



The School for Democratic Management at DAWI

Member Rights & Responsibilities Group Activity

Purpose: To gain practice in creating a list of rights and responsibilities that is meaningful to the group, and that is short enough to remember and put into practice.

Time: 55 minutes

Step 1: 5 minutes

- Everyone read the following scenario:

You are all members of an 18 member recycling cooperative. Your cooperative has been in operation since 2016. When you legally formed, you created a list of member rights and responsibilities that are codified in your bylaws. However, because you have grown from the original group of ten founders, and because you have a feeling that your cooperative's ownership culture is not very strong, you want to revisit your list of rights and responsibilities. Your executive committee has met and decided to refresh this list with all the members in a special meeting. During this meeting, you want to encourage all members to come up with new ideas that will help make their work and ownership life more meaningful. You also want to address any problems people are detecting that might indicate some people are taking on too many responsibilities while others seem to be slacking.

Step 2: 5 minutes

- Assign roles:
 - Assign a note taker and a timekeeper.
 - Assign a facilitator to share the meeting POP, and move the members at your special meeting through this agenda to the outcome.

Step 3: 35 minutes

- Pretend you are in a special member meeting to create your updated list of rights and responsibilities.
- First, the facilitator communicates the meeting POP and leads the members through the following meeting (5 minutes)
 - Purpose: Update our member rights and responsibilities
 - Outcome: Rights & Responsibilities that are relevant and unique to our cooperative culture today
 - Process/Agenda
 - Review existing rights and responsibilities as written in the bylaws
 - Come up with a list of any additions
 - Analyze the list

- Identify where there is agreement
- Second, everyone reads the legal rights and responsibilities in your bylaws (5 minutes)
- Third, using a flip chart, generate some new ideas for rights and responsibilities based on your experience of work and ownership. (10 minutes)
 - The notetaker will draw a line down the middle of the paper and write Rights on the top on the left side, and Responsibilities on the right side.
 - When creating your list consider the following:
 - i. Your experience as a worker in your industry.
 - ii. The four corner posts.
 - iii. The total number of bylaws to be manageable.
 - iv. The balance of rights and responsibilities
- Fourth, analyze your list and make decisions about priorities (15 minutes)

Once you have generated your list, then analyze it to determine if it is:

 - Balanced: are there more rights than responsibilities or vice versa, is that ok with you? If not, what do you want to adjust?
 - Review the total number of rights and responsibilities
 - Try to keep it manageable - whatever that means to your co-op
 - Consider if the new rights and responsibilities are covering all four corner posts (money, information, power and people). If not, is there anything to add?
 - Once you have discussed these issues, as a group, decide on your top 6-8 priority rights and 6-8 priority responsibilities. Circle the ones that you weren't able to agree on.

Step 4: Presentation (10 minutes)

- Post your final list of rights & responsibilities on a flip chart.
- Share your top priorities aloud with the entire class.
- Take mental note of similarities and differences between your list and the others'.