

Foundation of Administrative Justice
5th Annual Conference Workshops and Descriptors
April 29th & 30th, 2009

Concurrent session: Thursday April 30th, 2009 11:15 am

7. Make it Clear: What Are You Really Saying?

Speaker: Christine Mowat, President Wordsmith Associates

Tribunals need to communicate in ways their audiences can understand the first time they read or hear a message. Language and format that is plain to one set of readers or listeners may not be plain to others. Client-focussed communication techniques demonstrate the tribunal's connection with its stakeholders. Plain language is an international movement that helps to democratize processes and documents. Useful communications allow the audience to find what they need; understand what they hear or read; use what they find; and feel confident they can effectively participate. Plain language is an essential tool supporting access to tribunals at all levels and is defined by results. Christine Mowat will demonstrate how you say what you say can enhance the message and open doors for participants. The Council of Canadian Administrative Tribunals has published two resources on plain language in the tribunal environment, one on the need for plain language and one about how to implement plain language in the tribunal.