



**EMPOWERING OUR FUTURE**

## **UNE REGIONAL SEMINAR**

**Participant Materials**

## **Session Goals :**

Participants will:

- Explore union leadership mandates, roles, and responsibilities
- Increase familiarity with union governance principles, processes, and tools
- Enhance leadership solidarity skills related to working through differences

## **Agenda:**

- Welcome and Setting the Stage
- It All Begins at the Local Level
- Union Leadership Roles
- Solidarity Skills: Understanding and Working Through Differences
- Solidarity Skills: Leading in Support of Equity
- Solidarity Skills: Having Challenging Conversations
- One Final Look at Local Level Challenges
- Seminar Wrap-Up

# How We Will Work Together

## We will:

- Be present
- Participate
- Take risks
- Be open to new ideas and ways of doing things
- Be aware of the space you are taking
- Encourage the participation of others
- Challenge each other respectfully
- Try to be on time
- Minimize outside interruptions
- Take responsibility for your own learning
- Capitalize on the experiences and ideas others have to offer

## **PSAC STATEMENT ON HARASSMENT**

*This statement is to be read out and distributed at all Alliance events.*

Our union is made strong by Sisters and Brothers working together to improve our working lives and to preserve the rights that we have struggled to achieve. Mutual respect is the cornerstone of this cooperation. The Alliance Constitution states that every member is entitled to be free from discrimination and harassment, both in the union and at the workplace, on the basis of age, sex, colour, national or ethnic origin, race, religion, marital status, criminal record, disability, sexual orientation, language, class or political belief. Members are also entitled to be free from personal harassment.

If you experience harassment at this event, contact the identified Harassment Complaint Coordinator to discuss the situation and possible responses. Our initial approach is to encourage early and informal resolution and to facilitate our members speaking directly with one another to resolve the matter. If this is not successful or possible, the Constitutional and policy mandates on the issue of harassment will be fully and quickly enforced.

Harassment in all its forms, detracts from our common purpose and weakens our union. Let each one of us, as we work together on the important task at hand, treat each other with dignity and respect.

# **UNE Bylaws**

## **Summary of Local Tasks**

### **Locals' officers** Bylaw 3 Sec 4

Each local will elect at least three executive officers—a president, a vice-president, and a secretary-treasurer. Each local will also elect a health and safety representative. If there are only three executive officers, one will serve as a health and safety representative.

A local may divide the secretary-treasurer's responsibilities among two or more executive offices. The Local may also establish additional executive positions such as chief steward and human rights representative.

### **Local officers** Bylaw 3 Sec 5

Election of local officers takes place at annual general meetings or as otherwise permitted by their bylaws.

### **Taking office** Bylaw 3 Sec 6

All officers of Union of National Employees locals will take office at the end of the meeting at which they are elected. The oath of office will be administered to all officers immediately before taking office. In the event that any member-elect is not able to take the oath at the local meeting, the elected member will not be, or act as, an officer until the member takes the oath, regardless of having served previously on the local.

### **Jurisdiction of locals** Bylaw 3 Sec 7

Each local has the authority to manage issues particular to its local, as well as issues that affect the interests of its own members, so long as the local's work does not contravene the PSAC's constitution, or the UNE's bylaws or policies.

### **Acquiring facilities** Bylaw 3 Sec 8

Subject to Bylaw 5, Section 10, locals may acquire space and facilities to conduct their businesses. All costs for these facilities are borne by the local.

### **Adopting and amending bylaws** Bylaw 3 Sec 9

Locals will adopt bylaws to conduct their business. A local may amend its bylaws by a two-thirds majority vote of its membership at a local membership meeting, provided 30 days notice has been provided to the membership.

All bylaws will be approved by the national president prior to coming into effect.

### **Minimum standards for local bylaws** Bylaw 3 Sec 10

Local bylaws will respect, as a minimum, the UNE Standard Local Bylaws established by the national executive. Locals may adopt changes to these bylaws to accommodate particular circumstances, but the changes will enhance the standards set out in the Standard Local Bylaws and will not conflict with the UNE bylaws or the PSAC Constitution.

### **Conflicting bylaws** Bylaw 3 Sec 11

Bylaws of locals will be revised when changes to the PSAC Constitution or Union of National Employees bylaws create conflict.

### **Reporting requirements** Bylaw 3 Sec 12

Each year, locals will submit to the UNE national office their local's reviewed or audited financial statements and any other information required.

### **Local executive meetings** Bylaw 3 Sec 13

Each local's executive officers will hold at least six scheduled executive meetings annually. These meetings ensure that the local conducts its business properly.

### **Locals' annual general meetings** Bylaw 3 Sec 14

Each local will hold a regular annual general meeting to receive and have available for adoption annual reports from its officers, financial statements, local budgets (where applicable) and the minutes of the previous annual general meeting for consideration of business, as required by the local's bylaws.

### **Inactive locals** Bylaw 3 Sec 15

A local will be deemed to be inactive when

- a) the local has ceased to function;
- b) the local has failed to carry out its responsibilities;
- c) the local fails to meet the requirements set out in Bylaw 3, Section 5; Bylaw 3, Section 12; and Bylaw 5, Section 9; or
- d) no officers have been elected to the local, as per Bylaw 3, Section 4.

### **Local dues** Bylaw 4 Sec 14

Locals may establish dues by a majority vote at a meeting of the Local. Such dues are paid to the local, provided that the local conforms with all rules in Bylaw 5 and Policy FIN 1. A local may amend its dues not more than once a year.

## **Retention of financial records** Bylaw 5 Sec 6

The UNE and its locals should retain all financial records for the legal period prescribed by the Income Tax Act as interpreted by the Minister responsible for the Canada Revenue Agency of National Revenue.

## **Local signing officers** Bylaw 5 Sec 7

Locals will approve at least three and no more than five signing officers, two of whom will sign all cheques. No disbursements may be made that are not in accordance with the local's bylaws.

## **Submission of financial statements** Bylaw 5 Sec 8

The treasurer of a local will submit a financial statement to all regular meetings of the local.

## **Bylaw 5 Sec 9**

The treasurer will also submit to the UNE, before April 1 of each year, annual financial statements independently reviewed in accordance with Policy FIN 1, Local finances. These financial statements cover the previous year ending December 31. The UNE will not remit the refundable portion of dues until its financial statement has been received and approved.

## **Local contracting** Bylaw 5 Sec 10

No local may enter into any extraordinary financial agreement beyond its day-to-day business operations without prior approval of the National President or National Executive Vice-President. If the Local is not satisfied with the decision, it can refer the matter to the National Executive.

## **Local attendance** Bylaw 6 Sec 8

All locals have the right to send observers to National Conventions at local expense. Observers do not have the right to vote or to participate in debate at National Conventions.

## **Election of delegates** Bylaw 6 Sec 10

At least four months prior to the opening date of the UNE National Convention, each local that has met the requirements of Bylaw 3, Sections 4 and 11; Bylaw 3, Section 5; and Bylaw 5, Section 9 will elect from among members at a general meeting an accredited delegate to the convention. The number of delegates per local is based on the number of members in good standing in the local six months prior to the opening date of the convention:

- a) four to 100 members = one delegate;

b) one accredited delegate for each 100 members or portion thereof to a maximum of five delegates for any given local

**Alternates** Bylaw 6 Sec 11

Each local will elect alternates to attend National Convention in place of any accredited delegates who cannot attend.

**Accreditation** Bylaw 6 Sec 12

Immediately after locals elect delegates to National Convention, they will submit the delegates' names to the UNE on a UNE credential form. The form will include an extract from the local minutes that shows the actual motion of election of delegates

## UNE LOCAL LEADERSHIP ROLES

### **Local Presidents** will:

1. Act as the chief officer of the local and coordinate the affairs of the local through the other officers and local committees;
2. Be responsible for the efficient and proper conduct of the local;
3. Preside at all membership meetings and executive meetings of their respective locals and is an ex-officio member of all committees of the local;
4. Apply the PSAC Rules of Order to any questions of procedure; and
5. Be the chief spokesperson of the local in its dealings with the employer.

### **Local Vice-Presidents** will:

1. Perform the duties of the local president when the president asks, when the president is absent or if the president resigns;
2. Conduct meetings on behalf of the president or assumes the chair when the president vacates it for any reason during a meeting; and
3. Be responsible for certain portfolios or duties as assigned by the president or the executive.

### **Local Secretaries** will:

1. Be responsible for the administrative duties of the local;
2. Keep accurate records of all meetings of their local;
3. Be responsible for keeping proper files of all documents;
4. Be responsible for maintaining a record of all correspondence relating to their local; and
5. Be responsible for certain portfolios or duties as assigned by the president or the executive.

### **Local Treasurers** will:

1. Keep proper files of the financial records of their local;
2. Be accountable for all receivables and payables;
3. Act as one of the local's signing officers
4. Prepare and submit financial reports at each executive or general meeting;
5. Collect and deposit local funds;
6. Be familiar with and responsible for Component financial policies (e.g., FIN 1);

7. Identify Rand members (dues paying members who have not signed a union card) so that they may be signed up.
8. Be responsible for certain portfolios or duties as assigned by the president or the executive.

**Local Chief Stewards will:**

1. Coordinate the work of stewards in their locals and ensure that their members receive advice and assistance on grievances, staffing complaints and related issues;
2. Recruit stewards and where possible organize and chair the steward's committee/network;
3. Work closely with all stewards, executive officers, committees and liaise with component staff; and
4. Be responsible for certain portfolios or duties as assigned by the president or the executive.

**The Local Executive Health and Safety Representative will:**

1. Act as the local representative on health and safety issues;
2. Participate as one of the union's representatives on the joint union management health and safety committee;
3. Encourage members' attendance and participation at health and safety conferences, courses and events.

**The Local Human Rights Representative will:**

1. Act as the local representative on human rights issues;
2. Develop knowledge and expertise on such issues as human rights, and employers' human rights plans;
3. Keep current on human rights matters by subscribing to publications and accessing other resources;
4. Maintain files of materials on human rights;
5. Keep abreast of information and resources to advance the interests of human rights for members;
6. Review employer's equity plan on a regular basis;
7. Advocate for members on human rights matters by presenting these matters to the employer and the union;
8. Provide human rights-related input into the local executive's decision-making processes;
9. Develop and promote initiatives that encourage members' participation on human rights matters;

10. Advocate for the development and delivery of a comprehensive human rights education program in the local and at the workplace;
11. Organize education sessions and sensitization training for local members in conjunction with other local representatives;
12. Encourage members' attendance and participation at human rights conferences, courses and events;
13. Report to the local executive on his or her activities;
14. Communicate actively with regional leadership and representatives on the PSAC human rights Committee; and
15. Notify regional leadership—and the Union of National Employees — immediately in the event of an incident related to human rights in the workplace.

**Local Stewards** will:

1. Act as the link between members and their elected local officials
2. Serve as local builders who unite members, organize locals, and get members involved;
3. Deal with management on workers' on issues;
4. Get to know the membership they represent;
5. Make themselves available to the membership;
6. Meet with members to hear individual or group concerns or complaints;
7. Be proactive in identifying and solving problems, rather than waiting and reacting to problems Page 48 Union of National Employees Policies
8. Talk informally to supervisors to address members' issues;
9. Mobilize members when management breeches the collective agreement, their own policies or the law;
10. Provide representation to members on grievances;
11. Organize and participate in workplace actions;
12. Work with and take direction from local executive and union staff;
13. Engage members in union campaigns.

Source: Policy LOC 8 (former Policy LOC 7, Local Bylaw 8)

## What's an Equity Lens?

Our society is made up of individuals who have an array of identities, abilities, backgrounds, cultures, skills, perspectives and experiences, representative of our country's current and evolving population. Barriers to the participation of marginalized and equity communities still exist.

Unions have a key role in ensuring the removal of these barriers and in working towards representative and inclusive workplaces and unions.

An **equity lens** ensures union leaders can intentionally focus on how equity seeking groups and marginalized groups are negatively affected and impacted by policies and practices.

### **Helpful equity lens questions include:**

- Are equity members included in the union work you are doing?
- How are equity members affected?
- Have you considered equity in the development and implementation of your union actions?
- Are additional measures required to support the participation of equity group members?

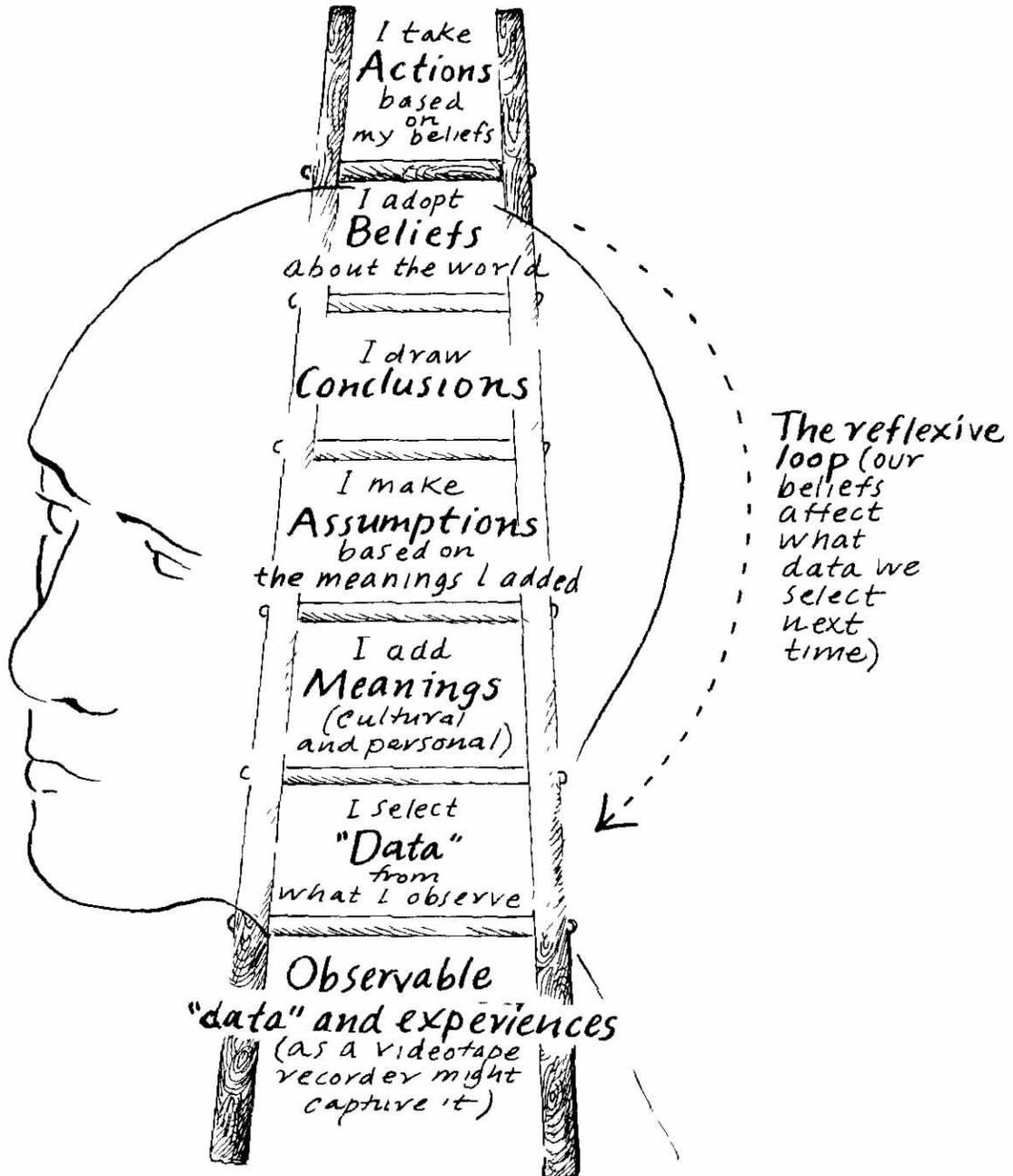
# My Tips for Good Union Governance

## Task Sheet

Consider the suggestions which are listed on the roving workshop stations. Reflect on your leadership role and select the leadership tips you think will help you the most in supporting good union governance.

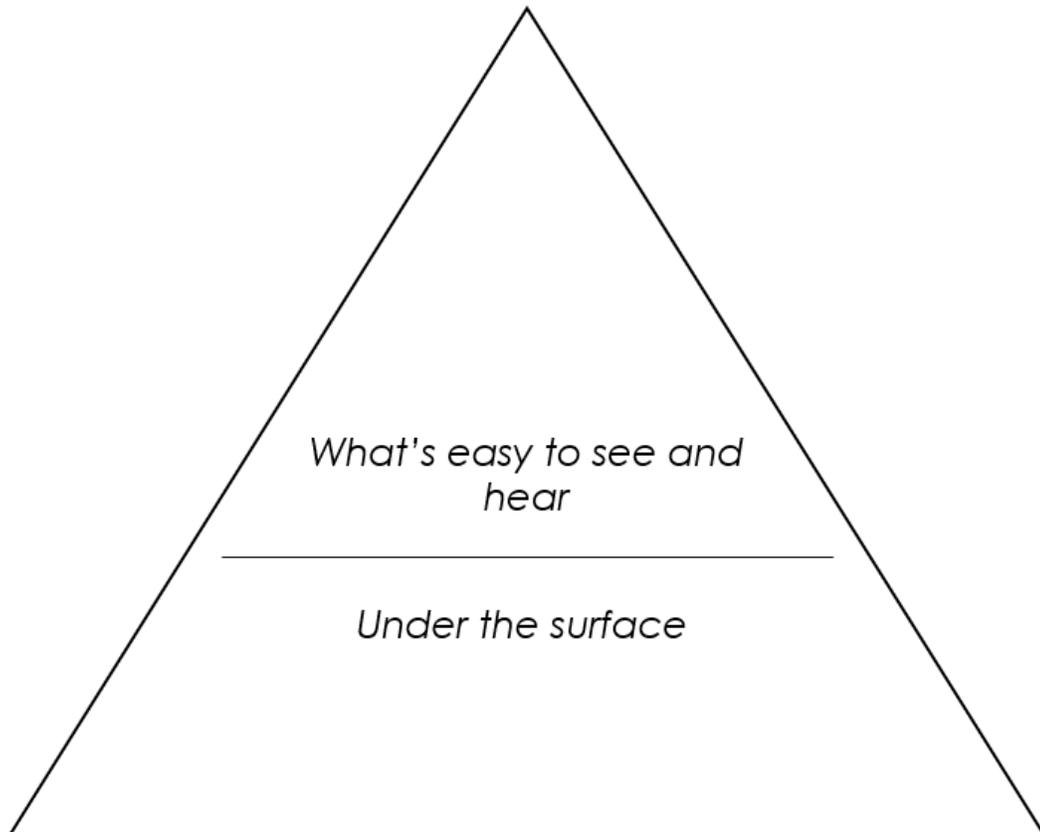
<b>A Good Governance Suggestion I Like</b>	<b>How I Might Do This</b>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

# The Ladder of Inference



# THE TRIANGLE OF DISCRIMINATION AND OPPRESSION

## Individual Behaviours



**Systems**  
(Normal Way Things Work)

**Powerful Ideas**  
(Unexamined)

# THE TRIANGLE OF DISCRIMINATION AND OPPRESSION

## **Individual Behaviours:**

- Things that individuals show, do, and say that are discriminatory (unequal and differential treatment linked to a prohibited ground of discrimination).
- Often obvious and overt actions that are easily recognizable.
- Can also be micro-aggressions (everyday, subtle, intentional, and oftentimes unintentional interactions or behaviors). People who commit microaggressions might not even be aware of them.
- These individual behaviours are the “tip of the iceberg.”

## **Powerful Ideas:**

- Biases and stereotypes that influence how people think about individuals or groups of individuals.
- Acquired at a young age and unexamined.
- Usually also relayed or unchallenged in media, education system, public institutions, etc.)

## **Systems and Processes:**

- Processes or practices designed by dominant groups without considering the impact on groups protected by human rights legislation.
- These processes or practices can be formal (policies, laws, procedures, rules) or informal (day to day ways of doing things).
- They are usually more difficult to identify.

## The Three Conversations That Happen During Dialogue

From: *Difficult Conversations: How to Discuss What Matters Most*

By: Douglas Stone, Bruce Patton and Sheila Heen

**Type of Conversation:**

The “What Happened?” Conversation

**Challenge:** The situation is more complex than either person can see

<b>A BATTLE OF MESSAGES</b>	<b>A LEARNING CONVERSATION</b>
<p><b>Assumption:</b> I know all I need to know to understand what happened</p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> Each of us is bringing different information and perceptions to the table; there are likely to be important things that each of us doesn't know.</p>
<p><b>Goal:</b> Persuade them I am right</p>	<p><b>Goal:</b> Explore each other's stories: how we understand the situation and why</p>
OR	OR
<p><b>Assumption:</b> I know what they intended</p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> I know what I intended, and the impact their actions had on me. I don't and can't know what is in their heads/their intentions</p>
<p><b>Goal:</b> Let them know what they did was wrong</p>	<p><b>Goal:</b> Share the impact on me, and find out what they were thinking/trying to achieve. Also find out the impact I'm having on them</p>
OR	OR
<p><b>Assumption:</b> It's all their fault (Or it's all my fault")</p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> We have probably both contributed to this mess.</p>
<p><b>Goal:</b> Get them to admit blame and take responsibility for making amends (or I admit blame and take responsibility for making amends)</p>	<p><b>Goal:</b> Understand the contribution system: how our actions interact to produce this result</p>

**Type of Conversation:**

*The Feelings Conversation*

**Challenge:** The situation is emotionally charged

<b>A BATTLE OF MESSAGES</b>	<b>A LEARNING CONVERSATION</b>
<p><b>Assumption:</b> Feelings are irrelevant and wouldn't be helpful to share. (Or, my feelings are their fault and they need to hear about them.)</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> Avoid talking about feelings. (Or, let 'em have it!)</p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> Feelings are the heart of the situation. Feelings are usually complex. I may have to dig a bit to understand my feelings and theirs.</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> Address feelings (mine and theirs) without judgements or attributions. Acknowledge feelings before problem-solving</p>

**Type of Conversation:**

*The Identity Conversation*

**Challenge:** The situation threatens our identity

<b>A BATTLE OF MESSAGES</b>	<b>A LEARNING CONVERSATION</b>
<p><b>Assumption:</b> I'm competent or incompetent, good or bad, lovable or unlovable. There is no in between</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> Protect my all-or-nothing self-image</p>	<p><b>Assumption:</b> There may be a lot at stake psychologically for both of us. Each of us is complex, neither of us is perfect or imperfect.</p> <p><b>Goal:</b> Understand the identity issues on the line for each of us. Build a more complex self-image to maintain my balance better.</p>

## Communicating Across Difference

(Adapted from a Steelworkers Communications Course)

1. **Be clear with yourself where you are a member of an oppressed group, and where you are a member of the dominant group.**

For example, if you are a man, you are not the target of sexism; however, if you are a South Asian man, you are the target of racism; if you are a working class man, you have experience of being targeted because of your class. Most of us experience oppression in some parts of our lives, and are also members of a dominant group (gender, race, age, etc.) in others.

2. **Don't get offended if you're a member of a dominant group and people name you that way.**

Working class people can identify the manager or rich people in a flash, even in his/her casual clothes. We know the power of that group to make decisions that affect us, and to ignore their power. The same thing applies to gender, race, disability. Being in a power group means you don't have to think about it unless you're challenged, or unless you work consciously to be aware of it.

3. **Don't stop listening to someone because they don't share the same oppression as you.**

Telling everyone to "put this racism and sexism stuff behind you" to avoid divisions in the union will not build unity. Dealing with the divisions that are already there, will build unity.

4. **Don't stop listening because you're afraid you'll make a mistake**

5. **Ask questions when you're trying to understand what words to use, or what the other person's experiences are.**

6. **Know your own stereotypes and how they can interfere with listening.**

None of us was born with prejudices, but all of us have learned them in a society where stereotypes are rampant. You just have to look around at television, billboards, newspapers, even in some union materials to see stereotypes of old people, young people, poor people, people on welfare, sick people, black people, with disabilities, women, single mothers, and so on. Sometimes it's the absence of the most marginalized people from these media which promote stereotypes.

## 7. **Model equity in your working relationships**

- Encourage leadership of people from different social groups.
- Try to ensure that members who are women, people of colour, people with disabilities attend union courses, get their fair share of opportunities to develop themselves.
- Be conscious if invited speakers at a meeting are all male, or all white, or all first-language English speakers. Make sure there are a diversity of voices and experiences represented.
- Encourage members from different social groups to run for office.
- Encourage caucuses to build skills and confidence (women's groups, seniors, people of colour.)
- Anticipate where different languages will be needed to communicate with members; draw in activists whose first language is not English or French.

### **Other?**

This is just a beginning list. Add to it from your own work and experiences.