

STEPS IN THE GRIEVANCE: THE STEWARD'S ROLE

Step I: Investigating the Grievance

1. Interview the Grievant. Your first job is to listen well and let the grievant express his or her feelings about what has happened. Get all the facts you can from the grievant. Next, ask the grievant to listen as you give a "recap" of the story and to fill you in or correct you when you have finished.
2. As you work together, take notes on the "w" questions included in the interview sheet. Be sure to note any additional information that might be necessary.
3. Talk to people who may have witnessed the incident or be able to verify facts surrounding the grievant's story. Check the agreement and any other relevant documents including the grievant's personnel file, if necessary. Find out what past practices have been. Indicate this information and your sources on the interview sheet.

Step II: Analyzing the Grievance

1. Get a good understanding of the problem and organize your material. Prepare for an oral discussion with management of the written grievance you may file later.
2. After you have worked through the analysis, you may find you need more information before you can begin following the plan you've worked out. You might have decided to file a grievance on behalf of an individual and to file a separate one on behalf of the union, for example. In this kind of situation, you would probably have to do more research.

Step III: Preparing for Discussion

1. Block-out your strategy for moving the grievance into more formal stages, thinking through the personalities and special considerations involved. Develop your argument of the case. Be prepared for management's arguments.
2. This is the time to do any last minute research and to prepare the grievant if he or she is going to be participating in the discussion.

Step IV: Writing the Grievance Form

1. Write a short, concise statement of the grievance and the remedy. Union grievance forms will vary in format, but the two essential elements are always statement of grievance and remedy (relief desired, adjustment).