



GUIDE TO ORGANIZING PROFESSIONALS

2018 EDITION



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ABOUT DPE

The Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE) is a coalition of 23 national unions that represent professional and technical employees. DPE affiliates represent millions of professionals in:

- ▶ Education and healthcare;
- ▶ Science, engineering, and technology;
- ▶ Legal, business, and management;
- ▶ Media, entertainment, and the arts; and
- ▶ Public administration.

Professionals are essential to the future of the labor movement. DPE organizing materials, research, programs, and presentations help its affiliate unions organize more professional and technical employees and effectively represent current members.

DPE MISSION

The DPE mission is to assist its affiliated unions in achieving their objectives. DPE does this by:

- ▶ Providing a forum for its affiliates to collaborate, connect, and act;
- ▶ Assisting affiliates in their efforts to organize, represent, and bargain on behalf of professional and technical employees;
- ▶ Communicating the value of union membership to professional and technical employees and the public;
- ▶ Advancing the interests of professional and technical employees through public policy and legislative advocacy;
- ▶ Building alliances with professional associations and societies to promote the interests of professional and technical employees; and
- ▶ Encouraging diversity in the professional and technical workforce.

DPE is an AFL-CIO trade department and as such is independent from the AFL-CIO allowing DPE to focus solely on advancing the interests of its affiliated unions.

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Photo courtesy of AFT

INTRODUCTION

Professionals are an important part of the labor movement. Membership is increasing and union professionals can be found in nearly every profession and across all sectors. Long-term commitment to their professions and power in the workplace derived from their expertise makes it possible to build strong bargaining units of professionals.

Building and sustaining an organizing program that motivates professionals to join together to improve the workplace is the objective of all unions organizing professionals. *DPE's Guide to Organizing Professionals* seeks to give organizers the information they need to develop a campaign that will resonate with professionals. The strategies included herein are applicable to new organizing, internal organizing, and new hire orientations.

The 2018 edition of *DPE's Guide to Organizing Professionals* includes new data from DPE's October 2016 survey of 1,004 non-union professionals. Survey respondents were selected randomly from across the country and employed in most professions. DPE's 2016 survey gathered information to help its affiliates organize professionals by learning about non-union professionals' attitudes toward unions.

While support for a union varied among respondents based on demographic, political, and economic factors, the survey showed that in all cases there was the ability to increase support. Specifically, DPE's

survey asked twice, once at the beginning of the survey and again at the end of the survey, whether the respondents would support a proposal to have a union in their workplace to represent them and other professionals. When asked initially, 56 percent of all professionals would support a union at work, which increased to 60 percent when asked the same question at the conclusion of the survey. Typically, there were only small percentages of professionals who were strongly opposed to a proposal for a union at work.

DPE's Guide to Organizing Professionals provides information to help organizers build strong, majority support. The *Guide* details issue strategies needed to build support within a bargaining unit as well as the campaign strategies necessary to make an organizing campaign successful.

Suggestions are made for developing messages that are tailored to potential members based on their age, work sector, political party, gender, race and ethnicity, and earnings. Reaching all potential bargaining unit members with messages that speak to their needs and values will help to build and solidify support for a union at work.

The *Guide* also provides information on: generating organizing leads; building support among professionals who are persuadable or undecided; and addressing frequently asked questions by potential bargaining unit members.

DPE ORGANIZING RESOURCES



1. Extend the Invitation: A 10 Step Approach to Internal Organizing

- ▶ Released in August 2016, Extend the Invitation was designed so that anyone could pick it up and develop and launch an internal organizing campaign in their workplace.
- ▶ Extend the Invitation is applicable to professionals and non-professionals.



2. Growing Your Union: Engaging Professionals through New Hire Orientation

- ▶ Released in March 2017, best practices for new hires were identified based on interviews with union staff and leadership.
- ▶ This guide offers simple, practical ways for union leaders and staff to develop or enhance orientations for new potential bargaining unit members. An effective orientation program can have a lasting and outsized impact on the future strength of unions.

3. Attitudinal Survey of Professionals

- ▶ Survey of 1,004 non-union professional and technical workers was conducted by Hart Research Associates in October 2016.
- ▶ DPE utilized survey results to create analysis on the attitudes of:
 - Young professionals aged 21 to 34
 - Professionals aged 50 and older
 - Women professionals
 - Male professionals aged 21 to 44
 - Male professionals aged 45 and older
 - White professionals
 - Professionals of color
 - Private, for-profit sector professionals
 - Nonprofit sector professionals
 - Public sector professionals
 - Healthcare professionals
 - Professionals who disapprove of a union at work
 - Professionals by amount of earnings
 - Democrats and Republicans
 - Southerners, Westerners, Midwesterners, and Northeasterners
- ▶ DPE analysis includes: professionals' attitudes about unions; knowledge of unions and opinions on union effectiveness; advantages and benefits of union membership; disadvantages and concerns with having a union; preferred union qualities and values; perspectives on current job; and perspectives on their profession.

Print and electronic copies of DPE organizing resources are available for staff and members of DPE-affiliated unions. DPE staff can also make presentations on any of the above resources.

DPE AFFILIATED UNIONS

Actors' Equity Association (AEA)

American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE)

American Federation of Musicians (AFM)

American Federation of School Administrators (AFSA)

American Federation of Teachers (AFT)

American Guild of Musical Artists (AGMA)

American Guild of Variety Artists (AGVA)

Federation of Professional Athletes (FPA)

Guild of Italian American Actors (GIAA)

International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts (IATSE)

International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF)

International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW)

International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE)

International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT)

Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU)

Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS)

Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU)

SAG-AFTRA

Seafarers International Union of North America (SIU)

Stage Directors and Choreographers Society (SDC)

United Steelworkers (USW)

Utility Workers Union of America (UWUA)

Writers Guild of America, East (WGAE)



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