

A BASIC GUIDE TO ESTABLISHING A

# LABOR - MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



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For further information, contact:

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# STARTING YOUR LMC

## COMMITTEE SIZE

The number of representatives on the committee can vary according to the size and structure of the establishment. However, the representatives of each party should consist of responsible leaders. The Committee should be composed of an agreed upon equal number of representatives of each side. The union members should include the local union leadership, the chief steward and representatives of major departments and shifts. Management members must include site management and line supervisors. Additional members can be included as required. In the future, it may be helpful if the committee is supplemented with rotating members, each serving for a short period of time. This practice allows more people to participate in the committee and can introduce a "fresh outlook" on issues and/or solutions. Rotation also affords the opportunity to bring to the meetings the "habitual grippers" who can disrupt an orderly process of operation. Many times the "griper" can make a valuable contribution by offering constructive suggestions. The increased communications between the parties, as a result of the LMC, will lead to a better Labor-Management relationship; and will be invaluable in reaching solutions to mutual problems.



## LMC MEETINGS AND PROCEDURES

The first order of business is establishing the frequency, dates, location and duration of meetings. Once the Committee is in place, monthly meetings should be sufficient. Meetings should be limited to one and one-half hours. (These limits can be modified by the mutual agreement of the parties). However, the meeting time provided should be strictly adhered to and not extended unless an emergency exists.



## CHAIRING THE COMMITTEE



Initially, Commissioners of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service may assist the chairpersons. It is suggested that co-chairs (one representing labor and one management) be appointed and rotate the chairing of meetings.

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## THE "FORBIDDEN" ISSUES

There are certain issues that are better handled by collective bargaining or contract enforcement including:

- Any topic covered by the provisions of the collective bargaining agreement or any topic that proposes any change in the language of your current contract.
  
- Active Grievances



**THE LMC IS NOT DESIGNED TO BY-PASS THE GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE OR ANY ASPECT OF THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT.**

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## THE DO'S

## THE DON'TS

Once the labor-management committee has been set up, organized and procedural items have been agreed upon, the success of the committee depends on the parties. Based on past experience, federal mediators have identified some of the "do's" and "don'ts" that provide the framework for success.

**DO** keep the discussion centered on the issue involved.

**DO** keep personalities from becoming involved

**DO** hold all meetings as scheduled. Cancel meetings only in an emergency

**DO** be prompt in attending the meetings.

**DO** submit the agenda in advance to allow the opposite party sufficient time to investigate problems.

**DO** in submitting the agenda, identify all items to be discussed.

**DO** maintain an agreed-to procedure on recording and drafting the minutes, as well as methods of distribution.

**DO** maintain accurate minutes on subjects discussed at the previous meetings that have been "completed" or "resolved" as well as those items still "open".

**DO** be sure the committee concept is explained and understood by employees and supervisors.

**DON'T** start the first meeting with extremely difficult issues. **DO** get accustomed to this problem-solving technique by tackling rather minor problems first.

**DON'T** allow the meetings to become gripe sessions.

**DON'T** deal in generalities. Be specific about the problem and its suggested correction.

**DON'T** anticipate that you know the answer to a question before it has been discussed. **DO** ask questions to get the facts.

**DON'T** treat any issue on the agenda as unimportant. Each item on the agenda deserves thorough investigation and discussion.

**DON'T** delay in communicating solutions developed for serious problems, or the outcome of issues discussed.

**DON'T** start scheduled meetings late, or drag them or beyond the allotted time. This has often led to the failure of a LMC.

**DON'T** look for immediate results.

**REMEMBER**, IT IS IMPORTANT THAT LESS SERIOUS PROBLEMS BE DISCUSSED INITIALLY TO FAMILIARIZE EVERYONE WITH THE COMMITTEE AND THE PROCESS OF WORKING TOGETHER TO SOLVE PROBLEMS.

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# Chairing

Responsibility for chairing meetings shall alternate each meeting between the union and management. Each party will determine whether their chair assignment will be permanent or rotate among their members.

# Reporting

Topics will be recorded as they are discussed. Any procedures or recommendations developing from these meetings will be communicated to the proper group; i.e., Operating Department, Joint Standing Committee, Negotiating Committee, etc. Drafts of the minutes of meetings will be refined by one designated representative from each party.

# General Guidelines

1. It is recognized that recommendations growing out of these meetings are not binding.
2. No grievances shall be discussed and no bargaining shall take place.
3. Topics that could lead to grievances may be discussed.
4. Each person wishing to speak shall be recognized by the Chair before speaking.
5. The Chair shall recognize a motion from either party to table a topic for further study.
6. Either party may initiate a request to the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service for assistance.
7. Each topic shall be discussed fully and action reached before proceeding to another topic. Topics requiring further study may be tabled. Where mutually satisfactory decisions are not reached, the topic shall be cancelled, reverting to its proper place in the labor/management relationship - for instance, grievance procedure, negotiations, etc.