



Engineers & Scientists of California

Local 20 IFPTE



Shop Steward Tips

As a union leader, you are our union's representative in the workplace. For some members, you may be their only contact with our union.

A union leader must be an organizer, an educator, a mobilizer, a sounding board, a communicator, and an enforcer of our bargaining units' rights on the job.

What can a union leader do to be successful?

- ✓ Attend Steward Meetings to discover what's happening and participate in decisions. Report back to your co-workers.
- ✓ Listen to what members say and ask.
- ✓ You don't have to be an expert in everything.
- ✓ Greet every new member and welcome them to our union. The sooner the better. Members should know and trust you as their Steward.
- ✓ Hold regular meetings/check-ins, even if it's just an informal get-together over lunch or coffee. Creating a community with co-workers is essential.
- ✓ If you see a contract violation or an injustice in the workplace, act on it — don't wait for someone to complain. Help co-workers find their solutions and voice. You want to empower and seek out new union leaders.
- ✓ Represent all members fairly. It's not just the right thing to do, it's the law.
- ✓ Don't hesitate to speak up. Representing a member and working on union business means you are management's equal.

- ✓ Be responsible, credible, and a good employee. You're setting an example.
- ✓ Strong and effective shop stewards make a powerful union. Thank you!

What can a union leader know to be successful?

KNOW YOUR CONTRACTS (Collective Bargaining Agreement and National Agreement)

- What it says, what it means, and how it protects you and your co-workers.
- Where to find key provisions.
- How to get contracts into the hands of members.
- Examine based on your experiences, and be prepared to recommend changes.

KNOW THE RESOLUTION PROCESSES

- Explore ways to settle problems *without* immediately having to file a grievance.
- Explore ways to problem solve at the lowest levels when possible.
- Know where to find the grievance process described in your contract.
- Follow the procedures carefully and be especially aware of timelines.
- Work with your ESC L20 Union Representative when all options have been exhausted, and there is a need to file a grievance.

KNOW YOUR EMPLOYER'S POLICIES/RULES

- Watch bulletin boards, check emails, and other places notices are posted.
- Read your organization's newsletters, emails, and other communications.
- Have current copies of the policies and procedures and any handbooks.
- Learn about any statutory rules/regulations impacting your industry.

KNOW OUR MEMBERS

- Learn about their work and working conditions.
- Know the various departments, job classifications, and other details.
- Keep an up-to-date email or phone list of co-workers to mobilize easier.
- Know your fellow union leaders and look for potential leaders.

KNOW OUR UNION'S POLICIES/BYLAWS

- Know our union's constitution and bylaws.
- Know our union's policies that impact the membership.
- Know how union decision-making works.

KNOW OUR UNION'S ACTIVITIES

- Know where and when membership meetings take place.
- Read our union newsletters.
- Check out our local union website @ www.ifpte20.org.
- Learn about other union activities.
- Encourage membership engagement in union activities such as surveys and membership meetings.