



Effective Communication

Tips on Effective Communication

- **Always build the relationship first.** Send the message that you care about the receiver.
- **Know what you are talking about.** Obtain the knowledge, insight, and forward thinking ability necessary for your industry.
- **Listen more than you speak.** When you do speak, ask frequent questions to draw out the knowledge and opinions of others.
- **Be specific.** Learn to communicate clearly by using simple and concise language.
- **Focus on understanding what others are saying.** Instead of formulating your response when someone else is speaking, ask questions for clarification and make sure you thoroughly understand what the other person is saying.
- **Repeat what you understood the other person to say.**
- **Listen to the nonverbal communication that others exhibit.** Tone of voice, body language, and facial expressions form more than 80% of communication.
- **If you are going to say something critical or controversial, or if you feel angry or emotional, wait 24 hours before you say or post it.**
- **Open your mind to new ideas.** Be willing to change your message if necessary.
- **All communication is more effective with trust.** You gain trust in everyday interactions with people when you tell the truth. Consistently exhibiting integrity and trustworthiness will help build your ability to be a great communicator.
- **Think dialogue, not monologue.** The more personal and engaging the conversation is, the more effective it will be.

Communicating with Clients

- [Cut the legalese by Ann Macaulay](#): Avoid malpractice claims by taking the time to make sure your clients understand you (CBA National Magazine, March 2013).
- [Draw Clients a Roadmap to Avoid Communication Claims by Dan Pinnington](#) (Slaw, December 2013).
- [Back to Basics: Competence in Communications by Karen Dyck](#) (Slaw, September 2013).
- [Six Technology Tools for Improving Client Communication by Dan Pinnington](#) (Slaw November 2011).
- [Avoiding a Communications Breakdown With Your Client by Dan Pinnington](#) (Slaw, September 2011).

Internet & Social Media Communication

- [From Pigeons to Twitter: The Evolution of Communication by Megan O'Neill](#) (SocialTimes, March 2013).
- [Undetected by Douglas Mah](#): The law of anonymity on the internet (CBA National Magazine, November 2013).
- [Get out there! by Julie Sobowale](#): Networking helps build connections & develop new business (CBA National Magazine, July 2013).

Alberta Lawyers' Assistance Society

Professional Counselling
Peer Support
Education
Resources

www.albertalawyersassist.ca



The Alberta Lawyers' Assistance Society (Assist)

Assist is a charitable society providing help to lawyers, law and articling students, and their families with personal issues.

Our goal is to prevent crisis and keep lawyers and law students happy and healthy.

Assist is governed by an independent Board of Directors. Confidentiality is the corner stone of our programs and services.

FREE CONFIDENTIAL SERVICES

Professional Counselling

Assist provides up to four hours of professional counselling to you and your family. This time is given to each family member, per issue, per year, so that problems can be assessed and referrals made to long-term sources of help, if necessary. Our counsellors are located across the province, and are available for emergencies.

Peer Support

This is a program of lawyers helping lawyers. The goal is to develop a relationship of trust and confidentiality with another lawyer who relates to your experiences, providing encouragement and hope.

Resources

Assist offers information on various topics such as Career & Education, Physical & Mental Health, Work-Life Balance, Stress Management, and Overcoming Addictions.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Peer Support Program

Join a network of support through lawyers helping lawyers. You will have the opportunity to provide one-on-one personal or career-related support. You will receive training outlining your responsibilities and required skills in offering peers help, encouragement, and referrals to appropriate resources.

Committees

Assist is supported by working committees. You will be able to contribute your background and skills to any one of these committees, such as Communications, Funding, Succession Planning, Law Schools, and Peer Support.

Representatives

Assist speaks at workshops and events, publishes a quarterly on-line newsletter, offers a website with resources, and contributes to various publications. Your contribution is welcomed.

Contact Information

For immediate help call **1 877 498 6898** (toll free) from anywhere in Alberta.

For more information on **Assist's** services and to access our online resources, visit our website at:

www.albertalawyersassist.ca

To speak with someone at **Assist** about our services or volunteer opportunities, call **403 537 5508** or **1 877 737 5508**.