



Karen M. Black

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References and
portfolio available
upon request.

How I can help

I hit the ground running to help HR, benefits, pensions and marketing managers painlessly deliver communication projects.

Call me when:

- Your team can't handle more
- You don't have the expertise in-house
- You're dreading your busy season
- You have work *you* can't bill for
- A key staff member's on leave
- You have a temporary vacancy

Specialized focus:

- DB / Capital accumulation pensions
 - Group benefits (including flex)
 - Investment / retirement planning
 - Group insurance
 - Benefit and pension statements
 - Pharmaceutical / healthcare
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Sample projects

- At ACS/Buck, worked with internal resources to re-design a client's **total rewards statement**. As a team, we streamlined a ten page lackluster statement into a four page, branded, plain language statement, printed in colour. The client was thrilled with the results, receiving great feedback from executives and employees on the design, and 10% fewer calls to the HR department over the same four week delivery period.
 - At ACS/Buck, wrote, managed and created original branding for a telecommunications company's **flex benefits plan launch**, *flexconnect*. The campaign used a train-the-trainer approach, electronic presentations, newsletters, FAQs, booklets and a survey to measure results. Employees indicated a very high satisfaction rate for the launch, and the client streamlined their benefits further by convincing two divisions and their union employees to join the *flexconnect* model.
 - At ACS/Buck, managed a campaign for an industrial paint and pharmaceutical company supporting the **pension harmonization** of three defined benefit (DB) plans, two capital accumulation plans (CAP), and one RRSP. A key objective was to assist the DB members in deciding whether to stay in the DB plan, or switch to the new CAP option. With the actuary, I wrote targeted newsletters, personalized statements, booklets and encouraged 55% to switch to CAP.
 - At Krieger + Associates, managed the delivery of **flex benefit, employee orientation**, and **retirement planning** communication projects, each of which won a Benefits Canada / CPBI Communications Award and an IABC award. This recognition provided increased visibility for Krieger, a small consulting firm in an industry dominated by multi-nationals.
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OUTSIDE THE OFFICE

Diverse music enthusiast

Reads like a fiend

Lay psychologist
(free to friends!)

Author of debut novel

Sails, floats

Thinks there should be an
honourary PhD in Common
Sense

Absolutely no sense of
humour whatsoever

Personal history

Education

MBA (marketing)	University of Toronto	April, 1997
BSc (biology/literature)	University of Toronto	1983-1987
OSSGD	Collingwood Collegiate	1979-1983

AWARDS and OTHER

Speaker at a Benefits Communications conference. Topic: *Creating an Award-Winning Financial Planning Publication and Web Site*

Three Benefits Canada / CPBI Communications Awards, one IABC Gold Quill and two IABC Awards in 2000

IABC web-writing course

Graduate of three Constellation Learning courses: *Leadership Dynamics, Living Leadership* and *Facilitation Skills Development*. I also volunteer as a Constellation team assistant a few times a year.

Work experience

SR. COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT ACS Buck, Toronto

Aug '01 - Jul '06

- Work with clients, designers and technical consultants to write and launch benefits, pensions, retirement and compensation communications.
- Wrote, designed and project-managed benefit, pension and total reward statements.

COMMUNICATIONS TEAM LEADER Krieger + Associates, Toronto

Feb '98 - Aug '01

- Team leader, senior writer and project manager.
 - Worked with clients, designers and technical consultants to create and launch benefits, pensions and HR communications.
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Personal history

Work experience, *cont'd*

CONFERENCE DEVELOPER

Strategy Institute, Toronto

Nov '97 - Feb '98

- Researched financial planning and pharmaceutical trends to identify opportunities for professional conferences.
- Wrote conference agendas, recruited speakers.

ACCOUNT EXECUTIVE

Anderson Advertising, Toronto (contract)

Mar '97 - Nov '97

- Wrote market access reports for pharmaceutical clients to increase a drug's chance of reimbursement.

SR. COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALIST

Sun Life, Group Marketing, Toronto

Apr '95 - Mar '97

- Wrote client communications about Sun Life products, legislation and industry issues.

SPECIAL PROJECTS

Confederation Life & Manulife Financial, Toronto

Nov '94 - Apr '95

(between Confed Life's Liquidation in August, 1994, and Confed Group's purchase by Manulife Financial)

- Wrote crisis communications and participated in merger transition teams: *Strategic Communications* and *Product Integration*.

MARKET ANALYST

Confederation Life, Group Marketing, Toronto

May '92 to July '94

- Researched and provided advice to salesforce on government cost shifting, drug pricing.
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