



ATT BARGAINING 2009-2010

VICE PRESIDENT,
BARGAINING CHAIR AND
ELECTED MEMBER
INTERVIEWS



NATIONAL BARGAINING...A GOOD IDEA OR NOT? (VICE PRESIDENTS)

- Did not have enough quality discussion before making final determination
- Needed better communication about decision
- Did allow teams to keep their own underlying health plan administrative rules.
- Many think yes, it allows for more input
- Gives us more leverage
- Easier to get to a framework for a settlement
- No, avoids potential conflict because of differences

NATIONAL BARGAINING...A GOOD IDEA OR NOT? (BARGAINING CHAIRS)

- Many say Yes and believe a good idea
- Economic issues weren't decided collectively
- Easier to stick together-too hard when physically separate
- Better leverage—potential for better results

NATIONAL BARGAINING...A GOOD IDEA OR NOT? (ELECTED REPS)

- Many believe yes
- No guarantees it would have a different outcome
- More strength and solidarity
- Can have national table and still have regional differences
- Felt like one table bargained the economics. Also some impact on other key items
- ATT operates as one company
- Disagreements separated us

JANUARY STRATEGY MEETING PLANNING AND EXECUTION (ALL)

- Overall almost everyone thought meeting was a good thing to do and our plan was good
- We need to recognize that there are two parties at the table
- Communication on plan needed more clarity

JANUARY STRATEGY MEETING PLANNING AND EXECUTION (VP)

- Communication doesn't equal coordination
- Strategic Watch list lost value
- Everyone didn't communicate equally
- Needed more discussion about key items up front
- Working together was hard. We could have done a better job

JANUARY STRATEGY MEETING PLANNING AND EXECUTION (BC)

- ATT bargained from Dallas
- Difficult to deal with items on list
- Difficult to work through coordinated items and involve all committees
- Took too long
- Different Expectations
- Mood shifted after first settlement

JANUARY STRATEGY MEETING PLANNING AND EXECUTION (ER)

- Lack of clarity, thought would be more united
- People left with different understanding
- Didn't manage expectations well
- Thought we would be more together
- Rank and file should have been part of communication from the beginning

JANUARY STRATEGY MEETING PLANNING AND EXECUTION (ER)

- Aggressively sold unity. Slogan hurt us after the first TA in the Midwest. Lost sense of unity
- Chairs did great, had a lot on their plate
- Not always aware of info from other tables
- Strategic Watch list more problematic, should have done a “deeper dive” on the issues
- Given external factors worked as well as it could

HOW EFFECTIVE WAS OUR COMMUNICATIONS? (VP)

- Vice President should have had a face to face meetings
- Different levels of communications between vice presidents, chairs and teams.
- Not enough quality conversation on issues up front
- Vice president calls should have had more purpose and strategy instead of sharing.
- Needed more real time communication from everyone
- Calls did allow for organized communication.
- Need better communication with bargaining teams
- Different traditions and personalities impacted flow of info.

HOW EFFECTIVE WAS OUR COMMUNICATIONS? (BC)

- Calls good, but then everyone went own way
- Did know where people were at
- Mixed thoughts on having rank and file on calls
- Learned something every time
- Face to face would have been helpful
- Info from calls leaked out beyond committees, not held in confidence
- Tone changed after first settlement
- Good support from other chairs.

HOW EFFECTIVE WAS OUR COMMUNICATIONS? (ER)

- Rank and File should have been on calls from beginning.
- Should have been calls with the committees together
- People weren't always open and honest
- Felt like some districts didn't want to share
- Needed more direction from the top
- Some knew a lot more than others
- Liked having each table focus on one of the coordinated item
- Felt like we weren't coordinated, we were on our own
- Communication felt like too late for input, it was after the fact
- Issues on the strategic watch list were problematic
- Traditions and attitudes about sharing information were different

HOW EFFECTIVE WERE THE TWO VIDEO CONFERENCES AND THE UNITY @ATT? (ALL)

- Mixed results on video conferences
- Some felt very effective good feedback from members
- Most mentioned the technology problems
- Some thought not good because it wasn't specific enough for members
- Most thought we should continue to explore other ways to communicate
- Positive comments about the Unity @ ATT.

HOW EFFECTIVE WAS OUR MOBILIZATION PLAN AND STRATEGY? (VP)

- Poor job integrating bargaining and mobilization strategy
- Challenging when six vice presidents bargaining
- EVP needed to ensure that happened
- Felt like we bargained from a position of weakness
- Terrible, no accountability. National should play that role
- Pushed as far as we could if we weren't going to escalate
- Could have looked at other options, intermittent strikes, etc
- For some the slogan became the strategy, created problems

HOW EFFECTIVE WAS OUR MOBILIZATION PLAN AND STRATEGY? (BC)

- Need to determine how to create more leverage
- ATT wasn't moved, kept coming for more
- LBFO needed stronger unified reaction
- Should have been more militant and aggressive
- Seemed to have no impact at table. Managers locally noticed
- No one expected ATT to bargain like they did
- Hard to craft message when MW settled
- Needed a plan B when things changed
- Slogan good until first settlement
- No escalation of activity, could have reached out to other unions/ JWW, etc.

HOW EFFECTIVE WAS OUR MOBILIZATION PLAN AND STRATEGY? (ER)

- Geared members up to fight, didn't follow through
- Too our credit, kept up steam
- Dallas centric was a surprise
- Bad year to bargain
- Mixed feelings about involving mobility
- Need more accountability
- Needed more coordination
- Not enough Local participation in some areas. Staff needs to play role in following up with locals
- Should have communicated how bad it was at table

HOW EFFECTIVE WAS OUR MOBILIZATION PLAN AND STRATEGY? (ER)

- Shareholders meeting was a missed opportunity
- People got burned out over time
- Didn't seem to make a difference at the table
- Membership thought no one would settle until everyone settled.
- Felt let down after LBFO
- Need to use SIF more effectively
- Mobilization needed to get in ATT's pockets
- Slogan was misunderstood
- Need more public events that ensure ATT leaders attention
- More escalation

HOW WAS THE SUPPORT FROM RESEARCH AND PR? (ALL)

- Overall very positive comments about research support
- Felt like they had good support and lots of help in a timely manner
- Overall positive comments on PR

HOW WAS THE SUPPORT FROM PRESIDENT AND EVP? (ALL)

- Sometimes it seemed like we weren't on the same page
- Our roles were not clearly defined.
- Main link into ATT out of DC was from Randall to Larry.
- There were times we needed more control from DC
- EVP had oversight but no authority
- Felt like we started strong and then lost our way, needed more leadership

HOW EFFECTIVE WERE WE AT BALANCING UNITY AND AUTONOMY? (VP)

- Became a victim of our slogan
- Sometimes can't reach consensus, then DC should decide
- Structure isn't going to fix everything
- Hard to maintain unity in a democracy
- Not sure we really wanted unity over autonomy
- Need more education about legal limitations of separate agreements
- 'No structure itself is going to overcome failures to communicate, lack of honesty and clarity.'

HOW EFFECTIVE WERE WE AT BALANCING UNITY AND AUTONOMY? (BC)

- Slogan created false expectation
- Not enough understanding of legal obligation.
- Political realities impact unity
- We need to work towards consensus and then vote
- We need to recognize key differences

HOW EFFECTIVE WERE WE AT BALANCING UNITY AND AUTONOMY? (ER)

- Did not balance effectively
- Slogan misleading
- We played lip service to solidarity.
- Hard to manage without regional table
- Things were settled at one table that impacted others
- No opportunity to really bargain over big issues
- Felt like Vice Presidents not on same page

HOW EFFECTIVE WERE WE AT BALANCING UNITY AND AUTONOMY? (ER)

- We started together
- Thought everyone was going to be on same page but didn't feel that way
- We need better education for members
- More meetings ahead of time to plan
- We need a better connection
- Our guiding principle needs to be what is good for overall union
- Huge challenges, different areas have different needs, different experiences
- Members see CWA as one, not as piece parts
- Lack of unity big problem, need some autonomy
- "Members only have autonomous concerns to the extent leaders tell them to"

FINAL THOUGHTS (ALL)

- We need to look ahead and focus on how we can make a difference
- Better coordination across the board, non-disclosure and trips home
- Explore better uses for SIF
- Need to understand impact in RTW states
- Begin planning and education earlier
- Don't be afraid to use outside experts to come up with new ideas
- We need better bargaining reports
- Endless bargaining hard on committees
- Attacking each other doesn't accomplish anything.
- Always have a Plan B

COMMON THEMES

- National Bargaining could be valuable for economic items, wages, pensions, benefits
- Structure itself does not fix anything. Execution of the plan is the key.
- A mobilization strategy needs to be integrally tied to and coordinated with bargaining.
- Recognize the power of a slogan.

COMMON THEMES

- Accountability for mobilization is important.
- Our mobilization needs to make a difference at the table.
- Communication-we need to recognize that we have different traditions/personalities that impact the flow of information
- Need communication among all of the team members.

COMMON THEMES

- Communication is important-Clarity is imperative.
- We need to do more education of our leaders, our bargaining teams and our members.
- There are two sides at the table, we have to be able to adjust to what is happening.