



# ***How to Work Positively and Constructively in a Unionized Environment***

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# *How to Work Positively and Constructively in a Unionized Environment*

## **CCPL System Overview**

- 28 branches serving 600,000 residents of the 47 urban & suburban cities surrounding Cleveland.
- 7.2 million visitors borrowed 16.43 million items.
- Branches range in size from 4,000 - 48,000 sq.ft.
- \$11.5 million materials budget, all in house processing.



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## **Staffing Breakdown**

- 1,041 Total Staff
- 398 Full Time
- 643 Part Time
- 76 Managers
- 20 Confidential/Clerical
- 607 Bargaining Unit
- 338 Non Bargaining Unit (under 16 hours)



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## **Union Overview**

- The Union was organized in 1985 and is "deemed certified" by the State of Ohio.
- The Union represents all non-managerial professional, para-professional, clerical, technical, maintenance employees and drivers, including some supervisory employees.
- The Union has a chapter leadership team consisting of 10 key representatives from most major classifications, and from all regions and divisions of the library system.
- SEIU 1199 represents employees at 12 other library systems in Ohio, and other SEIU locals represent library employees throughout the United States.



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# *How to Work Positively and Constructively in a Unionized Environment*

## **Critical Elements to a Positive and Constructive Labor-Management Relationship**

- **Respect** for each other's work and perspectives.
- **Trust** that each party is committed to the success of the library system and to providing the best service possible to the library's customers.
- **Understand** that each party has an obligation to represent their respective sides.
- **Recognize** historical events and actions.
- Be **Open and Up Front** with your intentions, with your timing, with what you know and what you don't know.
- Have the **Courage** to propose real change, challenge our respective constituents, and seek and accept the compromises needed to achieve the change.



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# Interest Based Bargaining Whatcom County's Story



# WCLS Mix of Players

- 30 year Union veterans entrenched in the traditional bargaining process
- New Union staff; total of 66 Union members
- Union Reps who helped open group to change
- Management both with and without Union background and experience
- Board members who embraced fresh ideas
- New HR staff who attended an FMCS training





## **ESSENTIAL TO HAVE IN PLACE:**

Sound and solid foundation of trust and willingness to work together



# Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service Training

- Two days mandatory FMCS training for all involved in negotiations.
- Group agreed that if either party thought this was not going to work after taking the training or at any point in the process, we would go back to traditional bargaining.



# Simple Sample Role Play

- Traditional
- IBB





# ASSUMPTIONS

- *Both parties can have their interests met*
- *Problem solving enhances relationships*
- *Parties should help each other*
- *Open discussion expands mutual interests and options*
- *Standards can replace power relative to solutions*

FMCS



## *Framing Issues as Questions*

### *Questions for the Bargaining Process*

- How can we ensure better safety and security in all our buildings for all people involved in using our services?
- How can we structure the salary schedule to reward career staff and attract new staff?
- How can we improve our voluntary transfer procedure?

FMCS



## POSITIONAL

- *Issues*
- *Positions*
- *Arguments*
- *Power/Compromise*
- *Settle:*  
*Win-Lose*

## IBB

- *Issues*
- *Interests*
- *Options*
- *Standards*
- *Settle:*  
*Win-Win*

*FMCS*



# Interest Based Bargaining Steps

1. Define the Issue
2. Develop interests on both sides through communications with constituents
3. Identify mutual interests
4. Develop options through brainstorming
5. Establish standards
6. Measure options against standards
7. By consensus eliminate options that do not meet standards

FMCS





# What Are Some Commonly-Used Standards?

- Is it legal?
- Can we actually do it?
- Can it be ratified?
- Will it enhance our relationship?







# WCLS 3 Year Contract Costs

- \$11,492 staff time
- 10 staff for 59 hours each 16 hours training,
- Union rep and board time not calculated
- 43 negotiating hours total
- \$473 attorney fees



# Benefits

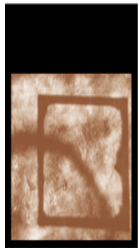
- Three year contract ratified
- Greater understanding about the complex problems facing all of us—not us and them
- A partnership agreement was established between Union and Management to encourage communication and problem solving; fewer surprises;
- Negotiations starts this summer and training for the team is scheduled—learning continues!



# Intangibles

- A culture of trust,
- Improved relationships at all levels,
- Expectation that by working together, solutions can be found!
- Want to jump in?





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**Singer  
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# ***How to Work Positively and Constructively in a Unionized Environment***

## **Jeannie and Paula's Top Ten Tips:**

- 1. Trust ... and Respect**
- 2. Clear and open lines of communication**
- 3. Relationships** between supervisors and employees – doesn't matter if unionized.
- 4. All supervisors should be more than familiar with the contract**, including intent.
- 5. Resolve problems** before they turn into grievances.
- 6. Contract administration** is key to making or breaking the labor contract; supervisory training is critical.



# Our Top 10

7. Do your **homework**.
8. Work closely with the management team in developing a **comprehensive** collective bargaining plan.
9. If City/County wide bargaining secure a place on the **bargaining team**. *Trust us on this one.*
10. Try to be **collaborative** as opposed to adversarial.



# ***How to Work Positively and Constructively in a Unionized Environment***

- Try options: ADR, IBB, FMCS
- Learn: IPMA, SHRM, NPELRA
  - Communications Skills \* Libraries are changing



# ***How to Work Positively and Constructively in a Unionized Environment***

Jeannie and Paula's Top Tips *if bargaining for the first time*:

1. Examine **why** your employees joined a union.
2. Get **professional help**.
3. **Learn**; take classes.
4. Familiarize yourself with state **statutes and local ordinances** governing labor relations.
5. Be careful about what you put into the contract ... it's hard to remove a **contract provision**.
6. Avoid **unfair labor practices**.
7. Serve as a **conduit** between the Board, elected officials and the employees.
8. Preserve your **sense of humor**. Practice being a **diplomat**.





# ***How to Work Positively and Constructively in a Unionized Environment***

## ***You can get into trouble for:***

- Acting without knowing the legal regulatory environment
- Failure to bargain in good faith
- Discouraging union membership
- Providing financial support to an employee organization



# *How to Work Positively and Constructively in a Unionized Environment*

- **Finally**, keep in mind that it is easier to maintain a good working relationship than it is to mend fences.



# Q&A



THANK YOU!!!



# How to Reach Us

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# Federal Mediation & Conciliation Service

FMCS mediators work from 69 field offices, administered through two geographic regions, East and West.

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