



A resource from Labor Notes
(with some extra context from CWA#1180)

As we get going into hot labor summer, it's a great time to evaluate your shop for the key components that lead to a strong, well protected workplace. Every shop's strength is tied to these 13 points that demonstrate power, unity, and follow through. When you look at this list ideally you can say "that's us!" and on the points where you haven't gotten there yet you can say "let's do it!" Every point is a sign of success or an opportunity to build your power.

COMPLETE COVERAGE: There is a Shop Steward or union volunteer on every shift. The list is written down, regularly updated, and widely available. Your members will know who they can reach out to if an issue arises, and knows how to contact them. All the members can get help when they need it.

FACE-TO-FACE/VIRTUAL VISITS: Shop Stewards or union volunteers have relationships or open lines of communication with all members, we often call this "turf." These conversations are an opportunity for leaders to be informed of issues that need to be addressed with management, can be used to alert members of upcoming actions, or progress at the bargaining table. When leaders cover their turf it builds connection and allows members to raise concerns.

LIVELY MEETINGS: Membership meetings are regular (ideally monthly), well-attended, and include member participation. Many of our workplaces don't allow time and space for staff to have their voices heard. The union can and should be a place where staff can speak up and feel that their voices are valued. Union meetings can be used to receive feedback on working conditions and the unit can work together for proposed solutions.

NEW HIRES JOIN: A union representative attends every new employee orientation, or hosts one to ensure that new members are properly enrolled with the Union. Aside from getting cards signed, orientation is a place where you can explain the benefits and protections of membership, share the history of how the union was established, and answer questions (for many people this is their first union job!) And as we know: go over those Weingarten Rights!

WORD GETS AROUND: There is regular communication through digital chats, email, newsletters, flyers, up-to-date bulletin boards, and a member-to-member networks. Communication is a vital tool to keeping your members informed and connected. Especially in remote work environments where there are no "water cooler moments." In this era, the word is out, and everyone knows the latest 411.

We Defend Our Standards & Enforce Our Contracts

ACTION IS THE NORM: Members mobilize and use collective action to solve everyday problems, and grievances are not our primary line of defense. While Grievances are a powerful and necessary tool, your shop solves many of the problems at work by meeting it head on with action. Staff meetings, digital systems, letter/petitions, and in-person actions are all vital ways to challenge an unhealthy workplace. Your members are ready to stand up together when the action bell tolls.

We know our rights: Contracts are widely available and promptly distributed, both electronically and in print.

STEWARDS DO IT: Stewards are trained and empowered to resolve issues at the lowest level, including filing grievances. Stewards are actively keeping the unit organized, facilitating meetings, representing members in discipline procedures, communicating with the Labor Management Committee, giving new hire orientations, and covering their turf.

BOSS KNOWS IT: Managers do not act unilaterally or abusively, because they know they will get pushback. The best defense from bad behavior is pushing back and winning. When managers step out of line or violate the contract they know that the union will protect it's members.

Members Own the Union

CONFIDENCE: Members feel that their union is strong and can resolve problems.

EASY ACCESS: Through stewards, members have immediate access to resources to resolve their problems, without having to track down the union rep.

PARTICIPATION: Members participate in unit actions, meetings, and union-wide programs and campaigns.

PRIDE: Members feel a sense of kinship to the union, a place they know they belong. Members feel the power of being part of something bigger, that can protect them and their colleagues.

Have an **UPDATE** or **NEWS** from your Private Sector Shop?

Send information and photos to either Staff Rep Chris Thomas cthomas@cwa1180.org
OR Staff Rep Tomas Laster tlaster@cwa1180.org