

*A member at one of your local union's worksites reports that they are having issues with their hours being cut. How can you engage member activists to develop a solution?*

## Step-by-step guide to WIN MORE HOURS:

### The 5 steps:

1. **Research** the issue
2. Create the **plan**
3. Fill in the **details**
4. **Track** your progress
5. **Debrief** what happened



## Unpredictable scheduling is a huge, dominating issue in hourly workers lives.

Scheduling software that seeks to maximize “efficiency” without considering the toll unpredictable hours can have on real people, pressure from higher-ups to cut costs, personal favoritism and retaliation, and managers who just aren’t very good at their jobs can all result in lost hours— hours workers depend on to get by.

Individual contracts usually strive to address scheduling and hours issues, but regardless of what is in the contract, there are always ways to think creatively and organize together towards a winning solution.



### Step 1: Researching the issue

The idea here is to find out as much information as you can about what is happening in the workplace and community, who it is happening to, why it is happening, and what people are thinking and feeling.

### Helpful questions you should try to answer while researching the issue:

- How many stores in your market are hours being cut in?
- How many people are affected in each store where hours are being cut?
- Whose hours are being cut? Is everyone being affected or is a smaller group being targeted? Try to figure out if there’s a pattern.
- How many hours are being cut? Is there an average?
- How are the cuts affecting people? Are they impacting access to health care or full-time status?
- How are people reacting? Are people angry or frustrated? If not, why?
- If hours are NOT being cut in some stores, why do you think that is?

# STEP -BY-STEP GUIDE TO WIN MORE HOURS

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## Step 2: Create a plan

Once you start to understand what's happening, bring workers together from the store and your community to discuss some of the questions from Step 1. Talking over ideas with member activists about what you all can do should form the basis for a plan.

### Helpful steps when creating a plan:

- What are all the different actions workers could take to show unity and power and pressure management to stop cutting hours?
- Don't worry about putting everything in order, and don't try to pick one idea at first. Write down all the actions people can think of so you have lots of ideas to choose from.

### Next, pick the actions to do first. Helpful things to think about when picking the first action include:

- What actions will get people excited?
- What actions would allow the most people to get involved?
- What actions would newer people involved? People who are supporters but haven't previously wanted to be active?

Talk about the importance of "high road" actions that win public sympathy and allow them to build momentum.

One effective way to start is an hours petition – petitions are good initial actions: they state the problem clearly as well as a solution, they get many people involved, they help measure support, and they are high-road.

### Helpful things to discuss if you're launching a petition:

- Where will you launch it?
- What is the goal for the number of signatures? What will you all do if you don't reach it?
- How will member activists talk about the petition? How will member activists approach people who haven't had their hours cut?
- What date will you launch it? What is the due date?
- How will the petition be delivered?

### Create a calendar with everyone's ideas

- What would victory look like? Is it a good idea to discuss this in your early worker meeting?

- How do you set member activists up for victory?
- Even if workers don't get more hours back, what could a victory look like?

## **Escalation Brainstorm: Think about what should be done next if the first action doesn't solve the problem:**

- How do member activists get people ready for a sustained campaign early?
  - When do allies in the community get involved?
  - Should customers be engaged? If so, when?
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### **Step 3: Fill in the details**

If the hours issue motivates many of the workers, how can member activists get more of them involved in planning and carrying out actions?

### **Helpful steps to getting more people involved:**

- What are all different areas of work needed to accomplish the plan? Brainstorm everything that needs to get done to carry out the plan.
- If possible, create some small work-groups that think through the different pieces that need to be accomplished.

### **Here are some examples for work that different small groups could handle:**

#### **Action group:**

- Bringing together leaders and activists in a meeting or conference call to make a plan together
- Planning what an action will look like
- Figuring out who will participate in an action
- Deciding who is speaking and what will be said
- Making sure all coworkers know what happened once the action is complete
- Anticipating management's reaction and making sure coworkers know what to expect

#### **Online group:**

- Who do you want to reach and what's the best way of communicating with that audience?
- What kinds of information should be on social media? Remember, some workers may be friends with managers on sites like Facebook, which may

## STEP -BY-STEP GUIDE TO WIN MORE HOURS

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give them access to some information posted on personal pages.

- Who is in charge of maintaining social media profiles?
  - How to make your stories and messages exciting and accessible?
  - How to make sure important and urgent updates get online quickly to spread the word?
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### Step 4: Tracking your progress

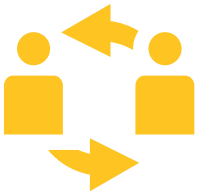
As everyone begins to carry out the plan, how do you keep track of your progress and make sure that everything is working out as it should?

#### Helpful questions to keep you on track:

- Who is circulating the petition in stores?
- How many signatures are member activists collecting on a daily basis?
- How are people responding to the petition? Does response differ by store?
- What is management saying or doing?
- Does the plan need to be adjusted?
- Would it be helpful to have small group meetings so people can report on what they are doing and stay informed about the campaign?

Remember, the key is to be able to change the plan if you need to or to respond to new developments.

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### Step 5: Debrief

After the last action is completed, try to hold a worker meeting. Debrief how the process worked out.

#### Helpful questions things to talk about:

- How did everyone feel about the actions?
- How did the action look to different audiences:
  - To coworkers
  - To customers
  - To management
  - To the media, if there was any
- Are there member leaders who stepped up in the campaign who would stay active? How might you involve them with other union activities moving forward?

Make sure to write down things that went well as well as things that ought to be changed next time.