

GRIEVANCE MEETINGS

REMEMBER YOUR RIGHTS

To present facts and ask questions

To counsel the grievant, or take him/her aside for a private caucus if needed

To advise the grievant not to answer abusive, misleading, badgering or harassing questions

To object to a question or request clarification

To speak on the grievant=s behalf as an equal with management Even if the grievant is not too afraid, emotional, hostile, or inarticulate to do it, as he/she may be.

USE AN APPROPRIATE NEGOTIATING STYLE FOR THE SITUATION

This is a negotiation session, *not* a formal hearing.

Insist on acting as the boss's equal

 In where people are and whether they stand or sit

 In forms of address (e.g. "Mary" versus "Mr. Smith")

Respond with dignity if provoked or disrespected

 Maintain emotional control, but insist on respect,

 If you can=t get respect, end the meeting until management will give it.

You can be either tough or easy-going (within reason either way), depending on factors such as:

 The personalities of the participants, and the relationships among them.

 The strength and/or importance of the grievance

 The degree of the supervisor's fault

 The possibilities for compromise

Be prepared to shift styles if necessary, e.g. in response to the supervisor=s behavior

The sole criterion is what will work best

USE TIME-TESTED NEGOTIATING TECHNIQUES

Begin by stating the grievance clearly, completely, concisely

 What happened

 What was violated

 What you want

Sell the requested remedy by explaining why:

 It is not so hard for management to do

 It may be good for everyone

 The alternative is harsh or otherwise unjust

Leave management a way to agree with you without losing face

Don't foreclose the possibility of other remedies

If management disagrees with the requested remedy, ask:

 What specific problem(s) he or she has with it

 What modifications or additions might make it acceptable

 What other solution she or he thinks would be better

Be prepared to respond creatively to legitimate management concerns

If supervisor is reasonable & tries to resolve the matter, let him or her know that you appreciate it.

If supervisor is avoiding settlement, make clear you intend to go to the next step if necessary