

Investigating Grievances

GET THE FACTS: REMEMBER THE 5 W's & 1 H

WHO... is involved? Name(s) of the grievant(s), shift, job classification, etc. Have they been disciplined before? Has a similar grievance been filed on the same issue? Who is the supervisor? Who are the witnesses? Remember the union itself may be the grievant.

WHEN... did the incident or condition occur or begin? Give dates and times as accurately as possible.

WHERE... did the grievance take place? Give the exact location, job site, etc.

WHAT... is the grievant's story? Management's position? The reports of witnesses? Are there any records that might help support your cause? Collect all the facts you can, always looking for the hard facts, but accepting and weighing "less convincing evidence" and different versions.

WHY... is this a grievance? Has the contract been violated? What about violations of past practice, the law, or Health and Safety rules. Is the issue one of unjust action or application of company rules, contract interpretation, etc.

HOW... should the grievance be settled? What adjustments are necessary to correct the injustice? You want to return the aggrieved worker to the same condition he or she would have been in, had the violation not occurred? You want to make sure that the union's authority or jurisdiction is protected.