative expects me to make most of the decisions in my Local. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 8. | Leaders must lead: Leaders must give definite direction to their members. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 9. | I believe that members should have a say in Union decisions and plans. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 10. | I think that, as a rule, most activists have the ability to take on additional responsibility in the Union. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 11. | To be frank, I am usually less comfortable when I let members to things in their way rather than the way I would have done them. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 12. | I usually run the Local as I see fit and pay only slight attention to my members' suggestions. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 13. | My members frequently approach me with ideas and recommendations. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 14. | Basically, my members lack the capacity to get more involved in the running of the Local. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

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- | | | | | |
|---|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 15. I frequently give in to my members in discussions with them. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 16. As a rule, I feel that my own ideas are generally better than those of my members. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 17. I respond readily to changes proposed by members. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 18. I feel that as a leader, I am expected to demonstrate strong, firm, and definite leadership in dealing with my members. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 19. I frequently compromise on union problems with my members. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 20. I usually determine precisely what shall be done and how it will be done by the members under me. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 21. I insist, as a rule, that members under me follow my instructions to the letter. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 22. I believe in getting the ideas of my members before proceeding in a given direction. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 23. I usually insist that things be done my way. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 24. I frequently change methods when my members convince me with evidence. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 25. I usually conduct myself in a firm, definite, and authoritative manner. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 26. I usually encourage new ideas from my members. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 27. As a rule, I think my members get their greatest satisfaction from their families, hobbies, and outside Union activities. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 28. I encourage members under me to do their work as they see fit. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 29. My member's ideas regarding the work of our Union are almost as good as my own. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |
| 30. I generally encourage initiative and innovation in my members. | _____ | _____ | _____ | _____ |

LEADERSHIP STYLE QUESTIONNAIRE

Scoring Instructions:

To score your responses to the statements on the questionnaire, look at the table below for the point values for each question and place those values in the "Point Value" column beside each of the questionnaire statements. For example, if you checked "Generally Disagree" on question #1, mark the value of 3 points in the "Point Value" column. If, on the other hand, you checked "Strongly Disagree", mark the value of 4 points in the column. When you have finished scoring all the items, add their point values to arrive at your total score.

POINT VALUES

Question	Strongly Agree	Generally Agree	Generally Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
2	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
3	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
4	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
5	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
6	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
7	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
8	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
9	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
10	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
11	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
12	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
13	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
14	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
15	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
16	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
17	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
18	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
19	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
20	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
21	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
22	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
23	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
24	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
25	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
26	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
27	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
28	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
29	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)
30	(4)	(3)	(2)	(1)

If you score between 30-74 you tend towards a more directive leadership style that is often task focused. If you score between 75-120 points you tend towards a more participative 'union building' leadership style that is often more supportive than task focused.

**GROUP 1
CASE STUDY #1**

THE GROWING LOCAL

Local 811 is a multi-union local. All of the members work for the same employer but they are spread over 4 worksites in a particular geographic area. The leaders on the LEC are from only two of the worksites. The other two worksites have unit stewards but they rarely attend the LEC meetings and tend to be more stewards in name only rather than in action.

The LEC has been recently discussing how to deal with the employer and members around the fact that 3 new worksites are about to be created and to be staffed by new employees. The issue for the LEC is that they believe a number of members would like to have the opportunity to transfer to the new worksites and other members, many occupying clerical positions, would like to be provided promotional/developmental opportunities for some of the new, better paying positions.

The present discussion among LEC members can be outlined as follows:

- They'd like to bring to the ERC the issue of providing opportunities to and accommodating the interests of existing members as these new offices are about to be staffed.
- They know they need better links with the 2 units where the local has little effective representation or presence. They also wonder how they're going to have the steward resources to cover 3 new units when they are all feeling pretty strapped just covering the existing four units.
- A number of the LEC members have been getting calls from unit members in the two inactive units (units B & C). The description of these contacts is as follows:

- Tom, a Unit A steward has gotten several calls from Millie Smith, a member in Unit B. Millie says that a number of the people she works with, including herself, are pretty anxious to know if they will have a chance to transfer to another site. Some of these sites are closer to home or day care centres. Several of the secretaries would like to be considered for the new caseworker assistant positions. Millie says their unit steward has been off on LTIP so they are sort of in the dark. Millie would be willing to handle communications between the LEC and her unit members. When Tom asked Millie if she'd consider being a unit steward, she expressed reluctance to hold a formal position. She felt she had too little knowledge about the work of the unit steward. She was also worried about time commitments since she's presently caring for her elderly mother.
- Pamela, the Local Vice-President, knows Frank, a Unit C member. She worked with him in the past on a classification grievance. She sees him as smart, interested in Union issues, is often vocal with management at staff meetings. Other members saw him as very important in the success of the classification grievance. Pamela knows from previous discussions with Frank that he feels strongly that existing workers should have job bidding and transfer rights before new hires. She's suggesting Frank could be a potential contact.

Questions:

1. List some of the things the LEC should be doing to prepare to take this issue to the ERC?
2. Specifically, what kinds of things can the LEC be doing to find and recruit new leaders as they organize around this issue?
3. What are some ways Millie and Frank can be supported to continue their informal leadership role and moved toward taking a more formal leadership role in the union, i.e. unit steward?

**GROUP #2
CASE STUDY #2**

A NEWLY ORGANIZED UNIT

Local 899 is a composite local representing members from five different units. Four of the units are OPS employees from Ministries of Transportation and Environment. The fifth unit is a newly organized BPS unit made up of child protective and foster care workers.

While all the units work in the same building many of the employees are out in the field on different days, including the BPS unit.

The newly organized BPS Unit has recently lost its Unit Steward. This person had been key in the organizing drive and the main link to the union. No new person has come forward to take on this role.

In the last week the Local President has received calls from several of the BPS unit's members. There has been a questionable death of a child who was under the supervision of child protective services. Workers are concerned that issues of staff negligence are being raised and they want to know their rights in any investigation.

None of the LEC members are from the BPS Unit or are familiar with the specifics of their work and do not know any of the individual members or management staff. The LEC obviously believes it has got to recruit leaders from inside the Unit if the Union is to effectively respond to these workers.

Questions:

1. Who are the people in this Unit who have already shown a belief in the importance of unions and organized activity? Why might these people be the best to focus upon? How might they be identified by the LEC?
2. How might the LEC approach these people?
3. If they are not presently willing to act as Unit stewards how might the LEC still recruit them to help out on this important issue?

DOCUMENT #14

GROUP #3

CASE STUDY #3

A RECENTLY INCORPORATED UNIT

Recently OPSEU reorganized unit structures in this geographical area causing one unit to be incorporated into Local 842.

Local 842 is a composite local of 4 separate units including the recently incorporated unit. This local has always been a high functioning, active and powerful composite local. Structures have been created to ensure representation from all work areas and all occupational groups. Three of the units are functioning well, however the recently incorporated 4th unit has a number of problems:

The fourth unit is comprised of workers who staff a small institution for developmentally handicapped adults. The workers include nurses, residential counselors, social workers, one psychologist, maintenance staff, and kitchen staff. A number of these employees are shift workers. Of these 90 employees over half are women and over one-third are racial minorities. One of the stewards is a psychologist and the other is a social worker. Both work Monday to Friday 8:30 – 5:00 and often their work requires them to be away from the institution.

Recently the Executive of Local 842, who come from the other 3 units, received a quarterly updated membership listing from Head Office. At the time of OPSEU's reorganization of units, Local 842's executive was advised that the new unit to be incorporated would increase Local 842's membership by approximately 90. Of the 90 employees only 30 showed up on the membership listing.

It is the custom of Local 842 to prepare well in advance for their demand setting meeting. The Local Executive wanted to meet with the representatives from the 4th unit to find out what the important issues are for their membership.

When the LEC invited the two Unit Stewards to meet with them, the social worker showed up and said it was unfortunate the other steward was unable to make the meeting because he had a longer history of union activity.

DOCUMENT #14

During the meeting the LEC learned from the social worker that the staff at the institution were an apathetic lot. According to her they showed no interest in

the union. She didn't think any of them had any union consciousness, nor did she think there were any potential activists among the residential counselors, nurses, or maintenance staff. When asked what their issues were she said, as far as she knew, they didn't have any issues. All she heard were complaints they had about the evening supervisor/administrator. She went on to say she thought a number of staff had been disciplined the year before by this supervisor but she didn't know how it was all resolved. She wasn't aware if grievances were filed but said the practice in the previous local was to let the Staff Rep handle all grievances.

Questions:

1. List some of the things the LEC should be doing with this newly incorporated unit?
2. Who are the people in this Unit who have already had some dealings with the union? Why might these people be the best to focus upon? How might they be identified by the LEC?
3. How might the LEC approach these people?
4. How might the LEC approach the rest of the workers in the institution?

