

# Management Pre-Decisional Involvement (PDI) Planning Checklist

*The goal is informed decision making and eliminating surprises*

\*Please note this checklist is just an example. Labor and Agency representatives are encouraged to change and adapt this list in a way that suits your needs.

## Step 1-Background for the PDI session

| Questions  | Explanation   | Notes |
|--|---|-------|
| 1. What is the proposed initiative? Is it new or is it building on something already in place?                 | If the initiative is not new, it is possible that a PDI invitation may have already been extended. A new invitation may not be necessary; instead, reopening the original PDI may be more appropriate and a better use of resources and time.   |       |
| 2. Why is the Agency interested in doing it?   | Mandates from external sources may require expedited timelines. Externally imposed timelines assist both the Union and management in planning which type of PDI outcome and model will be the most effective, given the available resources, etc.   |       |
| 3. Confidentiality of Information. Are there any restraints or limitations on sharing information? If so, why? | Legal requirements, policy restrictions, and higher-level mandates may affect management's ability to openly share information and may require management to obtain assurances from PDI participants to protect against disclosure. This may require some research but, more importantly, requires the development of clear expectations with the union prior to engaging in the discussion. Like toothpaste, once information is out of the tube it can't be put back. |       |
| 4. What are the timeframes associated with this initiative? Is there a target date for implementation?         | Implementation of a management initiative requires backward planning to ensure negotiated or agreed upon timelines are honored. The amount of time before implementation will affect how the parties approach PDI and the need to establish any   |       |

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|  | PDI timeframes. Agencies should begin the pre-decisional process as soon as possible after they determine that some decision or action is needed to address a particular issue or problem.  |       |
| 5. Long-term or short-term initiative? If long term, list the phases and activities you anticipate are needed to complete the project? Will the union be involved in all phases? If not, which ones? | Helps plan for resources (e.g., subject matter experts (SMEs), locations equipment, etc.) as well as the type of PDI options. If a union representative is not part of each phase, it is helpful to develop a means of communicating the outcome of each to help promote discussion at the next phase. It also assists the Union in identifying what resources they have to contribute to the PDI.                      |       |
| 6. How do you see this initiative impacting unit employees? What, if any, action can management take to mitigate the impact?   | Identifying the impact that management sees for the mission and bargaining unit and identifying what steps they will take to mitigate those impacts assists in setting up a starting point for PDI discussions with the union. This saves time, and shows that management is not promoting an initiative in an arbitrary manner. This also helps in gathering information from SMEs to share with the union during PDI. |       |
| 7. Are you leading the initiative? If not, who will be the lead?   | A management official with the authority to initiate PDI in their program may elect to have the SME lead the PDI session. If so, management should identify who has the authority to represent the agency. For more information on the PDI process, please see the National Council's guidance on PDI Outcomes, and Frequently Asked Questions about  |       |

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|  | PDI.   |       |
| <p>8. Are you using teams to carry out the initiative? Who should be on the team? Could this be an opportunity for PDI &amp; having a Union rep as a team member? If a Union rep is a team member, what is your expectation of their involvement? Voting member, information sharing, collaborative problem-solver, other?</p> | <p>Planning helps promote open communication, efficient use of resources, and fosters collaboration. If the union’s participation is not clear, it can lead to loss of faith between the parties. Clarification of the Union’s role helps the union select the best person(s) for participation in PDI. Additionally, if the union is participating on a “team” set up to address aspects of a change, it is important that the team members have a background in the PDI process.</p>   |       |
| <p>9. When will you contact the Labor Relations Specialist? (Name and Contact Information.)</p>  | <p>Some agencies require the presence of a Labor Relations Specialist (LRS) when an agreement is developed between management and the union either through negotiations or the PDI process. LRSs are a resource and their availability may require coordination. Some LRSs are adept at the PDI process, can serve as a coach or mentor, and can assist in the planning phase to help promote efficiency of the process. People who support PDI and the collaborative process often make the best resources for this effort.</p> |       |
| <p>10. How do you see the change being communicated to the employees?</p>  | <p>Communication is critical; the absence of information leads employees to fill in the blanks with perception and rumor. Change is hard enough on employees; it is useful to seek consensus with Union representatives on how best to keep employees posted on what is decided, what isn’t,</p>   |       |

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|   | <p>and what is under discussion. Offering employees an opportunity to provide feedback to both the union and management (e.g., through a web-link) may provide the parties with real-time information while also conveying to employees that they have been “heard.” Moreover, the person who handles these issues every day (front-line employee or supervisor) probably has a better sense of how a process works and how it can be improved.</p>  |       |
| <p>11. How will you introduce the proposed change(s) to the union? Prior to PDI? During the first PDI session?</p>  | <p>The quality of the relationship and the types of forums in place between the parties will largely determine when and how you introduce the proposed changes. Sharing ideas about the change(s) in a leadership meeting, a partnership meeting, or some other setting and conveying management’s intent to initiate PDI at a later date helps the union prepare and determine whether they want to participate in PDI. Agencies should begin the pre-decisional process as soon as possible after they determine that some decision or action is needed to address a particular issue or problem</p> |       |
| <p>12. Are there any issues that may inhibit PDI from being constructive? Identify the steps you can take to try to mitigate or eliminate the potential roadblocks.</p> | <p>A manager’s comfort level with discussing issues with the union and her/his familiarity and training in PDI processes can affect the likelihood of success in PDI. Going into a PDI session half-heartedly or without conviction will likely harm the parties’</p>  |       |

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|           | relationship for future interactions.<br>Other potential “roadblocks” may involve the type of information. Some information could be sensitive or considered confidential and may require certain precautions before sharing, while other information may not be appropriate to share. |       |

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## Step 2: Preparing for the PDI Session

| Questions  | Explanation  | Notes |
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| <p><b>1. PDI Invitation:</b> Do you and your union partners already have an agreement on a PDI process either in a CBA or elsewhere (e.g., MOU)? If not, how will you initiate the PDI? Are you sending the invitation to engage in PDI electronically, by mail, by phone, in person, etc.? How much time will the union have to respond?</p>  | <p>Timelines associated with the initiative are important in setting parameters for discussions and may affect how you convey the invitation to engage in PDI. It's also important to make sure that after PDI is done, you can meet any timeframes for mid-term bargaining set forth in your CBA. If the union is in the same building as the management official initiating PDI, why not walk the package down to the union office? Sending the invitation electronically or having the LR specialist send it out provides a means for tracking the initiative and the response. You may also contact your Labor Relations Office for support and expertise regarding agency agreements and PDI.</p> |       |
| <p><b>2. PDI meetings:</b> If there are meetings, will you participate in the meetings? If you aren't leading the PDI sessions, who will? Will the SME lead the PDI session? What is the SME's authority? If the PDI expectation is that an agreement (MOU) will be the outcome, s/he will need a written delegation of authority. Does the lead have experience with facilitation, mediation,</p> | <p>If an expectation is to have an MOU at the conclusion of PDI, management needs to ensure that one of its representatives has authority to commit the agency. (If this person is the SME, then the delegation of authority should be clear.) Agency resources are limited. Participation of a facilitator, LRS, or SME may streamline the process and make it more efficient. Their participation requires time away from other duties and calls for planning to minimize the impact on service to their other</p>   |       |

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| <p>and/or interest-based problem-solving? Will the LRS participate? If so, what role do you expect her/him to play? If a face-to-face session, will you take notes during the session? Who will be the note-taker? Will you have a facilitator, and if so, what role will s/he play?</p>   | <p>customers.</p>  |  |
| <p>3. If you have information to share regarding a proposed change, it is suggested that an <b>information package</b> be sent with the PDI invitation and be available for the PDI review/meetings. You will need to determine what it will contain. Who will ensure the package is completed and sent with the PDI written invite to the union representative?</p> | <p>Management sharing adequate information on PDI matters with the Union prior to the meeting is optional. However, doing so expeditiously demonstrates openness and saves time. If the union is hit "cold," it will need time to review and digest the information, eating up valuable time that could otherwise be spent in the PDI session.</p>   |  |
| <p>4. Who are the <b>subject matter experts</b> (SMEs) for the information? Are they available to provide briefings and additional information? Did they contribute to the management information package?</p>   | <p>Having the right people at the right place helps ensure that the right information is shared, promotes efficiency and open communication, and builds trust in the parties' relationship. Ensuring involvement of the SME who helped create the information package (e.g., an IT Specialist who is the program lead for a change in automated time and attendance software) is critical to understanding the impact of the change and avoids delays in making decisions.</p> |  |
| <p>5. What <b>technology</b> will you need for the PDI sessions? Does your union</p>   | <p>Technology is only as good as the operator's level of comfort and training. Ensure that the method for</p>  |  |

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| counterpart have access to this technology? If not what is your “plan B”? With whom do you need to coordinate to establish communications? | sharing is one that all the participants have used and have access to. If the power goes out or the computer-based meeting system fails, what is your backup for continuing the discussions or reconnecting with everyone to set up a new meeting time? |  |
|--|---|--|

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### Step 3: During the PDI Session

- Extra information packages are available
- Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are included in the meeting
- Appropriate Labor Relations personnel are present consistent with agency policy.
- Identify how notes will be taken and shared with each party
- Introductions are made
- Management and the union share expectations for the meeting
- The parties clearly identify next steps -- this is dependent upon the type of PDI and expectations identified in the invitation and upon any agreement between management and the union. This could result in one or more of the following:
  - Mid-term negotiations
  - Implementation
  - Further PDI sessions/participation as a project moves forward

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### Step 4: After the PDI session

- Meeting notes are completed and sent to all parties.
- If consensus or commitments were made by the parties not related to working conditions, these may be captured in meeting notes or in a separate document signed by both parties. Follow-up items from the meeting or written agreements are monitored and updates provided to the parties as they are completed.
- If an agreement was made (MOU), ensure it is signed and copies are provided to both parties.
- If PDI results in an agreement, negotiations may not be necessary. However, if negotiations are still required in relation to the implementation of a change discussed in PDI, the parties will normally follow their established process for addressing the impact and implementation of proposed changes. In the notice, the agency may elect to include the information package(s) exchanged during PDI, any written agreements, and any other information gathered during the PDI process. This gives the parties a platform to build upon for negotiations.

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Step 4: After the PDI Session