



Tips for Reps and Activists

RECRUITMENT, RETENTION AND MANAGING MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

Basics For Reps

- The union is only as strong as the organisation of its rank-and-file members, so your role in recruiting and retaining members is crucial.
- Speak to every new member of staff, whether they are new to LUL or just new to your workplace. Ask management to tell you when new starters are coming, and check duty sheets regularly for new names. Check with all new staff that s/he is an RMT member, if not persuade him/her to join. Introduce yourself as the rep and make sure that s/he feels welcome and knows how to contact you.
- Talk to non-members. They may be new and have not got round to joining, they may have questions or criticisms: it is important that you hear these and respond. You may persuade staff to join. Or you may find that they are dyed-in-the-wool anti-trade-unionists or loyal members of another union. Nothing ventured, nothing gained!
- Always have RMT membership forms with you. Familiarise yourself with how people can join on the RMT website. Make sure that information on how to join is in every union notice case and on every leaflet you produce.
- Make sure that RMT has a high profile around your workplace. Keep notice cases up-to-date. Encourage members to wear an RMT badge at work. Talk with people.
- If there are several workplaces in the area you cover as rep, call in regularly at those where you don't work.

Keep Up-To-Date

- Keeping our membership lists up-to-date helps to identify lapsed members, ensures that the people we represent are actually members, makes sure the union has the right contact details so members receive RMT News and can vote in ballots and elections, and also helps when organising for disputes.
- You should maintain this information and liaise with your branch's Membership Secretary.
- You can get the current membership list for your group either via your branch's Membership Secretary or directly from the Membership Department at RMT head office.
- When you check your membership list, it is an ideal time to recruit new members, inform members of what is going on around the combine and update union notice cases. It also shows the membership that the RMT is an active grassroots organisation.
- Use the list to identify non-members and talk to them.
- Get the 'leavers and joiners' list for your location from your branch. Seek out new members, welcome them and explain how they can get more active. Also talk to people who are listed as 'leavers'. This may be a simple mistake by their bank that they can put right, or it may be a more serious issue that you need to address.
- Remind members that if they change address, grade, location or name, they must tell the union.

Recruit, Retain, Activate

- If you plan recruitment days on your group, liaise with your Branch Secretary and invite a level 2 rep to help. We can bring recruitment material and spend time on your group assisting.
- If there is bad feeling about the union in your workplace, engage with it before it leads to members leaving. Ask people what they are upset about. They may have a valid criticism, so explain to them how to make their point, get them along to a branch meeting, talk through how RMT's democracy and accountability works. On the other hand, they may have got the wrong end of the stick, and you will need to put them straight. Or someone who is anti-RMT may be stirring things up – if so, you need to counter their arguments and help others to do so too.
- Seek out activists from the area you represent who can aid you in your role as a rep. Members who are actively involved in the union locally can improve the effectiveness of the union and make us more representative. Being a local rep can be demanding, so getting members to help with updating notice cases, recruitment and pointing other members in the right direction can ease your workload.. It also shows that the union is a collective body of workers, not just an individual rep.

