

**DEMOCRATIC AND  
ECONOMIC RIGHTS**

**TRAIN-THE-TRAINER  
WORKSHOP**



**ONTARIO FEDERATION OF LABOUR**  
Spring 2013



## Campaign for Democratic and Economic Rights: Train-the-Trainer Workshop

Spring 2013

The Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL) represents 54 unions and one million workers. It is Canada's largest provincial labour federation.

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## NOTE FOR FACILITATORS

This manual is designed to make it as easy as possible for you to deliver the “Democratic and Economic Rights” workshop in your workplace or community. Please make sure you have read through the manual and know how it works before you do the workshop.

This is designed as a “Train-the-Trainer” session, so facilitators should bear in mind that the goal is to have participants leave feeling prepared to deliver the workshop on their own. Each participant should have a copy of this manual and should follow along through it as you do the workshop.

You can use these notes for delivering the workshop to a larger audience, and not as a training session. In that case, participants do not need a copy of this manual.

You will want to have a copy of the agenda (page 6) on hand at all times throughout the workshop to help you keep things moving on schedule and so that you always know what is coming up next. Ideally, there would be two facilitators so you can divide the workshop and facilitate alternating sections.

It is also suggested that the facilitators read the “Working for Less” and “The Rising of Us All” papers before delivering the workshop.

For copies of these papers visit <http://ofl.ca/index.php/campaigns/workersrights/> or contact the OFL in advance for printed copies.

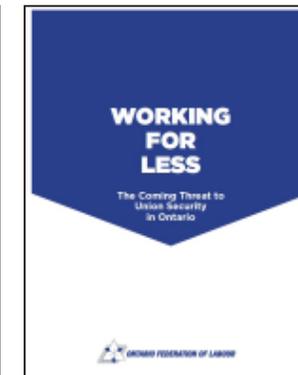
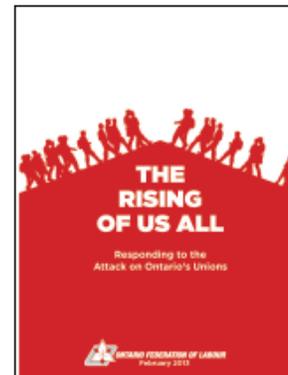
If a participant asks a question that you cannot answer, don't be thrown off. Simply write the question down and get in touch with [brynnesw@ofl.ca](mailto:brynnesw@ofl.ca) afterwards to get answers and together we can send an answer back to the participant.

Feedback from facilitators on how to improve the workshop is also appreciated. Please send suggestions and recommendations to [brynnesw@ofl.ca](mailto:brynnesw@ofl.ca).

Also see the companion documents, “*The Rising of Us All*” and “*Working for Less*.”

Download both documents at:

[www.OFL.ca/Index.php/Campaigns/WorkersRights](http://www.OFL.ca/Index.php/Campaigns/WorkersRights)



# GETTING STARTED

## Principles and Goals

- This workshop is designed to be **participatory** and **democratic**, and incorporate the life experiences and knowledge that participants bring to the workshop.
- This workshop is designed to **build capacity**. The idea is to do the workshops in a “train-the-trainer” format, with the goal of having participants organize further workshops in their own communities.
- The workshop is designed to lead to **action**.
- The workshop is designed to provide participants with a basic understanding of the **value of unions** for all working people and the **threat to union security** in Ontario.

## Room Set Up

- You will need a room with an open space that is big enough to do the “Union Advantage” exercise.
- If you have 30 people or less, you may want to arrange the workshop in a circle or semi-circle with space for the facilitators in the circle or at the front. This kind of arrangement tends to be more conducive to conversation. If you have a larger group of more than 30 people then you will probably not be able to have this seating arrangement. Considering the space that is available to you and the number of participants you expect, plan the seating arrangement ahead of time.
- For the Learning Circles the group will be splitting into smaller groups. You will want to plan ahead whether you will be moving the chairs around for that exercise or whether you can use another part of the room or another space for these smaller group discussions.

## Materials You Will Need

- Laptop, projector and screen
- Flip chart, markers and masking tape
- Sign in sheet (Appendix A)
- Copies of this manual for each participant
- Copies of the “Rising of Us All” and “Working for Less” papers and fact sheets for each participant
- Materials for the “Union Advantage” exercise (Appendix B)
- Stickers for the “Dotmocracy” exercise
- An internet connection (wireless or an ethernet connection) to show the presentation, which is available at <http://ofl.ca/index.php/campaigns/workersrights/>
- Make sure you have any necessary passwords for logging on to the laptop, connecting to the internet, etc. The presentation is publicly accessible and can be shown or viewed by anyone.
- If an internet connection is not available, the presentation can be downloaded to a laptop in advance. Please follow the instructions at [www.Prezi.com](http://www.Prezi.com) to do so.

# ANTI-HARASSMENT STATEMENT

To establish the proper expectations and ground rules for a safe and inclusive environment for every participant, read out the following statement before every training session and ask that participants agree to abide by these rules before beginning:

- › *We aim to provide a harassment-free environment.*
- › *Mutual respect must be the basis of interaction among workshop participants in addition to cooperation and understanding. We will neither tolerate nor condone behaviour that is likely to undermine the dignity or self-esteem of an individual, or create an intimidating, hostile or offensive environment.*
- › *Harassment is not a joke. It creates feelings of uneasiness, humiliation and discomfort.*
- › *It is an expression of perceived power and superiority by the harasser(s) over another person, usually for reasons over which the victim has little or no control: sex, race, age, creed, colour, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, expression, disability, political or religious affiliation, or place of national origin.*
- › *Harassment can be defined as any unwelcome action by any person, whether verbal or physical, on a single or repeated basis, which humiliates, insults or degrades.*
- › *“Unwelcome” or “unwanted” in this context means any action which the harasser knows or ought to reasonably know is not desired by the victim of harassment.*
- › *Prohibited grounds under the Ontario Human Rights Code include: race, sex, age, marital status, sexual orientation and disability.*
- › *We consider harassment of any kind a serious offence. Anyone who harasses another participant at this workshop will be required to leave immediately.*

# WORKSHOP AGENDA

	<b>1 Hour</b>	<b>2 Hours</b>
<b>Part I - Welcome</b>		
Welcome and Introductions	<b>5 min</b>	<b>10 min</b>
<b>Part II - The Rising of Us All</b>		
Mini-Lecture: The Rising of Us All	<b>--</b>	<b>5 min</b>
<b>Part III - Union Advantage</b>		
Union Advantage Exercise	<b>--</b>	<b>5 min</b>
Video: Solidarity Forever	<b>2 min</b>	<b>2 min</b>
<b>Part IV - The Threat to Union Security</b>		
Mini-Lecture: The Threat to Union Security	<b>10 min</b>	<b>10 min</b>
Video: Roseanne Barr Talks to Her State Representative	<b>3 min</b>	<b>3 min</b>
<b>Part V - Learning Circles</b>		
Learning Circle 1: Understanding the Coming Threat to Union Security	<b>10 min</b>	<b>15 min</b>
<b>Break</b>	<b>--</b>	<b>15 min</b>
Learning Circle 2: Pushing Back and Strengthening Our Movement	<b>12 min</b>	<b>25 min</b>
Debrief	<b>5 min</b>	<b>10 min</b>
<b>Part VI - Action Planning</b>		
Brainstorming and “Dotmocracy” Exercises	<b>13 min</b>	<b>20 min</b>

# PART I — WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

- Welcome participants and introduce the facilitators.
- Pass around the sign-in sheet (Appendix A). After the workshop, send the sign-in sheet to the OFL by mail, fax or email. We will keep all participants informed about our campaigns.
- Introductions:  
Have each participant introduce themselves by saying their name and if they represent an organization, the name of the organization. If you have more than 30 people this may take too long. If so, try to give the participants an idea of who is in the room and have participants introduce themselves in smaller groups during the Learning Circles later in the workshop.
- Introduce the Anti-Harassment Statement.
- Review the Principles and Goals of the workshop.
- Review the Agenda.

## PART II – MINI-LECTURE: THE RISING OF US ALL

It took a century and a half to win the rights and protections that Ontario workers now rely upon to improve and uphold our standard of living. Both at the bargaining table with individual companies and through public and political advocacy, unions have been at the forefront of struggles to improve the lives of all workers – both unionized and non-unionized. Unions led 19<sup>th</sup> century efforts to stop child labour and establish a minimum wage and 20<sup>th</sup> century campaigns to win public healthcare, establish public pensions and win equal pay for women. There are few social programs and benefits in our society that unions did not have a hand in creating.

More recently, it has also been established that there is a link between strong unions and equality. In the last 10 years, international organizations like the International Labour Organization and even the World Bank have released research that demonstrates a correlation between a stronger union movement and lower levels of income inequality.

Unions also provide millions of dollars each year to support charities. To take just one example, in 2011 working people contributed \$250 million to the United Way, more than 50 percent of their annual budget.

The role of unions both historically and in Ontario today, however, is not always well known and is not often taught in schools.

In 1886, an editorial in the Globe and Mail asked readers: “Haven’t unions outlived their usefulness?” Today, anti-union spokespeople, including conservative politicians, are still asking Canadians this same question. The answer has not changed since 1886. Unions are a crucial collective voice for all workers and continue to advocate for progressive change.

Arguably, unions are more important today than ever before. Where we have made progress, our advances are under attack. Long standing victories – such as the 40-hour work week, paid vacations, sick time, injured workers’ compensation, public healthcare, access to education, unemployment insurance and pensions are all under threat. Real wages have also become stagnant for 40 percent of Ontario’s families with children, while too many new jobs are precarious, dangerous or underpaid. Meanwhile, a second tier of the workforce is growing as more Ontario employers hire migrant workers who are paid less and often experience oppressive and dangerous working conditions.

A particularly aggressive assault on public services and public service workers is also sweeping the western world under the auspices of “austerity.” The proponents of austerity are exploiting public concerns about so-called ballooning government deficits to roll back many of the social and economic

gains that the labour movement and its allies have fought hard to achieve in both Canada and Ontario. While workers are being asked to tighten their belts, tax cuts that benefit large corporations and the wealthy are continuous and the accumulation of wealth at the top has assumed grotesque proportions.

Unions play an important role in pushing back against austerity. For example, after Dalton McGuinty’s Liberals prorogued parliament in October 2012, the Ontario Federation of Labour launched a Democratic and Economic Rights Campaign that demanded that parliament be recalled and that good jobs, public services and workers’ rights be made a priority. This campaign culminated in a rally attended by 30,000 people outside the Liberal Leadership Convention on January 26, 2013.

Today, unions continue to be a strong collective voice for all workers by pushing back against austerity and advocating for a more just, sustainable and equitable society that leaves no one behind.

\* NOTE: You may want to add local examples throughout this mini-lecture about gains that unions have achieved for all workers in your community. If you do, ensure that you stay within the time allotted in the agenda.

## PART III – UNION ADVANTAGE EXERCISE

This short exercise illustrates the union advantage:

- Identify 10 volunteers to participate in this exercise and invite them to the front of the room. Give them each one of the signs from Appendix B.
- Of the 10 participants, 5 will live in “Low Union Density Town” and 5 will live in “High Union Density Town”.
- In “Low Union Density Town” 2 workers will be union members and 3 will be non-unionized.
- In “High Union Density Town” 4 workers will be union members and 1 will be non-unionized.
- Get all 10 workers to stand in one line with lots of room to walk forward (at least 6 steps). The 5 living in each town together should stand side by side so that the audience can easily see who lives in which town.
- One facilitator should read the narrative and one facilitator should help guide the participants.

### Narrative:

1. Union members typically earn better wages than non-union workers. In Ontario, unionized workers earn \$6.19 per hour more than non-union employees.

**All union members please take one step forward.**

2. Unions also tend to equalize wages. In Canada, 53% of non-union women earn less than \$13.33 an hour compared to just 6.4% of women who belong to unions.

**All union members please take another step forward.**

3. Union members tend to have better benefits. In Canada, 88.5% of workers with a union received non-wage benefits like drug, vision and dental plans compared to 68.6% of workers without unions.

**Five union members please take another step forward (your paper is marked with a circle). Also, three non-unionized workers (your paper is marked with a circle) please take one step forward.**

4. Union members tend to have better pensions. In Canada, 76% of unionized workers have access to a workplace pension plan compared to 28% of non-union workers.

**Five union members (your paper is marked with a square) please take another step forward. Also, one non-unionized worker (your paper is marked with a square) please take one step forward.**

5. The union advantage, however, doesn't just benefit union members. It benefits everyone. Workers in unions are an important part of the local community and economy because that's where they spend their paychecks. Their incomes support local businesses who create more local jobs and bolster the local tax base, which supports public works and community services that add to everyone's quality of life. This impact would be greater in places with higher rates of unionization.

**All workers in “High Union Density Town” please take one step forward.**

## Narrative (cont.)

6. Higher rates of unionization also lead to higher wages for non-unionized workers, especially in related industries.

**All non-unionized workers in “High Union Density Town” please take one step forward.**

7. Higher rates of unionization are also associated with lower levels of inequality.

**All low-wage workers in “High Union Density Town” that are falling behind (your paper is marked with an triangle) please take another step forward.**

8. Stronger unions can also advocate on behalf of all working people for the adoption of more progressive public policy, including quality public services, a higher minimum wage and a stronger social safety net including unemployment insurance and welfare. Since non-unionized workers would tend to be more vulnerable workers, the social safety net is especially important to them, but it does benefit all workers.

**All workers in “High Union Density Town” please take another step forward.**

In both towns, unionized workers have benefitted from membership in their union.

In “Low Union Density Town” we see that vulnerable workers are being left behind, inequality is greater and the social safety net is not as strong.

In “High Union Density Town” we see that both non-unionized and unionized workers benefit from stronger unions. They have a higher quality of life on average and a lower level of inequality.

Unfortunately, in the eyes of many workers unions are seen as defenders of sectional rather than broader interests. We need to challenge this narrative because union gains benefit all workers.

Thank the volunteers for participating in this exercise and ask them to return to their seats.

If participants want to access more statistics and information about the union advantage, it is available on the Canadian Labour Congress website:

<http://www.canadianlabour.ca/about-clc/union-advantage>

If you have time, ask all participants if they have any thoughts that they would like to share about the exercise.

## Video: Solidarity Forever

Introduce the video: This is the winning video for the Canadian Labour Congress’ One Minute Message contest. The contest invited submissions to describe in just under one minute how unions stand up for fairness, deliver good jobs and better lives, and fight for a better deal for everyone.

### Play the video!

It can be found on YouTube here:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tol1110a3J4&feature=share&list=UUP15u1BRMN9E0\\_f1Bu-rShQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tol1110a3J4&feature=share&list=UUP15u1BRMN9E0_f1Bu-rShQ)

# PART IV — MINI-LECTURE: THREAT TO UNION SECURITY

## What is Union Security?

Union security is a set of rules that ensures that unions can continue to represent workers in a workplace by requiring that (a) workers in the bargaining unit become union members and/or (b) workers pay union dues. Union security has been off the table in talks about labour law reform for decades, but this discussion is now being brought up again.

## What is the Rand Formula?

The Rand Formula is at the heart of union security in Canada. Basically, the Rand Formula requires all workers in a unionized workplace to pay union dues. Unions have a legal responsibility to negotiate on behalf of everyone in the bargaining unit (also known as the “duty of fair representation”). So since everyone in the bargaining unit benefits from the collective agreement, the Rand Formula is based on the principle that it is fair and reasonable to require that everyone pay dues.

## Why is it So Important?

Union security and the Rand Formula are important for many reasons, including:

- Promoting fairness by avoiding “freeloaders” or workers who benefit from the collective agreement but do not pay dues;
- Promoting labour relations stability by avoiding strikes over the issue of mandatory dues payment;
- Protecting workers’ right to union representation and collective bargaining by ensuring that unions have the resources needed to negotiate effectively on behalf of workers; and
- Ensuring that unions have the resources they need to remain a progressive force in society, continue to promote social justice and counter-balance the increasing power of corporations and a wealthy elite.

## What is the Coming Threat?

A White Paper released this summer by Hudak’s Progressive Conservatives outlined several steps that his party would take if they were elected that take direct aim at undermining union security. They include plans to:

- Outlaw mandatory union dues;
- Make union leaders collect dues instead of employers;
- Ban mandatory union membership, also known as closed shop arrangements; and
- Impose onerous financial reporting requirements on unions;

Hudak’s Progressive Conservatives have also suggested that they would take other measures to undermine unions, including limiting union-funded political action.

## The Coming Threat (cont.)

In his White Paper, Hudak calls these reforms “worker choice reforms”. This is misleading because:

- Members already “choose” whether or not their workplaces are unionized; workplaces only become unionized if a majority of workers want a union.
- In most workplaces, workers can choose whether or not to be members, unless a closed shop clause is included in the collective agreement. If so, the collective agreement must be ratified by a majority of workers.
- In sum, decisions about unionization and rules around membership are made collectively by workers.

Ultimately, Hudak’s proposals about union membership and dues payment prioritize individual choice over democratic, collective decisions, and undermine workers right to collective action.

Despite the guise of “worker choice”, Hudak makes two other aims explicit and it’s important to expose this agenda:

- To weaken unions – he says they’ve become too powerful.
- To make Ontario more competitive and make Ontario’s workforce more flexible, which means lower wages for working people (i.e. he says China and US wage levels will converge around 2015 and that Ontario cannot be left behind). This is a dangerous line of thinking because it sets Ontario on a path that would require continued adoption of anti-worker policies as it tries to maintain an anti-worker, low wage “advantage” over other jurisdictions.

All of these proposals are part of a broader agenda that would weaken unions and drive down wages, while prioritizing profits for a small corporate elite over the well-being of all Ontarians. This is why we need to start a conversation, not only in union halls, but also in our homes and communities, about what is at stake for Ontarians if this type of American, anti-union legislation takes root in Ontario.

## Video: Roseanne Barr talks to her State Representative

Introduce the video: In this video Roseanne Barr talks to her State Representative about implementing these kinds of anti-worker measures in her community. She does a great job of exposing them as part of a low-wage agenda.

### Play the video!

The video can be found on YouTube here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TSaaBT032c>

## PART V – LEARNING CIRCLES

Explain the Guidelines for the Learning Circles (below) to the group.

Split the group into smaller groups of 5 to 10 people, depending on the size of your workshop. (If you are running short on time, this exercise could also be done in partners. Just have people turn to the person next to them and discuss these questions.)

### Learning Circle 1:

#### Threats to Union Security

- With your group, discuss the questions below. It may be useful to refer to the “Working For Less” fact sheets numbers 1, 2, and 4.
- What strikes you the most about Hudak’s proposals that were outlined in the mini-lecture? Which of these proposals concerns you the most? Which of these proposals do you think would be of most concern to your co-workers, friends, families or neighbours?
- Does your group have any unanswered questions about union security or the coming threat to union security in Ontario? If so, write these down and give them to the facilitators.

### Debrief

Bring the whole group back together.

Take this time to address the unanswered questions from the Learning Circles.

Use your discretion. If you think it’s better to hold onto the questions and try to provide answers at a later date, do that instead and move on to the brainstorming below.

### Learning Circle 2:

#### Building Our Movement

- With your group, take a few minutes to look at the “Working for Less” fact sheets 3, 5, 6, and 7.
- Pick one of these fact sheets to discuss with your group. Then discuss the questions below:
  1. Why have you chosen this one in particular?
  2. How can the information in this fact sheet strengthen our efforts to push back against anti-union, anti-worker, low-wage legislation?
- If you have time, repeat this discussion with your group again using a different fact sheet.
- Again, if your group has any unanswered questions, write them down and give them to the facilitators.

## PART VI – ACTION PLANNING

### Brainstorm 1: Allies

- In the Learning Circles, each group helped each other to understand the coming threat to union security in Ontario and talked about which issues would resonate most with their co-workers, friends, family or neighbours. Now together we are going to do a quick brainstorm to identify allies in our fight to defend union security and workers' rights.
- Get participants to share their ideas while one of the facilitators writes them down on a flip chart. Tape this list up on the wall and keep it there for the rest of the discussion.
- Examples of allies: low-wage workers, unemployed workers, union members, students, women's groups, migrant workers, vulnerable workers, charities, community organizations working on housing, anti-poverty and many other issues.

### Brainstorm 2: Action Plan

- Now together we are going to brainstorm action ideas.
- Get participants to share their ideas while one of the facilitators writes them down on a flip chart.
- Are there local events and activities that participants want to make happen? Are there provincial events or actions that we should tie into?
- Where could participants hold their own workshops based on this one? Are there other groups they could take the workshops to? Could they organize a workshop in their agency, neighbourhood, community, faith organization or union?

### Dotmocracy: Action Plan

At the end of this discussion, have participants come to the front of the room and place a sticker next to the action idea(s) they are most excited about seeing in their community.

# APPENDIX A

# SIGN-IN SHEET







# **APPENDIX B**

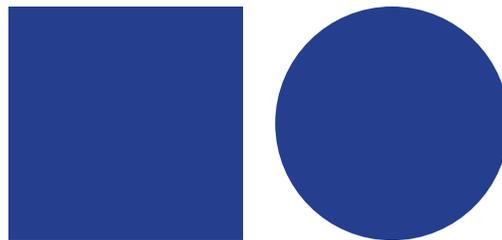
# **UNION ADVANTAGE EXERCISE MATERIALS**



**1**

# **Low Union Density Town**

**UNION MEMBER**

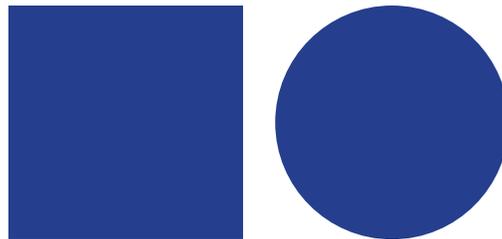




**2**

# **Low Union Density Town**

**UNION MEMBER**

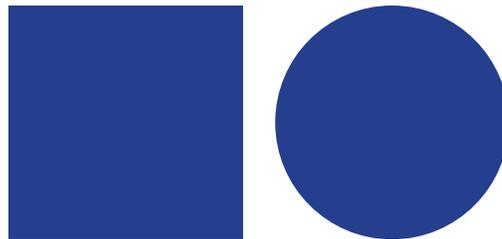




**3**

# **Low Union Density Town**

**NON-UNIONIZED  
WORKER**

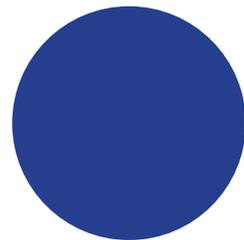




**4**

**Low Union Density Town**

**NON-UNIONIZED  
WORKER**





**5**

**Low Union Density Town**

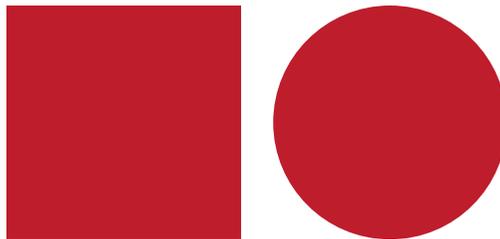
**NON-UNIONIZED  
WORKER**



**6**

# **High Union Density Town**

**UNION MEMBER**

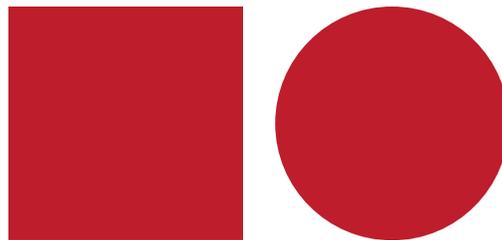




**7**

# **High Union Density Town**

**UNION MEMBER**

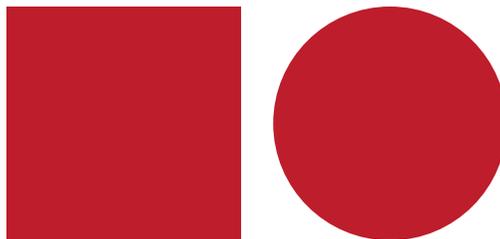




**8**

# **High Union Density Town**

**UNION MEMBER**

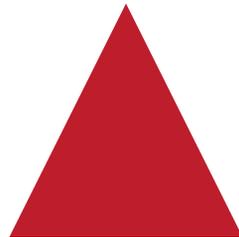




9

**High Union Density Town**

**UNION MEMBER**





**10**

**High Union Density Town**

**NON-UNIONIZED  
WORKER**

