

CSSEA NEWS

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

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From the CEO

Lorne Rieder



In the course of our March 30 Joint Panel meeting, member agency representatives were very clear that CSSEA erred in the way it recently communicated information regarding government MPP funding policy. While the communications were intended to bring clarity to a very important matter, they had the opposite impact. Members became angry and confused by both the content of the messages and the apparent complicity of CSSEA with regard to the preparation of the documents. We regret this occurred and, following discussions with the board, will take steps to ensure it does not happen again.

I wish to be absolutely clear that the messages forwarded to you reflect solely the position of the sectoral Ministries and Authorities that fund our sector. They developed the wording of the communications and the funding policy that was conveyed and simply used CSSEA as the vehicle to distribute their message.

CSSEA was aware of the negative impact that their message would have on the key trust relationship that exists between member agencies, CSSEA and the government. We also anticipated your substantive opposition to the funding policy and clearly identified both of those concerns to funders before the release of the initial document.

In hindsight, both government and CSSEA acknowledge that more could have been done to provide you with absolute clarity. For example, the board has now directed that future distribution of government communications be on government letterhead and be signed by a government representative.

The board has also acknowledged that the trust between CSSEA and its members has been damaged. To begin to repair the trust relationship, I, along with the board, will undertake a series of regional meetings to ensure that member agencies have a full opportunity to make their views known. I look forward to speaking with you on this issue, or any other issue that arises.

Readers receive **CSSEA NEWS** via email and through our website. If your email address has changed, please notify us at cssea@cssea.bc.ca

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Creating the “We” in Team

Doris Sun, Communications Coordinator



You are a manager with a vision. You want to breathe new life into your organization and transform your workplace from one where employees clock in and clock out to an entity where teamwork and collaboration form a strong backbone. Bob Green, a consultant who teaches a CSSEA course on team building, shares his insights on the 5 key attributes of a solid team.

1. Trust: This is the foundation for any agency and a prerequisite for positive change. Team members must feel they can trust their organization to listen to and respect their points of view, even if they are critical. If trust exists, the team can move ahead and build on other key elements.

2. Conflict: Green believes that in order to shift a culture positively, a healthy measure of conflict must exist. “If you never disagree, you never actually improve. You never find new ways to do things differently,” he said. “In the crazy world we live in, there’s always things that have to change. We’re continuously evolving.” This productive conflict has to be encouraged from the top-down. Management should be receptive and open to ideas, regardless if they decide to use them. The key, according to Green, is facilitating an ongoing dialogue.

3. Commitment: This is a two-way street in that organizations must be committed to the people that it expects commitment from. To do this, managers must be understanding of all facets of their employees’ lives and pay close attention to respecting the personal ups and downs that employees go through. “We’re people working with people,” said Green. “Whereas many organizations say, ‘leave your personal stuff at home,’ well we’re people...so if you want to have people long-term within your organization, then we need to work with them through whatever happens in their life. That helps build commitment.” Although commitment from leaders is significant, it can only be built upon from staff.

4. Accountability: Green argues that accountability is often avoided because it’s seen as a matter for a manager to handle. “As a co-worker it’s, ‘I’m your co-worker, I’m not your boss, thus why should I hold you accountable? I see you performing poorly but it’s not my responsibility to hold you accountable for increasing your performance.’” According to Green, everybody has a responsibility to do their personal best, therefore accountability needs to be treated in such a way that staff members are active in keeping each other in check. To encourage that, expectations can be given clearly and up-front. If an employee fails at a certain task, say, writing a report, he suggests speaking to them about the task, and not make the criticism appear personal. Green argues that it’s important to de-humanize performance evaluations.

5. Attention to Results: When an organization gets so far as to identify and implement a team-building policy, there must also be a way to track how well everyone is doing. Letting staff know where their efforts are at is crucial. ■

Bob Green has 10 years of experience as a facilitator, coach and consultant and is an expert in leadership. His CSSEA workshop focuses on encouraging behavioural changes in the workplace to get results. For information on requesting his course, go to www.cssea.bc.ca/Training and Development and submit a request form.

Cost-free team building:

1. Hold regular team meetings and spend some time talking about non-work related, fun topics.
2. Have occasional team meetings off-site, like at a park or coffee shop.
3. Start a Facebook group and encourage team members to connect and communicate with each other.
4. If some team members work off-site, keep them in the loop by sending them emails or phoning them, just to touch base.

In Profile Q&A: Tanya Behardien on True Leadership

We spoke with the executive director of Penticton and District Community Resources Society on her dynamic leadership style.

1. How would you describe your leadership style?

It might sound a bit cheesy, but I think a good leader leads by example and I try to keep this at the forefront of my mind in my interactions with others. A foundation of my leadership style would also be that I work at building relationships with people, as real people. I am collaborative and try to involve people where they can be involved in the decisions that affect them. I like to think I am responsive and have an open door policy. I think it's important that people at any level know that I am also a resource to them. I lead better when I am learning and making mistakes. Mistakes are opportunities for learning and learning supports my leadership style.



Staff show their spirit!

2. How important is it for you not only to provide “big picture” leadership, but also day-to-day management of your team?

I am probably better at big picture leadership than I am at the day-to-day stuff. I think it's an important balance, though, because the big picture can sometimes feel farther away to some than others depending on their vision. So while the big picture part is more inspiring to me, I think you need to meet people where they are at.

3. What are some things you do to balance “inspirational” leadership with “nitty gritty” management?

If you asked around, people are likely to say that I have to work harder at



Tanya has led the organization since November 2008.

the nitty gritty stuff. Because of this, I think it is helpful to surround myself with others who are better at that kind of thing than me. I am learning to allow others to help me with the things that they are great at, which in turn, helps me. Being inspirational is important to me. I believe when people are inspired about both their work and their workplace, they do more and they do it better.

4. How do you motivate staff to continually give their all to their jobs?

Is that part of my job description? Seriously, I think creating a good workplace culture goes along way. When people feel well treated, respected, and honored for the work that they do, my experience is that most people give a lot. A good dose of fun also helps.

5. What are some team building programs that you have at your agency?

In a large organization with many locations, it can be challenging to inspire a sense of team that reaches agency wide. Our United Way

employee campaign is one initiative that inspires a larger sense of team (the organization). A lot of the campaign activities contribute to team building and we tend to have a lot of fun with it. This year we had a pajama day on a Friday. We also host a few events that are open to staff and their families. Last spring we had a barbecue and beach day on a Saturday and had over 100 people participate! Our staff Christmas party was a huge hit and also a sell-out! I have received many comments about what a long way that went to contributing to people's sense of being a part of the larger team. ■



Charity events bring the team together.

Who is PDCRS?

What they do: Penticton and District Community Resources Society is a multi-service agency that provides service in the areas of Community Living, Youth and Family Support, Child Care and Support Services and Community Capacity Building

Number of programs: 20

Number of employees: 120

Service Region: South Okanagan Similkameen

In operation since: 1966

Grievances between CSSEA and the BCGEU should now be resolved more efficiently, due to a new 18-month trial protocol agreement that establishes a pilot process for expedited arbitration.

The protocol allows parties to determine dates, locations and expedited arbitrators annually. Hearings will take place in major regional settings across the province. Currently the following locations have been set in May: Arbitrator Moore in Burnaby, Arbitrator Foley in Victoria and Arbitrator Sullivan in the Fraser Valley. They will be informal, have limited application and be without prejudice. Other characteristics of the process include:

- Short and concise presentations
- No outside legal counsel

- A joint book of documents and a joint statement of facts that will be developed by both CSSEA and the BCGEU and forwarded to the arbitrator at least one week prior to the hearing
- The use of authorities limited

Streamlining the Arbitration Process
by **Bela Barros**
Senior Administrative Assistant
HRLR Services

- to excerpts from Brown and Beatty
- Oral evidence limited to a single witness
- A resolution mediated with the assistance of the expedited

arbitrator. Should the mediation be unsuccessful, a hearing will proceed and the expedited arbitrator shall render a decision within two weeks of the hearing

- No written reasons will be provided and the decisions will not be appealed

Ongoing reviews of the protocol agreement will take place to address any issues that may arise. CSSEA and the BCGEU will be determining which grievances are suitable for expedited arbitration and hearing dates will be set within the next few months.

It's expected the process will improve efficiency and help lower arbitration costs.

To read more on Expedited Arbitration, go to our website, under LR Awards, Decisions and Legislation. ▣

Sectoral Case Updates

Expedited arbitration – Arbitrator Moore has issued a concluding letter (posted on CSSEA's website under LR Awards, Decisions and Legislation) and implementation will begin over the next few months with the first hearings scheduled for May in Burnaby, Langley and Victoria.

Certification issue – Arbitrator Germaine scheduled a case management meeting to address the adjudication of preliminary issues.

Use of sick leave by part-time employees – Scheduling for a case management meeting is underway.

Job Evaluation – Hearing dates have been adjourned until April/May 2010.



Take Note!



This is friendly reminder that this year's AGM and Fall Conference will take place on **October 5-7** at the Delta Grand Okanagan Resort and Conference Centre in Kelowna, BC.

Keep checking the newsletter for updates and watch for the conference brochure and registration form to arrive in your mailboxes later this Spring!