

DISCOVERY OF FACTS BY USING THE FIVE W's

UNION STEWARDS NEED FACTS TO WIN....!

Nothing can be more important to you than the facts you need to win your case...without this vital information you cannot present the logic and evidence upon which winning the grievance depends.

THOSE IMPORTANT FIVE W's

A simple rule to follow is one adopted by the experienced newspaper reporter who makes sure the story is complete:



WHO...is involved? The member, the supervisor, the witness and their badge numbers etc. "Who" includes anyone who can contribute to your knowledge about the case?



WHAT...really happened? What was the sequence of events? Was there a background of action which went before? What was said? Did the Company act and the Union react or did the Union act and the Company react? Determine facts behind different viewpoints.



WHEN...did it happen? Is it continuing? How long? During work time? Off shift? Time, date, etc. Are there any special significant holidays or such which tie in? Within time limits



WHERE...did it take place? At the facility? Away from the facility? Exact location should be identified if possible as it is extremely important. This includes documenting such things as machine numbers, buildings, department, area, aisle etc. Pictures, diagrams, sketches may be necessary



WHY...is this a grievance? Violation of..... Agreement, Memorandum, Law, Past Practice, Safety regulation, Rulings or Awards, unjust treatment. Or what is necessary for this to be a grievance? The clause in the contract violated...or the basis for the grievance. It should be spelled out. This is extremely important in order to ask for the most appropriate remedy.

...AND THAT'S NOT QUITE ALL...

THERE IS A SIXTH "W"...WHOA!!! Double check to make sure you have all the facts... AND have them written down. Documentation strengthens your credibility, not only with management, but also with the arbitrator.

ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS

Only through the use of questions can you get beneath the surface and determine all the facts. Be sure that you question the member and anyone else, who may have knowledge of the facts. Remember you need both the supporting and damaging facts...in other words:

THE GOOD, THE BAD AND THE UGLY!