

# BE THE MANAGER YOU'D LOVE TO HAVE

**January 2007**

## Build a **healthy workplace**

The Government of Nova Scotia has a new Healthy Workplace Corporate Policy. This calendar is meant to help managers understand their role in the policy and in a healthy workplace.

The Nova Scotia public service has adopted the National Quality Institute's model of Healthy Workplace. It describes three elements that influence the health and wellness of the organization and its employees.

### **Workplace Culture and Supportive Environment (Organizational Culture) -**

work/life balance, the organization of work, a sense of control over one's work, respectful relationships with co-workers, supervisors and clients, adequate training, a sense of fairness and fun at work, and access to support during difficult times.

**Physical Environment and Occupational Health and Safety** - the quality of the physical work environment and includes things like noise control, air quality, ergonomics, and working in partnership with occupational health and safety programs.

**Health and Lifestyle Practices** - mental health, physical activity, eating habits, sleep habits, smoking, alcohol and drug abuse.

### **Quote**

"Having healthy employees is an important part of doing good business, and good managers are sensitive to potential impacts on employee health when making business decisions."

John W. Perry, Senior Advisor and Senior Vice-President, National Quality Institute

Visit: [www.gov.ns.ca/psc/healthyworkplace](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/healthyworkplace)

### **Tip**

Use the *Be the Manager You'd Love to Have*; Healthy Workplace self-assessment checklist.

## **Holidays and Observances:**

Jan. 1, 2007: New Year's Day  
Jan. 3, 2007: Mahayana Buddhist New Year  
Jan. 4, 2007: World Braille Day  
Jan. 15, 2007: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (US)  
Jan. 20, 2007: Muharram Islamic New Year  
Jan. 24, 2007: Weedless Wednesday

## **February 2007**

### **Communication matters**

Communicating with employees is one of the most important things you do as a leader.

Effective communications helps to build relationships, promotes mutual understanding, and enables employees to contribute to organizational success.

**"Internal Communications: It's Not Rocket Science"** was written for Government of Nova Scotia managers like you. The guide is available at our website or through your department's communications staff.

Learn how effectively-run staff meetings can lead to improved teamwork, why regular walk-about in the workplace is a good use of your time, and how to make the most of your E-mail.

Internal communications takes some planning. It takes practice and commitment. But, it's not rocket science!

### **Quote**

"The single biggest problem in communication is the illusion that it has taken place."

George Bernard Shaw

**Visit:** [www.gov.ns.ca/cmns](http://www.gov.ns.ca/cmns)

### **Tip**

Use staff meetings and roundtables to share information.

## **Holidays and Observances:**

Feb. 1, 2007: African Heritage Month  
Feb. 2, 2007: Groundhog Day  
Feb. 4, 2007: White Cane Week  
Feb. 14, 2007: Valentine's Day  
Feb. 15, 2007: National Flag Day of Canada  
Feb. 18, 2007: Chinese New Year  
Feb. 21, 2007: Ash Wednesday

## **March 2007**

### **Value diversity**

A workplace that is free of discrimination and truly representative of our province, where diversity is valued, and where people respect differences - this will establish the public service as a preferred employer.

Show respect for all people:

- Use language that respects diversity
- Listen to understand diverse perspectives
- Monitor personal behaviour with respect to diversity

Promote fairness in the application of diversity principles and policies:

- Promote the acceptance of diversity in the workplace
- Take initiative to gain an appreciation of various cultures
- Identify inappropriate behaviour in the workplace and intervene immediately

Encourage a climate that supports diversity:

- Ensure reasonable accommodation and accessibility
- Work toward establishing a diverse workforce
- Integrate equity and diversity principles in all management practices

### **Quote**

"Great discoveries and achievements invariably involve the cooperation of many minds."

Alexander Graham Bell

Visit: [www.gov.ns.ca/diversity](http://www.gov.ns.ca/diversity)

### **Tip**

Practice skills for working with diverse communities.

### **Holidays and Observances:**

March 8, 2007: International Women's Day

March 11, 2007: Daylight Saving Time Begins

March 17, 2007: St. Patrick's Day

March 21, 2007: First Day of Spring

International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

### **April 2007**

#### **Create a great team**

Whether you're managing a division or chairing a committee, you are responsible for creating teams and ensuring their effectiveness and success.

You are often called upon to be initiator, coach, model, facilitator, and negotiator.

A great team is one where its members understand their roles and share a sense of purpose, where communication is done easily and openly; where issues and solutions are discussed and solutions are found together; and where team members trust and support each other and respect their leader.

As the leader, you can set a vision, motivate your team members, provide constructive feedback, and set the tone for a productive and collaborative work environment.

### **Quote**

"A true team is a living, constantly changing, dynamic force in which a number of people come together to work."

Robert Heller, British Author

Visit: [www.leadinginsight.com/teams.htm](http://www.leadinginsight.com/teams.htm)

### **Tip**

Provide day-to-day encouragement to your team

### **Holidays and Observances:**

April 1, 2007: Palm Sunday  
April 2, 2007: Theravada Buddhist New Year  
April 3, 2007: Passover  
April 6, 2007: Good Friday  
April 7, 2007: World Health Day  
April 8, 2007: Easter Sunday  
April 9, 2007: Easter Monday  
April 15, 2007: Yom Hashoah - Holocaust Day  
April 22, 2007: Earth Day  
April 28, 2007: National Day of Mourning

## **May 2007**

### **Prevent workplace injuries**

Injuries that affect muscles, tendons, ligaments and nerves are among the most common workplace injuries. They can occur in any workplace from repetitive, forceful, or awkward movements on joints, ligaments and other soft tissues. Some examples are: low back or neck strain, Tendonitis, Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, and tennis elbow.

In Nova Scotia, sprains and strains accounted for 61% of the lost time claims reported in 2005. The back is the most common part of the body injured.

As a manager, you can promote prevention and good ergonomic practices to reduce the risk of injury and promote a healthier, more productive workforce.

### **Quote**

“Precaution is better than cure.”

Edward Coke, Lord Chief Justice, England, 1613-1616

**Visit:** [www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/preventmsd](http://www.wsib.on.ca/wsib/wsibsite.nsf/public/preventmsd)

### **Tip**

Ensure workers have access to workstation assessments.

### **Holidays and Observances:**

May 1, 2007: Asian Heritage Month

May 2, 2007: Buddah Day - Visakha Puja

May 6, 2007: NAOSH Week - North American Occupational Safety and Health Week

May 7, 2007: Mental Health Week

May 12, 2007: Canada Health Day

May 13, 2007: Mother's Day

Deaf Awareness Week

May 15, 2007: International Day of Families

May 18, 2007: Bluenose International Marathon

May 21, 2007: World Day for Cultural Diversity Dialogue and Development

Victoria Day

May 22, 2007: Aboriginal Awareness Week

### **June 2007**

#### **Work with EAP**

Approximately 10% of the workforce, at any point in time, experiences personal problems significant enough to affect their work. The Employee Assistance Program (EAP) is a confidential, 24-7 resource to assist managers and employees with these issues.

Managers can:

- Offer EAP awareness sessions to staff
- Attend EAP management/supervisory training

Consult with EAP to assist with:

- A change in job performance (absenteeism, quantity/quality of work, work attitude, behaviour)

- Workplace safety concerns (substance abuse, violence-or threat of violence)
- Personal problems (grief, loss, emotional distress, relationships, child or elder concerns, or life changes)
- Critical Incident Stress Management

Contact Information:

EAP Toll free: 1 800 777 5888

Local: 902 424 7948

**Quote**

“No matter how big and tough a problem may be, get rid of confusion by taking one little step toward a solution. Do something.”

George F. Nordenholt

**Visit:** [www.gov.ns.ca/psc/eap](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/eap)

**Tip**

Call EAP to arrange awareness sessions.

**Holidays and Observances:**

June 3, 2007: Commuter Challenge Week

June 4, 2007: Canadian Environment Week

June 6, 2007: Clean Air Day

June 17, 2007: Father's Day

June 21, 2007: National Aboriginal Day

Summer Begins

June 24, 2007: St. Jean Baptiste Day

June 27, 2007: Canadian Multiculturalism Day

## **July 2007**

### **Nurture, trust and respect**

Trust is the foundation of a healthy organizational culture. A positive culture will encourage strong ties between employees, managers, clients, and stakeholders and will enable employees to excel in their work.

Three dimensions of trust in the workplace are credibility, respect, and fairness.

Managers can increase their **credibility** by:

- being visible and accessible
- matching behaviors and words
- carrying through with promises

Managers can demonstrate **respect** by:

- modeling respectful behavior
- collaborating with employees
- caring for employees

Managers can convey **fairness** by:

- showing equity and balance in decision-making
- demonstrating impartiality in hiring and promotions
- following up on concerns and complaints in a timely way

#### **Quote**

“A crucial insight for public sector managers is that a high-trust workplace is high-performing because employees are more than engaged – they are passionate about their work and feel inspired to further their organization’s goals.”

Graham Lowe, Great Place to Work Institute and the Graham Lowe Group

**Visit:** [www.grahamlowe.ca](http://www.grahamlowe.ca)

#### **Tip**

Enrol in “Leading a Respectful Workplace” training.

## **Holidays and Observances:**

July 1, 2007: Canada Day

July 15, 2007: Halifax Pride Week

## **August 2007**

### **Balance** life and work

The Nova Scotia government employee surveys show that 90% of respondents want support in balancing work and personal/family life.

The strongest support you can offer is your own personal example. Take care of yourself and be seen to be taking care of yourself. When you take a walk, a break, a breather, a vacation, you telegraph to others that it's OK for them to do the same.

Work flat out 24/7, send email at 2:00 in the morning, and it won't matter what you say to others. They'll follow your lead and feel guilty if they don't or can't. Your lived example sets the tone and the pace.

### **Quote**

“The strongest support you can offer is your own personal example.”

Patricia Katz, Optimus Consulting

**Visit:** [www.pauseworks.com](http://www.pauseworks.com)

### **Tip**

Catch your breath and still your mind.

## **Holidays and Observances:**

August 6, 2007: Civic Holiday

August 9, 2007: International Day of the World's Indigenous People

August 15, 2007: National Acadian Day

## **September 2007**

### **Pause for applause**

Recognition is an essential part of creating a supportive and healthy work environment that values employees for who they are and acknowledges the work they do.

As a manager, you should consider reinforcing positive behaviours and performance within your teams.

Recognition does not need to be fancy or complicated, but it should be specific.

Look around every day and “applaud” employees for doing their job well. The best recognition is personal - delivered directly to the individual(s) responsible.

Recognition can take on many forms, depending on your team members. Some people like to be singled out, while others appreciate a quiet, personal note of thanks from their direct manager or supervisor.

### **Quote**

“Brains, like hearts, go where they are appreciated.”

Robert McNamara, former U.S. Secretary of Defense and President of the World Bank

Visit: [www.gov.ns.ca/psc/recognition](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc/recognition)

### **Tip**

Plan for Provincial Public Service Week

### **Holidays and Observances:**

Sept. 3, 2007: Labour Day

Sept. 13, 2007: Rosh Hashanah

Ramadan

Sept. 21, 2007: World Alzheimer Day

Sept. 22, 2007: Yom Kippur

Sept. 23, 2007: Autumn Begins

October 2007

## Promote **healthy** living

Employees who are healthy are also more productive. That's why individual health and lifestyle practices - physical and mental health, healthy eating, weight management, stress management, smoking cessation, and addressing alcohol/drug abuse - are an important part of workplace health.

**Communicate.** Ask employees what health and lifestyle issues are important to them and help them gain access to current information.

**Promote.** Promote healthy workplace initiatives, policies, and programs, including EAP and corporate health benefits.

**Model.** Take back **your** lunch break, host healthy meetings, and participate in corporate wellness initiatives.

**Support.** Support employees making health and lifestyle changes and those who are participating in work-related sports teams, walking clubs, and physical activity campaigns.

### Quote

"The first wealth is health."

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Visit: [www.heartandstroke.ca](http://www.heartandstroke.ca)

### Tip

Recognize Healthy Workplace Committees.

### Holidays and Observances:

Oct. 1: Mi'kmaq Treaty Day/ Mi'kmaq History Month

Oct. 8, 2007: Thanksgiving Day

Provincial Public Service Week

Oct. 22: Healthy Workplace Week

Oct. 31, 2007: Halloween

**November 2007**

**Lead** by example

With an ageing population and declining birthrates, the size of the available workforce in Nova Scotia is shrinking. Creating a healthy workplace is one strategy to attract and retain highly qualified and motivated employees for Nova Scotia's public service.

Employees feel valued, supported, and productive in a healthy workplace.

To support a healthy workplace, you should consider:

- Leading by example
- Modeling the public service values
- Communicating regularly and seeking employee input
- Recognizing staff for a job well done

Employees can become ambassadors for the organization by demonstrating pride and helping to promote government as a great place to work in our communities.

Visit the PSC website for HR tools and information directed to managers.

**Quote**

"One of the most important elements in the fight against the labour shortage is a healthy workforce. A strong, integrated health strategy will help you attract the talent you need, and retain and develop your workforce to ensure they contribute to organizational performance."

Conference Board of Canada

**Visit:** [www.gov.ns.ca/psc](http://www.gov.ns.ca/psc)

**Tip:**

Encourage participation in annual corporate employee surveys

**Tip:**

Try a walking meeting

## **Holidays and Observances:**

Nov. 4, 2007: Daylight Saving Time Ends

Nov. 9, 2007: Mahavira Nirvana Celebration

Nov. 11, 2007: Remembrance Day

Nov. 19, 2007: Addictions Awareness Week

Nov. 24, 2007: AIDS Awareness Week

Nov. 25, 2007: International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women

## **December 2007**

### **Reach out to others**

Nova Scotians have a rich history of volunteering and community involvement. From soup kitchens to fire departments, helpful neighbours to dedicated drivers, volunteers strengthen the fabric of our society.

Employers that support their employees' community work have healthier and more satisfied employees.

Here are some ideas to support volunteerism in your workplace:

- Talk to your staff about what's important to them
- Volunteer as a team outside of the workplace
- Help to raise funds for charities you all want to support
- Find ways to accommodate staff who volunteer their time
- Replace gifts with donations
- Bring in speakers to team meetings from charities of interest

### **Quote**

You make a living by what you get, but you make a life by what you give.

Winston Churchill

Visit: [www.volunteer.ca](http://www.volunteer.ca)

### **Tip:**

Make 2008 the year you start to give back.

## **Holidays and Observances:**

Dec. 1, 2007: World AIDS Day  
Safe Driving Week  
Dec. 3, 2007: International Day of Persons with Disabilities  
Dec. 5, 2007: Hanukkah  
Dec. 6, 2007: National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women  
Dec. 10, 2007: International Human Rights Day  
Dec. 22, 2007: Winter Begins  
Dec. 25, 2007: Christmas Day  
Dec. 26, 2007: Boxing Day  
Kwanzaa

## **January 2008**

### **Rethink workload**

Nearly 20% of employed Canadians say that they often have difficulty keeping up with their workload. Heavy workloads can take a toll on organizations and employees, possibly affecting productivity and turnover, workplace stress, and individual health and job satisfaction.

What can you do?

Rethink workflow and division of labour in your team. Be creative about how workloads can be made more reasonable.

Focus on performance outcomes. Give employees more choice over their work, work schedules, and how the work is accomplished.

Take your team through a process improvement initiative. Identify low value work so that it can be reduced or eliminated without negatively impacting business results.

### **Quote**

"What works especially well is employees coming up with solutions. They didn't suggest hiring more people or reducing the workload. Instead they came up with ideas. They came up with all kinds of ideas, hundreds of ideas."

Sange de Silva, Statistics Canada

Visit: [www.bd.edu/centers/cwf/news/meta-elements/pdf/workload\\_ebs.pdf](http://www.bd.edu/centers/cwf/news/meta-elements/pdf/workload_ebs.pdf)

**Tip**

Reduce non-value added work.

**Holidays and Observances:**

Jan. 1, 2008: New Year's Day

Jan. 19, 2008: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day (U.S.)