

NLEC calls on employers to create respectful workplaces

Holding full day workshop tomorrow to help them do so

--FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 13, 2011, St. John's, NL – The NL Employers' Council (NLEC) will be holding a full day workshop in St. John's on Thursday, April 14th to help employers create respectful workplaces.

A respectful workplace is one in which employees are treated fairly and given the freedom and respect to contribute fully to the organization. Issues of workplace bullying and harassment have become a concern to employers over the last number of years, and new technologies including social networking sites have complicated these issues. Disrespect in the workplace impacts not just the individuals being mistreated, but the entire organization, causing decreased productivity, increases in sick leave and absenteeism, higher staff turn-over, and can have legal implications. Many employers are developing respectful workplace policies and procedures to address this and the NLEC believes more should follow suit.

“The employers council speaks out on a number of issues impacting workplaces, things like employees asking for a layoff to go on EI benefits, high use of sick leave and absenteeism, and the high duration of worker's compensation claims in this province,” says NLEC Executive Director, Richard Alexander. “When we look at these issues, a lot of this overuse has to do with an employee's job satisfaction and their work environment. While there is a lot of work that needs to be done to address issues within these systems, employers need to look inward and create workplaces where employees love to work – a respectful workplace is a good start.”

The workshop will outline the importance of proactive Respectful Workplace policies and procedures, what they should include, and how to evaluate your current workplace to determine how well you are doing now and what changes are needed. It will also outline manager and supervisor responsibilities in creating a respectful workplace, legal strategies for ensuring your workplace stays respectful, best practices to follow through on a complaint from an employee, and what employers should do when an employee falls below respectful workplace standards. New challenges such as "cyber bullying" will be discussed, and employers will be given practical hands-on educational tools that can be used in their workplace.

Speakers at the workshop will include Noel Flynn and Maureen Barry of Alegria Associates; Ruth Trask and Rebecca Saturley of Stewart McKelvey; and Debbie Samson, Senior Advisor, Respectful Workplace Program at Iron Ore Company of Canada.

The NLEC session “**Creating a Respectful Workplace**” will be held Thursday, April 14, from 9:00 am – 4:00 pm at the Sheraton Hotel in St. John's. For more information and to register, employers should visit www.nlec.nf.ca.

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Interview Opportunities Available

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