

Contract Campaign

✓ Checklist



- Prepare Well in Advance.** Most pressing challenges? What will it take to win? Allies to involve? What kind of research is needed? What roles will staff have? What financial resources will be necessary? How do we make sure workplace leaders determine campaign direction? How do we build an effective Contract Action Team? Opportunities for organizing new members?
- Gather and Request Information.** Employer financial info; wage surveys; employee data name, address, phone, email (work and personal), shift, DOH, job title, department, wage, PTO accrued, retirement, health plan info; organizational charts; benefit booklets; policies and procedures (including “intranet”); executive board lists and other stakeholders; past bargaining notes; upcoming employer events and input from members, stewards and union reps.
- Survey Members and Identify Issues.** We need to know what’s most important and why; how best to contact members; what actions members are willing to take and for which issues; who can be called on for testimony; who’s willing to take on a leadership role; where our weaknesses are, and who’s willing to outreach to non-members. Surveying is an organizing tool — how best to use? One on one? Small groups? Home visits? Organized distributions? E-mail/mail? What about surveying non-members?
- Organize Contract Action Team (CAT) and Bargaining Team.** What’s the role of the CAT? Can we identify and activate leaders in each work area? How do we connect and mobilize to action? Size of our bargaining team? Election process for the bargaining team? How do we ensure “hidden” leaders step up? Is our team representative of our unit? Do we have a good CAT to member ratio (about 1:10)? What kind of training is needed?
- Develop Contract Proposals and Priorities.** How can we best involve the bargaining team in developing contract proposals? Process for deciding contract proposals? How will members have an opportunity to voice bargaining priorities?
- Communicate and Mobilize.** Do we have a communication system in place to keep members informed about bargaining and to educate on issues? How will we distribute our bargaining updates — email blasts, social media, website, videos? How do we ensure members are front and center in relaying what’s happening at the table? What’s our message to the community? To the employer? How do we communicate and engage with non-members? Have we set aside time for field planning after each session?
- Engage Community Allies and Other Unions.** Which elected officials, faith-based and social justice, and advocacy organizations share common values and concerns? Is there an opportunity to align with other labor unions? How do we best support each other for our shared goals?
- Escalate, Agitate and Continue Organizing.** Have we tapped into the issues most people will care about? Can we win on these issues? Do our allies and the public share the concern? Will the action move the employer; build on leadership; require resources? Is it unifying and inspiring? Is it legal? Is it fun? Actions to consider: sticker up; petitions; march on the boss; crashing board meetings; wearing t-shirts or colors; group grievances; ULPs; rallies; candlelight vigils; public leafleting; social events; positive ads; talking to the press; info picketing; and when necessary, striking.
- Develop and Encourage Future Leaders.** Find ways to bolster and recognize emerging leaders throughout campaign. Are there other roles new leaders might fill in the union? Have we asked leaders to reach out to non-union counterparts to join? What ways can we offer other leadership opportunities?
- Celebrate and Organize Around the Victories.** Recognize hard work. Evaluate and debrief the campaign. How do we use our results to reach out to non-union workers? How do we continue to organize with the same urgency and commitment?