



# HR LINKS

January 10, 2005

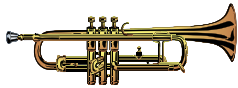
Vol. 2 No. 1

**“We must be the change we seek in the world.” -Gandhi**

## Comings & Goings

Recent movement in the HR Community includes:

- ☺ Rose Marie Roberts has recently joined Health as a Payroll/Benefits Officer from the PSC.
- ☺ Holly Cameron has been seconded to the Resources CSU from Environment & Labour to provide administrative support to the OH&S Consultant implementing the Ability Management Program.
- ☺ Donna Murphy and Mary MacInnis have recently transferred from Finance to the PSC continuing their role as administrators of the Provinces benefit plans.



## Announcing

Health Human Resources is pleased to advise that effective November 1, 2004 human resource services for the Human Rights Commission has transferred from the Justice CSU to Health.

Health has also confirmed that they will be establishing a Human Resource Development Consultant position to be advertised soon, which will provide support to the Department of Health, the Office of Health Promotion and to the Human Rights Commission.

## Upcoming HR Meetings:

- ✓ **OH&S Forum** - Thurs. Jan. 13<sup>th</sup> 9:30AM - Gail McClare to host, Founders Sq.
- ✓ **HR Managers** - Wed. Jan. 19<sup>th</sup> 1PM, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor Terminal Rd.
- ✓ **HR Directors** - Thurs. Jan. 20<sup>th</sup> 9AM, 5<sup>th</sup> Floor Joe Howe
- ✓ **HR Consultants** - Thurs. Feb 3 9:30 AM Maritime Centre
- ✓ **HRD Forum** - Meet the first Friday of

every month.



**Thursday Feb. 17, 2005**

4PM - 8PM

Location TBA

Stay tuned - put this in your calendar today!!

If you would like the dates of your upcoming meetings, events or announcements posted here, please send your information to the address on page 5 of the HR Links.

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## SILVER ANNIVERSARY

Congratulations to **Dave McEachern**, Public Service Commission and to **Lynn Burgess**, Service NS and Municipal Relations for reaching their 25 year service milestone. Both were honored by Premier John Hamm and Minister of Human Resources Carolyn Bolivar-Getson on Thursday December 16, 2004 along with 194 other provincial government employees.

Over the holidays the HR Links “linked up” with Lynn Burgess, HR Consultant to talk about her 25 years with the Government of Nova Scotia.

**HR Links:** What was your first job with the government and describe your first day on the job.

**Lynn:** “My first job with government was as a Data Entry & Control Clerk with the Department of Social Services (now Community Services). My first day was exciting though I was a little nervous starting a new job as most people are.”



(Lynn Burgess, HR Consultant)

**HR Links:** When did you decide that you were going to pursue a career in Human Resources?

**Lynn:** “In 1986 Community Services posted a Personnel Clerk’s position in the Field Services & Personnel division. I thought it looked really interesting and applied for the position. I didn’t have much time to worry about the interview, I was interviewed the day they called because I was going on vacation. It must have worked in my favour, I was the successful candidate - blue jeans and all.”

**HR Links:** What challenges do you see coming for those in Human Resources?

**Lynn:** “In the next several years a significant number of provincial civil servants will be eligible to retire. This will be a good opportunity not only for succession planning, but also for expanding diversity in the civil service. I think it’s important for Human Resources to try and promote the provincial government as an equal opportunity employer when it comes to immigration/diversity. We need to educate our clients more regarding the importance of hiring through *the* diversity program when at all possible.”

**HR Links:** What advice would you give to a young person just beginning their career with the government?

**Lynn:** “Not to be afraid to go after something you really want, even if means going back to school. You are responsible for a successful career in the public service.”

**HR Links:** What do you want to accomplish before you retire?

**Lynn:** “Well, finish my degree for starters. I really enjoy my job as a Human Resources Consultant, but at some point I would like to move into a Manager’s position.”

**HR Links:** What has been the best office location that you have been in? And the worst?

**Lynn:** “When I started with government, we were located in the Johnston Building. In 1994 our section moved from the 5<sup>th</sup> floor to the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor. My cubicle had this big post which took up a fair bit of my work space, not to mention coming in one day to find a ceiling tile smashed across my work station. I now have a great office in the Maritime Centre with a window that overlooks the harbour, but again I have a big post.”

**HR Links:** Lynn told the “Links” that she has seen many people come and go over the past 25 years. She has worked under 6 Premiers and could name each of them, but did not want to even attempt the number or names of Ministers. Outside of work, Lynn is a student, enjoys being with friends and family and is an avid fan of Hockey, Lacrosse and Soccer especially when her niece and nephew are playing.

Congratulations Lynn on 25 years with the Government of Nova Scotia!

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### NOTICE

#### **HR Manager and Senior Consultant EAP Training**

Due to present demands on HR CSUs, the half day **HR Manager and Senior Consultant EAP Training** originally scheduled for Monday, February 21, is being deferred until the new fiscal year (date to be announced). For those with an immediate need, this course is being offered through the Corporate Calendar on February 16, 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (deadline to register is January 25) and April 18, 8:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. (deadline to register is March 24).

***Everyone is encouraged to attend the EAP Awareness Lunch and Learn Sessions identified on Pg. 8 of the HR Links.***

## **Employee Safety and Health Promotion at the PSC**

By: Joel Marsman, Senior Consultant Employee Safety and Health Promotion

### ***OHS Review and Report (aka the Clahane Report)***

In 2003, the PSC requested an independent review of OH&S activities across government to ensure that obligations under the OH&S Act and corporate policy were being met, and to ensure that the PSC was contributing effectively to the success of OH&S in the public service. The ensuing *Clahane Report* provided 19 recommendations which focussed primarily on three key areas:

- **Leadership** - It was felt that the PSC must champion OH&S at the senior levels and

promote OH&S awareness across government.

- **OH&S Programs and Audit Evaluation** - It was recommended that auditing of departmental OH&S programs be renewed.
- **Resources** - The PSC should assess the availability of OH&S professional resources across government and determine how departments without this resource are acquiring this expertise to meet their requirements.

In general, it was recommended that the PSC should focus on corporate and strategic OH&S initiatives, and take on the role of advising, supporting and monitoring line departments (including the PSC, itself) to help them meet their OH&S responsibilities.

To date, 12 of the 19 recommendations have been implemented. The remaining seven are in progress and in some cases are linked to other initiatives expected to be completed early in 2005.

### **Moving Forward with a Renewed Focus on OH&S**

The PSC, with its renewed focus on employee health, safety and well-being, is committed to providing a safe and supportive workplace for all government employees. We aim to exceed compliance with the OH&S Act and corporate policy in order to reduce the total experience of workplace injury and illness each year for the next five years.

Health and safety has come a long way in the past several years, thanks in large part to a lot of good work done in and by the line departments. Overall, there have been 382 fewer lost-time injuries over the past five years. The recent employee survey indicated other positive trends in OH&S related statistics. Of the employees surveyed regarding safe and healthy workplaces:

- 69 % reported their department creates a safe work environment (24% unfavourable responses).
- 71 % reported feeling safe working in their job (23% unfavourable responses).
- 61 % reported harassment is not tolerated in their workplace (23 % were unfavourable ).

The PSC is committed to working with all departments to further improve upon these trends!

In terms of the how this progress will be made, here are a few highlights of results recently achieved, and a few initiatives to look forward to in 2005:

- a Senior OH&S position was created at the PSC
- OH&S is now specifically addressed in the PSC's Business Plan
- OH&S targets are now included in performance management for managers
- OH&S is now a topic addressed in the Manager Orientation Program
- OH&S is a standing item for the HR Executive Forum
- a strategic planning day was held for the Master OH&S Committee
- a planning day was held for government-wide OH&S Specialists.

This year, the PSC's OH&S group will continue to work on improved OH&S infrastructure and process at a corporate level, and to provide assistance to the line departments in their efforts to improve workplace OH&S. Some of the activities we have planned include :

- improved communications of OH&S related data
- benchmarking of corporate OH&S activities performed in other jurisdictions
- creating a corporate *Scent in the Workplace* policy
- developing a multi-faceted strategy to improve workplace ergonomics across government.

Stay tuned for future updates!

###

"Some people drink from the fountain of knowledge, others just gargle."

- Dr. Robert Anthony

## The Drum Beat

by Candy Palmater



(Candy Palmater)

Happy New Year!! Welcome to the inaugural column, "**The Drum Beat**". This column will be a regular feature in HR Links and will be a general interest column dealing with diversity issues and more. For this opening column, I want to tell you a bit about me (*because I do love to talk about me*) and my new role with the PSC.

I hope by now you have all had a bit of a laugh over the picture I chose to put with this column and I hope it gives you some idea of my need for levity in my work. That picture was taken of me in my back yard when I was 14 years old. So before you jump to conclusions about my juvenile delinquency, let me tell you about what brought me to this point.

Point La Nim, New Brunswick, a little spot outside of Dalhousie is where I grew up. My father came from the Eel River Bar First Nation, but my siblings and I were raised off-reserve. Our family had two family businesses; a Harley Davidson Dealership and a Body Building Gym. So naturally I grew up loving speed and playing lots of sports!! After graduating from high school I went to the University of New Brunswick in Fredericton and then came to Halifax in 1989 where I began a career in Human Resource Training and Development at Dalhousie University. It was at Dalhousie that I realized my

life's work was beginning to form. I was becoming a change agent. This is when I began to work, beyond my own experience as a Mi'kmaq woman, for social justice.

My pursuit of social justice has lead to some interesting life experiences. During my time at Dal, I was trying to save money for law school (does that bust your idea about Aboriginal People attending school for free??) by working a night job at Tim Hortons. I was heavily involved in the NSGEU at Dalhousie and thought my Timmy's co-workers also needed the protection and advocacy of a union. I organized the first union of Tim Horton workers in Atlantic Canada and got my face on the cover of Coast Magazine. **This opportunity was short lived however, as they bulldozed the building, leaving me and my co-workers out of work!!**

That was when I decided that I needed to attack this social justice agenda from a different perspective. I attended Dalhousie Law School and graduated as the first Aboriginal valedictorian of a law school in Canada. I went to work at Patterson Palmer Hunt Murphy, where I practiced management side labour law. I then left private practice and joined the Nova Scotia government in a policy position with the Office of Aboriginal Affairs. In my time with Aboriginal Affairs I piloted a program, I had developed the summer prior, called Aboriginal Perceptions. This training has become a very popular package among government employees and the private sector. You will find a description of the course in the Public Service Commission Course Calendar and I encourage all of you to sign up for it in 2005.

Before I tell you about my new role at the PSC, I want to tell you about some of the fun parts of my life. First of all, you can find me in a purple corset in the 2004 fundraiser for Breast Cancer, Titz n Glitz calendar (so feel free to address me as Ms. February in meetings); secondly I go for happy hour with friends every Friday night after work and you all should consider yourselves invited; and finally, when I'm not hard at work on my day job, I have a blossoming career as a stand up comedian. My motto in life is: "Work hard. Play hard."

So, finally we get to my new role as the Diversity Management Advisor for the Government of Nova Scotia (a two year secondment). In the employee survey that was conducted last year, Nova Scotia government employees told us that they were concerned with diversity and that they supported more work in this area. As a result the PSC has added my role to their already existing diversity management program. Over the next two years I will be helping departments to identify barriers through their own employment systems reviews. In addition I will be assisting them as they develop and implement their Diversity Management Plans. Diversity affects everyone and I hope to bring that message to the masses over the next 24 months.

I hope to make this column one of general interest, but also with a question and answer section; a sort of "Dear Abby" for the diversity confused. So, are you sitting at your desk wondering: "What the heck is diversity management and how is it different from Employment Equity? How much more work is this going to mean for me? Should I say Aboriginal or First Nation?" Wonder no longer!! Send your confidential question to [palmatcj@gov.ns.ca](mailto:palmatcj@gov.ns.ca) and see the answer posted in the following issue of HR LINKS.

I look forward to working with all of you and hope that you will find this column both entertaining and useful!!

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**HR Links Editorial Board:**

Jane Allt  
Mary Dauphinee  
Michelle Collins  
Jeannette Smith

**Next issue:** Monday February 14, 2005. Deadline for submission of articles and updates: **Wednesday February 9<sup>th</sup>** to [smithjm@gov.ns.ca](mailto:smithjm@gov.ns.ca)



## HR Strategy for the HR Community

### *Defining*

#### **Government's HR Community**

By: Vanessa Hammock, Consultant, HR Strategies

A foundational step in the development of an HR Strategy is a shared definition of the Government of Nova Scotia's Human Resources Community.

This definition is needed to determine the scope of current and future human resources needs analysis and priority setting within the HR Community. This definition will be used immediately to:

- identify the recipients for HR Strategy surveys;
- select focus group participants and interview respondents; and
- determine the preliminary focus, key priorities and action plans for the HR Community

This definition will also be used for the development of HR Strategy tools and programs, for example, to help identify positions to include in an HR Community career path model. The HR Community must also be defined to execute such a model including identifying individuals for any associated training.

The Executive HR Forum drafted a definition of the HR Community at the HR Directors Retreat in November 2004.

The two key criteria that were used to determine inclusion in Government's HR Community are:

1. The individual must be a member of the Public Service.
2. Currently working in a Human Resources role, performing HR functions on a daily basis. The employee will

possess knowledge and/or training acquired through formal education and/or other training (e.g. on the job training).

In addition to the key criteria, eight disciplines/functional areas were identified and are included in the overall definition of Government's HR Community.

#### **Government's HR Community**

The essence of the incumbent's primary role encompasses human resources processes and/or related human resource management in the area of employee/labour relations, recruitment/selection, organization and employee development, compensation and classification, payroll and benefits, workplace health and safety, research and information management and/or diversity management. The incumbent will possess knowledge and/or training acquired through formal education and/or other training.

Four levels have also been identified within the HR Community and level-specific definitions have been developed for each of these groups.

#### **Support/Developmental**

Provides administrative/process support in/or across a number of human resource management areas, (e.g. payroll and benefits). This level also includes developmental roles for key HR functional areas (e.g. OH&S, labour relations). The incumbent may (under the supervision of a manager, senior consultant or consultant), assist with development, implementation and delivery of HR programs and services. There may be a requirement for training/education in human resource management.

#### **Consultant – Generalist/Specialist**

Provides professional consultative advice, service and support in all facets of human resource management (generalist) and/or specialty areas such as compensation, OH&S, training and development and diversity management. The incumbent would have a sound understanding of their related area of human resource management as well as client service delivery principles and practices.

## **Management**

The incumbent directs and manages human resources policies, programs, practices and/or operations/staff utilizing their specialized human resources knowledge together with significant job-related experience. Positions may also require that the incumbent possess a broad base of management and people issue skills.

## **Strategic**

Provides leadership in support of the strategic corporate human resources agenda. As a member of the senior management team, the incumbent is responsible for the establishment of the human resource strategy and direction of human resources programs, policies and practices at the highest level. The incumbent possesses formal specialized human resources knowledge together with extensive job-related experience at the senior management level.

HR Directors and PSC Executive Directors will be delivering a presentation on the definition of Government's HR Community to their HR teams in February. This presentation will include the definitions in this article as well as more detailed information regarding examples of positions within each of the levels, for example; Human Resources Assistants fall within the Support/Development level. Directors will also provide more detail on how these definitions and levels of work will be used to develop and execute the HR Strategy for the HR Community. This presentation will provide HR teams across Government with the opportunity to discuss these definitions and provide their feedback before they are finalized. Directors will bring back their respective team's feedback to the Executive HR Forum at which time any necessary revisions will be made and final definitions approved.

###

### **Our HR Strategy Guru tells us that:**

In the Government of NS HR Community 39% of us have an undergraduate degree and 14% have a graduate degree.

###

## **Impact of the Changing Workforce Dr. Linda Duxbury**

(As advertised in the December HR Links)



The Human Resources community clearly identified succession management as a top priority in the needs assessment conducted last spring. As one step in addressing this priority, the

Human Resources Innovation and Growth Division of the Public Service Commission is pleased to offer a half-day seminar with **Dr. Linda Duxbury** on the impact of the changing workforce.

**Dr. Duxbury** is a subject matter expert on Canadian and global workplace trends. Her speeches are funny and incredibly well-informed, so don't miss out on this great learning opportunity.

This session is open to human resource professionals across the provincial civil service. Details are as follows:

1:00 - 4:00, Thursday, February 10, 2005  
Highland Suites 6 & 7 - World Trade and Convention Centre  
1800 Argyle Street, Halifax

**To attend, individuals must RSVP, specifying the date & time of the session, to:**  
[registrartraining@gov.ns.ca](mailto:registrartraining@gov.ns.ca) by February 1, 2005.

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## “Can’t Take A Break? Take a Breath!”

By Rhonda Calcott, Employee Assistance Program

It is January 10th 9:30 am and Carl\* is feeling unusually exhausted. He has been an HR consultant for the past 10 years, prides himself on providing excellent customer service, being highly organized and in control so this feeling of exhaustion is not making sense - particularly since he is just back from two weeks vacation.

He came in early today as he expected a back log of e-mails and projects that needed to be attended to. He had just completed and sent 10 lengthy responses to managers looking for advice on serious workplace issues with employees and was just completing his December activity report for his manager when the overhead lights went out and his computer screen went black.

He instantly felt a flood of frustration rush through his body, his heart began to pound and his breathing became laboured. When he got up to close his door he noticed his legs felt unstable and he barely returned to his chair in the upright position. His hands became cold, they started to tingle and he began to think that he was going to die. His mind began to race with thoughts about things he needed to do before the days end - this report was due by 3pm today; his ex-wife got stormed stayed in Alberta and would not be returning until the end of the week and he had promised her that he would take her mother to a long awaited specialist’s appointment at 11:30 today; his bank manager called and needed to see him today for only 10 minutes to address his first overdraft problem with his account; his sister wanted him to meet her at the airport this evening before she returned to Australia to make amends after a serious argument they had at Christmas dinner, and he had to pick his children up after school and take them to their hockey practice and piano lessons. The red ‘Empty’ warning light on his car’s fuel gage that he had ignored for past two days began to flash in his mind as well as the image of his empty refrigerator.

He was hardly breathing now and just when he thought he was going to faint, his eyes shifted to

his filing cabinet and focussed on a magnet that his daughter had made for him for Christmas that said “**Can’t Take a Break? Take a Breath!**” As he stared at the magnet, he responded by taking a deep breath, held it for 10 seconds and exhaled slowly through his mouth. As he repeated this, he began to notice that his heart slowed down, his hands became warm and his mind became clearer.

And yes, he did survive the day.

Sound familiar? This is an example of stress controlling the person, rather than the person controlling their stress. The body starts sending out signals when we are not coping well with the demands in our life - like keeping us awake at night, heart palpitations, heart burn, backaches and headaches to name a few. These symptoms can be treated, however the best remedy is to evaluate and address the sources of stress and adapt better coping behaviours.

Sometimes this is easier to do with a bit of guidance and support and that is how EAP can be of help. If you or your colleagues would like more information on Healthy Stress Management, please contact EAP 1-800-777-5888.

*\*Although this person and scenario is fictitious, some people may relate to experiencing similar events and feelings.*

###

### **REMINDER: January and February EAP Awareness Lunch and Learn Sessions**

Monday, January 24, 12 noon - 1:00 p.m.  
Joe Howe Training Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

Tuesday, February 15, 12 noon - 1:00 p.m.  
Joe Howe Training Room, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor

Take an hour to lunch with your HR colleagues and learn more about the Government of Nova Scotia’s Employee Assistance Program (EAP).

Please contact Vanessa Hammock by Monday, January 17 if you are interested in attending either of these sessions at 5926 or [hammoccv@gov.ns.ca](mailto:hammoccv@gov.ns.ca).

## “Promote Excellence in the Practice of HR Management”

By Jerry Dodson

This is the IPMA mission. “Promote excellence in the practice of HR management” whether it be in our own HR Community or in the operations of our clients, where the impact of HR decisions is felt first hand.

Momentum is building as it moves closer to the IPMA 2006 Conference, being hosted by the Halifax Chapter, May 28 - 31, 2006. The 2006 Conference Co-Chairs are: Jerry Dodson and Janet Lee. An official launch of the conference logo and branding, including some of the key note speakers and presenters will be announced this month.

A tentative list of topics for the conference include:

- ★ The future of HR Professionals
- ★ Investment in Employee Wellness
- ★ How to Work with Generation Y
- ★ Talent Management
- ★ HR World of Technology
- ★ Human Capital Competencies
- ★ Succession Management
- ★ Leadership - Global Shift

The Program Committee, whose co-chairs include Anne MacDonald and Joan MacLeod are continually working on enhancing and fine tuning the topics for the conference.

**Registration costs have been confirmed** and are as follows:

Regular Members	\$575 (early bird \$525)
Regular non-member	\$675 (early bird \$625)

With the cost of the conference established, and having it in Halifax **now** is the perfect opportunity for those wishing to attend to submit their request to their management for budget planning for 2005/2006. Official registration packages will be going out in December 2005. This is also the time we should be encouraging our client management teams to also plan to attend.

**The various committee chairs include:**

**Conference Co-Chairs:**

Janet Lee (424-7840) or Jerry Dodson (424-3067)

**Programs:**

Anne MacDonald via email at [anne\\_macdonald25@hotmail.com](mailto:anne_macdonald25@hotmail.com) Or Joan MacLeod via telephone at 426-6536

**Registration:**

Lynn Burgess 424-7802

**Logistics:**

Annette Saulnier 424-3391

**Marketing & Communication:**

Kim Ashizawa 424-4493

**Entertainment & Social:**

Mahogany Marcial 464-6208

**Finance:**

Sue Tingley 424-2835

**Sponsorships & Exhibitors:**

Sue Tingley 424-2835

For those in the HR community who are not yet involved but wish to do so, they can contact either Jerry or Janet or any of the committee chairs.

We would like to use this opportunity to acknowledge the invaluable support, expertise, and talent provided by all the volunteers.

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**For more information on IPMA,** including membership information please contact Sherri Boutilier, Director of Membership at 424-8456.

## **Additional Calendar Programs**

by Carla Ellis, Registrar, Corporate Training Calendar

“**Taking Control: How to Organize**” and “**Pre-retirement Planning**” are two of the most popular corporate courses this year. In order to meet the increased demand, two additional sessions have been scheduled. These are in addition to the dates in our 2004-2005 training calendar.

### **Taking Control: How to Organize**

March 22 & 23, 2005

(Registration deadline: March 1)

### **Pre-Retirement Seminar (Halifax)**

March 14 & 15, 2005

March 16 & 17, 2005

(Registration deadline for both sessions: February 21)

**NEW!!** All computer software training courses offered through the Public Service Commission are now posted on the PSC website: <http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/default.asp?mn=1.161.242.245>

Anyone interested in applying for courses offered by the Public Service Commission can find the complete 2004-2005 Corporate Calendar of Learning Programs and Courses, as well as the course application form, at [www.gov.ns.ca/psc](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc) (select the “Training & Development” link under the “Employees” heading).

###

## **Project eMerge Update**

by Carolyn McKenzie

Since the announcement in December of changes to Project eMerge and a new go-live date (April 3), a number of milestones have been reached.

Recommended changes have all been implemented. To reduce complexity, the project

was separated into two distinct projects by sector. Resources, both internal and consulting were doubled. As well, management controls were increased, with more detailed planning based on fewer assumptions, and lower risk tolerances. A representative of Internal Audit now works full time with the team, and the planned external reviews which have always been part of the controls on the project will continue.

With the focus on the government portion of the project, unit testing has been completed with positive results. Tests are now underway on logical series of these units, often referred to as “end to end” tests such as hiring an employee, the employee goes on maternity leave, returns from leave, receives a promotion and retires. Specific scenarios critical to test will be validated and approved by the business. By February these “end to end” tests will be complete. Representatives from the business will approve test results.

With increased resources, training is now being developed based on actual processes and roles, instead of generic system transactions. End users’ specific training needs are driving the design of curriculum, to be complete late in February.

Payroll testing will begin in February, first with “play” data, then with actual data from HRMS, and finally in March with actual data and security accesses.

A series of workshops and demonstrations will be held throughout these coming months to help users become familiar with the system. Dates and topics will be posted on the project website, [www.gov.ns.ca/econ/emerger](http://www.gov.ns.ca/econ/emerger).

###

### **Our HR Strategy Guru ALSO reported:**

That within the Government of NS HR Community, 44% have 6-15 years HR experience within the government.

###

## **A word or two .....**

By Rick Nurse, Public Service Commissioner



**First, Happy New Year!!!** I hope 2005 is good to you and yours!

I've been asked by the newsletter's Editorial Board to plan to provide a "word or two" on an information or opinion piece for each publication. I'm happy to do this, but would welcome

suggestions from newsletter readers on what you'd find useful! So, if you raise questions or suggest topics, I'll write!! How's that??

The "word or two" I'd like to ask you to think about today are "**courageous conscience**" - words I came across in a book called - of all things - "BAD LEADERSHIP", by Barbara Kellerman of Harvard University. In writing about leadership in general, Kellerman suggests that we can't assume that "leadership" is synonymous with "good leadership", and that to fully understand leadership we need to consider the "dark side". She also makes some interesting observations about "FOLLOWERSHIP".

In considering Followership, something we all engage in, Kellerman points out that it too can be good or bad, ethical or unethical. And, that, sometimes it is harder for followers to address ethical issues than it is for leaders. I'm not sure about this, but I am sure that to act or behave ethically, we all need to strengthen our ability to judge right from wrong; and to find the courage and wisdom to act (or react) accordingly. As followers, we are challenged to exercise "courageous conscience" and to deal with situations that make us personally and/or professionally uncomfortable. We all understand that to do otherwise is to behave unethically. But, do we also understand and agree that to do nothing or to just go along (as followers) is just as unethical. How's that for a real dilemma? Essentially, it's the age old "you're damned if you

do and you're damned if you don't" problem that, as servants of the public and as professionals, we face often or occasionally - in our work lives. Sometimes to do nothing or to say nothing is to fail to exercise the integrity, accountability and "courageous conscience" we are each called upon to exercise. If it were easy, anyone could do it; and, the need for personal, professional courage wouldn't exist. My New Year's resolution is to be open to those around me who strive to demonstrate "courageous conscience" and to support them as they raise questions and challenge me (and others) to do better. And, yes, I'll try to exercise a more courageous conscience myself.

Thanks for reading this and for considering these few words as we enter 2005 together. If you'll allow a subject shift, I also want to take this opportunity to say how delighted I was to get to meet more of our Human Resource Community at the December 1st Holiday Season get-together. (I have been told that another has been scheduled for February 17) In fact, as I understand it, there is a need and a wish to get together more often (for networking and for informal information exchanges).

While I know there may be more and better ways, I want to suggest that we consider getting together for the occasional HR Community Breakfast. And, to get things started, we've taken the liberty of booking Breakfast at the Delta Barrington for **Friday, February 4, 2005** at 8:00 A.M. The PSC will host this one; and, we'll need to talk about how to share the cost (contribute to) future Breakfasts and we'll need to consider other, better or additional ways of networking. (If you've got suggestions on different ways of bringing the HR Community together, please send them to your respective HR Director, or to me at your convenience).

The February 4<sup>th</sup> HR Community Breakfast can accommodate 30 (or so) people and we'll take your calls on a first come, first serve basis. So if you're interested and have the time, please e-mail ([smithjm@gov.ns.ca](mailto:smithjm@gov.ns.ca)), or call (424-7504) Jeannette Smith. (Jeannette has "volunteered" to help coordinate this first session).

Again, all the very best in the New Year!