Union Meetings

PLANNING THE 10-MINUTE BUILDING MEETING

Minutes	Topic	Rationale
2 Minutes	Brief overview of major topics discussed at last month's Association meeting.	We're keeping members informed. We try to reduce the hush-hush attitude so often prevalent in union business. Keeping members informed is not a matter of how much they are told. Rather, it is a matter of their realizing that leaders are working hard to keep them informed.
4 Minutes	Present and explore a new issue. We need your input before we go to the next Executive Board meeting.	The mere process of getting members' input reinforces in the members' mind that his/her opinion is actively sought and subsequently presented to the voting body. The Building Representative who neglects this step is asking for mistrust and hostility from members.
3 minutes	A 3 minute review of a current issue or problem. Could be a building issue or a district wide item.	Often just talking about a problem gives considerable relief. Reviewing issues keeps information flowing and demonstrates a commitment to items raised by members.
1 Minute	End on a positive note. Outline how member involvement has influenced the union's action or a decision by the district. Or simply congratulate a member on a recent achievement.	We must constantly provide our members with the context in which the union operates. We must remind them where we started on an issue and where we are today. While the issue may not be resolved, point out how far the item has come since it was first mentioned.

SAMPLE AGENDA
ANYTIME EDUCATION ASSOCIATION
10 MINUTE MEETING
PLAZA DRIVE ELEMENTARY
June 4, 2009

- What was discussed at the last AEA meeting (2 minutes)
- We need your input (on _____). Your views will be presented at the next executive board meeting. (4 minutes)
- Latest developments on the problem of _____. (3 minutes)
- Something that should make you proud! (1 minute)

Time's up! We told you that we could do it in 10 minutes! Don't forget to leave your questions and suggestions at the door.

ASK A QUESTION. MAKE A SUGGESTION. Tear off this portion of the agenda and leave it at the door.

Name: _____

Question or Suggestion: _____

10-MINUTE AEA BUILDING MEETING
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 4, 2009

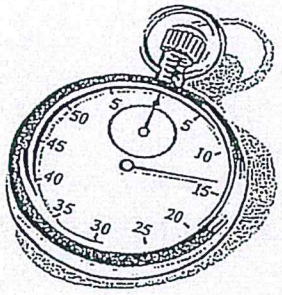
The **Anytown Education Association**
is negotiating our contract this year.
The **AEA** is determined to keep
you informed.
AEA leaders need **YOUR** input.

Remember – only *10 minutes*!

We start in the library at 3:15 SHARP!
We wind up the meeting at 3:25 SHARP!

Honestly, it really is a *10-minute* meeting.

If you doubt us, come on Wednesday and time us!



Strategy Chart – Coalition Building Worksheet

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING THE AGENDA

Factors	Meeting issue 1	Meeting issue 2
Priorities – what absolutely must be covered?		
Results – what do you need to accomplish at the meeting?		
Participants – who needs to attend the meeting for it to be successful?		
Sequence – in what order will you cover the topics?		
Timing – how much time will spend on each topic?		
Date and time – when will the meeting take place?		
Place – where will the meeting take place?		

FACTORS TO CONSIDER WHEN PLANNING THE AGENDA

Factors	Meeting issue 1 Mapping the membership	Meeting issue 2 The rest of the Rep Council meeting
Priorities – what absolutely must be covered?	• Why we are mapping membership • Importance of information collected • How to collect the information	
Results – what do you need to accomplish at the meeting?	• Decision re information to collect • How to collect the information • Suggestions to divide up the buildings • Timeline/due date for the information	
Participants – who needs to attend the meeting for it to be successful?	• All executive team members • All building reps • Political action members • Negotiation team members (?)	
Sequence – in what order will you cover the topics?	• Overview of information collection process (VAN) • Consensus on 2 other pieces of information to gather • Agreement on timeline/due date	
Timing – how much time will spend on each topic?	• Why we are mapping membership (5 minutes) • Overview of information collection process (VAN) (20 minutes) • Consensus on 2 other pieces of information to gather (15 minutes) • Suggestions to divide up the buildings (5 minutes) • Agreement on timeline/due date (5 minutes)	
Date and time – when will the meeting take place?		
Place – where will the meeting take place?		

Tips for Running Union Meetings

PLANNING FOR THE MEETING

Planning the Objective

1. What is the purpose of holding the meeting?
2. What do you expect to accomplish at the meeting?
3. What are the basic goals of the committee?

Planning the Time and Place

1. Select best time and convenient place to ensure attendance
2. Determine number of meetings needed
3. Physical arrangement of the room
    - Lighting
    - Ventilation
    - Acoustics
    - Table and placement of chairs
        - Theatre style
        - U-Shaped style
        - Circle style
        - Parallel Line Style
    - Distractions
    - Equipment needs (overhead projector, Proxima, screen, flipchart and markers, white board and dry erase markers, pads and pens
    - Name tags, if necessary
    - Order food or refreshments

Notification of Members

1. Schedule meeting as far in advance as is possible and practical
2. Determine how meeting notices will be sent out (e-mail, phone call, hard copy)
3. Information in meeting notice
    a. Date
    b. Time
    c. Place
    d. Purpose (*attach agenda*)
    e. Adjournment time
    f. Request that members indicate whether they will attend

The purpose of the Bell Shaped Agenda is to structure events around the group's energy and attention. The first few items help the meeting participants to work as a group on easy items before they tackle more difficult items

THE BELL SHAPED AGENDA

Item 1: Welcome

Item 2: Minutes

Item 3: Announcements
-non controversial
-short
-example; upcoming events

Item 4: Easy Item
-more than one item may be included in this section, but should not be controversial

Item 5: Hardest Item *Why in the middle?*
-Attendance: late comers have arrived and early-leavers have not left
-Attention: focused on meeting by this time, not yet concerned with next appointment

Item 6: For Discussion Only
-will often be presented as Item 5: Hardest Item at subsequent meeting for vote or decision

Item 7: Easiest Item
-end of this meeting is the beginning of next meeting
-end on positive note of agreement and encouragement
-good time for member recognition

Item 8: Plan Next Meeting Agenda
-set agenda for next meeting

***Source: IEEE**

Agenda Template

This agenda template is divided into 5 sections: meeting organization, goal, meeting prep, agenda, and related information. You can use this meeting agenda template for any type of meeting. Simply fill out the template below:

Let's Meet!

Date: [Insert Date]

Time: [Insert Time]

Location: [Insert Location]

Attendees: [Insert Attendees]

Objective

Our goal is to brainstorm ways to increase productivity in our meetings. Please come to the meeting with a few ideas to share.

Meeting Prep

Read: And complete the Running a Union meeting module. Read the attached article from Harvard Business Review.

Bring: A sample agenda used in the past year.

Examples of things you've tried in the past that worked and/or things you've heard of from other teams

Agenda Template

Agenda			
Date:	**Time:**	**Duration:**	**Place:**
Meeting Purpose:			

Topic/Item	Time Allocated (Minutes)	Topic Leader	Objective (Choose one)
1.			
2.			
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			

MEETING MINUTES FOR
[ORGANIZATION'S NAME]

I. MEETING DETAILS

Meeting Facilitator: [CHAIRPERSON'S NAME]
Secretary: [SECRETARY'S NAME]

Date: [DATE]
Time: [TIME]

Location: [LOCATION NAME]
Street Address: [STREET ADDRESS]
City: [CITY]
State: [STATE] Zip: [ZIP CODE]

II. ATTENDEES.

[ENTER WHO IS IN PRESENT]

III. ABSENCES.

[ABSENCES]

IV. REPORTS.

[LIST ANY AND ALL REPORTS]

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS.

[LIST ALL UNFINISHED BUSINESS]

VI. NEW BUSINESS.

[LIST ALL NEW BUSINESS]

VII. OTHER.

[OTHER BUSINESS]

Minutes submitted by: _____ Print Name: _____

Approved by: _____ Print Name: _____

Meeting minutes template

Effective meetings are the product of good leadership, a collaborative team, minimum small talk and excellent note-taking. Make the most of your meeting minutes with this basic minute-taking template. Copy the template below and use it for your next meeting!

Meeting Purpose

A [meeting type] meeting of [team or organization name] was held on [date] at [location]. It began at [time] and was called by [meeting leader, person who called the meeting], with [scribe name] as scribe.

Attendees

[List of team members in attendance]

[List of guests in attendance]

[List of team members who did not attend]

Topics/Presentations

[Topic/Presentation name] was presented by [presenter/speaker].

- Main takeaways

Follow-up Tasks

Task: Called by [name] for [task doer name] to [complete task] by [date]

Meeting Minutes FAQs

What tense should meeting minutes be in?

You should always write your meeting minutes in past tense. These could be considered a recap to what happened on the call and therefore will be read by colleagues after the meeting happens. Make sure to go back after the meeting and correct your tenses to avoid confusion.

Who should take meeting minutes?

Having someone who will be attending all meetings, will not be presenting on the call and can take notes swiftly and understands the topic being discussed would be ideal.

How long should meeting minutes be?

The length of your meeting minutes depends on how long your meeting is and how many topics you and your team plan on covering. Keep your sentences short and objective — no need to get creative!

MEETING CHECKLIST

- Have notices of the meeting been sent?
- Did the notices clearly state the date, place, time and purpose of the meeting?
- Were reminder calls or e-mails sent?
- Was an agenda prepared?
- Is the meeting room available?
- Is the meeting room comfortably heated or ventilated?
- Are there sufficient chairs and is the room set up as requested?
- Is the lighting adequate?
- Has all the necessary equipment (proxima, screen, overhead projector, flipchart and markers, etc.) been requested?
- Are there notepads and paper for committee members?
- Have refreshments and/or beverages been ordered?

Meeting Room Arrangements

Theatre Style-

- leader has great power by position
- participation and interruption by audience is limited
- good visibility for visual aids
- Example: General Membership meeting

U-shaped Style-

- equity of membership
- no doubt who the leader is
- good visibility for visual aids
- Example: large committee meeting or class

Circle Style

- Democratic: equity is stressed
- Great visibility for participants
- Obvious body language
- Excellent participation
- Example: small committee meeting

Parallel Lines Style

- 2 sides with 2 leaders and their teams or committees facing each other
- Primary face to face discussion between 2 leaders with limited discussion support by teams
- Equity of teams
- Example: Labor – Management Meeting

Parliamentary Procedure Cheat Sheet

Type	Purpose	Phraseology	Need a second?	Can it be amended?	Debatable?	What vote is needed?
Main Motion	Propose an action	"I move that…"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj.
Amendment	Change something in the motion	"I move to amend this motion by…"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj.
Previous Question	End debate	"I move the previous question."	Yes	No	No	2/3
Unanimous Consent	Unanimously accept a motion	"I move to accept by this motion by unanimous consent."	No	No	No	A single objection kills this motion
Point of Information	Get clarification on something	"Point of information!"	No	No	No	None
Point of Order	Something needs to be corrected	"Point of order"	No	No	No	No vote, only ruling by chair
Suspend the Rules	Lay aside a standing rule	"I move to suspend the rule that states…"	Yes	No	No	2/3
Table	Put a motion aside temporarily	"I move to table this motion."	Yes	No	No	Maj.
Remove from the Table	Bring a motion back "from the table"	"I move to take from the table the motion that…"	Yes	No	No	Maj.
Recess	Take a short break	"I move that we enter a recess for *amount of time*."	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj.
Limit or Extend Limits of Debate	Debate for more or less time	"I move to limit / extend the limits of debate for…"	Yes	Yes	No	2/3
Postpone Definitely	Put something aside for more than a week	"I move to postpone this motion until…"	Yes	Yes	Yes	Maj.

ROBERTS RULES CHEAT SHEET

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Adjourn	"I move that we adjourn"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
Recess	"I move that we recess until…"	No	Yes	No	Yes	Majority
Complain about noise, room temp., etc.	"Point of privilege"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair Decides
Suspend further consideration of something	"I move that we table it"	No	Yes	No	No	Majority
End debate	"I move the previous question"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Postpone consideration of something	"I move we postpone this matter until…"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Amend a motion	"I move that this motion be amended by…"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority
Introduce business (a primary motion)	"I move that…"	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Majority

The above listed motions and points are listed in established order of precedence. When any one of them is pending, you may not introduce another that is listed below, but you may introduce another that is listed above it.

To:	You say:	Interrupt Speaker	Second Needed	Debatable	Amendable	Vote Needed
Object to procedure or personal affront	"Point of order"	Yes	No	No	No	Chair decides
Request information	"Point of information"	Yes	No	No	No	None
Ask for vote by actual count to verify voice vote	"I call for a division of the house"	Must be done before new motion	No	No	No	None unless someone objects
Object to considering some undiplomatic or improper matter	"I object to consideration of this question"	Yes	No	No	No	2/3
Take up matter previously tabled	"I move we take from the table…"	Yes	Yes	No	No	Majority
Reconsider something already disposed of	"I move we now (or later) reconsider our action relative to…"	Yes	Yes	Only if original motion was debatable	No	Majority
Consider something out of its scheduled order	"I move we suspend the rules and consider…"	No	Yes	No	No	2/3
Vote on a ruling by the Chair	"I appeal the Chair's decision"	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Majority

The motions, points and proposals listed above have no established order of preference; any of them may be introduced at any time except when meeting is considering one of the top three matters listed from the first chart (Motion to Adjourn, Recess or Point of Privilege).

HOW TO ACCOMPLISH WHAT YOU WANT TO DO IN MEETINGS

MAIN MOTION

You want to propose a new idea or action for the group.

- After recognition, make a main motion.
- Member: "Madame Chairman, I move that _____."

AMENDING A MOTION

You want to change some of the wording that is being discussed.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by adding the following words _____."
- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words _____."
- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the motion be amended by striking out the following words, _____, and adding in their place the following words _____."

REFER TO A COMMITTEE

You feel that an idea or proposal being discussed needs more study and investigation.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that the question be referred to a committee made up of members Smith, Jones and Brown."

POSTPONE DEFINITELY

You want the membership to have more time to consider the question under discussion and you want to postpone it to a definite time or day, and have it come up for further consideration.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move to postpone the question until _____."

PREVIOUS QUESTION

You think discussion has gone on for too long and you want to stop discussion and vote.

- After recognition, "Madam President, I move the previous question."

LIMIT DEBATE

You think discussion is getting long, but you want to give a reasonable length of time for consideration of the question.

- After recognition, "Madam President, I move to limit discussion to two minutes per speaker."

COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

You are going to propose a question that is likely to be controversial and you feel that some of the members will try to kill it by various maneuvers. Also you want to keep out visitors and the press.

- After recognition, "Madame Chairman, I move that we go into a committee of the whole."

POINT OF ORDER

It is obvious that the meeting is not following proper rules.

- Without recognition, "I rise to a point of order," or "Point of order."

POINT OF INFORMATION

You are wondering about some of the facts under discussion, such as the balance in the treasury when expenditures are being discussed.

- Without recognition, "Point of information."

POINT OF PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

You are confused about some of the parliamentary rules.

- Without recognition, "Point of parliamentary inquiry."

APPEAL FROM THE DECISION OF THE CHAIR

Without recognition, "I appeal from the decision of the chair."

Rule Classification and Requirements

Class of Rule	Requirements to Adopt	Requirements to Suspend
Charter	Adopted by majority vote or as proved by law or governing authority	Cannot be suspended
Bylaws	Adopted by membership	Cannot be suspended
Special Rules of Order	Previous notice & 2/3 vote, or a majority of entire membership	2/3 Vote
Standing Rules	Majority vote	Can be suspended for session by majority vote during a meeting
Modified Roberts Rules of Order	Adopted in bylaws	2/3 vote

Dealing With Difficult People

Latecomer/Early Leaver	Dropout	Gossiper
Blocker	Whisperer	Know-It-All
Broken Record	Loudmouth	Backseat Driver
Doubting Thomas	Attacker	Busybody
Head Shaker	Interpreter	Interrupter

Strategies For Dealing With Difficult People

Latecomer/Early Leaver

- Don't stop the meeting to review
- Ask what would make the meeting more important for that person
- Find out why the person is leaving
- Check to make sure everyone can stay until the end of the meeting

Blocker

- Ask Blocker to provide reasons for withholding consensus
- Ask Blocker to provide another solution or a way for the group to make progress
- Ask the Blocker if he/she can live with the solution the group favors

Broken Record

- Let the person know their idea has been heard and acknowledged
- Allow the person a few minutes for their idea and move on

Doubting Thomas

- Get group agreement to not evaluate ideas for a set period of time
- Use this agreement to correct anyone who violates it

Head Shaker

- Ignore the person and focus on the speaker
- Approach the person at break if it becomes a disruption

Dropout

- Walk near the person to gain attention
- Get feedback as to lack of interest

Whisperer
- Remind the group to keep focused
- Ask the person to share their thoughts

Loudmouth
- Shift the focus to others in the group
- Ask the person to serve as recorder

Attacker
- Have people address you, not each other
- Ask the critic to suggest positive alternatives

Interpreter
- Stop the person so others can finish
- Ask others if the interpretation is valid

Gossiper
- End gossip by getting the facts
- Defer the issue until information is available

Know-It-All
- Stress the importance of group decisions
- State that there are other valid opinions

Backseat Driver
- Stick to group procedures
- In extreme cases, challenge the person

Busybody
- Deal with the person before the meeting
- Take a recess if it is a key person

Interrupter
- Stop interrupter to let others finish
- Ask person to record their ideas

Rules for Brainstorming

Build on others' ideas	Let the ideas of others spark your own thinking
Reserve judgment	Do not take the time to evaluate ideas as they emerge-anything goes
Aim for quantity	The more ideas that can be brought out, the better. Don't worry about duplication, etc.
Imagine wildly	Let the mind run freely; don't prevent emergence of ideas by boxing them in by conformity.
No killer phrases	Avoid saying things like: "Whoever heard of that?" "We've already tried that." "That's ridiculous."
Be positive	Nothing kills creativity like negativity!

COMPONENTS OF DECISION MAKING

- The problem is stated.
- The problem or goal is clarified.
- The discussion is kept germane.
- The discussion is summarized.
- The readiness for decision-making is tested.
- The consequences of proposed decision is tested.
- The group's commitment to the decision is obtained.
- The decision is finalized.
- Follow up with members regarding effect of decision.

Methods of Group Decision Making

1. **Default** – The group makes no decision (e.g. someone says, "That's the boss's job!" and the group agrees)

2. **Self-Authorized** – One person in the group anoints him/herself with the power.

3. **Topic Hopping** – The group moves from problem to problem and solution to solution assigning outcomes to individuals. There is no group ownership in the problem or the solution.

4. **Hand Clasp** – Two members of the group agree to the problem and the solution, thus a "handshake". The other group members opt out.

5. **Minority Support** – The vocal minority owns the problem and the solution while the silent majority opts out.

6. **Majority Support** – The majority (50% + 1) of the group indicates support and ownership of the problem and the solution. What about the minority?

7. **Problem Consensus** – There is group focus and ownership of the definition of the problem, but not a solution.

8. **Near Consensus** – There is group focus and ownership of the definition of the problem, but a small minority does not own the solution.

9. **Thought-Feeling Consensus** – Each member of the group owns the definition of the problem and supports the solution as defined on both intellectual and emotional grounds. All members of the group will work for the solution.

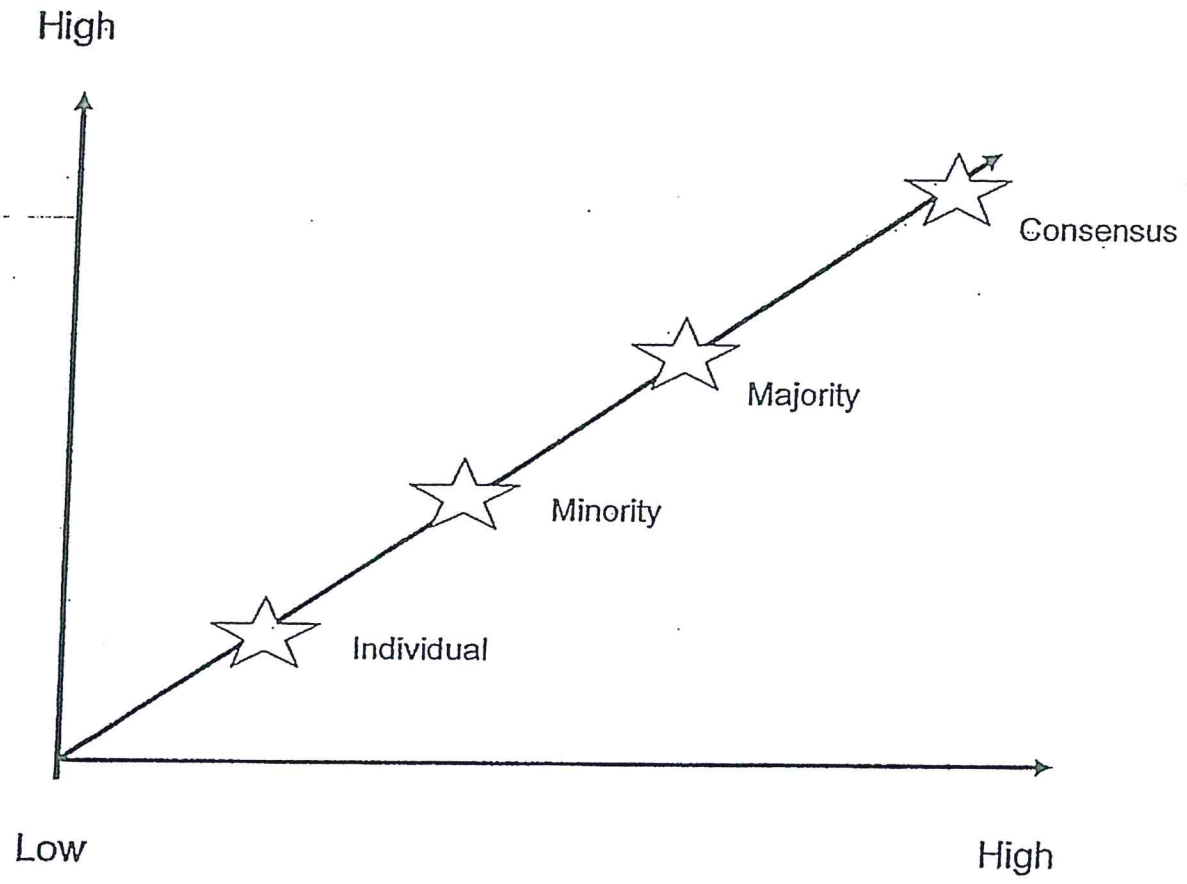
Decision by Consensus

Consensus is a decision process for making full use of available resources and for resolving conflicts creatively. Consensus is difficult to reach. Complete unanimity is not the goal – it is rarely achieved. But each individual should be able to accept group decisions based on the logic and feasibility. When all group members feel this way, the group has reached consensus as defined here, and the judgment may be entered as a group decision. this means, in effect, that a single person can block the group if s/he thinks it is necessary; at the same time, s/he should use this option in the best sense of reciprocity.

To reach a decision by consensus means that each separate point must be agreed upon by each group member before it becomes a part of the group decision. Again, consensus is difficult to reach. Therefore, not every answer will meet with everyone's complete approval. Try, as a group, to make each answer one with which all group members can at least partially agree. Here are some guidelines to use in reaching consensus:

1. Avoid arguing blindly for your own opinions. Present your position as clearly and logically as possible, but listen to other members' reactions and consider them carefully before you press your point.
2. Avoid changing your mind only to reach agreement and avoid conflict. Support only solutions with which you are at least somewhat able to agree. Yield only to positions that have objective and logically sound foundations.
3. Do not use conflict-reducing procedures such majority voting, tossing a coin, or averaging.
4. Seek out differences of opinion. They are natural and expected. Everyone must be involved in the decision process. disagreements can improve the group's decision because they present a wide range of information and opinions, thereby creating a better chance fiord the group to reach more adequate solutions.
5. Do not assume that someone must win and someone must lose when discussion reaches a stalemate. Instead, look for the next most acceptable alternative for all members of the group.
6. discuss underlying assumptions, listen carefully to one another and encourage the participating of all members of the group.

QUALITY OF DECISION



Level of Involvement

Consensus Polling

Poll your group to test whether they are reaching consensus by asking each member of the group to indicate (by raising the appropriate number of finger(s)) the statement which reflects his or her position on the proposal before the group

I ...

1. Support the proposal and will work for it.
2. Support the proposal but will not work for it.
3. Oppose the proposal but will not work against it.
4. Oppose the proposal and must work against it.

You are reaching consensus if the group has...

□ no "4's"
□ few "3's"
□ As many "1's" as possible.

You have a strong consensus decision if...

□ you have all "1's"

If you have many "2's" or "3's", you have reached a decision, but it is not a true consensus decision.

Committees

D. WHY HAVE A COMMITTEE? HOW SHOULD IT BE STRUCTURED?

Committees are successful because a small group working together can develop better ideas and plans than any one member can do alone. The committee is a way of pooling different ideas, experiences, and talents to develop and implement a program for a local union. The greater the mixing of thoughts, values and perspectives, the better the solution or course of action.

An active committee must have a strong chair. The chair links the Executive Board with the committee. The chair calls meetings and provides direction to the committee. The chair helps the group define issues, focus discussion, and balance the need to "get the job done" with making such people participate fully. He or she must fulfill the routine tasks, arrange meeting times and locations, and call members; as well as stimulate discussion, involve the quiet delegate, clarify the discussion and keep the he discussion on track.

The chair must resist running the entire show. A chair who initiates action, settles all differences, determines the agenda, makes assignments and gives but does not seek opinions is ineffective. Instead, chairs must be a part of the committee, not above it: They must know their strengths and weaknesses, accept praise and criticism, and try to genuinely get to know the committee members on an individual basis.

E. WHAT ARE SOME CLUES TO HELP A COMMITTEE BE MORE EFFECTIVE?

Make sure there is a clarity of purpose for the committee, and that members know what they are doing and why.

Keep committee records: you cannot keep it all in your head. Have a list of members, with names and up-to-date addresses and phone numbers. Keep minutes of decisions made and notes of jobs to do. Keep a list of each person's assignments.

The more ownership members feel for a committee, the stronger their commitment. The committee should try to involve even the newest members in developing program ideas and making decisions.

Keep your committee together: Call meetings regularly, do not just keep in touch with individual persons. People need to see and feel that they are part of something, not just hear about it from you. Call all committee members before a meeting to make sure they will bet here, and let them know that you care that they come. Give each member a list of names, addresses, and special jobs! People will feel more responsible to each other if they have this information.

Provide an orientation and training session for new committee members so they know what is involved and what is expected of them.

Do things at meetings. Transact business - make decisions - review past work - plan new activities. People will be more committed to things that have been agreed on by the group. Besides, they will not keep coming to meetings unless they accomplish something.

Make your meetings interesting. Hold the work and "mechanics" down to a specified time. Provide time for informal discussion and socializing at the end of the meeting.

Keep the meeting time and location convenient for those attending.

Keep your committee active the year around. If months go by without meeting or activity, the committee loses its identity and must re-establish itself. It takes at least a meeting a month for members to feel they are "regular."

Keep the committee accountable. The members should provide a short but interesting committee report for each meeting as well as a short written summary for the local meetings and newsletters. The accountability will help volunteers feel like their work is taken seriously.

Encourage people to help each other out on jobs. "Everyone for one's self" is not a good philosophy for committee work.

Recognize good work and reward it. What you can do will depend on your situation, of course, but you can always commend good workers at meetings and show your appreciation in person. You can send active volunteers to special meetings and training programs. Such support will refuel their enthusiasm and help them become committed to activity.

GUIDE FOR BETTER UNION COMMITTEES

(Adapted from Organizing and Leading Volunteers, prepared by Dr. Robert Kahn of the Institute of Social Research, University of Michigan)

This Guide suggests ways for effective leadership when working with officers, stewards and Committees. It deals with principles of working with people who are not paid or "employed" but who do union work because they "volunteer" – they believe in the union.

This Guide contains many good tips for Chairpersons of Union Committees – you might give it to a new Chairperson when they are selected.

SOME BASIC PRINCIPLES:

This Guide is a tool to help you carry out your program. The basic principles are few but vital. All suggestions are based on these central ideas:

1. Talking face-to-face is more effective than any other form of communication.
2. Effective leadership depends on group decisions and reinforcements.
3. People have reasons for what they do, or fail to do. You must understand those reasons before you can organize effectively.
4. Personal interest makes a big difference to members. They like logic and efficiency too, but their loyalty goes to organizers who know and care about their needs, problems and accomplishments.
5. Effective groups don't just grow and persist; they must be built and maintained. Good group work requires organization, and that means records, clear assignments, regular meetings and periodic review of results.

WHERE THEY CAME FROM:

These principles are based on years of objective research in voluntary organizations. Effective committees have been compared with ineffective ones, and these are some of the major findings.

HOW TO USE THIS FACT SHEET:

Read it and study it to help you plan your work. Keep it constantly at hand and check it through before you start each activity. Refer to it to solve problems as they arise. Review it at least once a month and see how you are doing.

1. How do I get people to do a job?

   Ask them. Few people will volunteer their services. This does not mean that they don't want to be active, however. People wait to be asked. Asking builds activity.

2. Who should ask them?

   If possible, someone they know and trust; someone whose influence they respond to; a friend, an officer, steward; a worker in the same department, a person with prestige in the union. But if you cannot arrange for someone else, do it yourself. Remember that the act of asking is itself important.

   After this has been done, be sure that the person is welcomed by the leader of the group he will work with. The most effective combination is therefore being asked by someone he already knows and being welcomed by whomever is heading up the activity.

3. What do I tell new Committee members?

   a) Make clear what you are asking them to do, and be sure it has a definite beginning and end. People do not want to sign up for life, so do not get them to over-commit themselves.

   b) Ask people to do things they can do well, especially in the beginning. People are more willing to begin things they know they can do. Later, when they are really a part of your group, they will be more willing to try new things.

   c) Tell each person how his job fits in with the rest. People want to understand things that they are part of, and they work best when they know that others are depending on them.

   d) Let each person know that his help is needed. If he feels that you are just "looking for people" he will also feel easily replaceable and less responsible for doing a good job.

   e) Discuss their own goals and how they fit into those of the union. People have their own reasons for volunteering, and you need to know them in order to lead effectively. Also, you must help people keep their expectations realistic; otherwise you will not be able to meet them.

   f) Ask what they would like to know, and give them plenty of time and help in raising questions. Many people are reluctant to ask questions, but they will work better after they have done so.

   g) Do these things in person; do not rely on printed circulars, letters, phone calls and e-mails. There is no substitute for talking face-to-face. It lets the person

know that you consider the discussion important, and it gives you a chance to get acquainted with him.

h) You have a right to be enthusiastic about the importance of your work. Do not apologize or belittle it. Your mood will get across to the people you talk to, and they will respond to it.

4. How do I build an active committee?

a) Keep records: you cannot keep it all in your head. Have a list of members with names, up-to-date addresses, phone numbers and e-mail addresses. Keep minutes or notes of jobs to do and decisions made. Keep a list of each person's assignments. Keep a list of each person's skills and "strong suits."

b) Keep your committee together: Call meetings regularly; do not just keep in touch with each person separately. People need to see and feel that they are part of something big, not just hear about it from you. Call each person before a meeting, to make sure he will be there, and knows you care that he comes. Give each member a list of names and addresses and special jobs or skills of committee members. People are interested in these things, and they will feel more responsible to each other. Give each member a copy of minutes or notes about what was decided at the meetings. It will remind him of his job, and he will know the others are expecting things of him.

Let members share in deciding what jobs to do, how they can best be done, and who can do them best. They know some things you do not, and they will work harder for things they decide on themselves.

5. How can I keep people motivated?

a) Set high standards of activity. Members will take their cue from you. And remember, you won't get more than you ask for.

b) For each activity get agreement on group goals. Achieving them will give you a real feeling of accomplishment. Where there are no challenging goals, members feel that activity is unimportant.

c) Get enough people to do the job. Overworked volunteers stop volunteering and besides, the extra lift of the group really begins when you have at least 7 or 8 people involved.

d) Be sure each member knows his job, and position in the group. It is not enough for you to know; ask him and listen to make sure he knows too.

e) Do things at Committee meetings. Transact business; make decisions; review past work; plan new things. People will be more committed to things that have

been agreed on in the group. They will feel on record with the others. Besides, they won't keep coming to meetings unless they accomplish something.

f) Invite union leaders to your meetings. People want to hear directly from them, and to make sure that their own views are carried to higher levels.

g) Encourage people to help each other out on jobs. "Every man for himself" is not good committee work.

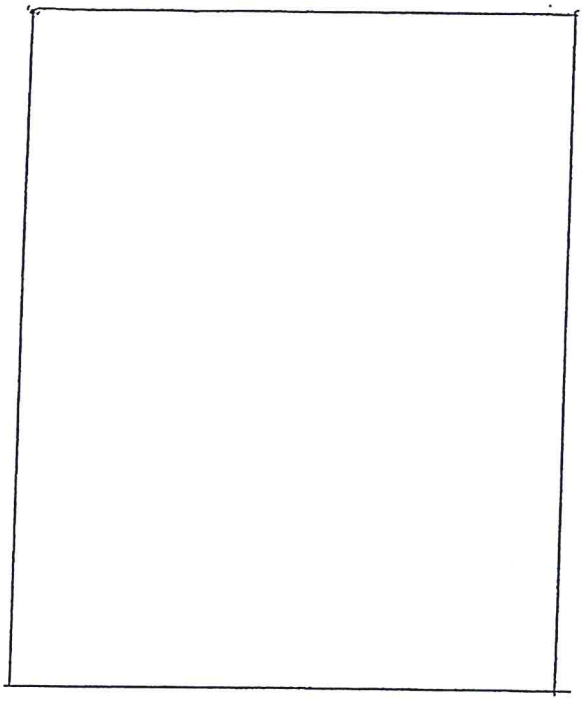
h) Pay attention to people who do not meet committee standard and expectations. If you ignore their failure, other members will follow them. If a member does not live up to your committee standards, speak to him personally, asking frankly what the trouble is, encouraging him, offering help. Encourage other members to speak to him, and show interest. Reassign his job, if necessary. This will show other members that the job is important.

i) Recognize good work, and reward it. What you can do will depend on the local situation, of course, but you can always: commend good workers at meetings, express your appreciation in person, and write letters of thanks.

AN EFFECTIVE COMMITTEE COMES FROM

1/3 Inspiration
1/3 Participation – and
1/3 Perspiration

My Job is...



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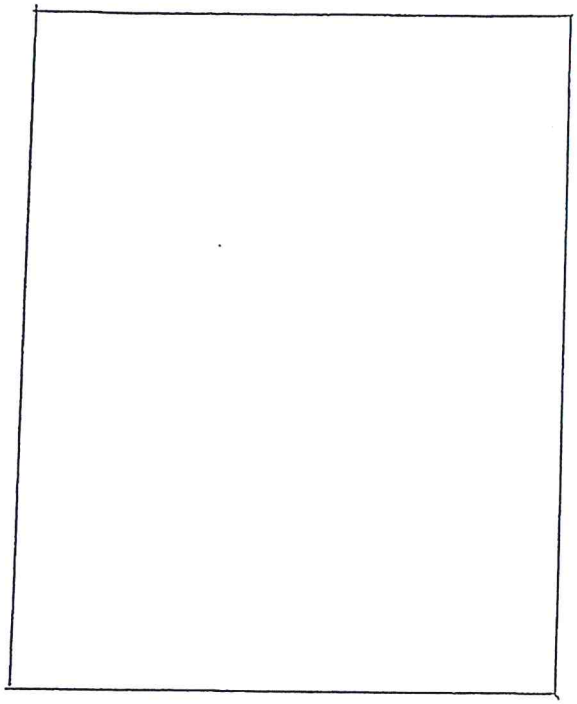

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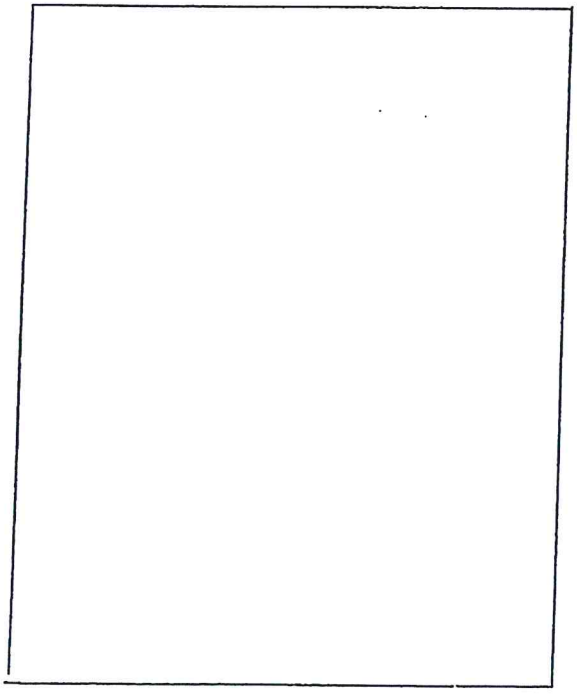

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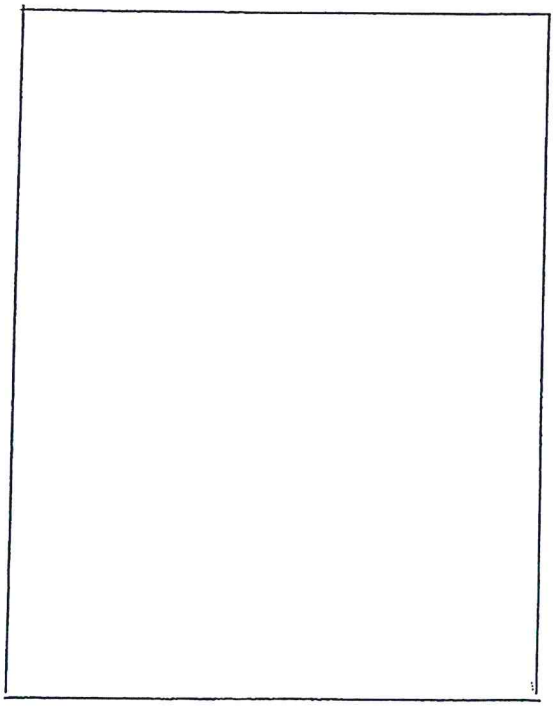

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Why Don't More Members Attend Union Meetings?

John Lund[1,2] and Don Taylor[1]

"Why don't more members attend union meetings?" It is a common complaint to union officers and labor educators alike, yet there is not likely a single reason for low meeting turnout nor any single silver bullet to cure it. In this article, we report the results of a membership survey administered to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 2150,[1] a large utility worker and outside construction local of 4,500 members spread over a two-state area.

Both the qualitative (Miller and Young 1955) and quantitative (Kolchin and Hyclak 1984; Gallagher and Strauss 1991; McShane 1986; Flood 1993) research findings to date suggest that meeting location does play an important part in union meeting attendance (Miller and Young 1955), as does knowledge of the meeting time and place (Flood 1993). Duration and subject matter involved in the meeting seem to have a smaller impact, but clearly, low attendance does concern both union leadership and members alike. Smaller, geographically compact local unions, organized around craft instead of industrial lines, tend to have higher membership attendance; and incentives, such as prizes, raffles, and free refreshments appear to have limited utility in generating and sustaining higher meeting turnout (Miller and Young 1955). There is also some support for the notion that higher skilled, higher seniority, better-educated union members are more likely to attend union meetings (Kolchin and Hyclak 1984; McShane 1986). Finally, members appear more likely to attend meetings if they feel that they will actually be able to participate in the meetings and that other members will be present (Flood 1993).

Background

The leadership of IBEW Local 2150 approached one of the authors in the fall of 2008 to conduct a membership survey to better understand the reasons for low membership turnout at its meetings and to determine what could be done to improve it. The local union has over 4,500 members spread over a two-state area; originally chartered in 1964 to represent utility workers, it has grown significantly to include municipally and

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cooperatively owned utilities as well as manufacturing and line construction and line clearance (e.g., tree trimming).

The local union has divided its jurisdiction into eight geographical units, each with its own monthly membership meeting conducted by a unit chair. Meeting notices are posted on the union's Web site and are usually (but not always) posted in the workplace. Members are assigned to a unit depending on their employer and the geographical location in which they work, so at a single unit meeting, there may be outside linemen, municipal or cooperative utility workers, and workers from investor-owned utilities.

Methodology

At the very outset, the geographical and industrial dispersion of the local union's membership posed problems. Line construction and line clearance workers generally have no fixed workplace and essentially use the local union as a job referral service; they might work anywhere in the two-state area from month to month. Surveys, a cover letter, and a self-addressed, stamped return envelope were mailed to each of these approximately 1,400 members' home addresses. Those remaining members at fixed workplaces received a "bubble" (optically scanned) survey and cover letter from their steward or unit chair, who then collected and returned them. In addition, an electronic version of the survey was created in Survey Monkey (www.surveymonkey.com); the link to this survey was provided in the cover letters. Surprisingly, only 18 of the 1,409 respondents utilized the online survey option.

Survey questions were generated at a meeting of officers, staff, and one of the authors; a mock-up survey was then pretested at a unit chair meeting in November 2008. Final adjustments were made in the survey, and distribution occurred immediately following the Thanksgiving–deer hunting holiday. Two questions were asked about meeting attendance: (1) "How many meetings have you attended in the last twelve months?" and (2) "How many months ago did you attend a union meeting?" We also provided several demographic questions, including questions about gender, type of employer, and length of membership in Local 2150, so that we could cross-tabulate results for Local 2150 leadership and help to better target remedial efforts.

Two additional sets of questions were generated. The first set elicited a scaled response to questions about current obstacles to meeting attendance; several of these questions dealt with issues raised in the research literature, including location, knowledge of date and time, and expectancy measures, such as whether the meetings were properly dealing with issues, answering questions, or providing any value to the member. The second set of questions dealt with factors that might improve meeting attendance. Collection of surveys occurred over a three-week period immediately prior to the Christmas holiday. A total of 1,409 surveys were returned, either by mail, by manual collection, or through completion of the online survey; of a total of 4,516 members, this represents a response rate of 31.2 percent.

Results

Regarding demographics, of those responding to the gender question (1,263 of 1,409 did so), males were underrepresented (745 total responses, 59 percent of the total sample, compared with 78.8 percent of total membership, for a response rate of 20.9 percent), whereas women were overrepresented in the sample (518 total responses, 41 percent of all responses, 21.2 percent of total population, for a 54.1 percent overall response rate).

Newer members (with less than five years of membership) were underrepresented in our sample population (347 total, 25.8 percent of the respondents vs. 38 percent of total membership of the local). Two hundred thirty-one (17.2 percent of the sample, 18.0 percent of the population) were proportionally represented. As for the ten-or-more-years group, we had 767 respondents, or 57 percent of the sample but 44.1 percent of the total membership.

Finally, we asked for what type of employer each member worked. Nearly 68 percent of respondents indicated they worked for an investor-owned utility, compared with 56.0 percent in the population. Our sample population was underrepresented in the line construction and line clearance groups (15.6 percent of the sample but over 30 percent of the membership). The sample was very slightly overrepresented among municipal and cooperative utility workers (9.3 percent of sample vs. 5.6 percent of the overall membership). With the exceptions noted above, we feel our sample was fairly representative of the membership as a whole.

Turning to attendance at union meetings, 64 percent of all respondents said they had not been to a single meeting in the last twelve months, and 15.5 percent said they had attended only one meeting. Clearly, this supports the anecdotal evidence that attendance at meetings is low. This is the "bad" news; but there is good news, too, in that 20 percent had been to at least two meetings or more in the last twelve months. Overall, 8.5 percent of respondents reported attending four or more meetings in the previous twelve months.

Nearly two-thirds of those responding said they either could not remember the last meeting they had attended or that it had been more than a year ago; this is fairly consistent with the 64 percent who said they had not attended a meeting in the previous twelve months. But on the positive side, 11.4 percent said they had attended a meeting within the last three months. In the next set of questions, we asked respondents to respond, one reason at a time, why they do not come to more meetings. Nearly 54 percent indicated that they would come to union meetings if they were held after work in their workplace; 46.1 percent disagreed. Most of the respondents knew when their next meeting was scheduled (25.2 percent said they do not attend because they do not know when the meeting is scheduled). An even lower percentage (21.7 percent) indicated that knowing the location of the meeting was an obstacle.

In general, members were fairly satisfied with how meetings were run (only 25 percent said they would come if leadership handled union business differently). Only a small proportion felt that contract-related information was not handled well (18.2 percent agreed with this) or that the union did not effectively deal with behavioral

problems of certain members (17.6 percent agreed that the union did not handle difficult people well). Only 15.1 percent said that they would come if the union ran the meetings in a more businesslike fashion. More importantly, perhaps, 71 percent disagreed with the statement, "I don't get any value out of union meetings," and 66.1 percent said they do not attend because they are satisfied with the job the union is doing.

More than half (52.7 percent) of all respondents indicated that their steward had personally invited them to attend a meeting. Flood (1993) has noted that a necessary and sufficient condition for union meeting attendance is that the member knows the location and time of the meeting, and the personal touch here is important; local unions often fail to use their stewards for such basic but very concrete tasks.

It is also interesting to note that nearly half of the respondents (46.5%) said they do not attend meetings because they feel they already get the information they need through other means. This is an indication that the union's various methods of communication—bulletin boards, newsletters, and face-to-face contact—are reaching a significant number of workers. But obviously, members need to attend meetings for reasons other than simply receiving information (Gallagher and Strauss 1991).

Finally, a fairly small percentage of respondents said they do not attend for what might be termed "expectancy" reasons—they feel that they do not get any value out of the meetings (29 percent) or that their questions are not answered adequately (23.6 percent).

Our survey then turned to proposed "fixes" for improving attendance at union meetings. Not surprisingly, 60 percent of respondents indicated that a more convenient location would help "somewhat" or "a lot" in increasing attendance at union meetings. For a local union that is already holding eight monthly meetings at geographically distinct locations, this is somewhat discouraging news, but as we indicate in our recommendations later, it is possible to using mapping software to better determine more convenient locations for members and to test out attendance before and after venue changes. It should also be noted that 23 percent of the written comments received from respondents related to meeting location.

The second-highest-rated fix in this group of questions was the elimination of scheduling conflicts (55.9 percent said this would help a lot or somewhat). Unfortunately, this is a variable that the local union has little ability to influence, except by changing the meeting date (33.2 percent said this would help a lot or somewhat) and/or time (44.8 percent said this would help a lot or somewhat). One can be assured, however, that with changes in meeting date and time, the local would be making the meeting more convenient for some while creating inconvenience for others. With no ability to affect the other events in members' lives, the realistic option remaining would be to experiment with meeting dates and times. Our data suggest that changing location would have a greater impact on meeting attendance than changing meeting times.

Somewhat surprisingly, providing child or elder care at meetings was not a significant factor: only 10.3 percent indicated this would help them a lot or somewhat. Also surprising is that there was little gender differentiation on this question: 11 percent of women and 10 percent of men indicated that this would help a lot or somewhat. Better

transportation also apparently would not have much impact on meeting attendance. Finally, while conference calls with unit leaders or stewards were not enthusiastically embraced (25.6 percent said this would help somewhat or a lot), other technology, such as video or Web conferences, was embraced by nearly 40 percent of respondents, who said this would help somewhat or a lot.

In addition to the quantitative data gathered by the survey, we received two hundred open-ended comments from survey respondents. These comments were grouped by theme and were then tabulated; a more detailed listing of comments has already been provided to Local 2150. The largest number of open-ended comments (almost one-fourth of them) concerned the location of the meeting, reinforcing what we had already learned from the survey. "Meeting focus" comments related how unit meetings that bring "craft" (line construction, clearance, and linemen) and office and administrative members together sometimes tended to focus on the former's issues at the expense of the latter. Other members noted that they simply did not know when or where meetings were held, a reminder that there is perhaps no such thing as too much publicity about union meetings; others felt a detailed agenda and/or invitation either posted or delivered directly from the steward would boost attendance. A number complained that the meeting times were inconvenient. Several members commented that they stayed away from union meetings because they disagreed with the union's political stance. Several others indicated that they did not attend because they felt the union was doing a good job or that they already had the information they needed from other sources. Finally, several members commented extensively about negative personal experiences with union meetings that were poorly run, either by no failing to rein in unruly behavior or by focusing excessively on the concerns of a few members.

Recommendations

On the basis of our results, we recommended the following to the leadership of Local 2150:

1. Deal with the matter of meeting location. We proposed that the local union literally map their membership and readjust meeting locations accordingly. Computer applications are available—for example, Microsoft's Streets and Trips—that would enable the local leadership to see the entire membership's population in clusters statewide. We have recommended that the addresses, cities, and zip codes of members be "mapped," unit by unit, and then alternative meeting sites determined that provide the most convenient location for the greatest number of members.
2. Remove the excuse that members do not know the meeting location, date, and/or time. Our study has shown that for Local 2150, stewards are doing a fairly effective job of informing members about upcoming union meetings, but there is room for improvement. Further training can be undertaken to build on this success in order to help stewards improve their work site communication structures.
3. Provide training on how to conduct more effective unit meetings. While the structure and substance of unit meetings ranked significantly lower as a reason for lower attendance, it still cannot be dismissed as a reason more members do not attend

meetings, and several of the respondents' comments drew attention to this problem. A significant number of respondents felt that meetings were poorly run, with overly garrulous members being permitted to dominate to some extent. We have recommended a training program for union chairs in how to conduct more effective meetings as well as a careful review of the "order of business" of the meetings so that the business of the meeting can be more efficiently and effectively conducted and still allow adequate time for an orderly discussion of issues.

4. Continue to experiment with technology. Although conference calls with stewards or unit chairs received lukewarm support, other technology, such as video or Web conferences, received the support of nearly 40 percent of respondents. The technology exists for businesses to conduct synchronous real-time meetings in numerous locations, and we have offered our technical assistance. One Wisconsin local union has already begun to post videos of its local lodge meetings on YouTube (http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrq5EF19RtM).

Conclusion

We believe survey research is a valuable tool for local unions to assess membership attendance and participation in union meetings, because it is likely that more local unions will be amalgamated and will be more geographically dispersed than they are today. Our survey makes clear, at least in Local 2150's case, that location does indeed matter. It no longer makes sense to think that if members "really cared," they would drive an hour to a union meeting. As more unions have moved their offices out of metropolitan areas and into suburbs, there is a concern that meeting locations are no longer convenient, and local unions should periodically assess how convenient the monthly meeting locations are. Mapping software can plot members' home addresses and make the search for a more convenient meeting location a fact-driven exercise rather than an educated guess.

On the other hand, a local with a limited number of work locations may want to experiment with the idea of having separate meetings at or near each work location. But holding meetings at or near each shop may not be feasible for geographically dispersed or large amalgamated locals. A local with dozens of work sites hundreds of miles apart simply may not have the ability to have "official" union meetings at each location. One option available to such a local would be to train and empower stewards to hold shop-level meetings, where members discuss issues in their shop and get information about what is going on at the branch or "central" level. While such shop meetings would increase member participation and a sense of inclusion, a regular meeting that executes the regular business of the local could not be conducted in such a piecemeal fashion. Clearly, all local unions need to periodically assess and effect changes in meeting location that will make attendance physically easier for the largest number of members possible.

"How do we get more members to come to meetings?" is a question that haunts nearly every local union as well as most other social and civic organizations. It has become an even greater challenge with economic and societal changes that have led to an increase in two-earner households and schedule conflicts in general for the middle

and working classes, which in our study is the second most important reason members do not come to meetings. As this study has shown, it is important for unions to directly engage their members to find out why they do not attend meetings and to then develop a plan to address the needs identified through that process. Much wringing of hands occurs over why members do not come to meetings, and it is too easy for local leaders to lament the apathy of the rank and file. Local unions can, however, often with the assistance of labor educators, systematically analyze the problem of meeting attendance and take concrete measures not just to increase turnout but also to increase truly meaningful engagement by the members.

Note

1. The authors would like to recognize the willingness of Local 2150 to agree to their identification in this article and for their assistance in developing, distributing, collecting, and participating in the analysis and follow-up of this survey.

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Bios

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Psychological Safety at Local Union Meetings: A Key to Unlock Meeting Attendance

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Abstract

We take a psychological view of local union meetings in reference to the problem of chronic low meeting attendance. This view suggests that local meetings are designed to encourage employees to experience safe environments in which they can strive to fulfill psychological needs, examples of which include a need to voice concerns and opinions, a need to participate in decision-making, and a need to be counted as a valued contributor to "our collective effort." As such, we constructed a model to predict likely meeting attendance informed by literatures on team effectiveness, meeting design, and union participation. Extracting relationships from the cited literature relevant to local meetings, we positioned psychological safety experienced at meetings as a predictor of likely attendance in the next 12 months, with meeting effectiveness as rated by attending employees positioned as a mediator of the relationship. A test of the mediated model based on data collected from employees in 20 unions and 42 locals (N = 132) suggested support for the model, in which the effect of psychological safety on likely attendance was shown to unfold through meeting effectiveness. Future models of local attendance are discussed and an intervention aimed at solving the attendance problem is suggested.

Keywords Psychological safety · Meeting effectiveness · Meeting attendance · Union employees

The psychological lifeline for American labor union survival is the local union meeting (see Ezorsky, 2017; Mellor & Holzer, 2018; Stagner, 1981; Tannenbaum & Kahn, 1958, among many others). Within the context of a union as a voluntary member-driven organization, local meetings are designed to allow and encourage employees to experience *safe fulfillment of psychological needs*, exemplars of which include opportunity to voice concerns and opinions, to participate in decision-making, to seek and receive help from others, to provide help to others, to be recognized and accepted as an individual who is "one of us," and importantly, to be valued as someone who shares in and contributes to "our

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collective effort" (Greenhouse, 2019; McAlevey, 2020; Mellor, 2019; Mellor & Holzer, 2018).[1] The extent to which local meetings are experienced as safe environments in which employees can strive to fulfill such needs is an issue that we think bears on and provides a solution to a problem that threatens union survival: the problem of chronic low meeting attendance (see Monnot et al., 2011; Rosenfeld, 2014; Tetrick et al., 2007; Wiegand & Bruno, 2018 for like recognition of the issue).

As such, we constructed and tested a prediction model of local union meeting attendance, a model informed by literatures on team effectiveness featuring psychological safety as a psychological construct, meeting design featuring non-psychological safety constructs, and union participation in local activities featuring economic-inspired and attitudinal constructs. As a demonstration of the fit of the model, we collected survey data from employees attending local meetings. Consistent with our aim, we used analytic tests to distinguish the model and to suggest an intervention to address the problem of low meeting attendance. Throughout, we take a decidedly psychological and mediational point of view, in which, consistent with the cited literature, we suggest that the relationship between the experience of psychological safety at local meetings and meeting attendance unfolds through meeting effectiveness as rated by attending employees. Also throughout, we equate local meetings with meetings in nonunion work environments, in which, common to both, meetings are attended by employees who meet on a scheduled basis to coordinate their skills and efforts to effect group outcomes that enhance both self-goals and organizational-goals (see Mathieu et al., 2018; Salas & Fiore, 2012 for parallel definitions).

Before presenting the literature reviewed to construct our model, we should note that hard numeric information about local union meeting attendance is hard to come by. Although local meeting attendance is recorded and archived by unions, the data are considered proprietary (for understandable reasons). As a numeric illustration of local attendance, we turned to the union participation literature. We extracted from the literature American samples of employees eligible to attend meetings (sample N=19) and recorded the percent of attendance within various reported spans of time (commonly, the last 12 months). The average attendance of employees across samples was 26%; the median was 32%. The range of attendance was between 3 and 43%. To corroborate this information, we contacted various union officials via email through posted websites. Based on a low response rate (15% of 40 sent emails), officials indicated average attendance as low as 10% and as high as 50%.[2]

[1] These exemplars are among the most frequently discussed needs in the union participation literature although they are not typically characterized as needs but as "benefits of" or "opportunities afforded by" union membership (Parks et al., 1995; Tetrick et al., 2007 are two examples). More properly characterized as psychological needs in the work motivation literature, they are linked to various formal theories of motivation, including expectancy theory (when utilities are properly recast as motive constructs; e.g., Van Eerde & Thierry, 1996), self-determination theory (see especially competence and relatedness constructs; e.g., Deci & Ryan, 2000), prosocial motivation (e.g., Grant & Berry, 2011), collective mindfulness (e.g., Weick et al., 1999), and internal-instrumental motivation (especially in reference to other-based self-esteem; e.g., Schwartz & Wrzesniewski, 2016).

[2] A list of studies and samples included in the analysis is available from the author. Conceivably, the sample N might have been larger had journal authors not treated local meeting attendance as an item embedded in multiple-item measures of union participation, in which unreported item responses were summed to yield participation scores. Also, Non-American samples were excluded from the analysis in light of credible discussions on the cultural distinctiveness of American unions (see Mellor, 2019 for an example discussion). As an additional corroboration of the median attendance shown in the analysis, McKay et al. (2020) reported in the largest type/group of employees at Time 1 that the percent of meeting attendance was 32%.

Literature

Psychological Safety

As a psychological construct introduced by Edmondson (1999; Edmondson & Lei, 2014) to predict "team efficacy and performance," psychological safety is defined as a shared belief by individual team members that the team is safe for interpersonal risk-taking. The definition is meant to suggest a sense of confidence experienced by team members that the team will not embarrass, reject, or punish any member for speaking up. Not intended as an explicit team goal, this shared belief is thought to emerge from the experience of *interactions among team members*—interactions in which members encourage each other to engage in conversational turn-taking, to speak roughly in the same proportion, to express and be open to a diversity of ideas and perspectives (even if discussion takes a critical turn or challenges team norms), to exchange personal information intended to allow others to know what feelings are in play and what is being left unsaid, and to exercise a form of social sensitivity, in which attending to and acting upon what others feel—especially in regard to being upset, distracted, or left out—is regarded as a normal part of team life. It is from these kinds of interactions that climate properties are thought to emerge such as interpersonal trust and mutual respect—properties that provide a safe environment for individuals to suggest and explore creative solutions aimed at team goals, to share older and newer knowledge skills (to learn from each other), and all the while to experience, as stated by Edmondson (2018), "a comfortable sense of being themselves."

Uncommon but not rare, psychological safety as a construct has made the leap from the academic world to the world of application and intervention. As indicated in corporate periodicals and corporate guidebooks (e.g., Understand team effectiveness, 2017; Van Bavel & Packer, 2021), psychological safety is widely regarded as an indispensable tool to diagnose poor team performance and to maximize team effectiveness, outcomes of which are couched in terms of *team success*.

The origin story for the crossover begins with Google's "quest to build the perfect team" (see Duhigg, 2016; Rozovsky, 2015 for full accounts). In-house researchers at Google set out to determine what factors made for the most effective teams. They collected data from 180 engineering and sales teams to identify skills, personality types, backgrounds, and demographics for team effectiveness. Looking for patterns in the data, they found none—or as stated by one of the lead researchers, "The 'who' part of the equation didn't seem to matter."[3] Returning to square-one, these researchers refocused their attention on how employees interact at team meetings. Based on this tack, they finally discovered what did matter: Group dynamics were the key to team effectiveness. Importing new psychological and non-psychological measures to collect data, including Edmondson's (1999) measure of psychological safety, they discovered that "far and away" the best predictor of team effectiveness in the data was psychological safety (Rozovsky, 2015).

This "discovery" inverted and extended Google's approach to identifying and maximizing team effectiveness. First, rather than focus on effectiveness as a predictor of team success, focus shifted to psychological safety, in which effectiveness was thought to follow

[3] Predictors not significantly connected with team effectiveness at Google include co-location of team members (e.g., sitting together in the same office), consensus-driven decision-making, extroversion of team members, individual performance of team members, workload size, team seniority, team size, and employment tenure at Google (Rozovsky, 2015).

safety (i.e., "safety predicts effectiveness"). Second, with effectiveness as an outcome of safety, team success was thought to follow effectiveness (i.e., "effectiveness predicts success"). This prediction sequence became the center of Google's intervention strategy to "build more successful teams." Confirmed by post-intervention data drawn from Google records, ratings by Google executives, and employee data, linked success included higher team productivity (e.g., meeting goals on time; less time on tasks), greater team creativity (e.g., more willingness to consider and incorporate diverse ideas), more stable teams (fewer absences for any reason; lower rates of leaving Google), and greater team satisfaction (a variable that was also shown to "radiate" to other satisfaction targets like customer satisfaction) (see Understand team effectiveness, 2017 for a more complete account). Also, suggested by these stated links—and germane to our study—is implied mediation, in which the effect of safety on success is thought to unfold through effectiveness.

Non-Psychological Safety

Constructs overlapping with psychological safety (e.g., "interpersonal dynamics") can be found in studies framed in reference to "the science of meetings" (Allen et al., 2015; Rogelberg, 2019), with ensuing diagnostic tools (e.g., Hoffman, 2018; Rogelberg, 2019). Conducted in nonunion environments, this research is comprehensive and includes many constructs that focus on meeting design variables positioned as predictors of *meeting success* (e.g., Allen et al., 2018; Cohen et al., 2011; Leach et al., 2009; Rogelberg et al., 2014). A sample of such predictors linked to success are meeting composition (only critical personnel should be included at meetings; no one who need not be included should be invited), meeting lateness (chronic lateness to meetings should not be tolerated by attendees; meetings should start and end on times announced in advance of a meeting), meeting agenda (an agenda with stated meeting goals should be distributed to attendees in advance of a meeting along with necessary tools and materials), leader preparedness (leaders should be fully prepared to stick to the meeting agenda, instrumentally guiding attendees to stay on topic), and meeting summary (meetings should end with decision summaries that include when and by whom follow-up work can be expected). To be noted is that these and other design variables show direct links with meeting success, criteria of which include "well-attended meetings." Our study interest in meeting design predictors of success aligns with our aim to show the effect of psychological safety as an independent and applicable predictor of meeting attendance.

Union Participation

Union participation research has not been silent on introducing variables to predict local activity by employees, albeit most studies that include meeting attendance do not per se indicate predictors of attendance. Rather, in these studies, predictors are reserved for union participation as a global indicator of activity, in which meeting attendance is one of several scored and summed activities (e.g., Hammer & Wazeter, 1993; McShane, 1986; Parks et al., 1995; Wiegand & Bruno, 2018). Also, in these studies, predictors of participation rely on economic-inspired constructs of questionable psychological relevance, constructs such as utility, instrumentality, exchange, and cost–benefit (e.g., Flood, 1993; Klandermans, 1984; Lund & Taylor, 2010; Tetrick et al., 2007). Although these constructs show links to participation, they present participation as evidence of rational self-interest, with nary a referent to needs or to fulfillment of needs through interactions among local

employees (for an exception, see Stagner, 1950). Studies that include attitudinal predictors of participation operate in kind. Predictors such as prounion beliefs and union commitment show positive links to participation, but how could they not—only an irrational employee with strong prounion sentiment or strong commitment would not participate (see Monnot et al., 2011; Tetrick et al., 2007 for relevant studies). Moreover, predictors from this literature have yet to inspire interventions with participation in mind; rather, the interest has been thematically theoretical and explanatory.

However, design variable for "successful meeting attendance" abound in this literature, especially in older studies that suggest "practical recommendations" based on survey and interview data collected from eligible employees (e.g., Dean, 1954; Kahn & Tannenbaum, 1954; Miller & Young, 1955; Purcell, 1954; Rose, 1952; Rosen & Rosen, 1955; Sayles & Strauss, 1953; Stagner, 1956; see also Parker & Gruelle, 1999). Example recommendations we think are yet viable include efforts to extend invitations to employees to attend meetings, especially invitations extended by a local representative ("the local rep"), to perfect meeting flyers (perhaps now also emails and text messages) distributed/sent in advance of a meeting that include the meeting agenda and assurances that workplace issues (e.g., "an unreasonable job demand") will take priority over national union issues, to communicate to employees how many employees attended the last meeting and are expected to attend the next as a bid to suggest the idea of "missing out," and, as the *sine qua non* of recommendations, to plan and conduct "on the clock" short meetings.

Model and Hypothesis

In reference to our psychological view of local union meetings as designed to allow and encourage employees to experience safe fulfillment of psychological needs (exemplars of which have been indicated), we think psychological safety at meetings positioned as a predictor of likely meeting attendance is justified. However, in reference to the cited literature on team effectiveness, equally justified is the prospect that psychological safety indirectly effects meeting attendance through meeting effectiveness as rated by attending employees. This prospect positions meeting effectiveness as a mediator of the effect of psychological safety on meeting attendance (see the hypothesized model depicted in Fig. 1).

The mediated relationship is hypothesized as follows:

> Hypothesis: In reference to local union meetings, employees who experience more psychological safety at meetings are more likely to attend meetings in the next 12 months. The path from psychological safety to meeting attendance in the next 12 months unfolds as a sequence with meeting effectiveness as a mediator, such that more psychological safety is associated with higher rated meeting effectiveness, which in turn is associated with more likely to attend.

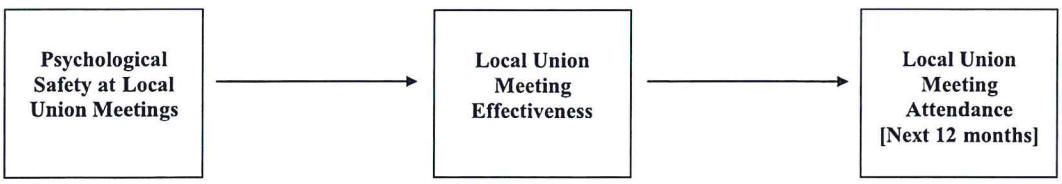

Fig. 1 Hypothesized model

Method

Procedure

Beginning in June 2021 and ending in December 2021, survey data were collected from American employees. Survey sites included public transportation areas, licensed bingo halls, farmers' markets, and union- and civic-sponsored community events.[4]

With permission obtained at each site, the researchers circulated flyers with the following information:

> Can you volunteer to take this survey? You can if you are employed in the United States and not a full-time student. The survey is anonymous—no names. The survey takes less than 10 minutes to complete. The survey cannot be mailed. $5 is given for taking the survey. Please ask the researcher for a survey.

Employees who responded to the flyer were given an information sheet, a survey, a pencil, and an unmarked envelope. The researchers collected sealed envelopes, paid participants, and conducted onsite debriefing.

Sampling

To ensure that sampling resulted in data appropriate to test the hypothesized mediation, the survey was embedded with eligibility items. We excluded surveys in which responses suggested: (a) noncurrent union membership and (b) nonattendance of at least one regular scheduled local meeting in the last 12 months. An additional check for careless responses resulted in excluded surveys if responses indicated the same scale anchor for long strings of consecutive items.

From a pool of 302 returned surveys with no missing data, 132 surveys were counted as eligible. Eligible surveys included employees from six U.S. States (Connecticut, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island) and the District of Columbia. Surveys included employees with memberships in 20 unions and 42 locals affiliated with the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO; e.g., American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), American Federation of Teachers (AFT), International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers (IW), International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), National Education Association (NEA), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and United Auto Workers (UAW)).

Measures

Demographics Assessed demographics included age (indicated in years), gender (coded as either man (0) or woman (1)); ethnic group (coded as either non-ethnic (0, White,

[4] Survey sites were selected to include employees who worked in urban and non-urban settings, as well as employees who worked as professionals and non-professionals. Surveying in public transportation areas (e.g., truck stops) was intended to include employees who worked in a variety of U.S. States. At every site, field researchers in teams of two conducted surveying, with one researcher submitting field notes detailing respondent and setting characteristics.

European American) or ethnic (1, African American, Asian, Pacific Islander American, Latinx American, Middle Eastern, Arabian American)); English as a second language (coded as either English as a first language (0) or English as a second language (1)); socioeconomic status, in reference to "education level (highest degree), contribution to family income, and occupational job status" (response options: *lower class* (1), *lower middle class* (2), *middle class* (3), *upper middle class* (4), *upper class* (5)); and employment status (coded as either part-time (0, less than 35 h a week) or full-time (1, 35 h or more a week)).

Ninety-five percent of employees were age 25 years or older (the median age was 47; the range in years was 21 to 75). Fifty-one percent were men employees. Seventeen percent identified themselves as ethnic. Five percent identified English as a second language. Sixty percent identified themselves as middle class or lower (the median class was middle class; no one identified themselves as upper class). Eighty-one percent were full-time employees.

Assessed demographics specific to local unions included length of local membership (indicated in years); local officer status (response options: *member only* (0) or officer (1)); local meeting size (response options: *less than 25 members* (1), *somewhere between 25 and 50 members* (2), *somewhere between 50 and 100 members* (3), *over 100 members* (4)); and local meeting attendance in the last 12 months (calculated as the percent of regular scheduled meetings attended either in-person or online).[5]

The average length of membership was 11.60 years (the median length was 7 years; the range in years was 1 to 46). Twenty percent identified themselves as officers. The median meeting size was somewhere between 25 and 50 members. The average meeting attendance in the last 12 months was 42% (the median attendance was 47%; the range was 13% to 100%).

To estimate the representativeness of the sample with respect to the 2021 population of American union employees, the 2022 January issue of the *U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics* (*BLS*) was consulted (Union Affiliation, 2022). In doing so, we compared the percentages in the sample for age group, gender, ethnic group, and employment status with reported national percentages. The results indicated that employees 25 years or older and women employees were oversampled by 3% or less, +0.0015, +0.0288, respectively. The results also indicated that ethnic employees and full-time employees were undersampled by 9% or less, -0.0641, -0.0921, respectively.

Psychological Safety at Meetings To assess psychological safety at local meetings, we asked employees to respond to 7 items adapted from versions of the Psychological Safety Scale developed by Edmondson and her colleagues (Edmondson, 1999; Gavin et al., 2008; Nembhard & Edmondson, 2006; Tucker et al., 2007; see also Parker & Gruelle, 1999 for related items). The items focus on the experience of employees at meetings (in-person or online) in the last 12 months exempting non-psychological safety (see the Appendix for a list of items).

The items were prefaced with the statement:

> "We are interested in a frank and accurate description of how your local meetings **were** run based on **your experience—not** hearsay from others—strictly and exclusively based on **your experience**."

The statement was followed with a response instruction (*"Check (√) one blank"*) and an item stem:

[5] It is important to underline that meeting attendance data are specific to regular scheduled local meetings as distinct from nonregular crisis meetings held in response to an actual or anticipated threat to a union (e.g., calling for a strike vote, a yes–no vote on negotiable vs. nonnegotiable collective bargaining proposals, a straw vote on contract ratification). Crisis meetings are typically better attended due to concerns about fulfillment of economic needs, concerns that represent bread-and-butter issues for members, and with the added note that meeting agenda are typically focused on the "crisis" at hand.

In reference to local meetings **I have attended in the last 12 months**, the following describe what I experienced at these meetings . . ."

An example item is:

". . . meetings wherein members were at no risk of embarrassing themselves even when they couldn't always express themselves clearly."

Response options were *"yes"* or *"no"*.

A principal components analysis was performed on the psychological safety items. The analysis produced one eigenvalue greater than 1.00, eigenvalue = 4.748, percent of variance explained = 67.831, item loadings ≥ 0.559. The Cronbach's α for the items was 0.92.

As a result of these analyses, responses were averaged, yielding continuous psychological safety scale scores from 0 (experienced less) to 1.00 (experienced more).

Non-Psychological Safety at Meetings To assess non-psychological safety at local meetings, we asked employees to respond to 5 items adapted from union and nonunion design meeting scales, taxonomies, and commentaries (Hoffman, 2018; Lund & Taylor, 2010; Miller & Young, 1955; Parker & Gruelle, 1999; Rogelberg, 2019; Rose, 1952; Twarog, 2007). The items focus on the experience of employees at meetings (in-person or online) in the last 12 months exempting psychological safety (see the Appendix for a list of items).

The items were interspersed randomly with the psychological safety items, following the same preface statement, response instruction, and item stem.

An example item is:

... meetings wherein members did their best to begin and end meetings on time (as scheduled).

Response options were *"yes"* or *"no"*.

A principal components analysis was performed on the non-psychological safety items. The analysis produced one eigenvalue greater than 1.00, eigenvalue = 2.573, percent of variance explained = 52.454, item loadings ≥ 0.482. The Cronbach's α for the items was 0.72.

As a result of these analyses, responses were averaged, yielding continuous non-psychological safety scale scores from 0 (experienced less) to 1.00 (experienced more).

Meeting Effectiveness To assess local meeting effectiveness, we asked employees to respond to 2 items adapted from Hammer and Wazeter's (1993) Global Scale of Local Union Effectiveness. The items focus on the experience of employees at meetings (in-person or online) in the last 12 months (see the Appendix for a list of items).

Prefaced with a response instruction (*"Circle one number"*), the items followed the psychological safety and non-psychological safety items.

An example item is:

"Based on how your local meetings **were** run, how **effective** do you think they **were** in doing the business your local needed to do?"

Responses were based on Likert scaling with 1 to 7 anchors (*Not very effective* to *Very effective*).

A principal components analysis was performed on the meeting effectiveness items. The analysis produced one eigenvalue greater than 1.00, eigenvalue = 1.918, percent of variance explained = 95.914, item loading = 0.979. The Cronbach's α for the items was 0.96.

As a result of these analyses, responses were averaged, yielding continuous meeting effectiveness scale scores from 1 (lower effectiveness) to 7 (higher effectiveness).

Meeting Attendance in the Next 12 Months To assess local meeting attendance in the next 12 months, we asked employees to respond to an item to indicate how likely they were to attend regular scheduled meetings (see Flood, 1993; Kahn & Tannenbaum, 1954; Lund & Taylor, 2010; McShane, 1986; for similar one-item measures in reference to 12 months).

The item followed the meeting effectiveness items:

> "Based on how your local meetings **were** run, how **likely** are you to attend meetings **in the next 12 months**?"

Responses were based on Likert scaling with 1 to 7 anchors (*Not very likely* to *Very likely*), yielding continuous meeting attendance in the next 12 months item scores from 1 (less likely) to 7 (more likely).

Controls

To control for sample-specific statistical associations between the demographics and psychological safety at meetings, psychological safety scale scores were regressed onto the demographics, and in the same analysis, onto non-psychological safety scale scores. From this analysis, the unstandardized residual psychological safety scores were used to represent psychological safety (the predictor variable, x) in model tests.

In the same vein, significant zero-order correlations between the demographics and meeting effectiveness, and between meeting attendance in the next 12 months, were used to select covariates (see Sauer et al., 2013 for an overview of covariate selection). As such, meeting effectiveness scores were regressed onto gender, officer status, and meeting attendance in the last 12 months. In a separate analysis, meeting attendance in the next 12 months scores were regressed onto gender, membership years, officer status, and meeting attendance in the last 12 months. From these analyses, the unstandardized residual scores for meeting effectiveness (the mediator variable, m) and for meeting attendance in the next 12 months (the outcome variable, y) were used in model tests (see the tested model depicted in Fig. 2, with covariates listed in grayscale).

Results

Raw score zero-order correlations, means (Ms), and standard deviations (SDs) for all study variables are presented in Table 1.

Descriptive Tests

To discern significant mean differences in demographics in relation to model variables, we performed t-tests, using median splits for non-dichotomous variables to construct demographic subgroups. On average, women employees (vs. men employees) were less likely to experience psychological safety at meetings, a difference also seen for employees in which English is a second language (vs. employees in which English is a first language), ts(130) $\leq$ -2.733, ps $<$ 0.01. In contrast, on average, local officers (vs. member only) were more likely to experience psychological safety at meetings, a difference also seen for employees who attended a higher percent of meetings in the last 12 months (vs. employees who attended a lower percent), ts(130) $\geq$ 2.303, ps $<$ 0.01.

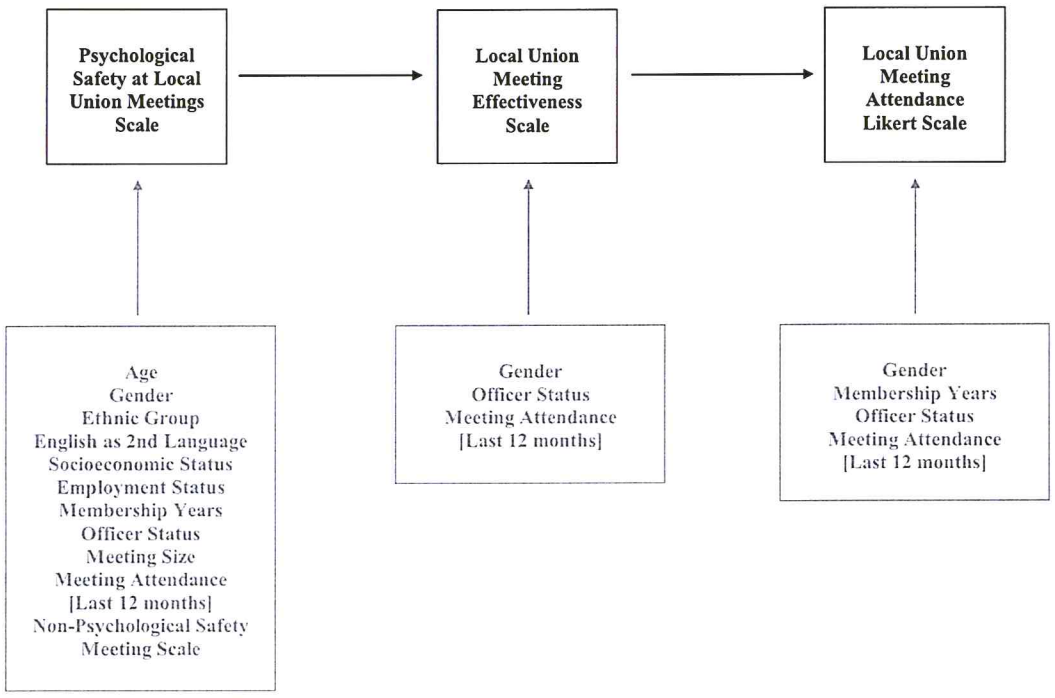

Fig. 2 Tested model

Also, on average, women employees were less likely to indicate higher meeting effectiveness, $t(130) = -2.473$, $p < 0.01$. In contrast, on average, local officers and employees who attended a higher percent of meetings in the last 12 months were more likely to indicate higher meeting effectiveness, $ts(130) \geq 4.059$, $ps < 0.01$.

And, on average, women employees were less likely to attend meetings in the next 12 months, $t(130) \geq -3.627$, $p < 0.01$. In contrast, on average, local officers, employees with more membership years, and employees who attended a higher percent of meetings in the last 12 months were more likely to attend meetings in the next 12 months, $ts(130) \geq 2.319$, $ps < 0.01$.[6]

Preliminary Tests

The zero-order correlation between psychological safety at meetings and meeting attendance in the next 12 months was positive and significant ($r = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$), as were correlations between psychological safety and meeting effectiveness ($r = 0.49$, $p < 0.01$) and between meeting effectiveness and meeting attendance in the next 12 months ($r = 0.72$, $p < 0.01$), results that are consistent with the *Hypothesis*.

Also, as a baseline model check for mediation, residual scores for meeting attendance in the next 12 months were regressed onto residual scores for psychological safety at meetings.[7] The unstandardized coefficient was positive and significant, B = 1.330, standardized $b = 0.315$, standard error (SE) = 0.352, $t = 3.778$, $p < 0.01$, $R^2 = 0.099$; $F(1, 130) = 14.276$, $p < 0.01$.

[6] Using a median split for non-psychological safety at meetings, on average, employees who experienced more non-psychological safety (vs. employees who experienced less non-psychological safety) were less likely to indicate higher meeting effectiveness, $t(130) = -2.724$, $p < .01$, and were less likely to attend meetings in the next 12 months, $t(130) = -3.103$, $p < .01$.

[7] Showing that the predictor variable (x) is significantly related to the outcome variable (y) is a prerequisite for a statistical inference about mediation (see Mathieu et al., 2008 for a discussion and demonstrations).

Table 1 Zero-order correlations (rs), means, and standard deviations

Variable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
1. Age	—													
2. Gender	.23**	—												
3. Ethnic group	-.15	-.24**	—											
4. English second	-.12	-.03	.35**	—										
5. Socioeconomic status	.41**	.14	-.16	-.10	—									
6. Employment status	-.18*	-.38**	.11	.03	.02	—								
7. Membership years	.58**	-.12	-.13	-.09	.16	.16	—							
8. Officer status	.07	-.26**	-.16	.05	-.02	.05	.25**	—						
9. Meeting size	-.03	-.12	-.04	-.15	-.03	-.02	.16	-.07	—					
10. Attendance [last 12 mos.]	.10	-.27**	.10	-.12	.00	.12	.16	.28**	.10	—				
11. Non-psychological safety	.03	-.08	-.02	.09	.19*	-.10	.01	-.25**	.16	-.13	*.72*			
12. Psychological safety	-.17*	-.32**	-.05	-.18*	-.06	.04	.07	.27**	-.01	.38**	-.27**	*.92*		
13. Meeting effectiveness	-.06	-.25**	-.01	-.10	.07	.08	.14	.39**	.06	.33**	-.11	.49**	*.96*	
14. Attendance [next 12 mos.]	.04	-.24**	.04	-.06	.03	.08	.22*	.38**	.12	.63**	-.14	.49**	.72**	—
M	46.77	.49	.17	.05	3.02	.81	11.60	.20	1.80	.42	.80	.58	4.64	5.04
SD	13.77	.50	.37	.23	.70	.39	11.31	.40	.81	.31	.22	.40	1.49	1.80

Diagonal entries are scale reliabilities (αs). Age: in years; Gender: *man* = 0, *woman* = 1; Ethnic group: *non-ethnic* = 0, *ethnic* = 1; English [as a] second [language]: *no* = 0, *yes* = 1; Socioeconomic status: lower *(lower class)* = 1, higher *(upper class)* = 5; Employment status: *part-time* = 0, *full-time* = 1; [local] Membership years: in years; [local] Officer status: *member only* = 0, *officer* = 1; [local] Meeting size: smaller *(less than 25)* = 1, larger *(over 100)* = 4; [local meeting] Attendance [in] last 12 mo[nth]s: percent of regular scheduled meetings attended; Non-psychological safety [at local meetings], Psychological safety [at local meetings]: *experienced less* = 0; *experienced more* = 1; [local] Meeting effectiveness: *not very effective* = 1, *very effective* = 7; [local meeting] Attendance [in] next 12 mo[nth]s: *not very likely* = 1, *very likely* = 7. *$p < .05$. **$p < .01$

Model Tests

To test the hypothesized mediation, we ran a series of customized regression-based analyses derived from PROCESS 4.0 written for SPSS by Hayes (2022). In each regression model, we used 10,000 bootstrap (*Boot*) samples to generate *Boot* 95% confidence intervals (*CI*s) for direct and indirect effects.[8]

Sequential Analysis We first tested a model that estimated the direct paths to and from model variables in each instance, the two hypothesized direct effects (*psychological safety → meeting effectiveness*, *meeting effectiveness → meeting attendance in the next 12 months*), and the non-hypothesized direct effect (*psychological safety → meeting attendance in the next 12 months*). This *all-inclusive analysis* included the hypothesized indirect effect of psychological safety on meeting attendance in the next 12 months through meeting effectiveness (*psychological safety → meeting effectiveness → meeting attendance in the next 12 months*).

The results of this analysis are presented in Table 2. As shown, the direct effects were significant (i.e., the *CI*s did not include zero), with the exception of the path from psychological safety to meeting attendance in the next 12 months, *direct effect* = 0.4170, *Boot SE* = 0.2898, *Boot CI* [-0.1563, 0.9903]. This nonsignificant path indicates that when the path from psychological safety to meeting effectiveness and the path from meeting effectiveness to meeting attendance in the next 12 months are included in the model, the effect of psychological safety on meeting attendance in the next 12 months is nonsignificant. Also, as shown, the indirect effect of psychological safety on meeting attendance in the next 12 months through meeting effectiveness was significant, *indirect effect* = 0.9126, *Boot SE* = 0.2305, *Boot CI* [0.4866, 1.3906].

Based on the results of this analysis, we tested a model that estimated the hypothesized direct effects and the hypothesized indirect effect only (i.e., the *psychological safety → meeting attendance in the next 12 months* path was fixed to zero). The results of this *fully-focused analysis* (see Table 2) indicated that the direct effects were significant, as was the indirect effect of psychological safety on meeting attendance in the next 12 months through meeting effectiveness, *indirect effect* = 0.9600, *Boot SE* = 0.2392, *Boot CI* [0.5244, 1.4461].

Summary of Model Tests The results of the preliminary analysis and the sequential analyses provide support for the hypothesized mediation. Consistent with the *Hypothesis*, employees who experienced more psychological safety at meetings are more likely to attend meetings in the next 12 months, but the path from psychological safety to meeting attendance unfolds through meeting effectiveness, such that more psychological safety is associated with higher indicated meeting effectiveness, which in turn is associated with more likely to attend.

Supplemental Analyses

To illustrate the distinctiveness of the hypothesized sequence, we ran a residual regression analysis with non-psychological safety scale scores regressed onto demographics plus

[8] The logic of a PROCESS analysis is not to be confused with the logic of a Baron-Kenny analysis (see Hayes, 2022). When PROCESS is used for an inference about mediation, significant indirect effects are interpreted as showing how covariation unfolds in relation to three or more variables rather than how covariation represents a causal chain.

Table 2 Regression results: sequential analyses

Path	B	*Boot SE*	*Boot 95% CI*
All-Inclusive Analysis			
Direct effects			
Psychological safety → Meeting effectiveness	1.4041	.3439	[.7236, 2.0845]
Meeting effectiveness → Meeting attendance	.6499	.0696	[.5123, .7876]
Psychological safety → Meeting attendance	.4170	.2898	[-.1563, .9930]
Indirect effect			
Psychological safety → Meeting effectiveness → Meeting attendance	.9126	.2305	[.4866, 1.3906]
Fully-Focused Analysis			
Direct effects			
Psychological safety → Meeting effectiveness	1.4041	.3439	[.7236, 2.0845]
Meeting effectiveness → Meeting attendance	.6837	.0658	[.5536, .8138]
Indirect effect			
Psychological safety → Meeting effectiveness → Meeting attendance	.9600	.2392	[.5244, 1.4461]

Psychological safety [at local meetings]; [local] Meeting effectiveness; [local] Meeting attendance [next 12 months]. Standardized indirect effect in the *All-Inclusive Analysis*, $b = .2159$; in the *Fully-Focused Analysis*, $b = .2271$

psychological safety scale scores. Using these residual scores, we reran the *all-inclusive analysis* and the *fully-focused analysis* with non-psychological safety as the predictor variable (x). The results of these analyses indicated no significant direct or indirect effects involving non-psychological safety (i.e., the *CI*s included zero).[9]

Discussion

Overall Summary

Our view that local union meetings provide employees an opportunity to experience safe environments in which they are encouraged to fulfill psychological needs through interactions with other employees can be suggested as linked to the problem of low meeting attendance. Our model results are unequivocal. As hypothesized, employees who experienced more psychological safety at meetings are more likely to attend meetings in the next 12 months, a relationship that unfolds through meeting effectiveness as rated by employees attending meetings. That the relationship unfolds through effectiveness should surprise no one, in that effectiveness as a mediator is implied in the literature on team effectiveness in nonunion environments. Also, in reference to the confirmed effect, it should be noted that the effect is independent of the experience of non-psychological safety at meetings, and that the link between non-psychological safety and likely meeting attendance as mediated by effectiveness is not seen in our data.

[9] To explore the moderating effects of membership years on the hypothesized model paths, we adjusted and expanded the *fully-focused analysis* with the psychological safety → meeting effectiveness path conditional on membership years, and in the same analysis, the meeting effectiveness → meeting attendance path conditional on membership years. The results of this analysis indicated no significant moderator effects (i.e., the *CI*s included zero).

Also, that a mediated relationship is shown in relation to psychological safety at meetings but not in relation to non-psychological safety at meetings should surprise no one, least of all us. First, consider in reference to the link between effectiveness and attendance how work meetings in nonunion environments differ from local meetings. To wit, at work meetings, attendance is likely mandatory whether or not meetings are rated as effective by attendees. Not so with respect to local meetings; they are without exception nonmandatory. If local meetings are rated as ineffective by attending employees, no one would expect anything but low attendance. This mandatory versus nonmandatory basis of meeting attendance, spliced with the link between effectiveness and attendance, puts the role of meeting effectiveness in sharp relief. Second, consider the nature of meeting outcomes stemming from local meetings. A distinctive truism of local meetings is that meeting outcomes are group outcomes (e.g., approval of a wage adjustment); they apply equally to and benefit all eligible employees whether or not they attend meetings. This truism begs the question: Then, why attend? Our answer to this question is rooted in the experience of employees at local meetings in reference to how they interact. Above and beyond group benefits to be had, we think individual benefits are to be had—benefits that are associated with fulfillment of psychological needs. Our data are clear on this. To the extent that employees experience psychological safety at meetings conducive to such fulfillment—independent of non-psychological safety at meetings—more psychological safety is linked to higher rated effectiveness, and in turn, such rated effectiveness is linked to more likely to attend.

Literature Contributions

Centered on our interest in solving the problem of low local meeting attendance, our study contributes to the cited literature in several ways. Foremost, our importation and adaptation of constructs from the cited literature on team and meeting success featuring group dynamics represents a first attempt to bridge literatures in nonunion and union environments. As seen in our model, we adapted constructs from these literatures to predict likely meeting attendance. In doing so, we showed the expansiveness of the constructs for prediction of meeting success in union environments. In particular, psychological safety as a construct is given a boost by our work in regard to external validity. Without hesitation, we can confidently state that applications of adapted constructs featuring group dynamics are now open for prediction of meeting success in union environments.

The union participation literature also is a direct beneficiary of our crossover work. Having taken a decidedly psychological view, we think the participation literature has been mired in economic-inspired and attitudinal constructs with explanatory merit but bereft of insight drawn from attention to how employees interact at local meetings—insight that we think once shown in relation to prediction can be used as an intervention resource to address and solve the problem of low attendance. Moreover, the inclusion of psychological safety as a predictor of likely meeting attendance represents an important correction to the oft cited view of why employees attend (or do not attend). Put in simple terms in reference to our model results, we doubt that employees attend meetings solely for economic and attitudinal reasons grounded in rational self-interest. To be included are psychological reasons grounded in fulfillment of psychological needs. In our boldest (and we hope clearest) statement, we think that psychological safety entered into the prediction equation in regard to meeting attendance not only addresses an untapped need-based psychological connection between employees and unions but also provides an additive answer to the question of "Then, why attend."

Study Limitations

Our study is not without caveats and limitations, all of which we think can be addressed in future studies. As a caveat, our study is intended as a demonstration of how covariation unfolds in regard to the sequence of variables indicated in our model. It is not intended as a demonstration of causality. Such a demonstration would, at minimum, require measurement of local meeting attendance at two points in time (e.g., the last 12 months and the next 12 months; see Mathieu et al., 2008 for example data). Also, as a first attempt to introduce psychological safety at local meetings as a predictor of likely meeting attendance, we made no attempt to *rule out* other predictors. Doing so would be wide of our study aim. But we do encourage researchers who have interest in making causal claims to collect data using time-lapsed measurement designs, with only one caveat. Because of the proprietary nature of local attendance data, we anticipate that these data are hard won (difficult to obtain), a reality that we think provides perspective on the value of our data.

Mediation can also be misinterpreted as part of a causal chain (see Hayes, 2022 for a thorough discussion). No such chain is implied by our model tests. We openly invite researchers to expand our model in future studies in reference to both predictors and mediators. Based on the idea that there is no "true predictor" or "true mediator" in regard to variation in local meeting attendance, we view psychological safety at meetings as joining a set of known predictors linked to participation such as instrumentality and union commitment. As for mediators, easily envisioned are multiple intervening variables such as emotional investment in the union movement and sense of civic duty applied to unions (see Rose, 1952; Tetrick et al., 2007 for discussions). Moderators of the shown mediation are especially welcomed in future studies. As seen in our data, women employees are less likely to experience psychological safety at meetings and are more likely to rate meeting effectiveness lower. Also evident in our data, employees in which English is a second language are less likely to experience psychological safety at meetings. We think both of these demographics represent important markers of conditional differences to be explored in future studies.

Also, in reference to our sample size, and based on our broad but limited sampling of any one union, the generality of our model results requires replication with larger samples and, under ideal conditions, data collection that represents an entire union. In this vein, a suggested side benefit of our results is their use as a means to justify a request for collaborative research directed at a union, in which researchers and local reps work together to collect anonymous in-house local attendance data in pursuit of a common goal: to forge a solution to the problem of low meeting attendance.

Suggested Intervention

As indicated, interventions featuring psychological safety or attention to interpersonal dynamics abound in nonunion environments, in which targeted are work teams with enhanced meeting success in mind. These interventions include standard assessment tools showing how assessment is delivered to attendees, how feedback is gathered from attendees, and how implementation is driven through involvement by attendees. Moreover, the nuts and bolts of these interventions are available in the public domain, features of which can be extracted from online documents or popular press books (see Hoffman, 2018; Rogelberg, 2019; Rozovsky, 2015; Understand team effectiveness, 2017 for prepared material).

To target local unions with enhanced meeting attendance in mind, herewith is a suggested intervention outlined for a union environment.

First, we suggest that the local reps meet to work out an announcement to be distributed before a meeting. The announcement should indicate an agenda item stated in bold print that "the local will conduct an assessment to discern how employees would like to see their meetings run, with attention to enhancing the experience of employees at meetings." At this meeting, we suggest that the local reps preselect a local employee who is known and respected to introduce an invited guest (an outside researcher) who will administer an anonymous survey to be filled out voluntarily, a survey that is intended for "you to indicate how you would like to see your meetings run." Using the foregoing statement beginning with "indicate" as the stem for the survey items, we suggest that all 12 items be used from our study (the 7 psychological safety items interspersed with the 5 non-psychological safety items), with yes–no response options (Likert scaling could also be used). Before the survey is distributed, it should be indicated and underlined that survey results will be reported at the next meeting using *average item responses* rather than individual responses, and that the interpretation of the results will be opened to the floor for discussion by those attending.

Next, we suggest an announcement be distributed by the local reps before the next meeting reminding employees that "a substantial part of the meeting agenda will be devoted to the results of the survey taken at the prior meeting about how employees would like to see their meetings run." Importantly, the announcement should stress that all eligible employees are encouraged to attend the meeting whether or not they attended the last meeting and whether or not they volunteered to take the survey. At this meeting, "the researcher" should be absent, having reported the average responses to items (without descriptive tests) in a written document submitted to the local reps and distributed by the reps to employees before the meeting. This meeting should include only eligible employees—a closed-door meeting that also excludes non-local officials (perhaps to be briefed later). The key to this meeting is the creation of an open and informal atmosphere of discussion without concern that the conversation should be limited to one meeting. If a second meeting on survey results seems to be in order, it should be called. It is entirely possible that some locals during this phrase of intervention may take several meetings to "air out" and "settle issues" as related to how "we would like to see our meetings run."

We envision variants of the intervention as outlined and we invite suggestions and refinements from all involved parties, including feedback on how meeting announcements are best constructed to generate interest and how surveys are best distributed to include the faintest voices. Also, as an addendum to the intervention, it should be noted that formal recommendations are not recommended. As indicated, psychological safety is not intended as an explicit team goal. Rather, by opening discussion about how all employees can expect to experience a safe environment at meetings, we expect that emergent are enriched climate properties of mutual respect for psychological needs and a renewed sense of trust that "ours is a collective effort to serve and fulfill the needs of all members."

Final Note

On the relationships indicated in our model, we do not take the point of view that we have isolated *the* predictor or *the* sequence by which the experience of employees at local union meetings is linked to meeting attendance. We consider our model as a work-in-progress, in which a suggested path to attendance may yet be altered or reconfigured in reference to future modeling. In relation to our interest in strengthening the psychological lifeline

between employees and unions, and in relation to our interest in developing interventions, we encourage researchers and local reps to view our model as a starting point to take in the psychological experience of employees at meetings and to consider associations between psychological safety and local attendance.

Appendix

Scale Items

In reference to local meetings **I have attended in the last 12 months**, the following describe what I experienced at these meetings...

Psychological Safety at Local Union Meetings

... meetings wherein members were at no risk of embarrassing themselves even when they couldn't always express themselves clearly.
... meetings wherein members couldn't get away with shouting down other members who expressed opinions that varied from the norm.
... meetings wherein members freely asked other members for help in dealing with work issues.
... meetings wherein members who wished to speak up could do so even when they didn't know the exact rules about when to speak.
... meetings wherein members were given respect for sharing personal information that helped other members understand "where they were coming from."
... meetings wherein members were accepted for who they are no matter how much—or in what way—they differed from other members.
... meetings wherein "turn-taking" in speaking up was taken seriously as opposed to only "the same few members" speaking up.

Non-Psychological Safety at Local Union Meetings

... meetings wherein members did their best to begin and end meetings on time (as scheduled).
... meetings wherein speaking up about local, state, or national politics was frowned upon.
... meetings wherein attention to national union business was kept at a minimum in favor of attention to "on the job issues."
... meetings wherein members were personally invited to attend meetings by their union reps.
... meetings wherein members did their best to stick to items on the agenda.

Local Union Meeting Effectiveness

Based on how your local meetings **were** run, how **effective** do you think they **were** in doing the business your local needed to do?

Based on how your local meetings **were** run, how **effective** do you think they **were** in serving the needs of local members?

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Declarations

Conflict of Interest The author declares no conflict of interest.

Ethical Standards All procedures used in the study involving participants are in accordance with the ethical standards of the author's institution and with the 1964 Helsinki declaration and its later amendments.

Informed Consent Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants in the study in the form of an information sheet.

The data for the study are available at https://doi.org/10.7910/DVN/PUNEN5.

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