

## Introduction to “The Union-Buster’s Toolkit”

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Union organizing success in the United States has become increasingly difficult for labor organizations to attain over the last several decades. For example, after obtaining a peak victory rate of 82.9 % in the 4,919 union certification elections conducted in 1945, labor organizations won 65 % of the 1,202 elections that were held in 2012. Reasons for the dramatically reduced number of certification elections held more recently and the lower victory rates obtained by unions have been attributed to the existence of a legal environment which favors employers; many unions either unwilling or unable to devote sufficient resources to organizing as well as to the employers opposing unions more vigorously than they had during the twentieth century’s middle decades. The fewer number of elections held in recent years indicates that many organizing drives fail before obtaining enough employee support to file for a certification election.

In this interesting, well-written and stimulating “Perspectives” Section article, Jonathan Lepie discusses the widespread employer use of anti-union campaigns which, he argues, have generally been successful in maintaining a union-free environment. Working as a union organizer, business agent and negotiator for a number of unions including the International Ladies’ Garment Workers’ Union, the Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 535, the Union of American Physicians and Dentists, and the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees Local 800 for 33 years, Lepie retired as SEIU Local 535’s organizing director in 2005. While Lepie acknowledges that there has been some discussion of anti-union campaigns in the scholarly literature, he argues that there has not been much analysis as to how such campaigns have successfully convinced workers to vote against their employment interests. In this article, Lepie develops a model of the anti-union campaign in which he contends that different personality types of employees tend to fall into one of three groups which includes union supporters, union opponents, and swing voters. He argues that the anti-union messages delivered during the organizing drive induce diverse responses among the three groups and are designed to prevent the swing voters from uniting with the union

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supporters. Based on his model, Lepie outlines various tactics that unions can implement to conduct more effective organizing drives by considering employee personality differences.

If any of the journal's readers are interested in responding to any essays published in the "Perspectives" Section or would like to write articles on any topics in the field of employee relations, please do not hesitate to contact me with your proposal. I welcome both practitioner-based and scholarly-based articles written from any one of a variety of theoretical perspectives. I hope that you enjoy this article and find it most illuminating.