**Dictionary of Human Resources**

**and Personnel Management**

**ultimatum** **264** **undergo**

**U**

**ultimatum** /$lt\_me təm/*noun*astatement to someone that unless they do something within a period of time, action will be taken against them *The* *union officials argued among them-selves over the best way to deal with the ultimatum from the management. The management has given the union an ul-timatum.* (NOTE: plural is**ultimatums**

or **ultimata**)

**ultra vires** /$ltrə\_va ri\_z/*Latin**phrase* ‘beyond powers’

**ultra vires contract** /$ltrə\_va ri\_zkɒntr\_kt/ *noun* a contract which the

parties are not competent to sign

**umpire** /\_$mpa ə/*noun*an independ-ent person who is asked to decide in a dispute in cases where the adjudicators cannot come to a decision

**unacceptable** /$nək\_septəb(ə)l/*adjective* which cannot be accepted

*The terms of the contract are quite unacceptable.*

**unanimous** /ju\_\_n\_n məs/*adjective*where everyone votes in the same way

*There was a unanimous vote against the proposal. They reached unani-mous agreement.*

**unanimously** /ju\_\_n\_m məsli/*ad-verb* with everyone agreeing *The pro-posals were adopted unanimously.*

**unauthorised** /$n\_ɔ\_θəra zd/**, unau-thorized** *adjective*not permitted*unauthorised access to the company’s records unauthorised expenditure No unauthorised persons are allowed into the laboratory.* **unauthorised****absence from work *or* absence with-out leave** the fact of being away fromwork without permission and without a good reason

**unauthorised** **person** /$n-

ɔ\_θəra zd \_p\_\_s(ə)n/ *noun* a person

who has not received permission to do something *No unauthorised persons* *are allowed into the laboratory.*

**uncommitted** /$nkə\_m t d/*adjec-tive* referring to an employee who is nothappy and does not feel involved in the organisation they work for *There is a* *drive on to weed out employees who are uncommitted to the objectives of the company.*

**unconditional** /$nkən\_d ʃ(ə)nəl/*adjective* with no conditions or provi-sions attached *unconditional accep-tance of the offer by the board After the interview he got an unconditional offer of a job.*

**unconditionally** /$nkən-

\_d ʃ(ə)n(ə)li/ *adverb* without imposing any conditions *The offer was accepted* *unconditionally by the trade union.*

**unconditional** **offer**

/$nkənd ʃ(ə)nəl \_ɒfə/ *noun* a job offer with no conditions or provisions attached

**underachiever** /$ndərə\_tʃi\_və/*noun* a person who achieves less thanthey are capable of

**underemployed** /$ndər m\_plɔ d/*adjective* with not enough work *The staff is underemployed because of the cutback in production.*

**underemployment** /$ndər m-

\_plɔ mənt/ *noun* **1.** situation where workers in a company do not have enough work to do **2.** a situation where there is not enough work for all the workers in a country

**undergo** /$ndə\_əυ/*verb*to gothrough or to take *The managers have* *to undergo a period of retraining. She has to undergo a fitness test.* (NOTE:**un-**

**dergoing – underwent – undergone**)

**undermanned** **265** **unemployment pay**

**undermanned** /$ndə\_m\_nd/*adjec-tive* with not enough staff to do the work

*The department will be undermanned during the Christmas period.*

**undermanning** /$ndə\_m\_n ŋ/*noun*a situation of having too few staff than are needed to do the company’s work

*The company’s production is affected by undermanning on the assembly line. Undermanning is caused by lack of available skilled workers in the area.*

**undermine** /$ndə\_ma n/*verb*tomake something less strong *The leak-ing of the secret report has undermined confidence in the management.*

**underpaid** /$ndə\_pe d/*adjective*notpaid enough *Our staff say that they* *are underpaid and overworked.*

**underrepresent** /$ndərepr\_zent/*verb* to give one group fewer represen-tatives than another *Women are* *underrepresented at senior management level.*

**under review** /$ndə r\_vju\_/*adverb*in a state of being examined *Our* *wage and salary structure is currently under review.*

**understaffed** /$ndə\_stɑ\_ft/*adjec-tive* with not enough staff to do the com-pany’s work

**understanding** /$ndə\_st\_nd ŋ/*noun* a private agreement**to come to** *or* **to reach an understanding**to agree

*The management and union came to an understanding about the demarca-tion problems.*

**understudy** /\_$ndəst$di/*noun*aperson who is learning how to do a job which is currently being done by someone else, so as to be able to take over the job if the present incum-bent retires or is ill *They have planned* *to put understudies into each of the key managements posts. The production manager made sure his understudy could run the factory if called upon*

*to do so.* (NOTE: plural is**understud-ies**)*verb*to learn how to do a job byworking alongside the present incum-bent, so as to be able to take over if he retires or is ill *He is understudying the* *production manager.* (NOTE:**under-**

**studies – understudying – understudied**)

**undertake** /$ndə\_te k/*verb* **1.** toagree to do something *The union has* *undertaken not to call a strike without further negotiation with the manage-*

*ment.* (NOTE:**undertaking – under-took – undertaken**) **2.** to carry out

*They are undertaking a study on em-ployee reactions to pay restraint.*

**undertaking** /\_$ndəte k ŋ/*noun* **1.** a business *He is the MD of a large* *commercial undertaking.* **2.**a (legallybinding) promise *They have given us* *a written undertaking not to strike be-fore negotiations have been completed.*

**underutilisation** /$ndəju\_t la -

\_ze ʃ(ə)n/**, underutilization** *noun* a sit-uation where members of a social group are underrepresented in a particular job category *the underutilisation of* *women in top management posts*

**underutilised** /$ndə\_ju\_t la zd/**,**

**underutilized** *adjective*not usedenough

**underworked** /$ndə\_w\_\_kt/*adjec-tive* not given enough work to do *The directors think our staff are overpaid and underworked.*

**undischarged** **bankrupt**

/$nd stʃɑ\_d"d \_b\_ŋkr$pt/ *noun* a person who has been declared bankrupt and has not been released from that state

**unemployed** /$n m\_plɔ d/*adjective*not having any paid work *noun* **the** **unemployed** the people without anyjobs

**unemployed** **office workers**

/$n mplɔ d \_ɒf s w\_\_kəz/ *plural noun* office workers with no jobs

**unemployment** /$n m\_plɔ mənt/*noun* **1.**the state of not having any work**2.** a situation where a person is willingto work but cannot find a job **3.** the number of people in a country or region who are willing to work but cannot find jobs

**unemployment benefit** /$n m-

\_plɔ mənt ben f t/ *noun* a payment from the government made to someone who is unemployed

**unemployment** **pay** /$n m-

\_plɔ mənt pe / *noun* money given by the government to someone who is unemployed

**unemployment rate** **266** **unit**

**unemployment** **rate** /$n m-

\_plɔ mənt re t/ same as **rate of** **unemployment**

**unequal value jobs** /$ni\_kwəl\_v\_lju\_ d"ɒbz/ *plural noun* jobs done

by men and women which are not equal in value

**unfair** /$n\_feə/*adjective*not just orreasonable

**unfair contract term** /$nfeə\_kɒntr\_kt t\_\_m/ *noun* a term in a con-

tract which a court holds to be unjust

**unfair** **dismissal** /$nfeə d s-

\_m s(ə)l/ *noun* the act of removing someone from a job for reasons which are not fair

COMMENT: Unfair dismissal cannot be claimed where a worker is dismissed for incapability, gross misconduct or in cases of genuine redundancy.

**unfair labour practices** /$nfeə\_le bə pr\_kt s z/ *plural noun* illegal

activities by workers or employers

**unfairly** /$n\_feəli/*adverb*in an unfairway *She complained that she was* *treated unfairly by her manager.*

**unfilled** /$n\_f ld/*adjective*referring toa vacancy which has not been filled

*There are still six unfilled places on the training course. Many specialised jobs remain unfilled because of a lack of qualified candidates.*

**unfreezing** /$n\_fri\_z ŋ/*noun*the pro-cess of getting accustomed to a new or-ganisation and its procedures

*Unfreezing can be stressful in new em-ployees who are used to more bureau-cratic organisations.*

**unhappy camper** /$nh\_pi\_k\_mpə/ *noun* someone who has a grievance against their employer (*slang*)

**unilateral** /ju\_n\_l\_t(ə)rəl/*adjective*on one side only or done by one party only

**unilateral decision** /ju\_n l\_t(ə)rəld \_s "(ə)n/ *noun* a decision taken by one party alone *They took the unilat-eral decision to cancel the contract.*

**unilaterally** /ju\_n\_l\_t(ə)rəli/*ad-verb* by one party only *The decision was taken to cancel the contract unilaterally.*

**uninstalled** /$n n\_stɔ\_ld/*adjective*dismissed from employment (*slang*)

**union** /\_ju\_njən/*noun*same as **trade union**

‘…the blue-collar unions are the people who stand to lose most in terms of employment growth’ [*Sydney Morning Herald*]

**union agreement** /\_ju\_njən ə-

 ri\_mənt/ *noun* an agreement between management and a trade union over wages and conditions of work

**union card** /\_ju\_njən kɑ\_d/*noun*acard showing that the holder is a mem-ber of a trade union

**union dues** /ju\_njən\_dju\_z/**, union subscriptions** /\_ju\_njən səb-

skr pʃənz/ *plural noun* payment made by workers to belong to a union

**unionised** /\_ju\_njəna zd/**, unionized** *adjective* referring to a company wherethe members of staff belong to a trade union

‘…after three days of tough negotiations, the company reached agreement with its 1,200 unionized workers’ [*Toronto Star*]

**unionism** /\_ju\_njən z(ə)m/*noun* **1.** the fact of having trade unions **2.** the fact of being a member of a trade union

**unionist** /\_ju\_njən st/*noun*a memberof a trade union

**union leader** /ju\_njən\_li\_də/*noun*the head official of a trade union

**union member** /ju\_njən\_membə/*noun* a person who belongs to a tradeunion

**union official** /ju\_njən ə\_f ʃ(ə)l/*noun* a person holding an official posi-tion in a trade union

**union recognition** /ju\_njənrekə \_n ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* the act of agree-

ing that a trade union can act on behalf of staff in a company

**union representative** /ju\_njənrepr \_zentət v/ *noun* a person who rep-

resents a trade union on a committee

**union shop** /\_ju\_njən ʃɒp/*noun US*a place of work where it is agreed that all employees must be members of a trade union

**unit** /\_ju\_n t/*noun* **1.** a single productfor sale **2.** a group of people set up for a special purpose

**unstructured interview**

**unitarism** **267** **upgrade**

**unitarism** /\_ju\_n tər z(ə)m/*noun*thebelief that the management and workforce are working together for the good of the company (NOTE: the oppo-

site is **pluralism**)

**unite** /ju\_\_na t/*verb*to join together

*The directors united with the managers to reject the takeover bid. The three unions in the factory united to present their wage claims to the management.*

**unjustified** /$n\_d"$st fa d/*adjective*which is not justified *The union* *claimed the sackings were quite unjustified.*

**unofficial** /$nə\_f ʃ(ə)l/*adjective*done without authority

**unofficial** **industrial action**

/$nəf ʃ(ə)l nd$striəl \_\_kʃən/ *noun* an industrial action such as a strike or go-slow taken by employees without the approval of a trade union

**unofficially** /$nə\_f ʃəli/*adverb*notofficially *The HR manager told the* *union negotiators unofficially that their claim would be accepted.*

**unofficial sanctions** /$nəf ʃ(ə)l\_s\_ŋkʃ(ə)ns/ *plural noun* sanctions im-posed by an employer on union mem-bers who are working to rule

**unofficial strike** /$nəf ʃ(ə)l\_stra k/*noun* a strike by local employees whichhas not been approved by the main trade union

**unpaid** /$n\_pe d/*adjective*not paid

**unpaid holiday** /$npe d\_hɒl de/**, unpaid leave** /$npe d\_li\_v/*noun*

leave during which the employee does not receive any pay

**unpunctual** /$n\_p$ŋktʃuəl/*adjec-tive* referring to an employee who is notpunctual or who does not arrive on time for work

**unpunctuality** /$np$ŋktʃu\_\_l ti/*noun* the practice of not arriving on timefor work or for an appointment *He* *was warned that he would be sacked for further unpunctuality.*

**unrest** /$n\_rest/*noun*a state of protestbecause of dissatisfaction with conditions

**unskilled** /$n\_sk ld/*adjective*nothaving specific skills or training

*Using unskilled labour will reduce labour costs. Nowadays there is rela-tively little work for an unskilled workforce* or *for unskilled workers.*

**unskilled worker** /$nsk ld\_w\_\_kə/*noun* a worker who has had no particu-lar training

**unsocial** /$n\_səυʃ(ə)l/*adjective* **to work unsocial hours** to work at timessuch as in the evening, at night or during public holidays when most people are not at work

/$n-

str$ktʃəd \_ ntəvju\_/ *noun* an inter-view which is not based on a series of fixed questions and which encourages open discussion *Shy respondents of-ten perform well in unstructured inter-views where they have more freedom of expression.* Compare**structured**

**interview**

**unsuccessful** /$nsək\_sesf(ə)l/*ad-jective* not successful *He made six un-successful job applications before he finally got a job.*

**unsuccessfully** /$nsək\_sesf(ə)li/*adverb* with no success *He unsuccess-fully applied for the job of marketing manager.*

**unsuitable** /$n\_su\_təb(ə)l/*adjective*not suitable *We send all candidates a* *short written test, so as to weed out those who are clearly unsuitable for the job.*

**untrained** /$n\_tre nd/*adjective*refer-ring to a person who has had no training

*She came into the office straight from school, and completely untrained. The company has a policy of not recruiting untrained staff.*

**unwaged** /$n\_we d"d/*noun* **the unwaged** people with no jobs

**up** /$p/*adverb*,*preposition*in or to ahigher position *She worked her way* *up to become sales director. verb* toincrease *Management upped their of-fer to 7%.* (NOTE:**upping – upped**)

**upgrade** /$p\_re d/*verb*to increasethe importance of someone or of a job

*Her job has been upgraded to senior manager level.*

**upgrading** **268** **utmost good faith**

**upgrading** /$p\_re d ŋ/*noun*the actof increasing the importance of some-one or of a job

**uphold** /$p\_həυld/*verb* **to uphold a decision** to reject an appeal against adecision

**upper** /\_$pə/*adjective*higher

**upper age limit** /$pər\_e d"l m t/*noun* the highest age limit

**upper earnings limit** /$pə´\_\_\_n ŋzl m t/ *noun* the top level of earnings above which tax or other financial levies do not apply

**upsizing** /\_$psa z ŋ/*noun*the processof increasing the number of staff em-ployed by an organisation

**up-to-date** /$p tə\_de t/*adjective*,*adverb* current, recent or modern *an up-to-date computer system* **to bring****something up to date** to add the latest

information or equipment to something

**to keep something up to date** to keepadding information to something so that it always has the latest information in it

*We spend a lot of time keeping our mailing list up to date.*

**upward** /\_$pwəd/*adjective*towards ahigher position *an upward movement*

**upward communication** /$pwədkəmju\_n \_ke ʃ(ə)n/ *noun* communica-

tion between the lower level of staff in an organisation and senior management

**user’s guide** /\_ju\_zəz a d/**, user’s handbook** /\_ju\_zəzh\_ndbυk/**, user’s manual** /\_ju\_zəzm\_njυəl/*noun*a

book showing someone how to use something

**utmost good faith** /$tməυst υd\_fe θ/ *noun* a state which should exist between parties to certain types of legal relationship (such as partnerships or insurance)