

# Board Visioning Retreat: SPAN Leaps Forward



Vision is paramount when it comes to developing a Corporation the size of SPAN in St. Paul. Our focus has always been and remains: best service for the persons with disabilities in our region. As we are getting ready for another accreditation, we are looking forward to embracing our community and expanding our services.

All this requires strong teamwork and resources. Therefore we are moving ahead, training our personnel, building homes, catering to schools, providing cleaning services and trucking for the oil field and related industries and working hard on building yet new opportunities for our clients and our community.

*Platon Boiko, Communications*

**NOTICE:**

There is a big change in Alberta - Health Link is now at 811. If you haven't heard all they do - please check out the link. <http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/assets/healthinfo/link/index.html>

**Newsletter Team:**  
Eugene Mcafferty, Rochelle Whyne, |  
Platon Boiko.

*Erratum:*

The poem included in the previous issue of the newsletter by Adele Lawrence was originally written for the Home 3 SPAN Display in commemoration of SPAN's 50th anniversary last year. Due to a technical error, a part of the poem was unwittingly omitted. We apologize for it.

P: (780) 645-3441  
1-866-645-3900  
F: (780) 645-1885



4637- 45 Avenue, St. Paul,  
Alberta, T0A 3A3



**From the Desk of the CEO**

Res #1 house is in preparation to support one young adult to move from institutional care to community. This individual program will eventually be known as Res #44. We are making the house into a duplex, so are preparing the other unit for four people. Diana Foerster has begun the intake process for these new folks and we are now working to identify the staff for the home.

- We continue to seek out candidates for our Team Lead and Coordinator positions as these new projects justify creating another Coordinator position.
- I am concerned that many of our new staff are not participating in the Staff Social Club. While participation is actually up for many of the events this Staff club put on, membership is down.

The Social Club is a great way for people to connect with others in a fun, friendly way. Good relations among co-workers make happier, better employees and a better work experience. For \$5 per month you have opportunities to participate in lots of activities. As members you typically don't go to everything, but easily get your monies worth just from the Free Christmas party tickets. If you're not a member, ask yourself why you choose to miss out on a wealth of opportunities to develop connection in this agency. Are you not interested in making your work life better; or developing resources, contacts and friends? Please become a member.

- SPAN'S Casino Fundraiser is June 6&7 this year. I, along with 13 other volunteers will be spending the weekend raising money for the agency. Casino funds have gone toward:

The new kitchen cabinets at Res #6 The new kitchen at Res #3 The new van at Res #1 The new van at Res #2 The new van at Res #8 - New flooring and home renovations at various places Roof repairs on our gym Costs for photocopier and printers New computers and server for every program area Thank you to the fantastic group of volunteers who make casino's and bingo's happen.

- If you have heard a rumor that SPAN is looking to partner in Hotel; you are hearing correctly. While we are 'early days' at this point, we are seeking financial backing for a fairly major Social Enterprise business.

Social Enterprise essentially is when charities mesh business with charitable purpose. Our Social Enterprise begins with the principal that you cannot go to your community, asking for donations to help the poor and disabled, then turn around and try to characterize the same folks as ready and willing to work at their community business and contribute meaningfully.

So we create 'win-win' situations where we start business, hire and train people to be good workers. All the while we also have a goal to generate a revenue that supports our Charity, reduces our dependence on government grants and builds business in our community.

SPAN has been doing Social Enterprise for decades. Some examples include Catering with DACC AND D.S.S., The Habitat Laundry, The Next to New Store, White Pebbles Housing and SPAN construction. It is a culture of 'opportunity' in the agency that makes these things possible.

As we study the Hotel as a new possibility we will keep the needs of our Service Recipients upper most in our minds. Accreditation has been scheduled for May 17-20, 2016. While that seems far off, we have lots of preparation work to do. Phone Trina Cox (Extension #248) if you can help out on a committee. Much thanks everyone for some great work this past month.



*Tim Bear*

# Defining Cultural Competence

by Eugene McAfferty, HR Manager

**Cultural competence** is defined as a set of congruent behaviors, attitudes, and policies that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals and enables that system, agency, or those professionals to work effectively in cross-cultural situations



Operationally defined, cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices, and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services; thereby producing better outcomes.

When working in a culturally diverse environment these are some activities that help develop cross-cultural competencies.

1) Cross Cultural Motivation;

Activity: You are curious about new surroundings and cultures and actively seek out learning opportunities.

2) Cross-cultural knowledge;

Activity: You have a good understanding of how cultures are similar or different.

3) Strategic thinking;

Activity: You use your knowledge and understanding of different cultures to plan effective cross-cultural interactions.

4) Cross-cultural behaviour;

Activity: You demonstrate flexibility in your interactions and are able to recognize and adapt to cultural nuances in the workplace and beyond.



Cross-cultural competency is the key to managing diverse and inclusive workplaces. The ability to communicate, interact, and effectively lead people across cultures is an essential skill.

# The Art of Effective Communication

by Rochelle Whyne



It is said that communication is not so much a skill to be learnt as it is an art to be cultivated. Let's face it, communication is probably the most talked about, yet the least understood area of human behaviour. It is a most critical component and one that's really indispensable to our everyday functioning; especially in a workplace as dynamic, culturally diverse and sensitive as ours at SPAN! Our agency can and should take pride in the broad spectrum of ethnicities, talents, academic background and skills represented in the workforce. With this diversity comes a unique opportunity for growth and shared understanding. On the other hand, this can prove to be divisive with conflicts and challenges if management and staff fail to develop a level of diversity competence. Effective communication in the workplace can be a bridge to connect employees and create a trusting workplace climate. Let's briefly explore 7 fundamental concepts/principles that will prove beneficial for management and staff as we work together to create a climate of trust and a culture of excellent communication.

1. Recognize that everyone has values and that each person's value system is often different. One person may have love as the most important value, the other could have health. This can in and of itself molds different personalities. Learning the key values of other people is therefore essential to being an effective communicator.
2. Rapport building is a must. Creating an environment of comfort and ease where communication is made easy. The ability to build and maintain rapport in communication is an important of an effective communicator. It is probably reasonable to say that most people enjoy talking about themselves. Find common-ground and interests to talk about...family, likes, etc and get to know the individuals and staff you work with.
3. Use non-threatening neutral language. It is safer to refrain from using "You" statements . For example 1: "You were careless and almost burnt the house down yesterday by leaving the stove on". This will probably result in someone being defensive. A more suitable tone would be " We could've had a very serious situation yesterday with the stove being left on, we need to be more careful." Example 2: when you need to interact with another person do you ask to 'speak to them' or 'speak with them?' This may be subtle but it changes the meaning and intent of the communication and also the dynamics.
4. Hear the other person. Genuine listening most times requires us to hold our tongue, our judgements and be in the moment with the speaker. Be fully present and fully interested in what the person has to say. We don't have to agree, but we can strive to respect and understand each other's perspective.
5. Open Body Language- Remember that communication is 90% of what we do and 10% of what we say.
6. Ask Questions. Quite often we fail to ask simple questions which may leave others feeling like they are not being heard. When we don't ask questions, we sometimes end up being presumptive and miss the essence of what the person is trying to communicate.
7. Be aware. Be aware of our own attitudes, emotional states, values and perspectives that will shape how we interact with and respond to others. If we have awareness, we will more likely be able to pinpoint the attitudes that hinder effective communication.

## SPAN Builders:

building new homes in an excellent new subdivision in town.

For more information, please visit our website: <http://stpaulabilitiesnetwork.ca/spanbuilders/>

Ready to move in to a quiet neighborhood near Extra Foods Supermarket?



More homes are coming soon. Why not buy directly from the builders?



## Let's get Social!

by: Marilyn Lindsay (Administrative Assistant)

**Golf Funspiel/Patio Party July 3rd, 2015** Golfing starts at 1:00, supper at 5:00.  
If non social club members want to go they can come too but have to pay the whole fee.

## Special Olympics Update

Summer sports with start dates and times

### Golf:

Sunday evenings  
May 3-June 28: 6p-8pm  
July 8-Sept 6: p-8pm

### Baseball:

Tues & Thurs evenings:  
6p-8pm Start May 19

### Bocce:

Wednesday evenings 6p-7pm.  
Come out and have fun with fellow athletes!

## June is Brain Injury Awareness Month

*by Tracy Yaremko  
ABIN Coordinator*

**On June 02,2015 the Survivor Support Group met @ the Library meeting room for the weekly Support Group Meeting.**

The following is an excerpt from conversations with participants :

#1- What is it like to have brain injury?

- Whole world feels like it's gone.
- We have to try harder at everything we do now.
- We don't look different, so most people don't expect there to be anything wrong with us.
- No balance, we fall lots.
- Before our injury we could work, now we can't make lots of money.
- Some people try and take advantage of us because of our injury.
- We have pain, depression, headaches, stamina, health issues, anger.
- Sadness, seizures, memory loss.

#2- What would you like people to be more aware of about brain injuries?

- Realize that we want to be treated like a human being
- We still have opinions, and want to make our own choices.
- People should never judge the outside until they know our hearts.
- People think they know what we are going through, but they don't.
- Friends and families sometimes act like they are better then us now.
- Friends and families may not want to except that we may not get better.

#3- What advice can you give to people who are new to dealing with brain injury?

- Don't give up.
- We are allowed to grumble but try and find a solution and the hope.
- Try and have Jesus Christ in your life.
- Our values come from who we are.
- We can encourage one another.
- We are stronger in a group then we are standing alone.
- Be very careful not to isolate yourself.

**In support of Brain Injury Awareness Month, the following workshops are being held:**

Building Capabilities After Brain Injury/Stroke  
St. Therese, St. Paul Healthcare Centre  
June 19, 2015 @ 9:00a.m- 12:15 pm.  
Free Information Sessions  
Alberta supports/Alberta Works Office  
June 116, 2015 from 10a.m-12pm

**Free Snacks & Coffee**