

CUSTOMIZED SAMPLE

Customized Union Steward Communication Playbook

Customized scripts built from your actual contract language,
grievance patterns, and arbitration history.

Be fair. Be firm. Be credible. Be consistent. Be predictable.

Prepared for: ABC Manufacturing, Inc.
Labor Agreement with Teamsters Local 1234

The Clauses That Drive These Scripts

Excerpts from actual labor agreements

RECOGNITION (ARTICLE II)

Section 2: *"Excluded employees shall not perform any of the work normally performed by employees in the bargaining unit."*

Section 4: *"Part time employees will be limited to 10% of total production employees."*

SENIORITY & OVERTIME (ARTICLE XI)

Section 6(g): *"Overtime will be on a voluntary basis."*

Section 2: *"Seniority and its rights and privileges shall govern in all matters of promotion, demotion, layoff, and recall."*

MANAGEMENT RIGHTS (ARTICLE IV)

"Management of the company has the sole and exclusive rights to manage its operations..."

Note: This clause lacks the exhaustive enumeration found in stronger agreements. A detailed management rights clause would significantly strengthen the supervisor's position.

DISCIPLINE & DISCHARGE (ARTICLE XII)

"The reasonableness of the Employer's established rules shall be subject to the grievance and arbitration procedure."

Red Flag: This makes the reasonableness of your work rules subject to arbitration. An arbitrator can second-guess your rules.

CUSTOMIZED SCRIPT

Subcontracting Beyond Contract Limits

ARBITRATION EXPOSURE: \$293,000 — 50%+ of work outsourced to non-union labor without following contract procedures

STEWARD SAYS:

"You can't just bring in outside people to do our work. That violates our contract."

GENERIC SCRIPT

"I appreciate you bringing this to me. I want to help where I can, but I need to be fair to everyone by following the contract consistently. Article [X] is clear on this. If you think I'm misreading it, please file a grievance and we'll work through it together."

CUSTOMIZED TO YOUR CONTRACT

WHAT TO SAY

"I hear you, and I take it seriously. Let me walk you through our thinking. Article II, Section 2 says excluded employees can't do bargaining unit work. That's about supervisors and office staff — and I agree, we follow that.

This contractor situation is a business capacity issue. Article IV gives management the right to subcontract work, and we've followed the process. That said, I want to make sure we're not displacing anyone. Are any bargaining unit employees available for this work?

If you believe we've violated either provision, file the grievance. I'd rather get this right than find out six months from now that we created a problem."

CUSTOMIZED SCRIPT

Seniority Violation — Overtime Assignment

ARBITRATION EXPOSURE: \$40,000 — Work assigned to junior employees bypassing seniority provisions

STEWARD SAYS:

"You skipped three senior people for this overtime. Article XI says overtime is voluntary by seniority. You can't just pick who you want."

GENERIC SCRIPT

"I appreciate you being direct. Help me understand what you're seeing. I follow the same contract provisions for everyone, but every situation has different facts. If you think I'm applying different standards, file a grievance with specific examples so we can compare them side by side."

CUSTOMIZED TO YOUR CONTRACT

WHAT TO SAY

"You're right that Article XI, Section 6(g) says overtime is on a voluntary basis. Here's what I did: I asked for volunteers first. I had three people raise their hands, and those are the people I assigned."

Did senior employees volunteer and I missed them? If so that's on me and I need to fix it. Can you tell me specifically who was available and volunteered but didn't get the assignment?

If the issue is that senior employees are raising this after the fact — the contract says voluntary, and I went to the people who stepped up. File the grievance if you see it differently.

Either way, I'm going to start keeping a log of who's offered overtime and who accepts. That protects both of us."

THE DIFFERENCE

Why Customization Changes Outcomes

WHAT GENERIC SCRIPTS MISS

- Reference “Article [X]” — a placeholder no supervisor can actually cite
- Treat every situation the same: deflect to the grievance process
- Don’t distinguish between excluded employees, subcontractors, and part-timers
- Don’t ask the questions that determine if the decision is defensible
- Don’t address documentation habits that win or lose arbitrations

A routine operational question handled wrong becomes a \$293,000 arbitration award.

WHAT CUSTOMIZED SCRIPTS DELIVER

- Names specific articles and sections your supervisors need to cite
- Distinguish between provisions that look similar but have different consequences
- Ask the right diagnostic questions before making a decision
- Build documentation habits that create defensible records
- Maintain collaborative steward relationships while protecting management rights

Fortune 500 companies train their supervisors on exactly this. Your supervisors deserve the same infrastructure.

Customize These Generic Scripts.

Imagine Them Built Around Your Contract.



Your Contract Clauses

Every script references the provisions of your labor agreement, the ones your supervisors need to know cold.



Your Past Practices

We review your arbitration history, so supervisors know exactly where the boundaries are.



Your Grievance Patterns

We analyze your grievance history and build scripts around the situations your supervisors will most likely face.



7 "Red Flag" Clauses

We'll identify the contract clauses that cost mid-market companies the most — and show you how to manage around them.

We'll review your collective bargaining agreement and show you exactly how we'd customize this training for your supervisors.

Schedule a Free Contract Review

800-888-9115 | www.LRionline.com/steward-conversations