

## I.B.E.W. LOCAL UNION 1260 SHOP STEWARDS

### Suggestions for Handling a Complaint:

1. When given a complaint, a Steward should ask himself these questions:
  - (1) Has the contract been violated?
  - (2) Has the employee been treated unfairly by some action of the Company?

A "yes" to either of the questions indicates a grievance. But if the answer is "no" you should explain to the employee "why" the answer is "no." In cases where you are not sure that the grievance is covered by the contract, consult your Local Union Representative before proceeding.

2. Take up complaint as quickly as possible. Never stall. If you have an unpopular decision to make, don't make matters worse by stalling.

3. In making decisions, don't be influenced by personal feelings or petty jealousies. If you let personal likes or dislikes enter, you are bound to make enemies and lose the confidence of others.

4. Keep in mind that nothing is easier than to be wrong. So get all the facts. There is not quicker way of discrediting yourself than to make an issue of a case when you don't know the facts. Before taking up a grievance, be sure to get all the evidence. If you find that the employee was mistaken in his facts or in his interpretation, it is better to discover this yourself than to be corrected by Supervision or Management.

5. If you are convinced that the employee does not have a real case, it is better to tell him so at the beginning. Agreeing to a lot of poor cases will cost you the respect of all concerned. On the other hand, don't forget that you are the employee's representative.

6. If the case is a borderline one but you feel that the employee has considerable justice on his side, tell him frankly that you are not sure what is the correct answer. Very few cases are so urgent that you don't have time to think it over before giving an opinion. Never hesitate to ask advice where you are not sure.

7. If you feel a complaint is justified, arrange for the employee or employees and yourself to discuss it with the Supervisor. This is your first step in the grievance procedure. (The grievance procedure is outlined in the contract.)

8. When you and your fellows go into conferences with Supervision or Management, never quarrel among yourselves. If you see that some real difference exists, as for a recess and straighten out your differences in private.

9. If you can't reach a satisfactory settlement, don't think the world will end. You can always appeal the case. If you think you are going to lose your case with the Supervisor but may win it on appeal, try to avoid a situation where Management will have to reverse the Supervisor's decision. If it is a question of interpretation of the contract, suggest a joint submission--that is, both you and the Supervisor ask for a definite interpretation. (In that way, personal rivalry between you and the Supervisor can be avoided. Remember that you and he will have to get along together 52 weeks a year. Cooperation is more important to the Union than making a reputation as a tough Steward who put the Supervisor in his place.)

10. Don't carry a chip on the shoulder and don't expect to be outwitted or out maneuvered. Know the facts and stick to them. Demand the same respect from the other man that you give to him. Don't lose your temper. Shouting and pounding the table never settled an issue.

11. Make a real effort to see the other fellow's point of view. Don't let grievances become political issues. Try to avoid horse-trading on cases. Consider each case on its own merits. Don't brag about victories. Give the other fellow a chance to save face. You may need the same consideration.

12. Don't make threats. Bluffing is one of the most shortsighted and dangerous tactics a Steward can employ.

13. Don't go on record with promises. Promises not kept usually boomerang and the Steward who makes them will soon be labeled unreliable. Know that grievance procedure, the contract, and the Union Bylaws and Constitution. Observe the rules for taking up grievances. If you expect Management to live up to its side of contract, you must do so too.

14. Your job is not just to go along on a grievance. Your job is to get a settlement consistent with the justice of the case. This may call for both patience and persistence. It may mean appealing a case all the way. But once you are convinced a grievance is justified, it is your duty to carry the case as far as the grievance procedure provides for the Steward to go.

15. Remember that the men expect you, as their Steward and leader, to stand up for what you think will be to their best interests in the long run, whether your position is immediately popular or unpopular. Do what you think is right. There is no substitute for good sense. Be fair in your judgments and you will win the respect of all concerned.

## I.B.E.W. L.U. 1260 SHOP STEWARDS

Sec. 1. Stewards shall be appointed (where needed) by the Business Manager. They shall work under his direction and be subject to his authority. He can remove any steward, as such, at any time.

Sec. 2. Duties of Stewards shall be:

- (a) To have a copy of the IBEW Constitution, these Bylaws, and the working agreement and rules with them at all times.
- (b) To see that Union membership is encouraged, and all workmen at their respective shops or jobs have paid-up dues, receipts, or valid working cards of the Local Union.
- (c) To report any encroachment upon the jurisdiction of this Local Union.
- (d) To report to the Business Manager any violation of our laws, agreements, or rules.
- (e) To perform such other duties as may be assigned to them by the Business Manager.

Sec. 3. Stewards shall in no case cause a stoppage of work. In case of any trouble on a job or at a shop, stewards shall immediately notify the Business Manager.

## FUNCTIONS AND DUTIES OF SHOP STEWARDS

The Shop Stewards serve as a communication link between the members and the full-time staff of the Local Union.

They help coordinate various Local Union and Unit activities with members within their work group or jurisdiction.

Shop Stewards investigate complaints and grievances within their assigned areas and report on said investigation to the complainant and the Business Manager or his assistants.

They are authorized to represent members and/or the Local Union in the initial steps of the grievance procedure. (All written grievances will be handled by the Business Manager or his assistants.)

Shop Stewards shall perform such other duties as may be assigned them by the Business Manager and his assistants.

Questions regarding contract interpretations, grievances, complaints and other matters handled by Shop Stewards should be taken care of as soon as possible.

Shop Stewards should encourage members to bring up their questions and problems as soon as possible so that they can promptly be handled, rather than waiting to bring their matters up at membership meetings.