



# BARGAINING TEAM EXPECTATIONS



- **Time commitment** – Bargaining days can be long, depending on where you are in the process. Always try **be on time, and at times, expect to stay late** It can be helpful to **make alternative plans for family and pets, as** bargaining is focused and not always a multitasking kind of activity.
- **Take detailed notes** - during bargaining, every team member should take notes to capture the conversations and the intent of the items we discuss. These notes may be valuable for years to come, so make sure your Labor Representative has a copy after the contract is ratified and store a copy for your Local for future use.
- **Adopt a learning attitude** – learn the issues of nurses in other units, learn the process and be open to its ups and downs, be ready to actively listen as issues are driven by the collective not the individual.
- **Look into the future** – improving workplace issues is a process! Bargaining teams are prepared and educated to-recognize that getting a portion of the language or movement towards a goal in your contract is the first step towards improving on the language now and in the next bargaining cycle.
- **Stick together** – don't contradict one another at the table! Use your caucuses (or breaks during negotiations) when you may need work through issues with your team so you can be united when back in front of your employer! Nurses have more in common than not, so trust in your collective goals, and your collective voice.
- **Work with the team** - Stick together and have each other's back! Don't contradict another bargaining team member during negotiations, TAKE A CAUCUS and discuss it. You can return to the table and clarify or correct anything if it's appropriate.
- **Emotions!**- there are 5 stages of team building; forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Expect to experience all these stages as we build the bargaining team and expect them all again as we develop a bargaining relationship with management's bargaining team. Keep your game face on and do not let your employer see that you may be offended or angry. Be the professional and keep your emotions under control until you caucus with your team.

- **Bargaining can be out of your comfort zone** - Management may say things that challenge you. Make a plan to keep your eye on the goal and not let your emotions dictate outcomes. Remember, any member of the team can call for a caucus at any time.
- **Be respectful** - Your professionalism during challenging times is what defines your character long after the contract has been bargained. Be invested and courageous and take a stand when your professional conscience dictates that it's the right thing for the nurses!
- **Know your role in each circumstance** - sometimes it's your role to speak, sometimes it's not - Know that all strategies are developed to achieve the greatest success for the nurses.
- **Bargain at a mindful pace** - you don't have to respond until you have a mindful and thoughtful response. You don't have to be rushed in a caucus and can respond when you are ready. Be prompt but take the time needed to be prepared.
- **Trust the collective** – have faith in the collective voice of your nurses. They brought forward the issues that became top bargaining priorities, even if it represents concerns you haven't personally experienced. Individual agendas have no place in collective bargaining. Be willing to do the right thing for all your nurses.
- **You may not win on every item** – Know that the process will force us to determine our highest priorities and that our tentative agreements will very likely include compromises from both sides.
- **Attend all membership meetings** - during the bargaining process this is how the team communicates progress to the members. To be respectful of the bargaining process, we typically talk in generalized terms when reporting to members mostly because until a tentative agreement is reached there are typically compromises still ongoing. We don't want messages getting to the nurses that have the potential to change and them receiving contradicting news on the team's progress.
- **Keep your enthusiasm** – Use bargaining as an opportunity to advocate for your nurses and patients! Be honest, have vision, be open and creative in finding mutual issues. There's always more than one way to address an issue and still advocate for your membership.

