



# **Solving Workplace Problems**

**With Collective Action**



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**What are some of the issues my  
Union is fighting for?**

# How do we typically resolve workplace problems?

1. Grievance
2. Labor Management
3. Negotiations



**What are some  
of the  
drawbacks to  
filing a  
grievance on  
every issue?**





# Three Steps To Building Union Power

1. **IDENTIFY** workplace issues

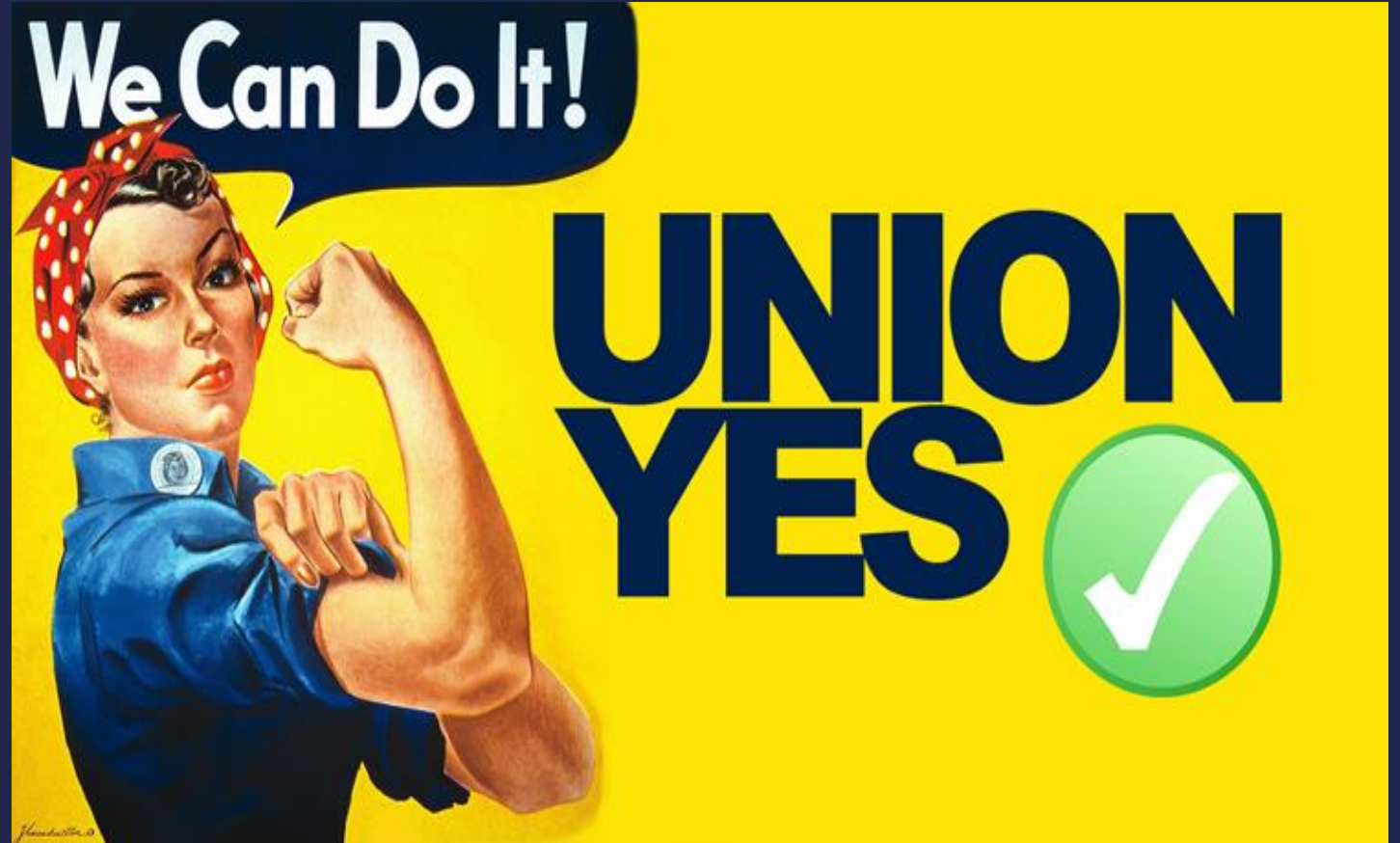
2. **DEVELOP** an action plan

3. **AGITATE** and mobilize workers



# Checklist for Choosing Issues

- ✓ Is it **WIDELY FELT?**
- ✓ Is it **DEEPLY FELT?**
- ✓ Is the issue **NON-DIVISIVE?**
- ✓ Is the issue **WINNABLE?**
- ✓ Does it **BUILD** our **UNION?**



- **Scenario 1:** The department just hired 3 new employees and a few months into their term, overtime assignments have become a problem. It used to be that only a few employees ever wanted the overtime hours and those few had an agreement to take turns. However, now all the new employees want to sign up for these shifts as well. The supervisor keeps giving the shifts to the employees with highest seniority but that means the new employees never get them and they're getting frustrated. There is no official policy and the contract doesn't cover the topic. The new employees have asked the union to fix the problem.
- **Scenario 2:** During the summer months, the central air-conditioning system in the main office building runs continuously. Employees come in from the summer heat to a building that is downright chilly. Workers aren't comfortable; some have gotten sick and have had to use sick leave. One employee went so far as to bring a blanket to work, another a space heater. The steward filed a grievance, but nothing happened. The department head said it was beyond his control to fix because the temperature is set by higher ups.



# Three Steps To Building Union Power

1. **IDENTIFY** workplace issues

2. **DEVELOP** an action plan



3. **AGITATE** and mobilize workers



**IDENTIFY  
PERSON  
WITH POWER**

**PRIMARY  
TARGET**

**BUILDING  
MANAGER**

**WHO CAN  
INFLUENCE  
PRIMARY  
TARGET?**

**SECONDARY  
TARGET**

**SUPERVISOR**

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# Successful Actions



People are willing to do it



Everyone can play a part



Visible & Fun!

# Tactics

1. Group meeting & decision making
2. Collectively signed grievance
3. Stand-up or sit down on the job
4. Button/ribbon/armbands
5. Workplace/site survey
6. Same color clothes
7. Newsletter or flyer
8. Involving community and/or union allies
9. Petition
10. Phone-in/email-in
11. Balloons
12. March into work together
13. Rally
14. Boycott event

15. Tapping pencils, coughing or sneezing at the same time
16. Strike
17. Evaluation of supervisors
18. Comparing their behavior toward employees
19. Awards to employers
20. Color coordinated ink on forms
21. Take over of office or meetings
22. Information leaflet at public event
- ~~23. Press release~~



# What Can We Do Back Home?

- Come up with an issue.
- Develop a few tactics.
- Put them in order of increasing action.
- Report out.

**Questions?**

