

# Practicing Patience

Make no mistake about it; I am grateful for many things in our digital age. We are blessed with tools that enable us to meet safely, communicate efficiently, and share information quickly through this pandemic.



However, something has been lost. Our ability to communicate with great speed has made us all less patient. This is exacerbated by the lightning speed with which items can be ordered online and delivered to our door. It leads us to believe that everything can be addressed, resolved or otherwise completed in the same nanosecond.

Sadly, time frames in Condoland are not so brief. Once a problem is identified, scope of work needs to be established before the remedy can be procured. Multiple bidders need to consider it, review conditions with the site, secure materials from suppliers and labour and submit their bids. Once bids are received, they must be reviewed and compared and summarized, then presented to the board. Once a project is awarded to a successful bidder, they must secure the required

material and labour, then schedule the work. Once completed, it must be evaluated, and payment must be issued.

I describe the process in detail because, as you can imagine, a pause or obstacle might be uncovered at each step, leading to delays. Unfortunately, I believe that these delays will only increase as we start to leave COVID19 restrictions. We have a glut of postponed and deferred work when there are known labour and supply shortages. Despite these being well-publicized facts, not every community is understanding or patient.

I am always disheartened to see maliciousness in Condoland. Criticism of process or project is legitimate, but personal attacks are not. The nameless, faceless internet can embolden bad behaviour, most often levied against those who least deserve it. A salacious headline or a public threat can be wielded like a weapon in public, adding an unnecessary public relations task to the already busy job of managing a condominium corporation during a global pandemic. Nonetheless, we graciously plod on.

I'll never forget an old-school engineer I met as a newbie manager. I had sent

him an email earlier in the week, dutifully included each of the drawings and technical reports he'd sought. I was emailing him for the second time to remind him of the opinion I needed, hoping he would answer immediately as the matter was urgent.

He called me on the phone and said, "You know Katherine, when I started as an engineer, you'd call me with a problem like this, we'd discuss it, and then you would type out a letter and mail it. I'd ponder the problem we discussed, review your letter and documents, consider my answer and send you a letter back. Just because I get your request and the documents faster now, it doesn't mean I think any faster."

I've taken his comments to heart ever since. While we enjoy the gifts technology brings us, I hope we might recall some good old-fashioned patience and allow ourselves some time to be thoughtful and graceful.

I wish you safe passage through the Annual General Meeting high-season. ■

Katherine Gow, RCM  
ACMO President

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