

Employment Services Seminar 2008

Enhancing Relationships

To get what you need, you are compelled to negotiate – to listen to the others' interests and needs and to fashion an outcome that works for all sides.

Mark Gerzon
Leading Through Conflict

The CPCO annual Employment Services Seminar took place on January 18-19, 2008 at the Marriott Toronto Airport Hotel. One hundred and twenty-five members participated in the interactive sessions. It was an opportunity to network with colleagues from across the province, to gather information, knowledge and best practices.

In his opening remarks President Dan Tighe thanked the Member Security Committee for the many hours of volunteer time they gave on weekends to design the two-day seminar for CPCO members. He assured the group that CPCO continues to advocate with the Minister of Education to improve school administrators' terms and conditions. As well, he stressed the importance of building relationships with senior administration at the board level.

The seminar was chaired by Glenn Miller, chair of the Member Security Committee. He invited participants to embrace the seminar's theme, *Enhancing Relationships* and to provide the committee with feedback on the effectiveness of the components of the agenda. Members were then provided with feedback from regional teleconferences with lead negotiators conducted in the early fall of 2007. The purpose for the consultations was to determine current local trends and practices. Declining enrolment and the importance of developing a good working relationship with senior administration and trustees were among the concerns noted. There was a sense of optimism that with so many new directors, new beginnings could be forged.

On June 8, 2007 the Supreme Court of Canada brought down its ruling on the British Columbia case, Health Services and Support

General comments from participants:

"This kind of in-service is important to all the membership and every opportunity should be made to in-service them."

"Overall it was a very effective and worthwhile session. I have gained a lot of negotiation information."

"Thanks for all your work and leadership. This was a great seminar once again!"

"Outstanding! You were able to meet the needs of all from first time participants to those who have attended before. Thanks!"

"Considering the political landscape, this was excellent."

"I enjoyed the networking. It was a well-organized event."

"This was a very practical seminar."

"I have attended the last three Employment Service Seminars. In my opinion this has been, by far, the best."

"Kudos to the organizing committee! The fruits of their labour were clearly evident throughout the two-day seminar."

"I am really glad I came. I know now what I need to do to prepare further for our discussions."

"As a new administrator and new team member, this was excellent training and even just a great chance to get to know my team-mates better."

"It is always an informative and extremely helpful experience to bring together our shared concerns, needs and potential issues. Collective wisdom is a good thing!"



Member Security Committee

From L to R: Lou Rocha, Bob Coons, Joe Czackowski, Jim Minello, Glenn Miller, Dan Howard, Mary Valtellini, John Ulicny, Mike Courchesne and Dan Tighe

- Facilities Subsector Bargaining Association, et al. v. Her Majesty the Queen in Right of the Province of British Columbia. Executive Director Lou Rocha provided the group with a comprehensive review of the decision and how it may impact on local negotiations. He pointed out that the ruling has two key ingredients that are of interest to the local associations; the right to protection against interference from associating for the purpose of collective bargaining and the right to bargain in good faith. CPCO has been proactive in consulting with our Catholic partners to discuss the impact of this ruling. Members will be kept apprised of further developments on this issue as they unfold.

Faye Drennan, senior staff consultant with the Ontario Principals' Council shared six principles of good faith bargaining:

1. the duty to meet;
2. the duty to be recognized as the bargaining agent;
3. the duty to bargain and to engage in rational discussion;
4. the duty to fully and candidly disclose all relevant information;
5. the duty to refrain from using unfair bargaining tactics; and
6. the duty to avoid bargaining to impasse those demands which are illegal or contrary to labour relations policy.

She recommended that each local association begin doing its research and preparing its proposal for the board. Ms Drennan reminded the participants that negotiation is about process and relationships.

Following the discussion on good faith bargaining, James Cameron an employment lawyer with Raven, Cameron, Ballantyne & Yazbeck took participants through a review of the

Charney decision and its implications for CPCO members. He also reviewed the wording options for a number of key clauses including arbitration, transfer, security, redundancy and recall, and seniority. Cameron reminded the negotiators of the importance of language and making sure a clause actually says what the negotiator intended. The associations were invited to submit individual clauses for review or where required, the entire contract. The session ended with questions from individuals regarding their particular contracts.

While the afternoon session was very informative, it was also quite intense. To make sure that the local teams could go home confident that they had all the information they needed to report to their membership, and to start their contract preparations, CPCO provided the necessary tools. Joe Czackowski, Executive Council liaison to the Member Security Committee highlighted the features of the resource binder, *Positive Outcomes*. He reminded members that this becomes a record of the history of the association's journey in contract negotiation. CPCO will assist the teams in developing online surveys to gather feedback and data from members as to what they consider the priorities for this round of discussions with senior administration.

Paul McGuire, webmaster for the online resource Contract Manager, demonstrated some of the features available through this application. Negotiators are able to review clauses from other contracts as well as salary data as they prepare their proposals. He also highlighted other reports available that teams may wish to reference during their planning. Members were encouraged to contact Paul if they require assistance.



The first day ended with an after dinner panel presentation and discussion. Retired directors of education Theresa Harris (Brant-Haldimand Norfolk CDSB) and Patrick Cureton (Bruce-Grey CDSB) were joined by Kevin Kobus, director of the Toronto Catholic District School Board. Some of the topics that were touched upon included:

- the importance of building relationships, especially trust relationships;
- principals have credibility and are held in high esteem;
- the principal’s role is as challenging today as it has ever been;
- job security is important to school administrators;
- succession planning is becoming an issue – declining enrolment and principal workload make the role unattractive to many teachers;
- the need for healthy principals who are supported by senior administration; and
- principals are called to be leaders – leadership is doing the right thing.

The second day was devoted to training members in interest-based bargaining. Representatives from the Stitt Feld Handy Group took the participants through the seven elements of principled negotiation:

1. alternatives;
2. interests;
3. options;
4. legitimacy;
5. communication;
6. relationship; and
7. commitment.

Understanding the elements is one thing, putting them into practice is quite another. Members had the opportunity to role-play a situation and to use their newly acquired knowledge to arrive at a resolution that was acceptable to all parties. The day culminated with a feedback session on the process and participants’ reactions to the exercise.

Member feedback regarding the success of the Employment Services Seminar 2008 was very positive. The Member Security Committee is to be congratulated for organizing and delivering a program that provided the teams with the tools they need to be of further assistance to their local associations.