

Preamble to the IWW Constitution

The working class and the employing class have nothing in common.

There can be no peace so long as hunger and want are found among millions of the working people and the few, who make up the employing class, have all the good things of life.

Between these two classes a struggle must go on until the workers of the world organize as a class, take possession of the means of production, abolish the wage system, and live in harmony with the earth.

We find that the centering of the management of industries into fewer and fewer hands makes the trade unions unable to cope with the ever-growing power of the employing class. The trade unions foster a state of affairs which allows one set of workers to be pitted against another set of workers in the same industry, thereby helping defeat one another in wage wars. Moreover, the trade unions aid the employing class to mislead the workers into the belief that the working class have interests in common with their employers.

These conditions can be changed and the interest of the working class upheld only by an organization formed in such a way that all its members in any one industry, or in all industries if necessary, cease work whenever a strike or lockout is on in any department thereof, thus making an injury to one an injury to all.

Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work," we must inscribe on our banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wage system."

It is the historic mission of the working class to do away with capitalism. The army of production must be organized, not only for everyday struggle with capitalists, but also to carry on production when capitalism shall have been overthrown. By organizing industrially we are forming the structure of the new society within the shell of the old.



Industrial Workers of the World



The Union for ALL Workers!

What is the IWW?

The IWW is the Industrial Workers of the World (sometimes called “the Wobblies”), a democratic, rank-and-file labor organization dedicated to building workers’ power on the job.

The IWW is run by its members, not by hired staff and union bosses. It has only one full-time paid officer, the General Secretary-Treasurer. All officers are elected each year by the whole membership. There are no “career officers” in the IWW

Local Branches elect their own officers and have complete control over local affairs, as long as they abide by the IWW Constitution. Nobody else can tell workers on a job to go on strike, to end a strike, or to take any other job action.

What Is Organizing?

Organizing is the process by which a group of people take power over some aspect of their lives--on the job or in their communities. The IWW concentrates on organizing our fellow workers in the workplace—where we, as workers, have the industrial power to enforce our demands.

Often, organizing is viewed as 'leaders' selling an external agency to workers to 'represent' them. A vast body of law and huge bureaucracies exist to reinforce such notions. But this is not what our organization is about. The IWW aims to enable groups of working people to build a union and use it to express their needs and desires and to accomplish the changes they want to make in their economic lives.



Why should I join the union?

It is we who plowed the prairies,
built the cities where they trade;
Dug the mines and built the workshops,
endless miles of railroad laid;
Now we stand outcast and starving
'midst the wonders we have made;
But the union makes us strong.
-From *Solidarity Forever*,
Ralph Chaplin,

Work sucks. There's no getting around this fact. We don't work because we want to- we work because we *have* to. If money was no object, nobody would work- if a person works when they don't have to, we call that a hobby. Business owners, politicians, and other union leadership sing the praise of work- because they profit from it. A whole cult of work's virtue has been fostered.

Under capitalism, we work for one reason: To get money. A union is how you, as a worker, get what you deserve. In such an advanced economy as we have today, there is no reason why anyone should have to worry about the bills. Not only that, but we get pushed around, forced to have 'flexible' hours, manipulated, forced to manipulate others, and endure countless other humiliations.

Trying to fix these problems individually is either a surefire route to frustration or a roundabout way to get fired. But your boss can't fire all of you at once, or they won't have a business. That's a union- whether you have an election or not.

In the long term, the mission of the IWW is to organize enough of the working class that we can take ownership of the economy and do away with capitalism once at for all. But that's a ways off.

We invite you to become a member whether or not the IWW happens to have representation rights in your workplace. We organize the worker, not the job, and recognize that unions are not about government certification or employer recognition but about workers coming together to address common concerns.

What does the IWW do?

Agitate workers to stop accepting an unacceptable situation and strive for a better one. Provide education about current affairs, history, theory, and strategy. Organize by helping workers to talk to each other. Host organizer training workshops. Spread the word about boycotts. Carry out job actions such as strikes, but also more tactical actions such as slow-downs, job conditioning, and work-to-rule.

Why don't you start your own businesses?

We do! The IWW is one of the only unions that includes and supports worker-owned cooperatives. But there are a couple of problems with relying on them exclusively. The biggest problem is that starting a businesses takes hundreds of thousands or millions of dollars. Because we're not capitalists, we simply don't have access to that kind of money. The other problem is that it can take years to get a businesses started, and it would likely take several hundred years to build a large enough cooperative-based economy to provide a real alternative and competitor to capitalism. In the meanwhile, we can still organize workplaces.

What about dues?

If you make less than \$2000 per month, dues are \$11 per month. Half of this goes directly back to your local.

How can I learn more or join?

The website for the IWW is

www.iww.org

Locally, you can contact: