
One-to-One Organising Contact

The objectives of a one-to-one organising contact between a delegate and worker might include:

- Learn more about the worker
- Find out their opinion on particular issues
- Identify issues and concerns
- Build a relationship
- Get them to join the union
- Ask them to be involved in some union activity e.g. sign a petition, attend a meeting, and talk to other workers.

This usually follows a number of steps - an agenda:

1. Introduction (if necessary), develop rapport
2. Basic information about worker, job etc
3. Try to find issues of concern
4. Educate about being union
5. Get agreement to do something 'union' or to join up
6. Wrap up

1. Introduction

The first step to getting workers more involved is to build a relationship with them. Through trusting you, they may begin to trust the union you are a part of.

First Contact

When you approach a worker for the very first time, it is important to adopt a friendly, open manner.

Introduce yourself; explain your union role very briefly and why you have approached them e.g.

"I'm here to introduce myself so that you know who I am and where to find me."

Later Contact

Even when you know the worker, it is important to continue to build the relationship and explain your reason for approaching them e.g.

"Some of the other people here have come to me because they are concerned about.... I wanted to find out how you feel about it because we're thinking of organising a meeting / conducting a survey / getting a petition together..."

2. Basic Information

First Contact

It's important to show interest in the person by asking open questions about them and their work and by listening actively to what they say e.g.

"How are you finding it here?"

"What other places have you worked in?"

"How does this compare with other places you've worked?"

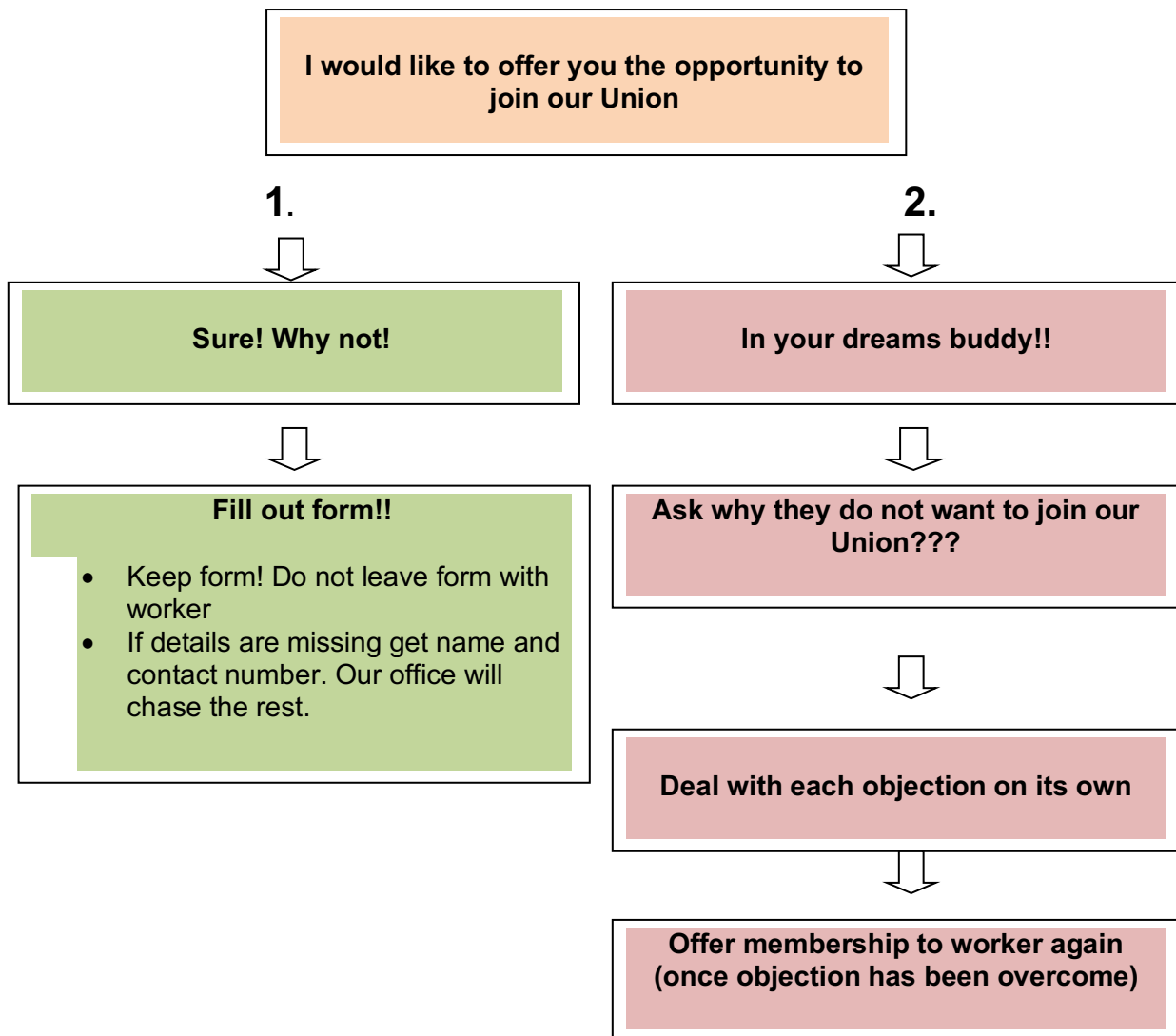
Later Contact

It is just as important to continue showing interest by asking questions and listening actively to the responses e.g.

"What's been happening?"

"How's the new roster system going?"

3. **Ask potential member to join our Union**



4. Handling Objections

We hear many objections when speaking to workers. They say things like:

- I can't afford it
- Unions go on strike all the time
- I get the benefits anyway
- I can look after myself
- I'm too busy
- I don't like unions.

It is important not to get into an argument with the person. This can be hard. We are human and sometimes our reaction to what they are saying is cynicism, anger, resentment, frustration etc. But if we argue, we may never reach our objective. Our aim is not to win the debate with them, it's to get them to join or to become more active. We also have to remember that often the objection is real for the person who is saying it. If we remember this, it can help us empathise with the person.

A technique which helps handle an objection and, most importantly, helps to achieve our purpose or objective is:

1. **Feel**
2. **Felt**
3. **Found**

Feel - 'I understand how you feel'

Acknowledge and validate how the potential member feels

Felt - 'Others have felt that way...'

Show empathy and relate to the persons objection so that they know they are not alone in their thoughts and feelings and also understand that others share their views

Found - 'What we have found is....'

Move away from the objections. Offer the potential member a valid reason based on real and personal experiences, if possible based on their own workplace, where their particular objection has been overcome as a result of becoming Union and working collectively to achieve desirable outcomes and common goals for all members.

5. Closure

In getting commitment from people to join or become more active in the union, there are four approaches that make this easier:

Summary close:

“We have talked about the importance of this issue and of people working together. So all that’s left is for you to agree to be a union contact in the section.”

“We have talked about the importance of this issue and of people working together. So all that is left is for you to join.”

Choice close:

“Would you prefer to organise a telephone tree or an e-mail network?”

“Would you prefer to pay up front or fortnightly, by direct debit?”

Suggestion close:

“I would suggest you become the section contact from now on and then we can start working together to resolve these issues.”

“I would suggest you join and then you are protected from now on and we can start working together to resolve these issues.”

Direct close:

“So you’ll hand out the leaflets. That’s good. Here they are.”

“So join now. Here’s the form.”

6. Wrap up

This stage is rather like the introduction step. The focus returns to the relationship and closing off the conversation in a friendly way that leaves an opening for further contact e.g.

“It’s been good talking to you. I’ll catch you next week.”

“It’s great you’ve decided to..... and I’ll get back to you tomorrow about”

“You know my number. Ring me anytime.”