

“A vital link between the Membership, GCEA and GSD”

Introduction to The Building Representative Program

The Building Representative Program is a vital link between (GCEA) Granite Classified Employees Association Executive Leadership, Association Members and Granite School District. It is through the building representative that the classified employees in district buildings come in day-to-day contact with the Association. GCEA will rely on the building representative to be the eyes and ears for the Association. It is through the building representative that all are assured of those rights that make-up the agreement between the District and the Association.

No one expects the building representative to be perfect. All that can ever be expected is that the building representative act responsibly, and are sincere and honest. In other words, one would expect a representative, the same quality's one expects of any good Classified Professional. No one expects the building representative to know all the answers. But they do have the right to expect them to know where to get the answers. The idea of the Building Representative Program is to have an individual who is the best informed Classified Employee in the area. They should be the best informed on the current issues of GCEA and its activities.

When a member asks about a classified employee policy, the Representative ought to know where to find that policy and the rationale behind that policy. To do this, building representatives must study the negotiated agreement and the District polices pertaining to Classified Employees. Becoming an expert involves following a few suggestions in this Handbook, and a willingness to hand out information to members in each area. When in doubt the building representative should contact a member of the GCEA board.

There are no shortcuts to building a strong and effective organization. To be strong and effective, the State Association must have the loyalty and understanding of its membership. This doesn't come easy. It must be worked at on an ongoing basis. It's a job that is never finished because there are always new members coming in and new problems arising. That is really what your Association is all about people, and the resolution of their problems.

The key to a strong Association is having loyal and active members at each work site/facility where the Association has members and/or represents employees. It doesn't matter what title you attach to this function. We can call these people Building Representatives, Job Representatives or Grievance Representatives. The important point is that the Association has such people, because workers judge their organization by these members. He or she is the key to a strong organization because they are the Association where it counts the most –on the job among the members. Most of the members do not go to meetings and when they think of the Association, they think of the building representative – the kind of person he or she is and the kind of job they do.

A good Building Representative brings many dividends to the Association. If they do a good job in enforcing the contract, the worker will have respect for them. As a result, they will also respect the judgement on other Association matters, and this is vitally important. The success of attaining the Association's goals and implementing its programs depend on the support and backing of the full membership. Only the Building Representative, along with the GCEA Leadership can build that support.

The Duties and Responsibilities of the Building Representative.

A Building Representative Handbook will be provided and should be maintained with updated information.

When possible, take the responsibility of recruitment of new members in your area and building.

Disburse all Association material including collection of Association material from members during elections and/or surveys.

Have membership cards available at all times.

Help in making announcements for the Association to all those in your area. This may be done by personal contact, phone calls or mailings.

Act as liaison between the members and administration in your area.

Help with grievances when needed.

Keep your Executive Board Member informed of any pertinent issues and concerns.

Encourage members to attend Association meetings.

Know where to get forms for classified employees such as; Personal Leave, Diagnostic and Dysfunctional Limitations, etc.

Perform other duties as are assigned by the Executive Board Member or their designated officials.

Be able to demonstrate the ability to exercise sound judgement.

Be able to communicate effectively with members, nonmembers, Association leadership and management or administration.

The Building Representative and Enforcing the Agreement

No agreement is worth the paper that it is printed on unless it is enforced. GCEA's Board Policy clearly states that one of the duties of the Building Representative is, "To oversee that all terms of the negotiated agreement are carried out in the work site/ building and areas." Being knowledgeable of the Negotiated Agreement will help with members issues.

The Building Representative as a Classified Employee Advocate

The Building Representative is an advocate for any Classified Employee in their area. It's important that the Executive Board receive information about any problems. Bring any and all concerns from the members to the attention of your Executive Board Member over your area.

When a problem arises its best to resolve the problem through informal discussions. Sometimes this may involve meeting with the school administrator. The Association has the right to attend any meeting when a member needs representation. Contact your Executive Board Member if needed.

The Building Representatives and Grievances

"Grievance" is defined as any violation, misinterpretation or misapplication of any provision of the Negotiated Agreement between GCEA and GSD. Initially informal discussions may resolve the dispute. If this fails, then a grievance may need to be filed either by the individual or the Association. An Executive Board Member should be informed and involved in any such action. As a Building Representative you need to be familiar with this procedure, especially because of time limits.

The Building Representative and Recruitment

Without the membership, we would have no Association. The larger the membership, the stronger the Association. The stronger the Association, the greater will be your success.

The best way to sell the Association is to show the benefits the Association provides. By telling the new employee what the Association has to offer and giving them literature explaining the advantages of membership, the Building Representative will be able to convince the new employee to join the Association.

People are not all alike. Therefore, different people have to be handled differently. There is no “canned” presentation for a Building Representative to use in investigating grievances or in selling the Association and its policies and programs to the members or perspective members.

A Guide To Membership Recruitment and Maintenance

WORDS TO THE MEMBERSHIP RECRUITER

You are the most important person in the membership drive. Please accept the Association’s appreciation for the job you have agreed to do. Of all the Association’s activities, membership recruitment is the most important. Without you, there would be no strong organization to work for members’ rights.

Your local chapter will be providing you with materials to distribute. However, a membership campaign is not successful if it depends on “paper” alone. People convince other people to join. In fact, the number one reason people join the organization is because someone asks them to join. Stuffing membership forms in a school mailbox or making a general announcement in a work site meeting is good, but it is not enough. Making a personal appeal to nonmembers to become a part of the organizational team is what gets them to join.

As a membership recruiter, it is vital that you are perceived as a person who has information about the organization. If you need more information, don’t hesitate to seek it. Your local president and labor representative are excellent sources of information.

PERSONAL CONTACTS BETWEEN RECRUITERS AND NONMEMBERS ARE THE SINGLE MOST EFFECTIVE RECRUITMENT TECHNIQUE

But just meeting the prospect face-to-face isn’t enough. It’s the quality of the contact that counts.

As a recruiter, you must be able to convince nonmembers that joining the Association is in fact an investment opportunity; that membership will provide many benefits and services whose equivalents just aren’t available elsewhere.

Every recruiter wants to make a good impression and to project a positive image of the Association as a dynamic organization deeply committed to improving the professional and economic well-being of its members. To project that image, you’ll need to come armed with sufficient information-information about both the Association and the non-member you are trying to recruit.

PROVIDING YOU WITH THAT INFORMATION IS THE ASSOCIATION'S RESPONSIBILITY. PUTTING IT TO GOOD USE IS YOUR JOB.

Keep in mind, however, that your success will depend not just on what you say, but how you say it - and possibly even more on how well you listen. When you expend the courtesy of asking for each prospect's observations, interests, opinions, and suggestions, you'll be demonstrating the Association's commitment to meeting the needs of individuals.

The suggestions on the following pages are designed to help you prepare for your key role as an Association recruiter. Treat them as guidelines - select, adapt, and supplement them to fit your own style. Develop an approach that you will feel comfortable using.

RECRUITING CAN BE REWARDING !

You will receive a work site roster from the Association or from the worksite secretary. If you don't have one - ask for one. Check these names against the association membership list for your work site. This will help you determine who is a member and who is not. Once the non-members are identified, ask other members in your building to assist you.

CALL FOR HELP

Not every person is willing to donate lots of time to an organization, but within your building there are strong Association members, who are not active. They may be personal friends. These are the people you need to contact. Ask if they will help you recruit members within your building. Explain that this project will not take a great deal of time and that the work can be done within the building **DON'T HESITATE TO ASK FOR HELP**. After all, it's their organization too !!

HAVE A MEETING . . . AND MAKE IT SHORT !

That's right - call for a brief organizational meeting with your new recruiters. Have copies of the sheets showing the non-members. Ask each of them to accept the responsibility for enrolling specific people on the sheet. Spend a brief time going over the information needed for the membership form. Schedule a follow-up meeting to discuss progress.

ASK A PERSON TO JOIN AT LEAST FOUR TIMES . . .

We know that's a lot of times to ask, but statistics show that is what is needed. Be positive but not aggressive when you ask for a membership. Be certain you ask during a time when the person is not under stress or pressure. Membership is a very personal commitment treat it that way.

AT YOUR NEXT MEETING

Assess where you are in the campaign. If your recruiters enrolled new members, be certain to express your appreciation to them. Review who is not yet a member. Did they express any specific reasons that can be counteracted? Perhaps a different person might be the key to getting them to join. It's frequently a successful move if two members go together to ask a non-member to join.

“I DON'T SEE WHAT OUR STATE ASSOCIATION OR THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION DOES THAT MY LOCAL ASSOCIATION CAN'T DO.....AND I'D RATHER SPEND MY MONEY FOR A LOCAL ASSOCIATION.”

Education is not an isolated community entity. Funds come through the state and national political process. Survival requires that we make an impact on these procedures at a level of sophistication beyond the resources of the local association. In a mobile society, educational issues and instructional techniques are

not confined to the community. Problems in areas such as contracting out extend nationwide. The state and national organization provide a network for research, communications, and support that are not available through any other means.

“THERE ISN’T ANY REASON FOR ME TO JOIN. I WILL GET ALL THE SALARY BENEFITS ANYWAY.”

School Boards are getting more and more sophisticated and want to know how many employees the Association represents. Representing some of the potential members isn’t enough. The negotiating team should represent the overwhelming majority of the employees. Joining shows the school board that employees are together behind negotiations.

Secondly, aren’t you a little guilty about being a freeloader? Yes, I said a freeloader. You know how much work some of the leaders put in on negotiations, on representing you at local and state meetings. What do you give them in return? Isn’t it about time you pulled your own weight?

Note: Use caution in applying this techniques.

“WHY ARE DUES SO EXPENSIVE? “

“You get what you pay for,” and Association members are getting a good program. Specifically, the program provides services - such as legal assistance, negotiations assistance, retirement consultation, and money saving discount programs. Right now we’re on the threshold of seeing enormous advances. Legislation that we’ve wanted for some time now seems possible. Also, when we tell the school board our salaries have to go up to meet inflation, we have to be ready to see our own organization’s cost go up.

“I CAN’T AFFORD IT”

You can’t afford not to join - join now. It only costs a few cents a day for year round service. The Association has contributed continuously to winning benefits already reflected in your paycheck. Payroll deduction provides an affordable pay-as-you-go dues payment plan. We don’t accept “can’t afford it” from school board negotiators. Why should we be any less firm with those who benefit directly from salary increases and other benefits we are winning?

HOW TO ANSWER THE “HARD” QUESTIONS FROM NON-JOINERS

There always seems to be a few individuals who traditionally refuse to even consider joining their professional organizations. They come up with multitudes of reasons, all logical to them. To do a successful “selling” job on membership in our classified association, responses to these reasons are necessary.

Here are some of the responses you can use frequently stated reasons given by individuals for not joining. Feel free to use them as you talk to people about becoming Association members.

“My wife (husband) also works in the school system. Why should we pay double dues?”

Because you’re guaranteed double benefits. Membership isn’t altogether unlike an insurance policy. If one of you has an accident, it doesn’t help if the other is covered. The same thing applies if one of you needs legal assistance. Membership benefits come with membership only. Didn’t you both get salary increases this year?

“I just don’t believe in joining anything.”

If that’s how everybody felt, we’d still be paying taxes on tea from England. Until classified employees organized and won due process and just cause protection, how many non joiners were dismissed for unfair reasons? Until members organized and entered the political arena, how many “letter writing campaigns” ended up in legislative wastebaskets? Do you want to turn back increases which Association negotiations and lobbying have won?

“I don’t believe school employees should be involved in politics.”

You have a right to believe that, and you have a choice whether you want to contribute to the political action arm of the Association. Other members who feel as you do join the organization but don’t support political activity. The important thing, however, is that they are staying in the organization and supporting not only other school employees but themselves.

“I haven’t got a voice in what the Association does.”

If you are a member, you have a voice and a vote every time your local Chapter takes action. You also have direct representation to the state delegate assembly and the national board meeting, where policies for the Association are set, through the representatives you elect. Your State Association is represented on the NACSE Board of Directors, and each local Chapter has proportional representation of the State Board of Directors and at the State Delegate Assembly. Each of these representatives will make your wishes known.

“I don’t agree with a lot of things that the Association does.”

Can you honestly say that you never disagree with actions of your State Legislature or Congress? Nonetheless, you don’t drop your citizenship, give up your voting franchise, and refuse to pay your taxes. Representative government - in organizations as well as nations - depends on people who “pay their dues” and who participate in decision making. If you don’t agree with some direction the Association is taking, join, become active, and work to change its course.

TIPS FOR SUCCESSFUL MEMBERSHIP RECRUITMENT

1. More people will join because we are interested in them, than join for all the facts we may know about the organization. They are not buying the organization, but rather what it will do for them.
2. Remember, people join for their own reasons, not for ours. The best promoter of membership is an enthusiastic member. Let it be known that you are proud of the Association and you believe it is the best thing you have going. Let people know you believe that the association can make a difference.
3. Contact prospects in person, one-on-one or two-on-one. Contact them when they are alone rather than in a group. Best results are obtained from personal contact. After personal contact comes telephone contact, mail and printed material.
4. Timing is important. People are most likely to join:

When a major activity occurs; When they are newly hired; When they are helped with a problem they’ve had; When they are already “joiners;” and When asked and asked and asked and asked.
5. Take a few minutes to plan your contact. Review the use of opened questions and listening skills and ask yourself:

What do I know about this person (prospective member)?
What is the purpose of this contact?
6. Remember that your job is to listen, and not talk, until you find out all you need to know about the prospective member. Ask questions which start with who, what, where, when, why, and how. Listen to the answers! Find out:

What the prospect knows about the Association;
What are his/her concerns, questions, and needs;
What are his/her objections, if any; and

How our Association can fill his/her needs.

7. Prepare yourself with information about organizational goals, programs, services, etc. Know where to get additional information should you need it. Talk about the Association in terms that would answer the question; "What will it do for me?" Use what you have learned about the prospective members to determine what to highlight about the Association.
8. Keep in mind that you don't have to know all the answers. A general briefing on the local, State, and National levels of the Association will usually suffice. Find out questions, concerns, and needs of a person and get back to her/him. It is often more important that you cared enough to follow through with what you promised that you provide the information. You may also ask a more knowledgeable leader or staff person to follow-up on your contact.
9. If you need someone to assist you or to make a follow-up contact, decide who the best person should be. When members are informed about who the members and potential members are, they are often willing to make recruiting new members a team effort, especially with individuals they know.
10. When talking about dues, talk in smallest terms - by the day, week, or month. Use the daily amount and compare it with what little that amount will buy in everyday purchases. Stress that members receive protection and service 365 days a year and, in some Locals, for less than a dollar a day!
11. Use printed material selectively. Hand deliver materials. Point out specific information which responds to the prospective member's interest. Write a personal note to go along with it.
12. Positive attitudes produce positive results. Be positive; expect everyone to join. Let the prospect be the one to tell you otherwise.
13. If someone shows any sign of interest in joining, try to get her/him to sign up immediately. It takes less than two minutes to complete an application, especially if you have filled in the information in advance. Become familiar with the application form so that you can help. Offer to take the completed form to save the person the bother of sending it in.
14. If there is any uncertainty in "closing" the membership "sale", remember the basics of closing - remind the prospect: Here's who we are; Here's what we do; Here's what we can do together; Here's what the dues are. Then ask, "Will you join with us?"
15. Set a goal for yourself each day. For example, ask one open ended question; contact one potential member, call and support another Membership Recruiter.
16. Much more comes through to the potential member than just the words we speak. It's been said that only 7% of our message comes from our words; 38% comes from our tone of voice and how we say the words; 55% comes from other non-verbal messages we send with our facial expression, body language, etc.
17. After a person joins, tell her/him what she/he can expect. Do not promise anything you can't deliver personally. Immediately after someone has joined is an excellent time to help get the person involved. Do what you can to make every new member feel good about her/his decision to join.

SEVEN REASONS TO BE A GOOD LISTENER

We learn a great deal.

It helps solve problems.
It gives us time to think.
It increases our self-confidence.
It helps us sell ideas.
It generates ideas.
It shows other people that we care.

REVIEWING YOUR WORK SITE SITUATION

If a check-mark appears in a box, it represents an item which you should work on?

- ' 1. Do you have a list of members and non-member at your work site?
- ' 2. Do you have a copy of your Associations contract?
- ' 3. Do you have copies of grievance forms?
- ' 4. Do you have copies of information, and brochures published by your Association?
- ' 5. Do you have membership applications?
- ' 6. Do you have employees at your work site who are not members?
- ' 7. Are there employees at your work site who are strongly anti-Association?
- ' 8. Are there employees at your work site who could be considered problem employees or who constantly complain?
- ' 9. Is your work site unhealthy or unsafe?
- ' 10. Do you have site-level managers who are difficult to deal with or who intimidate employees or who are strongly anti-union?
- ' 11. Do you feel that the Chapter officers or the field representative or the grievance rep. Ignores your work site?
- ' 12. Are the members at your work site involved in the Association activities?
- ' 13. Do your fellow employees think of you as someone they can trust or who can represent their interests?
- ' 14. Are you reluctant to get involved and to recruit members for union activities?
- ' 15. Can you expect the support of your Chapter in organizing your work site and being responsive to suggestions and criticism from you as a representative of a particular group of members?

DO'S AND DON'TS FOR RECRUITERS

DO

CHave a membership application with you.

- CKnow your prospective member.
- CMake appointments to discuss membership (with individuals where possible).
- CAsk questions designed to involve the listener in thinking about the situation.
- CListen carefully to learn biggest hang-ups - or interests.
Stick with the key issue when you find it.
- CShow your personal conviction for professional membership but also show respect for the other person's views.
- CBe prepared to answer predictable questions.
- CWork in pairs (two on one).
- CTry to learn something about the potential member's interests prior to meeting.
- CEnlist help from those members who get along well with the prospect.
- CAsk for suggestions for improving the Association (make written notes - and forward them to appropriate people.)
- CHelp potential members find information they seek.
- CMake an appointment for another time before leaving if you can't convince them to join at first discussion.
- CForward memberships immediately to the local membership coordinator.

DON'TS

- CKnock competing organizations.
- CFlatly contradict, (Instead try, "That seems to be a common misconception. Actually, the Association does.....")
- CFasten into arguments.
- CGive up after one try. (Sales people report that on the average, it takes 4-7 contacts to clinch a sale.)
- CBeg for membership.
- CBe afraid to ask. (You are serving the best interests of the potential member.)
- CDeal in personalities.
- CArgue in front of a group, or in any way embarrass your prospect in front of others.
- CConfront a group of non-joiners about membership. (Talk to them individually).