

# First Job: Making Demands

**SUBMITTED BY:** Lee Jackson

**SUBJECT(S):** Management

**GRADE LEVEL(S):** 9, 10, 11, 12

## ≡ OVERVIEW:

The purpose of this lesson is to introduce students to the vital components of labor unions – outlining working conditions. Students will explore the interconnectedness of labor unions and policy, as well as their influence on business.

## ≡ NBEA STANDARD(S):

- Management, VII. Organized Labor

## ≡ WHARTON GLOBAL YOUTH PROGRAM ARTICLE:

- [“The Well-Dressed World of Kate D’Arcy, Organic Fashionista”](#)

## Common Core Standard(s):

- Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**Objectives/Purposes:** Following this lesson, students will be able to describe the role of organized labor and its influence on government and business.

**Other Resources/Materials:** Blackboard or PowerPoint for terms, markers, chart paper.

Have students read the article (10 mins) and discuss (5 mins) the key takeaway.

**Key takeaway from the article:**

- How did D’Arcy focus on sustainability?  
*Most fashion isn’t very eco-friendly. A large chunk of the world’s pesticides and insecticides go into the production of conventional cotton. Organic cotton and other sustainable fabrics, on the other hand, are grown using methods that have a low impact on the environment. And Toggerly emphasizes **business ethics** as well: Its apparel is made in the United States at a factory near D’Arcy’s hometown, where the employees are guaranteed fair wages and working conditions.*

**Key Terms:** Discuss or review the key terms, leaving time for questions. (5 mins)

- **Collective Bargaining** – This is a process of negotiations between employers and the representatives of a unit of employees aimed at reaching agreements
- **Vertical Union** – This is a labor union that admits all workers in a given industry irrespective of their craft.
- **Organized Labor Union** – An association of workers united as a single, representative entity for the purpose of improving the workers’ economic status and working conditions through collective bargaining with employers.

**Tying It All Together:**

**Opening:** (5 mins) Ask students to think of their dream job. Ask them to describe their anticipated daily duties/ benefits in detail in a paragraph or list.

Then briefly discuss it as a class. Questions to extend the discussion: (10 mins)

- If you were creating your dream job, what working conditions would be most important to you?  
(Possible answer: Length of the workday, pet policy, vacation time.)

- Did you know that working conditions are some of the major determinants of a person's physical health? Why might this be the case?  
(Possible answer: People often spend more of their waking hours at work; thus, their time there is a large part of their quality of life.)
- Who sets the parameters for working conditions?  
(Possible answer: Founders of the company, the Human Resources department, or current supervisors.)
- If you were creating this position for yourself in a company, how would you structure those conditions?

**Activity:** (15 mins) In pairs or small groups, have students construct a written response based on the questions above. Make sure they include:

1. Daily working hours and breaks.
2. A list of job tasks.
3. Risk management based on proposed responsibilities.
4. Anticipated wages.
5. Benefits such as tuition reimbursement, stock options and pet policies.

**Practice Outside of the Classroom:** Ask students to locate an employee handbook, either a hard copy or online. Were they surprised about what it contains? How does the reality of an employee handbook gel with their vision of that job, if at all?

**What Worked and What I Would Do Differently:** This was a difficult exercise because most of the students had never had a job and had no idea what people actually do during a workday! So, rather than substantive ideas about job demands, the exercise ended up focusing on “perks.” Maybe more categories and examples would work better here. For example, students needed to know what “human resources” are.