



How to Develop a Workplace Action

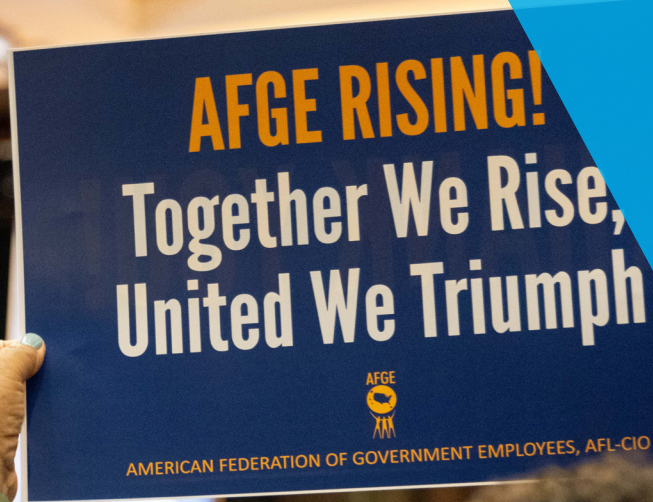
AMERICAN FEDERATION OF GOVERNMENT EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO



As folks convert to E-Dues and recommit to having a Union voice, they will want to see next steps about how to get involved, protect their jobs, and defend their rights.

Workplace actions are a great way to building worker power, raise visibility, address workplace issues of concern, and develop the muscle to make wins as a union.

Here's how to plan and execute one effectively:



Step 1: Identify the Issue

- **Listen to workers:** What are they angry, excited, or worried about?
- **Choose a unifying issue:** Pick something that affects a large portion of the workplace and has a clear demand or goal. A good issue is:
 - **Widely shared**
 - **Deeply felt**
 - **Winnable**
 - **Easy to understand**
- **Frame the issue:** Define it in simple, relatable terms. Make it clear who's responsible and what needs to change.
 - **Summarize the most common concerns.**
 - **Frame the threat in terms of its impact on both the workers and the service we provide.**
 - **Highlight the union's role, as the front line employees who understand the workplace best, as the solution to the problem.**



Step 2: Set a Clear Demand

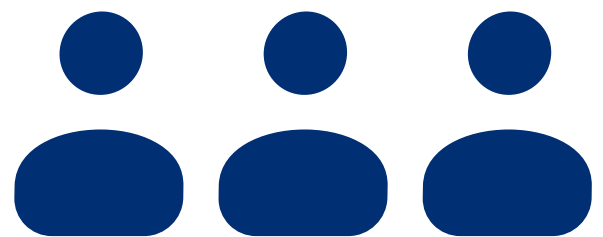
- **Be specific:** What exactly are you asking management to do?
- **Make it winnable:** Choose something achievable that shows your strength and builds momentum.
- **Put it in writing:** Use a petition, letter, or flyer to clearly state the demand.

Step 3: Build a Team

- **Identify natural leaders:** Who do people listen to? Who's respected?
- **Form a committee:** This team helps plan the action, recruit participants, and spread the word. You need leaders who will move their coworkers in each shift, department, location and position description.
- **Delegate roles:** Assign tasks like outreach, materials, logistics, and documentation.

Step 4: Hold Union Meetings to Develop a Plan

- **Convene membership or department meetings to:**
 - Discuss the issues identified by the workers
 - Brainstorm possible responses
 - Build consensus around an action plan.
- **Match the action to the moment:** Choose something visible and appropriate to the level of risk workers are ready to take.
 - Examples:
 - ▶ Group petition delivery
 - ▶ Wear Union gear day
 - ▶ Walk-ins to management
 - ▶ Lunch break rallies
- **Solicit volunteers:** Get as many members as possible to step up and help with the action, including outreach, materials development, social media, and spokespeople



Step 5: Plan the Details

- **Timing:** Choose a day and time when participation will be highest.
- **Location:** Pick a visible, strategic spot—inside or outside the workplace.
- **Messaging:** Create chants, signs, and visuals that reinforce your demand.
- **Materials:** Prepare handouts, posters, or stickers in advance.
- **Legal check:** If needed, ensure you're not violating any workplace rules or laws.

Step 6: Recruit and Mobilize

- **Use one-on-one conversations:** This is the most effective way to turn out participation.
- **Track commitments:** Keep a list of who's in and follow up.
- **Publicize:** Use flyers, social media, group chats, and informal networks.
- **Create urgency:** Build energy as the day approaches—countdowns, sneak peeks, and reminders help.

Step 7: Take Action

- **Lead with energy:** Make it loud, proud, and unified.
- **Stay disciplined:** Everyone should know their role and stick to the plan.
- **Document it:** Take photos and videos to show your strength and use them to inspire others.

Step 8: Follow Up

- **Debrief with your team:** What worked? What didn't? What's next?
- **Report results:** Share photos, attendance, and outcomes with the wider group.
- **Keep the pressure on:** If your demand wasn't met, plan the next escalation.
- **Celebrate:** Acknowledge participation and victories, big or small.

Final Tips

- **Start small and build:** Early wins build confidence.
- **Stay focused:** Keep the action centered around the issue and the demand.
- **Be inclusive:** Ensure the action is accessible to everyone.
- **Stay united:** Your power is in your numbers and your unity.

