

Campaign Wrap-Up

Once a new contract is ratified, you should begin to lay the ground-work for the future.

Involve leaders, members, and staff in analysis of the campaign. This should be done in a systematic way, using meetings, articles in local union publications, and, if appropriate, membership surveys.

Each aspect of the campaign, from planning goals and internal organizing to pressure tactics and the bargaining itself should be examined for what went right and what could have been done better. For each subject, ask questions such as...

What additional training should we have done for members, leaders, or staff?

Did we allocate enough resources to this part of the campaign?

Did we start planning soon enough?

What problems and obstacles came up that we should plan for next time?

A report summarizing the views of leaders and members should be compiled and kept in local union files for future reference.

Thank all who helped win the contract victory. Although leaders and staff may be exhausted by the end of the campaign, you need to find the energy to say your thank-yous while they are still timely.

Among those to thank might be...

- *Committee members, worksite leaders, staff, and volunteers.* They can be thanked in person, given recognition in union publications, and presented with certificates of appreciation. A party may be appropriate as long as it does not take on the appearance of abusing the members' money to benefit a few.
- *Allies in the labor movement or broader community.* If you hope to go back to them for help some other time, you have to let them know that their help contributed to winning a settlement and that your local is available when they need help.
- *Suppliers and consultants.* This might be the printer who added a shift to get a key leaflet out overnight, or the computer whiz who spent hours straightening out your mailing list. These also are people whose help you may need again, and it makes a difference when you show that their effort is appreciated.

Prepare to enforce the new agreement. A program to make use of new contract provisions helps maintain momentum after the campaign and reminds everyone why it was worth the effort.

Members need to be trained immediately on how to use new rights or benefits, and staff and worksite leaders may need special training on how to help them do so.

Copies of the new contract should be printed and distributed as soon as possible

While you may want to negotiate to have management pay all or part of the printing cost, you should be careful about an agreement in which management is in charge of arranging to get the printing done. In many cases, management will delay production and distribution as long as possible.

Until printed copies of the contract are available, you should provide worksite leaders with photocopies so they and their co-workers can start immediately to take advantage of contract improvements. If your local has a Web site, the full text of the new contract should be posted as soon as possible.

Whether members get paychecks that for the first time contain a new or higher benefit or pay rate, the union newsletter or a special leaflet should point out the improvement, making the point that *“we got this improvement because many union members got involved in the contract campaign, and if we want to win future improvements, we need to expand that involvement even more.”*

Encourage emerging leaders and volunteers

As a result of the campaign, you will have identified new people who are willing to get involved in union work. Make an organized effort to keep those people involved. For each individual, figure out what motivated them to become more active, what committee or activity would suit them best, what training they might need, etc.

Start planning the next campaign. It is no exaggeration to say that the next contract campaign starts the day the last contract is ratified and signed.

Gather a representative group of leaders and look at each topic in this manual to find ways to get a head start on planning for the next time. In doing so, you will be laying a blueprint for building a more effective local union with a clearer sense of future goals...greater internal unity and membership involvement...improved internal communications...stronger ties with potential allies...a sharper analysis of management's plans and strategies...and a more developed strategy for building the power it takes to achieve your goals.

The end of one contract campaign is the time to start building for the next one. One activity is to sign up non-members by pointing out the gains won and the need for unity to make further progress.