**Union Assignment – Case Study**

**Formation of Local 18 of the Canadian Union of Delivery Workers**

After work one day, four drivers of the ABC Courier Company met for coffee and, in the course of their conversation, decide that something had to be done about the way they were being treated at work. The drivers’ wages varied but it seemed that wages averaged a measly $5.60/h (for those who talked about it). It also seemed that the boss’s favourite drivers got much higher wages.

Another problem seemed to be the company’s expectation that, with last-minute notification, the employees would willingly work overtime. This happened frequently and inconvenienced many of the drivers and dispatchers. Most of the dispatchers were women, single mothers and others who had to get home to handle family responsibilities. Also unfair was the requirement that the dispatchers be on the job half an hour prior to their shifts but were not paid for this time. To top it all off, employee benefits were non-existent.

Employees who complained or frequently refused to work later or come in early were notified that they were “redundant” or “not flexible enough” – and fired. Jobs were hard to come by, so the employees grudgingly accepted the situation.

The issue of favouritism also arouse great resentment. Unless you played up to the boss or supervisors, you didn’t get anywhere. The boss’s favourites got better pay and the best delivery routes.

Eventually the situation became intolerable. The employees were tired of being treated unfairly and taken for granted. Over coffee, the four drivers decided to seek the help of a union organizer. They called the offices of the Canadian Union of Delivery Workers and arranged to meet with a union official in secret the next night.

After that meeting, a committed of ABC Courier Company employees was formed. The committee had to go to all employees’ homes – also secretly—to ask them to sign union cards and pay a small fee. Many employees were afraid to sign up, but the organizing drive was very successful and 43 out of 60 employees signed.

The union made an application to the government for the certification as the bargaining agent for all of the employees of the ABC Courier Company. ABC’s management was not happy. They tried to correct some past wrongs and even increased all of the employee’s wages, but the damage had already been done. The government received the application and issued a vote order at the workplace. Weeks later the government sent a representative to the ABC office and set up a polling station. The employees voted in secret to determine if they wanted a union. The union won certification because 70% of the employees voted to join the union.

**Union Assignment**

**Case Study – Labour Unions – Local 18:**

1. List five (5) complaints of the drivers and dispatchers of the ABC Courier company.
2. Which drivers and dispatchers do you think would not want to have a union? Explain your answer.
3. List some of the ways in which a union could help the drivers and dispatchers of the ABC Courier Company.
4. Why was ABC management unhappy about the union applying for certification?

- what did they Try to do?

- why did they not succeed?

**Understanding Union Functions:**

1. Define **union** as it relates to the workplace.
2. Explain what a **grievance** is and give examples of types of grievances you think employees might have.
3. Name some company policies and **benefits** that might be particularly important to employees.
4. Explain the process of **collective bargaining**.
5. Do you think employees who provide **essential services** should have the right to strike? Explain your answer.

- Name two (2) essential services and explain what the effects of each of them going on strike would be.

 6. Would you like to belong to a union? Explain your choice.