



HOW LABOR WORKS

LABOR TERMS

Scanned in from original union-printed hard copy

Those of us who work in the labor movement, like workers in most fields, have our own jargon-words that have a particular meaning only in our field. Many of those words and phrases have a different meaning when used by the public at large.

Just as someone running into two computer buffs discussing "bytes" might think they're getting ready for lunch, and another person hearing workers call out "fore" as they loaded equipment onto a ship might wonder where the golf course was -- so those who have not been involved with organized labor might find a discussion of "fair share" puzzling.

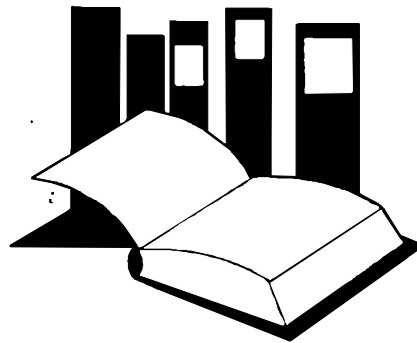
This glossary has been put together to help solve some of the puzzles facing those who write and/or otherwise communicate about unions and their members. It includes a variety of words and phrases that are commonly used in organized labor. We have tried to make the definitions straightforward -- with the least possible amount of legal gingerbread possible.

A number of reference publications have been used in preparing this glossary. The first is *Speaking of Labor Unions*, the International Labor Press Association's 1964 booklet on labor terms. Another is *Industrial and Labor Relations Terms: A Glossary*- 1989, prepared by Robert E. Doherty and published by the New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations. Third is the

800-plus page *Robert's Dictionary of Industrial Relations*, 4th edition, 1994. This historically revealing and exhaustive compilation is a good resource for labor scholars.

NOTE: The words that you will find italicized in definitions are listed and defined elsewhere in the glossary.

LABOR TERMS



A

Accretion

Adding new workers to an existing bargaining unit after the employer builds or acquires additional operations or facilities during the life of a collective bargaining agreement. Instead of making the new workers vote for union representation, the contract is extended to cover them.

Across-the-board increase

A general pay increase for all the workers covered by a contract. May be a percentage or dollar/cents figure.

Administratorship

See *trusteeship*.

Adoption leave

Type of family/parental leave that lets a worker take leave from the job to process an adoption. The type of leave is usually defined by law or the collective bargaining agreement and includes job return rights.

Advisory arbitration

A form of arbitration in which the arbitrator's award recommends a solution to the dispute but the recommendation is not binding on the parties. See *factfinding*.

AFL-CIO

See *American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations*.

AFL-CIO state and local central body

See *central labor (trades) council or state federation of labor*.

Agency shop

A bargaining unit covered by a union security clause in the collective bargaining agreement stating that nonunion employees in the unit must pay a sum equal to union fees and dues as a condition of continuing employment. Unions see this as fair since they must provide full and equal protection to every worker in the unit. In many jurisdictions, nonmember employees covered by an agency shop provision need pay only a *fair share* of the dues -- the prorated amount it takes to negotiate and administer the contract. See *free rider*.

Agreement

See *collective bargaining agreement*.

American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations

A voluntary federation of national and international unions. It was formed in 1955 with the merger of the American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations. While the affiliated unions maintain complete control over their individual

organizations, they agree to abide by certain membership policies-- including not raiding other affiliates. Affiliates may be sanctioned for serious violations of these policies. The AFL-CIO is not a union; it is a cooperative organization through which unions work together for the common good.

Amnesty clause

Usually negotiated as part of a strike settlement, it calls for no reprisals or discrimination against strikers or nonstrikers. Sometimes in public sector strikes, management will grant a general amnesty to restore essential services.

Annuity

A pension/retirement plan benefit payment made to a retiree at stated intervals. It may be for a defined number of years or for life.

Apprentice

A person training for a skilled trade through a comprehensive program of graduated on-the-job experience combined with technical instruction. Apprenticeship training programs are usually set up by joint union-management agreements.

Arbitration

A form of dispute resolution in which an impartial third party, known as an arbitrator, renders a decision that is binding on both the union and the employer. There are two types of arbitration: *grievance arbitration* and *interest arbitration*. See also *advisory arbitration* and *med arb*.

Article XX

See *internal disputes plan*.

Associate membership

A plan to extend some of the services and benefits of union membership to workers who are not part of an organized bargaining unit. It serves to introduce some nonunion workers to the advantages provided by union membership.

Attrition

A way to handle worker displacement that results from technological and/or economic change. Workers are not laid off from their jobs under attrition plans. Instead, as jobs are vacated by retirement, resignation, or death, they are not filled. Sometimes the rate of attrition is increased as employers offer early retirement incentives.

Authorization card

A statement signed by an individual employee during an organizing drive. The statement may indicate either the employee's desire for an election in which the question is whether there shall be a union, or it may authorize the union to represent the employee for purposes of

collective bargaining. U .S.labor law generally requires cards from a certain percentage of workers in the unit before an election is set

Award

In labor-management disputes, the decision of an arbitrator or labor law agency.

B

Back-loaded

Providing a greater wage increase during the later part of a multiyear collective bargaining agreement See *front-loaded*.

Back pay

Wages due to an employee because of 1) employer violation of the law; 2) suspension/discharge in violation of the collective bargaining agreement; or 3) adjustment of piece rate following a grievance. Also see *retroactive pay*.

Bargaining agent

A union that is the exclusive representative to the employer of all workers, both union members and nonmembers, in a bargaining unit An employer may voluntarily recognize a particular union as a bargaining agent for its employees, or the question of representation may be decided by a secret-ballot election conducted by the appropriate governmental agency. See *certification*, *exclusivity*, and *representation election*.

Bargaining unit

A group of employees in a workplace with enough commonality to be represented in collective bargaining by a particular bargaining agent A bargaining unit could be made up of all the members of a particular craft--plumbers, electricians, pilots; or all production workers, all support staff at a particular worksite or at all worksites of an employer. The state/national labor board determines the appropriate bargaining unit.

Base rate

A worker's pay for a fixed period of time, not including overtime or other premium pay.

Benchmark job

A job that serves as a standard or point of reference against which other jobs are rated or evaluated. The establishment of benchmark jobs allows a comparative examination of wage rates for other jobs so it is not necessary to collect data for all jobs in an organization. See *pay equity*.

Blacklist

A list circulated among employers containing the names of workers considered to be troublesome--often workers who are pro union. It is used by the employers as a warning against hiring or retaining those listed. Although it has been declared an unfair labor practice, the practice continues -- particularly in small towns and semi-rural areas and in the crafts.

Blue-collar worker

A manual worker, specifically a maintenance or production worker. Blue-collar workers have been a major source of membership in American unions. See *pink-collar worker*, *production worker*, *service worker*, and *white-collar worker*.

Blue flu

A job action, originally one in which large numbers of uniformed workers of a law enforcement agency called in sick. The purpose of the blue flu is to put pressure on the employer without resorting to a strike.

Bonus

A payment in addition to a worker's regular pay. It can be a lump sum payment recognizing goal achievement or a payment that supplements basic salary.

Boulwarism

A bargaining strategy in which the employer tries to circumvent the union and convince employees that its initial offer is in their best interest. Named after a General Electric vice president who used the tactic.

Boycott

An organized action by employees and their union to show their dissatisfaction with an employer's actions. In primary boycotts, consumers are asked not to buy the goods of an employer who is directly involved in a dispute. In secondary boycotts, pressure is exerted on employers who are not directly involved in a dispute -- for instance, workers for one employer refuse to use or handle goods or products of another employer involved in a labor dispute. Labor laws have seriously limited the use of secondary boycotts.

Bridging

A system designed to supplement early retirement income until social security or other regular benefits are payable.

Bumping

A practice that allows workers who are laid off from a job for lack of work to displace bargaining unit members with less seniority. It is often provided for in collective bargaining agreements to protect the most senior workers' job rights.

Business agent/ representative

A full-time union official who negotiates contracts, handles grievances, helps enforce contracts, and performs other daily tasks for the operation of a union. Some unions prefer the term *union representative*. Also see *international representative* and *steward*.

Business unionism

An approach by some unions consisting almost entirely of demands for better wages, hours, and working conditions. Also called "bread- and-butter" unionism, it focuses on the concerns of workers in a particular craft or industry rather than those of working people as a whole.

C**Cafeteria plan**

A flexible benefits plan that permits workers to choose among a variety of fringe benefits. These may include health, dental, long- term disability, legal services, child/elder care, vacation/leave, and retirement benefits.

Call-back pay

Compensation, often at higher rates, to workers called back on the job after they have completed their regular shift. They are usually guaranteed pay for a minimum number of hours, regardless of the number of hours worked.

Call-in pay

Guaranteed compensation, usually from two to eight hours' wages, for a worker who reports for work and is released because there is not enough work to be done.

Central labor (trades) council

Direct subordinate body of the AFL-CIO organized at the city and county level. Such councils exchange information of common interest among affiliates and to help them coordinate their common and individual efforts.

Certification

The decision by an appropriate agency that a particular union is the majority choice of workers in a bargaining unit. Once the union is certified, it becomes the exclusive bargaining agent of all employees in that unit.

Checkoff

The deduction of union dues, assessments, and initiation fees from the pay of union members or agency shop fee payers by the employer, who transmits the funds to the union.

Child care

Nursery, day care, before and after school care for children with working parents. Employers may offer a variety of benefits to help workers cope with competing work and family demands.

Civic duty leave

Time off from work for jury duty, public office, time to vote, and other citizen-related duties. Bargaining agreements usually provide for payment of regular salary less any fees received.

Civil service

A central personnel bureau within a governmental unit that advises, formulates policy, and regulates employment procedures. Such systems were established in response to the problems of patronage -- politically based job appointments.

Clean-up period

Time before meals or at the end of the shift when employees may clean themselves or their clothing. Also a time to clean up the workplace in preparation for the next shift.

Clerical work

Refers to office occupations. Work may range from routine, repetitive, and simple tasks to those of a highly complex nature.

Closed anti-union shop

A workplace closed to union members or those who may seek union representation. Commonly used in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the practice is now illegal.

Closed shop

A bargaining unit with a union security clause stating that the employer will only hire workers who are already union members. These workers must also maintain their union membership to keep their jobs. This form of union security clause was declared illegal in 1947 except in the construction industry. Also see *union shop* and *union security clause*.

Co-determination

A process in which decisions are made jointly by management and workers (or their representatives). These joint decisions may be made at various levels through labor-management committees or existing collective bargaining machinery.

Collective bargaining

A method of determining terms and conditions of employment by negotiation between representatives of the employer and representatives of the employees. Negotiations result in a *collective bargaining agreement*, also called a union contract.

Collective bargaining agreement

A written contract resulting from negotiations between employer representatives and representatives of the workers, which sets terms and conditions of employment and the procedures to be used in settling disputes that may arise during the term of the agreement.

Committee on Political Education (COPE)

The AFL-CIO's political action committee, supported by voluntary contributions. Its major responsibilities are to educate union members about political issues and to support candidates for political office who have been endorsed by organized labor. Most national / international unions have their own individual political action committees.

Common situs picketing

A form of picketing in which employees of a struck employer who work at the same worksite with employees of at least one neutral employer may picket only their entrance to the site. Employees of the neutral employer must enter through other gates. Found most often in the construction industry, it is a way to discourage secondary boycotts of neutral employers.

Company union

An employee organization, usually of a single company, that is dominated or strongly influenced by management. Such employer domination has been declared an unfair labor practice. Some labor-management cooperation efforts have been called into question because of extreme management influence.

Comparable worth

See *pay equity*.

Compensatory time off

Leave granted workers who have worked beyond their regular work day / week. Generally given to those considered ineligible for overtime pay.

Concerted activities

Action by a group of workers to better their wages, hours, and working conditions. Workers who engage in such activities have certain protected rights.

Concession bargaining

Negotiations in which the union agrees to give up or defer wage and benefit improvements in return for job security or other employment protection. In some cases the employees agree to cuts in wages and / or benefits.

Conciliation

A dispute resolution method in which a third party brings the disputing parties together, but acts as a catalytic agent by being available but not taking an active part in the settlement process. See *mediation*.

Confidential employee

Under labor law, an employee who has access to information about the employer's labor relations policy and therefore is not eligible to be included in a bargaining unit.

Constructive discharge

An employer's efforts to make working conditions so unbearable that a worker is forced to "quit."

Contract

See *collective bargaining agreement*.

Contract bar

The existence of a valid collective bargaining agreement that keeps a labor relations agency from honoring a rival union's request for an election or a petition from workers for decertification. See *certification*, *decertification*, and *representation election*.

Contracting out

Subletting certain parts of the employer's operation to subcontractors rather than having the employer's workers do the job.

Contributory pension plan

A pension plan partially funded with worker contributions.

Cooling-off period

A period of delay (fixed by law) following legal notice of a pending labor dispute covered by the Railway Labor Act during which there can be neither strike nor walkout. Or a period during which a strike / walkout is prohibited by court injunction. Wages and conditions of work are usually frozen under conditions set by the previous contract. Every effort is made during this time to settle the dispute. If, at the end of the period, there has been no settlement, the strike/lockout may legally be resumed. See *strike* and *lockout*.

Coordinated bargaining

A form of collective bargaining in which a number of different unions, representing different bargaining units of a single employer, coordinate bargaining objectives and strategies.

Corporate campaign

A concerted effort to influence management activities through non-workplace pressure and strategies such as influencing potential investors in a company or organizing shareholders to press for changes in policies or the removal of key executives.

Cost-of-living adjustment (COLA)

A provision in a collective bargaining agreement that relates wage additions to the cost of living during the period of the contract. Most COLA clauses provide for a portion of Consumer Price Index increases to be reflected in wages. Sometimes referred to as an escalator clause. Also see *cost-of-living index*.

Cost-of-living index

A measurement of change in prices of goods and services. Wages of workers whose union contracts contain a "COLA" clause, fluctuate with the cost-of-living index. The Consumer Price Index, compiled monthly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, is the best known and most widely used index.

Craft

A trade, employment, or occupation requiring skill, manual ability, an understanding of the principle of the trade, and a fixed training period.

Craft union

A union consisting of skilled workers in a specific trade or craft, such as carpenters, machinists, or printers. Also see *industrial union*.

Crossover employees

Workers who go out on strike but quit the strike and return to work before the strike is over. See *scab*.

Cumulative trauma disorder

Physical signs and symptoms due to chronic musculoskeletal injuries caused by repetitive work. Some types: carpal tunnel syndrome, tenosynovitis, tendonitis, ganglionic cyst, vibration syndrome. See *ergonomics*.

D**Death benefit**

Payment, usually a lump sum, given to a worker's beneficiaries at the time of his/her death.

Decertification

An order by the appropriate governmental body ending the representation rights of a union after members of the bargaining unit have voted the union out in a government-supervised election.

Defense fund

See *strike fund*.

Defined benefit plan

Pension plan offering a specific benefit that is spelled out in advance and made payable to participants upon retirement

Defined contribution plan

Pension plan where the employer and/or employee makes specific contributions to the worker's account, but the return is not predetermined; it depends on the amount of contributions and returns on investments. Employees may contribute to such plans as well as employers.

Dependent care assistance program

A section of the IRS code that allows funds to be diverted for dependent care expenses and reduces the employee's taxable income by that amount. The plan helps a worker to maintain employment while ensuring the well-being of dependents.

Directly affiliated local union (DALU)

A local union holding a charter directly with the AFL-CIO and not affiliated with any national or international union.

Disability

A person's inability to engage in ordinary or customary work or routine because of injury or illness. Disability may be short-term or long-term, temporary or permanent, partial or total.

Disability insurance plans

Insurance programs designed to compensate workers for wage loss due to injury or illness.

Disaffiliation

Separation of a local union from its national / international union (usually after a membership vote), or by a national / international union from the AFL-CIO.

Discharge

See *layoff*.

Discipline

An employer's actions against a worker -- short of discharge -- for violating company or contract rules. It is designed to set up standards of performance, behavior, fair play, and good morale so that work can proceed efficiently. See *progressive discipline*.

Dismissal

See *layoff*.

Displaced/dislocated worker

Worker whose job has been terminated because the workplace or department or product line has been sold, moved, or closed, generally because of trade policies. Also used as a general term for all laid-off workers.

Dispute resolution

Methods of settling labor-management disputes. A variety of types are used. See *arbitration*, *mediation*, *med arb*.

District council

Intermediate body made up of representatives of local unions in a particular region that belong to the same national/international union. Also called district lodge or joint board.

District lodge

See *district council*.

Double-breasted operation

A company operating both unionized and nonunionized subsidiaries. Unionized firms may set up a nonunionized unit to increase profits and/or compete with nonunionized employers. Often found in the construction and trucking industries.

Downsizing

A forced reduction in a company's work force as part of restructuring that management typically claims is designed to streamline bureaucracy and improve performance. Workers may be offered early retirement incentives or retraining.

Down time

Period when workers are unable to perform their tasks while waiting for materials, repair, setup, or adjustment of equipment

Dues

See *union dues*.

Duty of fair representation

A union's obligation to represent all individuals in a bargaining unit. A bargaining representative is required by law to serve the interests of all members of the bargaining unit without hostility, discrimination, or arbitrary conduct -- whether or not they are members of the union or voted for the union.

Duty to bargain

The legal obligation for employers and unions to bargain in good faith on the terms and conditions of employment and to write their agreement in a collective bargaining contract.

E**Economic strike**

Work stoppage resulting from the inability of the union and employer to agree on wages, hours, or other conditions of employment. In economic strikes the employer may hire permanent replacements for the strikers. See *unfair labor practice strike*.

Educational leave

Leave, paid or unpaid, granted to a worker for educational purposes. The employer may pay all or part of the worker's salary and all or part of the educational costs.

Eldercare

Help and support provided by family members to aging parents or relatives. Many workplaces have programs to help employees deal with the pressure and stress of balancing work and family responsibilities.

Employee assistance program (EAP)

Workplace services to help employees handle personal and/or family problems that may have an adverse effect on a worker's job performance. Programs may include substance abuse, emotional, family, marital, financial, and career counseling.

Employee involvement

A system to bring workers into fuller participation in problem-solving and decision-making to help raise job efficiency and profitability. Quality circles, quality of working life, labor-management participation teams are other terms used to describe employee involvement. See *industrial democracy* and *worker participation*.

Employee leasing

A process under which an employer lays off its workers who are then hired by a third party -- the employee leasing company -- which leases them back to the employer. Used to save employer paperwork and sometimes to prevent unionization.

Employee stock ownership program (ESOP)

An employee benefit plan in which employers contribute company stock and/or money to buy company stock for individual employee accounts held in trust for the employees until retirement or employment termination.

Employment at will

Common law principle that workers may be let go as the employer wishes. It is limited by some employment and labor laws and recent court decisions.

Equal employment opportunity

The absence of discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, and disability in hiring and employment practices. This type of non-discriminatory policy is required by federal and state/local statutes. Many jurisdictions also outlaw discrimination based on sexual orientation.

Equal pay for equal work

A principle stating that wages for a job should depend on the job and not the person who is doing it. Thus, when two workers are doing the same work, they should be paid the same despite their sex, race, national origin, religion, etc. Differs from equal pay for comparable work. See *pay equity*.

Ergonomics

The study of the relationship between people and machines. It is concerned with developing machines, equipment, and production processes that fit workers to protect their health and safety on the job.

Escalator clause

See *cost-of living adjustment*.

Escape clause

A clause usually found in contracts with *maintenance-of-membership* union security provisions. It *sets* aside an interval, usually 10 days or two weeks, during which members may withdraw from the union without penalty.

Excelsior rule

A legal requirement that an employer provide the NLRB with a list of the names and addresses of all workers eligible to vote in a union representation election.

Exclusivity

A bargaining agent's right to be the sole representative of all employees in the bargaining unit. With this right comes the responsibility to represent all bargaining unit members -- even those who do not join the union.

Exempt employee

A worker who is not subject to the provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act or its state/local equivalent. Most employees whose pay is based on an annual sum rather than an hourly rate and whose work requires advanced/specialized education are considered exempt.

External organizing

A union's continuing effort to convince nonunionized employees to join the union and/or to work together to secure collective bargaining in their workplace. Also see *internal organizing*.

F**Factfinding**

Investigation of a labor-management dispute by an individual or a board or panel. Factfinders and factfinding boards issue reports that describe the issues in dispute and frequently make recommendations for their solution. Their recommendations are not binding. See *advisory arbitration*.

Fair share

See *agency shop*.

Family leave

Paid or unpaid leave to care for a newborn, newly adopted, or seriously ill child or other family member. Federal law requires employers to provide a limited period of unpaid leave for such situations and guarantee job return rights to the worker.

Final offer arbitration

A type of interest arbitration in which the arbitrator selects either the union's or the employer's final proposal. Sometimes the arbitrator selects one side's entire "package;" in others, the final proposal of either party on each issue in dispute may be chosen. Also known as "last best offer arbitration."

Firing

See *layoff*.

Fixed shift

Assignment of workers to the same shift on a regular basis in work-places operating more than one shift. Also see *rotating shift*.

Flexible work-week

See *flextime*.

Flextime

A system that gives workers some freedom in deciding when they begin and end the workday, subject to the requirement that they are present during certain "core" hours and work a certain number of hours each day.

Free rider

Member of a bargaining unit who is eligible for union membership but does not join the union. S/he receives all the benefits of the union contract -- including use of the grievance procedure -- but does not pay the dues or fees that make these benefits possible. See *agency shop*, *fair share*, and *union security clause*.

Fringe benefits

Non-wage items and employer contributions received by or credited to workers. For instance: sick leave, vacation/holiday pay, pensions, health / disability insurance, unemployment compensation, and workers compensation. Also referred to as *employee benefits*.

Front-loaded

Providing greater wage increases in the early part of a multiyear collective bargaining agreement See *back-loaded*.

G**General strike**

A strike by all or most unionized workers in a given community or country. Rare in the U.S.

Givebacks

See *concession bargaining*.

Good faith bargaining

Negotiations in which the parties meet and confer at reasonable times, with a view to reaching agreement on new contract terms. Neither party is required to make concessions or reach agreement on any proposal. Lack of good faith bargaining is an unfair labor practice.

Grandfather clause

A collective bargaining agreement provision that states that employees who were on the payroll before a specified time will not be subject to certain terms of a new contract.

Grievance

A complaint by an individual or the union that there has been a misunderstanding or a misapplication of a collective bargaining agreement, traditional work practices, or law. It is handled formally through a contractually fixed process that may lead to arbitration, mediation, or -- in some instances -- job actions.

Grievance arbitration

A method of resolving a grievance in which it is submitted to a neutral third party for a final and binding decision -- usually the last step of the grievance procedure. This type of dispute resolution has been adopted in most collective bargaining agreements as an alternative to work stoppages, slowdowns, and other job actions to protest management actions.

Grievance mediation

A dispute resolution process that uses a neutral third party to facilitate the negotiation of a grievance but leaves the actual agreement in the hands of the parties. The mediator does not make a binding decision.

Grievance procedure

Steps spelled out in a collective bargaining agreement for the handling of grievances. The intent of the process is to settle complaints quickly and expediently.

H**Hiring hall**

A type of employment office, generally operated jointly by labor and management, set up to meet the needs of workers in casual trades. Frequently used in the construction, maritime, and needle trades.

Hit-and-run strike

A work stoppage organized so that only some of the employees stop work at any given time -- each group taking its turn.

Home-based work

A working arrangement where workers do their jobs at home instead of at the worksite. Also known as *homework*, *work at home*, and *industrial homework*. Traditionally found in the garment, jewelry, electronics, and knitting industries, it has become an issue for white-collar workers, particularly those using computers. See *telecommuting*.

Hot cargo provisions

Contract language that lets workers refuse to work on or handle goods coming from a workplace where there is a labor dispute. Most have been outlawed except those affecting suppliers / subcontractors in construction work and jobbers in the garment industry.

I**Impact bargaining**

Negotiations over the effects of employer decisions. Labor law has been interpreted to say that an employer is obliged to bargain over the effect of a unilateral decision even if the issue involved is not a mandatory subject of bargaining. See *scope of bargaining*.

Impasse

Situation in which no further progress can be made toward reaching an agreement. Either party may declare that an impasse has been reached. Often a mediator is called in to help resolve differences. In the public sector, a technical impasse may occur when an agreement has not been reached by a specific date in the budget cycle.

Improper practice

See *unfair labor practice*.

Incentive pay plan

A system in which workers' earnings are directly related to their output rather than an hourly rate. Frequently used in textiles, clothing, and other manufacturing industries. Often referred to as *piece-work*.

Increments

A series of successive additions to wages provided for in a salary schedule.

Independent union

A national / international union that is not affiliated with the AFL- CIO. There are also smaller independent unions that represent workers of a single employer. Not to be confused with *company union*.

Industrial hygiene

Aspects of medicine that apply to the workplace environment and affect workers' health, well-being, and medical safety in any way.

Industrial union

A union representing all workers in a specific industry, regardless of occupation or skill level. See *craft union*.

Industry-wide bargaining

A bargaining procedure in which a single agreement contains the basic terms and conditions of employment agreed on by labor and management covering a major portion of an industry.

Informational picketing

See *picketing*.

Initiation fees

Payment required of a worker when s/he joins the union. The amount is generally stipulated in the union's constitution.

Injunction

A court order restraining individuals/groups from committing acts that will do irreparable harm. They are issued in labor disputes that imperil the nation's health and welfare, and are also used to prevent certain unfair labor practices. There are two types of injunctions: temporary restraining orders (TRO), issued for a limited time before a complete hearing; and permanent injunctions, issued after a full hearing, that remain in force until the conditions for which they were issued have been changed.

Insubordination

The refusal or failure by a worker to obey a management order. The use of objectionable language or abusive behavior toward a supervisor may be considered insubordination since it violates management's authority and right to direct the workforce.

Internal disputes plan

A method established under Article XX of the AFL-CIO Constitution for resolving disputes arising among affiliated unions. Also referred to as *Article XX*.

Internal organizing

A union's efforts to educate workers who are currently union members and to encourage them to work together for their mutual benefit. Also see *external organizing*.

International representative

A *staff* officer of a national / international union who serves as liaison between the national / international and its subordinate bodies. His/her duties may include negotiating contracts, handling grievances, giving technical assistance, and organizing -- both internal and external.

International union

The national organization of a labor union, often used in referring to unions with affiliates in Canada or other countries outside the U.S. Financially supported by a per capita tax of all its members, its major functions are: chartering local unions, setting jurisdictional boundaries, organizing, research, and providing other technical support to local unions. Also referred to as *national union*.

Interest arbitration

A method to resolve an impasse in contract negotiations. It is frequently used in the public sector, particularly for police and fire fighters. Also see *grievance arbitration* and *final offer arbitration*.

J**Job action**

A concerted activity by working employees to put pressure on an employer without resorting to a strike. *Work-to-rule* and a *slowdown* are examples.

Job enlargement

Expanding a job to include more tasks. If a job is enlarged "vertically," duties of increasing complexity are assigned, giving the worker added responsibility. "Horizontal" job enlargement occurs when a large number of relatively similar tasks are added.

Job enrichment

See *job enlargement*.

Job evaluation

A system designed to create a hierarchy of jobs based on skill, responsibility or experience, time, and effort needed to carry out the duties involved. It is often used to set wage differentials between jobs or classes of jobs. The major job evaluation methods used are: ranking, classification, factor comparison, and point method. See *pay equity*.

Job security

Protection of workers' employment from job loss due to layoff or discharge.

Job sharing

A system where two workers hold one position together. They can work as a team, responsible together for the entire job; or they can each assume particular responsibilities. Not the same as *work sharing*.

Joint board

See *district council*.

Journeyman

See *journeyworker*.

Journeyworker

A craft worker who has completed apprenticeship training and been admitted to full membership in a craft. Historically called *journey-man*. Also referred to as *top scale worker*.

Jurisdiction

The primary area of jobs, skills, occupations, and industries where a union organizes and engages in collective bargaining. International / national unions often stake an exclusive claim to certain employment areas. Sometimes two or more unions claim the same jurisdiction. The AFL-CIO has tried to solve the problem by having its affiliates sign *no-raiding agreements*, in which they pledge not to trespass on each other's jurisdiction. For local unions, jurisdiction refers to their area of authority within the national / international union.

Jurisdictional dispute

A conflict between two or more unions over the right of their members to perform certain types of work. It may also refer to conflict between two or more unions about representing various groups of workers.

Just cause

Sufficient provocation to support an employer's disciplinary action. In determining just cause, an arbitrator looks at the collective bargaining agreement, workplace/community customs and standards, standards of justice and equity, and the facts of the particular case.

L**Labor force**

All persons 16 and older who are either employed, temporary idle, between jobs, or looking for work -- including military personnel.

Labor movement

Refers generally to unions and their collective bargaining and social welfare activities. Also refers to the unity and cooperation among workers -- beyond their own jobs -- that reaches out broadly to include a total program of political, social, and economic action to further the interests of working families.

Labor organization

A voluntary association of workers joining together for their mutual benefit and protection regarding wages, hours, and working conditions.

Layoff

Temporary and indefinite separation from work, usually due to slack season, shortage of materials, temporary market decline, or other factors over which the worker has no control. Different from *discharge* or *firing*, where the worker is permanently separated from the job for such reasons as insubordination, absenteeism, or poor job performance, and from *termination* or *dismissal*, in which the job is eliminated.

Leave of absence

Time off the job for a day or more, with or without pay. Usually granted for illness, pressing family problems, union business, study, or other personal or civic reasons.

Legal services plan

An employee benefit plan through which participants receive free or low cost assistance in dealing with a variety of legal problems.

Local union

Organization of members of a national / international union in a particular workplace, region, or locality. Often referred to as a *local*.

Lockout

A suspension of work initiated by the employer as a result of a labor dispute. The employer counterpart of a *strike*, which is initiated by the workers.

Longevity pay

Wage adjustments based on seniority or length of employment.

M**Maintenance-of -membership**

A union security provision stating that workers do not have to join the union as a condition of employment, but that all workers who do join must maintain their membership for the duration of the contract in order to keep their jobs. Most such provisions contain an *escape clause*.

Make whole

An action to keep workers from suffering any loss because of earnings or other benefits due them but not received because of the employer's violating the contract or law.

Management prerogatives

Rights that management believes are exclusively its own and hence not subject to collective bargaining. These rights are often expressly reserved to management in the contract. There is, however, no generally accepted definition of which rights should be nonbargainable. See *work rules* and *scope of bargaining*.

Mandatory subject of bargaining

See *scope of bargaining*.

Mass picketing

See *picketing*.

Master agreement

A collective bargaining agreement covering one or more unions and a number of employers or several worksites of a single employer spelling out wages and working conditions that apply to all sites. It is often supplemented by local agreements covering conditions in a particular company or worksite. See *multiemployer bargaining*.

Mediation

A method of dispute resolution in which a neutral third party attempts to bring the parties to a settlement. The mediator has no power to force an agreement. Distinguished from *conciliation*.

Med arb

Short for *mediation arbitration*. A method of dispute resolution in which the parties agree to have a third party act as a mediator. They empower the mediator to render a final and binding decision if mediation efforts fail to secure an agreement.

Meet-and-confer

A system that gives workers the right to hear presentations before representatives of a body with decision-making authority over their workplace. This system frequently covers public employees who do not have collective bargaining rights or who have not yet organized into a bargaining unit.

Merit system

An employment process in which hiring, promotion, and wage increases are to be based on the individual's capabilities and experience. A common practice in the public sector.

Minimum wage

Lowest wage rate allowed under federal or state law.

Minority union

A union that does not enjoy exclusive representation or bargaining status.

Model agreement

A collective bargaining agreement recommended by a national / international union or an employer organization to serve as a standard or pattern.

Multiemployer bargaining

Collective bargaining involving more than one company in a given industry and resulting in a *master agreement*.

N

National Labor Relations Board

The government agency created by the National Labor Relations Act responsible for administering the act. The NLRB determines appropriate bargaining units, certifies unions that represent a majority of employees, and establishes policies involving unfair labor practices.

National union

See *international union*.

Negotiation

The process by which representatives of labor and management bargain to set terms and conditions of employment. The results are usually written down as a *collective bargaining agreement*.

Net back pay

Awarded to employees who have been discriminatorily discharged under labor law, it is an amount equal to gross back pay (what the worker would have earned) less net interim earnings (actual earnings from other employment minus the expenses of seeking and holding that employment). Interest is also payable on that amount.

Noncontributory pension plan

Plan financed entirely by employer contributions.

No-raiding agreement

An agreement among unions in which they pledge they will not try to persuade workers to leave one union and join theirs when the first union has an established bargaining relationship. See *raiding*.

O

Occupational segregation

The concentration of women and minorities in certain types of jobs. These jobs frequently provide lower wages than those held primarily by white males. See *pay equity*.

Open shop

A workplace in which there is no union. Also used to describe bargaining units where workers are represented by a union but union membership is not a condition of continuing employment.

Organizational/recognition picketing

See *picket*.

Organizer

See *union organizer*.

Outlaw strike

See *wildcat strike*.

Outsourcing

Procuring materials from other manufacturers or contracting out work to another employer.

P**Parental leave**

Leave from work for a father or mother to care for a newborn, newly adopted, or seriously ill child. It may be paid or unpaid, but it usually includes job protection. It differs from *pregnancy disability leave*.

Parity

Equivalent compensation for workers who are in the same occupation but in different geographical areas; for workers in different sectors -- public/private; for workers in the same sector but different occupations -- police / firefighters; or for workers in the same occupation but with different employers.

Past practice

A consistent employer response -- recognized by the union and management -- to a given set of workplace circumstances over an extended period of time.

Pattern bargaining

Negotiations in which key terms reached in a settlement with one employer are closely followed by other employers.

Pay equity

The concept that compensation should be based on the worth of the job to the employer -- measured by skill, effort, responsibility, and working conditions -- under a bias-free job evaluation system. It is an attempt to end sex- and race-based job discrimination seeking "equal pay for work of comparable value" rather than just "equal pay for equal work."

Pension plan

Funds set aside for a worker's retirement See *contributory plan, noncontributory plan, defined benefits plan, defined contribution plan, portable pension*.

Per capita tax

Regular payments by a local union to its national / international union, central labor body, or state federation of labor. Also refers to payments made by national/international unions to the AFL-CIO. It is based on the number of members.

Permanent umpire

An arbitrator selected by both union and management to serve for a specified period of time -- most often for the length of the contract. The agreement outlines the umpire's duties. See *arbitration*.

Picketing

Patrol near a worksite to make the public aware of a labor dispute -- usually with signs that name the parties involved and describe the dispute. Picketers try to persuade their co-workers to join the action or to discourage customers from patronizing the establishment or both. When large numbers of strikers gather outside the workplace to discourage nonstrikers from entering or to prevent deliveries, it is called mass picketing. Organizational/recognition picketing occurs when the union tries to make the employer recognize the union. Informational picketing means off-duty workers picket to publicize the union's position in a dispute. During informational picketing passage through the picket line is not hindered as it is in other forms of picketing.

Piecework

See *incentive wage plan*.

Pink-collar worker

Refers to a worker in a job traditionally held by a woman.

Political action committee (PAC)

An arm of a union whose primary job is to help elect pro-union candidates to political office or to effect the adoption of legislation favored by the union and defeat legislation it opposes. PACs are funded through the voluntary contributions of union members and their families-not through union dues.

Portable pension

A system in which employees transfer pension credits accrued with one employer to another in the same industry. May occur when several employers pool their pension programs -- particularly among multiemployer plans.

Portal-to-portal pay

Payment for the time spent in travel from the workplace entrance to the actual worksite -- at the start and end of the workday. It has been adapted to a variety of jobs where travel time is a factor.

Pregnancy disability leave

A form of medical leave allowed to female employees who are unable to work for pregnancy-related reasons. Under the law, an employer must treat disability and illness due to pregnancy the way any other disability is treated.

Premium pay

An amount greater than the regular pay rate due to inconvenience or unpleasantness of the job. Often applied to late shifts, holiday work, or hazardous working conditions.

Privatization

Subcontracting public services to private industry. See *contracting out*.

Probationary period

The initial time of employment during which a worker is on trial and may be discharged with or without cause.

Production worker

A worker involved with operating and attending machinery, usually in a factory. Frequently referred to as a *blue-collar worker*.

Productivity bargaining

A collective bargaining arrangement with wage increases based on increased productivity. Often those increases are a trade-off for the union's agreement to give up work practices that the employer alleges restrict productivity.

Professional

A worker whose job is primarily intellectual, who has undergone advanced specialized training, and whose work requires the exercise of independent judgment. Under most labor statutes, professionals may choose whether to have their own bargaining unit or be in the same unit with nonprofessional workers.

Profit-sharing plan

Arrangement under which employees receive a percentage of the employer's profits in addition to their wages. A cash payment plan is one under which the share is paid immediately in cash. A deferred payment plan is one under which the employer deposits the workers' share with a trustee to be paid to them at some future time. Under some schemes, profits are distributed in the form of shares.

Progressive discipline

Method to compel or encourage worker compliance with company rules. Acceptable conduct is achieved through the use of progressively increasing penalties -- warning, counseling, reprimand, and suspension short of discharge.

Q

Quality circles

A problem-solving technique in which a group of workers meets regularly to identify, examine and find solutions to workplace problems.

Quality of work life (QWL)

A process where union and management participate as equal partners in restructuring work and the organization of work processes to make jobs more satisfying and to increase workplace efficiency.

R**Raiding**

A union's attempt to recruit members of another union by encroaching on the other union's jurisdiction. See *no-raiding agreement*.

Rank and file

Individual union members who are not officers.

Ratification

Formal approval of a collective bargaining agreement by a vote of the affected union members.

Recognition

An employer's formal acceptance that the majority of its employees in a given bargaining unit want a particular union to represent them in collective bargaining.

Reduction in force

See *layoff*.

Reopening clause

A contract provision stating that wages and/or other issues can be considered while the other terms of the agreement remain in force. Often called a *reopener*.

Repetitive strain injury

See *cumulative trauma disorder*.

Representation election

A vote of workers in a particular bargaining unit to determine what bargaining agent, if any, will represent them for collective bargaining purposes.

Reprimand

Discipline -- oral or written -- served on a worker as a corrective action.

Retroactive pay

Income due to workers when a new contract provides a wage increase for work completed prior to contract's effective date, often going back to the expiration of the previous contract Also see *back pay*.

Right-to-work laws

State laws that forbid unions to negotiate union security language requiring workers to join the union and/or maintain their membership in the union as a condition of employment Also referred to as *right-to-work-for-less* laws. Workers in *right-to-work* states earn about \$3,000 a year less than comparable workers in other states. See *free rider*.

Rotating shift

Changing shift schedules periodically to equalize the distribution of day and night work. See *fixed shift*.

Rolling strike

See *hit-and-run strike*.

S**Sabbatical**

Periodic time off traditionally granted to professionals, especially professors for research/study.

Savings clause

Language in a collective bargaining agreement stating that if any part of the agreement is held to be legally invalid or unenforceable, the rest of the contract will remain in force.

Scab

A worker who refuses to join or crosses his/her coworkers' picket line during a labor dispute. Also refers to a *strikebreaker*; someone who accepts employment during a strike.

Scope of bargaining

The range of issues appropriated for collective bargaining. Under most labor law, the parties must negotiate over terms and conditions of employment -- wages, hours, and fringe benefits, at minimum. If impasse is reached over one of these, a lawful economic strike may start. Failure to bargain over a mandatory subject of bargaining is an unfair labor practice. Permissive subjects of bargaining may be subjects of bargaining only if both sides agree. A strike over a permissive subject is not protected by the National Labor Relations Board.

Seniority

An employee's standing, based on the length of continuous employment and/or union membership. Competitive seniority is used to determine the right to advantages at the workplace: promotion, shift assignment, layoff survival. Benefit seniority measures employee entitlement to benefits -- vacation, sick leave, etc.

Settlement

A joint labor-management agreement resolving a particular dispute or resolving negotiations.

Severance pay

A lump-sum payment made by an employer to a worker whose employment is permanently ended.

Sex discrimination

See *discrimination*.

Sexual harassment

Unwelcome sexual advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature. Such acts create an intimidating, hostile, or offensive working environment. This type of treatment violates anti-discrimination laws.

Shift

The daily working period for a group of employees. See *fixed shift*, *rotating shift*, *split shift*, *swing shift*.

Shift differential

Added pay for work performed at other than regular daylight hours.

Shop committee

A group of employees elected by fellow workers or appointed by union officials to represent the bargaining unit in considering grievances and other related matters.

Shop steward

See *steward*.

Showing of interest

Evidence that workers wish to be represented by a union. Must be presented to the appropriate labor law agency before a representation election will be held.

Sit-down strike

Work stoppage in which workers stay at their workplace and refuse to leave the employer's premises.

Slowdown

A deliberate reduction of output by workers used as a way to put pressure on the employer. See *work-to-rule*.

Speedup

An increase in production with no compensating increase in workers' wages.

Split shift

Division of a worker's daily working time into two or more periods -- with a substantial interval between them -- to meet peak needs.

State federation of labor

State organization established by the AFL-CIO to represent the interests of unions within that state. It tries to coordinate efforts of the unions within the state.

Steward

The union representative of a group of fellow workers who carries out union duties at the worksite -- for instance, handling grievances, collecting dues, recruiting new members, providing information

about job rights, contract provisions, and union issues. The steward is elected by co-workers or appointed by union officials and usually continues to work at his/her regular job while discharging union duties on an apart-time basis. Often called shop steward or union steward.

Stretch-out

A situation in which workers are required to assume additional duties, such as tending more machines, without additional compensation.

Strike

Work stoppage. See *economic strike*, *general strike*, *hit-and-run strike*, *rotating strike*, *sympathy strike*, *unfair labor practice strike*, and *wildcat strike*.

Strike benefits

Union financial support for workers during a strike -- usually a portion of regular income. Some unions do not provide money but distribute groceries and other types of emergency aid to striking families.

Strikebreaker

An outsider hired by an employer to fill a job temporarily vacated by a striker. Often employers hire outsiders to maintain production and as an attempt to break a strike by lowering the strikers' morale. Also called *scab*.

Strike fund

Funds put aside by a union for use during a strike to cover expenses relating to sanctioned strikes. The amount in the fund often determines the ability of workers to stay out of work and, consequently, the success or failure of the strike. Also called *emergency*, *reserve*, or *special* funds.

Strike notice

A notice filed with the appropriate government agency that the union has rejected management's latest offer and a strike is imminent. Regulations may differ between public and private sector workers, and health-care workers have particularly stringent reporting procedures. If the union strikes without observing these procedures, the strikers may lose important rights.

Striker replacement

See *strikebreaker*.

Strike vote

A referendum among employees in the bargaining unit on whether they should go out on strike.

Subcontracting

See *contracting out*.

Successor employer

The entity taking over an employer's operation that is determined to have inherited its predecessor's obligations under labor law.

Successor union

A union that inherits the powers, assets, and membership of another union for any of a number of reasons. The union assumes the contractual obligations of its predecessor, and the employer must maintain the collective bargaining relationship.

Sunshine bargaining

Negotiations at which the public may attend the bargaining sessions.

Supervisor

An employee with certain management rights -- such as the right to hire or fire or to effectively recommend such action.

Supplemental unemployment benefit (SUB)

Private plans that compensate laid-off workers for wage loss, usually in addition to unemployment compensation payments. They are financed by employers as part of a collective bargaining agreement.

Suspension

Serious form of workplace discipline but less drastic than discharge. It results in loss of pay. Frequently used as a warning to the worker that a continuation of the conduct will result in discharge.

Sweatshop

A workplace with substandard working conditions. They usually provide low wages, long hours, and an unsanitary/dangerous work environment and often employ undocumented workers and/or others who are not in a position to fight for their rights.

Swing shift

Group of workers who rotate to different days and hours at specified intervals. Used in workplaces with a continuous operation schedule.

Sympathy strike

A strike by workers who are not directly involved in a labor dispute in an effort to show labor solidarity and put pressure on the employer. They are rare in the U.S. See *boycott*.

Syndicalism

A French term for organized labor. In the U.S., the term is connected with the philosophy that syndicates or unions should take over, own, and operate the industries as opposed to the American labor union philosophy that the job of organized labor is to improve workers' wages and conditions under private capitalism.

T

Take-home pay

The money the worker actually receives -- gross earnings minus federal / state income taxes, social security taxes, health/life insurance premiums, and other deductions.

Technological unemployment

Joblessness resulting from the introduction of labor-saving devices.

Telecommuting

A form of work involving computers. The work is performed at a site away from the office then electronically transferred to another location. See *home-based work*.

Temporary restraining order (TRO)

See *injunction*.

Tenure

A policy that continues employment until retirement barring special circumstances. It is usually gained through seniority and satisfactory performance.

Tennination

See *layoff*.

Time-and-a-half pay

Pay rate of one and one-half the worker's regular pay. Under many state and federal laws workers are due time-and-a-half pay for hours worked beyond 40 hours in a week.

Trade union

See *craft union*. Many use the term interchangeably with union.

Tripartite arbitration

Three-member arbitration panel with one member representing labor, one representing management, and the third who may be selected by the other two panelists -- a neutral member.

Trusteeship

After determining under appropriate internal rules that cause exists, an international union assumes control over a local union. The international suspends the normal governing process of the local and takes control of its assets and the administration of its internal affairs.

Thitton aid

Employer reimbursement of employee education costs. Intended to encourage workers to improve job performance. It can also offer ways to win upgrading and promotions.

Two-tier wage

A system that reduces the pay and benefits for new hires while maintaining or improving the wages, benefits, or job security of current workers.

U**Umpire**

A neutral party employed jointly by the union and management -- usually for a definite time period -- to make decisions on disputes over the interpretation and application of provisions in the collective bargaining agreement. Although arbitrator, impartial chair, referee, and umpire are sometimes used interchangeably, an arbitrator is usually appointed to settle a particular dispute while the other three generally serve in a long-term capacity.

Underemployed

Having a job that does not fully use or develop one's abilities.

Unemployment insurance

A joint federal-state program providing payments to those facing involuntarily unemployment. Funds for the benefits come from an employer-paid payroll tax. Coverage varies from state to state. Also called "unemployment compensation."

Unfair labor practice

Conduct on the part of union or management that violates national or state labor relations laws.

Unfair labor practice strike

Work stoppage resulting from or prolonged by unfair labor practices on the part of the employer. Workers involved in an unfair labor practice strike are protected by law and will be reinstated to their jobs after the strike is concluded.

Uniformed services

Public employees, usually police, fire, and sanitation workers.

Union label

Emblem printed on an article indicating that it was produced by union workers. Used especially in the garment and printing industries. Also referred to as *union bug*.

Union dues

Periodic payments made by union members to provide financial support for their union.

Union organizer

Staff member of a local or international / national union whose main job is to recruit new union members.

Union scale

A wage rate set by a union contract as a minimum rate for a job.

Union shop card

A placard displayed in a workplace informing the public that employees are represented by a union. Often found in grocery stores, and barber shops.

Union security clause

Language in a contract or agreement that aims to protect the union from raids by other union and nonunion workers. Also see *agency shop*, *closed shop*, *fair share*, *maintenance-of-membership*, *open shop*, and *union shop*.

Union shop

A bargaining unit covered by a union security clause stating that all workers must join the union within a specified period of time after being hired (not less than 30 days by law) and that they must retain membership as a condition of continuing employment. Also see *closed shop*.

Union steward

See *steward*.

Unit determination

The process of deciding which group of job titles is appropriate for the purpose of collective bargaining. Labor relations agencies usually use the following criteria: the desire of the workers, similarity of occupations/skills, collective bargaining history, and the organizational structure of the employer. Members of a bargaining unit may vote in a representation election for their unit.

V**Vested rights**

A financial right, such as a worker's stake in a pension plan, that belongs to him/her after a stated time period. This "vested" amount belongs to the worker and cannot be forfeited.

Voluntary recognition

An agreement-without a representation election -- between an employer and a union to recognize the union as the exclusive bargaining agent of workers in a defined bargaining unit

W**Wage determination**

The practice and procedure used to fix wage rates through collective bargaining, arbitration, individual employer determination, and government regulation.

Wage differentials

Variations among wage rates due to factors such as job content, location, skill, industry, employer, etc. Unions attempt to eliminate wage differentials not based on the degree of skill or effort the job requires.

Walkout

A strike. See *wildcat strike*.

Weingarten rights

Derived from the Supreme Court decision that workers have the right to a union representative at an investigatory interview if there is reason to believe that disciplinary action will result.

Welfare fund

A fund created through collective bargaining to provide benefits for the employees of a number of employers. Under law, such funds are administered by trustees representing both unions and employers. Typically the funds provide health, disability, and death benefits. Some provide pensions.

Whipsaw bargaining

A negotiating strategy where the union bargains with a succession of employers or the employer bargains with a succession of unions using each contract to secure greater concessions from the next.

Whipsaw strike

A strike against only one employer of a group -- typically the weakest -- when the union could have struck them all. The purpose is to put pressure on the struck employer, whose competitors remain open for business, with the hope that the employer will agree to a favorable contract.

White-collar worker

Generally refers to administrators and managers and office, clerical, sales, technical, and professional workers. See *blue-collar worker*, *pink-collar worker*, and *production worker*.

Wildcatstrike

A work stoppage violating the contract and not authorized by the union.

Wobbly

A popular name for a member of the Industrial Workers of the World -- a militant union that reached its height of membership in the early 20th century.

Worker participation

The opportunity for workers to share -- directly or indirectly through elected representatives -- in the workplace decision-making process. The amount of influence that workers are allowed to exert identifies various levels of participation. Communication refers to workers being informed about decisions -- either before or after they are made. Consultation involves seeking out workers' opinions usually before decisions are made. Co-determination means workers are able to participate in a joint decision-making process. See *employee involvement* and *industrial democracy*.

Workers' compensation

State-mandated insurance programs calling for the payment of benefits to workers suffering from diseases or injuries sustained on the job. Each state has some type of employer-financed workers' compensation law, but there is considerable variation in their application.

Work rules

Regulations of on-the-job working conditions -- usually found in the collective bargaining agreement. They may require a minimum number of workers to do a job; keep supervisors from doing bargaining unit work; limit the assignment of work outside the worker's classification. The purpose of work rules from a union point of view is to maximize employment opportunities, ensure decent working conditions/health standards, and protect workers from arbitrary employer action.

Work sharing

Plan by which available work is distributed as evenly as possible among all workers when production slackens, or by which working time is generally reduced to prevent layoffs.

Work stoppage

A cessation of work resulting from a strike or lockout.

Work-to-rule

A type of job action where workers perform only the minimum tasks required of them by official rules or regulations. Workers sometimes use this technique--instead of striking--to bring management's attention to a major problem and/or to win management concessions.

Y**Yellow-dog contract**

An agreement employers once exacted from job applicants as a way of combating unions. The applicant would state that s/he was not then a union member and would not become a union member during the term of employment. Declared unenforceable in the courts in 1932.