**Best Practices for Successful**

**New Employee Orientation (NEO)**

**DO** negotiate formal New Employee Orientation (NEO) on the employer’s time: it shows our union has a legitimate place in the workplace and is an equal partner.

**DO** realize that New Employee/Member Orientation is a **process**, not a single event or mailing. While formal NEO’s are very important, they are no substitute for multiple one-on-one conversations with new employees/new members that build union relationships over time.

**DO** have stewards, MATs or activists welcome new hires and conduct one- on-one conversations with them in their work area. Each new hire should be talked with individually **their first day**, meet with a steward within their first week, and receive a one-on-one or phone call with an officer or board member in their first month.

**DO** ask new hires to sign membership cards and PEOPLE MVP cards on their first day of work. Employees sign a number of forms on their first day on the job. By greeting new employees on their first day, joining our union will be as natural to them as joining the workforce.

**DO** distribute New Employee Packets with a reasonable (but not overwhelming) amount of information at the first meeting.

**DO** give workers written information only AFTER they sign their membership card. If you give them the paperwork first, they often say they’ll look over the literature and get back with us.

**DON’T** let employer representatives hand out membership cards and contracts as part of the hiring process. Stewards, MATs and activists should take responsibility for this, to build relationships.

**DON’T** wait until after new hires’ probation ends before signing them up as members. If we wait for several months, we allow others to define our union, and it becomes less likely that the new employees will join us. Probationary employees are covered by a number of union-won benefits such as wages, overtime, non-discrimination, pension, health insurance, seniority and so on, and should be part of our union from the start. Sign ‘em up the first day!

**3 Steps to Signing up New Employees**

**1. PLAN.**

**Develop a plan that ensures success.**

* Assign and train presenters for group New Employee Orientation meetings.
* Designate someone in each work area to have a one-on-one conversation with each new employee the first day of work and ask the new employee to join our union and PEOPLE.
* Train your stewards and MATs to do effective one-on-one conversations.
* Develop or revise your New Employee Packet as needed.

**2. PREPARE.**

**Create New Employee Packets which include:**

* A simple information sheet about our local union with the following information:
* A list of the officers, stewards and MATs, along with contact information and pictures
* Date, place and time of the union’s monthly meeting
* A brief description of the local and highlights of recent victories and accomplishments
* Local contract (if covered by a contract)
* Local / Council newsletter
* Membership authorization card
* PEOPLE brochure and MVP sign up card
* AFSCME Advantage brochure with members’ only benefits
* (NOTE: Remember to only give the packet AFTER you have signed the new employee up!)

**3. EXECUTE.**

**Sample Agenda for Signing Up New Employees:**

1) Introduce yourself and welcome the new employee(s) to the workplace.

2) Ask questions to get to know the new employee(s) and to develop a relationship.

* Examples: Have they ever had a job like this before? How’s it going? What are they looking forward to? Is there anything they’re worried about? Have they ever been a union member?

3) Share your message about the union.

* Accomplishments of your local union – things you have won or attacks you have fought
* How important it is that every worker be part of our union and be active in order to protect and improve our jobs, our working standards, and the services we provide.

4) Ask the new employee(s) to join our union. Sign them up!

5) Tell the new employee(s) how politics affect our jobs and why it’s important to have a voice in the political process. Ask them to become a PEOPLE MVP member. (And NOW, you can give them the information packet!)