

## Unions Killed the Soaps?



ABC, NBC and CBS have canned four long-running soaps. My wife's favorite one is "All My Children." She was stunned to hear that one *New York Post* contributor [blames the unions](#) for the soaps' untimely demise. Yes, the unions.

He had this to say:

But a good soap needs a twist, a nefarious power behind the dastardly deed. The ultimate villain, lurking in the shadows, is . . . collective bargaining.

The soaps' failure, and the rise of the cheap reality TV shows that will replace them, is just the latest episode in a story that was old when "Days of Our Lives" hit the air in 1965. Whenever a business is bleeding, there's often a union holding a bloody knife and a dazed "Who, me?" expression—like 6-year-old Michael Myers in "Halloween."

I don't know if unions killed the soaps. But I do know how they can hurt your company.

If you like organizational flexibility, unions are a nightmare. Your labor costs will rise as you spend time and money working out collective bargaining agreements. You'll have to dicker with unions if you want to change your base operations. Shoot, you'll probably have to fight over



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For more insight into how solid HR practices impact your company's strategic operations, visit Alan's employment law blog at [hrriskybusiness.com](http://hrriskybusiness.com).

[National Labor Relations Act \(NLRA\)](#)

[National Labor Relations Board \(NLRB\)](#)

[Unions](#)

reducing your employees' hours in lean times.

You can push back. Take a few defensive measures to stay union-free:

- Learn to spot the unions' latest organizing tactics.
- Assess where you're vulnerable.
- Loop in your supervisors and managers.
- Carefully handle areas where unions may file an unfair labor practice charge against you.
- Hone your employee manual.
- Speak your mind on staying union-free without drawing an unfair labor practice charge.
- Task a rapid deployment team.

I'm talking about these measures at the [Conroe Chamber of Commerce](#) on May 4. Feel free to sign up.

