Union Representation and Communications

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Topics

• Union Representation
• Leave for Union Business
• Union Communications
Union Representation

• Severe consequences for failure
• High awareness as a result
• Still, what is required is varied
• Worth reviewing
Union Representation (cont’d)

• ONA - at the time formal discipline is imposed or at any stage of the grievance procedure
Union Representation (cont’d)

• CAW - whenever an interview is held with an employee that could become a part of his record regarding his work conduct, a steward or union representative will be present.
Union Representation (cont’d)

• Where in doubt, take cautious approach

• Labour relations advantages
Union Representation (cont’d)

• Role of representative is to advocate, inform of rights

• Not to obstruct, coach how to answer, answer for employee
Union Leave

• Have some control over union representation

• Under ONA/CUPE/SEIU:
  – need permission before leaving (not unreasonably withheld);
  – notify of presence in another unit;
  – report to supervisor when return

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Union Leave (cont’d)

• Normally a number of union representatives (stewards, officers) – not typically required to deal with one person

• Operational considerations
Union Communications

- Obligation to notify of certain events
- Obligation to communicate with a particular position
- Confirmation of communications
- All present traps for the unwary
Union Communications (cont’d)

- Obligation to provide notice of some events (discipline, layoffs)
- If don’t provide the proper notice, can invalidate action
- Happens from time to time – unaware, inadverrence
Union Communications (cont’d)

- Obligation to communicate to particular person (president, secretary, more than one)
- Sometimes practice is different then what was agreed to
- If practice is different, send confirming letter
Union Communications (cont’d)

• Letter sent, but Union claims never received

• Unfortunately it does happen

• Utilize a method that can be verified (sign off, e-mail)
Summary

- Verify what your own collective agreement(s) provide
- Determine what actual practices are in place (and why)
- If going to change, may need to provide notice