

CSSEA NEWS

COMMUNITY SOCIAL SERVICES EMPLOYERS' ASSOCIATION

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According to the Experts: How to Communicate Successfully

Doris Sun, Communications Coordinator



Workplace communication is a broad topic that encompasses the tiny nuances of everyday interactions with colleagues: How best can managers communicate with staff? How can you speak with influence and persuasion? How do you navigate communications in conflict situations? This year's AGM and Fall Conference strives to chip away at the communications iceberg. As a preview to the event, we have asked a few of our presenters to share some words of wisdom on how to communicate successfully.

"Your ability to influence people depends on your relationship with them. Use every opportunity to build trusting relationships with the people you need to influence and you will reap the benefits. Your ability to influence depends on your ability to make focused, strong and logical arguments. If you care about something, plan and practice your pitch before trying to change someone's mind." - Russel Horwitz

"Giving critical feedback when necessary is your ethical responsibility as a leader. Remember to begin with the right intention and stay focused no matter what happens. Always, always let the other person vent first and let them do most of the talking. If they don't talk it out, they'll act it out. Watch your emotions. Pay close attention to how you're feeling and what impact you're having. Stay curious." - Sandra Reder

"We can learn a lot about communication in times of conflict by watching a stonemason at work. The stonemason has to consider the big picture: the emerging pattern and the stability of the structure – as well as the detail of each stone – which must be placed with the right touch, in the right place, at the right time. The placement of each stone affects the next. There is no rush, there are no shortcuts, and each outcome is unique! So too for communication in tough situations." - Sally Campbell

"Effective communication isn't just about what you say. It is about how you "show up" in the conversation. First, making time to fully listen and be present to people is essential for effective communication. Second, be clear on the intent of your message. Your body language and voice tone have far more impact on how your message will be heard than your content. Third, ask open-ended questions that will allow people to bring out their best. Being a great manager requires great communication skills." - Shauna Jones

Watch for our 2011 AGM and Fall Conference brochure to arrive in the mail soon. Register early for the best pick of workshops! ■

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The logo for CSSEA, featuring a large stylized 'C' followed by the lowercase letters 'ssea'.

From the CEO



I find it hard to believe that retirement - which always seemed like a distant and alien concept - is now becoming a reality.

I have worked nearly 12 years in the sector, as an HRLR Consultant, Director of HRLR and CEO. As I write this final piece, I can't help but reflect on the sector's impressive evolution.

In October, 1999, when I first started in community social services, it was apparent we faced challenges in assuming a unified and professional identity. We have worked hard in the years since to build a reputation as indispensable service providers and advocates for the most vulnerable in our society. This professionalism is entirely the result of your efforts and I commend you all for what you have accomplished. I leave excited about your future.

CSSEA staff have been integral to my long career in the sector. From

the day I started, the organization had a tight-knit team, one that has contributed to making the work environment surmountable when uncertainty existed and appropriately light-hearted and enjoyable when social opportunities arose. The camaraderie, jokes, drinks shared and weddings, birthdays and births celebrated will hold a special place in my heart.

My experience meeting and working with members has been similarly delightful. I have met many of you at your agencies during my tenure and in various meetings that we attended together. Our interactions and shared stories have confirmed for me what I knew in my heart: our sector is full of compassionate, generous and supportive people. From time to time I needed the benefit of these qualities and you never hesitated to extend them. Thank you.

My years as the CEO has also allowed me to collaborate with government. I met many fine people in the province and my hope is that any goodwill that has accrued will benefit the sector as it moves forward.

The next few months will be uncertain. As our hiring committee is actively seeking my replacement, the board has advised they may want me to be available after my scheduled departure date of June 30, 2011. I may very well be connecting with you in the interim but if not, I thank you for a dozen great years. Farewell. ■

In *Boyce v. Toronto Community Housing Corp.*, 2010 HRTO 520, the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal (the "Tribunal") ruled an employer had failed to suitably accommodate an injured worker despite having complied with the requirements of the Workplace Safety and Insurance Act (the "Act").

The Tribunal summarized that duty to accommodate pursuant to the Human Rights Code (the "Code") is far more extensive than the standards established by the Act. Under the Act the employer was limited to finding the employee suitable work whereas under the Code the employer must accommodate an employee's

disability to the point of undue hardship.

**DECISION AFFIRMS
THAT HUMAN RIGHTS
LAW OVERRIDES OTHER
WORKPLACE LEGISLATION**

**by Bela Barros
Legal Research Analyst**

The Tribunal found the employer erred when it simply relied on the Workplace Safety and Insurance Board's conclusion that the work was suitable and in turn had failed

to fulfill its duty to accommodate as required under the Code.

This decision reaffirms the principle that human rights law supersedes all other workplace legislation and sends a strong message to employers that they should not solely rely on provincial workplace insurance boards for direction in instances of dealing with disabled employees. Even if a workplace tribunal determines the work being offered by the employer is suitable, further review and consideration of the circumstances of the case may be required to meet the threshold of the duty to accommodate. ■

In Profile: BC211 Shares How it Can Be a Valuable Public Resource

Tell us about the service BC211 provides.

BC211 is an accredited information and referral organization that was launched in May 2010. We answer calls from the public looking for information and referral to a vast array of resources.

We also operate several provincial help lines including VictimLink BC, Youth Against Violence Line and the Alcohol and Drug Information and Referral Service.

The 411 on BC211

Established in: 1953

Formerly known as: Information Services Vancouver

Number of employees: 38

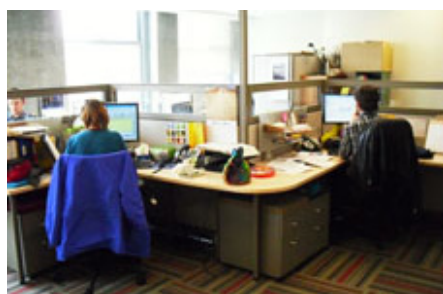
Service area: 2.6 million people in the regional districts of Squamish-Lillooet, the Fraser Valley and Metro Vancouver

How aware are the public about the availability of 211?

Our goal is to reach 78,000 calls by the end of this fiscal year and we're working hard to get the word out. For example, you'll see advertising for 211 on many buses and SkyTrains right now. Also, all public libraries in the three regional districts are distributing 211 bookmarks and these have also been sent to the schools. We're meeting with City Councils, police, fire and ambulance and networking with many community groups and organizations.

Why do you think the service is important?

People who need help often don't know where to turn. We are available 24/7 and our operators are trained to



Staff at BC211 fielding phone calls.

help the caller identify their needs and to offer appropriate resources.

One of the biggest call drivers for 211 is people seeking shelters. Twice daily we call all of the shelters in the 211 service area to update availability so when people call us looking for shelter we can direct them

Also, 211 collects information from callers to assist funders in making important decisions about keeping, closing or expanding services in a community, they will have concrete information to draw from.

How do you think other community social services agencies would benefit from 211?

Everyone at some point in their life might need 211. Perhaps you're looking for elder care. Maybe you want to know where to find a handicap sticker for your grandparents. People who are seeking counselling, recreation, legal assistance, language classes or job search skills (to name a few) can call 211.

Share with us a time that 211 made an impact on a client's life.

We received a hand-written note from a family who had called 211 because they were experiencing problems finding housing that was safe and free of bed-bugs. They wrote, "You made our move possible and pointed us to the various directions to turn to get the necessary help." They thanked us for our help and shared the outcome of their call to 211: "We are now living

in a very cozy, pleasant and most of all 'bug free' home."

Your operators must often deal with distressed people. How do you make sure staff are able to handle them effectively?

BC211 strives to be a great place to work. We have employee-driven teams such as the Green Team, who helped us obtain our Climate Smart designation. We also have a Wellness Team and when we were relocating to our new home at the Woodward's building, we had a Moving Team who was involved in all aspects of the relocation. We recently completed a wellness survey and a leadership survey to assess how employees are feeling about workplace wellness and the effectiveness of the leadership team. All staff receive one coaching session a month and those answering the phone also have clinical supervision and a debriefing with a Team Lead or Manager when necessary. We're a close knit group and we help each other out. ■



An event promoting BC211's services.

If you want promotional material on 211, please email Jessie, Marketing and Communications Coordinator, at Jessie@bc211. Information is available in a variety of languages, including Chinese, Spanish, Farsi, Punjabi, Hindi and French.

Resources can also be found at www.bc211.ca

Ask an HRLR Consultant: Resina Becket



Q: *I have an employee that I need to discipline. Is there anything I need to do before proceeding?*

A: • When an employment infraction or allegation of misconduct comes to your attention, it is imperative that you conduct a thorough investigation before imposing discipline. At arbitration many cases are decided based on an investigation: it isn't what you know, it's what you can prove!

• At the investigatory stage, your designate should investigate the situation and gather facts and evidence to verify what actually happened.

• Evidence may be gathered i by conducting interviews with witnesses (including other employees, clients and members of the public), reviewing relevant documentation and, most importantly, by meeting with the employee in question. Even when there is overwhelming evidence of an employee's guilt, it is imperative that the employee be given the opportunity to explain him/herself.

• Employers should look to Article 11.9, Employee Investigations, for additional information regarding this process. For further information, please contact your HRLR Consultant.

Send your questions to dsun@cssea.bc.ca

CEO Retirement Party!



Please join us in wishing our retiring CEO, Lorne Rieder, a fond farewell. A reception will be held in his honour on June 14 from 4-7pm at the Shaugnessy Room of the Marriott Pinnacle Hotel, 1128 West Hastings Street, in Vancouver. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Karri McDonald by June 3 at kmcdonald@cssea.bc.ca

CSSEA @ Whistler: Getting There is Easy!

- The new and improved Sea to Sky Highway means you can get to Whistler from Vancouver in under two hours. Just take Highway 99 north through Horseshoe Bay and Squamish to Whistler.
- PCL (Pacific Coach Lines) provides daily bus service from Vancouver International Airport and downtown Vancouver to Whistler Village. The cost is \$56.70 one-way and \$113.40 round-trip.
- **We look forward to seeing you in Whistler October 4-6 for our AGM!**

Sectoral Case Updates

Use of sick leave by part-time employees – Issue: Use of sick leave credits by part-time employees on days outside their regularly scheduled shifts. Status: A hearing date of November 22, 2011 has been set with Arbitrator Vince Ready.

Calculation of hours for wage rate – Issue: To be determined by union. Status: A Case Management meeting is scheduled for June 2, 2011 with Arbitrator Wayne Moore

Class 4 driver's license – Issue: Interpretation of Article 28.12, specifically, which costs an employer is obligated to pay. Status: A Case Management meeting took place with Arbitrator Vince Ready on May 30, 2011.

Canada Summer Jobs program – Issue: CSSEA has filed a grievance seeking damages and other remedies for losses caused by the BCGEU's efforts to sabotage funding for the Summer Student Programmes. Status: Arbitrator Vince Ready has been appointed and has ordered written arguments outlining the facts and legal issues. Any agency affected by the union's improper and unreasonable interference should provide factual background and financial implications to CSSEA for inclusion in the written argument.

Don't forget!

Complete Wages and Benefits Data Collection Survey

The 2012 Wages and Benefits Data Collection Survey is due on June 21. Make sure you fill it out and return to Adam Chatburn at: achatburn@cssea.bc.ca.

All survey documents are available on our website, through our Surveys page. Thanks for your participation!