

A LEMON NAMED WORKDAY

When a message doesn't get through the first time, you have to repeat it ... and that's what we did on May 16. There were even more of us, showing our exasperation and anger when faced with a lazy management that's taking too much time solving the problems affecting its new gadget for managing us: WORKDAY. Nearly 400 members gathered in the NMRC atrium in Montréal to make some noise, and there were just as many in stations outside Montréal.

Yes, we protest the two-tier salary policy that's made us, the employees in Québec and Moncton, into second-tier employees. But on May 16, we gave the place of honour (or horror!!!) to WORSTDAY. The annoyances and failures of this "turnkey" human resources management system have been known and present since it was rolled out in the spring of 2023...

We can understand and accept delays in the rollout when the "problem" doesn't affect our pay, but being unable to have our weeks of vacation is unacceptable. The first half-hour of overtime is now being counted. Bravo, we've been waiting for that since October 2022. As for the amounts owing to us, a first payment will probably come through in June and a second in the fall, but both will be in cash because the system won't let us bank this time.



Someday these problems will be behind us. But just imagine what would happen if it took you this long to become productive on the job. You'd be long gone from Radio-Canada. The strangest thing about the Workday debacle is that it's nobody's fault...

This second union payday event bothered people again. So much the better! That's exactly why we did it. Shall we plan a third one?



NEXT PAYDAY ACTION THURSDAY, MAY 30

We're not done with our demonstrations. The employer has seen and heard us, and we're going to keep on.

At lunchtime next payday, we'll show more solidarity than ever: we'll form a giant human chain in front of our stations. Even some of our delegates at the FNCC convention will pull in members of the other media unions present to be part of the chain.

As for the previous Thursdays, your shop steward will have the material you need and instructions will follow.



On the following pages:

- Campaign "Information is a public good"
- AGM
- Negotiating committee elections
- Pay equity: a first win
- Incorrect status: less than 13 weeks

“INFORMATION IS A PUBLIC GOOD” OUR FÉDÉRATION IS RUNNING A BROAD CAMPAIGN



Last February, the Fédération nationale des communications et de la culture (FNCC) launched a campaign to counter the damages that have been caused for far too long by the financial crisis affecting the media. The FNCC has five demands:

- 1- beef up tax credits for newsrooms, including electronic media;
- 2- a 2% “news fee” on the purchase of electronics that would generate \$200 million in Québec alone;
- 3- double the tax deduction for buying advertising in the news media;
- 4- develop a genuine government policy on buying advertising;
- 5- adoption by the Cities of the “My City” declaration supporting local media.

Left to right: Karine Tremblay, journalist at *La Tribune de Sherbrooke* and Vice-President of the FNCC; Caroline Senneville, President of the CSN; and Annick Charette, President of the FNCC

The Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec quickly gave its support to the campaign, recognizing the essential role of local media in the social, economic and cultural vitality of their communities. Moreover, local media contribute actively to democratic, sports and community life. Discussions have taken place that will lead to support from the Union des municipalités du Québec and the Fédération québécoise des municipalités. Requests have also been made to the mayors of the major cities and towns in each region of Québec. This campaign is receiving political and financial support from the CSN.

Preparations for the campaign began in the summer of 2023. It will be deployed progressively, and should be fully under way by the end of the summer. FNCC President Annick Charrette met with Minister Pascale St-Onge (Heritage, Ottawa) and Minister Mathieu Lacombe (Culture and Communications, Québec). FNCC wants to target associations of cultural, community and sports bodies to ensure that the campaign reaches everyone for whom local news is important. FNCC also wants to include other unions representing the media.

Remember that FNCC sparked the creation of the Coopérative nationale de l'information indépendante (CN2I), which saved these regional daily newspapers from bankruptcy: *Le Soleil*, *La Tribune*, *La Voix de l'Est*, *Journal Le Quotidien*, *Journal le Droit* and *Le Nouvelliste*. As one CSN slogan puts it: “We’re going forward, always forward, and we won’t back down!”

PAY EQUITY STTRC WINS A FIRST ROUND

The Pay Equity Commissioner has supported STTRC, rejecting Radio-Canada’s request for four separate pay equity plans for Radio-Canada. STTRC only proposed two. Therefore, there’ll be a first plan for the 23 employees of the pension fund and a second one for everyone else: managers, non-union staff and all unionized employees, from the Atlantic to the Pacific. To grasp the importance of this victory, we need to explain a little bit of history.

The *Employment Equity Act* obligates Radio-Canada to adopt a plan to correct “systemic discrimination based on sex that taints employers’ practices and systems of compensation and is suffered by employees occupying positions in female-dominated categories of employment to ensure that they receive equal compensation for work of equal value (...).”

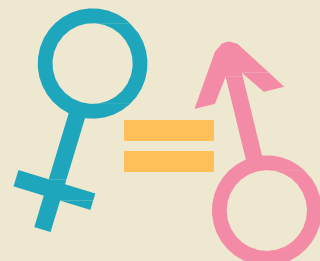
The Act calls for one plan per company, but leaves the door open for multiple plans in certain conditions. Radio-Canada proposed four, allowing it to treat managers and non-union staff separately. The main advantage for management was that it would get out from under the obligation to share all information on everyone’s compensation and to include members of upper management in the same plan as unionized employees.

STTRC contended that only the employees of the pension plan should be excluded, because they are in an environment that has nothing to do with SRC’s regular activities, but that everyone else should be in the same group. The Pay Equity Commissioner agreed with us.

NOW TO GET TO WORK

The next step is forming a committee that includes representatives of each interest group, that is, each of the four unions, non-union staff and managers, including upper management. Under the Act, the CEO is excluded from this exercise.

The main difficulty in establishing an equity plan is that it has to be the result of consensual choice. If this is impossible, the employer can decide for the group. But we’re nowhere near there yet. We’ve written to management asking them to show due diligence.



AGM

MORE AND MORE PARTICIPANTS

It's no simple matter to attract members to a union meeting on a fine Saturday, 250 of us were in attendance. That's more than at previous regular meetings. The event was an opportunity to update members on all the active dossiers at the union level, including the problems with Workday, the establishment of a compensation policy that discriminates against unionized employees in Québec and Moncton as opposed to those in the rest of Canada, the difficult (!!!) relationships with those who apply our short- and long-term disability plans, and repeated refusals by our insurer Canada Life to recognize treatments prescribed by a physician.



Photo: David Grand'Maison

Not to mention the fiasco of the announcement of cuts to 800 positions caused by a deficit of \$125 million that ended up being only \$25 million. But yet there are still 346 fewer employees at CBC/Radio-Canada, and management is refusing to break down the numbers so we can't tell whether CBC was hit as badly, in proportion, as Radio-Canada.


The meeting also assumed a mandate for mobilization, committing members to participate in activities where the union will be stepping up pressure on the employer to denounce the problems mentioned above.

Some things are going very well. The establishment of local labour relations committees in the regional stations provides a formal framework for dialog between managers and shop stewards. We're already seeing improved relations and the resolution of irritants in how work is organized in some locations. It's only a start, but the future is promising. Now they need to be established in Montréal, which would presume a review of the various sections. That's a big project that remains to be carried out.

Our finances are in good shape and we should be able to produce an audit for the next meeting, as requested by the Financial Audit Committee. There will be a special meeting in June to elect the next negotiating committee, as our contract is up in March 2025.

Everyone thought that the meeting was way too long. The Executive will make a certain number of recommendations to the Board to shorten the next one. The hybrid mode worked well and if we're more efficient we should be able to increase participation. The AGM is an important moment for dialog among elected officers and members.

INCORRECT STATUS: LESS THAN 13 WEEKS



The union has noted in recent weeks that some temporary employees are still labelled with the status “-13 weeks” (less than 13 weeks) on the employer's lists, even though they meet the criteria to be entitled to benefits. To be eligible, you have to meet one of these two criteria:

- have received for 13 consecutive weeks compensation per two pay periods equal to at least fifty percent (50%) of the base salary for a position;
- or
- have worked during 13 consecutive weeks at least two and a half days per week.

If this is your situation, you should automatically be entitled to benefits. Once you have benefits, they will only be withdrawn if you no longer meet the eligibility criteria for 13 consecutive weeks.

Temporary employees who believe that they are entitled to benefits instead of the wage premium should ask their manager in writing to check. For more details, consult section 47.25 of your collective agreement, at www.sttrc.ca.

MEETING TO ELECT THE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

JUNE 8

All STTRC members are invited to participate in an extraordinary general meeting to form a negotiating committee for the next collective agreement. Members will be able to vote for four candidates for the committee, which will also include two members of the Executive, as provided in our bylaws and statutes. The meeting will be by videoconference only and will be short (just two agenda items).

The negotiating committee is the most important committee that our union has because it defends improvements to our wages and our working conditions. Come one, come all!