

8Rs:

Simplified shop steward roles and responsibilities

Read - All PSA policies, the *PSA Statute*, collective agreements, employer policies, PSA newsletters and media statements, case laws, and competitor strategies and tactics. After all, it is said: *Readers are leaders.*

Recruit - Recruiting new members supports the strategic objective of Union growth and remains the key responsibility of shop stewards.

Represent - Shop stewards are to represent members in grievances and disciplinary proceedings. They also represent the PSA in bilateral and chamber meetings to ensure that members' rights and interests are advanced.

Reconcile - Shop stewards have a responsibility to ensure labour peace, which is one of the objectives of the *Labour Relations Act (LRA)*. They must thus be able to play a mediation role to reconcile employees and the employer where there are challenges.

Report - Section 14(4)(c) of the *LRA* provides that union representatives must report alleged contravention of workplace-related provision of this *Act*, any law regulating terms and condition of employment, and any collective agreement to the employer, unions, and any responsible authority or agency.

Further, they must arrange members' meeting in the workplace to report on issues affecting members.

Reprimand - In a role that is often ignored, shop stewards have the responsibility to reprimand members who demonstrate behaviour of ill-discipline before such members suffer consequences, including being charged or losing employment.

Respond - It is important that shop stewards respond to members timeously with regard to grievances, disputes, *etc.* and facilitate communication between the PSA and members.

Reproduce - Shop stewards are expected to identify members with leadership potential and empower them as part of their leadership role. A leader who does not think about the future is no leader at all.

Images: PSA / Freepik