



UNION REPRESENTATION IS SET TO INCREASE

Trust, Unions, and the New Employer Playbook

Connexion Conference & Event Centre 

15 April 2026

9.00AM to 5.00PM

TRAINING FEE

	RM 1225	30% OFF
MECA Member	RM 1750 Per Day	including 8% SST
Non- Member	RM 2000 Per Day	including 8% SST
	RM 1400	



* Prices are inclusive of 8% SST

* Employers contributing to HRDCorp may claim the seminar rate subject to a maximum of RM 1750/day/pax effective 1st November 2024

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Union Representation Is Set to Increase – Trust, Unions, and the New Employer Playbook

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of this training, participants will be able to:

1

Understand the current trends in union representation.

2

Explore how trust and employee relations impact union engagement.

3

Equip managers with strategies to navigate unionized workplaces effectively.

4

Align organizational practices with the evolving employer playbook in terms of dealing with unions.

1

Introduction & Context

- Local trends in union representation
- The evolving role of unions in modern workplaces

2

Building Trust in the Workplace

- Key drivers of employee trust
- How trust influences union engagement and employee morale

3

Understanding Union Dynamics

- Common misconceptions about unions
- Legal frameworks, employee and employers' rights
- Employer-union interactions

4

The New Employer Playbook

- Best practices for managing employee relations
- Proactive vs reactive strategies in unionized environments
- Case studies of successful approaches

5

Practical Applications & Action Planning

- Managerial tools and communication strategies
- Scenario-based exercises
- Developing an action plan for your team/organization

6

Q&A / Wrap-up

- Open discussion
- Key takeaways and next steps

Who Should Attend

This programme is designed for organisations that recognise union representation as an increasingly common workforce dynamic and wish to manage it effectively, lawfully, and with minimal disruption. It is particularly relevant for:

- **Senior Management & Business Leaders:** CEOs, Directors, and Senior Managers responsible for organisational strategy, workforce stability, and governance, who need a clear understanding of how union dynamics effect operational and reputational risk.
- **HR Leaders & Industrial Relations Practitioners:** HR Managers, IR Managers, and Employee Relations professionals tasked with managing union engagement, representation issues, and employee relations frameworks, and who must ensure consistency, defensibility, and compliance across the organisation.
- **Line Managers & Functional Heads:** Department Heads, Operations Managers, and Line Managers who interact directly with employees and play a critical role in shaping trust, communication, and day-to-day management decisions that may influence union engagement.
- **Organisations with Existing or Emerging Union Presence:** Companies operating in unionised environments, as well as organisations experiencing early indicators of union interest, representation activity, or increased employee collective engagement.
- **Employers Undergoing Change or Workforce Transition:** Organisations managing restructuring, operational changes, performance interventions, or policy shifts where employee trust, communication, and representation risks are heightened.

Course Methodology

This programme is delivered through a structured, practice-oriented methodology designed to help participants move beyond theory and develop practical, defensible approaches to managing unionised and union-prone environments.

The session combines contextual briefings, facilitated discussion, real-world case analysis, and applied discussion, real-world case analysis, and applied exercises, ensuring participants are able to translate concepts into actionable management strategies.

Trainer

Dharmen Sivalingam **CEO, MECA**

Dharmen, an Industrial Relations practitioner with more than 20 years' experience, has supported numerous employers on every aspect of Industrial Relations.

He has experience in the end-to-end management of what can be a delicate relationship between an employer and an employee. He represents only employers and has acted as Counsel for many employers in litigious matters before the Malaysian Courts. He has written numerous articles on Industrial Relations issues at various platforms.

Dharmen has earned a reputation for success in IR disputes because of his distinct ability to process data quickly and distinguish issues in question, thereby producing solutions which are clear and accurate. Dharmen read law at the University of Wolverhampton and was called to the Malaysian Bar in 2001. He commenced legal practice with one of the larger legal firms in Malaysia and set up DSP in 2013.



Trainer

Anna Balasubramaniam **Lead Consultant, MECA**

Anna's path in industrial relations was shaped by lineage and opportunity. As the daughter of MECA's founder and having worked alongside its leadership, she gained early exposure to high-stakes employment law and industrial relations practice in Malaysia - experience few consultants ever see.

With nearly 20 years of hands-on experience, Anna advises companies on policy drafting, workplace investigations, domestic inquiries, and complex employment issues. She guides employers to practical, clear, and balanced solutions that prevent disputes from escalating to court. Known for strategic insight and seeing both the big picture and fine detail, she crafts actionable solutions that work in the real world.

She is co-author of *A Practical Guide to the Employment Act 1955*.



Trainer

Astiqamah Abdullah **Senior Consultant, MECA**

Astiqamah Abdullah is a seasoned employment law practitioner with 17 years of experience in labour relations, litigation, and disciplinary management. A graduate of the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) with a Bachelor of Laws, her grounding in both Civil & Shariah Law enables her to interpret Malaysian labour legislation with clarity and precision.

She served 11 years with the Jabatan Tenaga Kerja Semenanjung Malaysia, presiding over Labour Court disputes and prosecuting cases involving breaches of employment laws. Her legal career continued in private practice, where she advised employers and represented clients in matters relating to workplace disputes and statutory compliance.

Now a Senior Consultant at MECA, Astiqamah provides strategic advice on misconduct management, domestic inquiry processes, and employer compliance. She is also a Certified Train-the-Trainer (TTT) and delivers training in both English and Malay.



Trainer

Pritika Menon

Consultant, MECA

Pritika Menon is a legally trained Industrial Relations Consultant who works closely with employers on employment law compliance, workplace disputes, and people management challenges. With formal legal training obtained outside Malaysia, she brings a cross-jurisdictional perspective that enhances her ability to analyse Malaysian labour law issues with nuance, clarity, and sound judgement.

She holds a Bachelor of Laws (LLB) from the University of Adelaide and has completed the South Australian Bar Certification, leading to her admission as a Barrister and Solicitor of the Supreme Court of South Australia.

As a Consultant at MECA Employers Consulting Agency Sdn Bhd, Pritika advises employers across a wide range of industries on statutory obligations, disciplinary matters, and industrial relations best practices. She is a Certified Train-the-Trainer (TTT), known for delivering structured, practical training sessions grounded in real workplace scenarios. Pritika conducts training in English & Malay.

