

Australian Services Union Local Government & Energy Delegates Conference 2020

“COVID AND BEYOND - Well Paid, Secure & Safe Jobs”

Tips for Handling Objections

It is important never to get into an argument with a person. This can be hard. We are human and sometimes we want to react with anger or frustration. But remember – if we argue we may never reach our objective. Our aim is not to win an argument; it is to get them to join.

It is important to remember that often the objection is very real for the person who is saying it, this means we must empathise with the person.

Objection Handling Technique

Step One – Explore or Question

Sometimes people throw in an objection that is very difficult to get a handle on. For example:

- Objection - “Union membership isn’t relevant these days”
- Response - ask “why do you feel that way?” This will unpack the objection and give you a much better chance of finding some common ground to talk through

Step Two – Equalise

This step is about acknowledging their objection, this is an important way to let the person know you are taking their objection seriously, and it means they are more likely to listen to you in response.

- Objection - “Unions aren’t effective anymore”
- Response – “I understand that a lot of people might think the changes in the law have made it almost impossible for union to do their job”

Step Three – Elevate

This step takes the conversation to a higher level.

- Continuing on from the response above:
- “Although some laws in place hinder and at times make it hard for unions to do their job, unionised agreements still provide better wages, conditions and employment
- security than non-unionised agreements. Unions also play an important role in influencing conditions in awards.”
- At this point it is also important to take the conversation back to the main issues in the workplace that you have been discussing with them
- REMEMBER – this is not a magic formula that will overcome all objections, but it will help if used effectively.



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Common Objections to Joining the Union and Possible Responses

Objection - I can't afford it

Response - I understand that it's an additional cost but the fees are tax deductible, and you receive many other great benefits. Truly, you can't afford not to. If you find yourself in a situation where you need industrial advice or representation and you aren't a member the union cannot help you.

Objection – I don't need it

Response – That's great that you don't need individual assistance and you feel confident enough to have an honest dialogue with your employer, but the conditions that you currently enjoy like sick leave, RDO's, pay increases etc., have all been negotiated by the union so that all staff benefit from these, it's not just about protecting yourself but ensuring that unions remain strong so that we continue to win these conditions

Objection – The employer treats me well

Response – That's great, that your employer treats you well, but what if that changes? Unfortunately, it only takes a change of management or problems with a colleague for a happy workplace to change into a problematic one. Wouldn't you like to have the peace of mind that if things go wrong you will have support?

Objection – I get the benefits anyway

Response - Yes, you still receive the benefits and great conditions that the union have negotiated for you, but think of how much more we could achieve if we were all members? The union is only as strong as its members. If everyone thought this same way, no one would be a member and we would not have any of the conditions the union has achieved.



By your side