

WINNING A RECORD CONTRACT



**A Case Study of the
2024 Contract Bargaining
Campaign at Daimler Truck**

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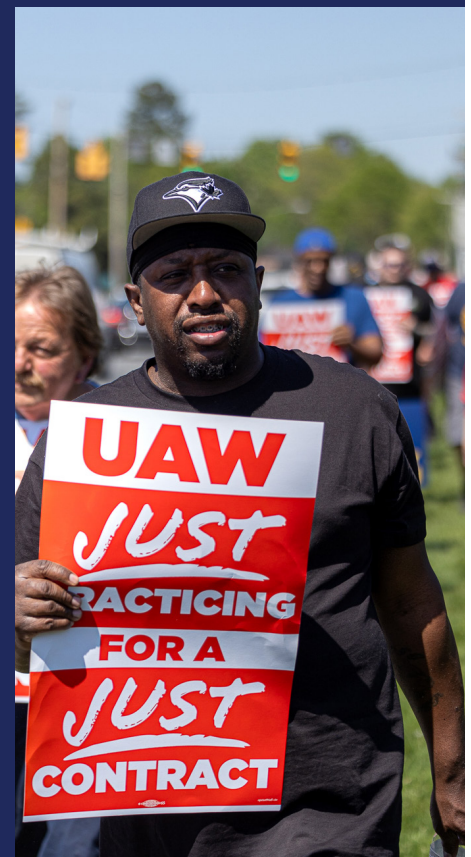
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Putting the ‘Collective’ back into ‘Collective Bargaining’

After seeing the incredible success of the UAW’s Stand Up Strike at Ford, General Motors and Stellantis, the 7,300 UAW members who build Freightliner and Western Star Trucks and Thomas Built Buses for Daimler Truck North America (DTNA) knew that if they wanted a record contract to match their employer’s record profits, then they would need to do things differently.

So, the Daimler Council reached out to the UAW’s newly created Department of Bargaining Strategies and got the support they needed to go into contract negotiations with bold demands and a plan to win.

This was only the second time the council bargained jointly at a master “common table.” The Daimler

Council was demanding an end to wage tiers, record wage increases, COLA, and profit sharing for the first time in the company’s history. Management was pushing hard for concessions—like increasing healthcare costs—and was adamant that the company would never agree to the union’s demands, especially the end of wage tiers.

But Daimler workers united together across the company’s different products, across plants, across locals, and even across states to collectively pressure the boss and build to a credible strike threat.

On the last day of bargaining, with just hours to go before an all-out strike, the company crumbled like a soggy biscuit—and UAW members won a historic deal.

What We Won in Our Contract



- ▶ **NO CONCESSIONS**
Stopped Daimler’s push to increase healthcare costs.
- ▶ **RECORD WAGE INCREASES**
25% raise over 4 years. 16% in first year.
- ▶ **PROFIT SHARING**
First time ever.
- ▶ **ENDED WAGE TIERS**
Raising wages so equal work means equal pay.
- ▶ **INCREASED JOB SECURITY**
More guaranteed product in our plants.
- ▶ **SKILLED TRADES RAISES**
Major gains on top of the 25% general wage increases.
- ▶ **COST OF LIVING ALLOWANCE (COLA)**
Inflation protection.

What is Power & How Do We Build It?

Walter Reuther once said “power is the ability of a labor union like the UAW to make the most powerful corporation in the world—General Motors—say ‘yes’ when it wants to say ‘no.’”

To build that kind of power, we have to approach collective bargaining differently.

The key lesson to learn from the success of The Stand Up Strike at the Big Three, as well as the record contract won at Daimler, is that our union can win strong contracts by:

- ▶ identifying the most popular and most important (or, “widely and deeply felt”) demands
- ▶ proactively organizing our coworkers around those demands
- ▶ being more transparent with members and the public about what’s going on in negotiations
- ▶ using collective action in and around the workplace to pressure the company into saying “Yes” at the bargaining table.

Involving members in the collective bargaining process is not only how we build trust and unity, but essential to building the power we need to win. We need to put the ‘collective’ back in ‘collective bargaining.’ At Daimler, as in the Big Three negotiations, when members are given the choice to fight and win—they Stand Up and fight!

It’s also crucial to remember that employers also have a playbook—one based on fear, uncertainty, and division. Management will do everything they can to drag out negotiations and send the

message that it’s futile to fight for anything more than what the company has offered.

They will threaten to send jobs to other countries where they can more harshly exploit workers. They will play up public fears that a strike will harm the economy and make them uncompetitive. The boss will also try to divide our union by isolating the bargaining team. Management knows that they will have the upper hand in negotiations if they can turn bargaining into a fight between the employer and a small group of union activists negotiating in private with no support from their coworkers.

Experience has proven over and over again that **member participation isn’t just a good idea or the right thing to do—it’s the source of our power!**

And that is important because a strong contract isn’t solely won by having the facts on our side or the best arguments at the bargaining table. If that were the case, we would win a record contract every time we go into negotiations! The truth is: what we win at the bargaining table is dependent on the power we build in the workplace.

That power isn’t built in a day.

A strong contract is won by a membership that has been involved long before bargaining begins and has a meaningful role every step of the way until a contract is ratified.

By keeping coworkers informed, we show the boss that we mean business and that their plan to divide us won’t work.

How to Jump Start Negotiations



The bargaining team and the membership are like jumper cables; they only work when they're connected. That means we have to bring our workplace power into bargaining, and we need to bring bargaining into the workplace. We do that by building a representative bargaining team and clearly communicating updates in real time.

What the Daimler campaign shows us is that meaningful progress in negotiations most often happens when we create a crisis—like a very credible strike threat—for the employer.

Power is the ability to make management say “yes” when they want to say “no.”

Here are the keys to building power:

- ▶ Identify “widely and deeply felt” demands to unite and organize everyone around.
- ▶ Do NOT give the boss the upper hand by agreeing to ground rules that prohibit the bargaining team from updating their coworkers about what is happening in negotiations.
- ▶ DO have a plan for sending out regular bargaining updates that keeps everyone informed about what is happening in negotiations.
- ▶ Use collective action to pressure the company into agreeing to our demands—and create a crisis for the boss.

Climbing the Campaign Mountain

Daimler workers won a record contract by running a textbook contract campaign.

What's a contract campaign?

A contract campaign is a collective action plan with a beginning, middle, and end, working towards specific demands that we are trying to win.

A contract campaign has a target—someone who can give us what we want. And a contract campaign involves a series of escalating actions over time which progressively turn up the heat on the target and create the conditions for winning our demands.

Below is what is called a “campaign mountain.” This is a visual representation of some different phases of a typical contract campaign.

The campaign mountain helps us identify and plan in advance some of the ingredients we need to win, so that we can put them together in a way that maximizes our success.

Campaigns are critical to shifting the balance of power in our workplaces and industries. They also help us build confidence in each other and our ability to win when we are united. They win in the short term, and they build our muscle for winning in the long term.

The Peak of Our Strength

Escalation Period

Resolution

Kick-off

Foundation

Laying the Foundation



This phase happens before bargaining begins. Here are some of the actions the Daimler Council took during this period:

- ▶ The Daimler Council held weekly digital **planning meetings** to plan out their contract campaign and discuss what was going on in their shops.
 - ▶ Working with the Communications Department, they put together an electronic **bargaining survey** that could be shared using a QR code. This survey helped the Council learn what the top priorities were across all of Daimler as well as in each of their individual shops. It was also critically important as a way to gather contact information so that bargaining updates could be emailed and texted to members.
 - ▶ The bargaining survey resulted in the “**Member Demands.**” These demands were widely and
- deeply felt issues that the Council publicized at the campaign kick-off and brought to the bargaining table.
 - ▶ They created a **timeline for actions** starting with the contract campaign kick-off and culminating in a strike.
 - ▶ They worked with Research to **analyze the company**. This helped to inform their bargaining demands and messaging. Using the research, the Daimler Council put together a slide called “Daimler Truck By the Numbers” that was first publicized at the campaign kick-off.
 - ▶ At the campaign kick-off, workers made it clear: the contract expiration was a **deadline**, not a reference point! If a deal was not reached by then, UAW members at Daimler would be going on strike!

Daimler Member Demands

- No Concessions
- Record wage increases
- Company-wide profit sharing
- No tiers on wages or benefits
- Fair and equitable wage scales regardless of facility or product
- Premium affordable health insurance for workers and our families
- COLA to protect wages from inflation
- Right to strike to protect our jobs and communities
- The right of non-union Daimler employees to join UAW free of intimidation
- More paid time off to be with families and recover from illness
- Job security
- Improved Safety Language



DAIMLER TRUCK

BY THE NUMBERS

Since 2018, profits soared while Daimler Truck workers fell behind.

+90%

▲
Profit

+24%

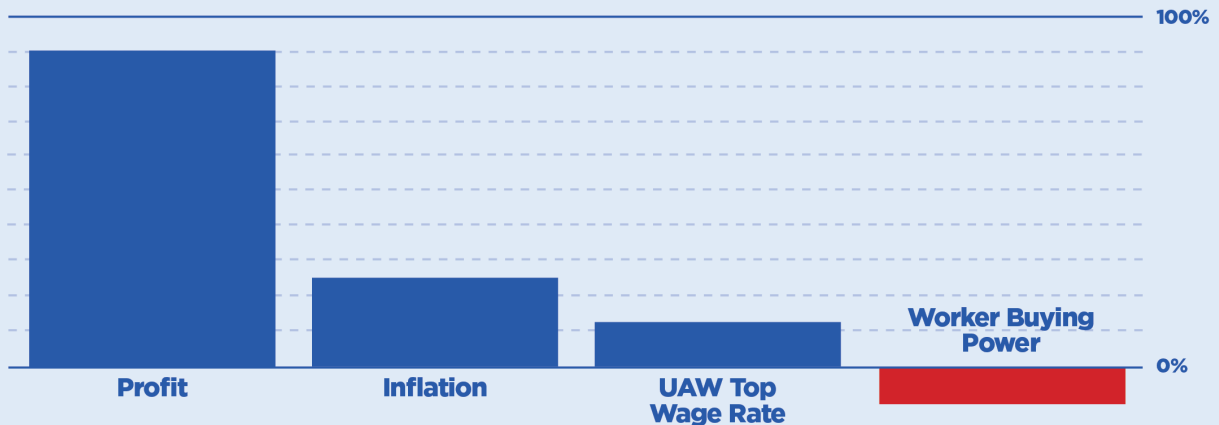
▲
Inflation

+11%

▲
**UAW Top
Wage Rate**

-13%

▼
**Worker Buying
Power**



2023 Snapshot: Daimler shareholders win big while workers lose out.

+39%

Profit

+104%

CEO Pay

**\$1.8
Billion**

**Shareholder
distributions**

+46%

**2024 Proposed
dividends increase**

+2%

**UAW top
wage rate**



UAW.org/Daimler

Campaign Kick-Off



This is where we publicly launch our campaign. The Daimler Council organized a massive rally at one of their locals. This rally featured a number of speakers, including UAW President Shawn Fain, and accomplished many things all at once:

- ▶ The rally was broadcast over Facebook Live and had a great turnout, so it publicly demonstrated to the company that Daimler workers are fired up and ready to do what it takes to win a strong contract.
- ▶ The Council unveiled the “Daimler Truck by the Numbers” data, which showed that the company was raking in massive profits while Daimler workers had gone backwards. The company could afford to make things right: “Record Profits = Record Contract” was 100% justified.

- ▶ The “Members Demands” were unveiled. These were the bargaining positions that united and excited Daimler workers across all the shops.
- ▶ The locals announced the dates, times, and locations for practice pickets being organized at work locations across the country in the lead up to the contract expiring and a potential strike.



Escalation



Actions should be timed to best support what is happening in bargaining. Ideally, these actions build intensity and participation over time—culminating in our peak of strength. The escalation phase typically starts with lower intensity actions—such as signing petitions and red shirt days—and builds to higher intensity actions, such as practice pickets. To win, we must keep showing the boss we are ready and able to turn up the heat.

Daimler workers engaged in a number of actions:

- ▶ When management came back with insulting counter proposals, the bargaining team recorded a video of all of them throwing it in the trash.
- ▶ Members organized red shirt days and published photos on social media of workers grouped together in the workplace holding up rally signs.
- ▶ Daimler workers covered their workplace in homemade “Tick Tock” signs, telling the company that the countdown clock to a strike was ticking.
- ▶ Daimler workers organized practice pickets at their workplaces to show the company they were getting ready to do the real thing when the contract expired.
- ▶ After management said they couldn’t afford members’ demands, Daimler negotiators used UAW research to put together a powerful presentation showing that the company could. The Daimler bargaining team then shared that information out in the shop, so everyone knew that the company was lying and that workers weren’t going to back down.
- ▶ When the company passed out bargaining updates with the boss’s spin on negotiations, members published photos and videos on social media of management’s updates being thrown in the trash, flushed down the toilet, and even set on fire!
- ▶ Daimler locals worked together to organize and promote a massive rally the day after the contract expired with the message to the company: this is either a strike rally or a celebration for reaching an agreement!

Peak of Strength



This is when we take the most intense action we are building towards. At Daimler, that meant building to our most powerful weapon: the strike!

The Daimler contract expired at midnight on April 26. We announced that President Fain would be holding a Facebook Live at 10 pm on April 26 to announce to the world whether we had a deal or whether Daimler workers were going on strike. That was the company's deadline.

At 9:50 pm—after weeks of escalating actions and hard bargaining—President Fain and the negotiating team told the company they could either sign all the remaining proposals or we were announcing a strike.

Management caved, and Daimler workers won a historic agreement.

Resolution



Transparency and participation don't come to an end just because we won an incredible tentative agreement.

The Daimler Council made history by also rolling out their tentative agreement in new ways:

- ▶ The full contract with markups and changed language was published online along with the highlighters. The highlighters included page numbers and links to the contract, so everyone could easily find the language and read it for themselves.
- ▶ The Daimler Council made short videos explaining some of the most important contract gains.
- ▶ Locals organized roll out meetings where everyone could turnout and collectively review the highlighter and printed versions of the contract together and have all their questions answered.
- ▶ Following the roll out meetings and enough time to review and discuss the tentative agreement, the locals organized ratification votes on the same day. **The result was historic: record turnout and a record 94.5% yes vote.**

Busting Some Myths About Bargaining

MYTH

It's irresponsible to share our demands before we go into bargaining. We shouldn't raise expectations too high.

TRUTH

Corporate profits have soared over the last few years, hitting a 70-year high in 2022. Income inequality in the United States has now risen to heights not seen since the Great Depression. Workers should be demanding more in this moment—and so should our unions! The only way to win bold demands is by boldly fighting for them together.

MYTH

Bargaining behind closed doors is the responsible way to bargain. This is how we have always done things in the UAW.

TRUTH

Involving members in the collective bargaining process is not only how we build trust and unity, but essential to building the power we need to win. The more we inform and involve our coworkers, the more power we have! For that reason, bargaining teams should NEVER agree to ground rules that bar them from talking about the status of bargaining with the membership or the public. This language ONLY helps management—after all, the boss already knows everything you are bargaining over, since they are in the room!

MYTH

Bargaining is a give-and-take. To get something, you have to give something up.

TRUTH

Bargaining is about power, plain and simple. We take what we have the power to win. At Daimler, we told the company that we would accept no concessions and we meant it!

Bargaining Updates Primer



Why do bargaining updates?

Keeping members up-to-date about negotiations builds unity and strength. It also counters the company's message. By having bargaining updates, you:

- ▶ **Build member buy-in.** When members can follow what is happening at the table, they are ready to escalate.
- ▶ **Arm members with information.** By understanding negotiations, members can share what is happening with their family, their friends and their community.
- ▶ **Pressure the company.** Management can see exactly how serious members are about winning a strong contract.

3-Step Guide to Bargaining Updates

Step 1: Make a Plan to Reach Members with Relevant Updates

- ▶ **Before bargaining begins, have members share contact information** and language preference if your shop is multilingual. That way everyone can stay updated.
- ▶ **Figure out how to best reach members.** Is it with fliers, texts, emails, social media posts, livestreams or something else? It's likely a combination.
- ▶ **Put out a bargaining survey** to identify members' demands before bargaining begins. Make sure your updates reflect members' issues.

Step 2: Craft a Core Message, Have a Clear Review Process

- ▶ **Go into bargaining with a core message.** An example is the tagline "Record profits mean record contracts" from 2023 Big Three bargaining.
- ▶ **Know who's writing and reviewing updates.** Before bargaining starts, designate a point person at the table who will share draft text for the updates. When there's a final draft, know who the final approver(s) are, and whether updates will need legal review.

Step 3: Keep Updates Clear & Concise, Engage & Agitate Members

- ▶ **Think KISS (Keep It Simple, Stupid)** If your updates are too long and complicated, your key points will be lost.
- ▶ **Be transparent and assume the world is watching.** Be open and honest about negotiations so members trust you, not the company. Assume everyone will see your updates. Keep them accurate so the boss and negative press can't undermine them.
- ▶ **Avoid information overload.** Make sure members know what's going on after each session, especially as things get heated later in bargaining. But be mindful about your pace of communication on each platform. Texting people five days in a row early in bargaining could lead to opt-outs, while sharing on a Facebook group will not.
- ▶ **Involve and agitate members.** Include a "call-to-action" for members in your updates. For example, announce practice pickets that keep members engaged and pressure the company.

Reinforcing Core Messages

Daimler Truck Bargaining Update

It's Time for a Record Contract!

We've been very clear with Daimler Truck: Record Profits mean Record Contracts for UAW members in Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina.

United at our common negotiating table, representatives from our six UAW locals put forward our members' demands. They're ambitious, but totally reasonable changes to contracts at our highly profitable facilities.

Daimler Truck's response is simply outrageous. The company's insulting responses to many of our priority demands continue to reveal what is important to them: hoarding the billions in wealth that we create for CEOs and shareholders, while leaving us further behind.

MEMBERS DEMANDS	DTNA's RESPONSES
No Concessions!	Concessions including increases to health care costs and increasing health insurance premiums by a whopping 66% over 3 years.
Record wage increases - 20% now, 10% 2025, 10% 2026, 10% 2027!	Workers falling further behind with 8% now, 3% 2025, 3% 2026 , while Daimler gave its CEO a 104% raise in 2023.
Company wide profit sharing!	No.
COLA to protect wages from inflation!	No.
Equal pay for equal work across the locals - no more wage tiers based on facility!	No.
Job Security	Reduced build rate at Cleveland and no increase in build rate at Mt. Holly.
Dignity and respect	DTNA lead negotiator laughing in our faces refusing to provide important information, and bargaining in bad faith.

Daimler Truck's choices show they think they can slap us in the face and we won't fight to get what we deserve. But they are wrong!

We are focused. We are united, and we will win - but only if we show the company that we are ready to **STAND UP!**

Ready to STAND UP?

Join pickets at plant gates **this week and on Tuesday, 4/23** to show management we are prepared to do what it takes to win. Make sure you're strike-ready and sign up for a practice picket at UAW.org/Daimler



www.uaw.org

This flier from Daimler Truck bargaining, which also went out as a text graphic, clearly states the members' demands.

Plus, it agitates members by highlighting the insulting response of the boss, and it engages them by including an RSVP for a practice picket.

Keep Members Informed



You can also livestream updates. During Big Three bargaining, UAW President Shawn Fain had a classic moment on Facebook Live when he threw an insulting proposal from management where it belonged—straight into the trash.

Winning Takes Changing

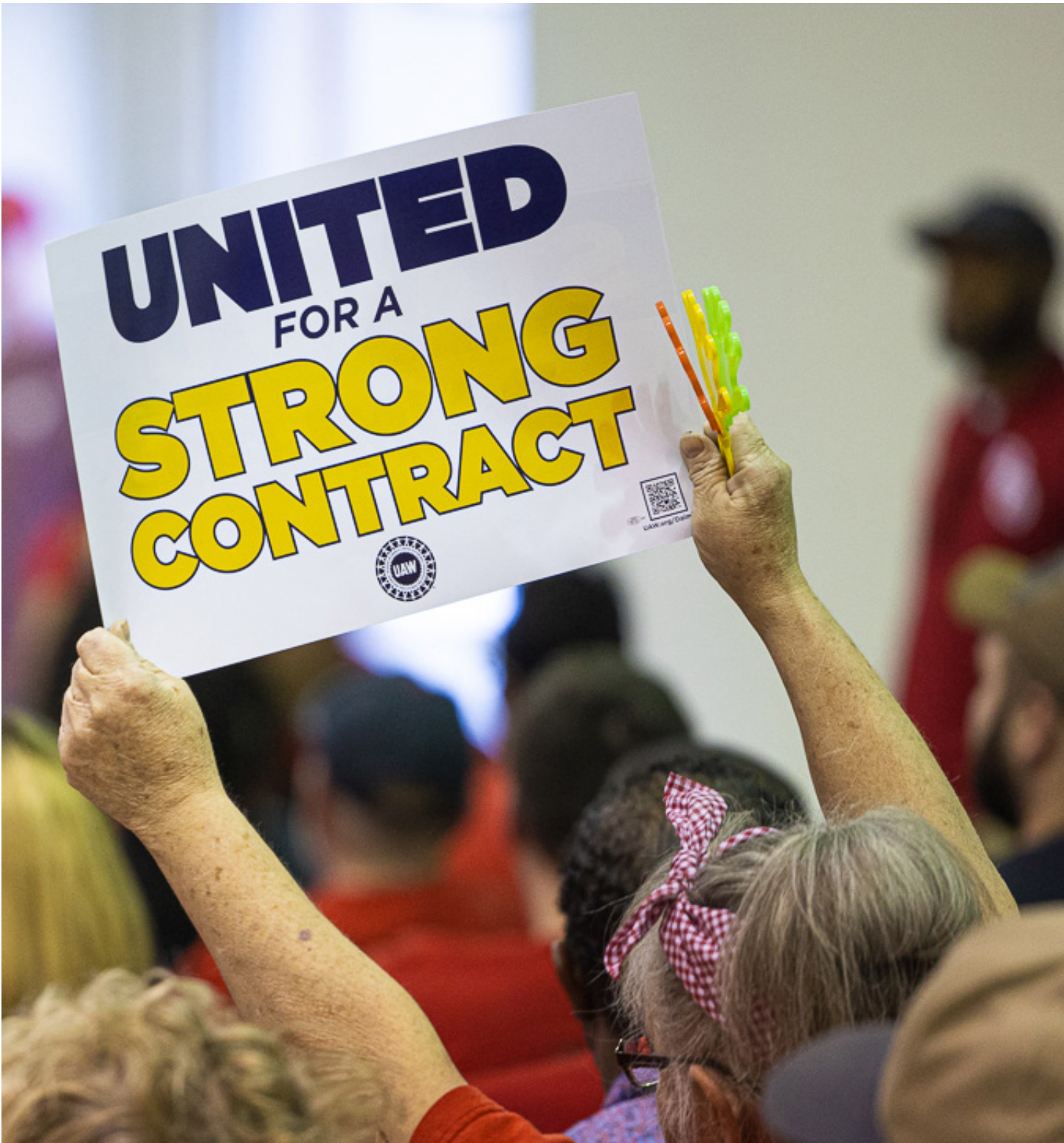
	OLD APPROACH	NEW APPROACH
Attitude towards the employer	Good relationship with management is most important.	Advancing our issues and growing our collective power is most important.
Member input	Small number of members submit resolutions to bargaining team.	Locals organize in the shop to have a strong majority complete a bargaining survey so that we can both prioritize our demands around widely and deeply felt issues and collect contact information so we can mass distribute bargaining updates.
Bargaining approach & communications	No utilization of research to inform bargaining demands and communications; proposals only get shared with management, bargaining team practices “black out bargaining” in which no updates are given to members; don’t push management at the table when they lie about their finances or threaten to offshore work.	Use research to paint a picture about what the company can afford and why; engage in hard bargaining by being clear with the boss, members and the public about what we are fighting for in negotiations; engage in “sunshine bargaining” by sending daily text and e-blasts with bargaining updates to members; call out management’s lies and build our own picture of the company’s finances and ability to offshore production; bring members who were not elected to the bargaining team to the table to speak about our top issues.
Contract Campaign	None. After electing the bargaining team, members just go to work like normal. If the bargaining team can’t reach a deal, everyone is called out on strike with little preparation or communication.	Massive rally to kick off bargaining followed by shop floor actions across all the plants and coordinated practice picketing demonstrating a credible strike threat. Everyone knows what we are fighting for and why we would be going on strike.

Winning Takes Changing

Striking	Don't talk about striking; don't publicly enforce the contract expiration date as a deadline.	Make it clear that the contract expiration date is a deadline and build momentum leading up to the deadline to force management to either give us what we want or face down a strike.
Summary	Weaken ourselves by limiting involvement and not fighting aggressively for bold demands.	Strengthen ourselves by fighting for widely and deeply felt issues and involving as many members as possible every step of the way.

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