

Section 1
Role of the Union Rep

Responsibilities of a Union Representative

As a Leader

- Educate members.
- Run meetings.
- Interpret local's policies.
- Speak on behalf of members.
- Gather support for local's programs and positions.
- Assist members with problems or concerns.
- Act as a liaison with principal/supervisor.
- Represent constituency at all organizational meetings.
- Assume decision-making role in certain situations.
- Be available.
- Know where or how to find answers.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Be committed. (not that way!)
- Be self-directed.
- Model appropriate union member behavior.
- Involve others.
- Promote and support VOTE-COPE.
- Listen.

As an Advocate

- Be assertive on behalf of members and the union.
- Be supportive of the member with a problem.
- Utilize resources.
- work collaboratively with other local leaders and the Labor Relations Specialist.
- Prepare grievances.
- Present grievances.
- Monitor grievances.
- Preserve confidentiality.
- Maintain records.
- Determine how best to handle a problem.
- Listen.

As a Communicator

- Attend all meetings.
- Keep members informed.
- Communicates on behalf of members.
- Coordinates membership communications system (e.g. phone tree, bulletin board, mailing list, personal email addresses).
- Dispense timely and critical information.
- Communicate constituents' needs to local leadership.
- Communicate constituents' needs to administration.
- Maintain strong public relations image (tell the good news).
- Promote internal communications (e.g. local newsletter, local website).
- Make yourself accessible to membership.
- Ask questions.
- Promote coalition building.
- Listen.

As an Organizer

- Know the contract, the local constitution and bylaws, employer handbook, and policies.
- Know where to find answers.
- Have materials with which to function.
- Have the desire to succeed.
- Be visible.
- Persevere, be persistent, and be patient.
- Be indispensable.
- Be innovative.
- Communicate.
- Attend all meetings.
- Involve others.
- Delegate responsibilities.
- Build action teams.
- Be issue-oriented and action/oriented.
- Listen.