

360° Leadership Assessment Tool

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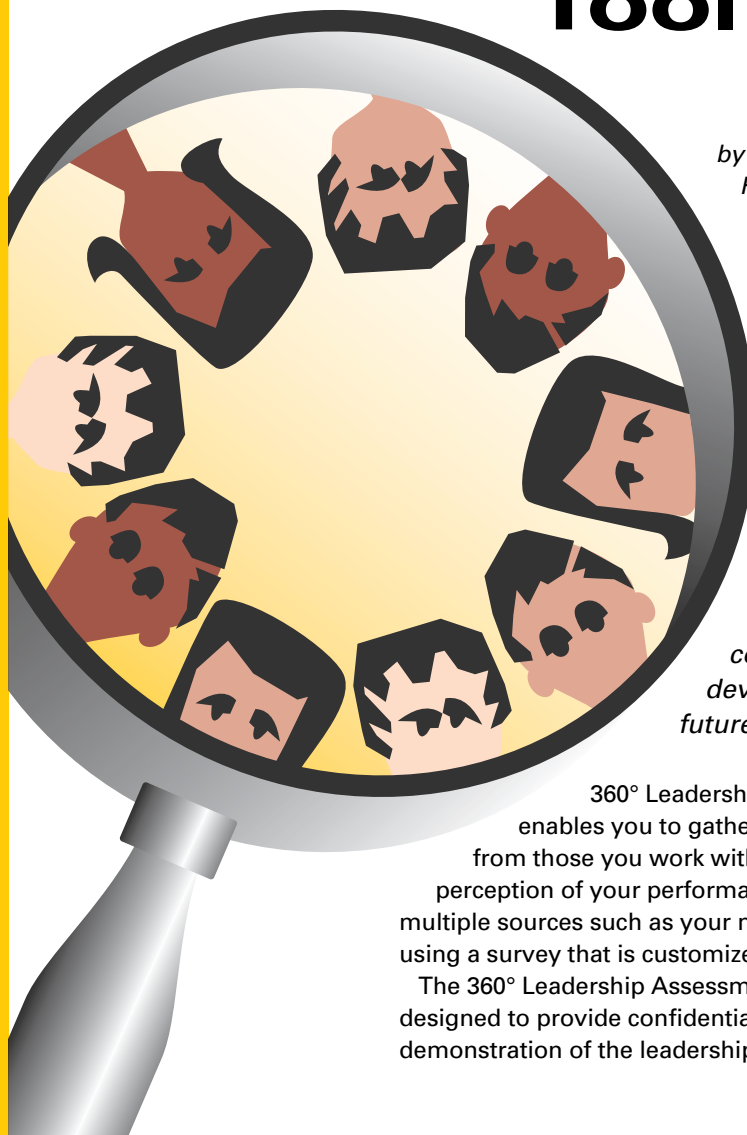
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by Debbie Thomas
Human Resource
Development Consultant
Innovation and Growth, PSC

We will soon have a 360° Leadership Assessment tool available for employees and managers across government. The Leadership Assessment tool is designed using our leadership competencies to support development of our current and future leaders.

360° Leadership Assessment is a process that enables you to gather confidential performance feedback from those you work with and compare it with your own perception of your performance. The feedback is gathered from multiple sources such as your manager, peers and direct reports using a survey that is customized to our leadership competencies.

The 360° Leadership Assessment is a powerful development tool designed to provide confidential, honest feedback on your demonstration of the leadership competencies. → 2



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← 1 It provides you with valuable insight into how you are perceived by others and helps you identify strategies to work more effectively. It points out leadership strengths as well as development opportunities for personal and career development.

The 360° Leadership Assessment will provide you with a well-rounded view of your strengths and areas of development. The feedback will enable you to:

- Identify your areas of strength
- Build a career development plan
- Improve your working relationships
- Understand how others perceive you
- Enhance your personal effectiveness
- Identify gaps that require development

A pilot test group has just completed the 360° Leadership Assessment with a one-on-one feedback session. The pilot group represented leaders at all levels from various government departments. The pilot test results were very positive and included these comments:

“The 360 tool is great—so applicable to us”

“This was a very helpful process and I learned a lot about how others see me”

“It provided me with clear direction on what I am doing well and where I need to improve”

The next step is training with implementation of the 360 Leadership Assessment Tool targeted for mid September 2006. The training will be a certification program that will qualify designated individuals in each department to use the tool and conduct the one-on-one feedback meeting. The PSC is preparing Master Trainers who will work jointly with the Hay Consulting Group in delivering the certification program. The training is expected to be 2 days offered twice in early September. More specific information will be provided to each Human Resources CSU in the next week.

What an excellent opportunity for Human Resource Professionals to develop their skill in using this powerful tool to develop others. ■

Department of Community Services is recognized for their commitment to Workplace Violence Prevention

by Judy Baker
Manager Human Resources

NAOSH Week (North American Occupational Safety and Health Week), celebrated the first week of May each year in Canada, the United States and Mexico, was created to raise awareness of health and safety issues in the workplace and to focus attention on the importance of preventing injury. Each year, during NAOSH Week, the Canadian Society of Safety Engineering (CSSE) presents awards to various individuals and groups to recognize outstanding safety achievements. This year, the award in the “Large Company/Organization” category has been presented to the Department of Community Services for their work in the field of workplace violence

prevention. The Department developed a “Workplace Violence Prevention/Office Security Program” which has been implemented in all offices and has been made available to all government departments. DCS’s Occupational Health and Safety Consultant is always willing to discuss or answer any questions regarding this program. Valerie Wadman can be reached at 424-7975 or through GroupWise at wadmanva@gov.ns.ca.

Congratulations to DCS on this award which exemplifies the Department’s commitment to the health, safety and well being of its employees and the clients they serve! ■

Correction

In the April Issue of HR Links (pg 5) the article on Employee Recognition in Community Services was written by Sandy Graves from Community Services and not Sheila Bissonnette as indicated. Thank you to Sandy for providing the article!

PUBLICATION STATEMENT

HR Links is published 10 times a year on the first business day of each month. The July/August and December/January issues are combined.

The editorial board welcomes and actively solicits articles and story suggestions from members of the HR Community and its partners. Please send your submissions to hrlinks@gov.ns.ca by the first of the month for editing and layout.

Members of the HR Links Editorial Board are:

Jane Allt, Michelle Collins,
Vanessa Hammock, Donna Hendy,
Jeannette Sanchez-Smith,
Alexandra Smith

Letter to the Editor

Dear HR Links:

I have been in the HR Community for over 10 years and just in the past 2 years or so there seems to be more and more secondments within the HR community, but I don't know how to get into that path. I don't see any of them advertised but just hear about the staff that have moved. I need to get some different experience and do want to try something else but stay in human resources, how can I take part in secondments?

*Signed,
Waiting for the Secondment Train*

Dear Little Train that CAN:

Thank you for your question and obvious interest in trying something different. Many of the temporary moves (secondments, transfers, expressions

of interest) occurred when the PSC and CSU's identify particular needs in our community and then 'match' them up with individuals. Some have been able to be achieved because departments offered their support through FTE's, budget and/or career pathing for the individuals involved, while others have the new challenge incorporated into their 'regular' role with a new target in their performance management process (see the recently communicated opportunities to manage the projects for our HR strategy).

How do you get on the 'secondment train'? We would encourage you to complete a career development plan to ensure you have a clear picture of where you want to be in the future (check out the PSC website for career planning tools that can guide you in the direction you want to take) and then speak to your direct supervisor about opportunities

that can help you fulfill your career objectives. This can be done during the performance management process or anytime during the year. There's also a mentoring guide on-line that can help you identify someone who could be a mentor and help open some doors for your development.

As the career planning information states, you as an individual have to take responsibility for your future career goals. Having clear aspirations, a good networking system, utilizing the tools available to you and some 'innovative' ideas to get where you want to go can help you expand your HR experience in our community.

Don't let the train leave the station without you!

Signed HR Links

HR Comings & Goings

The Justice HR CSU welcomes **Tonya Fry** to the CSU in the role of Human Resource Development Consultant. Tonya joined the department on June 26th. Prior to establishing her own consulting business Tonya was at Eastlink as the Training Manager, with Convergys and with the Sheraton. She is a welcome addition to the Justice Learning Centre.

John Plotnikoff has announced his retirement effective October 31, 2006 from the Justice HR CSU where he has been a Human Resources Consultant for the past 17 years.

Karen Fitzner has accepted a secondment from the Department of Justice, Legal Services Division to the Public Service Commission as the Director of Staff Relations.

The Public Service Commission bids a sad but fond farewell to **Julius Egbeyemi** who accepted a position in Ottawa and left the Commission on June 2.

Cheryl Macmillan is retiring at the end of June from the Department of Health after 33 years as our Payroll Benefits Officer. Cheryl will be missed by the employees of the Department of Health.

Shelley Walker successfully competed to fill Cherly's role upon her retirement. Welcome aboard Shelley!

Rick Nurse, Public Service Commissioner announced his plan to leave government at the end of the summer. Rich has led the Public Service Commission and all Human Resource initiatives with energy and passion, we all wish him well in his new endeavours. ■

Advancing HR in the Public Service

For the past 3-4 years, the Human Resources Community has been especially challenged to meet the day-to-day demands for service while trying to anticipate and plan for the future.

You've processed countless staffing competitions, payroll system changes, OH&S and other training sessions, staff and public inquiries, grievances, collective agreement changes, staff recognition and wellness initiatives.

You've contributed to the development of a five-year Human Resources Plan and helped to complete three annual Employee Opinion Surveys - conducted to see how all government employees feel about their workplace.

And, yes, it's been some 13 months since the "go live" date for our HR/Payroll System. No shortage of challenges, lots of hard work, and some concern about mixed results for your efforts. That said, you should never confuse our shared concerns about system challenges and, our unequivocal appreciation for the hard work and significant extra effort of key HR, Finance & IT staff.

So, let me remind you of some of the impact of your efforts and the efforts of our partners in the line.

The fact is, we now have a shared set of stated values to guide our actions, interactions, and decisions and we have five key goals on which to focus our united efforts to foster a positive work environment for all public servants. We have reported measurable progress on each goal in the first year of the HR five-year plan. Let me offer a few examples:

A number of departments are involved in the introduction of professional development plans and talent reviews

Almost all departments have active Workplace Wellness committees and/or Employee Survey follow-up committees

We are close to having a common core

OH&S training program for all staff, with added modules for departments with unique OH&S needs. We've seen reduction in workplace incidents and in LTD claims and will soon add an organization-wide S.T.I. component to our partnership with the LTD Trust and Manulife.

We've had a higher per cent of new hires self-identify as members of designated diversity groups, and at least two departments of government are reporting that their affirmative action plans have increased self-identification representation beyond 15% - compared to a government average of some 7-8%. New diversity training programs have been developed and added to the PSC calendar.

With regards to collective bargaining, we've successfully concluded a new Civil Service Master Agreement through arbitration, and negotiated an agreement with the Highway Workers.

We've substantially reduced the time for processing Classification Reviews and are now targeting an average turnaround of 30 days.

In June, some 60 enthusiastic people from across government met to discuss employee recognition in government.

And by now I'm sure you've thought of a few advances in your areas that others may not even be aware of.

I'm not trying to suggest that everything is perfect. I do, however, want you reflect on the progress that you, as members of the HR Community, have made or supported.

In the next few months, we all know that the HR/Payroll System will continue to need our focussed attention, if we are to have a system that is working smartly and you and others directly involved, see your work-life balance restored.

I know too, that the HR Community and our partners in the line will continue

to take action on the results of the Employee Survey and on the objective and strategy in the HR Plan.

While you're doing this, I want you to keep the results of the recent Public Perceptions Survey - another HR Plan related activity - in mind. I want you to take pride in these results because this survey is about you and about all employees of the government of Nova Scotia; and, our relationship with the citizens we serve.

Respondents to the survey said that employees of the Nova Scotia government are respectful (82%), knowledgeable (84%), act for the public good (72%), and are accountable (67%). As well, they agreed that employees act with Integrity (83%), are courteous and friendly (85%), and are service oriented (80%).

I hope you are as encouraged as I was when first reading the results. For me, this is the best evidence we have that shows the public service has the right people to achieve our goals to help serve the people of this province.

The survey's summary is available at www.gov.ns.ca/psc.

As I anticipate finishing up at the PSC after 2 ½ years, I want you to know that I am proud to have had the chance to work with you and to be associated with the government of Nova Scotia and its hard working, skilled, and dedicated public servants.

*Thank you and take care,
Rick Nurse*

The **Freedom Schooner Amistad** is coming to Halifax!

by Toko Zaza, Communications Officer
Office Of African Nova Scotian Affairs

Have you seen the movie "Amistad"? The Freedom Schooner *Amistad*, a re-creation of the 19th century schooner, La Amistad, will visit Halifax from July 30th until August 7th this year.

The *Amistad* Incident of 1839, made famous by director Steven Spielberg, is one of the first human-rights cases in United States history to be argued in the American court system on behalf of Africans.

In 1839, 53 Africans were illegally kidnapped from West Africa and sold into the transatlantic slave trade. Shackled aboard the Portuguese slave vessel *Tecora*, they were transported to Havana, Cuba, where they were fraudulently classified as native, Cuban-born slaves.

They were illegally purchased by Spaniards who transferred the captives to the coastal cargo schooner, *La Amistad*, for transport to another part of the island. Three days into the journey, a 25-year-old Mende rice farmer named Sengbe Pieh, or "Cinque" to his Spanish captors, led a revolt.

After 63 days, *La Amistad* and her African "cargo" were seized as salvage by the United States Naval Revenue Cutter *USS Washington* near Montauk Point, Long Island, New York, and towed to Connecticut's New London harbor.

The Africans were held in a jail in New Haven on charges of mutiny and murder. The case took on historic proportions when former President John Quincy Adams successfully argued before the United States Supreme Court on behalf of the captives. In 1841 the 35 surviving Africans were returned to Africa.

Events over its week-long visit include, a welcome gala, freedom festival featuring local musicians, youth diversity

sail and daily public tours of the ship. Rounding out the week will be a harbour cruise in conjunction with the Halifax Natal Day celebrations and fireworks.

The Freedom Schooner *Amistad's* visit to Halifax will be an important addition to the usual line up of summer attractions for Nova Scotia.

The Amistad Host Committee, made up of members from the African Nova Scotian community and representatives



from the Office of African Nova Scotian Affairs, Maritime Museum of the Atlantic, DaCosta 400 Project, Black Cultural Centre for Nova Scotia, Africville Genealogy Society, Canadian Heritage, Waterfront Development Corp. Ltd., and Amistad America Inc. (owners of the *Amistad*), are responsible for the historic visit. ■

For more information and to volunteer contact events coordinator Sandy Phillips at 422-2244 and visit the website: <http://www.amistadamerica.org/>

Need an external consultant?

You can now find external Human Resource Consultants at http://iweb.gov.ns.ca/tour_asp/jumppage.asp CLICK on Go to Procurement Site button. This will take you to the 2006 Consulting Support Services standing offer, which is now managed by Procurement Office (formerly managed by the PSC). ■

Need an external trainer or facilitator?

The Request for Proposal (RFP) for training courses and services will be issued by the PSC in the next few weeks. The standing offer database will be available online in August. An online standing offer is a new approach for both the PSC and Procurement Office so we're excited that the information will be available in a searchable, user-friendly format. Stay tuned!

More info? Contact Kenda MacFadyen at the Public Service Commission 424-2706. ■

Recognition Learning Event

by Carrie Hotton and Lisa Palermo
Public Service Commission

"I learned, I laughed, I networked and was inspired"

On June 6th, over 70 employees and managers from across government came together to discuss employee recognition, network and share best practices in an event co-hosted by the PSC and Community Services. It was a full day of learning sessions, presentations, and discussions. As commented by one participant: "I learned, I laughed, I networked and was inspired—thank you!"

Rick Nurse, Commissioner of the PSC, and Marian Tyson, Deputy Minister for Community Services, opened the event and reminded us of the importance of employee recognition and its role in attracting and retaining employees. Presentations made in the morning provided participants with an overview

of employee recognition programs at a corporate and departmental level. Most importantly, departments were able to share lessons learned and best practices, which proved to be very valuable to participants.

Howard Windsor, Deputy Minister for the Office of the Premier, was our keynote speaker and spoke to the importance of being proud of our public service, of leading by example and demonstrating our corporate values in all that we do, including employee recognition. Afternoon discussion tables reviewed topics such as buy-in, roles and responsibilities, the process for getting started with a recognition program, different types of recognition activities, and financial considerations, among others.

Feedback received from participants was very positive:

"This is exactly the type of corporate approach we need to take to improving our place of employment."

"Very timely, informative, need more of these events!"

"Very helpful... I wish more of my colleagues had attended!"

"Excellent. Made me feel more connected to my job, government, and employees. I have more pride in my work."

"Was a breath of fresh air... Thank you!"

We'd like to thank everyone who participated, and particularly those members from our HR community who presented or volunteered as facilitators. The day would not have been as successful without you! ■



What is HR reading over the long hot summer?

Lynn Burgess, HR Consultant from Service Nova Scotia and Municipal Relations will be reading "Angels and Demons" by Dan Brown.

John Plotnikoff, HR Consultant at the Justice HR CSU told our roving reporter that most of the summer he is reading "corrections" material before he heads off in the fall on vacation and retirement. Dedicated is that man's middle name.

Cheryl MacMillan, HRA with Health Human Resources plans to begin her retirement reading a variety of travel brochures and a good Nora Roberts novel while camping on Prince Edward Island.

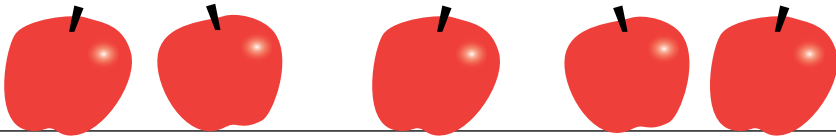
Carrie Hotton from the Public Services Commission doesn't want all in the community to think she is "geeky" because she plans to read: "Life is a Series of Presentations" and "Managing with Carrots – Using Recognition to Attract and Retain the Best People."

Rhonda Walker also from the Public Service Commission, says she plans to jump on the bandwagon and read Dan Brown's "The DaVinci Code." She has this all mapped out. After the "The DaVinci Code" she is going to follow with "Holy Blood, Holy Grail" by Michael Baigent, Richard Leigh and Henry Lincoln who she says claim to use "facts" to prove their theories on whether or not Christianity is based on

a magnificent hoax. Barring all of that she may just grab the closest Harlequin Romance.

"Wow! What a question!!" exclaims **Kim Scott** from her World Trade Centre window seat with Tourism, Culture and Heritage. "I read about a book a week in the summer so the short answer is anything I can get my hands on (except romance and true crime – ugh). I will also be reading the Doers and Dreamers Guide as I tour around the province exploring. I know it sounds like a plug for my client base, but I really do enjoy the guide and have actually stopped along route to somewhere else to explore a location I found in the book." ■

Workplace Health Making Strides



by Joan M. Parks-Hubley RSW, CRSP
Coordinator, Healthy Workplace Programs

As we work to achieve our goal to be a safe and supportive workplace, one of our challenges has been designing and targeting a Healthy Workplace program for maximum long-term effectiveness and sustainability.

But, that challenge has not stopped us from maintaining momentum and making progress on the healthy workplace front, both corporately and within government departments.

As evidence that our timing is just right to move forward, 'healthy workplace' was recently included in Government's Business Plan and plans of many line departments.

As we implement a comprehensive healthy workplace program across the Nova Scotia Government we will be guided by the National Quality Institute's (NQI) approach that focuses on three key elements:

Individual Health and Lifestyle Practices (e.g.: nutrition, physical activity, smoking cessation)

Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment (e.g.: healthy organizational culture, supportive leadership and policies, positive work life balance)

Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety (e.g.: appropriate noise levels, OH&S Programs, ergonomics)

Through the NQI-Progressive Excellence Program (PEP), we will continue working with Canadian Healthy Workplace Criteria with an aim to achieve first-level certification in the coming months. The criteria create the foundation for a healthy workplace

program in government, and set a direction for our work:

- An acknowledgment in its vision and/or mission statement of the value of people within the organization
- A written policy on employee well-being in the workplace
- A process to review relevant occupational health and safety legislation
- A method by which management demonstrates its commitment to a healthy workplace
- Approaches to ensure that the responsibility and accountability for healthy workplace issues are shared throughout the organization
- A process to ensure employee health issues are considered in the management decision making process
- A process to ensure the review and, if necessary, improvement of actions covered under NQI-PEP Canadian Healthy Workplace Criteria - Level One: Commitment

The Healthy Workplace initiative has been working to create healthy and supportive work environments for all employees through a number of activities.

An interdepartmental committee, the Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee, has been set-up to lead the work on Healthy Workplace and Level I certification. A number of subcommittees have also been established to address various issues including communication and policy.

Over the past year the majority of departments have initiated Healthy Workplace or Wellness Committees.

Committee members have had access to a new half-day workshop, "Jumpstarting Your Healthy Workplace Committee."

A wide variety of activities and initiatives to support Healthy Workplace have taken place to date.

The Advisory committee consulted with stakeholders in November 2005 to help inform their work in drafting the corporate **Healthy Workplace policy**. An Environmental Scan on Healthy Workplace Programs in Canadian Government has also been completed to support the policy's development.

In March, the "**Take Back the Lunch Break**" campaign was launched across government to encourage those employees who don't regularly take lunch to commit to getting away from the office at least three days a week. The webpage www.gov.ns.ca/takebackthelunchbreak had over 3,500 hits in the first few weeks of the initiative.

A new government-wide quarterly newsletter called "**@ the Window**" was created to focus on healthy workplace issues. This is the only newsletter that is distributed to all 9,000 employees.

A corporate **Healthy Workplace webpage** is currently under development.

A pilot project on **Caregivers in the Workplace** has just concluded and is being evaluated. Since the broader issue of work life balance was identified in employee surveys, it was felt that learning more about how to support family caregivers would be a priority. With more employees dealing with aging family members, this area presents challenges for all workplaces.

In the coming months, a new resource on **Healthy Eating in**

Stress Buster

How to put off procrastination

compiled by Jerry Dodson

Procrastination is a core source of stress. You know you have to do the job, and you keep running it through your head, putting pressure on yourself. This is a simple technique for taking that pressure off and getting on with it.

The first thing to remember is that

your brain works with pictures.

It's only the surface level that works with words. For example, if I was to ask

you how many chairs are in your home, how would you get the answer? You'd visualize walking around your home and counting them, wouldn't you? Or if I was to ask you what the colour of your first car was, how would you get the answer? You'd see a picture in your mind's eye.

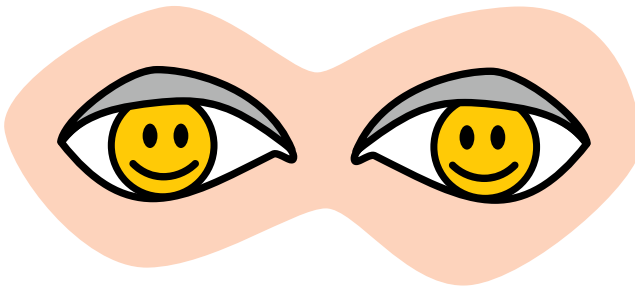
When we're thinking about doing something we don't want to do, we usually make a picture in our heads of doing the task. If it's something we don't like or don't want to do, that actually de-motivates us and pushes us to avoidance. The more we focus on doing it, the more we avoid it, and the more stress and pressure we feel.

Instead of focusing on doing the job, what would happen if you created a picture of having finished it, and how good it would feel? For example, if you needed to clean the kitchen, instead of thinking of cleaning it, create a picture of it clean and how good you feel about it.

If you need to sort out the files and paperwork on your desk, instead of thinking about actually

doing the clearing up, picture your clean desk in your mind's eye, and notice how that makes you feel about doing the work.

Strange as it may sound, many of our feelings don't come from the outside world, but rather from the pictures we create in our minds. By focusing on what you didn't want, you created feelings that made you avoid the work. Instead, focus on what you want (the end goal), and notice how that makes you feel about going ahead and getting on with the work. Try it out and see what happens. ■



← 7

the Workplace will be available to all departments. This resource guide was drafted by a nutritionist, in partnership with Capital Health and Health Promotion and Protection.

A new workshop, **Make A Move**, will be offered via the Heart and Stroke Foundation to members of the Healthy Workplace Advisory Committee to provide physical activity counselling strategies and a tool kit of resources.

And finally, the corporate **Healthy**

Workplace initiative will take learnings from the Healthy Life Works Project to help build a strong, comprehensive, and sustainable workplace health program across the Nova Scotia Government.

To keep the momentum, it will take the continued commitment from our leadership, our HR Community, healthy workplace committees, and all government employees.

Are you ready?



Awarded to

**Deputy Minister
Howard Windsor**

As we strive to make improvements, to set goals, to reach targets, as human resource professionals we rely on the commitment from our partners, our stakeholders in government to stay on task and to make things happen. It is indeed critical to our overall success as practitioners that we have this commitment and encouragement from our partners.

To recognize the importance of partnerships, this month's award goes out to an HR partner who has been instrumental to our overall successes and what we have achieved to date. Deputy Minister Howard Windsor has shown his commitment to our HR Corporate Plan. He has shared with us his time, and his words of wisdom on human resources in the public sector, which we will take with us today and tomorrow. He has added so much value to our processes, has been equally as committed to our goals, and has shown us nothing but support. Howard, this award goes to you as a huge thank you for being who you are and for doing what you do! It just takes one strong leader to make things happen and you certainly have demonstrated this throughout your career.

All our best to you.

We in the
Human Resource Community
will miss you tremendously.

If anyone sees an individual or group in our community that you feel is deserving of some special recognition please send your nomination to hrlinks@gov.ns.ca