

Some key employment rights:

1. The right to be told in writing how much and when we are to be paid. The Minimum Wage rate is set at £5.73 until October 2010, then £5.80. For 18-21 year olds, it is £4.77 then £4.83. For 16-17 year olds it is £3.53 then £3.57. For agency workers, wages must be paid on the agreed day, even if the hiring company has not paid the agency.

2. The right to at least 5.6 weeks paid leave per year. Any employment contract should set out leave entitlements. If it doesn't, then 5.6 weeks must be given (which can include public holidays). All workers, agency workers, homeworkers, trainees, so-called casuals and most freelancers are included in this. Holiday entitlement starts immediately, e.g. on day 1, we get 2 days leave and, after 6 months, we get 14 days (for part time workers it is less, and it applies to jobs started since October 2001).

3. The right to breaks of at least 20 minutes after each 6 hours of work. We are entitled to at least 11 hours' rest in each 24 hours and a minimum of a day a week off. Rest breaks for under 18s are minimum 30 minutes every 4 1/2 hours.

4. The right to refuse to work any more than 48 hours each week. We cannot be forced to work over 48 hours per week unless we have agreed to it in writing (note that this is averaged over any 17 week period, so we can be forced to do more in any one week).

5. The right to sick pay when we are ill. We are entitled to statutory sick pay if we normally earn over £77 per week and we have been working for over 3 months (or are deemed to have been in continuous employment for 13 weeks).

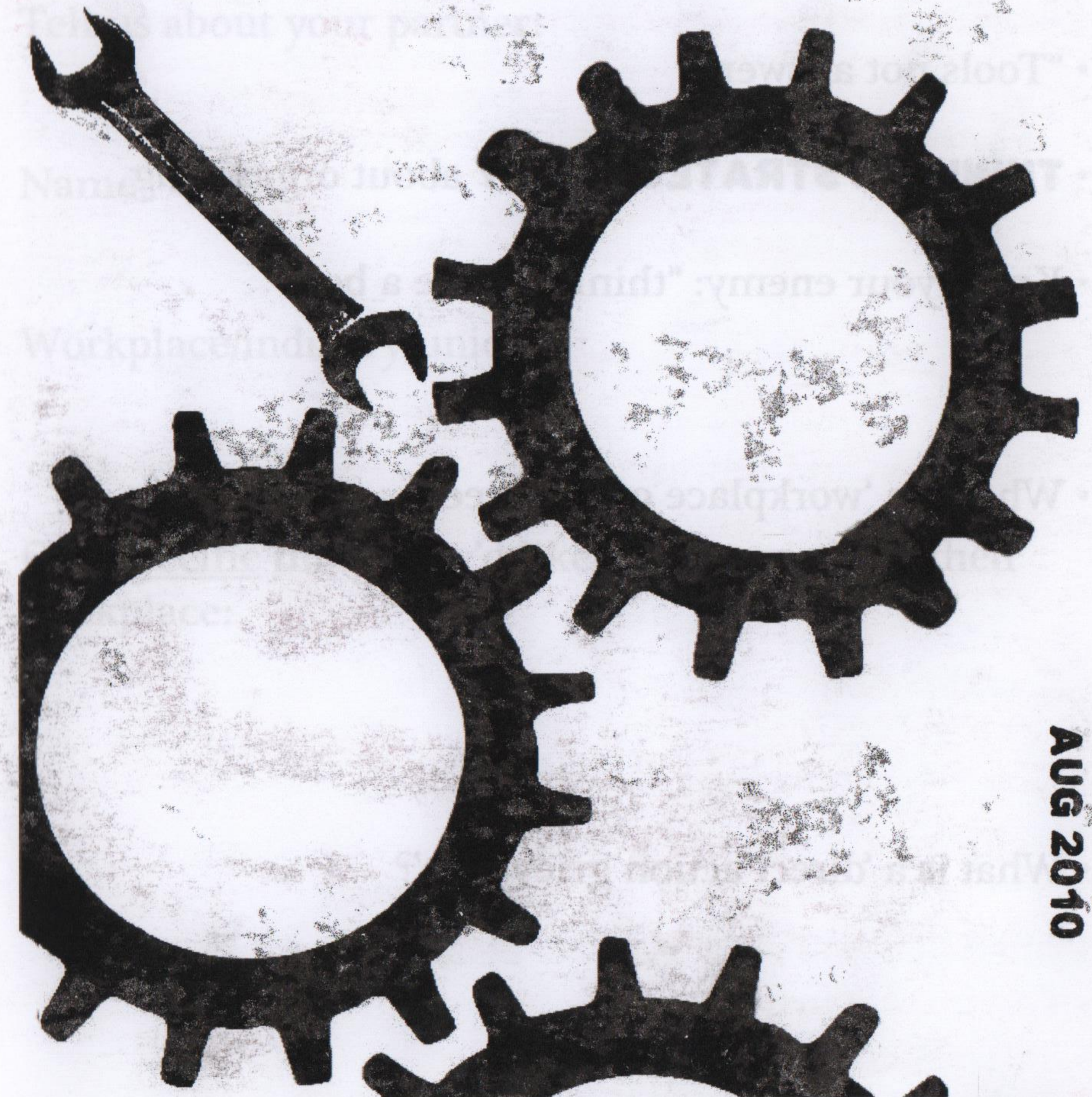
6. The right to maternity/paternity leave when we have children. From April 2003, most mothers are entitled to 26 weeks' paid maternity leave and an additional 26 weeks' unpaid leave. To get maternity pay, we must earn over £77 per week and have been working for over 6 months by the time the baby is 15 weeks from being due. For the first 6 weeks, this should be 90% of average earnings, then a flat rate of £100 for 20 weeks. If pay can't be claimed, Maternity Allowance may be claimed from the DSS. Fathers/male partners get 2 weeks' paid paternity leave (subject to the same qualifying conditions as for maternity).

7. The right to be free from harassment. We are all entitled to a workplace where there is no racial or sexual harassment, bullying, prejudice or discrimination. Agency and part-time workers have the same rights as full-time workers.

8. The right to defend ourselves. We all have the right to protection from dismissal for asserting our statutory employment rights. We also have the right to join with our fellow workers and organise ourselves collectively, and to join a trade union.

9. The right to refuse work that is unsafe or where training is not provided. We all have the right to refuse to work if we find ourselves in imminent danger. Also, laws governing agencies mean they should not send us to jobs for which we are not qualified, and they must ensure that proper training is provided.

An introduction to workplace organising [trainee manual]



AUG 2010

Solidarity Federation - International Workers Association





Goals of the training

- “Tools not answers”
- **THINKING STRATEGICALLY** about organising
- Know your enemy: “thinking like a boss”
- What is a ‘workplace committee’?
- What is a ‘direct action grievance’?



Names round

Tell us about your partner:

Name:

Workplace/industry/union:

Delegate:

One specific thing they'd like to change about their workplace:

Instantly recallable:

Delegation of tasks:

Accountability:



Basics of anarcho-syndicalism

The unions offer stability in the workplace, they channel workers' anger, shape and influence their demands and, if need be, act to police the workforce. Perhaps this is best summed up by a quote from the boss class themselves: a manager when asked by a reporter why his multi-national had recognised unions in South Africa replied "Have you ever tried negotiating with a football field full of militant angry workers?"

Anarcho-Syndicalism and the unions

- Mediation and representation v. self-organization and direct action
- Social partnership v. class struggle
- legalism v. solidarity

THINKING STRATEGICALLY:

- The importance of industrial organisation
 - The "flow of production"
 - Supply-chain organising



Basics of anarcho-syndicalism

Revolutionary unions, federated inside and outside the workplace, are the best method of defending working-class interests today and for preparing and delivering the new society of tomorrow. In these organisations, power remains at the base and flows upwards. Members elect delegates rather than representatives, and these can be recalled at any time. All decisions are made by the mass membership of the unions.

Anarcho-syndicalism and leadership

Delegate:

Mandate:

Instantly recallable:

Delegation of tasks:

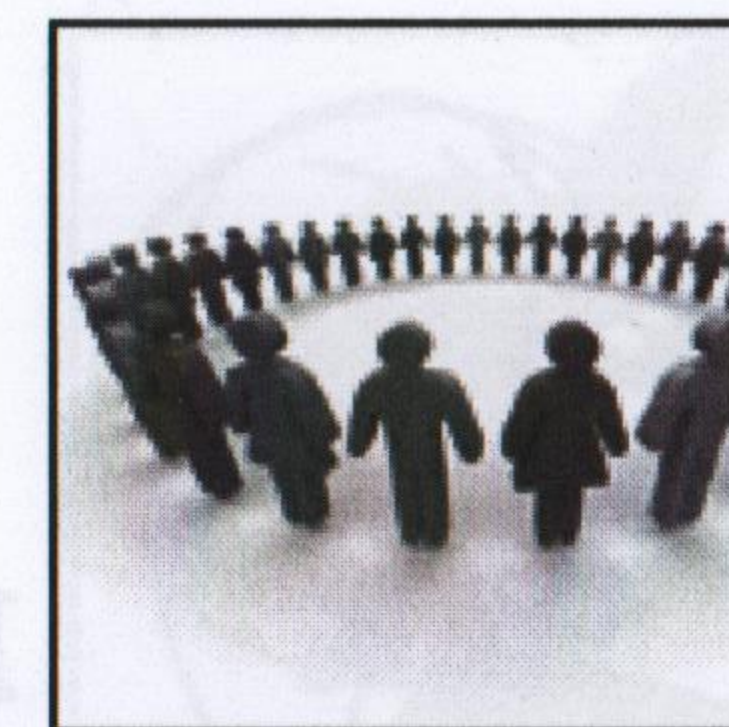
Accountability:



Organising in different workplaces

How might organising differ in...?

- Public/private sector?
- Different industries?
- Different contract types?
- Workplaces with a union(s) or no union?



Objectives of the workplace committee

THINKING STRATEGICALLY: Defining a goal:

- Address a particular grievance?
- Build the union?
- Mass action?
- Other options?

Based on what we've discussed so far, what would your workplace committee look like?

Discussion: The importance of having a defined objective



Making contacts

THINKING STRATEGICALLY: ways to gather contacts:

- Public/private
- Address a particular grievance
- Build the union
- Mass actions
- Other options?

Based on what we've discussed so far, what would your workplace committee look like?

• Different contract types?

Discussion: The importance of having a defined objective

• Workplaces with a union(s) or no union?

GET A NOTEBOOK!!!



Workplace mapping (1)

Physical mapping

Using another sheet of paper, take five minutes to sketch your workplace.

Notes:

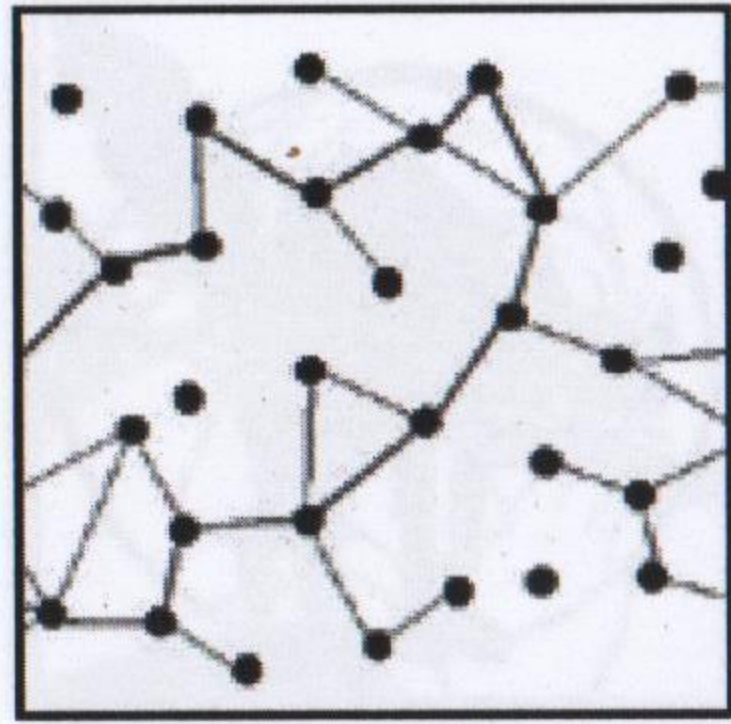
- "Personalise and collectivise"

Initiating the conversation:

- What is active listening?

THINKING STRATEGICALLY: What are informal workplace groups and how should they affect our organising?

- Now is the time for colleagues to 'rant'; group meetings are time to talk of collective grievances and action

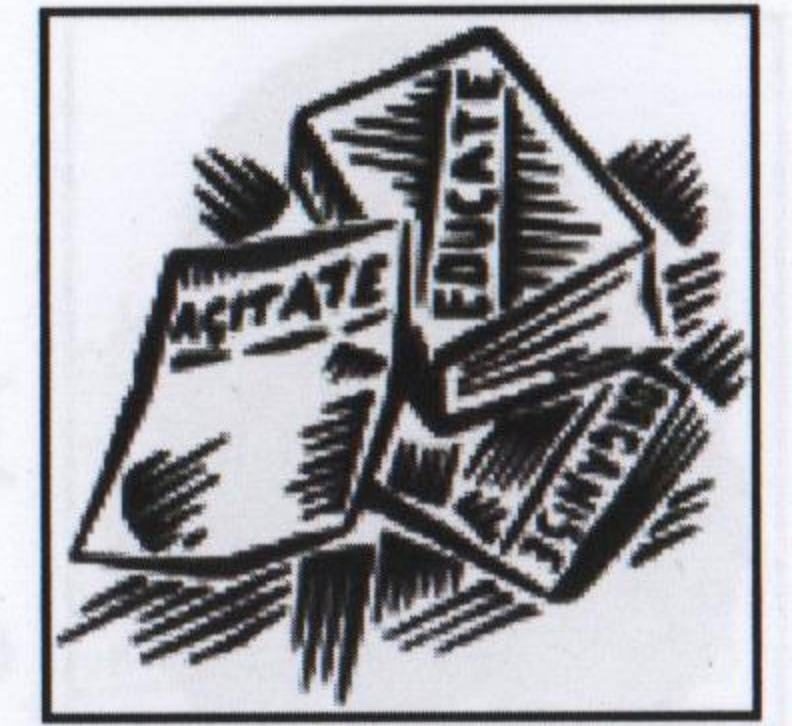


Workplace mapping (2)

Social mapping

What is social mapping? What sorts of things should be included in a social map?

THINKING STRATEGICALLY: What are informal workplace groups and how should they affect our organising?



Making the case for organisation (1)

The one-on-one

- What is your goal for a one-on-one meeting?

- “Personalise and collectivise”

Initiating the conversation:

- What is active listening?

- Now is the time for colleagues to ‘rant’; group meetings are time to talk of collective grievances and action



Making the case for organisation (2)

The one-on-one (continued)

Dealing with potential negative responses:

ROLEPLAY: The one-on-one

- “Know the union, hear the union, see the union”

Building your committee (1)



The group meeting

- Where?
- When?
- Taking account of your demographics:
- Who comes/level of openness?
- Formal or informal?
- Chairing
- What is the meeting NOT?



Building your committee (2)

The group meeting (continued)

Delegating tasks:

- Reflect your demographic (again)
- Remember that these are the types of decisions that should be discussed in group meetings as to create a sense of inclusion and to build up the organising skills of all workmates.

ROLEPLAY: The first meeting

OPTIONAL ROLEPLAY: Chairing skills



“Inoculation”

Potential employer responses to organising?

How to counteract?

Inoculation is an _____ process.

What should an organiser NEVER say?



Direct action (1)

Potential direct actions (remember to start small):

Delegating tasks:

Collectivising grievances:

Remember that these are the types of decisions that should be discussed in group meetings as to create a sense of inclusion and to build up the organising skills of all workmates.

ROLEPLAY: The first meeting

OPTIONAL ROLEPLAY: Chairing skills



Direct action (2)

Pros and cons of each direct action and how this relates to the inoculation process:

2) Family restaurant, no union, sent home early on slow days.

3) Nightclub, non-union student workforce, tips being docked to make up for discrepancies in the till.

THINKING STRATEGICALLY: Escalation plan:

4) Large co-operative supermarket, few union members, solitary lifting, greeting customers (to the detriment of your other tasks), cold working conditions.

5) Anti-union coffee shop, understaffing and speed-up.

What needs to happen shortly after an action?

7) Large bank, minimal union presence, spending



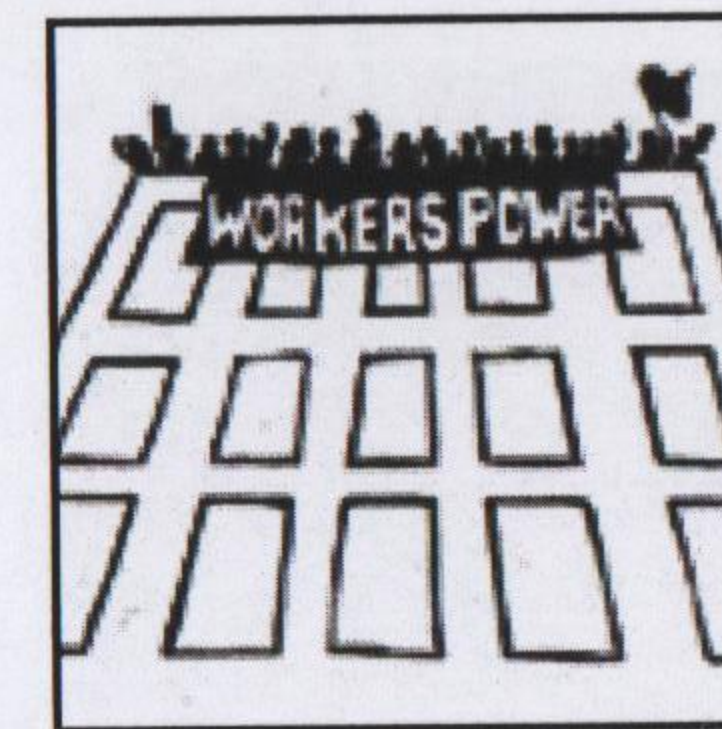
Direct action (3)

ROLEPLAY: "March on the boss"

- Nice boss/nasty boss

Notes:

NOW FILL OUT YOUR FEEDBACK FORMS!!!



Default workplace scenarios

- 1) Construction industry, nominal union presence, health and safety issues, language and nationality barriers between workers.
- 2) Family-run restaurant, no union, sent home early on slow days.
- 3) Nightclub, non-union student workforce, tips being docked to make up for discrepancies in the till.
- 4) Large co-operative supermarket, few union members, solitary lifting, greeting customers (to the detriment of your other tasks), cold working conditions.
- 5) Anti-union coffee shop, understaffing and speed-up.
- 6) Public sector, union activity, management bullying.
- 7) Large bank, minimal union presence, spending cuts, job evaluation forms.