

**THE UNION AND ITS EFFECTIVENESS WITHIN  
THE DURHAM FIRE DEPARTMENT**

EXECUTIVE DEVELOPMENT

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## ABSTRACT

In 1998 members of the City of Durham Fire Department were faced with the decision of whether to maintain the Durham Firefighter's Association (DFFA) or unite with the International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF). This sparked immediate controversy because North Carolina is a "right to work" state. (NRTW 1999)

The decision was ultimately made to unite with the IAFF. Feelings of skepticism, uncertainty and apprehension accompanied this newly formed partnership. The problem that stemmed from members within the Durham Fire Department's rank and file who were doubtful of the effectiveness of the union's representation. However, there were members of the fire department who were optimistic and hopeful that the IAFF representation could provide a stronger more adequate voice and help forge them into a more unified, organized group.

The purpose of this research project is to evaluate the effectiveness of the IAFF representation within the rank and file of the Durham Fire Department (DFD).

The research project employed an evaluative research methodology to answer the following research questions:

1. Which areas would you prefer the union representatives give their time and attention to. (multiple choice answers provided on sample survey).
2. Do you feel that the union's influence and representation is adequate?
3. Are you aware of the difference between a "collective or collaborative bargaining state" versus a "right to work state"?

On August 30, 1999, two hundred fifty-five (255) surveys were distributed to all personnel assigned to Fire Prevention and the Operations Division. One hundred forty-two (142) surveys were returned by the Sept. 30, 1999 due date.

Survey results indicate that fifty-five percent (55%) of those surveyed are not union members. Fifty-six percent (56%) of those surveyed do not feel that the union's influence and representation is adequate.

The following recommendations are suggested to the union representatives and management to ensure a positive work environment:

1. Maintain open lines of positive communication.
2. Listen to employees' issues and concerns.
3. Commit to make positive changes.
4. Eliminate adversarial barriers.

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## INTRODUCTION

The International Association of Fire Fighters (IAFF) recently re-established a chapter within the Durham Fire Department (DFD) in 1998. While knowledge of this partnership with the union may be new to many of the younger firefighters, many veteran firefighters and retired firefighters remember a previous association with the union that began in late 1969 or early 1970.

In 1971, the Durham City Council decided by a majority vote to adopt and implement the Public Safety Concept. The main purpose for adopting the Public Safety Concept was to save taxpayer dollars by cross-training officers in fire fighting and law enforcement. The DFD and the Durham Police Department (DPD) were to be merged and renamed the Durham Public Safety Department.

In 1971 police officers and firefighters were faced with a career decision. They were offered the opportunity to become Public Safety Officers. However, any firefighter or police officer who chose to make the transition had to successfully complete additional training from the newly formed Public Safety Academy (PSA). Many officers and firefighters declined the opportunity because they simply did not aspire to be cross-trained as Public Safety Officers (PSOs).

The time Durham City leaders were examining the concept, the firefighters felt this was the perfect opportunity for the IAFF union representatives to take a more proactive stance. Many of the firefighters were not in favor of the Public Safety Concept. However, much to their surprise and dismay firefighters perceived a lackadaisical attitude from the IAFF union representatives. Firefighters felt they were not adequately represented during this crucial time of decision making. As a result, the relationship between the firefighters and the IAFF

representatives rapidly eroded and subsequently the relationship was terminated by the firefighters. In June 1985, after much controversy and debate the city council voted 8-5 to abandon the Public Safety concept and return to separate Police and Fire Departments.

There are members in the present day rank and file of the fire department who are doubtful of the effectiveness of the union's representation. However, there are other firefighters who may be more optimistic that the IAFF representation can help to provide a stronger, voice and forge them into a more unified, organized group.

The purpose of this research is to evaluate the effectiveness of the IAFF representation within the DFD. The research project employed an evaluative research methodology to answer the following research questions: 1) Which areas would you prefer the union representatives give their time and attention to? (Multiple choice answers are provided.); 2) Do you feel that the union's influence and representation is adequate? ; and, 3) Are you aware of the difference between a "collective or collaborative bargaining state" versus a "right to work state"?

## **BACKGROUND AND SIGNIFICANCE**

In late 1969 or early 1970, members of the DFD joined with the IAFF. North Carolina was and remains a "right to work" state as declared by N.C. General Statute 95-78. to 84. Article 10 and enacted on March 18, 1947. (NRTW 8-18-99) Under these statutes individuals are protected by state law and cannot be required to join and pay dues or fees to a union. Individuals who choose not to join a union cannot be denied the right to work because they have refused to do so. However, there are exceptions to the general rule. Employees working on property subject to exclusive federal jurisdiction and employees of airlines or railroads are not covered by "right to work" laws. . (NRTW 1999)

The IAFF membership is open to all full-time, paid employees, engaged in fire fighting, emergency medical or rescue service activities or related services through a chartered local affiliate. (IAFF 1999) Unions do not possess the dynamic influence in a “right to work” state in comparison to a collective or collaborative bargaining state therefore incentive to join is lower.

In 1971, the Durham City Council decided by a majority vote to adopt and implement the Public Safety Concept. The primary purpose of this concept was to conserve taxpayer dollars by cross-training officers in fire fighting and law enforcement. The DPD and the DFD would become the Durham Public Safety Department (DPSD). All police officers and firefighters of that era were faced with a monumental career decision. They were offered the opportunity to become Public Safety Officers (PSO). Those who took advantage of the opportunity had to successfully complete additional training provided by the newly formed Public Safety Academy (PSA). Many police officers and firefighters did not have the aspiration to become cross-trained.

During the period in which the Durham City leaders were reviewing the public safety concept, the firefighters expected the IAFF union representatives to take an active, aggressive role by voicing the concerns of the firefighters. However, much to their surprise and dismay the union representatives were literally absent from the entire procedure. The firefighters felt that they were not adequately represented during this critical time. As a result, the alliance between the firefighters and the IAFF representatives rapidly deteriorated and was subsequently terminated by the disgruntled firefighters.

In June 1985, after much controversy and debate the city council voted 8-5 in favor of abandoning the Public Safety Concept and re-establishing separate police and fire departments.

Because North Carolina is still a “right to work” state, the problem remains that some members of the fire department may feel a renewed partnership with IAFF will not be

advantageous. Other firefighters may be more optimistic that the IAFF representation can help to provide a stronger more adequate voice, and forge them into a more unified, organized group.

Results of a recent survey, designed for this project, suggested that fifty five percent (55%) of the respondents were not members of the union. Commenting on the labor movement (Flagler 1990 p.96) wrote, "Union membership fell in the 1980's to its lowest point since the early years of the Great Depression. Those who predict the demise of the labor movement, however, would do well to remember what Mark Twain said when he learned that a newspaper had published his obituary: "Reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated." In contrast, retired Durham Fire Chief Nathaniel L. Thompson, stated, "Approximately seventy percent (70%) of the firefighters were union members in 1970."

Additional survey results revealed that fifty-six percent (56%) of the respondents indicated that they do not feel that the union's influence and representation is adequate.

The research problem suggests that there are members of the rank and file within the DFD who are doubtful of the effectiveness of the union's representation. This topic relates to the Labor Relations section of the National Fire Academy's Executive Development Course.

Confidence, loyalty and trust must exist before an effective partnership can be developed between the IAFF representation and the firefighters.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

A literature review was conducted to identify existing research conducted in the area of labor/management relations and its effectiveness within the fire service. The topic was researched through literature searches conducted at the Learning Resource Center of the National Fire Academy. Information sources included Executive Fire Officer (EFO) research papers, journals, books, and Internet web sites. Other information sources included books from the Durham County Main Library.

It must be noted that certain limitations exist on the availability of information relating to the effectiveness of unions within fire departments in “right to work states.” Many of the research articles addressed the issue of labor/management relations and the importance of developing and sustaining positive and productive communications between both parties.

The EFO research paper submitted by (Barnes 1989) details the turmoil encountered by the City of Aurora firefighters and the city’s management team. The city refused to recognize the firefighters as a organized, viable bargaining agent. The city was backed by the Home Rule City Charter and Colorado State Law which prohibited them from recognizing and conferring with city employees collectively, in reference to wages, benefits, grievances, or promotional processes. The firefighters organized a petition process to challenge the city’s stance on not recognizing them as a viable bargaining agent. Eventually, the Colorado State Supreme Court to decided in favor of the firefighters. The firefighters subsequently gained the public’s support. Strong political pressure was initiated from the firefighters’ union endorsing new candidates to replace the mayor, the city manager, the city attorney, and all four city council members who were running for re-election. The atmosphere improved and labor relations were excellent. However, things changed in 1986 when a new city manager was hired. 1998 saw the renewal of

labor unrest and the fall of morale. The events chronicled an ever-present problem between the city and its employees.

In his book, *The Labor Movement in the United States*, (Flagler 1990) examines the reasons workers organize unions, and how the labor movement has effected the workplace. He observes that unions have bargained for decent wages, safer workplaces, pensions to provide income security in retirement, freedom from unfair treatment on the job, recourse from unjust firing, as well as paid holidays and vacations. He also examines how new technology and foreign competition are changing the work world. Flagler explains why the labor movement has been a dynamic part of U.S. history and culture, and the role it will continue to play into the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

(Aronowitz 1998) reveals in the last twenty-five (25) years, most American workers; blue collar, white collar and professional, have taken an enormous wage and job loss, while only twenty percent (20%) of the population has prospered. Corporate downsizing, technological change, mergers, and acquisitions have cut the workforce by half in some industries. The best-paid workers have lost their jobs and have been replaced by part-time temporary employees who often lack benefits. Aronowitz calls for a new agenda for the principal challenges facing the labor movement in the South among the poor, by unionizing white collar and technical employees, and by re-establishing labor's political independence.

In the book, *Why Unions Matter*, by Yates (1998) provides statistical information that indicates unionized workers in every part of the economy get more pay and better benefits than employees who do comparable work and are not unionized. The author states that unions inspire power, solidarity, and dignity in workers, with positive consequences, for their lives. He shares practical advice on what makes a collective bargaining campaign effective. For example: union

leaders must establish unity and organization, prepare a planning document which lays out what the union proposes to do, how it will do it, and a time table for the plan's elements. (Yates 1998)

In his research paper, Joseph Pidala describes the morale problem facing the city administrators in Clearwater, Florida. With an employee workforce of about 1600 employees, Pidala discusses why the city manager opted to hire a consultant with expertise in labor/management communications. The research paper reveals how the consultant was instrumental in helping the city officials to organize a labor/management committee whose function was to initiate positive communication, to eliminate adversarial barriers and create trust and respect. (Pidala 1993) The information detailed in Pidala's research was pertinent to the research problem of this project. It provided recommendations to improve labor management relations within the fire department.

A personal interview was conducted with retired Durham Fire Chief Nathaniel L. Thompson, who retired with over thirty-eight (38) years of service. He was selected because of his knowledge of the fire department in the late 60's to 70's. Chief Thompson stated, "The firefighters originally joined the union to get pay raises, better working hours and benefits." When asked about accomplishments of the union, he replied that, "The firefighters were able to get pay roll deduction for their union fees." Chief Thompson also indicated that no one in the fire department administration joined the union, and no one above the rank of Captain was a union member. (Chief Thompson interview conducted on 12-1-99 1000 hrs.)

When asked about the number of firefighters enrolled in the union during 1969-70, Chief Thompson stated, "About seventy percent (70%) of the firefighters were members." This response creates an interesting comparison of the present situation because approximately fifty-five percent (55%) of those surveyed stated they are members. Fewer firefighters are enrolled as

members in 1999 than there were thirty years ago. Chief Thompson stated that the union relationship was ultimately terminated because union representation was ineffective, because North Carolina is a “right to work” state. In his book William Glueck (1978) provides positive, helpful practices that management may find very useful in communicating with employees to counteract union organizing efforts. He also indicates to the reader that there are no guaranteed strategies or tactics which can assure management that unions will not be organized.

The History of American Labor (Rayback 1959) chronicles the beginning of American labor in colonial times. Written accounts reveal that labor/management disputes occurred in America before its independence was gained in 1776. It provides a historical account of the beginning of the organized labor movement up to the Eisenhower administration. The history of the AFL-CIO is recounted from its beginning up to the 1950’s.

A review of the literature provides insight and direction in the current study. The historical trials and struggles experienced by other municipalities serve as operating manuals. To paraphrase the author, George Santayana (source unknown) who stated, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.”

## **PROCEDURES**

This research project required the use of the evaluative methodology to examine the effectiveness of the union within the DFD. The procedures used to complete this research included a literature review of textbooks, journals, internet web sites, a survey of members of the DFD, and a personal interview with retired Fire Chief Nathaniel L. Thompson.

### **Literature Review**

The literature review was initially conducted in August 1999 at the National Fire Academy's Learning Resource Center (LRC). Additional materials were supplied by the LRC via the U. S. Postal Service and the Interlibrary Loan Program, (ILL) in which the Durham County Library participates.

The literature review focused on textbooks, journals and NFA Research Papers.

### **Durham Fire Department Survey**

A personnel survey was developed and distributed to assist in determining if members of the DFD are content with the union's level of effectiveness within the department.

### **Survey**

There were two hundred fifty-five (255) surveys distributed to the Operations Division and Fire Prevention. The surveys were personally hand delivered to all twelve (12) fire stations and Fire Prevention on Monday, August 30, 1999. The deadline date for return was September 30, 1999, via inter-department mail. One hundred forty-two (142) of the two hundred fifty-five (255) surveys were returned for a response rate of fifty-five point six (55.6) percent.

### **Personal Interview**

A personal interview accompanied by pre-determined written correspondence was conducted with retired Durham Fire Chief Nathaniel L. Thompson. The interview was conducted on December 1, 1999. Chief Thompson was selected as an interviewee because of his vast knowledge of the DFD, which spanned more than thirty-eight (38) years beginning October, 1958 until his retirement on June 30, 1997.

### **Assumptions**

In analyzing this study, it was assumed that the survey respondents answered each question truthfully.

### **Limitations**

After the survey distribution was completed, additional research revealed that question #3; “Do you feel that the union’s influence and representation is adequate?” could be interpreted as an unfair labor practice. It must be noted and acknowledged that no intent was made to conduct any form of unfair labor practice and that the City of Durham and the DFD had no prior knowledge of the questions contained in the survey.

## **RESULTS**

### **Research Questions and Responses**

1. Which areas would you prefer the union representatives give their time and attention to?

[Note: The possible selections were listed as follows and in this order.]

Pay: Eighty-one percent (81%) or one hundred fifteen survey respondents placed a check mark in the box selecting this answer. This selection turned out to be the most frequently selected answer of this question.

Benefits: Forty-six percent (46%) or sixty-five (65) survey respondents selected this choice for an answer.

Equipment: Forty-eight percent (48%) or sixty-eight (68) survey respondents selected this choice for an answer.

More Personnel: Forty-four percent (44%) or sixty-three (63) survey respondents selected this choice for an answer.

Schools: Eighteen percent (18%) or twenty-five (25) survey respondents selected this choice for an answer.

Training: Twenty-three percent (23%) or thirty-three (33) survey respondents selected this choice for an answer.

Other: Twenty-five percent (25%) or thirty-six (36) survey respondents selected this choice for an answer.

A blank space was provided to allow the respondents to specify their selection. The responses were as follows:

Lobby for a twenty-five (25) year retirement - Sixty one percent (61%) or twenty-two (22) of the thirty-six (36) survey respondents wrote in this item.

Morale - Eleven percent (11%) or four (4) of the thirty-six (36) survey respondents wrote in this item.

Work load decrease - Five percent (5%) or two (2) of the thirty-six (36) survey respondents wrote in this item.

Improve hiring procedures - Five percent (5%) or two (2) of the thirty-six (36) survey respondents wrote in this item.

Administration to address employee concerns - Five percent (5%) or two (2) of the thirty-six (36) survey respondents wrote in this item.

Each of the following items listed separately represent two percent (2%) of one of the thirty-six (36) survey respondent's answers.

- a) Focus on another city's fire department.
- b) The union should stay out of the fire service.
- c) Practice fair treatment for all employees.

2. Do you feel that the union's influence and representation is adequate?

Thirty-one percent (31%) or forty-four (44) survey respondents indicated by checking "yes."

Fifty-six percent (56%) or seventy-nine (79) survey respondents however, indicated by answering "no."

Of the respondents who marked "no" for their answer, they gave different reasons which included: not enough information about what the union can offer; not enough members or participation, the union is still young, inadequate communication, resistance exerted by the city administration and North Carolina is a "right to work" state, and etc.

3. Are you aware of the difference between a "collective or collaborative bargaining" state versus a "right to work" state?

Sixty-three percent (63%) or ninety (90) survey respondents checked "yes" indicating they were aware of the difference between "collective or collaborative bargaining" versus "right to work."

Thirty-three percent (33%) or forty-seven (47) survey respondents indicated by checking "no" that they were not aware of the difference between the two terms.

In summary, the results indicate that eighty-one percent (81%) of the survey respondents are interested in pay issues. Fifty-six percent (56%) of those surveyed do not feel that the union's influence and representation is adequate. Finally, more than sixty percent (60%) of the survey respondents are aware of the difference between a "collective or collaborative bargaining" state and a "right to work" state.

**Personal Interview with retired Fire Chief Nathaniel L. Thompson conducted on December 1, 1999**

1. In your best estimate, what year did the Durham firefighters originally join the IAFF of North Carolina?

Chief Thompson stated, “The firefighters joined with the union in late 1969 or early 1970.”

2. What events prompted the firefighters to join the union in the very beginning?

Chief Thompson stated, “ They joined the union to get better raises, better working hours and benefits”.

3. Can you recall the achievements the firefighters were able to make after they joined the union?

Chief Thompson replied, “They were able to receive pay deduction for the union fees. There was no union representation in the fire department administration, and no one above the rank of captain was a union member. The enrollment was about seventy percent (70%) of the personnel.”

4. What caused the firefighters to eventually leave the union?

Chief Thompson stated, “The firefighters felt the union representation was ineffective because North Carolina is a right to work state.”

## **DISCUSSION**

This research project represented an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of the union within the DFD. The survey results clearly indicate that over fifty percent (50%) of the respondents are not union members at this particular time.

A successful union often takes time to build. Those workers who strongly support the union must, with the help of the union’s organizers, build a rank-and-file organization inside the

workplace right from the beginning. This means meeting and talking with co-workers to build understanding and support long before asking them to sign petitions or authorization cards.

(Yates 1998)

The chance that people will turn to unions to help address their economic needs are greatest when they have experienced deterioration in their wages and working conditions; when like professionals, they have suffered diminished expectations; or, as in the case of farm workers and janitors, when unionization becomes a mission, a crusade for liberation and justice.

(Aronowitz 1998) To be effective, a union must convince most or all of the employees to actually become union members. (Yates 1998)

If members have been fed the idea that their union is a bank or insurance company that dispenses services and benefits, they are unlikely to respond to appeals to become involved in organizing. (Aronowitz 1998)

Careful examination of the survey results indicated that eighty one percent (81%) of the survey respondents would like to see the union representatives give their time and attention to addressing pay issues and concerns. Unions are vehicles by which workers can secure a voice in many workplace decisions and at the same time obtain higher compensation for their labors.

(Yates1998) Some DFD firefighters have stated that they cannot afford to pay union dues at this time, because they are not getting paid enough as it is now. This statement indicates that a satisfactory pay increase for the firefighters would make paying union dues more feasible and affordable.

A key difference between the public and private sectors is a practical one. In the private sector, the bottom line in labor relations is the effect on the profitability of the enterprise either in terms of efficiency of operation or total cost of labor services. In the public sector, however, the

political dimension tends to predominate. If the firefighters can mobilize public opinion in their favor on a particular issue, the cost often becomes a secondary consideration. (Regnolds 1994)

Fifty-six percent (56%) of the survey respondents indicated that they did not feel that the union's influence and representation is adequate. The respondents gave many reasons for their feelings. Some of the reasons were: not enough information about what the union can offer, not enough members or participation, the union is still young, inadequate communication, resistance exerted by the city administration, and North Carolina is a "right to work" state.

A century after union efforts to organize workers, the South remains an anti-union bulwark. It would be inaccurate to say that unions' efforts have had no impact on the region. However, union pressure has forced Southern employers to make only small changes in wages and working conditions. (Aronowitz 1998). This would justify and support the need for the fire department union leaders to address the needs of its membership and to conduct its own survey to gauge its effectiveness.

Employees see strong labor organizations as a way to force management to listen to their ideas. When forced to listen to these ideas, management may not be receptive, and good ideas are lost. Progressive government agencies realize that input from all employees, including labor, as well as, management can promote cooperative relationships. (Pidala 1993) Methods of increasing employee involvement and sharing departmental control are seen as positive contributors to healthier more effective organizations of the future. (McDonald 1998)

The DFD organized a firefighter's council in 1998. The purpose of this council was to assemble a group of personnel comprised of firefighters, fire technicians and captains; who were willing to assist in making positive changes within the fire department. Individuals serve on the

council on a voluntary basis for a two-year term, and they meet regularly to discuss issues and concerns gathered from the rank and file. They were also involved in formulating various standards for employee evaluations. Their initial assignment dealt with helping to re-write the department promotional policy. The firefighter's council is an example of the administration seeking input from the rank and file to address various issues and concerns, as well as, building a bridge for open, effective communication.

### **Implications**

The organizational implications of this research indicate that at the present time the IAFF union representatives along with the fire department union leaders could possibly be successful in obtaining very minor changes, at best, by communicating with the fire department administration. The research gathered from the literature review and other sources indicate that the union's internal support is crucial for its success and survival. On the other hand, the fire department administrators undoubtedly realized as (Quarles 1995 p.16) wrote, "Organizational theory teaches that management should try to persuade employees to assimilate the organization's goals into their own. When the organizational goals coincide with those of the workers, conflict is eliminated. When this is not possible, then win-win situations must be developed between the parties competing for limited resources. Compromise is the key; sometimes this means finding solutions that imposes acceptable damage levels on one or both parties."

In his research paper (Quarles 1995) wrote, "Until both labor and management realize that win-win situation is the best approach to contract negotiations the winner will continue to be the labor attorney." Even though the union within the DFD will not be involved with any type of

contract negotiation with management, legal representation and/or consultation may be necessary on occasion.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

Traditionally management and labor have taken on adversary roles, therefore, when one side came out ahead or won, the other side lost. This “win-lose” type of interaction is described quite well by the psychological theory of Transactional Analysis. (James 1971). In a “win-lose” relationship or interaction one party wins at the other party’s expense, which results in frustration for the loser and breeds hostility. (Hilgard & Atkinson 1967). Eventually communication and cooperation decrease while hostility, resentment and the struggle for equity or supremacy increase.

As a healthier alternative, the transactional analysts work for a “win-win” type of interaction. In a “win-win” relationship, each party recognizes the needs of the other party as well as his/her own needs, and both parties attempt to relate in a manner which promotes mutual satisfaction and development through cooperation and concern for the other as well as the self.

The positive management approach is like a “win-win” relationship in that it is neither pro-management nor pro-union but is pro-people stressing the mutual and individual needs of managers and employees while urging managers and employees to work together cooperatively as a team rather than as adversary groups. (Hughes 1976). This “win-win” concept underlies the positive management approach and is implemented through open effective communications between managers and employees, treating employees fairly, appropriate job design, effective

management systems and procedures, adequate pay and benefits, providing equal employment opportunity and providing adequate working facilities. These positive personnel practices help productivity and maintain employee morale so employees do not feel the need for self-protective activities such as seeking union representation. (Hughes 1971)

There are no guaranteed approaches for maintaining a non-union environment except where specific laws prohibit unions from representing public employees in collective bargaining with public employers. However, laws can be changed through voter pressure and concentrated lobbying efforts by unions. Therefore, the public manager who has relied upon the law rather than effective preventive strategies might at some future date find himself/herself negotiating with a union representative of his/her employees. (Johnston 1980)

There are no guaranteed strategies or tactics, which can assure management that the union organizing efforts will be ineffective. However, the following practices are positive, helpful and send an encouraging message: (1) use early and consistent communications to assert its position; (2) meet with employees to present management's position; (3) distributes written material, and (4) effectively uses first level supervisors to communicate directly with employees by answering their questions, listening to their concerns, and presenting factual information supporting the management position. (Glueck 1978)

By meeting employees; basic needs, the manager removes the sources of employee dissatisfaction and eliminates issues the union organizer may use in attempting to persuade employees that they need a union to represent them. For example, if employees are free to express their problems or concerns to management and management responsively corrects or

alleviates the problem then a union representative is made unnecessary and in fact would probably get in the way of already effective communication channels. (Johnson 1980)

In summary, several key factors must be presented and maintained, both by the union representatives and those representing the administration to ensure a positive work environment. These are possible whether in a right to work state or collective bargaining State.

- (1) Maintain open lines of positive communication.
- (2) Listen to employee's issues and concerns.
- (3) Commit to make positive changes and eliminate adversarial barriers.

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*Appendices Not Included. Please visit the Learning Resource Center on the Web at <http://www.lrc.fema.gov/> to learn how to obtain this report in its entirety through Interlibrary Loan.*