



GPSU ACTION PLAN

Strategic Action Plan 2021-2023

Guyana Public Service Union Institutional Strengthening Plan

- Priorities
 - Must have an adequate trained staff complement
 - Improvement of working relationship with GoG
 - Training of branch representatives and members
 - Increasing membership
 - Improvement of communications at all levels and to all audiences
 - Check-off of agency fees
 - Improvement of diversity of representation
 - Improvement of internal management

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- Developing a Customer Service Culture –
 - members pay dues and they expect service for the dues paid and expect to know what that service is
- Improving the internal capacity –
 - this includes industrial relations capacity, physical identity and management and administrative capacity

ACTION PLAN

PERSONNEL

GPSU needs to attract and employ qualified personnel to fill the positions of:-

General Secretary

Industrial Relations Officers

Information/IT Officer

Research Officer

These recruits can come from within or without the union

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- Action Plan

- Building the membership

- GPSU needs to actively encourage and support members in recruiting colleagues and acquaintances at work
 - Members need to be coached about how to approach prospective recruits
 - They need to be given materials that they can be proud to hand to recruits
 - The incentives for recruiting should be reviewed and given to both members and branches instead of members alone
 - GPSU should work with branches to hold well-publicised recruitment blitzes or saturation recruitment
 - Branches must have regular Branch elections

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- Strengthening the branches. This will require a focus on increasing and strength at the branch level. The following areas were highlighted
 - Membership
 - Branches need to be actively expanding in the area covered by the branch
 - They need to support those members who are active in union affairs with recruitment and registration
 - Each branch needs to organize the welcoming of new members
 - Trained representatives. The top priority of the members was to have a number of representatives trained in union affairs at each branch

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- Communications
 - There must be an improved system of communication between branches and between the secretariat and branches. This is a very important concern of the members but this is often exacerbated by the geographical location of the branches. However, novel means of communication need to be developed both between branches and between the branches and the Secretariat
- Equity of access
 - all members should receive equitable treatment in the workplace
 - Members who participate regularly in union activities at a specified level and on a regular basis and who have expressed an interest in training, should be exposed to such training
 - Officers in the GPSU who regularly volunteer for work on behalf of the GPSU should have access to education and training that build skills for their current roles and for other roles they may aspire

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- Branch site
 - There is the need for a physical presence – office/building that could be identified with each branch/region
 - This will serve as a known point that members can go to when they need the union
 - Gives the union visibility and a concrete presence in the area
 - Could also support the dissemination of information
- Branch level funding. This is important for branches to be functional. Branches could raise fund by organizing fund raisers such as
 - Raffles
 - Fairs
 - Etc.

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- Education and training. This is necessary for the following –
 - To build the basic capacity it needs, particularly at the branch level.
 - To offer training as an advantage of membership with wide potential appeal
 - To project an image of competence and confidence
 - To become a more active participant in community life across the nation

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• Race Relation

- In keeping with its policy of non-partisanship and recognizing the diversity within the public service. The GPSU is an organization that represents members across the racial divide hence a comprehensive Race Relations Plan must be advocated.
- “GPSU can set a national example for racial inclusiveness within its core mission as a union, thus helping set the national agenda
- non-partisanship and nonalignment is important to make clear that membership of the union is solely for the betterment of public servants’ condition, and does not overflow into other loyalties.
- The following actions should be pursued:

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- Undertake a long-term public awareness programme on this issue
- Ensure that internal practice confirm to this policy
- Undertake an enhanced recruitment of a diverse body of Public Servants
- Strengthen the Education Committee, Membership Committee and the Committee on Race Relations, Equality and Human Rights
- Conduct training programme on the positive impact of a diverse work place.
- Promoting attendance at the Union social events.

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- Gender Equity

- Gender equity in the work place is very important, and that the following should be done to facilitate this

- Resist gender typing of jobs
- Support women and men in non-traditional jobs
- Oppose abuse of power in the work place
- Equity pay rates
- Promote updating the rules of the Guyana Public Service Union
- Educate the members and public about the need for gender equity
- Work with other institutions in promoting gender equity

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• Youth Involvement

- Youth involvement is very important issue of the workshops.
- The view that low pay and the apparent low prestige of the public service would serve as deterrent to young people joining the public service. The following are possible actions to be taken to correct the above.
 - Promote updating the rules of the Guyana Public Service Union
 - Develop a database concerning youth employment
 - Introduce and facilitate a mentoring programme
 - Strengthen the youth arm of the Guyana Public Service Union
 - Introduce and maintain a national scholarship competition
 - Partnering and Visibility

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- Training
- The training needs ranged from and include
 - Employee rights and obligation in the work place
 - Hours of work, extra duty time, absence from work, leave
 - Work assignment, scheduling ,shift work, workload
 - Abuse of authority and harassment in the work place
 - Rights and obligations of union employees vis-à-vis GPSU
 - Pay, emoluments , special benefits
 - Working life milestones and events – joining, moving, quitting, family events (related to spouses and children) retiring, illness death
 - Benefits provided by GPSU

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- Industrial Relations and union life
 - The following topics are very important
 - Rights of public servants and supervisors/ managers, and limits of these rights
 - Hiring and promotion practices in the public service
 - Redress in the public service, required documents, procedures, time limits, etc.
 - Effective representation before management, committees, tribunals
 - Rights and obligations of the employees
 - Effective networking and intelligence in the workplace
 - Monitoring health and safety in the workplace
 - Monitoring de facto organization changes and workload redistribution
 - Effective interaction with management in the workplace – anticipating and diffusing issues

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- Workplace skills
 - The following are of interest
 - Introduction to computers and office programmes
 - Word processing
 - Effective use of spreadsheets
 - PowerPoint
 - Using the internet
 - Courses in advanced topics such as publishing software and web development
 - Stress management
 - Dealing with difficult people
 - Basic supervision

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- Life skills.
 - These include
 - Entrepreneurship
 - Conflict resolution
 - Literacy
 - Craft
- Literacy and educational advancement
 - Bursaries offered by GPSU to members' children should be accessible in an equitable manner

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- Training Plan
- The training and development plan involves the following
 - Establish a funded project
 - There is need to seek funding for a project to develop a training capability as outlined above.
 - Establish a training facility
 - GPSU has properties which can be refurbished to house a training facility
 - Develop a training capacity
 - The syllabus will be based on GPSU's needs and the ability to attract revenue from paid courses
 - Maintain and fund the training facility
 - This will be done by in house trainers
 - Potential collaboration with the GoG is possible

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- GoG/Employee Relations Management Strategy:
 - A mutually respectful and constructive working relationship on matters where common interest prevails is a prerequisite for employer/employee relationship and as one member succinctly puts it, it permits “Better productivity for the nation, government and the union”. It is felt that this relationship will lead to:
 - Improve productivity and quality of service
 - Non-partisanship
 - Avoiding confrontation

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- Capacity Building in Public Service Modernisation and Labour Relations
 - The GPSU will have a significant role in ensuring that public servants are better off as a result of modernisation.
 - It is felt that with modernisation there will be
 - a more responsive, efficient and effective public service that provides a high level of service to the GoG and the public of Guyana
 - along with better economic well-being and working conditions for public servants.
- It was felt that the following will be useful:
 - Understanding Public Service Modernisation
 - Officers and members of GPSU must fully understand the proposals in the modernisation plan and the GPSU's position as it relates to the plan
 - Understanding Union Strategies
 - GPSU should be aware of and learn from other countries that have undergone modernisation within the public service.
 - Officers of the GPSU could benefit from a programme of education and mentoring by other public sector unions
 - Unions in the Caribbean should be invited to share their experience with the GPSU

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- Operational Strategy and Implementation Plan
 - Operational Strategy
 - The operational strategy must take into consideration the position the GPSU is in today and the limits on its capacity. It must focus on improving that capacity and broadening the scope of action.
- The strategy aims at gathering support from the following area
 - International :
 - continue garnering tangible support from agencies with an agenda for sound governance that can :
 - Provide funding to GPSU in its pursuit of exemplary governance practices
 - Exert influence with GoG through linking funding in other areas to tangible improvements in in labour representation as part of good national governance

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– Caribbean

- Concentrate on gaining tangible support from Caricom member governments in relation to the rule of law within Caricom
- Continue to seek the support of trade unions, especially public sector trade unions, in assisting GPSU
- Clearly and reliably inform unions in Caricom of the progress that GPSU is making

– National

- Re-brand GPSU as an organisation that earns the respect of public servants and pride of membership, an organisation where membership is seen as being patriotic
- Focus on the following for public servants
 - Pay and benefits
 - Working conditions
 - Security of employment
 - Safety in workplace

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- Speak for public servants on matters of national policy that affect public servants as citizens, but keep these matters outside the realm of collective bargaining and grievance resolution
- Actively combat corruption in the workplace in all its form and by all public servants
- Pursue a living wage as a human right and as a prerequisite for fighting corruption
- Ensure that the GPSU internal procedures, symbols, and communications reflect the policies of inclusiveness, non-partisanship and constructiveness
- Pursue a regular audit of the hiring and promoting policies and practices for conformity to sound, merit-based standards, and the adherence of hiring and promotion to these practices
- Encourage members to take advantage of their full rights as citizens
- Actively combat racism in the public service and ensure that GPSU lives up to the standards it espouses
- Support the strengthening of family values among GPSU members

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– Internal

- Strengthen the effectiveness of the Executive Council
 - Assign responsibility to individual Council members for the performance of a set of branches
 - Train Council members in depth in labour relations union organisation and management
 - Strengthen the effectiveness of the secretariat:
 - » Automated systems for basic functions
 - » Benefit from the experience of exemplary public sector unions in other countries
- Strengthen the effectiveness of regions and branches
- Take measures to enhance pride of membership
- Increase membership and revenue from membership