## DO:

1. **Find your local’s and division’s social media platform(s); like or follow it. Invite your co-workers in your personal friends list to follow the page or group.** It’s surprising how many members are not even aware their union is active on social media. As of March 2018, CUPE NB has approximately 2000 followers. We estimate only one every 15 CUPE member is following the page. Why? Because pages grow mainly through “organic” actions: word of mouth, shares and invitations. The more people you invite, the more your union’s message will be heard.
2. **Create and be active. Social media works because YOU make, shape and mold the content**. It’s important to have members reposting, sharing and retweeting official union communications and events. However, remember social media is interactive: communication goes in both ways. It’s not a spam “forward to all” machine. Be considerate. Your audience is likely comprised of friends and they want to hear your perspective, see your pictures, read your jokes on the union issues or events that you share.
3. **Participate.** There is such a thing as an “online army”. If you already possess social media skills, please let your local union leadership know. Locals always need more team players ready to take on some responsibility for online work. Many hands make light work!
4. **Try to be relevant.** When writing a union post, consider what your friends and co-workers might want to read rather than what you feel like saying at the moment. Rant sparingly and remember your friends aren’t there just to listen to you vent. Like the boy who cried wolf, your friends might tune out when you will really need them to listen.
5. **Remember who your audience is and respect them.** As anyone can create content on social media, this means that every union member becomes an “ambassador” of the labour movement. You’re talking to real people on Facebook: watch your tone, don’t shout, and don’t be nasty.
6. **Mix it up with multimedia.** Pictures, videos, interactive polls are stronger than text alone. Research continues to show that multimedia boosts social engagement. Facebook live video posts and photos have a higher interaction rate (87%) than shared links and text-only status updates combined.
7. **Proofread.** It only takes a minute, and it can make the difference between a status update that makes sense and one that doesn’t. On Facebook, you’re thankfully able to correct a post with the “Edit your post” function. But correct mistakes promptly, as bad facts, wording or syntax can quickly lead to unwanted disagreements and useless debates.

## Don’t:

1. **Don’t overshare!** Once you get the hang of social media, it may be tempting to share everything — but make sure that you are only sharing things that are helpful and necessary. Personal information that is not essential to your objective does not need to be posted on social media, so don’t feel like you must update your local’s page or group with every little (or big) thing.
2. **Post information or links without checking your sources.** Your friends naturally trust you, let’s keep it that way. This means check the source of the information twice before sharing. Verify where the information comes from. Does it come from a pro-employer website, think tank or news media? “Fake news” is not a new thing for workers. Employers have never shied from using misleading propaganda to further their agenda.
3. **Don’t worry about all the comments or feel you must respond to all.** Trends matter, trolls don’t! Sometimes there isn’t enough time to respond to every comment and you shouldn’t, so don’t stress, prioritize! While social media is important, interaction in the comment section is not always going to achieve the results that you want and can sometimes hurt more than help.
4. **Don’t say anything you wouldn’t want to appear in the press on social media.** You will be quoted from here by reporters, so don’t post anything that you wouldn’t want them to report.
5. **Don’t become an informer for your employer.** Don’t share anything about your coworkers, union, friends or family on Facebook that they would not want known publicly. You’re responsible for protecting their privacy as well as your own.
   1. Don’t be a Facebook “friend” with your boss. This might seem obvious, but have you checked thoroughly if you were friends with your boss’s friends, your supervisor or anyone close to HR? Many HR guides now refer to the importance of directly “friending” employees, to facilitate surveillance and logging of employees’ behavior. They could be recording activity on your profile, posts, likes and shares.
   2. “Unfriending” is as important as raising your privacy settings so they see the less information possible from your profile and posts. Nonetheless, you can’t perfectly hide anything on FB, but you can create obstacles to protect your privacy.
   3. Beware of fake profiles. If you get friend request from good-looking strangers with whom you share few or no friends, it's good to run a check with your friends!
   4. “Secret groups” rarely remain secret. Remember, anyone can do a “screen capture”.

For more information on social media guidelines, please visit:

[**https://cupe.ca/social-media-guidelines**](https://cupe.ca/social-media-guidelines)

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