

Employee Relations (Unionised Setting)

In periods of rapid change, engaging employees and maximising productivity are essential success factors. Beyond survival, organisations that thrive develop a strong alignment between the goals of the organisation and the needs of staff and their representative organisations. In some organisations, developing a positive relationship between managers, employees and union representatives is problematical. Poor quality relationships - and the low trust which flows from this - can be a major barrier to developing a high commitment culture. Reviewing and re-gearing the industrial/employee relations strategy and practices allows organisations to break the stalemate which often exists and move forward. How is this done?



Step 1: How Are Things Now?

In helping organisations to review their employee relations strategy, our approach focuses on what's happening now. We analyse and review your current strategy – whether stated or implicit in actions – alongside existing procedures and practices. The intent is to establish whether current practices support the business goals. This review can be completed directly with the senior team or can be more extensive i.e. involving managers and employees in a consultation process. The available time and resources along with the overall goals of the exercise will dictate the route. Overall, our approach is *action oriented*, rather than *academic*.

The Outcome: Key 'gaps' will be identified i.e. aspects of the industrial and employee relations system that influence organisational performance. In particular we will identify procedures and practices that are no longer 'fit for purpose', that waste time or generate negative energy within the organisation. If desired, we can benchmark current systems and practices against leading organisations in the field.

Step 2: How Do Things Need to Be in the Near Future?

This step involves identifying specific improvements that need to be made by asking: *'how would the proposed change help to drive the business strategy?'* Client organisations are unique with distinctive challenges - in terms of history, culture, products and people. There is no one-size-fits-all solution and we will develop a customized approach for your organisation. Again, this exercise can be conducted directly with the senior team or designed as a highly participative 'culture changing' exercise, engaging managers, employees and representatives. Either way, the outcome will be a clear roadmap for changes and improvements to the current employee relations strategy. Typical areas for reform which emerge are:

Procedural Agreements: Consultation, negotiation, grievance and disciplinary procedures.

Employee Involvement: Information sharing, team working, project groups.

Reward Practices: The extent to which these support/detract from business objectives.

Change Practices: Consultation and involvement in major change initiatives.

Step 3: How Can These Changes Be Implemented?

Introducing changes in industrial/employee relations is similar to introducing changes generally. The Paul Mooney Partnership approach to managing change equips leaders and teams with the necessary 'thinking and tools' to confidently drive the change themselves. While we guide the process, you stay firmly in the driving seat. Our role is to intervene as necessary to keep projects on track (or where you specifically request support). This approach combines the skills of the consulting team alongside the depth of understanding which exists internally.