

How to Handle Common Objections

“I’ll think about it.” – one of the most common answers!

- “What information can I give you to help you make the decision to join the union?”
- “Are there particular issues you need to think about?” (they may cite one of the reasons below).
- “If you join now, you will immediately get the benefits of membership. If you have a problem, you’ll have the support of the entire union.”
- “While you’re thinking, remember that union members enjoy better wages and conditions, and strength at work that other workers don’t have.”

If a workmate wishes to give more thought to a decision to join, it is important to follow up on your conversation within a week.



Following up involves checking back to see what the person has decided, being prepared to answer further questions and providing a second opportunity to join.

“I can get the benefits without joining.”

- “It’s easy to take our working conditions for granted, but they might not always be here. There’s been lots of examples of employers trying (and sometimes succeeding!) to take away good union conditions and cut pay.”
- Example: workers at CUB in Melbourne had good conditions but their employer tried to cut their pay by over 60%! It was only because they were all union members that they could stay strong together and fight back.

- Example: Streets Ice-cream workers would have had a 43% pay cut – but they were all union members so they stood together and fought back.
- “Unfortunately, our rights aren’t set in stone – that’s why we all need to be members so we can stand together – to protect what we’ve got.”
- “The union won’t be able to protect our pay and conditions – and fight for better ones! – unless we’re ALL members.”
- “Actually, you DON’T get all the union benefits without being a member. There’s no access to our HelpDesk for information, no access to union representation if you have an issue at work, and you won’t get our union member insurance products.”

You can see some of our Member Benefits here: www.amwu.org.au/member_benefits

“I can’t afford to join. The fees are too high. It seems a lot to pay. What do I get for my money? I don’t see the value.”

It’s important to listen carefully. People might say they can’t afford union membership fees but when you talk to them in detail you might realise their real reason for not joining is because they don’t actually see the value in union membership.



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- “Well, by being in the union we’ve been able to raise our pay and improve our conditions – to much higher than what we pay in union fees.”



- “Membership fees are an investment in your working life, making sure you can maintain and improve your conditions and have support and help when you need it most. It’s worth much more than what we pay!”
- “Additionally, did you know union members earn on average 25% more than non-union workers?”
- “Don’t forget, you can also deduct your union fees on your tax return.”

“The union doesn’t do anything for me. I can look after myself.”

- “The union has over 150 years experience in dealing with employers. It’s true that occasionally you will be able to handle a matter yourself. But individual workers can never match the power of the employer – they have a whole staff of HR advisors, lawyers, and the big business lobby backing them up. That’s why we need the union backing us up to level the playing field.”



- *Try and use an example of something that has happened in your workplace or in your industry to show union action – maybe a successful recent EBA or campaign.*

“I’m only going to be working here for a

short while on a casual/ temporary/ labour hire basis.”

- “You never know when you might need the help of the union. It’s very important for any worker – however you’re employed – to have the protection the union offers from day one of starting work.”

- “In many ways, workers that don’t have the protection of permanent work are the ones that MOST need the union – because bosses often feel like they can take advantage of you.”
- “The union has also been fighting for the right of casuals to be converted to permanent workers after 6 months if that’s what they want.”
- For casuals who are uncertain of how much work they will get, they’ll almost always pay lower fees than full time workers.

“I don’t like unions. My partner/friends don’t like unions. Unions are corrupt.”

- “Why don’t you like unions? Have you personally had a bad experience? Why do you think this?” (try and find out why the person thinks this – they may believe a bad story they read in the paper, or just believe a family member or friend who has this view).



- “Unions are simply groups of workers joining together to make sure we all get a fair go, and that we can balance out the power of the boss. The union is not the leadership or the office – the union is members like you and me, working together for a better deal.”
- “We take our responsibility to members very seriously – in fact our 4 key values are: **1. We are For Workers; 2. We stand for a Fair Go; 3. We do what we say; and 4. We are effective.**”



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