

Creating a Quality Workplace
Pre-conference Workshop, 2 June 2004
2004 Labour Arbitration and Policy Conference
Graham S. Lowe, PhD, The Graham Lowe Group Inc.

Overview: Focusing on high-quality work environments, this workshop addresses the underlying causes of some major labour-management problems, ranging from employee stress, injuries, and dissatisfaction to disability claims, grievances and rising health benefit costs. The workshop will describe the ingredients of a high-quality workplace and how unions and employers can collaborate to achieve this goal. Successful change strategies will be outlined, using examples from unionized and non-unionized settings.

Objectives: This workshop will provide participants with...

- An in-depth understanding of the building blocks of high-quality workplaces, which are healthy for all stakeholders;
- The link between quality work environments, human resource capacity, the industrial relations climate and business results;
- Tools for assessing the costs and benefits of quality workplaces for individual workers and employers;
- An understanding of the potential for union-management collaboration on a quality workplace strategy;
- Insights about the risks to unions and collective bargaining of quality workplace strategies;
- Tools for assessing the current 'health' of an organization and its employees, and how to identify gaps;
- A checklist of common workplace barriers and enablers, and ways to turn barriers into enablers;
- Practical examples, particularly from unionized settings, of the design and implementation of successful quality workplace strategies;
- A deeper appreciation of how creating a high-quality work environment is an exercise in organizational change, and the implications of this for planning and implementation;
- An opportunity to discuss the practical challenges of making these changes.

Workshop process: This workshop will provide opportunities for shared learning. In addition to the expert knowledge provided by the workshop leader, participants will be actively involved in discussing and analyzing their own experiences and challenges.

Resources: The main resource for this workshop will be the Dr. Lowe's new Health Canada guide, "*Healthy workplace strategies*." It will be included in the workshop materials, but can be downloaded in advance at no cost at www.grahamlowe.ca. Other material will be distributed to registrants prior to the workshop.

Workshop Leader: Dr. Graham S. Lowe is president of The Graham Lowe Group, a workplace consulting firm. An international expert on workplace change, he has run many workshops for unionized and non-unionized employers, unions and professional associations.