



# Amicus

***Recruitment – The key to our future***



**Have your say  
at work**

Britain's biggest private sector union  
**Backing you at work**



## ***Recruitment – Handling Objections***



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# HANDLING OBJECTIONS – A BRIEF GUIDE FOR MEMBERS

Anyone who has tried to recruit new members in their workplace will be familiar with the range of objections that they will frequently hear. This guide aims to equip you to deal with some of the most common objections. These relate to both one-to-one recruitment, and also sessions where you may be addressing a group.

## 1 TERMS AND CONDITIONS

### **'I get the pay rise anyway'**

'Yes, you do get it anyway, but how much better could it be if we represented 100% of you instead of 30%?'

'What else do you think union members get?'

### **'The company can't afford pay rises'**

'How do you know?'

'How much money has this company made and lost in the past year?'

Make them feel they're only hearing one side of the story.

If the company is losing money:

'If the company continue to lose money, what do you think would happen?' (audience will think 'job losses')

### **'You haven't been successful to date'**

'Why do you think that is?'

'How are we going to turn that around?'

'How could we make sure that doesn't happen again?'

'How will we get good pay rises for you?'

'Which is stronger – negotiating for 30% of the workforce or for 70%?'

### **'What difference could the union make?'**

'What are you looking for?'

'What would have happened if the union wasn't negotiating wages?'

'What difference do you think you could make?'

### **'If I pay two pounds each week, it's a pay decrease not a pay increase'**

'Terms and conditions are important, but what else do you think you get from union membership?'

## 2 REPRESENTATION

### **'I can get a colleague to help me'**

'How well does your colleague understand employment law / the company's grievance procedure?'

'Who trains them?'

'Would your colleague be willing to represent everyone?'

'Who supports your colleague?'

'Wouldn't it be better to have someone fully trained sitting beside you, who knows what they're talking about?'

### **'I can go to the CAB'**

'What's the first question they're likely to ask you?' ('Are you a member of a trade union?' – this is also a question that many solicitors will ask when first examining an employment-related legal case)

### **'I can look after myself'**

'Great, would everyone else be able to look after themselves?' (refer back to colleague responses)

### **'My brother's a solicitor'**

'Would he be willing to represent everyone at no cost?'

### **'The law looks after me'**

'How?'

Give example of health and safety legislation – many accidents still happen at work, half as many accidents in unionised companies. 'If you've been disciplined at work, how does the law look after you?'

### **'I don't get into trouble'**

'Good for you, but what about the others? Who would they turn to for help?'

### **'I know the shop steward and I wouldn't want him/her representing me'**

'Fine, who would you want?'

'How would you feel if we provided someone else?'

### **'I can go to an employment tribunal'**

'How would you do that?' (remind them of company procedure)

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## 3 LEGAL PROTECTION

### **'I can go to a no-win, no-fee solicitor'**

'What does that mean?' (winners pay substantially)

### **'I can go to the CAB'**

(refer to previous CAB answer)

### **'My brother's a solicitor'**

'Would he be willing to represent everyone at no cost?'

### **'The company looks after me'**

'How?'

'Whose interests count most to the company?'

'Would they help you if you put a claim in against them?' ('no') 'So who would you turn to?'

'Would they look after you if you were responsible for the accident?'

### **'The law looks after me'**

'How?'

'Where do you go for that legal advice or help?'

## 4 HEALTH AND SAFETY

### **'We don't have accidents here'**

'Good – how can we keep it that way?'

'How do you think that's come about?' (if already organised in the workplace)

'What else do you think health and safety is about? / What about the other aspects of health and safety?' (ie environment, VDU, workstations, smoking areas, general health, disease, gender-specific issues...)

### **'The company has a duty of care for my health and safety'**

'Who monitors the company's performance?'

'How?'

'What happens if the company fails to discharge its duty of care?'

'Whose responsibility is it? Where does the buck stop?'

### **'We have health and safety reps here'**

'Who appoints them?'

'Who trains them?'

### **'We can appoint our own health and safety reps, we don't need union ones'**

'How are they chosen? Who trains them?'

'How well trained are they?'

'Are they independent and objective?'

### **'The health and safety executive looks after us'**

'How often do they visit?'

'How do they become involved?'

'When do they become involved?'

(when an accident has already occurred)

### **'We have regular inspections'**

'Who carries them out?'

'How often?'

'What do they look for?'

'Who do the inspectors represent?'

'What input do you have?'

## 5 GENERAL OBJECTIONS

### **'I'm not a Labour supporter – I don't want to join a union that supports the Labour party, I vote for someone else'**

'Would you be happy if I told you that you don't have to support the Labour party. None of your union contributions go to the Labour party if you don't want them to' 'The union supports the Labour party as we believe that this is the best way to bring about our objectives'

'Not all of our members support the Labour party, but they understand the benefits of union membership in relation to workplace issues'

'You have to decide what's important to you'

### **'Trade unions take people out on strike'**

'Why do you think strikes take place?' (because members vote for them to take place)

'Do you think any trade union wants to take its members out on strike?'

'What do you think trade unions do to prevent strikes taking place?' (everything – strike is a last resort)

### **'I'm still in a probationary period'**

'What would you do if the company decided not to keep you on?'



## ***Recruitment – Techniques***



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# RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES – A BRIEF GUIDE FOR MEMBERS

The main benefits of union membership lie in four key areas:

## ● Representation at work ● Legal Protection ● Wages, terms and conditions ● Health and Safety

This brief guide gives you an idea of how to discuss and promote these benefits to non-members, with the aim of signing them up into membership.

This tried-and-tested technique has a very high success rate, both in presentations to groups and one-to-one discussions. It works on the basis that very few people like being told what's good for them or what to do! Particularly people who may have negative preconceptions about what a union does, or have a closed mind to the benefits of union membership.

This technique concentrates on opening people's minds by asking them a series of questions about the four core services and benefits that union membership provides. The ones provided below serve as a guide and a starting point, and once you're comfortable with them you can develop your own. In some places this guide also shows you the most likely responses that you will be getting to your questions. Your regional officers/organising co-ordinator can help you to develop similar questions around issues in your workplace not covered here.

A guide to handling objections is also available, designed to deal with the most common objections that we've heard over the past few years.

The additional benefits, such as discounted insurance, 24hr Legalline, and the Holiday Club are fringe benefits that help to offset the costs of membership and help our members to get a good deal outside the workplace as well as in it. These can be discussed after the four key services listed above.

### ● Wages, Terms and Conditions

Q: How important is your pay to you?

A: Very important

Q: Why do you come to work every day?  
(Follow up: If you won the lotto at the weekend, would you carry on working here?)

A: For the money

Q: So your pay is very important to you?

You have now got them to agree that their pay is very important to them.

Q: Who deals with your pay, and your terms and conditions?  
How are they currently determined?

A: Works Committee

Q: How important is it that they are well trained?  
Who trains them to negotiate your wages?

If they need support, advice or information to help them negotiate, who provides this for them?

How do you have a say in your pay and how it's determined?

Is it important for you to have a say?

What if I told you that the union would train representatives elected by you to negotiate your pay, and that you would have input into this process? Would that be a good thing?

A: No-one, the company decides

Q: Would you not want to have input into this process?

What sort of pay rises have you got in the past couple of years?

Are you happy for the company to impose a pay increase?

Would it be a good thing to have someone fully trained negotiating your wages on your behalf?

Get them to agree that pay is very important to them, and it is important for them to have a say in how it is determined.

### ● Legal Protection

Q: What happens if you have an accident at work?

Who would you turn to for help?

A: My line manager

Q: Whose interests do you think your line manager is most likely to represent? Yours or the company's?

Can you be 100% sure s/he would support you?

A: My colleague/friend/brother

Q: Does your colleague know about health and safety legislation?

Is your colleague trained to argue your case in court?

A: I'd go to a 'no win, no fee' solicitor

What does 'no win, no fee' mean?

(the winners pay the costs for the losers as well as themselves)

How much of your claim would disappear if you won?

Do you want to pay up to 70% of any settlement you get?

Q: Would you want to be advised and legally represented by someone who knew all about health and safety legislation, and who was trained to argue your case?

Would you want the union's solicitors to represent you for free if you had an accident at work?

If you won, would you want to keep 100% of your claim?

Q: Did you know that the union wins over £45m each year on behalf of its members who have accidents at work?

Get them to agree that if they had an accident at work, it would be important to have someone who was an expert in employment law argue their case for them, and to keep 100% of their claim if they win.

# RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUES – A BRIEF GUIDE FOR MEMBERS

## ● Health and Safety

Q: How important is it for your workplace to be safe and healthy?

Who currently monitors and deals with health and safety in your workplace?

Is it important to you that someone trained in health and safety is monitoring it on your behalf on a day to day basis?

Should that person have the best interests of employees at heart?

Get them to agree that it would be important to have someone trained in health and safety legislation, with their interests at heart, monitoring health and safety on a day to day basis in their workplace.

## ● Representation and Advice

Q: What would happen if you had to go through a disciplinary procedure? Or if you wanted to bring a grievance against the company?

What would you do if your case reached an industrial tribunal?

Would you want to represent yourself?

Would you want to be represented by your friend or colleague?

Are they trained in employment law?

Do you think the training provided by an outside body would be more or less objective than training provided by the company?

If you had a problem at work, would you want someone to help you to resolve it before it reached a formal procedure?

If you were being bullied or harassed, would you want to be able to speak to someone in confidence about it, who could help you to stop it? Would it be important that they knew what your legal rights were?

Would it be important to have someone advising you and sitting next to you who was trained in employment law and representational skills?

Would you feel reassured if you were being advised and represented by a professional body, external to the company?

Get them to agree that if they had a disciplinary or grievance, it would be important to be represented by someone who was trained in employment law, with their best interests at heart.

## SUMMING UP

For each of the four issues you should by now have received positive responses. Sum up the conversation or presentation, using phrases such as:

On PAY:

**'You've told me that your pay is very important to you, and it is important for you to have a say in how it is determined'**

'This is something that the Union does / can do for you'

On LEGAL PROTECTION:

**'You've told me that if you had an accident at work, it would be important to have someone who was an expert in employment law arguing your case for you, and to keep 100% of your claim if you win'**

'As a member, this is protection that the Union provides for you'

On HEALTH AND SAFETY:

**'You've told me that it would be important to have someone trained in health and safety legislation, with your interests at heart, monitoring health and safety on a day to day basis in your workplace'**

'The Union trains health and safety representatives to provide you with this service'

On REPRESENTATION:

**'You've told me that if you had a disciplinary or grievance, it would be important to be represented by someone who was trained in employment law, with their your interests at heart'**

'As a Union member, this is a service and protection that you receive'

Now invite them to join the Union and benefit from all of these things and hand them a form!

## Membership Benefits

As you do so, remind them of all of the extra membership benefits the Union provides in order to help them and save money to recoup the costs of membership e.g. free will making service, 24hr Legalline, Holiday Club, preferential rates on car, home and travel insurance.

## Cost

If/when you are asked how much membership costs, ask:

'How much would all of this be worth to you?'

'Far less than the increase we could negotiate on your wages if more of you join'

'Less than the cost of a newspaper every day / one pint per week / 2 packets of cigarettes per month'

'£9.20 per month' (2004 rate)