

**CUPE Workshop
Steward Learning Series**

**Roseland Golf & Curling Club
Windsor, Ontario**

September 17/18, 2011

I attended the CUPE Steward Learning Series workshop which included Handling Grievances, Building Your Case and Disability Issues for Stewards.

The course was taught by Bobby Nand who was extremely interesting and continually gave great examples of each aspect of the course as we went. Although I have not been involved in the grievance process, with each educational component, I am becoming more confident and knowledgeable about the way unions work as well as the processes and reasoning behind it.

We touched on sections such as the four different kinds of Harassment (Verbal, Physical/Sexual, Ethno-racial and Disability), grievance language, how to properly fill out a grievance form, create a grievance file with all the pertinent information, etc..

One of the points I found most interesting was role-playing an actual grievance itself. Bobby played Management (as well as having 2 students on his side of the table), and on the Union side, there was a note-taker, the griever and the Steward representing the employee. It was quite interesting how the scenes played out in 4 different scenarios from questions being asked, HOW they were asked by both sides (in tone and wording), and the difficulty keeping accurate notes throughout the process. Bobby stressed you should not be taking notes in your own words, but doing the records verbatim. I didn't realise how difficult this process is if you are trying to both speak as well as take notes – almost impossible to keep accurate. The instructor also gave tips on how to keep the note-taking quick by using shortcuts such as using your own short-forms, suggested short-forms and such.

What a great weekend – it was an enjoyable course, great venue and excellent networking with other groups around the area to see how they are currently getting the job done.

Yours in solidarity,
Marg Lemoine
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