Training Overview and Goals

- Role of union stewards
- Qualities of good stewards
- Grievances
- Legal Protections
- Available resources
- Tips for success
Introductions

• Name
• How long a union member?
• How long a steward?
• How did you become a LIUNA steward?
Role of the Steward

Member Point of Contact

- To most members, YOU are the union!
- Value of first impressions
- You are the contact for all workplace issues
- If not you, than who?
Role of the Steward

Contract Administration

• Be familiar with your contract
• Know your grievance procedure
• Duty of Fair Representation
  • Treat all Laborers equally
• Try to settle issues informally
Role of the Steward

Member Communications

- Union meetings: when, where, etc.
- Union position on matters
- Politics: why important to them
- Volunteer and social activities
- Status of bargaining, grievances, disputes, etc.
Role of the Steward

Member Communications Tips:

• Always find time to talk
  • Schedule time that works
• Always get back to people
• Always be honest
• “I don’t know” is OK
• Respect people’s privacy/dignity
• What else?
Role of the Steward

Union Communications

- Problems you can’t resolve
- Problems you have resolved
- Member complaints/concerns
- Opportunities for member involvement
- Members in need
- Ideas for better meetings
- Trouble on the horizon
Role of the Steward

Union Communications Tips:

• Always be honest
• Admit mistakes
• Ask for help or support when needed
• Share what you know
• Regular reports
• What else?
Role of the Steward

Internal Organizing

- Identify/sign up new members
- Help with union paperwork
- Educate and assist new members
- Spread positive communication
- “Organizing never stops”
Qualities of a LIUNA Steward

- Knows their contract
- Keeps good records
- Good communication skills
- Positive relationships
- Meets Duty of Fair Representation
- What else?
Qualities of a Good Steward

• Good communicator
• Good listener
• Approachable
• Honest
• Organized
• Problem-Solver
• Responsible
• Decisive
• Supporter of the union
Qualities of a Bad Steward

- Represents unfairly or unequally
- Makes backroom deals with management
- Over promises
- Promises remedies too quickly
- Fails to speak to new workers
- Doesn’t call into Local Union
- Fails to meet time limits and deadlines
- Lazy
- Fails to organize
Tips to be a Good Steward

• Go to union meetings
• Participate in union functions
• Follow the contract
• Be “straight up”
• Register to vote and VOTE
• Support other unions’ causes
• Show union pride
Problems on the Job Site

What do you do when there is a problem in the workplace?
Problems on the Job Site

- Determine if problems is a:
  - Grievance
  - Work Issue
  - Complaint
- Decide course of action to resolve:
  - Talk to management
  - Enforce contract
  - File a grievance
  - Seek help from Local Union
Problems on the Job Site

How would you handle this situation?
Investigating a Grievance

- Is the problem a violation of:
  - Collective Bargaining Agreement
  - Federal or state law, or local ordinance
  - Past practice
  - Disparate treatment
  - Workplace policy
Interviewing a Grievant

• Get the facts
• Get all sides of the story
• Ask:
  • Who
  • What
  • When
  • Where
  • Why
  • How
• Document, Document, Document
Know Your Grievance Procedure

- Know different steps
- Know and follow time limits
- Don’t miss deadlines
Writing a Grievance

- Limit details to basic information
- Don’t limit contract violations
- Avoid personal opinions
- Don’t limit remedy or solution
- Consult with grievant
- Consult with Local Union official

Work within time limits!
Weingarten Rights

- Allows union steward to be present:
  - Worker requests representation
  - Investigatory interview
  - Worker reasonably fears representation

- Union Steward does more than just observe:
  - Witness AND Advocate

- Worker must request union representation
Duty of Fair Representation

- Union represents all workers fairly, regardless of membership status, race, religion, nationality, age, or gender
- Conduct a full, fair, and unbiased investigation
- Act within time limits
- Handle each case based on the facts
- Documents all steps
Tools of the Trade

What tools are available to help you do your job?
Tools of the Trade

- Collective Bargaining Agreement
- Steward Training Manual
- Union contacts
- List of members of job site
- Cards/forms/paperwork/pen
- Filing system
- Union literature
- Electronic Resources
Know Your Contract

- Read it and keep a copy with you
- Common and recurring issues
- Most grieved sections
- Know and keep deadlines
CBA Scavenger Hunt