

January 8, 2015

Dear RN colleagues;

About 2 years ago I was working as a relatively new nurse and had only been in practice for 3 years. I was working for a facility going through a lot of changes and what we felt to be poor management and lack of leadership from the cooperate office. At that time, the facility was actually without any administrative leadership, the CEO had been dismissed months before and the CNO was no longer working there, there wasn't even an interim administrator doing the job in the hospital. I felt there was no communication no direction and patients and staff were suffering.

The facility was ripe for a union to come in. I was an eager new nurse who wanted to fix everything and make it right. I wanted what was best for the facility and thought the best way to do that was to speak with UNAC reps. They agreed we were mistreated understaffed and under equipped they gave us examples of how they could make it better and we heard from reps from neighboring successful hospitals. I was in! I wanted to spear head change. I wanted to make a difference, my coworkers depended on me for information, this was not about money, it was about making a better working environment for staff and patients. After administration heard of the coming union, they started sending out information about the union. Fare is fare, the union was slamming administration and now it was their turn. At first I wouldn't listen, I believed it was "bogus

One of the things I did as a union rep was get my co workers to fill out cards stating yes they would like to have the union, this was meant to get numbers so if we had a enough numbers we could then go to the government and get a vote. Administration sent out notices saying the cards were meant to get your personal information so union reps could go to your homes and try to get you to join the union. I asked the UNAC reps about this and was assured it was more "lies from the cooperate office".

As weeks went on and we were gaining momentum, we filed with the NLRB for a vote and suddenly I was called upon by the union to go door to door, sometimes late at night, and instructed to "not take no for an answer" we were to go to my friends and coworkers homes and convince them to join the union. This may sound like a trivial story but as the rep for my area I had **promised** my friends and coworkers this was all "made up". It was the first instance where I knew these people were lying and manipulating me, they continued to lie and manipulate to meet their needs.

I was wrong. I went and talked to the new interim CEO (who had always been fair) I spoke to him at length about my motives and what I wanted to see. I came to the realization that cooperate is not perfect and administration comes and goes, but if I am going to fight for what I want, I am going to do it with one set of people. I don't need to fight administration **and** the union. I decided then to work with administration and get the liars and manipulating virus (UNAC) out of my hospital. I campaigned against them and RNs at my hospital voted NO. We remain union free! I now work directly on several committees that were put in place by the previous CEO, I work directly with the new CEO implementing change from both administration and staff. It's not perfect and we will always have a lot of work to do. I continue fighting for what's right as a health care worker, but I am fighting and working directly with those who have the power to make change and not with a 3rd party who have their own interests at heart.

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