



Reduce harmful work stressors.  
Improve job quality and health.

## Healthy Work Strategies

### **Jim Beam workers achieve better work-life balance through new labor-management contract**

Jim Beam distillery workers at two facilities in Kentucky, members of Local 111D of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), made demands to improve their work-life balance to Beam Suntory, a Japanese conglomerate, which is the parent company of Jim Beam. After rejecting two contracts offered by Beam Suntory, workers agreed to strike in October 2016. Following a week of picketing, the union successfully negotiated a new two-year contract, which was ratified by a 209-19 vote later that month.

#### **New contract reductions in long work hours and improvements in work-life balance, job control, job security, pay, and pay equity<sup>1,2</sup>:**

- A 25% limit on the % of workers who are part-time or temporary (contingent)
- Eliminate mandatory overtime – it had not been uncommon for workers to have up to 80-hour workweeks.
- Hire additional 27 full-time workers.
- Elimination of a “two-tier pay system.” “Top-tier” workers had earned more than “bottom-tier” workers and temporary workers, for the same job and effort.
- 2% pay increase

#### **Some factors that likely contributed to successful contract re-negotiations:**

The October 2016 strike was the first in Jim Beam’s history, and provided leverage for the union and workers to negotiate terms with the company.<sup>1-6</sup> Also, the unionized workers agreed for the most part on the ultimate goals of the negotiations and the strategy to engage with Jim Beam—they primarily focused on improvements to work-life balance and equal pay for workers. In addition, the media gave considerable coverage to the strike.<sup>1-6</sup> A few weeks after the ratification of the contract, Jim Beam ended mandatory overtime and started hiring full-time workers.<sup>1-6</sup>

## References:

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