

What to do for earning and maintaining the loyalty of members?

The post-recruitment

Good recruitment

- makes the organisation look smart

Great recruitment

- makes the member feel smart





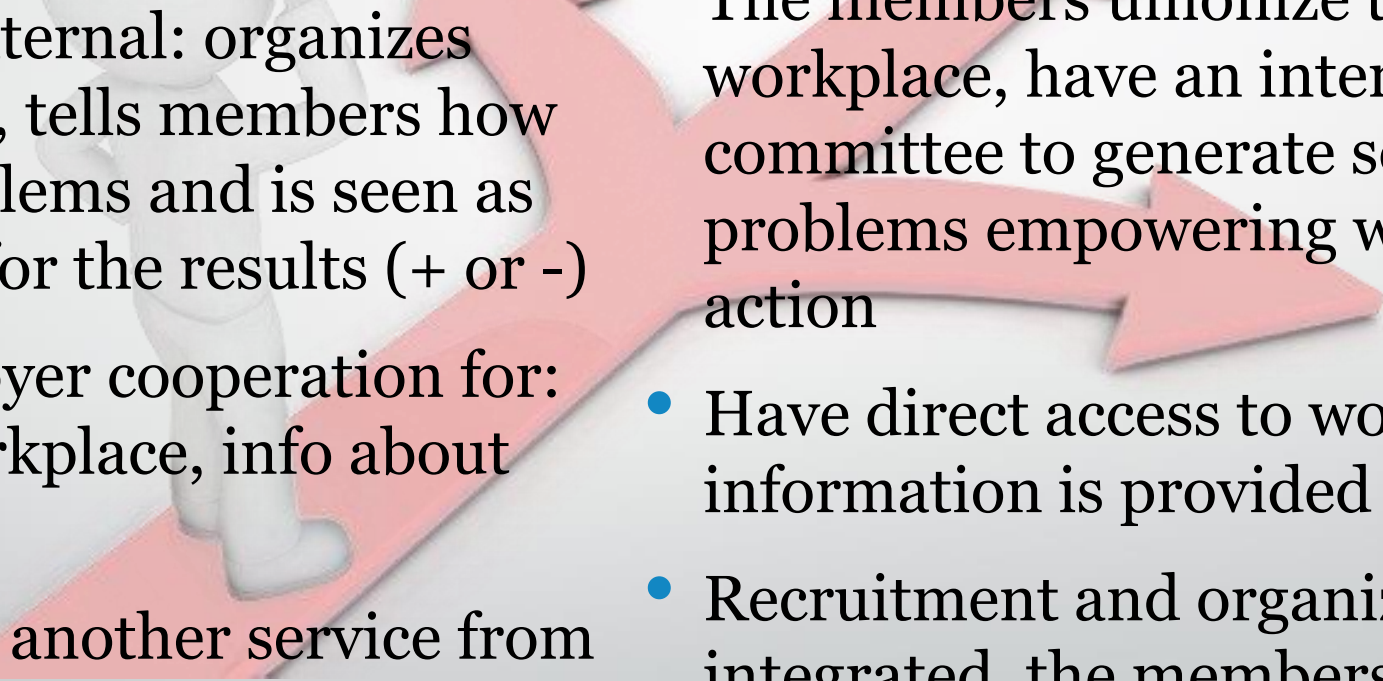
What is the most important for a trade union/ association to do after recruiting a new member?

Gaining new members is good, but retaining the members is better

Different members' profiles, require different strategy to earn their loyalty



Servicing vs Organising

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- The TU as external: organizes membership, tells members how to solve problems and is seen as responsible for the results (+ or -)
 - Needs employer cooperation for: access to workplace, info about the workers
 - Recruiting is another service from union's offer
 - The members unionize their workplace, have an internal committee to generate solutions to problems empowering workers for action
 - Have direct access to workplace and information is provided by workers
 - Recruitment and organizing are integrated, the members being identified with the union

Servicing vs Organising

Servicing model

- **The Union is helping you and solving your problem**
- **It's on us, as you pay your fee**
- **The Union achieved something for you**
- **Promote the benefits of joining the union**

Limits

- tell people why they should join the union
- attendance and commitment of workers

Organising model

- **The workers solve their problem together**
- **The workers convince their colleagues, based on mutual trust**
- **The union is closer, the leader is one of us**
- **The union is the workers involvement and commitment**

Limits

- asks questions which answer might be the union
- "DIY" solutions



The members' perspective

- Run periodical perception surveys
- Compare the image of union/association by
 - new members,
 - long-term members,
 - non-members
- Identify the reasons members joined and stay/left the union/association



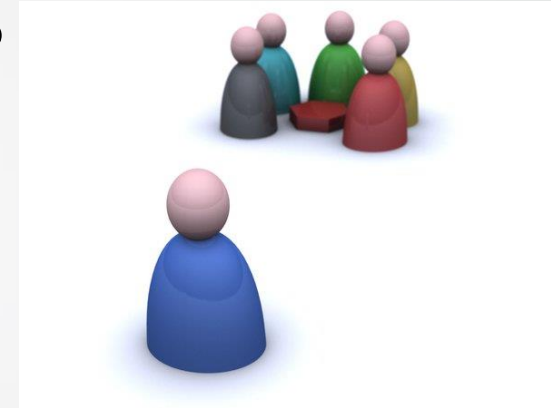
When members leave the union/association

- Passive reasons: changing job for other sector (or a workplace not covered by organisation), retiring or, as currently happening, job loss
- Active reasons: loss of motivation for being a member, loss of confidence in the union/association, loss of reason for which originally joined



Main reasons for losing members

- The union doesn't solve the problems or doesn't win on negotiation
- The meetings are long and boring
- Members do little other than to listen to leaders talk
- A small group has all the power and does not encourage others to get involved
- Members are not valued and are never thanked or praised for the work they do
- The organisation has no projects that members can be involved in



People usually join an organisation because they want to do something for their community. But they also want to be represented and defended in work matters. Find out what motivates members and make sure you manage them so that they stay motivated and involved.

That makes them feel...

useless or
frustrated

that they are
getting nothing
out of the
organisation

excluded and
ignored

Some statistics...

A study regarding membership retention in public sector (UNISON, UK) revealed that:

- Local union (the local leader) has an important role in the mutual trust
- The membership fee and tailored financial services are not influencing strongly the retention of members
- Influence of peer group is second reason in ranking (slightly different by gender)
- The presence of large number of trade unionists encourages retention
- A major impact have the trust and belief in the trade union

Conclusion: union benefits are only relevant after joining the organisation, but not a main reason for becoming a member



FIG.8

What is motivating workers to stay in the union/association?

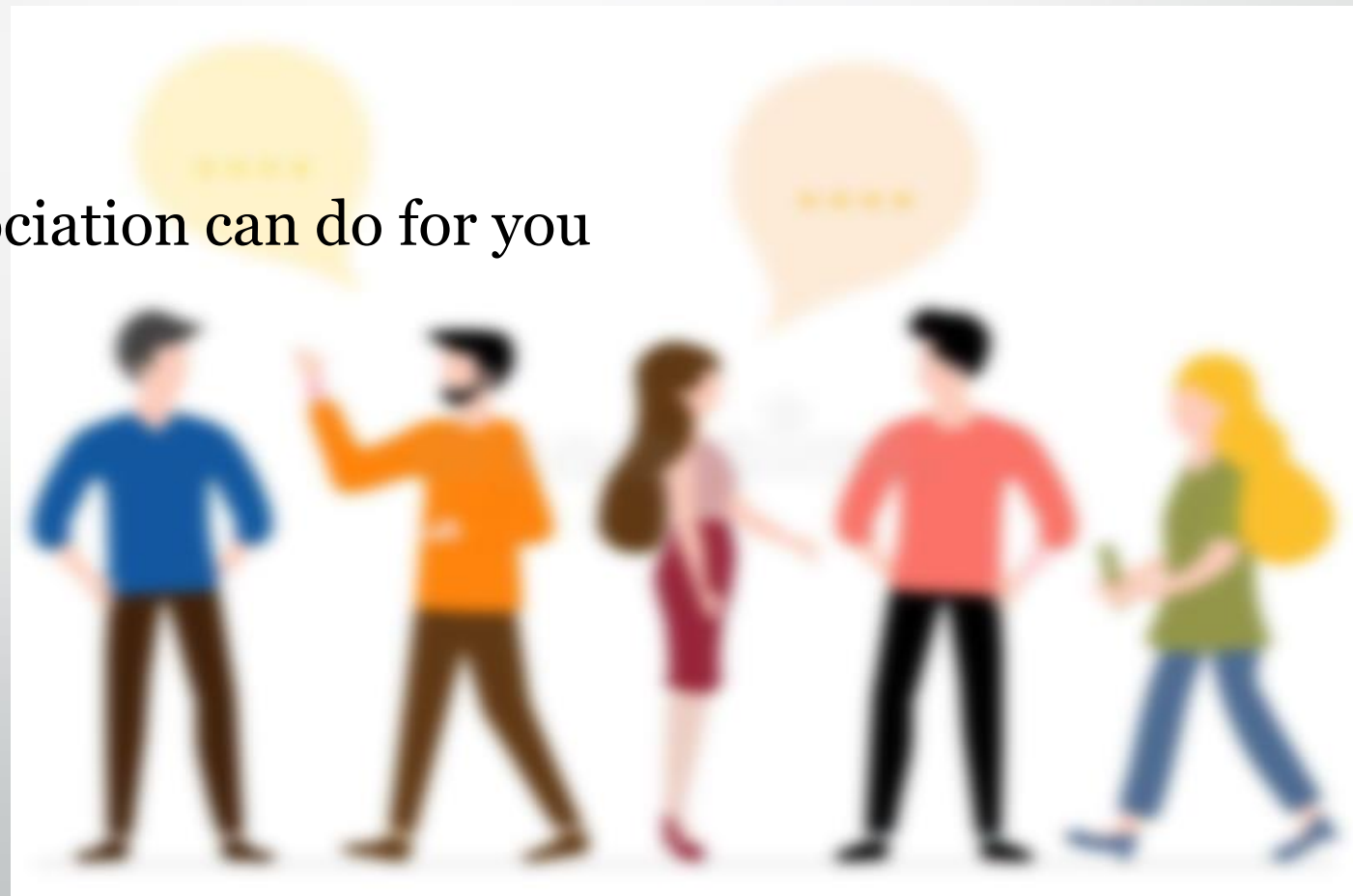
- Feel valued by the organisation and giving a contribution
- Feel part of it, on the principle “the right person, in the right place”
- Develop skills/competences and get trained on topics that interest them
- Working on issues that will improve their lives or of their family&community
- Share principles, values, interests and priorities
- Feel part of a team with a purpose
- Rewards in terms of status or personal development

The reason for joining the union/association is not necessarily the reason for staying in it



Promote the principle

What you can do
for the union/association,
not just what the union/association can do for you



Always keep on...



Organising



Mobilising



Contacting



Supporting



Organising

Welcome and introduce all new members at the beginning of each meeting

Promote exclusive contents and activities for members

Structure your meetings so that they are exciting and everyone gets a chance to participate



Organise social events for members



Mobilising

Give people responsibilities and tasks and team them up with experienced members



Encourage members to get involved in projects and campaigns

Give responsibilities to committed and active members, promote the new ones with potential



Contacting

Do an introductory workshop **or a welcome session** for new members so that they understand the organisation and its work



Create a common communication channel (preferably instant) and keep it active and focused on members' interests

Listen and ask for opinions and critics, including of ex-affiliates

Inform and be informed. Keeping the contact is an important investment for the organisation.

Have emergency contact lists and procedures for issues that require fast action



Supporting

Leaders should spend time talking with members and getting to know them

Thank people and praise them in meetings for work done

Regain the trust of ex-members by working on reasons they left



Run regular education and development sessions for all members - either as part of regular meetings or in special workshops

Recruitment or retention culture



**“Come & See,
Come & Help,
Come & Stay”**

- Without recruitment there is no union/association and without retention there will be no union/association for too long
- You have to have members, before you can retain them is the traditional trade union culture
- The longer a worker is member, more likely it is to remain
- The recruitment is the most visible action, but the retention should not stay back
- Recruitment without retention has long-term consequences on membership and financial situation of the organisation
- Retention is hard to monitor, data is not visible, member lifetime value differ by sector/country/union/association
- Retention is the result of daily union work, communication, campaigns, doesn't happen quick and is not accountable



Is there a way back

Knowing the reasons a members joined the union and why he/she left it

Perception of membership's "value"	Retention action
The expression of belief, self-image and contribution	Believe in the fight, focus on objectives
The feeling of community	Show that everyone's there, focus on peer strategy
The utility, membership benefits	Less risk and cost being in, focus on immediate practical results

Have specific actions for specific membership values

React to lack of interaction, is an alarm call

Respond to crisis with protection strategies focused on members

And remember...

Recruiting is not a finish line, but a continuous activity

Don't be afraid of critics, is what makes you improve

Is not only about getting new members, but mostly about keeping the members

A problem is what takes for the first step, but motivation and commitment is what keep us going

The only sure thing is the change and adaptation is a key competence