

SOLE SOURCE STATUS JUSTIFICATION FOR TIM GARD, CSP, CPAE

Tim has the rare combination experience of having been an eligibility worker at a local office who met with applicants for food stamp assistance and interviewed and determined eligibility for these applicants first hand. He was later one of Montana's first Eligibility Investigators, an investigative pioneer who investigated food stamp fraud and program abuse; in the office and during home visits and then took administrative or legal action. He assisted in writing the State investigator handbook and wrote the standards and procedures for field interviews and home visits still in use today. He was then invited by USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to lecture and consult with other states as those states added front-end investigation programs. In 1989 he was recruited to join FNS and became a management evaluation reviewer at the Mountain Plains Regional Office in Denver Colorado.

He is truly a rare individual who has determined eligibility directly with customers in direct services, investigated applicants and recipients for program abuse and then worked with states in the development of corrective action plans at the federal level. Since leaving federal service in 1984 he has become one of the most sought after speakers in the human services field. In addition to this in 2000 he was awarded the Certified Speaking Professional designation by the National Speakers Association. This CSP is the highest earned designation of the NSA, an achievement shared by less than 7 percent of NSA members worldwide. He has also been inducted into the Speaker Hall of Fame.

DETAILED HUMAN SERVICES HISTORY

ELIGIBILITY TECHNICIAN:

Montana Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Kalispell Montana. Local level benefit delivery and eligibility determination as both a county and a State employee: Tim began his career with social services as an Eligibility Technician (ET) in Kalispell, Montana determining food stamp, AFDC and Medicaid eligibility. Tim interviewed applicants for assistance, determined eligibility, testified at hearings and assisted in local training events. It was while working with the Montana Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, that he began to develop training to help fellow eligibility workers deal with stress, team development, compassion fatigue and burn out inherent to their jobs. He discovered in those early training sessions that sharing his own good humor and enabling the group to develop a Comic Vision of their own proved to be a very effective and fun way for people to deal with, and even avoid, the sometimes intense personal and professional stress most people encounter every day. He later was the sole source of research, development, author and presenter of several workshops specifically designed for Social Services groups on such topics as "How to Deal with Welfare Fraud Personally and Professionally", "Interviewing Techniques" and "Field Interviews/Homevisits".

ELIGIBILITY INVESTIGATOR:

Montana Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, Kalispell, Montana. State employee. Tim was responsible to investigate and pursue welfare fraud cases for both civil and criminal resolution and he trained new investigators statewide. When Montana implemented an investigator program, Tim became one of the first Eligibility Investigators in the state. He later was the primary field trainer for new investigators and wrote both the field interviews and home visit sections for the state training manuals. He was invited to lecture and train at state and national conferences on fraud investigation, stress reduction through humor and team development in social services environments.

MANAGEMENT EVALUATION REVIEWER:

United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Denver Colorado. Performed management evaluation reviews of the food stamp program at a federal level for Utah, Colorado, Montana, Wyoming, Iowa, North and South Dakota. Tim moved to Denver, Colorado to join the staff of USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) as a food stamp program reviewer. While with FNS, he continued to lecture and consult on interviewing, stress reduction through humor, team development and self-esteem at local and national conferences. He also served on inter agency task forces on welfare reform, electronic benefit transfer systems and federal income tax refund offset programs.

SPEAKING EXPERIENCE:

Since 1984 Tim has provided workshops, keynotes and team development training at over 2000 local, state, federal and national events. Today, Tim is a highly sought-after speaker both inside and out of the human service field he speaks at over 130 events annually, offers his own line of "stress buster" toys and appeared on TV talk shows. Throughout the last decade Tim has provided his good humor seminars, nationally and internationally while developing a reputation for hilariously entertaining fast paced and informative programs. Approximately 10 percent of his presentations are provided to Human Services professionals nationwide. His clients have included American Public Welfare Association, National Eligibility Workers Association, United Council on Welfare Fraud, Public Service Company of Colorado, Ball Aerospace, Colorado Credit Union League, U.S. Department of Energy, First Data Corp., First Interstate Bank of Denver, Colorado National Bank, Amoco Production Company, National Park Service, U S WEST, Universities of Colorado and Wyoming, TCI Cable, United Way, UNIPAC Service Corp., U.S. Navy, Idaho Power, IRS, National Eligibility Workers Association and numerous other city, county, state, federal, private industry, and professional organizations.

PUBLICATIONS:

Authored articles on "Using Humor to Build Communication Bridges and Effective Teams", "Humor as a skill at work", "Laughter Becomes You" and the book "Secrets of Choosing and Using Props". Copyrights owned on: Developing a Comic Vision", "Laughter Becomes You", "Laughter Becomes You", "Eye to Aye Interviewing", "Interviewing With Style" and all accompanying workbooks. Coauthor of "Motivational Leaders" and "Just Plane Funny". Author of "My Policy Manual".

VIDEO AND AUDIO TAPES:

Producer and owner of Comic Visions Seminars with audio and video tapes of my training programs marketed worldwide.

AWARDS /CERTIFICATION:

Professional member of National Speakers Association. Recipient Certified Speaking Professional 2000. Recipient of recognition awards from the Indiana Chapter of International Association of Personnel in Employment Security, The National Eligibility Workers Association, The State of Florida, The Wyoming Department of Family Services, The Social Security Administration, The United States Naval Reserve, Fitzsimons Hospital, State of Arkansas, U. S. Department of Agriculture and many others. Letters of achievement from USDA Food and Nutrition Services (FNS), USDA FNS merit award 3 time winner for speaking.