

Live and Learn

The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance



Summer 2012

Photo courtesy of johnsylvester.com

Oral Communication — An Essential Skill Everybody Needs



The Ladies of Avonlea had excellent oral communication skills.
From Sullivan Entertainment's Production "Road to Avonlea". Used with permission.

Despite e-mail, texting and twitter, being able to speak clearly and listen well are skills everyone needs.

Oral communication is the ability to use speech to share thoughts and information. This issue of *Live and Learn* looks at different aspects of oral communication.

What's inside

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Live and Learn – Summer 2012

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The Newsletter of the PEI Literacy Alliance

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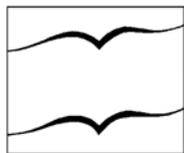
We would like to hear from you if you have:

- learners' stories
- creative writing by learners
- articles or news about teaching adults
- upcoming events
- new resources for adult education

Please send your material to:
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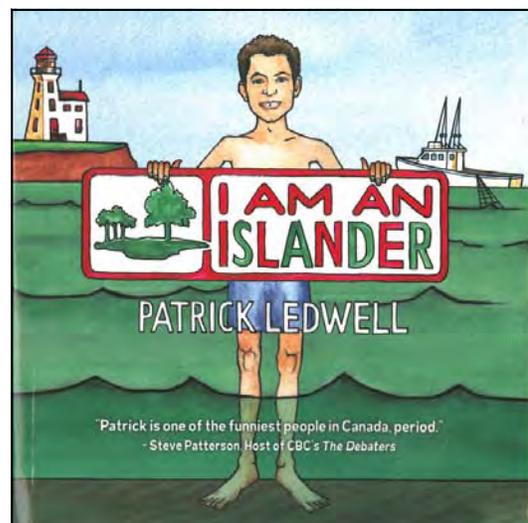
Congratulations, Patrick

The summer edition of **The Employment Journey** features an article about comedian **Patrick Ledwell**. He tells his story of getting into the business of comedy.

www.employmentjourney.com



Patrick has been a great friend of the PEI Literacy Alliance over the years. He has just released his first book called *I Am An Islander* published by Acorn Press.



Oral Communication

Oral Communication Tips for the Workplace

Here are some practical tips to help you improve your Oral Communication skills. Review each of the tips below and practice the ones that that you need the most.

General Tips

1. Slow down your speech and pronounce words clearly and correctly.
2. Vary your pitch, tone and volume to emphasize key words or sentences.
3. Record yourself speaking and then listen to the recording to analyze your pitch, tone, speed and volume.
4. Adjust the volume of your voice to your audience. Speak softly when you are talking one-on-one and speak louder when you are talking to a larger group or across a room.
5. Be conscious of your speech to avoid filler words such as um, uh, ah, like, well, and so on.
6. Organize your thoughts and ideas before speaking. You can write notes on what you want to say.
7. Do not interrupt when someone else is speaking.
8. Concentrate on the speaker's message and focus your attention on listening.
9. Respond non-verbally to show understanding and interest when communicating, for example by nodding your head or smiling.
10. Make eye contact when listening or talking to people.
11. Ask questions until you are sure you understand what is being said.
12. Be specific when asking questions and giving answers.
13. Take notes to help remember what is being communicated.

This tip sheet is from a series of Essential Skills tools published by the Office of Literacy and Essential Skills. You can find many tools and resources on their web page: www.hrsdc.gc.ca/eng/workplaceskills/LES/tools_resources/tools.shtml

Oral Communication

Communication Between Patients and Health Providers

Ideally, health communication is a dialogue between patients and providers. Providers present information about new diagnoses, treatment options, and self-care instructions. Patients describe their symptoms, ask questions, and express opinions about treatment and care.

Unfortunately, good communication doesn't always happen.

Strategies for Health Providers

- Help patients ask questions. Encourage patients to think about questions they want to ask. You can help by giving patients tools like notepads to write down their questions about diagnoses, treatment, and medical instructions.
- Confirm that you and your patients understand each other. Pause periodically after key points and again at the end of appointments or conversations and ask patients to tell you, in their own words, what you just discussed. Assume responsibility by starting with a statement like “I just want to make sure I explained this clearly. Please tell me how you will...”
- Help patients learn more. Make it easy for patients to learn as much as they want to know. Prepare lists of credible resources including books, articles, websites, hot lines, and associations.

Strategies for Patients

- Create your own medical record. Just as health providers keep records about our diagnoses, treatments, and test results – patients should do the same. One suggestion is a three-ring binder with tabbed sections for test results and medical reports, questions to ask and notes from appointments, medication lists, and other important papers.
- Invite family members or friends to act as advocates. It can be extra hard to advocate for yourself when feeling vulnerable, scared, overwhelmed, or ill. If you can anticipate that conversations might be difficult, consider inviting a family member or friend to help by taking notes, voicing concerns, and remembering what was said.
- Learn only as much as you want to know. When it comes to being a patient, there is no right or wrong amount of information. Helen Osborne's advice to patients is to learn only as much as you want to know now. Later, you can always find out more.

Excerpted from Helen Osborne's excellent health literacy web site.
www.healthliteracy.com

Oral Communication

New Alliance Video — “Talking Health With Seniors”

With funding from our PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy, the Alliance has produced a 16 minute video about health communication. Ron Irving wrote the script and played a role, along with fellow actors Nancy Price, Will McFadden, Cathy Grant and Paul Whelan. Viola Evans-Murley appeared in her true-life role of a diabetes consultant. Dr. Lana-Beth Barkhouse acted as host of the video.



Moses Media took care of the project management, direction and editing. You can see the video on our You Tube channel at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=19voqe2BriQ&feature=plcp> or type “Literacy PEI Channel” into your computer search engine.

PGI 2012



The morning of June 15 was cloudy and cool, but there was lots of hot golf at our 22nd PGI Golf Tournament for Literacy. Twenty-nine teams teed off at Belvedere Golf Course in our most successful tournament ever. Thanks to all our sponsors, golfers and volunteers we raised over \$45,000 for literacy in PEI.

Alan Watts accepts the Gzowski Award from Joanne Ings.



The Atlantic Lotto team #1 pose for their team picture.



MC Matt Rainnie keeps the program moving with humour and style.



Learner Award winner Blair Gray tells his story and gets a standing ovation.



Catherine O'Bryan, left, and Senator Catherine Callbeck having a good time at the banquet



Lori Johnston, left, accepts the prize for women's closest to the hole from Mary Jean Irving

Thank you to our major sponsors



Work Force News

New survey indicates 80 % of Canadian executives find it difficult to find qualified employees

- research shows the need to improve essential skills of Canadian workers

New research by Rogers Connect Market Research Group on behalf of ABC Life Literacy Canada indicates that 80 % of Canadian business leaders find it difficult to find qualified employees. Nearly half say this difficulty is due to the low literacy and essential skills levels of workers.

Research also shows that 76 % of executives feel that literacy is a major workforce issue, and they believe that over one third of employees do not possess adequate essential skills. Yet 42 % of responding organizations do not have anything in place to improve literacy and essential skills.

When it comes to the responsibility of training workers, the research showed a 50/50 split in thinking; while 51 % of executives surveyed agreed that improving literacy is not the responsibility of the employer, 49 % disagreed with that statement.

Essential skills, for the purposes of this survey, are not the technical skills required by particular occupations but rather the skills applied in all occupations, such as the ability to adapt, learn new skills and perform the task required by their occupation in their daily life.

Excerpted from abclifelifiteracy.ca

Alliance AGM

You are invited to attend the PEI Literacy Alliance Annual General Meeting on Monday, September 10th, 2012 at 7:00 pm. It will be held at The Hotel on Pownal (formerly the Islander Motor Lodge) in the Pownall Room.

We will have a guest speaker and refreshments will be served.

Home Library Service Pilot Project Launched

Islanders with a disability or illness can have library materials delivered directly to their own homes. The service delivers books, CDs, DVDs and talking books from the Prince Edward Island Public Library Service's collection.

The Home Library Service is available to anyone with a disability that prevents them from visiting the library regularly, whether it's a physical or visual disability, or if an individual is recovering from surgery or illness. The service is available to Islanders, regardless of age.

The materials will be delivered by community volunteers. Any Islanders interested in volunteering should speak to their local branch librarian.

The Back Page

Summer Tutoring Program Starts



Jessie Bowness has returned for this year's Summer Tutoring Program for Kids. Jessie joins 22 other tutors who will help about 700 children to maintain their reading skills until school starts again in September.

Award Winner

Congratulations to **Carrie St Jean** who won the Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee medal in recognition of her achievements, contributions and service to education in Canada. Carrie sat on the Alliance board and has worked tirelessly to improve education in PEI.



Good Corporate Citizen



Thanks to **R Birt & Associates** for donating space for the **Guardian Book Drive**, which raised over \$15,000 for literacy in PEI. Congratulations to **Jolene Spencer** and her team of volunteers for a great project.