

Common Unionbusting Tactics

Supervisors as Front-line Soldiers:

Supervisors, who themselves have no legally protected right to be represented by a union, are often tasked with doing the dirty work of the Union busters and management. Middle managers and supervisors who have closer relationships with rank-and-file staff are often directed to deliver anti-union letters, speeches and informal talks prepared by Union busters.

One-on-One Meetings:

During union organizing drives, 77 percent of workers are forced to attend intimidating, closed-door or isolated meetings with supervisors. These aren't friendly impromptu chats, but well-planned meetings designed by Union busters to decipher employees' feelings about the union and persuade them against the union.

Captive Audience Meetings:

So-called "captive audience" meetings are held for employees during work hours to disseminate propaganda against union representation and to attempt to discredit the union. Eighty-nine percent of employers hold captive audience meetings during an organizing drive. Employees are almost always required to attend, but union organizers may be intentionally dis-invited. Often, the meetings are rigged so that workers who are already against the union are assigned to ask questions to sow misinformation.

Delay:

Union busters often attempt to delay union representation elections by legal maneuvers so they have more time to implement other tactics needed to increase tension, dissension and the employer's chance of winning the election.

Divide and Conquer:

Union busters manipulate staff dynamics to make employees feel that there is a tense division among staff concerning the union election. They may go so far as to pit one group of employees against each other, based on race or ethnicity.

Propaganda:

Union busters often flood employees with heavy-handed letters, cartoons, videos and leaflets to sway them against wanting a union. Seventy percent of companies involved in organizing drives mail anti-union materials to employees' homes. In 2011, Gawker unearthed a video and scare-mongering materials that Target shared with employees who were trying to form a union.

Love Offerings:

In order to convince employees that they don't need a union, Union busters may advise clients to provide indirect bribes, like unexpected increases in wages or benefits or "feel good" measures like free food and lottery tickets.

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