



A **TUC** Education Workbook

unionlearn
with TUC Education



Equal

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Welcome to Organise 2! A Voice in Every Workplace

Last year saw the TUC's affiliated membership grow by 12,000, the second successive year that membership has increased. This small, steady growth shows that unions are continuing to make progress in meeting the membership challenge.

But there is much to do. Unions are working to increase the rate at which we grow, and considering how we can reach out to those workers, particularly in the private service sector, who have no direct, first hand experience of the positive "union effect". A key priority is to identify and develop new workplace activists who can support the 200,000 union reps who are the face of trade unionism up and down the country.

Trade union education is an important resource for developing the organisers of tomorrow. Last year saw TUC Education, now part of unionlearn, reach almost 50,000 workplace reps with trade union education programmes designed to support workplace organisation. Courses, whether they are developed for safety reps, equality reps, pensions champions or any part of the curriculum, focus on building the union as the key to getting things done at work.

Organise 2! A Voice in Every Workplace builds on the success of the first edition of Organise!, and has been designed to help you, as a lay rep or steward, to develop the skills you need to organise your workplace effectively. It has been developed for use across the TUC Education curriculum, for branches, for union officers, for union learning reps, for campaigns and for wherever the voice of the union should be heard.

I hope that you find these materials useful – and would like to thank you for playing your part in helping to recruit and organise the next generation of union members.



Brendan Barber
General Secretary

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Section 1

Introduction, contents and how to use the materials

The purpose of this section is to introduce the learning materials *Organise 2! A Voice in Every Workplace* to a wide range of union reps, union learning reps, project workers, full-time officers, organisers, staff and activists in the learning and organising agenda.

It aims to:

- identify the aims of the learning materials
- make a link with other learning and resource materials
- provide examples of short courses on organising and combinations of activities for short sessions
- introduce the learning and organising workbook
- explain accreditation.

Welcome to Organise 2! A Voice in Every Workplace activities and resource materials

Building stronger, bigger unions is the best way to win a better deal for working people. Opinion polls show that unions have never been more popular. The job of the organiser is to turn this popularity into active membership – and the purpose of this workbook is to show you how to do this.

Today everyone needs to be an organiser in order to develop our unions and win more power, and to help improve the lives of working people. At the same time, everyone is a learner and unionlearn has been instrumental in providing opportunities for reps and members to develop themselves and their union through workplace learning.

We all know the confidence that can come from getting people active and involved. Just one new member or a few new faces at a meeting is a success that can be built on to start the union bandwagon rolling. Active events and campaigns help to raise awareness and encourage people to join in.

Whether you are an old hand or new, a tutor, project worker, union learning rep or union official, or work in a learning centre or union office, the ability and skills to organise are linked closely to the development of learning. The aim of the learning materials is to make a difference for the people you work with. You'll be part of creating a voice in every workplace.

Course activities – a flexible approach

The activities in this pack are designed to be used flexibly by anyone involved in organising or learning. You may be:

- a union representative or full-time officer who wishes to look at different and effective ways to improve union organisation, recruitment and retention and negotiate facilities and improvements at work
- a project worker, union learning rep or learning adviser who wishes to find out what members want and promote learning in the workplace to meet their needs
- a union activist involved in developing organising campaigns and events or learning partnerships where you need to involve other reps and members.

No matter how you are involved in learning and organising, you can choose from the activities in this book to:

- meet the needs of different unions, sectors and workplaces
- provide a variety of activities and 'Top Tips' to engage different reps, organisers, project workers, members and officials who may have different levels of understanding and involvement in the union – from those just joining the union to reps who have been active for a while and want to try some new ways to promote the union
- run a structured 1-, 2- or 3-day course
- run short 1-hour sessions such as lunchtime learning sessions or a series of sessions over a number of weeks at the start or end of a shift
- try combinations of activities that fit together, lasting anything from 30 minutes to 1½ hours, or a half or full day to achieve a certain aim or to suit the skills required by a particular group of people, for example new members
- use as part of campaigns and events to build the union and promote learning as a key service that unions can provide
- organise new ways to involve reps and members through the learning agenda, for example online learning and electronic communications.

Aims of the learning materials

The learning materials will help you to:

- embed learning within the organisational aspirations of unions to win members
- understand and review union organisation, recruitment and retention practices and identify improvements
- identify how learning opportunities can be used to promote the union and engage members
- practise skills that will help develop confidence and the ability to organise potential, new and existing members in a diverse workforce
- provide a variety of activities and resources that can be used thematically to promote specific themes, such as equality, health and safety, or in a diverse workforce and community
- become familiar with employment information and resources and how they can be used to advise and inform members
- develop communication and networking skills that will sustain active partnerships.

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Learning and organising workbook

The learning materials are accompanied by the *Organise! Learning in Every Workplace: Notes for Tutors and Organisers* publication, which explains the link between learning and organising and covers many aspects of teaching and learning and embedding them into the organising agenda. It includes a CD-ROM that contains ready-made electronic tools to help you develop learning and organising in your workplace and union. They include:

- 1 Organising tools
- 2 Top tips
- 3 Survey – Perceptions of the union
- 4 Planning a project template
- 5 Progression routes for ULRs
- 6 Development plan
- 7 Learning styles questionnaire
- 8 Quiz – What is a trade union?
- 9 IAG questions sheet
- 10 Organise! An online course
- 11 Useful website addresses

Links with other learning and organising materials and resources

The activities in this book can also be used in the many new ways to learn and organise that help to meet the different needs, and different approaches, required in a diverse and changing workforce.

These include:

- identifying different learning styles
- providing a differentiated or personalised approach, whether this be for getting involved in the union or for taking up learning itself
- using online and blended learning – a developing area that some members will benefit from if they have difficulties in travelling or have domestic responsibilities. A number of Unionlearn courses are now available online
- planning, monitoring and analysing projects for union project workers and union learning reps
- professional development for union full-time officers, organisers and staff who are developing their own skills or are engaged in work with members as part of the Organising Academy training
- using the learning and organising toolkit that comes with this pack, which includes electronic versions of ready-made newsletters, posters, planning templates and other useful tools.

Unionlearn also provides numerous publications and other learning materials that will assist learning and organising in the workplace (for example: *Tackling Racism*; *Out at Work*; *Working Women*; *Safety and Migrant Workers – A Practical Guide for Safety Reps*; *Union Learning Reps Training Pack*; *Workplace Training – A Race for Opportunity*; *Community Unions – Organising Beyond the Workplace*), as well as a wide range of regional courses for union reps.

Professional development for union full-time officers, organisers and staff

These materials are also targeted at union professional staff as well as officers. Research shows that jobs are changing fast and responsibilities within union office teams are shared to a greater extent than ever before. The materials can also be used by the Organising Academy, which is aimed at supporting the work of unions who are organising for growth.

Example of a 2-day course programme

Day 1

Day 1

9.30–9.45	Registration and course programme Activity 1: Introductions
9.45–10.15	Activity 2: Why people join/stay in trade unions
10.15–11.00	Activity 9: Organising and recruitment opportunities
11.00–11.15	Break
11.15–12.30	Activity 10: Workplace report and workplace profile or Activity 11: Workplace mapping
12.30–1.15	Lunch
1.15–2.15	Activity 12: Improving your recruitment skills – 10 good reasons to join the union
2.15–3.15	Activity 14: One-to-one recruitment (role play)
3.15–4.15	Activity 20: Organising leaders and mentors
4.15–4.30	Review of the day

Day 2

Day 2

9.30–10.30	Activity 29: Different workers, different needs
10.30–10.45	Break
10.45–11.30	Activity 8: Making the most of union successes
11.30–12.30	Activity 21: Issue-based advice and campaigns – keeping members in the union
12.30–1.30	Lunch
1.30–2.30	Activity 21: Issue-based advice and campaigns – keeping members in the union (continued from the morning session)
2.30–3.30	Activity 19: Building effective teams and networks
3.30–4.15	Activity 35: Action plan: Organise in every workplace – what needs to be done
4.15–4.30	Activity 36: Course/session review

Examples of combinations of activities used in short sessions

Sessions can be run as stand-alone activities or as a series of meetings. The combinations below are listed to meet the needs of:

- potential members – who may know nothing about the union, its organisation or the role of the rep
- new union representatives/activists – members whom the union wishes to become more active and who require new or improved skills to recruit and organise
- existing members whom the union wishes to revitalise or retain
- union reps, ULRs and officers who work together on the organising and learning agenda
- organising and learning themes, such as health and safety or equality
- those involved in organising and learning projects who need to plan and monitor their successes and outcomes.

	<i>Sets of activities to be used over 1 or 2 days</i>	<i>Examples of short combinations of activities 45 minutes–1 hour</i>
Potential members	1) Introductions 4) What is a trade union? Why people join/stay in trade unions 12) Improving your recruitment skills – 10 good reasons to join the union 8) Making the most of union successes 23) Organising in newly recognised workplaces 35) Action plan: Organise in every workplace – what needs to be done? 36) Course/session review	1) and 12) 2) and 7) 7) and 10) 19) and 13) 6) and 8)
New union representatives/activists	1) Introductions 2) Why people join/stay in trade unions 9) Organising and recruitment opportunities 17) Organising and learning – making the link 10) Workplace report and workplace profile or 11) Workplace mapping 7) Images of the union 12) Improving your recruitment skills – 10 good reasons to join the union 13) Preparing to recruit 29) Different workers, different needs 14) One-to-one recruitment 15) Review of one-to-one recruitment	1) and 8) 9) and 29) 17) and 19) 7) and 29) 12) and 18) 13), 14) and 15) 29) and 11) 8) and 21)

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	<i>Sets of activities to be used over 1 or 2 days</i>	<i>Examples of short combinations of activities 45 minutes–1 hour</i>
	8) Making the most of union successes 21) Issue-based advice and campaigns – keeping members in the union 19) Building effective teams and networks 30) Organising vulnerable/migrant workers – rights at work 34) Self-assessment 35) Action plan: Organise in every workplace – what needs to be done? 36) Course/session review	21) and 6) 19) and 17) 28) and 30)
Existing members	1) Introductions 2) Why people join/stay in trade unions? 6) Perceptions survey – what does the union offer members? 7) Images of the union 26) Identifying and developing health and safety reps 10) Workplace report and workplace profile or 11) Workplace mapping 7) Images of the union 12) Improving your recruitment skills – 10 good reasons to join the union 13) Preparing to recruit 21) Issue-based advice and campaigns – keeping members in the union 19) Building effective teams and networks	2) and 6) 7) and 26) 7) and 31) 12) and 18) 21) and 28)

	<i>Sets of activities to be used over 1 or 2 days</i>	<i>Examples of short combinations of activities 45 minutes–1 hour</i>
	35) Action plan: Organise in every workplace – what needs to be done? 36) Course/session review	
Organising for union reps, ULRs and full time officers	1) Introductions 5) Servicing and organising 16) Overview of learning and organising materials 18) Organising for union reps 9) Organising and recruitment opportunities 17) Organising and learning – making the link 10) Workplace profile and workplace report or 11) Workplace mapping 7) Images of the union 12) Improving your recruitment skills – 10 good reasons to join the union 13) Preparing to recruit 14) One-to-one recruitment 15) Review of one-to-one recruitment 8) Making the most of union successes 21) Issue-based advice and campaigns – keeping members in the union 22) Officers supporting the learning and organising agenda 19) Building effective teams and networks 20) Organising leaders and mentors	1) and 8) 5) and 6) 16) and 18) 18) and 22) 9) and 29) 17), 19) and 20) 7) and 27) 12) and 19) 13), 14) and 15) 8) and 21) 22) and 30) 22) and any of the activities in this section and 23) 20) and 29)

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	<i>Sets of activities to be used over 1 or 2 days</i>	<i>Examples of short combinations of activities 45 minutes–1 hour</i>
	35) Action plan: Organise in every workplace – what needs to be done? 36) Course/session review	
Organising for health and safety	1) Introductions 2) Why people join/stay in trade unions 3) From past to present – organising and learning timeline 5) Servicing and organising 8) Making the most of union successes 13) Preparing to recruit 19) Building effective teams and networks 24) Linking learning and organising in health and safety 26) Identifying and developing health and safety reps 25) Reviewing and improving your health and safety organisation at work 27) Health and safety survey 30) Organising migrant/vulnerable workers – rights at work 32) Planning a learning or organising project 36) Course/session review	2) and 26) 3) and Section 9 8) and 24) 13) and 24) 24) and 29) 25) and 27) 26), 27) and 26) 26) and 32) or 30)
Organising for equality	1) Introductions 2) Why people join/stay in trade unions 3) From past to present – organising and learning timeline	and 27)

	<i>Sets of activities to be used over 1 or 2 days</i>	<i>Examples of short combinations of activities 45 minutes–1 hour</i>
	10) Workplace report and workplace profile or 11) Workplace mapping 28) Barriers to equality 5) Servicing and organising 8) Making the most of union successes 29) Different workers, different needs 13) Preparing to recruit 19) Building effective teams and networks 26) Identifying and developing health and safety reps 30) Organising migrant/vulnerable workers – rights at work 31) Organising beyond the workplace 32) Planning a learning or organising project 36) Course/session review	27) and 6) 28) and 11) 13) and 29) 26) and 28) 30) and 10) or 18) 31) and 22) or 18) 32) and 6)
Getting involved in organising and learning projects	1) Introductions 2) Why people join/stay in trade unions 5) Servicing and organising 18) Organising for union reps 9) Organising and recruitment opportunities 11) Workplace mapping 7) Images of the union 8) Making the most of union successes 6) Perceptions survey – what does the union offer members?	18) and 31) 9) and 11) 8) and 18) 6) and 31)

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	<i>Sets of activities to be used over 1 or 2 days</i>	<i>Examples of short combinations of activities 45 minutes–1 hour</i>
	12) Improving your recruitment skills – 10 good reasons to join the union 13) Preparing to recruit 21) Issue-based advice and campaigns – keeping members in the union 19) Building effective teams and networks 20) Organising leaders and mentors 32) Planning a learning or organising project 33) Monitoring and reviewing a learning or organising project 36) Course/session review	21) and 31) 32), 20) and 21) 33) and 7)

Accreditation

If you complete at least 10 hours of learning at a session, series of sessions or course you may receive accreditation through the Open College Network, which accredits the Unionlearn Passport to Progress programme of courses. Units cover organising, recruitment, handling members problems, equality, skills for union learning reps, tackling discrimination, skills to work in a learning centre and many more. Credits can be built up to achieve awards, certificates and diplomas in your chosen role as union rep, safety rep, ULR, organiser or full-time officer. Your unionlearn Regional Education Officer can provide you with further information.

Section 2

Getting involved in your trade union

The purpose of this section is to introduce learning materials on organising a wide range of union reps, ULRs, project workers, full-time officers, organisers, staff and activists who wish to find out about and improve the perceptions of trade unions.

It aims to:

- introduce the role of trade unions to new and potential members
- identify the difference between the servicing and organising models of trade unions
- build a positive perception of trade unions.

Activity 1

Introductions

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- get to know more about each other
- work out aims for the course/session
- practise interviewing, listening and note-taking skills.

Task

Work with another person. Find out some basic information about their workplace and union background. You might want to take some notes to remember what they say.

Use these headings for your interview:

- name
- experience and position(s) in the union
- how long they have been in the union and how they became involved
- how they were approached to join the union and by whom
- their job and the number of people in their workplace
- other courses they have been on
- why they are interested in recruitment and organisation
- what they want to get out of the course.

Report back

Be prepared to introduce your partner to the rest of the group.

Estimated time: 30 minutes

Why people join/stay in trade unions

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- clarify the main reasons why people join trade unions
- decide why some people don't join trade unions
- build up the case for joining trade unions.

Task

Working in small groups, discuss the following questions:

- Why do people join trade unions?
- Why don't some people join trade unions?
- What makes people leave their trade union?
- What is the difference between a trade union member and a trade unionist?
- What advantages are there for trade unions being collective organisations?

Report back

Write your key points on a flipchart; alternatively, add additional points to the 'Top tips: Why people join/stay in trade unions' checklist below. Elect someone from your group to summarise and report back the key points of your discussion.

Estimated time: 1 hour

Top tips: Why people join/stay in trade unions

What motivates a member to be involved?	What stops people getting involved?
• A feeling of justice or unfairness • A particular issue that they want to see resolved • Previous involvement with a union • A sense that they want a voice, respect and dignity at work • Already active in other groups, for example in the community, Greenpeace	• Afraid of being singled out • Not enough time at work or other commitments • Not confident enough to get involved • Feel they lack the skills or knowledge • Haven't been asked • Times of meetings/venues are inappropriate

Activity 3

From past to present – organising and learning timeline

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- find out the role of unions in organising and learning
- understand what the union offers and its positive effects
- build the case for joining trade unions.

Task

Your tutor will help you with resources. Working in pairs or small groups, draw a timeline on a flipchart to show the main dates/events since the start of trade unions in:

either

the organisation of people into trade unions

or

the development of worker education

or

either of the above in your own union

If you have access to a computer and the internet, you might like to look at the following website to help you: www.unionhistory.info – then follow links to other resources.

Report back

Elect someone from your group to summarise and report back on key points, using the timeline on the flipchart.

Estimated time: 1 hour 15 minutes

What is a trade union?

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify key points about what a trade union offers
- build the case for joining trade unions
- demonstrate ways to use the quiz with new or existing members.

Tasks

Work in pairs or small groups.

Task 1

Answer the questions in the quiz 'What is a trade union?' on the next page.

Task 2

Can you think of other questions that could be added to the quiz?

How might you use this quiz to involve new or existing members at work?

Report back

Your tutor will go through the answers. Identify which group had the highest score.

You will be asked to give a verbal report on Task 2.

Estimated time: 45 minutes

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Quiz: What is a trade union?

1 Which of these is a trade?

- ☐ hairdresser
- ☐ market stall worker
- ☐ bridegroom
- ☐ bricklayer
- ☐ shop worker
- ☐ cook
- ☐ teacher

2 What is a union?

- ☐ a postal delivery service
- ☐ a group of people who band together
- ☐ the United Nations Institute

3 With which of these issues do unions get involved?

- ☐ helping members when they have a problem
- ☐ campaigns to change opinions
- ☐ health and safety
- ☐ protecting people at work
- ☐ equal treatment
- ☐ learning and skills

4 How many people are in trade unions today in the UK?

5 The percentage of women workers of this total number in trade unions is:

- ☐ 10 per cent
- ☐ 28 per cent
- ☐ 51 per cent
- ☐ 60 per cent

6 Which of these groups are in trade unions?

- ☐ Abbey National staff
- ☐ firefighters
- ☐ police
- ☐ footballers
- ☐ radiographers
- ☐ cleaners
- ☐ journalists
- ☐ switchboard operators

7 Trade unions organise worldwide. Which sector has the most members worldwide?

- ☐ the chemical industry
- ☐ the civil service
- ☐ transport
- ☐ construction

8 What is the name of the organisation that individual trade unions affiliate to?

9 Do trade unions sponsor MPs? Why do you think they do this?

10 Name a well-known trade unionist.

11 Where can you find information about your trade union?

12 Trade unions have rulebooks that their members must abide by. True or false?

13 All union reps have to be elected. True or false?

14 What is the difference between a trade union and a trades council?

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Activity 5

Servicing and organising

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- understand the difference between a servicing union and an organising union
- consider the implications for your union of a shift in emphasis from a servicing culture to an organising culture.

Tasks

In your groups, read through 'Top tips: Servicing and organising models' on the next page. Put a tick against those statements you think currently describe your union.

Using your own experience, discuss the implications for your union and your workplace of a shift in emphasis from a servicing union to an organising union.

Think about possible changes in:

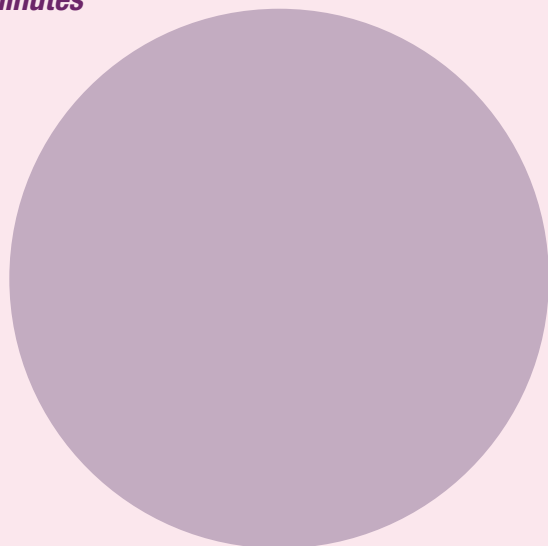
- the way the union is run
- the way in which members and representatives are involved
- the way in which the union represents members
- the image of the union to non-members.

Resources:

Top tips: Servicing and organising models

Top tips: The easy road and the hard road

Estimated time: 1 hour 15 minutes



Servicing and organising models

Vs

A servicing union means...	An organising union means...
• The union is seen as external. It enters the workplace to increase membership or solve problems. • Unions tell members how they can solve their problems. • Relying on the employer to provide lists of names of workers to union officials. • Relying on workplace access and employer cooperation. • Cold selling union membership by organisers. • Selling the union for services and insurance protection. • Relying on full-time officials to recruit and solve problems. • Recruiting is seen as a separate activity. • Results are achieved, but they are likely to be short term. • The union is blamed when it can't get results. • Members complain they pay fees and the union does nothing. • Organisers resent members for not coming to meetings or participating. • Management acts, while the union reacts and it is therefore always on the defensive.	• Members own the campaign to unionise their workplace. • Members generate their own issues and organise to solve them together. • Names and information are provided by workers – mapping the workplace and staff attitudes are crucial. • Initial organising can be done outside work – in workers' homes and elsewhere. • Establishing initial contacts and finding natural leaders to help recruit. • Workers empowered to access these benefits for themselves through education and support. • An internal organising committee is formed and workers are encouraged to build the union through one-to-one organising. • Recruitment and organising are integrated. • Results are obtained through sustained efforts – more likely to be permanent. • Members share decisions and solve problems together with union leaders. • Members make a real contribution to the union and identify with it. An attack on the union is an attack on themselves. • The image of the union is positive and active. • The union has its own agenda, with members involved, and it keeps management off balance.

Source: *Organising Works* – Australian Council of Trade Unions

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The easy road and the hard road: alternatives in organising

Servicing	Vs	Organising
• We get our satisfaction from helping people and solving problems. • The union has achieved this agreement for you. • Leave it to us – that is why you pay your dues. • We talk to the workers about the benefits of joining the union. • The workers think we are just coming here for their money.		• Workers need to get involved and realise that only by working together can their problems be resolved. • The employer is always trying to paint the union as external or a ‘third party’ coming in to interfere with the happy relationship between the employer and the employees. • The members think we have a magic wand and can solve all problems. • Workers are always more likely to be convinced by their work colleagues, whom they know and trust. • We meet with workers more than once, and get them to talk to their work colleagues.
Issues • We tell people which issues the union is pursuing. • The workers did not have any issues. • We give people a prepared speech listing 10 reasons why they should join. • We spoke to the employer first and they showed us where we could meet the workers. • The workers were an apathetic bunch. They hardly spoke at all during the meeting. • We fixed the problem for them and achieved a good benefit, and now none of them will join.		• The workers’ issues are the key driver in any campaign. • We listened to the workers and found out what was concerning them, rather than give them a 19-minute lecture during the 20-minute meeting. • We listen and ask questions for at least 70 per cent of the time when we first meet someone. • We met people off the job and involved them in talking to other workers. • We met the workers outside work. They were anxious at first but eventually opened up. • We worked out what the issue was, and highlighted that there was hope and a pathway to get it sorted out so long as we stood together.

Servicing

Vs

Organising

• I get sick of all those standard objections to joining and I often end up in an argument. • We tell people why they should join.	• We realise that the concern or objection for many people is real, so we always acknowledge their concern or objection before making our points. • We ask questions that get people thinking and helps them to decide that being in the union will help resolve and satisfy their needs.
Communication vs. organisational networks • We ask people to be the union representative and no one wants the role. • We have a union representative, who is a bit burned out and not well regarded by everyone. • We have trouble getting women, black workers and young people as representatives. • We get union representatives elected and then spend 2 years trying to get rid of them. • We get representatives elected as soon as we can in a recruitment campaign; however, quite often they get picked off by the boss and other people just stop getting involved.	• We ask someone to talk to five workers in their area and hand out a survey. • We have a communication network where we have a contact in each area who looks after no more than 10 people. • We encourage these workers to get involved. They are great communicators and networkers. They often start off as our contacts doing small tasks, and many go on to be union representatives. • We assess those who are potential activists; we give them small tasks to do and if they do well, we give them bigger tasks. • We seek potential activists early on in a campaign and build a network of people to get involved.
Education • We put out fliers but no one comes to meetings. • We negotiated what we thought was a good agreement with the company and ended up being blamed and criticised by our members.	• We use our communication network to get fliers around and speak to all workers one to one about the importance of the meeting. • We use the communication network to survey the key issues for the members, to explain what collective bargaining is, and we develop the claim together with the negotiating committee.

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Servicing

Vs

Organising

Action

- The rally and the industrial action were poorly supported.
- At the meeting we told the workers what the union had achieved for them.
- We called a strike but it was very poorly attended.

- We made sure that we had a winnable and widely felt issue, that the communication network was used to contact every worker one to one about the importance of the campaign, and as a result we had a great turnout.
- At the meeting we congratulated the members and the activists for all their efforts that had led to this result. Before voting on the final agreement we talked about the importance of having ongoing communication networks and got people to agree to speak to five or ten people in their area.
- We realised that we needed to build up the final action, so we had a union badge day and then we all wore black armbands to work one day to give the boss a message.

Survey of perceptions – what does the union offer members?

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify how people perceive trade unions
- plan how to use a perceptions survey to organise members.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups, discuss the perceptions survey on the next page.

- Is there anything you would add or change?
- How might you use the survey to organise and recruit members at work?

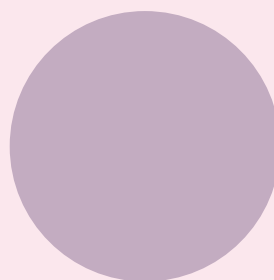
Task 2

Try out your perceptions survey on a group of members at work and summarise the main findings.

Report back

Write your key points on a flipchart. Elect someone from your group to summarise and report back the key points of your discussion.

Estimated time: 1 hour



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Survey: Perceptions of the union

Your name

Job

Your tel. no

email address

Workplace address or department where you work

What learning or union activity are you currently involved in?

How long have you been doing this?

Who helped you to start/get involved in the course/union activity? (Please tick)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| ☐ Union rep | ☐ Project worker | ☐ Full-time official |
| ☐ Friend/family (at work) | ☐ Health and safety rep | ☐ Union organiser |
| ☐ Friend/family (outside work) | ☐ Union learning rep | ☐ Manager |
| ☐ Union convener | ☐ Trade union studies tutor | |

Did the information, advice and guidance you received match up to what you are doing in the course/union activity?

How did you view the union before you started the course/union activity?

How do you view the union now?

How would you describe the image of the union at work?

What could be done to improve the view of unions at work?

Images of the union

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify how others see the union
- improve the way unions are viewed.

Tasks

Task 1

On three separate flipcharts (one for each of the groups listed below) placed around the room, write up keywords to describe the image of trade unions created by:

- trade unionists
- employers
- the media.

Task 2

Working in small groups, decide what the image of trade unions should be and what can be done to achieve this?

Report back

Elect someone from the group to report back the key points from your discussion.

Estimated time: 1 hour

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Activity 8

Making the most of union successes

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- find examples of how the union has helped members
- identify ways to promote the successes of the union to assist recruitment and retention.

Tasks

Work in small groups.

Task 1

Look through some recent publications from your union and unionlearn, e.g. the union journal, health and safety newsletters, the ULR magazine, case studies on www.unionreps.org.uk and www.unionlearn.org.uk

Find one or two examples of successes that you think would interest members and explain why you have chosen them.

Task 2

Discuss and decide how you could use the examples to help communication and networking with members.

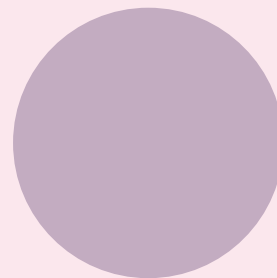
Think about:

- who you would aim it at
- how you would introduce it to members and non-members
- different formats to publicise it, e.g. posters, email.

Report back

Elect a spokesperson to report back to the whole group.

Estimated time: 1 hour



Answers to the quiz: What is a trade union?

- 1 All of them except 'bridegroom'
- 2 A group of people who band together
- 3 All of them
- 4 6.5 million (TUC-affiliated)
- 5 51 per cent. For the first time in history, women are in the majority of trade union membership (2005 figures)
- 6 All of them
- 7 The chemical industry, which covers 20 million employees
- 8 Trades Union Congress (TUC)
- 9 Yes. Some unions sponsor several, to have a strong voice in parliament to take up their specific issues and concerns.
- 10 Some examples: actor and presenter Tony Robinson (Equity), Prime Minister Gordon Brown (UCATT), actor Ricky Tomlinson (Equity), footballer Gary Neville (PFA Management Committee)
- 11 Find your union's website or check the TUC site www.tuc.org.uk for more information.
- 12 True
- 13 It depends on the union rulebook. Some are elected and some appointed.
- 14 A trades council is made up of reps from different local trade union branches who link up into a national organisation and affiliate to the TUC. They provide a local watchdog and campaigning body. A trade union is usually a larger organisation with a local, regional and national structure. In the past they have mainly represented single sectors but now are amalgamating and recruit across different trades.





Section 3

Organising your workplace

The purpose of this section is to encourage activity and support for the organising and learning agenda.

It aims to:

- review existing organising opportunities
- help define the workplace and its profile of members
- identify different workplace mapping methods
- demonstrate different recruitment practices
- provide top tips for organising in the workplace.

Activity 9

Organising and recruitment opportunities

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- compare how different workplaces organise and recruit
- identify successes, problems and opportunities.

Task

Working in small groups, discuss and compare how you organise and recruit members at work. Use the questions on the worksheet on the next page to help your discussion.

Report back

Write your key points on a comparison chart showing the different arrangements for each workplace. Elect someone from your group to summarise and report back the key points of your discussion.

Example of a comparison chart

	Workplace 1	Workplace 2	Workplace 3
How does recruitment and organisation to the union take place where you work?			

Estimated time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Worksheet: Organising and recruitment opportunities

Recruitment

How does recruitment to and organisation of the union take place where you work?	
Who does the recruiting?	
What happens to the application forms?	
Who identifies non-members/ new starters?	
Is there an agreement with the employer?	
Are there language or cultural issues to consider?	
What part do learning opportunities play in recruitment (e.g. provision of learning centres, learning agreements, or courses)?	
What is done well?	
What weaknesses are there?	

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Organising

What do you think is meant by union organisation?	
Who has recruitment responsibilities and who decides this?	
Do you have any learning reps or learning projects?	
What facilities do you have to organise (e.g. time off to meet members about problems, access to a telephone or email)?	
Are there induction sessions for new staff? What information are they given?	
Are there language or cultural issues regarding recruitment or access to learning?	
Who keeps membership and staff lists? Are names of new members sent to the union rep or ULR?	
What materials/resources would help you to organise? Where do you get them from? Are they readable and interesting?	

Is there co-ordination between unions at your workplace?	
Are ULRs integrated into the branch structure?	
What training is available for reps and members?	
What is done well?	
What weaknesses are there?	
Are there other organising and learning opportunities?	

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Activity 10

Workplace report and workplace profile

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- carry out a workplace report
- prepare a workplace profile.

Tasks

Work in small groups.

Task 1

In the course/session, look at the Workplace Profile and Workplace Report on the following pages where you can list different departments or sections and numbers of people in the boxes. You can choose which format you would like to complete – the questions or the grid.

Identify:

- any changes/additions you might make
- any problems you may have in completing them.

Task 2

Use the headings in the Workplace Profile and Workplace Report to find out as much information as you can about how your union organises in your workplace. You may get some of the answers by speaking to experienced reps or staff in your human resources department.

Report back

Elect someone to summarise and report back the key points of your discussion. You will be asked to explain your workplace profile to the rest of the group at the next session.

Estimated time: 1 hour

Workplace profile

Name of workplace:

Non-union members (potential)	
Union members	
Union rep(s)	
Temporary workers	
Part-time workers	
Workers under 25	
Male	
Female	
Total number of employees	
Number of shifts	
Different departments or sections	

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Workplace report

Members and potential members	• How many of your union members are there in the whole workplace? • How many potential members of your union are there in the workplace? • Where are the non-members concentrated (e.g. part-time workers, young workers, particular sites, departments or grades)?
Union reps	• Are there shop stewards/departmental reps for each section/area and/or shift in the workplace? • Are there safety reps for each section/area and/or shift in the workplace? • What union or TUC training have these representatives received?
ULRs	• Are there any learning reps? • What union(s) do they belong to? • What have they been doing to develop learning opportunities?
Organising and recruitment	• Is there a union rep with special responsibility for organising and recruitment? • Has your union at workplace/branch level carried out any organising and recruitment campaigns? • Does your union have an opportunity to contact new starters when they join the organisation? • Does the union have an adequate arrangement for facilities required (e.g. time off, access to internal mail, photocopying, etc.)?
Information	• What information does your union receive from your employer about new starters? • What information do new starters receive from your employer about the union? • What information does the union get from your employer about current union membership and location of the membership? • Do you know of any other workplaces in your area that are currently non-union or poorly organised?
Your priorities	• Try to discuss with others in the workplace or in the union (who may be involved in your organising activities) the main things that need to be done. If you come to the course with a clear idea of what you want to achieve then it will be much easier for you to use the course to help produce an organising plan for your workplace, sector or area. • Don't worry if you don't know what needs to be done. You will still get maximum benefit out of the course.

Workplace mapping

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- adapt an example of a workplace map to represent a specific plan of union and non-union members
- identify next steps to recruit members.

Tasks

You will be asked to work in a small group.

Task 1

Look at the examples of workplace maps showing the pattern of different areas of members and non-members.

Discuss how you can adapt the map to represent your own workplace. You need to think about showing:

- existing members
- areas that have no members
- areas that may require special attention, e.g. off-site provision, evening or shift work, agency staff
- areas that require a union or health and safety rep (you may also wish to think about whether a union learning rep would be useful to organise education and training opportunities)
- migrant/vulnerable workers.

Task 2

Draw a diagram/map to show the different sections of the workforce listed in Task 1. Examples of workplace maps are shown on the following pages.

Rank the different sections in order of importance for recruitment and organising. For example on a 1–5 scale with 1 as the most important, or by colour coding by using coloured stickers or felt pens.

Identify any problems you think you may encounter in mapping the workplace and suggest how you might overcome them.

Report back

Explain your map to the rest of the group. Elect someone to summarise and report back the key points of your discussion.

Estimated time: 1 hour 30 minutes

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Example of a workplace map (1)

Workplace name:

Each department/section can be represented as a box:



The box for each department should be of sufficient size to include all the information required. Ideally, boxes should be laid out to represent geographical reality; if this is not possible, they should reflect the production process as closely as possible.

Example: Issues/targets

- a. 100 per cent membership, day and evening shifts
- b. find out issues and problems of evening shift staff
- c. elect evening shift steward/health and safety rep
- d. find out about union training

Examples of completed boxes

Maintenance Department

Number of staff

3 x 8-hour shift, 12 on each shift

Breakdown of staff

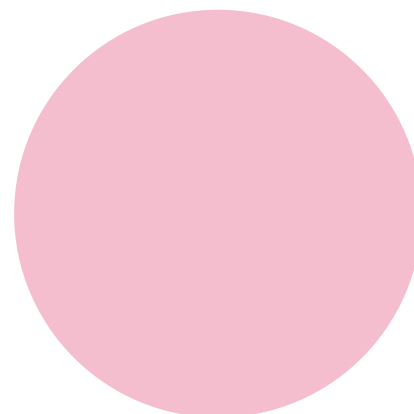
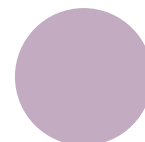
All male, 10 White British, 2 Black British

Union organisation

All members, 1 steward and 1 health & safety rep for each shift

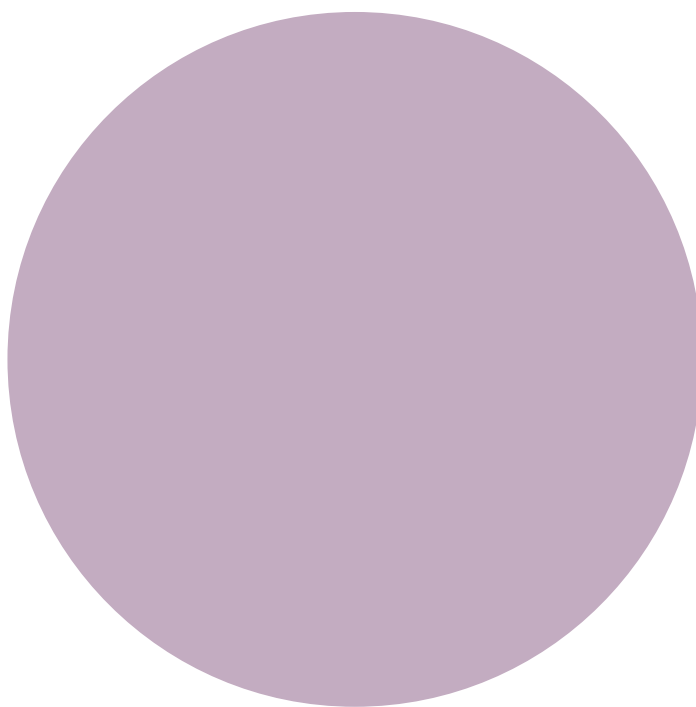
Union training

All TUC Stage 1 & 2, TUC H&S Stage 1 & 2



Production Department

Number of staff	35 8am–5pm, 10 5–9pm
Breakdown of staff in days	22 women (Indian and Pakistani), 13 men (all White British)
Breakdown of staff (evenings)	10 women (5 East European, 5 Black Caribbean)
Union organisation/members	Days: 18 (15 Indian and Pakistani women, 3 White British men) Evenings: 2 Black Caribbean members 1 day shift steward, white, male British; 1 day shift H&S rep, white, male British
Union training	Not known



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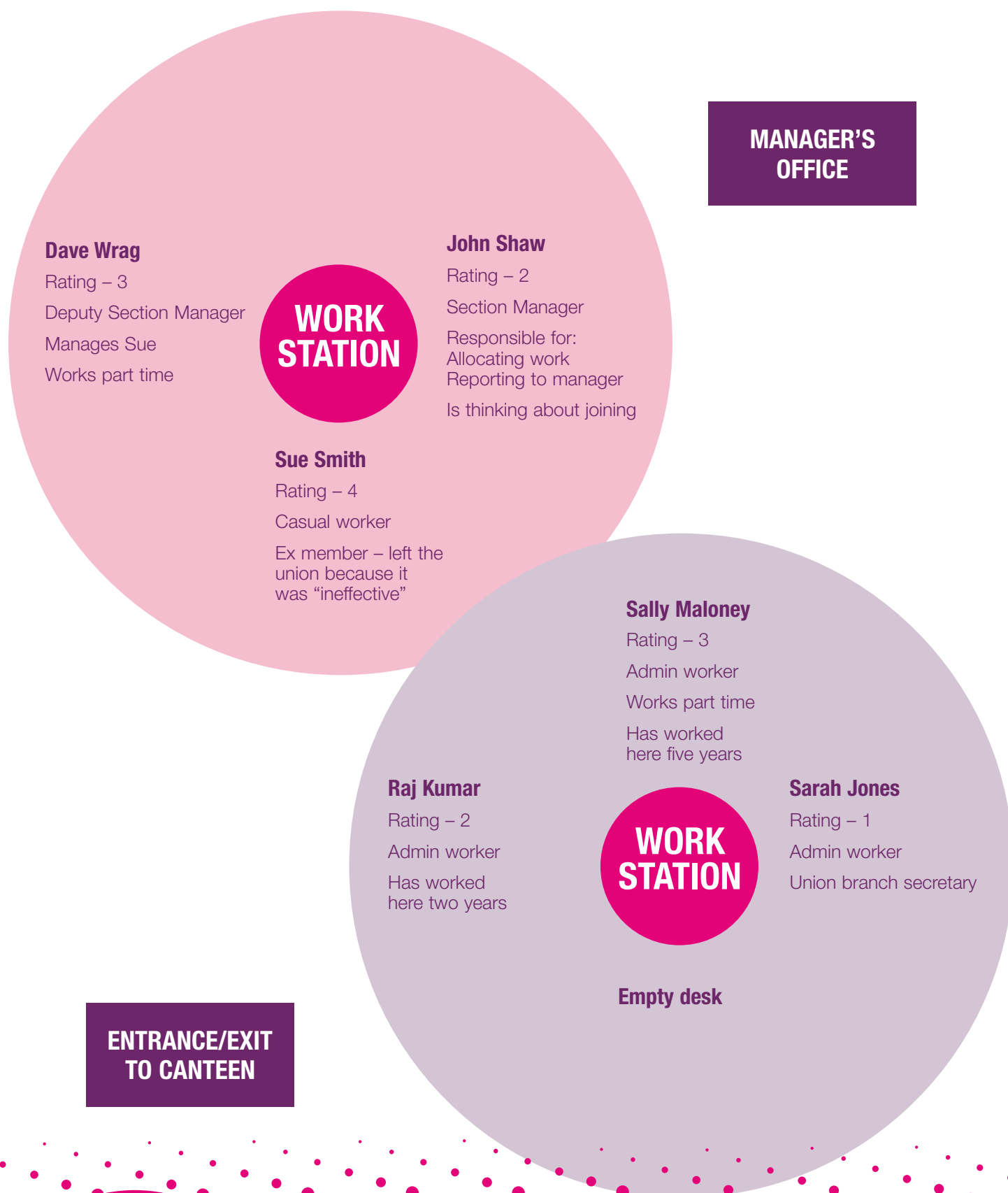
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Example of a workplace map (2)



Task 3

Organising analysis

Using the information from Task 1, try to make a realistic estimate of the percentage of members and potential members who fit into the following categories within your workplace:

Activists

(not just elected representatives but any member who undertakes any activities in support of the union)

 %

Supporters

(members who support the union but haven't taken any action to demonstrate it)

 %

Uncommitted

(members and non-members)

 %

Anti-union

(members and non-members)

 %

What do you need to do to improve the percentages in the top half of the box?
List three ways in which you could do this.

Resources

Workplace map

Estimated time: 1 hour

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Activity 12

Improving your recruitment skills – 10 good reasons to join the union

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- summarise key points to use to recruit members in special circumstances
- identify arguments to use to help people stay in the union
- identify best practice in recruiting members.

Tasks

Work in small groups.

Task 1

Make a list of what you might need to recruit someone to the union.

Task 2

Identify and discuss the 'Top 10' reasons to join the union for new and existing members in the following situations:

- a newly recognised unionised workplace
- migrant and vulnerable workers
- existing members where industrial relations may be difficult.

Task 3

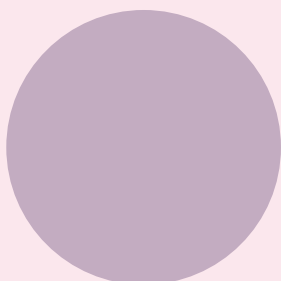
Decide how you would like to be approached to join the union.

Report back

Elect someone from the group to write the 10 points on a flipchart as a poster.

Elect another person to report back the key points from your discussion.

Estimated time: 45 minutes



Activity 13

Preparing to recruit

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- plan to recruit a member
- produce a checklist to use when you recruit a new member.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups or pairs and referring to your workplace map, decide who you will try to recruit. Will you go for the easiest first, or where there are most people, or where members have a particular problem?

Explain your decision about whom to recruit first.

Task 2

Draw up a checklist of guidelines for an effective recruitment interview, using the headings on the example on the next page.

Report back

Elect a spokesperson to explain your interview checklist to the rest of the class.

Estimated time: 1 hour

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Guidelines for an effective recruitment interview

What do I need to know about the person I wish to recruit?
How will I introduce myself?
What issues might they raise?
What information do I have about these issues?
Are there current issues at work I could usefully introduce, if necessary?
How will I show that I am listening to them and that I understand?
Do I need to be aware of any language/cultural barriers?
What should I do to help me with this?
What union materials/resources do I have that will help?
What else do I need to have?
Do I know what will happen when they join (i.e. process of membership, next meetings, newsletters etc.)?
What can I ask them to do that will get them involved?
If they don't want to sign up, what can I do to ensure I arrange to go back to talk to them again?
How will I end the meeting?

One-to-one recruitment

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- recruit a member
- improve speaking and listening skills.

Tasks

Task 1

You will be divided into groups of three, with each in the group playing a different role:

- the union rep/activist
- the non-member
- the observer

Using the information from your recruitment checklist, recruit the person to the union.

Report back

The observer will watch the meeting and take notes, using the checklist on the next page, and then report back at the end of the meeting.

Task 2

Before the next session of the course, recruit someone to the union.

Report back

Who did you approach and why?

What recruitment methods and resources did you use?

What response did you have?

Did you have to answer any awkward questions?

What might you do differently next time?

Estimated time for Task 1

15 minutes for the interview and 5 minutes report back from each group of three people.

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Observer's checklist – One-to-one recruitment

Did the rep/activist introduce themselves?
Did they have a friendly manner?
Did they use arguments well? Were they persuasive?
Did they listen well?
Did they answer the person's questions?
Did they have any difficult issues/arguments to respond to?
How did they promote the union?
Did they use any documentation or information?
What was the outcome of the meeting?
Did they suggest any follow-up activity?

Signing the union form

Be aware of the different ways that workers sign up to the union. Generally, most will not sign the form straight away, or when you are leafleting them. However, some are so keen to join they will sign straight away.

- Always carry application forms and a pen with you.
- Don't let people take the form home with them – they usually forget to fill it in or lose it.
- You might have to help some workers to complete the form if they have difficulties with writing. Be aware of reasons not to sign (e.g. 'I've forgotten my glasses').
- Think about getting some application forms and recruitment posters translated into other languages if you have workers from different ethnic groups.
- When you sign up a new member, ask them if they will take one or two more forms to sign up their workmates. Never give them too many as this may overwhelm them.
- If the person does not have their bank account details, get them to fill in the rest of the form and sign the direct debit form. Arrange a time for them to see you with the missing details (this is another chance to have a chat with them and say a bit more about union activities).
- The same goes if a person says they want to go away and think about joining – arrange the next meeting time.
- Don't be disheartened if it takes some time to recruit your first new members. It often takes time and maybe some union successes to get people to join.
- Workers are more likely to join if they see the union is active and relevant to their needs, so plan your recruitment strategy carefully alongside some other union event or activity.

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Some phrases to use during one-to-one recruiting

Introduction – who you are and why you're there.

We are concerned about...

Some people have contacted us about....

We've been talking to some other people and...

We've been trying to get people together to....

Basic information – learn about the worker and workplace

How long have you been working here?

What's your job/role?

How long have you worked in this industry?

How many other people work here?

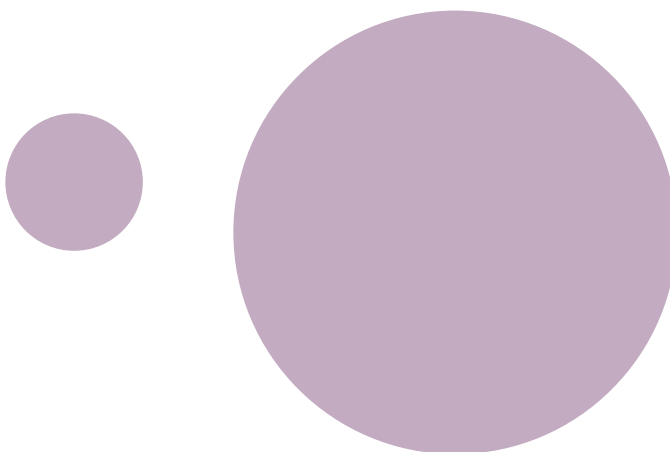
Issues

Identify issues by using questions:

- How are things going here at work?
- What's changed here recently/over the last...?
- What's good about working here?
- What would you change if you could?

If you are already aware of an issue:

- Are you worried about...?
- What's happening about...?
- Who else could be affected?
- How do you think you and your workmates could be affected by...?



Developing listening skills

An effective union organiser is a good communicator. Listening is something everyone does every day, though unfortunately few people are good listeners. Researchers claim that 75 per cent of spoken communication is ignored, misunderstood or quickly forgotten. It is therefore important for union organisers to become good listeners.

Here are 11 points to help improve your listening and communication skills:

- 1** Hearing isn't listening – hearing the words doesn't necessarily mean you are listening. You hear with your ears but you also listen with your mind.
- 2** Stop talking – you can't listen while you are talking.
- 3** Share responsibility – you have an important part to play in the communication process.
- 4** Listen actively – commit yourself to receiving accurately the other person's ideas, facts and opinions. Don't shut your ears and eyes.
- 5** Look at them – 'listen' to the non-verbal signals as well.
- 6** Listen with empathy – for the time being put yourself in the other person's place. This will stop you from interrupting and forgetting how difficult it is to think and talk at the same time.
- 7** Reinforce the speaker – show you are listening by, for example, nodding, saying 'yes', paraphrasing and so on.
- 8** Use your spare time. The speaker will be talking at about 100–150 words per minute: you can absorb 450–500 words a minute. Try to use this spare capacity by anticipating what is coming next, reviewing what has been said and keeping track of your feelings.

9 Recognise your own bias – allow for any prejudice you have towards the speaker, the subject, the occasion etc. Don't make assumptions or jump to conclusions.

10 Basic tips on body language:

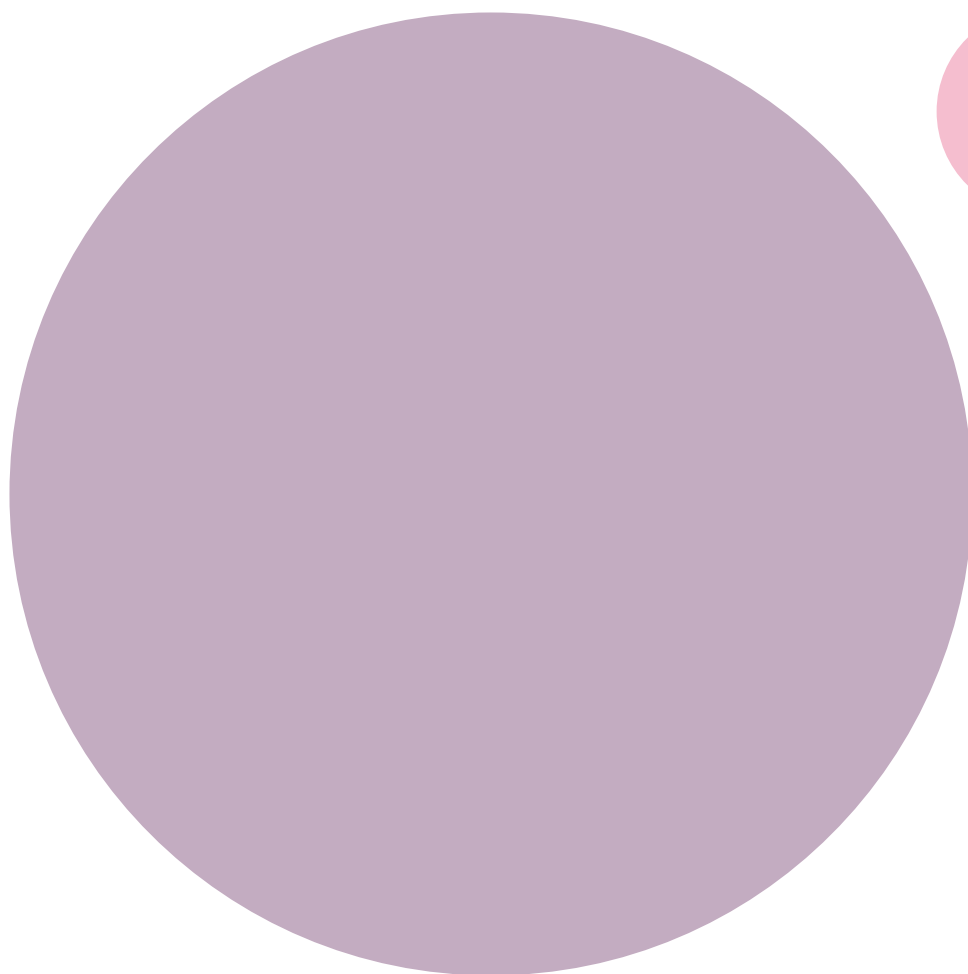
- face the person squarely
- adopt an open posture
- lean slightly towards the person you are listening to
- keep good eye contact
- try to be relaxed

11 Remember this formula:

Listen with your ears for what is said.

Listen with your eyes for what is unsaid.

Listen with your mind for the message.



Influencing skills – persuading people to join

Once all your preparation is complete, you will need to talk to individual non-members and persuade them to join the union.

In general, organisers have learned that they can influence non-members to join up when their unions:

- adopt a **campaigning** approach to sorting out problems in a specific workplace
- have **credibility** with non-members
- make a **commitment** to organising a workplace
- and actively **contact** non-members on a regular basis.

However there are a number of specific techniques you can adopt to help you influence someone to take the step and join up.

Listen An effective organiser starts off any conversation with a non-member with open questions about how they feel about their work, and then actively listens to the answers that person gives. This is because when a non-member opens up and starts talking to you, they very often provide you with all the information you need to recruit them. As a rule of thumb, you should expect to be listening and not talking for about two-thirds of the time in any recruitment situation.

Remove the barriers There are many barriers in the way of people joining a union and the effective organiser aims to remove as many of them as possible. Consider how you present yourself to the non-member and the language you use. You need to be assertive and clear in your arguments – but not so pushy that you frighten them off. A good technique is to use inclusive language such as ‘our union’ or ‘your union’. You need to avoid union jargon and illustrate your arguments with real-life examples of how the union has been effective in their workplace. You also need to consider the recruitment material to use and if you need to produce your own to supplement the forms produced by your union.

Focus on the issue You should already have identified the main issues that affect the workforce. They tend to be the issues people talk about in the canteen or on the way home from work. You should try to steer the conversation round to the issue and the unions’ strategy for sorting the problem out. It is useful to have this strategy prepared beforehand.

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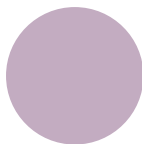
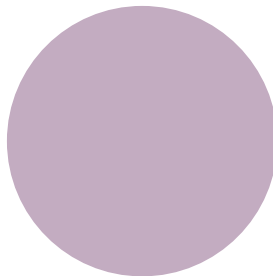
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Be confident Talking with some knowledge and experience about how you might expect the employer to respond, and using this to reassure potential members, can be a persuasive technique.

Be empathetic A powerful influencing technique can be to explain how you joined the union and became an active member, including your experience of the union and its achievements.

Be honest It is an important part of achieving credibility with a potential member that you are honest with them, particularly when they criticise the union. No organisation can be perfect and we will not be trusted by the potential member if we try to claim that our union is. It is also important to remember that you do not need to know the answer to every question you may be asked. If you don't know the answer to a question, promise to find out and get back to them.

Be accessible Always be looking for ways to make it easy to join your union. This might mean arranging to meet non-members in the canteen every Tuesday lunchtime, or making a phone number available for non-members to contact.



Review of one-to-one recruitment

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- review your recruitment skills
- compare the outcomes of your recruitment.

Task

Working in small groups, discuss:

- what you learned from the recruitment process
- whether you will do things differently next time
- dos and don'ts points to improve your next recruitment exercise.

Report back

Your tutor will help you draw up a checklist of points with the whole group.

Estimated time: 40 minutes

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Section 4

Organising for union reps, ULRs and full-time officers

The purpose of this section is to encourage union reps, ULRs and professional officers in the union to work together to develop the learning and organising agenda.

It aims to:

- give an overview of the main issues and arguments concerning the organising and servicing models
- introduce the materials and the pack and how they can be used in a flexible way
- make the link between learning and organising
- provide some training on running short education sessions.

If you are a union rep or officer and aim to run or have been asked to run specific union courses or a number of courses you should talk to your unionlearn Regional Education Officer to arrange a briefing for union officers, either as a group or on a one-to-one basis. It is essential that the union knows about planned organising and recruitment activities in local workplaces so that reps, ULRs and activists have the full support of their rep, branch and officer and are able to obtain the union information they require.

Activity 16

Overview of learning and organising materials

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- become familiar with the learning and organising pack
- identify the main issues for learning and organising in your workplace.
- identify useful activities for your union
- decide which activities could be used with different groups of members and potential members

Tasks

Task 1

Your tutor will give you an overview of the materials.

Using the materials pack and the worksheet on the next page, identify the main issues for learning and organising in your workplace.

Task 2

Referring to the materials pack, identify two activities that you could use with members or potential members. Use the worksheet 'Planning a session' to plan your session.

Task 3

What factors make organising and recruitment education/discussion sessions effective for members and potential members?

Report back

Explain your plan to the rest of the group.

Write your key points for Task 3 on a flipchart and elect a spokesperson to report back.

Estimated time: 1 hour 30 minutes

Worksheet: Overview of learning and organising materials

What are the main learning and organising messages?
How can you embed learning and organising into your work regionally/nationally?
How can learning support organising campaigns and initiatives?
Integrating learning and organising into training and support for workplace reps
Integrating ULRs into branch structures
Measuring impact (collecting evidence/case studies)
Further support

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Worksheet: Planning a session

Activity title

Target group

How long will the session be?

What main message will you be trying to get across?

Are any resources required (e.g. information sheets, union recruitment literature)?

Are there any problems or issues you may face in running this activity?

Organising and learning – making the link

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- consider the union role in developing learning opportunities at work
- identify how learning can help build the union.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups, look at the statements below. Say whether you agree or disagree and give your reasons:

- Learning has nothing to do with organising.
- Agency and casual staff don't need training – they're not here long enough.
- Management doesn't think unions have anything to do with learning, skills and training.
- Some union representatives have had plenty of training and don't need to learn how to organise.
- Unions can benefit from recruiting and organising migrant workers and providing them with a wide range of learning opportunities, but unions don't know how to go about it.
- Union learning representatives are just a passing fad and don't have any clout to make changes in the workplace.

Report back

Version 1

Write your key points on a flipchart. Elect a spokesperson to report back

Version 2

Your tutor will place six flipcharts on the wall, one for each of the statements. Each group then writes a summary of its views on a post-it note and places it on the appropriate flipchart (or writes directly on the flipchart). Your tutor will summarise the key points and ask for explanations from the groups as required.

Task 2

Make a note of three things you can do when back at work to link learning with your organising plans.

Estimated time: 40 minutes

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Activity 18

Organising for union reps

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify ways to get union reps involved in learning and organising
- compare ways to get ULRs involved with union reps
- decide what union reps need to help them in their role.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups, list the arguments you would use to counter these statements from a union rep.

- There's no need to organise members – they join anyway!
- We've given up trying to recruit new members as there's such a turnover of staff and we don't see each other much because all the shifts are different.
- Leave the organising of learning to ULRs; that's what they were brought in for!
- I'm fed up of talking to ULRs. They don't have an interest in the union and just want to do their own thing.

List the arguments you would use to counter these statements from a ULR:

- I'm only interested in developing learning at work and I have initiated everything myself. The union rep hasn't helped me at all.
- I don't want to be political; I just want to promote learning.
- I did my ULR training but I haven't heard anything from the union for six months!
- We have this great learning centre with all the facilities but hardly anyone is using it.

Task 2

You will be asked to talk to one or two union reps and ULRs at your workplace. Try to get a mix of experience – new reps, existing reps, ULRs and so on.

Plan the questions you will ask to help you find out their main concerns and what help, support and training they would like to help them in their role as union rep or ULR.

Report back

Your tutor will help you draw up a checklist of points with the whole group.

Estimated time: 40 minutes

Building effective teams and networks

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- build up your team
- identify methods to involve members.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups, use the worksheet 'Building effective teams and networks' on the next page.

- Identify the value of developing teams and networks.
- List the main skills, qualities and knowledge that each role brings to the union team.

Task 2

Identify any priority groups that need particular support or encouragement to get them more involved in the team approach.

Which of the recruitment/organising tools on the checklist on the following page would be most effective for your priority groups?

How could this be done?

Estimated time: 1 hour 15 minutes

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Worksheet: Building effective teams and networks

Union full-time officers					
Union project workers					
Members					
ULRs					
Union reps					
	Skills, qualities, knowledge	Target areas for organising and recruitment in your union	How to involve more reps in organising and recruitment activities	Further training required	Other facilities/help you need

Checklist: Which recruitment/organising tools would be most effective in your workplace?

- ☐ Written communication
- ☐ Survey
- ☐ Questionnaire
- ☐ Written quiz
- ☐ Quiz night
- ☐ Union post-its – ‘I called to talk to you about the union but you were out’
- ☐ Union postcard(s)
- ☐ Newsletter
- ☐ A recruitment leaflet for different workers or in different languages
- ☐ Signing a petition
- ☐ Fax-ins
- ☐ A targeted communication to focus on getting more reps, safety reps, ULRs, women, black members
- ☐ Electronic communication
- ☐ An electronic singing postcard
- ☐ email
- ☐ Text messaging
- ☐ A union blog
- ☐ Wall charts
- ☐ A union success poster with blank centre for news item to be displayed
- ☐ A membership recruitment progress chart
- ☐ An issue-based campaign
- ☐ T-shirts
- ☐ Stickers, badges, mugs
- ☐ Training and discussion groups
- ☐ Lunchtime learning groups or late-night learning groups
- ☐ Members training in recruiting and organising
- ☐ e-learning
- ☐ Organising displays/events about learning opportunities
- ☐ Organising open days to union learning centres
- ☐ Visits or social events to encourage members and their families to participate (e.g. Tolpuddle Martyrs Memorial or Respect Festivals)
- ☐ Inviting a speaker to the meeting/branch
- ☐ Negotiating a learning agreement with a view to offering workplace learning

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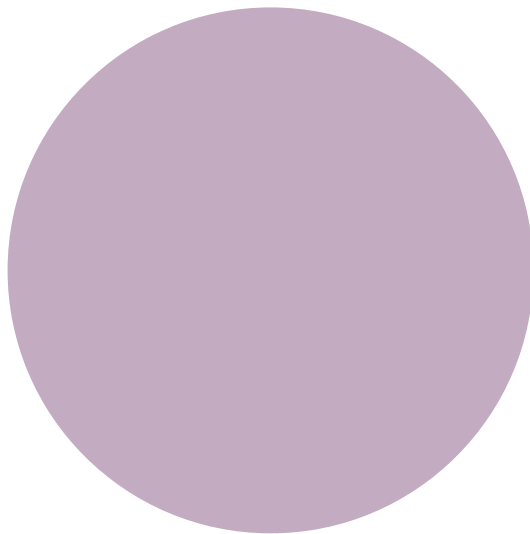
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How to encourage people to volunteer

Ask them!

Few people will volunteer their service out of the blue. This does not mean they don't want to be active – it's just that people wait to be asked. So ask them. Asking builds activity, and activity builds commitment.

- Ask in person rather than over the phone.
- Make it clear what job you are asking someone to do.
- Ask volunteers to do things they can do well.
- Tell each volunteer how their job fits in with the rest.
- Let each volunteer know that their particular help is needed.
- Discuss their own difficulties.
- Ask what they would like to know.
- Be enthusiastic about the importance of the work.



Top tips: Building teams and networks

The employer's response

1 Buying the problem

This might involve anything from improving pay and conditions to introducing performance pay systems to improving marginal benefits such as the canteen.

2 Buying the main activists

This may take many forms including promotion, improving shift allowances and access to overtime.

3 Playing the loyalty card

Some employers will argue that the union is an outsider or 'third party' with no knowledge of their business or workplace and that the workforce interest lies in remaining 'loyal' to the employer. By implication promotion and other long-term benefits related to length of service are threatened.

4 Anti-union propaganda

By exploiting its unique access to the workforce, an employer can try to counter the arguments put forward by workers for forming a union. It is often best to assume that one or more of the potential members you are working with will report this information to managers. In unrecognised workplaces, management often asserts that the union will never be recognised and that, in any case, nothing can be achieved in the face of hostile legislation.

5 Losing business

Some employers will argue that customers or service users will be hostile or suspicious if a union is seen to run the operation. Managers claim that this will lead to a loss of business and ultimately jobs as the organisation becomes inefficient or uncompetitive.

6 The direct attack

New members and activists are sacked on a pretext. This is often coupled with assertions that members of the workforce have no right to join a union and the same will happen to them. Often it's a calculated gamble by the employer that the union will not be strong enough to secure reinstatement. It can also take the form of warnings or disciplinary action over the use of the employer's time and resources for meetings.

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7 Restructuring

In particular, to increase the number of staff on short-term, zero-hours or casual contracts.

8 Divide and rule

This sometimes involves appraisal, performance pay or bonus systems designed to generally encourage competition between people at work.

9 The employee forum

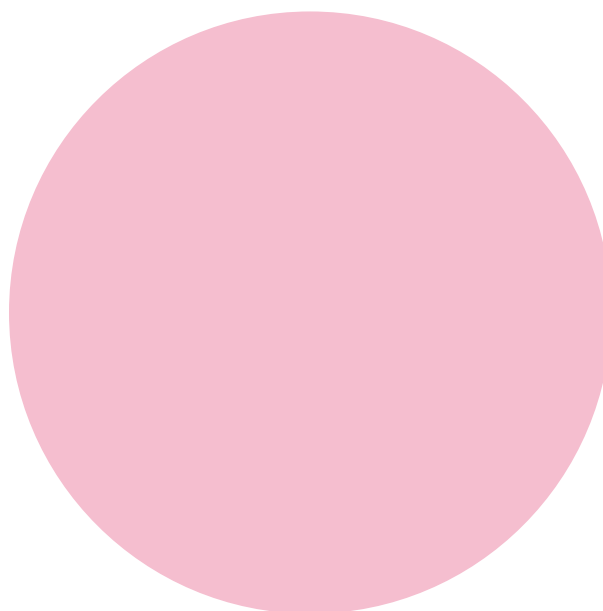
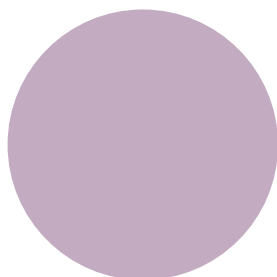
Called by a creative array of names, such bodies aim to give the appearance of consultation but can act to convince people that a union is unnecessary and costly.

10 Pride

Some employers and managers take the forming of their workforce into a union as a personal threat and insult. This can result in the deliberate withdrawal of fringe benefits explicitly as a result of the emergence of the union.

11 Using 'union-busters'

Some employers may engage consultants or 'union avoidance' experts to help undermine the union's organising campaign.



Be SMART

Before taking the first steps to achieve your aims, set yourself objectives. If done with some thought such objectives could be a useful tool and guide throughout the process of a project – particularly when you need to stand back and review your progress.

To be useful, each objective you set yourself should be SMART:

Specific

Identify the target for the project – e.g. we will organise the workforce in Harris's in the High Street.

Measurable

Quantify your targets – e.g. we will achieve 75 per cent membership/25 new members.

Achievable

Identify how you will do it – e.g. by using a dedicated organiser or a retired union member.

Realistic

Identify your resources and set the objective in context – e.g. in partnership with the union organising campaign and supported by the organising office.

Time bound

Set the period of time and review your progress at this point – e.g. by 21 September.

For example, the SMART objective could be written down as follows:

'By 21st September we will organise 75 per cent of the workforce at Harris's in the High Street into a union, using a retired member backed up by our organising office and with the support of the union organising and recruitment initiative.'

On reviewing progress towards this objective, the SMART model can assist you to identify problems, assess new information and set a new objective.

Some organisers find it useful to carry this model in their heads and to run through it almost unconsciously each time they begin a project. Others find it useful to write each objective down and use it as an administrative tool to stay on top of many projects at once.

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Organising teams

Organising workplaces into a union is often most effectively done by enlisting help from other people involved with, associated with, or with an interest in organising the workforce. The successful organiser will work with all individuals with a contribution to make and manage their efforts to ensure they are working to the same goal – recruiting members and organising the union.

Who might be in the team?

An organising team is not necessarily a fixed group of people employed by or members of the union – though this may be your core group.

A typical team would consist of:

- yourself
- the main contact inside the union for legal support, representation and advice
- any existing members of your union in the workplace
- other lay organisers under your direction
- members and officers of other unions in the same workplace.

Members of the team will probably come and go at different stages of any organising project. The most successful organising teams are loose and flexible, but clear about their goal.

Who else could help?

Outside of the organising team, a wider group of individuals can often be drawn upon and influenced to help. At any one time, you may consider local politicians, journalists, members of the public, other union members, users of the service or customers of the business – or practically anyone as a member of this wider group if they could help you recruit.

Remember: people do not need to consider themselves as part of your team to help you. Many, such as journalists and politicians, will have their own agenda but can still be influenced to act in ways that assist your objective. Do not discount the contribution they can make.

With both the core group and this looser collection of individuals your job is exactly the same – to be responsible for coordinating all contributions to achieve the bottom line – new members and an organised workplace that is recognised by the employer.

Making the organising team work

Recognise the context. When running an organising project you will need to work out how best to manage both your team and any wider groups of individuals who may be assisting you.

It may be useful to bear the following points in mind:

- It is probable that not every member of your team will have daily contact with all the others. This gives you, as the organiser and leader of the team, an extra communications role to keep everyone on board.
- Depending on your circumstances, you may need to focus on more than one organising project at a time and will have to split your time between leading a number of different teams.
- The majority of your team may well be volunteers. Those outside the workplace who are helping may also have a wider set of aims. Make sure everyone is committed to a clear agenda. The union will have clear ideas on how it wishes to approach the organising project.
- You need to lead and manage the team from the front.

Techniques for organising teams effectively

You will adopt and develop your own style and approach for managing the teams you need to lead and will probably adopt different styles for different teams. The following tips may be helpful:

- Have a clear plan for the project: detailed in the short term; broader in the medium term; and general in the long term. Make sure everyone in the team has bought into it, and review it regularly.
- Give team members as much autonomy as possible over the tasks they adopt in the team. As team leader, try to focus the team members on 'ends' rather than 'means'.
- Take action to give the team some form of shared identity. This may mean regular (if infrequent) formal or informal meetings.
- Agree SMART objectives among the team for the project as a whole. SMART = Specific Measurable Achievable Reachable Time bound.
- Have regular discussions with individual team members and don't forget to listen.

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Activity 20

Organising leaders and mentors

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify key qualities you are looking for in your team
- plan a strategy for finding and developing leaders and mentors.

Task 1

You will be asked to work in a small group.

Choose one type of organiser, project worker, mentor, union learning rep or other person who is necessary to improve organising and learning in your workplace or union.

- What qualities do you feel are needed to make them effective for the role you have chosen?
- What help and support should they have and from whom?
- What are the first steps to helping someone start to take an active part in the role you have chosen?

Report back

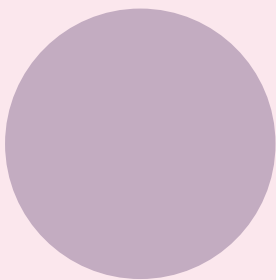
Appoint a spokesperson to report back your key points to the rest of the group.

Task 2

Talk to someone at work who you think has the qualities you have identified and discuss with them about getting involved as part of your team.

Report back to the next session of the course on how successful you were.

Estimated time: 1 hour



Finding natural leaders

Good leaders could be people who:

- are respected, trusted and liked by other workers
- have challenged management and have shown good judgement when it's been appropriate to do so
- have a good work record
- organise social events and activities
- are involved with outside community organisations
- speak up at meetings and show common sense
- have participated in and are a product of lifelong learning and are the best advocates to others
- have shown a commitment to others
- have had union involvement elsewhere
- other workers turn to for support and advice
- have special skills to help you communicate with ethnic groups, shift workers etc.
- are union-issue orientated
- are self motivated
- are representative of their fellow workers in terms of gender and race.

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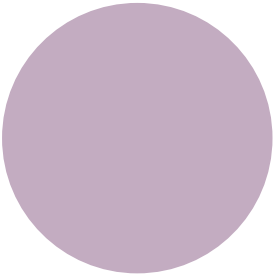
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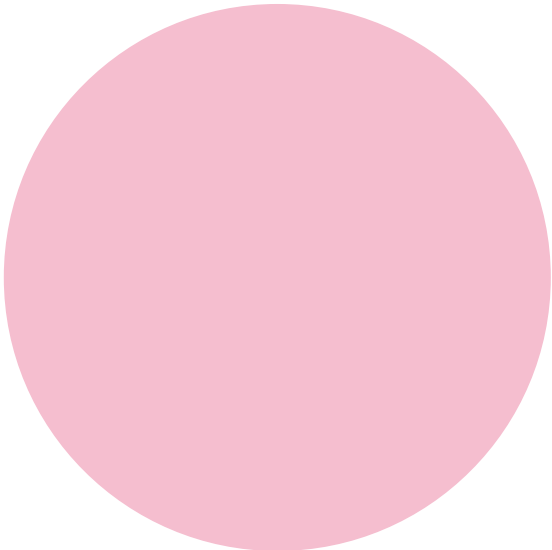
Mentoring and building union support



Mentoring is a way of assisting people to understand more about the union and to encourage them to start in a small way with helping in the union, and gradually increasing their confidence and skills to become more involved.

Think about when you first knew about the union and all the questions that you may have been reluctant to ask or did not know whom to approach. Mentors can provide a focus and information point for the union in a workplace.

The benefits to individuals and small groups that mentors provide include:

- the opportunity to promote a local face in the union
 - support to individuals, as mentoring encourages sharing of difficult situations and good practice
 - enabling potential union activists and reps to fulfil their potential quickly
 - ironing out unnecessary errors and mistakes by talking processes and procedures through
 - encouraging networks to develop team working
 - listening
 - encouraging self-confidence
 - allocating manageable union tasks
 - providing advice and different ideas and options to tackle a problem
 - exploring new experiences and ways of campaigning or taking up issues
 - providing a role model upon which others can base their activities.
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Issue-based advice and campaigns – keeping members in the union

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- encourage union reps to get involved in the learning agenda
- identify issues that members care about
- use employment information and legislation to advise and guide members and solve problems.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups, make a list of key problems facing members at work.

Some examples might be:

- rights for agency/part-time staff
- lack of fair or proper procedures
- no voice or respect at work
- health and safety
- training opportunities
- discrimination
- bullying and harassment
- written statements and contracts
- pay
- long working hours
- work/life balance

Task 2

Choose one issue and use the resources and information on employment rights to plan a campaign, event or advice session for members.

Use the 'Problem information plan' worksheet on page 81 to plan how you would use the information to:

- inform members (you can use one sheet for each problem)
- involve union reps or health and safety reps.

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Report back

Another person on the course can use the Review Sheet 'Issue-based advice and campaigns' to evaluate your plan.

or

Working in small groups, look through some recent publications from your union (e.g. the union journal, health and safety newsletters, or the TUC *Know Your Rights* book or other unionlearn publications.

Choose an issue that you think would interest members or that you know concerns them.

You have to give a talk lasting up to 20 minutes (including time for questions) during a lunch break to inform members about your issue. Think about:

- which members you are aiming at
- how you would introduce your issue to members and non-members
- different formats to use (e.g. a short talk, handouts, posters, questions and answers, most frequently asked questions, diagrams, a flowchart, checklists)
- any action you want members to take

Give your talk to the rest of the group, who will be the members/potential members.

Report back

The members/potential members will use the Review Sheet 'Issue-based advice and campaigns' on the next page to report back on the strengths and weaknesses of your approach.

Estimated time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Worksheet: Problem information plan

Problem
Information/investigation
Plan – short term – long term
Which union reps will be involved? What will they be asked to do?
What will ULRs be asked to do?
How you will communicate the information and your plan to members?

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Review sheet: Issue-based advice and campaigns

	Strengths	Weaknesses
Interest		
Background and information		
Voice and body language		
Visual resources		
Promotion of the union		
Answering questions		

Resources: the TUC's *Know Your Rights* book, articles from union journals and unionlearn publications

Organising a campaign

At some point or other you may be involved in co-ordinating a campaign in support of an organising project you are engaged in. The following model may prove helpful in planning a campaign, keeping it on track and achieving the desired result. The key principles are targeting and discipline.

Steps to a successful campaign:

- 1 Secure appropriate resources for the campaign from your union.
- 2 Set out and agree the objective of the campaign.
- 3 Work out who has the power to grant this objective – the target.
- 4 Define the weak spots and the groups that can put pressure on them in favour of your objective.
- 5 Focus all your energy on mobilising and motivating these groups. Don't waste time on organisations or individuals who can put no effective pressure on the target.*
- 6 Make it clear to the target who is behind the campaign and what the objective is and, most importantly, what they need to do to persuade you to take off the pressure.
- 7 Secure your objective and publicise it.

*As you get to point 5, you should consider the following campaign activities:

Mobilise active support for the campaign from within this group

You should consider: leafleting; mail shots; phone calls; social events; targeted meetings; seminars; workshops; conferences; securing speaking engagements; competitions; letter writing; paid advertising and posters; vigils; marches; rallies; working to contract/rule or other industrial action; occupation; telephone trees.

Explain the campaign and its objectives to this group

You should consider: public/street meetings; media campaigns including press, TV and radio; regular campaign briefings; placing articles and targeted press releases from your organisation and from any 'fronts' that you set up; lobbying; getting on radio phone-ins; paid advertising and posters.

Demonstrate the level of support for the campaign and put pressure on the target

You should consider: letter writing; doorstepping; rallies; vigils; formal or informal industrial action; lobbying; boycotts; legal challenges; party political campaigns.

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Activity 22

Officers supporting the learning and organising agenda

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- review current learning and organising practice
- identify implications for the union and union officers
- highlight useful activities to help support the learning and organising agenda.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups, identify links between learning and organising in your union and give one or two examples.

Discuss:

- why they have been successful
- what have been their weaknesses
- why it is worth investing time on learning as part of an organising strategy
- what the implications are for you as an officer and for your union
- what else could be done to link learning and organising in your union.

Task 2

Look at Section 1 of this book – Introduction, Contents and How to Use the Materials.

Which activities would be useful for you to help support the learning and organising agenda in your union?

Report back

Your tutor will help you draw up a checklist of points with the whole group.

Estimated time: 1 hour 15 minutes

Organising in newly recognised workplaces

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify recruitment strategies in a newly recognised workplace
- plan a step-by-step recruitment campaign to address barriers you may encounter.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups, each person will be asked to give a 2-minute outline briefing to the rest of the group on a company or organisation they know well. Pick a real-life example that you are familiar with.

You might want to think about choosing:

- a greenfield site
- an organisation with a weak or an inactive level of union organisation
- an organisation that has some union activity but has not yet developed the learning agenda.

The 2-minute background briefing should just set the scene and cover the following points:

- the name of the company
- where it is located
- what it does – the services or products it provides.

The members of the group can ask questions to enable them to draw a map of the workplace and work out strategies to help recruitment. You should answer the questions as honestly as possible, but answer only the question asked and do not volunteer any additional information that has not been requested.

Task 2

Working in small groups:

- identify the barriers that may be encountered in recruiting and organising in the workplace you have heard about
- draw up a step-by-step recruitment campaign to help overcome these barriers.

Report back

Write your key points on a flipchart. Elect a spokesperson to report back.

Estimated time: 1 hour 30 minutes

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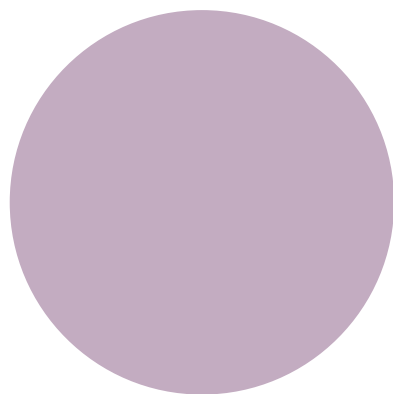
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Identifying activists

Good workplace organisation depends on active members and representatives. An effective recruiter/organiser will be conscious of different ways to ask people to become involved.

- Find out what interests people and what they are involved in.
- Find out about workers who have challenged management and have shown good judgement.
- Involve yourself with people who organise social events and activities they might also be prepared to do for the union.
- Target people who seem 'natural leaders' in a group of friends or people who are respected, trusted and liked by other workers, or who speak out.
- Identify people who help others and don't do things just for themselves.
- Be aware of people to whom others turn for help or guidance.
- Use people who speak other languages who could talk to different groups of workers – make a point of talking to them.
- Play 'devil's advocate' to stimulate discussion on a topical situation.
- Always carry recruitment leaflets and a pen with you, or something new that the union has produced, such as stickers or badges.



Tasks you can ask a potential activist to do

Ask them how they think they can help, what they feel comfortable with, and how much time they have. Tasks should be manageable and achievable and you should accompany them if necessary.

Ask them to:

- distribute contact cards
- create a map of their section showing members and non-members and a list of those whom they wish to start to recruit
- approach three people to find out what is good and bad about the workplace
- get others to complete a survey or petition
- ask others to join the union and help fill in application forms
- put up union posters
- ask a person to attend a branch meeting
- ask people who have computer skills to help you put together leaflets, newsletters etc.
- involve people in a campaign/exhibition/union education event.

Always go back and see how they felt about the activity. Identify any problems and work out how they can overcome them.

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Section 5

Organising for health and safety

The purpose of this section is to encourage activity and support for organising, recruitment and learning in a health and safety context.

It aims to:

- identify what makes an effective and strong health and safety organisation
- involve members in health and safety issues so that they take the first step to becoming union safety reps
- show that health and safety is a key area in which to develop an interest in learning and research
- show that safety reps do make a difference and organised workplaces have half the injury rate of those without a union
- promote health and safety as one of the main reasons why people join trade unions
- encourage safety reps to identify learning opportunities to promote interest in the union.

Activity 24

Linking learning and organising in health and safety

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify how to use health and safety issues to recruit and encourage new safety reps
- use learning opportunities to improve health and safety organisation
- develop a range of methods to build interest on specific health and safety issues.

Task

Working in groups, discuss how you would approach the following situations to recruit and encourage new safety reps. Identify a range of methods you could use to develop their interest, e.g. a workplace campaign, mentoring, learning/training opportunities.

- A worker has written to the union on behalf of a group of migrant workers complaining about the bad working conditions on site. They want to join the union and when they said they would be contacting the union the employer just laughed and told them they could leave as there are plenty of others who need a job.
- A group of women members come to you to tell you that one or two of them have been disciplined for taking days off with health disorders linked to the menopause. Neither management nor the union is taking them seriously and seems embarrassed to discuss their issues.
- A group of members have an issue around the heavy packages they are expected to carry. They want to know more about the regulations and the employer has refused to let them see the risk assessment.
- A group of apprentices want to join the union but their supervisor says they are only trainees and getting involved in the union will make it harder for them to get a job.

Report back

Explain why you have chosen your different strategies and why.

Estimated time: 50 minutes

Reviewing and improving health and safety rep organisation

Aims

This activity will help you:

- review your health and safety rep organisation
- identify improvements and organising methods that will help.

Task

Working in small groups, complete the questionnaire 'Organisation of safety reps' on the next page.

Identify:

- the main strengths and weaknesses of your health and safety rep organisation
- ways to improve your health and safety rep organisation.

Report back

List your main points on a flipchart and prioritise your improvements in the order that you intend to tackle them.

Estimated time: 50 minutes

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Questionnaire: Organisation of safety reps

Have all safety representatives had training opportunities made available to them?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are employers properly notified of all safety representative appointments?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Does every safety representative have a clear constituency?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do the safety representatives feel they have been provided with the support they need to carry out their role?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Does the branch have a health and safety officer?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are the safety representatives allowed sufficient time off to carry out their duties?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Does your branch regularly talk to safety representatives to find out if there are problems?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Does the branch get regular reports on health and safety issues?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Are health and safety issues considered when bargaining issues such as reorganisations are discussed?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do safety reps organise workplace campaigns and events?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Do safety representatives get involved in campaigns and events outside the workplace?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Identifying and developing health and safety reps

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify the main obstacles to identifying and recruiting new safety representatives
- think about ways of overcoming these obstacles.

Tasks

Task 1

Discuss and identify the main obstacles to recruiting new safety representatives.

List them on a flipchart, then think about ways of overcoming these obstacles.

Consider:

- how the branch can support safety representatives
- the role of safety reps and how they relate to stewards and ULRs
- the expectations placed on safety representatives.

Task 2

Your tutor will allocate you a case study to consider in pairs. Your task is to work out an approach to identify and develop one or more safety representatives in the situation described.

Report back

Report back to the whole group.

Task 3

Consider the reports of the different groups and discuss those things that your branch currently achieves in relation to both branch support and relationship with members. How could these be improved? Consider the kind of support you think safety representatives should realistically be able to expect from the branch, and the relationship that the safety representative should have with the members, and with stewards. Think about training, time off, access to information and other kinds of support.

As a whole group, identify what practical steps the branch can take to:

- support safety reps more effectively.
- recruit new safety representatives within your workplace.

Report back

Write your key points on a flip chart. Agree which five of these are most important.

Estimated time: 1 hour 30 minutes

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Identifying and developing safety representatives

Case study 1

You are a union branch covering one employer with members on a number of sites, including some members who work in the community and do not have a base. You have very few safety representatives outside the main headquarters building. The safety representatives you do have find it hard to keep in touch with the branch office, and the branch health and safety officer ends up having to do a lot of the work for members who do not have safety representatives, which is proving very time consuming.

There are lots of potential members and you need more safety representatives.

- How can you identify and develop more safety representatives?
- What concerns do you think potential safety representatives might raise about taking on this role?
- How will you respond to these issues?

Case study 2

MagicCarpet Limited is a cleaning company that has won the cleaning contract for your building. The company has around 250 employees, of whom 40 are directly employed to clean within your workplace. Of these, 12 are union members who used to be directly employed by your employer before the service was privatised.

MagicCarpet Limited agreed to recognise the union, but in practice they have ignored most approaches from the branch.

There are no safety representatives for this group of staff, though the steward from the Resources Department has agreed to keep a 'watching brief' over this group of members. Union members employed by MagicCarpet have made a number of complaints over health and safety issues, and these have gone straight to the branch office.

There are lots of potential members and you need more safety representatives.

- How can you identify and develop more safety representatives?
- What concerns do you think potential safety representatives might raise about taking on this role?
- How will you respond to these concerns?

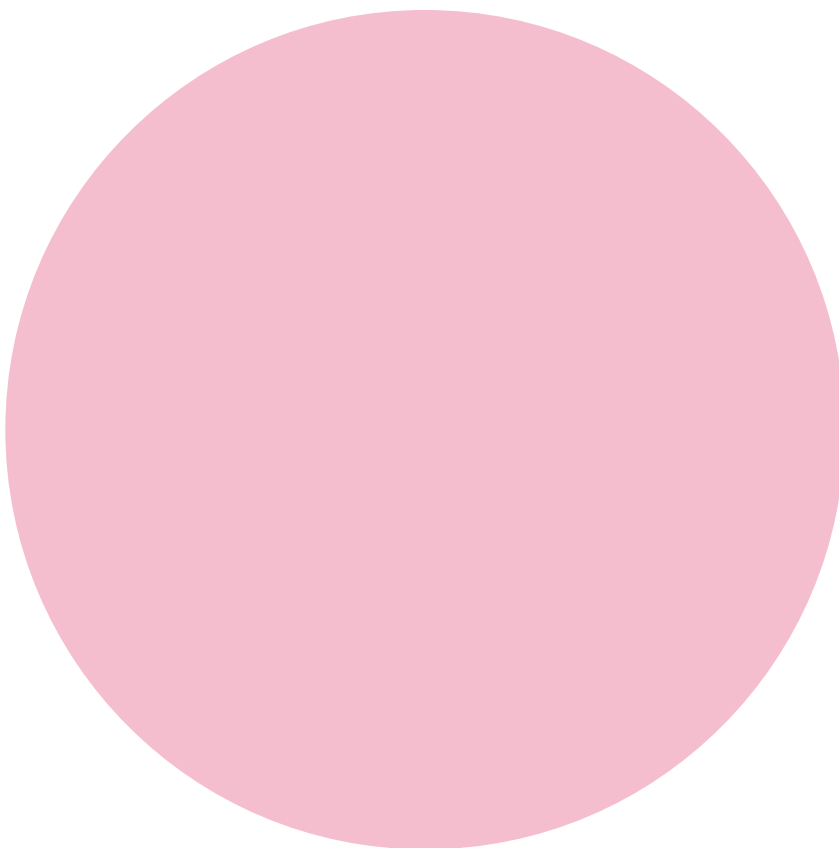
Case study 3

This is a department with 40 staff, where there is no safety representative and no departmental steward, even though half the employees in this section are union members. Within the workplace as a whole there are around 600 members and 8 safety representatives; in addition, there is a branch health and safety officer.

It is known that a considerable number of staff have been off work sick as a result of stress. There is also a high turnover of staff. There was a safety representative within this department until last year, but she stood down, giving the reason that she was fed up with her colleagues complaining that the union wasn't doing anything for them.

There are lots of potential members and you need more safety representatives.

- How can you identify and develop more safety representatives?
- What concerns do you think potential safety representatives might raise about taking on this role?
- How will you respond to these concerns?



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Activity 27

Health and safety survey

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- prepare a health and safety survey for members
- review the usefulness of health and safety as an issue to recruit members.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in small groups, select a group of members or a particular department where you work where you want to encourage more members to join. Identify a health and safety theme to design a survey to use with your selected group or department.

Exchange your survey with another group and ask for suggestions or improvements.

Task 2

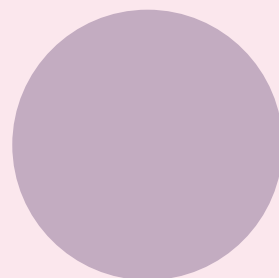
Try out your survey with your selected group or department.

At the next session, review how useful the health and safety issues and the survey were in recruiting members to the union.

Report back

Your tutor will help you draw up a checklist of points with the whole group.

Estimated time: 1 hour





Section 6

Organising for equality

The purpose of this section is to encourage activity and support for organising, recruitment and learning to help develop equality and fairness at work and to ensure that the union is representative of all groups.

It aims to:

- identify the experiences of members around equality issues
- explore how organising, recruitment and learning might be applied to workplace situations concerning equality
- identify opportunities to develop trade union organisation and reduce inequality inside and outside the workplace
- assess the role played by trade unions in reducing inequality
- review organising and recruitment practices and identify improvements.

Activity 28

Barriers to equality

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify how barriers may prevent, restrict or dissuade participation in workplaces and unions
- plan effective strategies to encourage participation at work and in the union.

Task

Working in pairs or small groups, consider what barriers and inequalities exist to restrict and prohibit participation for people in:

- your workplace
- your trade union

What can unions do to help break down these barriers?

Report back

Write your key points on a flipchart. Elect a spokesperson to report back to the main group.

Estimated time: 45 minutes

Different workers, different needs

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- plan recruitment of members with different needs
- work out different arguments to use with different people to persuade them to join the union.

Task

Below are some examples of different types of members you may have to recruit.

Your tutor will allocate you the examples to discuss. Work in small groups to decide how you would recruit them.

- 1** You are a female administrator and have worked in the same office for three years but have been a union member for only three months. You are quiet and conscientious but you think there are some problems in the office that your employer is not taking seriously. The main problems are the VDUs – no risk assessments have been done and two pregnant women are working a lot of overtime without regular breaks. There are only a few office workers in the union. The rest of the workplace is quite well organised but nobody seems to bother about the office workers.
- 2** You have worked in your present job for 18 years. You are Head of Department but your line manager keeps insisting that you work longer and longer hours, sometimes unpaid. You feel that you have to do the work because your partner was made redundant and is not working at the moment.
- 3** You are a young worker who is given all the boring jobs, and you see little opportunity to progress. You are undecided about the union – you can't see what it has to offer. Most of the other workers are older than you and you feel you have nothing in common with them.
- 4** You have worked for your employer for several years. You have progressed reasonably well and there are still opportunities for promotion and better pay. You don't want hassle and you get on well with your boss. You feel that management sees the union as a nuisance.
- 5** You have just started your job and during the induction your right to join the union was mentioned. However, you don't know how to go about joining or who to see. Also, you do not read and write well so, though you want to find out more, you don't want to embarrass yourself. There are several other workers like yourself who you have just got to know in the canteen.

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- 6** Your circumstances changed recently. You have been a union member in the past but have become a part-time worker and a one-parent family. You have been in this job for a year, which quite suits you as it fits in with all your other commitments. You are worried about taking time off to look after your children if they go sick and in addition you don't have much money. You don't really want to renew your union membership.
- 7** You are a part-time worker and English is not your first language. You have been in this job for about two months. Your manager is a bully and you don't think you are getting your holiday entitlement and are not sure of your rights. You have approached your union rep but they don't seem concerned and told you to wait until you had worked there a bit longer.
- 8** You are an experienced, skilled worker but there is to be a reorganising exercise, which means there will be fewer jobs for the number of people who do the work now. The workforce is demoralised and the union is seen by both staff and management as weak and ineffectual in the workplace. Everyone knows that the union did nothing in the last restructuring so there is not much hope now.
- 9** You have a stack of debts after being unemployed for a year. You can't get a loan. You have joined this workplace on a fixed-term contract and feel that the permanent members of staff blame casuals like yourself for unsatisfactory work conditions and that the union should never have gone down the road of allowing in casual staff in the first place.
- 10** You used to be a union member but you don't think the union has done anything for the members. You never see the union rep and there are lots of new starters who are never approached about the union. You are very disillusioned with the union both locally and nationally and you are looking around for another one to join.
- 11** You have a number of gay friends at work who repeatedly refuse to join the union. They don't see why they should since the union reps and some of the members constantly make jokes about gay people.
- 12** There is a group of apprentices who say they cannot join the union or get the pay rises and improvements at work because they are trainees. They say that only a small number of people are active in the union and the recent votes for industrial action (which they didn't agree with anyway) had a low turnout – so it shows that only a few have the biggest say!

Estimated time: 1 hour

Organising migrant/vulnerable workers – rights at work

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify issues that will help to organise migrant/vulnerable workers
- encourage questions and participation from migrant/vulnerable workers.

Task

Your tutor will lead a discussion to find out what migrant/vulnerable workers are legally entitled to:

- when they arrive in the UK

- when they start work

Your tutor will write the main points on a flipchart and leave this up to refer to throughout the course/session.

- What are the main barriers that stop migrant/vulnerable workers joining the union?
- List the top five action points that would help migrant/vulnerable workers join the union.

Report back

Your tutor will help you draw up a checklist of points with the whole group.

Estimated time: 1 hour

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Migrant workers' rights

Why migrants are important to ALL workers

Britain is a nation of migrants.

We all have roots in other nations. Migrants to Britain built this country and built our union movement as well.

Today, union members are joining with people of faith, civil and human rights activists and other friends of working families to demand legal status and fairness for all migrant workers. Why? Because:

- all workers deserve fairness and basic rights
- migrants work hard, pay taxes and contribute to our communities
- whether documented or undocumented, migrants work in jobs we all depend on – they are caretakers, waitresses, hotel workers, construction workers, textile workers, teachers, nursing home and care workers, doctors – and more
- undocumented migrant workers can be exploited by employers – not paid the wages or overtime they are due and sent to work in very hazardous conditions
- legal status for undocumented migrants will make it harder for employers to intimidate all workers who demand fair pay and the freedom to join a union.

Migrant/vulnerable workers – common issues

It is important to be clear about the different groups of people coming to the United Kingdom and how the claims for social benefits they can make and services they get depend on whether they are migrants, asylum seekers, refugees or illegal workers. They are not scroungers; they are entitled to certain social benefits depending on how they qualify.

What are migrant/vulnerable workers?

- **Vulnerable workers** are people working in an environment ‘where the risk of being denied employment rights is high’ and who do not “have the capacity or means to protect themselves from that abuse” (DTI, Success At Work 2006: 25a). A wider definition than that made by the government is given by Anna Pollert in a 2004 survey of unorganised workers: a vulnerable worker is someone who is low paid, earning below median pay – and lacking a collective voice and labour power in terms of scarce skills or seniority (Pollert 2006). This is broadly 7.4 million United Kingdom employees or 1 in 3 of all employees. They are earning below median pay and do not have union agreements affecting their pay and conditions. Of those, migrant workers have been described as “the most vulnerable of them all” (Citizens Advice 2004).
- **Illegal immigrants** are people from outside the European Union who do not have a visa or who may outstay their visa. If they have a visa with conditions (such as not to work) that they break, they can be arrested and deported for contravening the visa.
- **Asylum seekers** are people who claim they have a well-founded fear of being persecuted because of their race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinion in their country and therefore need to stay in the United Kingdom. They have applied to the Home Office for refugee status but have not yet received a decision.
- **Refugees** are those asylum seekers who have been granted asylum and indefinite leave to remain in the United Kingdom.

‘There are too many coming in!’

- There has been an increase in people entering the United Kingdom, mainly due to the new Accession countries (referred to as A8 countries) – the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, the Slovak Republic and Slovenia. These workers make a valuable contribution to the United Kingdom economy.
- Migrants have to register with the Worker Registration Scheme, otherwise they remain working here illegally. Many have paid their way here out of personal or family savings or have suffered really difficult or even life-threatening experiences to get here, either from unscrupulous gangmasters or gruelling transportation.

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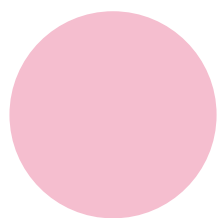
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- Some migrant workers come here for work, others for the experience, others on study breaks to work in different countries. Some are forced out of their countries due to war or famine or because of their political or religious beliefs. If they are members of the European Union, or they have the correct visas, they have every right to be here, as we have the right to go to their country to work or retire.

‘They are taking all our jobs for half the wages. They don’t pay National Insurance or taxes but want all the benefits.’

- There is a labour shortage in the United Kingdom as people are becoming better educated and do not wish to take manual or low-paid jobs.
- Migrant workers can be found at both ends of the skills spectrum, both skilled and unskilled. They work in all sectors, including construction, hotels, catering, health and social work, transport and telecommunications (Green et al. 2005).
- One study of 341 low-paid workers in London showed that 90 per cent came from 56 countries of origin, with 90 per cent earning less than the Greater London Authority’s living wage for London. Half lost pay for taking time off for emergencies and just over half received no sick pay (Evans et al. 2005).
- Research shows that many migrant workers work below their skills level and live in poor accommodation (McKay 2006).
- Asylum seekers are not entitled to benefits. There is a difference between the types of social security benefits that are given to different categories of persons. For example, on arrival asylum seekers (i.e. port cases) are entitled to Urgent Case Payments, which is set at 90 per cent of the usual adult Income Support personal allowances, but persons with exceptional leave or British citizens are entitled to the full Income Support allowances.
- Some are highly skilled and cannot get the jobs they want and are qualified for due to prejudice against their qualifications or through language difficulties. Many are employed in high-skill jobs – perhaps as teachers, telecommunications workers or doctors. As long as they are working or actively seeking work and have a National Insurance number, they can apply for benefits.
- Citizens from new Accession countries are not entitled to benefits unless they have been here for 2 years or they are registered with the government’s ‘Workers Registration Scheme’. They must have a job in order to register. People from other countries have special work permits and cannot generally claim benefits.
- Illegal immigrants cannot claim any benefits.
- Employers are required to check that any new starter has a National Insurance number. All foreign nationals must have this number to claim benefits. Some European Union citizens are entitled to claim benefits, as are United Kingdom citizens in those European Union countries.



'Agency workers are also a threat to our jobs and undercut wages.'

- Many migrant workers end up working for agencies. The informal sector is a problem in all industrialised economies; working for cash in hand with no employment rights or contract of employment and wages lower than the minimum wage. Unions in the textile industry have shown that workers are employed on an illegal basis by employers who avoid legal responsibilities such as tax payments, and pay them £2–3 per hour – sometimes in factories linked to high street stores. Many work in this way out of need – not greed – to supplement poor households.
- There were also 1.1 million home workers in 2005, including data inputters, traditional craftspeople, component assembly workers and salespeople. Enforcing the minimum wage is still difficult here.

Illegal working

- There are some employers and gangmasters who employ illegal immigrants, which is against the law. Apart from exploiting workers, it undermines everyone's jobs when these employers and gangmasters pay below the minimum wage and charge people for accommodation, protective clothing and even their food (which is often sub-standard).
- Legislative and enforcement authority is extremely weak.

'They get in using false passports.'

- Attempts to forge passports and visas do happen. However, National Insurance numbers are assigned by the Department of Work and Pensions. People have to attend an interview and ultra-violet lighting is used to check that passports and visas are genuine. Employers are also checked out to ensure that they have given correct information and made an offer of a job. Suspicious applications are reported to the National Identity Fraud Unit.

'They don't pay National Insurance or taxes but want all the benefits.'

- Employers are required to ensure that National Insurance numbers have been applied for as soon as possible. Migrants can legally seek and take up employment before being allocated their number. Unscrupulous employers are not afraid of sanctions as even the deductions from wages by employment agencies are not clear whether deductions are legal or not.
- The Gangmasters Licensing Act of [2004] has gone some way to improve this.
- Of the 466,000 total arrivals into the United Kingdom in 2004/5, only 15,000 (3 per cent) were claiming out-of-work benefits (e.g. Jobseekers Allowance, Incapacity Benefit or Income Support). This is a fall from the previous year when it was 6 per cent. Of those 15,000, 12,000 were actively seeking work (and receiving

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Jobseekers Allowance). The remaining 3,000 were not obliged to be actively seeking work (NINA National Statistics 2006).

- If they are working they will be paying taxes and contributing to the economy.
- Migrants generally have the right to register as NHS patients if they are here for a settled purpose (i.e. are intending to be resident here for 6 months or more). If they are not residents then they can be treated as an NHS patient at a GP surgery or as private patients. Illegal immigrants cannot register as NHS patients and will be treated by a hospital or GP only in an emergency. Asylum seekers have the right to register as NHS patients at a GP surgery.
- Hospitals have different rules for treating people, depending on issues such as length of residency, treatment required and the patient's country of origin.

'They are getting the best newly built flats and houses when people in my family have been waiting years.'

- If migrants have a National Insurance number, have a right to be in the United Kingdom and are residents in the UK, they can go on the housing register. They get no preferential treatment and their need is assessed in the same way as everyone else who applies. The vast majority of lettings go to people of British origin as they have been here longer and have had applications in for some time.
- Illegal immigrants are not entitled to housing. Asylum seekers have to go where the NASS National Asylum Support Service tells them to or find private accommodation. This is frequently some of the worst housing in areas where no one else wants to live. Refugees have to secure their own housing and have the same rights to apply for housing but must meet the same criteria as everyone else.

'There are loads of them living in one house.'

- Some residencies may be a 'house in multiple occupancy' (HMO), which is defined in law under the national Housing Bill as a house or flat having two or more unrelated people sharing it. Licences to have an HMO are administered by the local council. These properties must comply with standards for fire safety, repair, overcrowding and cooking and sanitary facilities. HMOs can be inspected by the Environmental Health Private Sector Housing in the area.
- Lots of people living in a property does not mean it is an HMO. Unscrupulous landlords working with gangmasters will still offer dormitory-style accommodation in pubs and hotels or in caravans on out-of-the way sites.
- Many migrant workers will stay with their own family or find accommodation privately and pay for it themselves if they are working or can claim benefits.

'They can't speak English when they come here and they don't want to learn English.'

- Misunderstandings around language and customs will remain as long as people coming to the United Kingdom remain isolated and without an effective voice.
- English is commonly spoken throughout the world. This means UK citizens often don't make an effort to learn other languages when they are working abroad.
- Some visiting workers may have no reason to learn if they remain employed by their own group. Lack of language also makes it easier for them to be exploited.
- The current cuts in English for Speakers of Other Languages courses do not help as many who wish to learn English have to pay for their own English classes.
- Employers are aware of the dangers of employing people with poor language skills. They have an obligation to pay for language training or to give paid release to attend.

'Their training is not as good as ours and is not recognised here.'

- There are differences in the training that people receive in different countries but qualifications and their content can be checked out by employers and people given a probationary period to see if they meet the necessary work standards. There is still a lot of room for improvement in the take-up of UK qualifications. The Leitch Review of Skills of 2006 notes that more than five million people of working age in the UK have no qualifications, which leads to social deprivation and powerlessness as they can easily be replaced in the workforce.

'Their working conditions are a lot lower than ours, so they cut corners in the jobs to do them quickly with no understanding of health and safety.'

- Work standards and conditions in some countries are different to ours and there is less legislation. Many migrant workers come from poor agricultural sectors and are low skilled. However, some industries have good qualifications; for example, construction workers in Eastern European countries have long apprenticeships and have gained a reputation as hard workers.

'They are very cliquy and don't integrate at work.'

- People tend to live together where they feel comfortable in their own community and can speak their own language. Many communities, housing/tenant associations and churches are working successfully together to help people integrate.

'They aren't interested in joining a trade union.'

- Getting people to join trade unions is an issue for all sectors. Less than 29 per cent of employees in the United Kingdom are union members. This falls to 17 per cent in the private sector, where managers are more sceptical of trade unions compared to the public sector (Kearsley et al. 2006: 315).

References

TUC (2006) *The Hidden One-in-Five: Winning a fair deal for Britain's vulnerable workers.*

Department for Work and Pensions: National Statistics – National Insurance Number Allocations to Overseas Nationals Entering the UK.

Activity 31

Organising beyond the workplace

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- identify local organisations to work with to promote union activity
- plan to involve members and reps in a community activity.

Tasks

Task 1

Working in groups, list some local organisations and campaigns or small/medium enterprises that it might be practical to work with.

Task 2

Decide on one organisation or campaign you have listed in Task 1 and identify:

- the benefits for the union in getting involved
- the steps you would take to organise union involvement.

Think about activities such as:

- organising a speaker to visit your workplace or union branch
- organising a roving rep or ULR to contact/work with a cluster of small organisations/enterprises
- joining in and supporting a local campaign
- visiting a leader or representative from a local organisation to find out what it does
- taking a group of members to a rally or demonstration.

Report back

Draw up a checklist of points to explain to the whole group.

Estimated time: 1 hour



Section 7

Getting involved in organising and learning projects

The purpose of this section is to encourage activity and support for organising, recruitment and learning in union projects.

It aims to:

- address issues faced by the range of people involved in developing union and workplace projects
- provide templates to effectively plan, monitor and analyse union projects.

Activity 32

Planning a learning or organising project

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- draw up an effective plan for a union project
- compare different plans and projects.

Task

Working in pairs or small groups and using the worksheet Planning, Monitoring and Reviewing a Learning or Organising Project on the page 116:

- discuss whether the template contains all you need to be able to plan your project
- make any amendments/additions
- plan your union project.

NB: You can use the same worksheet for Activity 33 Monitoring and Reviewing a Learning or Organising Project.

Report back

Explain your plan to the rest of the group.

Estimated time: 1 hour

Monitoring and reviewing a learning or organising project

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- draw up a plan for monitoring and reviewing a learning or organising project
- identify problems and issues and how they be overcome.

Task

Working in pairs or small groups and using the worksheet Planning, Monitoring and Reviewing a Learning or Organising Project on the next page:

- discuss whether the template contains all you need to be able to review and monitor your project
- make any amendments/additions.

If you *have not* completed a project:

What problems or issues might you encounter in:

- reviewing and monitoring your project
- collecting and analysing the results and outcomes of your project.

If you *have* completed a project:

- review, monitor and analyse the results of your project
- summarise the main strengths and weaknesses.

Report back

Explain your analysis to the rest of the group.

Estimated time: 1 hour

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Worksheet: Planning, monitoring and reviewing a learning or organising project

<i>Planning</i>
Name of project
Sector
Workplaces/sites involved
Unions involved
Education providers involved
Name/number of project workers Names/number of ULRs Administrator
Aims of project
Resources required (e.g. time off, learning centre, travel costs)
Sources of funding

Outcomes of project	Year 1				Year 2				Year 3			
	Men	Wo	Eth	Dis	Men	Wo	Eth	Dis	Men	Wo	Eth	Dis
Numbers or percentage to be trained (men/women/ethnic origin/disabled)												
Union reps												
Union health & safety reps												
Union learning reps												
Learning organisers												
Others												
Skills for Life												
ESOL												
Computers												
NVQs												
Learnndirect												
Online learning												
Languages												
Taster sessions												
Soft skills (e.g. assertiveness)												
Others												
Total												
Dates of planning meetings												
Dates of review meetings												
Dates when annual reports completed												
Dates of dissemination events												

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	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Anticipated problems/barriers			
How these will be overcome			
Numbers to recruit to union			
Numbers of new reps and ULRs to be created			
Branch or committees developments/improvements			
Ways to involve full-time officers			
Changes to the union profile at work			
Effect on union/management relations			
Records/information to keep			
Other changes/developments			

The planning cycle



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Key principles of organising campaigns/projects

Organising can't be left to chance. Organising is a strategy to secure the future of the working people in this country. It is guided by a number of key principles, which should be transferred and used to organise any group of workers in any workplace. You may have to use a little creativity or different tactics to apply them – but that is what organising is all about. The overriding principle is that the union should involve and mobilise its members around issues of concern to them.

Key principles of organising

The principles fall into six main areas:

- 1 Strategically building your campaign/project
- 2 Communicating with workers
- 3 Developing and sustaining member activity
- 4 Utilising relevant workplace issues
- 5 Collecting statistics, case studies and successes
- 6 Evaluating your campaign/project

1) Strategically building your campaign/project

- It is important to **organise strategically**, **prioritise** and carefully choose your target workplaces.
- Aim to make a number of **informal contacts** in each workplace.
- **Be flexible** and use tactics that are appropriate to each group of workers.
- **Talk to workers**, find out about their issues and build a relationship with them.
- **Follow up** any interest from potential members, using an appropriate form of communication.
- Ensure that you are systematic in **building a relationship** and following up any interest.
- **Planning your campaign/project** gives it a better chance of success.

2) Communicating with workers

Try to understand where the workers are coming from, why they might be resistant to joining a union and what they feel about their work and their job.

We build our union by talking one to one with workers, listening to them and dealing with their objections.

Ensure that you are systematic in building a relationship and following up any interest.

Potential members rarely sign up to the union instantly – give your campaign/project time and commitment.

3) Developing and sustaining member activity

Our aim is to set up sustainable union structures in each workplace.

Use organising in other areas as an opportunity to involve other branch members.

A successful organising campaign/project usually requires a high level of support and effective coordination from the branch.

Get as many union members as possible active in organising their colleagues.

Give new activists realistic tasks to do and see if they do them.

Workers do not become experienced shop stewards overnight; we are responsible for helping them to develop and take on more responsibility.

Set up organising committees or networks. They can be informal structures, utilising members' different skills and interests.

4) Utilising relevant workplace issues

We need to identify issues that are relevant to potential members.

We should encourage members to become active around these relevant issues and support them to resolve the issues collectively.

The way we deal with workplace issues and problems will inform the members' perception of the role the union will play in the future. Ensure that you work with and support the members to solve problems.

Each campaign or issue you win gives the union the opportunity to educate your activists and to prove the relevance of the union in the workplace.

5) Collecting statistics, case studies and successes

Lots of people will be interested in your campaign/project so they can:

- publicise the campaign/project
- bid for further funding
- identify patterns of involvement or gaps
- give awards.

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They will include:

- your union and the organisations who fund your campaign/project – to prove numbers who participated, gender and ethnicity, numbers of achievements or qualifications
- funding organisations so that they can showcase how the money has been used
- awarding bodies to show how different people can progress their education and training
- your union journal, website and local and national media to show how unions are involved in education and training.

6) Evaluating your campaign/project

A union organising campaign/project rarely goes smoothly. We need to continually evaluate and review how the campaign/project is going and modify our tactics to suit the circumstances.

Remember that organising is tough. We won't always get it right but we should learn from our mistakes and share our success.

Always keep records of people who come through the campaign/project – their name, date of birth, company, job, ethnicity, qualifications achieved, comments and aspirations etc. Take photographs as well. This is valuable information that shows the achievements of your project and can be used to prepare colourful statistics, diagrams and displays for further marketing and organising. Also, keep a diary of what happens during your project as this can be used to write reports and press releases – it's easy to forget all the good things you have done!



Section 8

Action planning and review

The purpose of this section is to bring together all the learning and skills that have been gained in the sessions to develop an action plan to take the organising and learning agenda forward in specific unions and workplaces.

It aims to:

- provide an opportunity for self-assessment to see what has been gained from the sessions
- enable actions to be prioritised
- highlight where and how the learning agenda fits in with developing union organisation
- identify useful resources and contacts who will help
- set timescales
- identify further organising opportunities and learning and skills needs.

Activity 34

Self-assessment

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- review your progress during the course/session
- identify where improvements are needed.

Task

Complete the self-assessment questions on the next page.

Which of your aims for the course/session were met?

Report back

You will be asked to report your main points to the rest of the group.

Estimated time: 10 minutes

Worksheet: Self-assessment

<i>How did I improve?</i>	<i>Where do I need to improve?</i>
Speaking and listening to members	Speaking and listening to members
Understanding my role and the union role in recruiting and organising	Understanding my role and the union role in recruiting and organising
Understanding procedures and processes for organising and recruiting	Understanding procedures and processes for organising and recruiting
Understanding a variety of methods for recruiting and organising	Understanding a variety of methods for recruiting and organising
Using a systemic approach to take up recruitment and organising issues	Using a systemic approach to take up recruitment and organising issues
Making the link between learning and organising	Making the link between learning and organising
Other issues	Other issues

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Activity 35

Action plan: Organise in every workplace – what needs to be done?

Aims

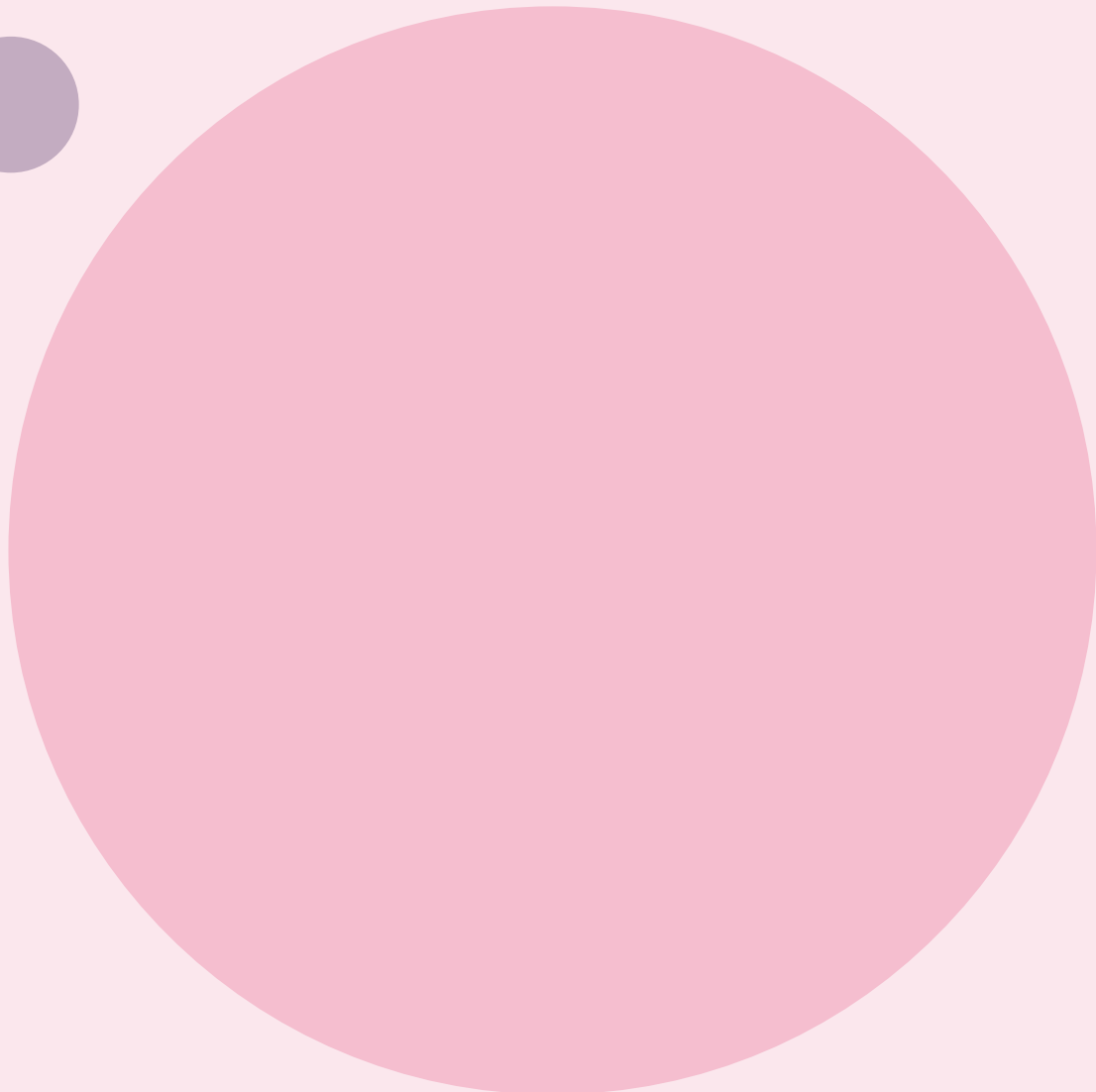
This activity will help you to:

- review key issues in the course
- plan a strategy for action.

Task

Use the worksheet on the next page to plan an action strategy to improve organisation and recruitment.

Estimated time: 30 minutes



Worksheet: Organise in every workplace – what needs to be done?

Further training								
Timescale								
Who will do it?								
Resources/ materials required								
Learning opportunities that will help the organising agenda								
Priorities – what needs to be done?								
	You	Other union reps/ULRs	Union officers	Potential members	Existing members	Employers	The wider union/ community	unionlearn

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Activity 36

Course/session review

Aims

This activity will help you to:

- review what you have done on the course
- identify what you have learned about organisation and recruitment
- decide how you can use what you have learned back at the workplace.

Task

Write a feedback report on the course or session you have attended. Please use the following headings as a guide:

- 1 What you found most useful about the course.
- 2 How you will use what you have learned back at the workplace.
- 3 What you found least useful.
- 4 Suggestions for improvements.
- 5 Further training for reps, potential reps or members that would be useful.
- 6 Other.



Section 9

Useful contacts and resources

The purpose of this section is to provide a range of useful contacts and resources that will help everyone involved in developing a union voice in every workplace.

It aims to:

- encourage you to use the internet to find information
- help you build up a bank of relevant information to support your organising/learning activities.

Website address	Name of website or subject	Nature of website
www.apprenticeships.gov.uk/	Apprenticeships	Are you 16–24 years old? Find out how an apprenticeship could help you.
www.basic-skills.co.uk	Basic Skills Agency	The Basic Skills Agency is the development organisation for literacy and numeracy in England and Wales. As well as the latest news on basic skills, the Learning Zone lets you test your basic skills and find out what courses are available.
www.basic-skills-observatory.co.uk/keydata_content.php?catID=7	Basic Skills – Workplace Sector	In this section you will find out about basic skills in the workplace sector.
www.bbc.co.uk/learning/	BBC Learning	The BBC website is one of the most popular sites in the country. This area of the site is dedicated to learning and contains information about adult learning.
www.bbc.co.uk/skillswise/	BBC Skills Wise	Games, quizzes and more to help you improve your literacy and numeracy.
www.dti.gov.uk	Department for Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform	Training opportunities information.
www.drc-gb.org/	Disability Discrimination Act	Legislation relevant to Information, Advice and Guidance on the Disability Discrimination Act.
www.bdadyslexia.org.uk/	Dyslexia Association	Provides information and advice on dyslexia.
www.e-learningcentre.co.uk/	e-learning Centre	Information on e-learning.
www.equalityhumanrights.com	Equality and Human Rights Commission	A publicly funded body set up as the successor body to the CRE, EOC and DRC to tackle discrimination and promote equality for women, BME people and disabled people.

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www.tuc.org.uk/redundancy

Facing Redundancy

Advice from the TUC for people facing redundancy. Includes information about training and retraining.

www.foundationdegree.org.uk

Foundation Degree

Information on Foundation Degrees, what they are, what you can study and where.

www.freepint.com/

Free Pint

Free Pint is a community-based website that provides a newsletter with tips on internet searching and website reviews.

www.foi.gov.uk

Freedom of Information Act

Legislation relevant to information, advice and guidance on the Freedom of Information Act.

www.matrixstandard.com

Guidance Accreditation Board

The Guidance Accreditation Board was established in 1999 to provide accreditation to a national quality-assurance framework for organisations giving people information, advice and guidance on learning and work services. By displaying the matrix Quality Mark, you will demonstrate that you have met the matrix quality standard.

www.investorsinpeople.co.uk/

Investors in People

Investors in People is the national standard that sets a level of good practice for training and development of people in the workplace.

www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/unions_form.cfm

Join a union

Unions are not just there for when something goes wrong. Union workplaces are safer, and more likely to help employees get on with better training and development programmes. Unions themselves provide training and services such as legal advice.

www.learndirect.co.uk	Learndirect	Learndirect provides access to high-quality courses, over 80% of them online. You choose what to learn, when to learn – and you can learn as quickly or as slowly as you like.
www.lsc.gov.uk/	Learning and Skills Council	The Learning and Skills Council is responsible for all post-16 education and training. There are 47 local Learning and Skills Councils across England.
www.lifelonglearning.co.uk	Lifelong Learning	A website devoted to the promotion of lifelong learning.
www.realworkrealpay.info	Modern Apprenticeships: Real Work, Real Pay	Information on Modern Apprenticeships for 16–24-year-olds.
www.lifelonglearning.co.uk/moneytolearn/	Money to Learn	Website providing advice on financial help for adults in further and higher education.
www.nec.ac.uk/courses	National Extension College	From Accounting to Writing Short Stories, the National Extension College has a range of over 100 tutor-supported home study courses, including 43 GCSEs and A Levels and new courses in basic adult literacy and numeracy. A non-profit making trust, NEC is accredited by the Open and Distance Learning Quality Council and has almost 40 years' experience of supporting distance learners.
www.niace.org.uk/	NIACE – the National Organisation for Adult Learning	Providing information on the work carried out by NIACE to promote and support adult learning.
www.statistics.gov.uk/	Office for National Statistics (ONS)	Labour market information.

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www.open.ac.uk/

Open University

Online prospectus for long and short open learning courses. The Open University offers reduced fees to union learners.

www.naric.org.uk/

Overseas qualifications

Information and advice on the comparability of overseas qualifications with those from the UK.

www.partnership-at-work.com/

Partnership at Work

This site is provided by the IPA, a not-for-profit organisation that encourages employee involvement and participation, and partnership between management and employees. It provides information on building, maintaining and enhancing partnership at work, and the processes and structures that support it. The site also aims to be a comprehensive source of information on employee relations policies and practices.

<http://qca.org.uk/>

Qualifications and Curriculum Authority

Advice about qualifications and awarding bodies.

www.ssda.org.uk/

Sector Skills Development Agency

The Sector Skills Development Agency funds, supports and champions the new UK-wide network of influential employer-led Sector Skills Councils.

www.skillsforfamilies.org/

Skills for Families

Skills for Families is working with 12 LEA/LSC partnerships across the country to help meet the need for effective family programmes through a joined-up programme between Local Education Authorities, local Learning and Skills Councils and providers.

www.gla.ac.uk/wg/index.htm

The Social Partners and Vocational Guidance for Low-Paid Workers

This European project researches vocational guidance for low-paid workers, and aims to gather examples of good practice in this field, and develop a set of methods and solutions that can be used by employers and trade unions.

www.timetolearn.org.uk/pls/ttl/show_index

Time to Learn

The City & Guilds online directory of adult residential courses and day schools, featuring a searchable database of courses and venues.

www.unionlearn.org.uk/index.cfm/raot/

Trade union education

Unionlearn's mission is to 'increase workers' life chances and strengthen their voice at the workplace through high quality union learning'. TUC Education offers a programme of accredited courses for union reps, safety representatives, ULRs, pension scheme trustees and other trade union representatives as well as for union professionals.

www.tuc.org.uk/tuc/unions_main.cfm

Trade unions

This area of the TUC website contains a comprehensive list of unions, their contact details and websites.

www.tuc.org.uk/

TUC

The TUC is the voice of Britain at work. It has more than 60 member unions representing nearly seven million working people from all walks of life. This site contains information about the latest TUC campaigns, press releases and policy briefings, as well as advice pages on your rights at work.

www.tuc.org.uk/publications

TUC Publications

This area of the TUC website contains a useful list of publications on subjects such as organisation and recruitment, equality, effects of new recognition agreements, results of surveys on health and safety and trade union trends, work/life balance, skills and learning.

www.ukonlinecentres.com

UK Online Centres

UK Online Centres allow anyone in England to have access to the internet and email near to where they live. This website will help you find your nearest centre and provide you with more information on what UK Online Centres can offer.

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www.unionhistory.info

Trade union history

A valuable source of trade union history websites and libraries.

www.unionlearningfund.org.uk

Union Learning Fund

The ULF was set up in 1998 by the government as a source of funding to help trade unions promote and organise learning opportunities in the workplace. The ULF will be increased to £15.5 million in 2008 to continue its work.

www.unionreps.org.uk/login.cfm

Union reps

Networking and resources for all types of union reps.

www.windmillsprogramme.com/frames.asp

Virtual Career Coach

Virtual Career Coach offers unique help with managing your career. If you're feeling in a rut, confused about where your career – and life – are heading... or need tips or advice on a particular career area, this is the site for you.

www.waytolearn.co.uk/

Way to Learn

The Way to Learn website is intended to bring together information to help adult and potential learners make informed decisions about taking up learning.

www.wea.org.uk/

Workers' Educational Association

The WEA is the UK's largest voluntary provider of adult education. Ever since its foundation in 1903, in order to support the educational needs of working men and women, the WEA has maintained its commitment to provide access to education and learning for adults from all backgrounds, and in particular those who have previously missed out on education.

