



## The President's Message

May 2017

Today I would like to talk about the letter "R".

"R" stands for **Responsibility**.

"R" stands for **Reply**.

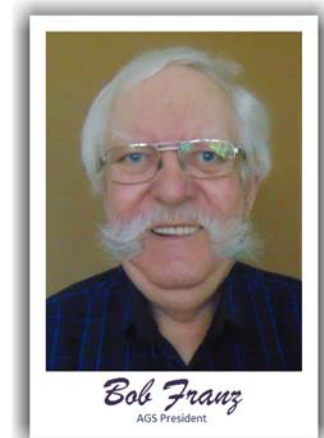
"R" stands for **Respect**.

As the President of a province-wide organization with ten branches and roughly seven hundred members, I get complaints. I get them through the web-form at the end of this column. I get them through my AGS presidential email address. I get them through my personal email address. I get them while attending AGS activities. I even get them at events at which I am an invited guest. Let's look at three more recent ones.

1. *They had too many vegetarian lunch bags at the conference on Sunday.*
2. *The problem with AGS is the lack of communication.*
3. *The President's Fan Club (PFC) Chair/Committee is doing a poor job.*

**Okay, the matter of the lunch bags.** It was not my **responsibility** to determine the number of vegetarian, beef, or turkey bags. Our First Vice-president, whose duties include oversight of the conference, was extremely busy leading up to and during the conference, but it was not her responsibility either. It was our responsibility to provide a first-class conference. It is her specific responsibility to gather feedback and notify (in

this example) the hotel of any concerns. It is also the responsibility of the 1<sup>st</sup> VP to note all concerns received and to compile a report for the Board of Directors, and for the next committee which will be responsible for the next conference in 2019. That I have no doubt she is doing. I could go on with Reply and Respect and speculate why there was a shortage of meat bags, but time and space limits dictate I move on.





#### Communication Continuum

1. Communication
2. Rapport
3. Collegiality
4. Collaboration
5. Improved Morale
6. Improved Productivity



**The lack of communication.** In further discussion with the two ladies who raised this issue with me, I narrowed the concern to the fact that they had written a memo to each of the AGS Branches regarding an upcoming event and had received only two replies. We further narrowed the problem down to a lack of a common courtesy to respond, and they were complaining to me because I am the President. Okay, it is not my responsibility to respond to every email sent to every Branch, Executive Member, or AGS Chair. It is my responsibility to encourage all individuals in leadership positions to reply to concerns addressed to them though it is not in my power to demand they do so. It is also my responsibility to ensure AGS is providing services to the membership and to the Branches, and I have in fact made the provision of services the second of three pillars of this presidency. In that regard I have added this concern to my list of service concerns to be addressed in the upcoming months. How can we refine our communications within AGS? Did the ladies send the email to the right person? Who is responsible for handling notices about upcoming Branch events? Are members and non-members aware of the how such messages can be facilitated? Stay tuned. There will be a [reply](#), and hopefully even a solution.

**The complaint about the AGS Chair/Committee.** AGS has at the moment a list of a possible 22 chairs or committees, most currently in operation. Each of these chairs and committees is under the oversight of a specific member of the AGS Executive and this oversight can be found in the Policies and Procedures Operation Manual found in every branch. There is no PFC (President's Fan Club) Committee, but I do get complaints about committees and their heads. I have made it clear from the commencement of this presidency, that all complaints from members will be heard by this office and all complaints will be forwarded to those directly responsible. I will require a response to that complaint, and a reply will be forwarded to the individual(s) making the complaint. That takes time. We are operating over a distance, we are all volunteers, we are all human, and we are all wearing other hats. That is where [respect](#) steps in. All too often these concerns are seen as personal attacks and we become involved in personalities and in perceived motives and the issue becomes tabled and eventually lost. The matter does not become resolved. Again, I have asked that issues regarding the services, and lack of services, provided by AGS be brought forward for examination with a target date of this September. That is my responsibility and there will be a reply. I only ask that those making known their concerns, and those responsible for addressing those concerns, keep the issue in focus, and in the process, treat each other with respect.



Next issue I will talk about the letter "S", my response when I open my email and find fifteen issues awaiting my attention. This is Bob. Let me know what you think.

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*Robert "Bob" Franz*

AGS President