

## Suggestions for Handling Grievances

1. Handle problems before they cause a grievance.
  - Keep your ears open.
  - Have your eyes glued around your head.
  - Develop a keen awareness to assess potential problems.
2. Be a good listener.
  - Listen patiently to the complaint.
  - Find out what is really the basis for the worker's dissatisfaction.
  - Show interest in the problem.
3. Be armed with facts.
  - Apply the 10 Key Points of an Investigation.
  - Know your contract, company rules and regulations, Past Practices ...
  - Know the history of similar circumstances.
4. Easy does it.
  - Keep calm.
  - Keep professional.
  - Maintain your credibility.
5. Use a positive, friendly approach.
  - Being aggressive or argumentative may score points with the members but such tactics are not always helpful
6. Be self-assured.
  - Don't appear to be on edge.
  - Be firm in your approach
7. Don't be afraid of pauses in your talk or conversation.
  - Think over your questions or statements before proceeding.
8. Avoid penalties.
  - Reject ultimatums
9. Keep an open mind.
  - Listen objectively to all that is presented.
10. Disagree when necessary but with dignity.
  - Always be respectful to yourself and to others.
11. Don't make empty threats.
  - Credibility is essential to maintain now and in the future.
12. Appeal to management's self-interest.
  - Remember that the company is not interested in what is best for the union; they are interested in their profit.
13. Settle each grievance on its merits.
  - It is unfair to the member, and undermines the collective bargaining process to "horse trade." (give up one grievance to settle another)
14. Stick to the point.
  - Don't get sidetracked into another conversation.
  - Stay focused on one issue at a time
15. Remember that management has rights too.
  - Both the members and the management must live up to the terms of agreement.
16. Don't take up complaints that are not real grievances.
  - When a complaint is not a grievance determine carefully how you will solve the problem.
17. Keep the aggrieved worker constantly informed.
  - The grievant should not have to seek out their Shop Steward to keep up to date with the status of their grievant. That is the Steward's job.
18. Permit the supervisor to correct the mistake without loss of face or dignity.
  - Present the facts.
  - Allow the appropriate time for the company to consider the arguments.
19. Don't gloat when a grievance is settled in your favor.
  - Gloating can cause ill will and will surely come back to haunt you.
20. Check to see that the decision is carried out.
  - Always confirm with the grievant that the decision has been actioned as agreed.