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Magazine



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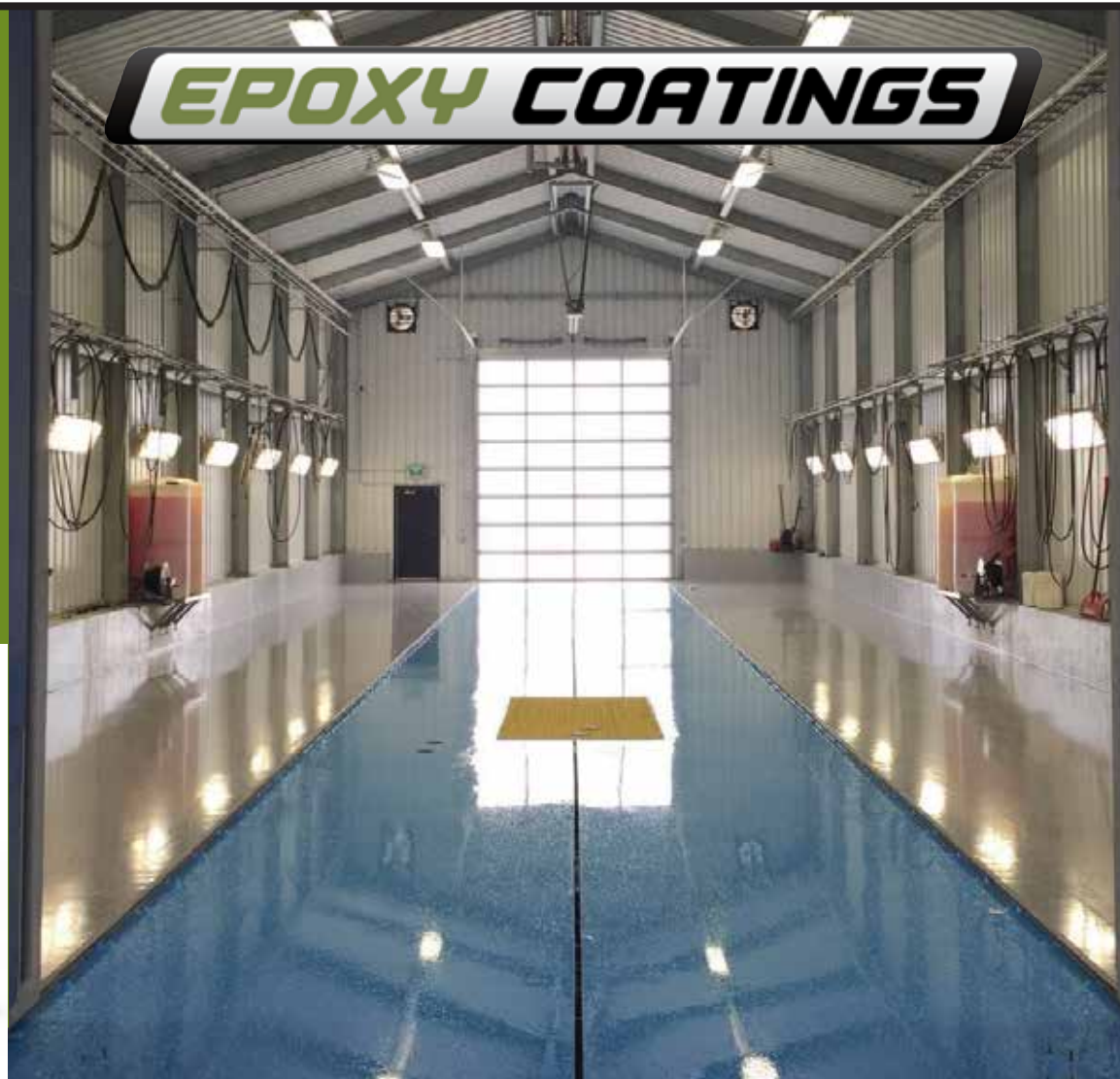


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Regional feature: *Prairie Manufacturer Magazine* heads to the Land of the Living Skies to profile the best Saskatchewan manufacturing has to offer.

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Diversity must become our innovation strategy

By Ronda Landygo

This edition of *Prairie Manufacturer Magazine* is especially near and dear to my heart. Not only does it commemorate the start of our second year in publication, it also marks perhaps our boldest editorial direction yet.

With the exception of *The Rundown*, a new quarterly policy and economic feature we have launched for the first time on *Page 18*, every article in this issue is either written by or showcases a prominent female leader.

We didn't make that decision to waive the gender flag. Instead, as Palliser Furniture CFO Cathy Gillespie eloquently explains in the *View from the C-Suite* column (*Page 6*), we chose to spotlight women influencers to spark a conversation on the importance of embracing varied and unique perspectives.

Why? Because the business of manufacturing is changing before our eyes.

The very nature of disruption — technological, societal, and economic — means if we intend to survive, let alone lead, we need to evolve. And, to do that,

we need to start thinking differently. One singular lens through which to view operations, products, customers, and surrounding pressures is no longer sufficient.

A few weeks ago, our editor, Derek Lothian, shared with me a 2016 study entitled *The Future of Jobs*. According to the report, one-third of the 'top 10' skills considered critical in today's workforce will be replaced by 2020. Attributes once highly sought after by employers, like negotiation and flexibility, will begin to trail off as intelligent systems make data-driven decisions for us. Meanwhile, other soft skills — emotional intelligence, complex problem solving, critical thinking, and creativity — will surge amidst the need to manage the impending "avalanche" of change.

It got me thinking about what it means to be innovative in such a fast-paced, tech-intensive age. *Innovation* is one of those words that seems to illicit an equal amount of excitement and panic. Few can clearly define it, yet everyone knows they need it. To some, it's robotics and automation; to others, it's as basic

as the creation of a customer solution. Either way, the only constant is our reliance on *people* — human capital — to make it happen. No computer will change that. So, it stands to reason that finding, training, and retaining the *right* people will be the competitive differentiator in the years ahead.

The problem with that is twofold. For starters, manufacturers already have a tough time securing the people they need. Roughly two in five companies are grappling with skills shortages today, and that number is expected to jump to three in five within the next half-decade.

Secondly, but not unrelated: We are suffering from an existential diversity gap. Although the last commodities boom injected a wave of foreign-trained talent onto the Prairies (albeit, overwhelmingly at the shop floor level), manufacturing remains a male-dominated industry. Roughly 13 per cent of employed Canadian men have a job in manufacturing, compared to less than six per cent of women.

We need to do better. But there is reason for optimism.

"We are suffering from an existential diversity gap. Although the last commodities boom injected a wave of foreign-trained talent onto the Prairies (albeit, overwhelmingly at the shop floor level), manufacturing remains a male-dominated industry. Roughly 13 per cent of employed Canadian men have a job in manufacturing, compared to less than six per cent of women."



When you travel across the country and visit manufacturers in most sub-sectors, it is apparent there is a generational 'changing of the guard' ongoing within management structures. Decision-makers are becoming younger, technologically savvy, globally literate, and open to a new way of functioning.

This is a fundamental transformation that we, as a community, need to work in unison to support. Resources like Manufacturing Executive Councils, facilitated through Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters, as well as the Manufacturing Management Certificate, delivered online through Athabasca University, provide structured, collaborative forums for discussion and debate, and are effective tools that will help the next generation of leaders understand, anticipate, and navigate the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

That, to me, is what innovation is all about — coming together to find a better way of 'doing.' Even icons like Steve Jobs relied upon hundreds of smart individuals around the table to develop out already-genius ideas to their fullest potential. And I guarantee the voices at that table didn't sound remotely the same.

The question we need to be asking ourselves is: How do we diversify those voices?


How do we draw more women and other underrepresented groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, into careers in manufacturing? There are tangible actions we can take today within our own individual enterprises to take positive steps down that path.

Open your facility up for tours and open houses — including to the families of your existing employees. Profile roles within your organization that the general

public may not even realize exist. Get involved with your local schools. Go on a recruitment mission. Celebrate cultures. Provide your staff with every reasonable opportunity for growth and development (and promote accordingly).

Stephen Covey, author of the bestselling book *7 Habits of Highly Effective People*, once said: "Strength lies in differences, not in similarities."

We must all commit to investing the time, money, and effort to encourage those differences, and to activating them toward a collective good.

It's time to innovate — together. Let's get to work. 



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It's all about perspective

By Cathy Gillespie

Fifteen years ago, manufacturing wasn't prominently fixed on my radar.

I had a good job as a commercial banker in a good company, making good money. Apart from a handful of industrial clients in my portfolio, my career path at the time couldn't seem further from many of the everyday operational concerns facing manufacturers. Important functions like product research and development, IT system integration, and lean adoption were foreign concepts.

I've always considered myself to be a selective individual — personally and professionally. Maybe it's the accountant in me. But I rarely jump into any endeavour without first identifying and analyzing every possible influence and outcome. *Who* I decide to work for is a decision I make only after long and careful

consideration. And truth be told, it has historically been a short list.

Fortunately for me, Palliser Furniture was on it.

Palliser is a fascinating Manitoba success story, full of rich history, innovation, and entrepreneurial spirit. Established in 1944 by the DeFehr family, the company is now transitioning into its third-generation ownership, and remains incredibly devoted to creating superior products by fostering a superior workforce. That razor-sharp focus has allowed Palliser to weather dozens of economic shifts and cycles, while remaining strong and profitable in the markets it serves.

So, when I was presented with the opportunity to join Palliser in 2002, I jumped at it, ignoring the worry I knew little about the sector I'd be entering.

To my surprise, it wasn't as much of a culture shock as I anticipated. My initial responsibilities included establishing a treasury function for managing banking relationships and financing transactions, as well as building out the firm's hedging strategy to manage risk amidst an increasingly volatile foreign exchange climate — all areas I specialized in during my time at the bank. Sure, there was plenty I still had to learn on the fly — in fact, I haven't stopped learning, and don't plan to anytime soon — though the familiarity made for a comfortable transition.

That is the interesting thing about manufacturing: It isn't just comprised of tradespeople and technicians. It relies on financial professionals, lawyers, international business and supply chain

graduates, scientists, engineers, and every occupational segment in between. You can come from virtually any background, with any education, and find immense growth potential in manufacturing.

It also makes the widening skills gap that much more curious. Are we really *that* bad at telling our story? Or are we just telling it to the wrong people at the wrong time?

A few months back, I was asked to participate in a new Women in Manufacturing Working Group — a national initiative spearheaded by Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters. I agreed — albeit reluctantly, because I simply never considered the issue to be much of a problem. At Palliser, we have many women in senior management positions. But then I took a sobering second look at the statistics.

Despite comprising 47.5 per cent of the national labour force, women make up a mere 28 per cent of manufacturing employees. Alarming, there has been no increase in the share of manufacturing jobs held by women over the last decade-and-a-half. A big part of those failings has been our inability to connect females to STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) and other experiential learning opportunities at a young age.

"The case for employing more females on the shop floor and in management-level manufacturing roles is less about gender equality and more about meeting the aspirations of customers. Multiple perspectives lead to solid strategic decisions. I am a believer in hiring the best person for the job; I am also, however, cognizant that a balance of genders, cultures, backgrounds, and personality types generally results in more dynamic enterprises."

Our narrative on what's possible in manufacturing needs to improve exponentially. Manufacturing is highly complex. It starts with a variety of inputs and ends with a client need; answering the 'by what method?' question in the middle is the primary determinate of success. As a maturing business, manufacturing simultaneously in two countries with uniformity poses a unique set of challenges. Solving those challenges starts with ideas, and then draws from design, engineering, construction, merchandising, sales, and marketing to arrive at high-value customer solutions. That interdependence is unlike any other industry I've experienced. It's an exciting world to be immersed in.

The case for employing more females on the shop floor and in management-level manufacturing roles is less about gender equality and more about meeting the aspirations of customers. Multiple perspectives lead to solid strategic decisions. I am a believer in hiring the best person for the job; I am also, however, cognizant that a balance of genders, cultures, backgrounds, and personality

types generally results in more dynamic enterprises.

We have nearly 2,000 employees at Palliser. If every one of those workers thought and acted the same way, would we be as resilient as we currently are and have proven to be in the past? I don't think so.

The question for me doesn't revolve around how we fill quotas. The question for me is how we build the capacity in our education system to ensure a greater cross-section of prepared, well-skilled, and globally competitive workers that represent a wide spectrum of perspectives. That's the foundation of business prosperity.

We need to change how we train for and speak about manufacturing. It's no longer smokestacks and sprockets. It's technologically advanced, fast-paced, environmentally-forward, and beyond any one set of borders. The era of *Rosie the Riveter* is over. The age of diversity is upon us. ♣

Cathy Gillespie, FCPA, FCMA, is the chief financial officer with Winnipeg-based Palliser Furniture Upholstery Ltd., recognized as one of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies.





Building the advanced manufacturing ecosystem

By Dayna Spiring

A primary function of economic development agencies is to develop market intelligence around key economic drivers. This data represents a combination of raw statistics and qualitative information gathered by tracking global trends and engaging with leading companies in targeted industries.

In Winnipeg and Manitoba, advanced manufacturing is one of the sectors proven to power economic growth, supplying high-value products to major players in packaging, ground transportation, farm machinery, and aerospace.

The past decade has given rise to dramatic shifts within the advanced manufacturing ecosystem, and Economic Development Winnipeg (EDW) has been challenged to better understand the technologies and catalysts moving the sector forward.

The mobilization of an advanced manufacturing alliance, designed to connect EDW to stakeholders who can supplement and corroborate market intelligence, has been a vital first step to validate manufacturing's role in the economy, and understand the profound and pervasive changes stemming from both radical and incremental innovation. New products using next-generation materials are being designed and produced more efficiently than ever before, while advancements in quality are often complemented by reduced environmental impacts.

Manufacturing juggernauts around the world are feeling the pinch. The United States, for instance — the manufacturing superpower for the past 40 years — is losing ground to China, India, and other emerging markets. To curtail this trend, the U.S. has injected mass amounts of cash into collaborative efforts between industry, post-secondary institutions, and government bodies to step up its innovation game. Other nations, including Canada, are following suit to varying degrees.

A recent PwC survey reveals more industrial companies around the world are making *Industry 4.0* digital transformation the focus of their business strategies. Globally, these companies plan to double their level of digitization within five years,

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“No single factor drives Industry 4.0, but the inexorable push for profitable growth is a compelling force. Customers are demanding more for less — and digital technologies offer a way to meet this demand, creating new opportunities for value-added products and services in the process. Canadian firms recognize they cannot compete on cost alone.”

from 33 per cent to 72 per cent — and they are investing more than \$900 billion USD per year to do it.

No single factor drives *Industry 4.0*, but the inexorable push for profitable growth is a compelling force. Customers are demanding more for less, and digital technologies offer a way to meet this demand, creating new opportunities for value-added products and services in the process. Canadian firms recognize they cannot compete on cost alone.

It goes without saying that innovation is a critical factor in assuring advanced manufacturing companies on the Prairies can compete in the *Industry 4.0* ecosystem. Canada, however, continues

to lag behind other nations.

In 2014, the Conference Board of Canada compared innovation performance, on a relative basis, between Canada, the provinces, and 16 peer nations. Its report, entitled *How Canada Performs: Innovation*, concluded that, “With few exceptions, Canadian companies are rarely at the leading edge of new technology and too often find themselves trailing global leaders. Also, with signs of emerging weakness in public R&D and persistent weaknesses in business R&D, patents, ICT investment, and productivity, Canada’s innovation performance — although improving overall — rests on a precarious foundation.”

The Conference Board proposed several straightforward countermeasures to mitigate this unremarkable ranking: Increase innovation-related spending, implement and effectively use technology, create a healthy business climate, and enhance management skills and expertise.

Obvious? Maybe. But definitely easier said than done.

To understand where we need to go from here, we first need to understand what an advanced manufacturing organization looks like. Typically, there are three hallmarks: Progressive products incorporating next-generation technologies, advanced processes and technologies, and the deployment of ‘smart’ manufacturing and enterprise systems.

Next, we need to identify how the ecosystem can encourage manufacturers to embrace these cornerstones.

In Winnipeg, that balanced ecosystem has already been around

for the better part of the past decade. Supports like the Composites Innovation Centre, which has promoted the use of advanced materials, and Precision ADM, shorthand for an *advanced digital manufacturing* hub, are not only relied upon by Manitoba manufacturers, but also companies coast-to-coast and internationally.

The ecosystem continues to strengthen as well. The federal government, through the National Research Council’s advanced manufacturing program, has slated for construction a \$60 million, 80,000-square-foot advanced manufacturing research and applied technology centre.

Underpinned by new skills programs and post-secondary institutions, leading-edge machine learning and artificial intelligence companies like Sightline Innovation further validate the need to build the *Industry 4.0* ecosystem as just that — an interconnected system.

If actuated, a proposed public-private machine learning cluster, called the Enterprise Machine Intelligence and Learning Initiative, or *EMILI*, would solidify Winnipeg’s standing across Canada.

EDW’s advanced manufacturing stakeholder alliance has identified eight action items structured to address competitive threats and grow the industry:

1. Create an industry-wide development strategy for advanced manufacturing;
2. Focus on the application of innovative manufacturing materials and technologies;
3. Support SME implementation and the effective use of advanced manufacturing technologies;
4. Optimize access to federal funding programs;
5. Optimize benefits pertaining to the National Research Council’s advanced manufacturing program;

6. Make better use of existing resources;

7. Focus support on sectors and organizations with proven economic development success; and

8. Work to position ourselves as a globally recognized region for advanced manufacturing.

Manufacturing is a major contributor to Manitoba’s — and Canada’s — economy. We cannot afford to take our eye off the ball. If we play our cards right, and forge proactive partnerships between government, industry, and education, advanced manufacturing excellence — and the global investment that comes with it — can define our industrial future. ¶

Dayna Spiring is the president and CEO of Economic Development Winnipeg. Spiring also serves as a director with Winpak and Manitoba Hydro, and as vice chair of the Winnipeg Blue Bombers football club.



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When *lean* meets *community*, everyone wins

By Carrie Schroeder

Lean is a journey, not a destination. It requires enterprise-wide commitment and a long-term vision to identify and solve problems, learn from those experiences, and institutionalize a culture of continuous improvement. Leadership is key, yet teamwork is fundamental.

Although recognizing there is always an opportunity to do better will get you into the game, nurturing high-performing teams is what will earn you the win.

Being part of a strong team is hard work. Egos must be checked at the door, humility sewn, and self-assessment practiced regularly. All players must foster an environment of trust, where healthy conflict challenges the status quo, while

— at the same time — celebrating successes and helping one another reach their potential.

World-class lean companies have refined this engagement down to a science. Each Toyota employee averages close to 50 suggestions for improvement annually — roughly one per week.

Celebrating accomplishments, however, is equally important. Lean should not be a daily grind; it should instead be a constant reminder to ask questions. Can we do this better? What can we improve? How can we keep this from happening again? How do we change the process to better communicate? Sometimes, the focus on transformative improvement is so

prominent, we fall short on celebrating many incremental successes achieved by the team along the way.

Of course, a one-size-fits-all approach to recognition and reward is nowhere near as powerful without meaningful activities driven by employees. Providing your staff with opportunities to celebrate together and grow both personally and as a group accelerates return on your lean investment.

Community-based initiatives, through group volunteerism or assisting local causes, is one way the top-tier lean organizations are supplementing their internal efforts.

Leaders have a social responsibility to leverage their position of influence to ignite a positive change in the world — and to empower their employees to do the same. Cultural anthropologist Margaret Mead said: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

Have you ever considered the impact your team could have in your community? How could your team apply its lean knowledge for the greater good? Who could we teach basic lean principles to that would benefit our society?

The Toyota Production System (TPS) is based on the idea that “the summation of many, many small, cheap improvements can have a big impact.” Jamie Bonini, vice president of the Toyota Production System Support Centre, or TSSC, a not-for-profit entity mandated to assist small industrial and not-for-profit organizations with TPS implementation, explains, “These basic principles of the Toyota Production System apply to any kind of process — it doesn’t have to be manufacturing.”

Remember Hurricane Sandy back in 2012? In one of the hardest hit areas in New York, volunteers at the food bank struggled to distribute provisions quickly enough to families in critical need. The volunteers were frustrated, disappointed, and yearned to do more. They had an abundance of supplies, but lacked the resources to match output with the demand.

TSSC answered the call. By using simple lean principles, the team was able to optimize the size of the boxes to pack more in the delivery truck. They reconfigured the layout of the warehouse, decreasing the time to pack a box of food from three minutes to 11 seconds, and streamlined the distribution process on-site. When all the improvements were implemented,

Continued on Page 14





the team consistently delivered food to 400 families in half the time — a triumph captured in the short, Toyota-produced YouTube video, *Meals Per Hour*.

Closer to home, Winnipeg-based Boeing Canada Operations Ltd. — recipient of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters' 2015 Community Contribution Award — has demonstrated that same spirit. Boeing dispatched their lean team to help Siloam Mission, an inner-city organization that addresses homelessness and people in crisis, to help volunteers organize donated goods, maximize storage space, and increase the efficiency of service delivery.

According to Judy Richichi, director of major gifts and corporate relations for Siloam Mission, "The cost of having that many engineers and that many staff come in and redesign our basement — we could never have afforded to pay for it. We could not have done it without them. As a matter of fact, we wouldn't have had the skill sets or talent to even think about doing it." What a proud moment for the Boeing team!

But these contributions are not the sole province of large

multinationals. Many Prairie manufacturers, big and small, have the aptitude to apply lean outside the factory floor. And we are seeing that in the advancement of lean in healthcare, education, government, and other service sectors. Can we improve the process for soccer registration at the local community centre? Can we help the seniors' care home serve meals more efficiently to their residents? Can we lend a hand to the nearby soup kitchen to save money on food collection and processing? These are questions we can help address as lean manufacturers.

The answers to these questions can also yield major reward for your employees that cake and coffee in the breakroom cannot touch. The result: An engaged workforce, a better community, and a stronger business.

It all starts with a conversation. Have yours today. 

Carrie Schroeder is a former lean facilitator and the current operations manager with Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters in Manitoba.

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In the weeds: Making way for effective corporate policy

By Annie Bell

Medical marijuana. Pot legalization. Cannabis in the workplace. These phrases have sprouted in popularity — and have elicited corporate trepidation — over the past year, and will continue to be a hot topic in the coming months, as the Government of Canada enacts its new cannabis legislation leading up to July 2018.

While much of the rhetoric has been rooted in the fear of impeding legal chaos, it is also built on a lack of understanding between employees and employers as to what their rights are and how they can be exercised.

We are still waiting for both scientific leaders and federal policymakers to establish guidelines on impairment levels — not to mention a device that can successfully measure impairment from marijuana use (although an oral swab test opposed to, say, a urine test can detect usage in a 24-hour period). In the meantime, there are no specific directives you can include in your policy to circumvent the uncertainty. That said, more than ever, *now* is the time to ensure your current drug and alcohol policy addresses the key points to protect all parties.

The most important piece of information that needs to be communicated to all company personnel is that there is no room for impairment in a safety-sensitive workplace. It must be clear in your policy that employees are responsible to communicate with their supervisor if there is a possibility of impairment, which includes alcohol and illicit drugs, as well as prescription and over-the-counter medication.

The second aspect that must be addressed is the process following the disclosure of potential impairment-causing substances. Employees must feel it is safe to come forward when required, which is supported by ensuring they understand the process and what will happen to them in that situation. This can include temporary modified work, an independent medical evaluation, or short-term disability. Additionally, the consequences of not disclosing an impairment-causing substance must be clearly defined.

In keeping with the theme of full transparency, it is imperative that the process of drug and alcohol testing is addressed in its entirety. This should outline when testing may occur (this is not as simple as it sounds — and *whenever we want* is not an

admissible standard), what drugs are being tested for (and their corresponding cut-off levels), the breath-alcohol content cut-off level, and the related outcomes should there be a positive test result.

All of these items are of equal importance to your company drug and alcohol policy; however, none of them matter as much as properly incorporating the policy into your workforce.

Once your senior leadership team reviews and supports your updated policy, the following steps must be completed to effectively communicate expectations to your staff:

First, pick a 'go live' date to make the policy effective. Leave ample time for dialogue and discussion, while establishing firm goalposts to prevent implementation from being punted further and further down the road.

Second, review the policy with all employees before it is effective. Give opportunity for questions and discussion. Remember, what may be clear to you may not be intuitive or clear to others — and it is paramount your policies are not only articulated, but also understood by those they encompass.

Third, have all employees sign an acknowledgement of understanding. New hires should do this at the time of hire, before they begin their assigned work.

Last, make sure to revisit your policy annually. Circumstances and laws change — marijuana legislation is a good reminder of that — and your internal policies must accurately reflect your company requirements and the climate you're operating in.

Finally, don't be afraid to ask for help if you need it. Organizations like Wellpoint Health have amassed extensive experience supporting teams by delivering in-class and online training to help identify substance abuse in the workplace, and how to effectively deal with those situations. Outside input in the development or review of your policy can also be a useful tool in ensuring the inclusion of appropriate language and structure.

Good policy and engagement is about protecting your business *and* your people. ☞

Annie Bell is the national drug and alcohol manager with Wellpoint Health — one of Canada's premier occupational health and safety advisors.

THE RUNDOWN

A quick update on the issues and policies impacting you

By Derek Lothian

Canada Free Trade Agreement

After months of intense negotiation, Canada's provinces and territories finalized a new domestic trade pact this spring, set to take effect July 1.

The new Canada Free Trade Agreement (CFTA) replaces the two-decades-old Agreement on Internal Trade, and is aimed at improving the alignment of regulatory controls, removing barriers to inter-jurisdictional business, and strengthening dispute resolution mechanisms.

While there are stalwart critics of the deal — many of whom have slammed the provision of a 'negatives list,' whereby provinces can outline protected exemptions on market access (worth noting it is a long list, too — comprising more than two-fifths of the final document) — business leaders nationwide have broadly welcomed the announcement, from the Canadian Federation of Independent Business to Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters.

Under the former regime, provinces declared what goods and services were eligible for interprovincial free trade. The CFTA, on the other hand, establishes free trade as the default position.

In addition to other structural revisions, this change will make it easier for companies to bid on contracts with governments outside the province or territory in which they are located. Without the modernization, the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with the European Union, slated for implementation later this year, would have allowed E.U.-block firms to be more competitive in the provincial procurement arena than companies from other Canadian provinces.

Carbon tax

Come up with your own plan to adopt a carbon tax or Alberta's will be imposed: That was the

message federal policymakers delivered in May to provinces reluctant to introduce a carbon pricing regime.

Alberta's model institutes a tax on emissions generated by the consumption of most types of commonly used fossil fuels, except for those on farms, and divvies the revenues through a mix of income-based rebates, spending in renewable energy and other green technologies, and a reduction in the small business tax. It was introduced in January at a price of \$20 per tonne, and will increase to \$30 per tonne in 2018. Ottawa is demanding a minimum price of \$10 per tonne in 2018 and \$50 per tonne by 2022.

This comes as an integral part of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau's commitment to axe emissions to 30 per cent below 2005 levels — equivalent to taking every Canadian car off the road, twice.

Saskatchewan and Manitoba have refused to sign onto the climate framework. Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall has even stated the Province would take the federal government to court should it attempt to enforce a levy.

2017-18 Manitoba budget

There were few surprises in second-ever budget presented by Hon. Cameron Friesen as Manitoba's minister of finance.

Following suit with many of his counterparts across the country, Cameron tweaked the province's Research and Development Tax Credit, reducing the eligibility rate from 20 per cent to 15 per cent for eligible expenditures made after April 11.

The Manufacturing Investment Tax Credit, applied against eligible investments in machinery and equipment, was peeled back as well. The non-refundable portion of the credit dropped from two per cent down to one per cent. The eight per cent refundable portion, however, remained unchanged.

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Effective July 1, the manufacturing and processing tax rate will decrease from 27 per cent to 24.5 per cent, and the general business tax rate will decrease to 26.5 per cent.

2017-18 Saskatchewan budget

Despite tabling perhaps his least popular budget since taking office, Saskatchewan Premier Brad Wall lived up to his commitment to introduce North America's first 'patent box.' Dubbed the Saskatchewan Commercial Innovation Incentive, the program puts in place a six per cent provincial corporate income tax rate to companies commercializing qualifying intellectual property in Saskatchewan for 10 years, and 15 years if the majority of the research and development (R&D) is conducted in the province. In response to repeated calls from industry (including from yours truly), eligibility will encompass IP definitions well beyond patents themselves.

In other notable moves, the budget increased the provincial sales tax from five to six per cent, rolled back both

personal and corporate income tax rates by 0.5 per cent, and limited the total refundable and non-refundable R&D tax credits that can be claimed by any one corporation to \$1 million per year.

2017-18 Alberta budget

Further west, in Alberta, the budget headline simply read, *No new tax cuts*.

For manufacturers, there is little in this year's budget that begs much attention. Most significantly, the previously-announced Capital Investment Tax Credit (CITC) will roll out in 2017. This is a two-year program that provides a 10 per cent non-refundable tax credit on manufacturing and processing infrastructure, up to a maximum of \$5 million. The CITC will have six competitive application intakes, with a total funding pool of \$70 million.

2017-18 federal budget

Comparative to years past, the March 22 federal budget was, well, *boring*. Take that as you may — maybe

it's good, maybe it's bad — but not much happened.

\$950 million was earmarked over the next five years for innovation *superclusters* — advanced manufacturing and agri-food being two of those identified (although what exactly these *superclusters* will look like is set to be determined through a competitive process, which launched in late May).

Up to \$50 million was set aside to kick-start Innovative Solutions Canada — a national procurement program to fund early-stage R&D, late-stage prototypes, and other private sector goods and services from Canadian innovators.

We'll be getting a new national infrastructure bank, to review and organize major capital projects in a manner that will better leverage public dollars with major private and institutional investment.

More than \$1.2 billion was directed toward the creation of a Strategic Innovation Fund, consolidating a patchwork of other sector-specific funding programs. Aerospace,

automotive, clean technology, and agri-food investments are expected to receive specific priority.

\$10.1 billion, meanwhile, will support the new Trade and Transportation Corridors Initiative to renew export gateways and ports.

And, finally, on the skills front, three noteworthy highlights: \$225 million over four years to establish a new Canadian entity responsible for improving labour market information, \$73 million over four years to create 8,700 new co-op and work-integrated learning spaces, and \$1.8 billion over six years to expand Labour Market Development Agreements with the provinces and territories.

Softwood lumber

Former Manitoba Premier and Canadian Ambassador to the United States, Gary Doer, is entering the softwood lumber fray.

Doer, who was recently hired by the Alberta government, joins a growing list of former trade heavyweights advocating regional interests in the softwood lumber

debate with the U.S., including fellow former ambassador Raymond Chretien (Quebec), former international trade and foreign affairs minister David Emerson (British Columbia), and former international trade minister Jim Peterson (Ontario).

The U.S. Department of Commerce began enforcing tariffs on softwood lumber imports from Canada on April 28, ranging from three per cent to 24 per cent, despite multiple international trade rulings against such a practice.

The last bilateral agreement expired in 2015, but required a full year's grace period before the United States could embark on supplemental legal action.

Global growth

According to Export Development Canada's semi-annual forecast, despite the latest wave of protectionist and nationalistic rhetoric felt across the United States and parts of Europe, global growth is expected to jump from 3.5 per cent this year to 3.8 per cent in 2018 — slightly above the benchmark of 3.5 per cent gained over the past half-decade.

The report prompted EDC Chief Economist Peter Hall to ask — and answer — the same question many have been thinking since the election of U.S. President Donald Trump: "Is this the beginning of the end for globalization? That's highly unlikely. The cost is massive, and everyone gets a bill in the mail. Remember, a wrecking ball doesn't only swing one way — it swings back."

The forecast predicts Canada's energy sector will lead a national export rebound of 18 per cent this year alone, with additional growth of seven per cent in 2018.

Provincially, Alberta is slated for a 19 per cent expansion in exports in 2017 and four per cent in 2018. Saskatchewan exports are set to rise nine per cent this year and four next year. And Manitoba export growth is expected to inch up more modestly — five per cent in 2017 and two per cent in 2018. ¶

Derek Lothian is the editor of Prairie Manufacturer Magazine and president of Lothian & Associates Management Group Inc.

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YOUR NEXT HIRE?

Technology is transforming more than your products and processes — it's changing your workforce

By Jennifer Findlay



The robots aren't *coming* — they're *here*.

And with them, they are bringing big questions for Prairie manufacturers: What will *Industry 4.0* need in an employee? What happens to the jobs of today in a world dominated by artificial intelligence and automation? What skill sets will grow in demand over the next decade as companies race to harness a new era of global opportunity?

Estimates suggest more than 40 per cent of the tasks currently performed by humans can already be automated. In the past, robots were used to replace highly repetitive manual tasks, such as packaging or welding on large-volume production lines. Now, using advanced sensors and computer algorithms, automation is moving higher up the value chain, performing exceedingly complex cognitive functions in real time. In 2014, Hong Kong-based venture capital firm Deep Knowledge even appointed a robot named *Vital* to its board of directors — becoming the first business in the world to do so.

These shifts have captured the attention of the World Economic Forum (WEF). Published just this past March, the WEF released a white paper that outlined five technologies considered *disruptive*, and which loosely form the umbrella concept of *automation*: The 'internet of things,' artificial intelligence, advanced robotics, enterprise 'wearables' (including augmented and virtual reality), and 3D printing.

The report also framed three fundamental questions for consideration: What are the specific tasks, skills, and job families in future production systems? What are the curricula, labour, and training policies that government and

companies need to collaborate on to develop the new workforce? And, what policies need to be put in place to support disruptions within the current workforce?

According to Jayson Myers, the former CEO of Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters and one of the country's foremost authorities on industrial change, these questions are nothing new.

"We have been asking these same questions for 35 years," says Myers, who now runs a strategic consulting practice. "Technology, however, is changing products, processes, and businesses faster today than ever before. Understanding how to implement those technologies and develop new business models to operate successfully — that's a vastly different kettle of fish than in the past."

Managing these changes, he adds, will require workers with a combination of technological skills and — perhaps more importantly — soft skills, including multi-tasking, critical thinking, project management, and communication.

Similarly, WEF highlights collaborative production, decision-making, predictive and remote maintenance, simulation, and workload optimization as the management 'musts' of the future.

Myers agrees, maintaining that success will start with the ability to see the big picture.

"The most urgent skill is strategic thinking from the management level," he says. "The same is true for new hires on the factory floor. Workers won't be able to focus on one small piece of the process anymore — they will need to think about the wider system."

Automation is continuing to leave its mark on the manufacturing labour pool. South of the border, approximately 6.5

million jobs — equivalent to one-third of the workforce — have been lost over the past two decades. In Canada, meanwhile, the projection is around 700,000 lost jobs, or one-quarter of the manufacturing workforce.

But that does not necessarily mean the robots have been kicking blue-collar workers to the curb. A surge in baby boomer retirements has forced many companies to turn to automation to bridge a continent-wide skilled talent shortage. As a result, the demand for technologists, analysts, and engineers, who can support and enhance automated environments, has boomed.

"Losing long-time employees is expensive for manufacturers, yet it also provides the groundwork for generational change," explains Myers. "As managers retire, new managers come in looking at automation and understanding it much better than the old guard. Because it is so difficult to find good people, one way of competing is by automating."

Norseman Structures is one of those companies vying to sharpen its competitive edge.

Located in Saskatoon, Norseman manufactures fabric-covered buildings for North American and international markets, from carports and quonsets to large, custom commercial products. Their diverse team constructs the buildings as well, routinely encompassing mechanical and electrical installation and the pouring of concrete foundations.

"We need people with expanded skill sets, who are able to perform a multitude of work paths," exclaims Chief Operating Officer Kevin Dow. "We need flexibility — people to deliver critical thinking, who can make decisions on their feet, and who can manage more sophisticated, computer-controlled equipment, be it lasers or robots."

While Dow is bullish on Norseman's plans for increased automation, he recognizes it is often a 'chicken or egg' conundrum, especially for small- to mid-sized manufacturers. Stiffening economic pressures are putting heat on companies

"Many programs now train people to be strong technically, but it's the overlay of technical knowledge along with the technical data that is really going to set apart the students who are going to have strong career paths. Students need to think about how to become involved in data analytics, supply management, logistics, just-in-time, automation — all the things that are becoming front-and-centre. It's no longer going to be what we think of as 'traditional' manufacturing."

Continued on Page 24

to invest in process efficiencies, although justifying the capital expense means first strengthening customer bases in a climate of swelling competition.

Then there is the question of whether it is the right tool for the right problem.

“Manufacturing in Canada is significantly under-capitalized as far as automation is concerned,” says Dow. “There are certainly challenges in terms of the types of manufacturing we do in Western Canada, compared to the automotive industry or some of the other

higher-volume manufacturing sectors. Many companies here are more focused on fulfilling smaller-volume, specialized market niches.”

Meeting the demand

If a tree falls in the forest and no one is around to hear it, does it make a sound?

Or, in the case of manufacturing: If the demand exists but no one is trained to meet it, can we still call it a *job*?

Producing workers with the right mix

of technical competency and soft skills preparedness to lead the digital economy is the challenge of the 21st century for Canada’s education system. Primary and secondary schools are racing to add courses in coding, robotics, and design technologies, while post-secondary institutions are aligning more closely with employers to redefine the applied learning experience.

For Nobina Robinson, the president and CEO of Polytechnics Canada, it all starts with understanding the need.

Continued on Page 26

STEAM 4.0

By Derek Lothian

We’re all conversant with the acronym *STEAM* — shorthand for the academic disciplines of science, technology, engineering, arts, and math, and what is often referred to as the basis of the new economy.

But should those broad categories be our entire focus? Using that same acronym, here are five more emerging manufacturing skill sets I believe will accompany the traditional STEAM framework demand in the years ahead:

Software development

Software is quickly becoming the nucleus of product and process innovation. From testing, design, and monitoring applications, to being incorporated as a core driver of the customer solution, the ability to code, debug, and integrate physical systems will be (if it not already is) a golden ticket for career success. Think of autonomous agriculture, automated production, and disruptive technologies like 3D printing — these advances are built around software engineers, and we are not producing nearly enough of them.

Trade

The Donald Trump phenomenon aside, globalization isn’t fading away. Even if you are only selling domestically at the moment, surviving the next half-decade will require you to be globally literate. Being up-to-speed on concepts related to foreign exchange management, hedging, customs, regulatory compliance, and the different types of trade insurance are paramount to profitability. If you don’t have the know-how internally, solidify excellent partnerships with trusted advisors.

Experimentation

Doug Hall, CEO and founder of Innovation Engineering and the Eureka! Ranch, often reminds business executives that

success is generally rooted in failure. The hinge is to fail fast and fail cheap. As the cost of being in the marketplace spikes, there will be renewed pressure to hit a home run every time you step to the plate. That carries the risk of stifling great ideas out of fear of striking out. Prosperity will belong to the bold, who build a culture of creativity, and who have a system of innovation to speed up commercialization and reduce cost.

Analytics

Data without context is like with a car without wheels: Sure, it’s there, but it ain’t going too far. Manufacturers today are able to generate volumes of information, encompassing product performance, plant efficiency, quality control, customer satisfaction, and everywhere in between. What you *do* with that data, however, is what will separate you from your competition. Telling a good story and making sound decisions based on data is not as simple as it sounds — make sure you have people who do it well.

Marketing

How do you reach your customers today? How did you 10, 20 years ago? *Push marketing* has been replaced by *experiential marketing*. Virtual and augmented reality are now tools you need to care about. And I’m not just talking VR goggles and a smartphone, either. I sat in on a panel discussion this past April on the future of construction innovation. There, a division manager for PCL Construction Management predicted the biggest shift in the industry over the next decade will be *gamification*. Manufacturers, it’s coming for you, too. ¶

Derek Lothian is the editor of Prairie Manufacturer Magazine and president of Lothian & Associates Management Group Inc.

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"Up to now, we've been fairly narrow in our understanding of the kind of talent we need, limiting development to the drive for more university graduates," says Robinson, noting that recognition of *competencies* needs to supersede merely *credentials*. "Both the technical and human cognitive skills will grow in demand, but in different ways applied to [evolving] technologies."

Tracey Scarlett, dean at the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology (NAIT) School of Business, a Polytechnics Canada member, shares Robinson's thirst for better data.

"The biggest challenge we have as learning institutions is getting demand-side data," imparts Scarlett. "How many coders do we really need? How many people will need to service electric vehicles? We haven't invested enough in labour market forecasting. Statistics Canada hasn't updated its occupational codes, and the federal government is not modernizing its labour market information systems."

One of the most effective mechanisms for institutions to gather input is through program advisory committees. These groups, comprised of representatives from industry, help

schools anticipate trends, develop or refine curricula, and remain relevant to employers.

They have proven invaluable to NAIT in its efforts to equip manufacturers with the best and brightest. The launch of its 'trade-to-degree' program, whereby tradespeople can obtain a bachelor of business administration degree, is a prime example of feedback in action.

"Many programs now train people to be strong technically, but it's the overlay of technical knowledge along with the technical data that is really going to set apart the students who are going to have strong career paths," says Scarlett. "Students need to think about how to become involved in data analytics, supply management, logistics, just-in-time, automation — all of the things that are becoming front-and-centre. It's no longer going to be what we think of as 'traditional' manufacturing."

Indeed, times are a-changing; and workers will be forced to adapt at a pace equal to or greater than those training them.

Fortunately, Canadians have demonstrated their flexibility.

During the oil boom, workers moved in droves to the Wild Rose Province,

and then back home or on to other jurisdictions when commodity prices softened. And in the thralls of the 2008-09 financial crisis, a record number of adults returned to school to 'upskill' or retrain altogether.

It's a familiar conversation. People have been concerned about changing technology since the time of Aristotle. Few who witnessed the birth of the Industrial Revolution could imagine most of the jobs available today. The tricky part is to not succumb to hype or overestimate the impact of inevitable change.

"Manufacturing will not disappear," assures Robinson. "It will push into new areas and domains that offer manufacturers new markets and opportunities. But the new manufacturing jobs will not be the same ones lost during the Great Recession. There is no way back to the legions of manufacturing jobs that only required high school education."

Back in Saskatoon, Dow believes the onus is now on manufacturers themselves.

"It is incumbent on all companies like mine to invest in our people," he says. "People will always be the key." 𐀀



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Ten recommendations for a 'new NAFTA'

By Maryscott Greenwood

President Donald Trump has been talking tough about the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) since the early days of his campaign, threatening repeatedly to withdraw the United States from the pact outright.

After concerned phone calls from the leaders of Canada and Mexico, however, he seemed to walk that threat back, opting instead to push for a more liberal 'modernization' of the accord. The selection of international trade law expert Robert Lighthizer as U.S. trade representative gave Canadians another reason to breathe a sigh of relief.

But even with the overwhelmingly-bipartisan confirmation of Lighthizer, it is far too soon to assume NAFTA is out of the woods. America's 45th president has demonstrated he is nothing if not unpredictable.

For now, the Trump administration does not appear to be on course to scrap NAFTA. It is, though, readying for significant renegotiation.

That alone is no cause for alarm. NAFTA truly is in legitimate need of an update. The deal is, after all, 23 years old, and was negotiated in an entirely different era — one without widespread access to the internet, and a decade before Apple introduced the iPhone. Some of the biggest and most robust sectors of the North American economy did not even exist when NAFTA was first enacted.

Now that the conditions seem right for a 'new NAFTA,' it is important that any bilateral changes to the Canada-U.S. relationship (although there is something to be said for keeping the agreement trilateral with Mexico) are structured to facilitate growth on both sides of the 49th Parallel.

At the Canadian American Business Council, we have put together a list of

our top 10 suggestions to give NAFTA a shot in the arm:

The first recommendation is straightforward: Create a chapter that codifies and strengthens the Canada-U.S. Regulatory Cooperation Council (RCC) as a permanent entity. The fruits of that labour have been frustratingly slow, yet they play an integral role to the health of both economies by eliminating costly red tape. Formally recognizing the RCC in a new NAFTA would ensure governments work in tandem on the implementation and harmonization of regulations. There is also an argument to be made in favour of a 'negative list' approach to new regulations, which would deem that all new regulations must be harmonized unless they are specifically excluded.

Secondly, a new NAFTA should mutually recognize voluntary product standards, testing, and certification, and remove tariffs on all products to guarantee a true free trade agreement. It's probably too much to hope that dairy and lumber would be included in the zero-tariff regime; so, for those sectors, alternative arrangements would need to be established.

The swift resolution of the dairy and lumber disputes, indeed, constitutes our third recommendation. These are key, job-creating industries throughout both Canada and the U.S. — determining their long-term future in the context of a healthy trade relationship is fundamental to their ability to operate, invest, and grow.

Fourth, we advocate revamping *Buy American* provisions into one *Buy American/Canadian* requirement — in other words: Consider Canadian content 'domestic' for all official procurement at the federal and state levels. That is currently the case in the defence sector. The reciprocity would need to be genuine, and would go a long way to nurturing our

highly complex, interdependent supply chains.

Number five is to support further integration of our North American energy markets by building robust infrastructure systems to connect supply and demand. That will require a push for predictable, efficient, and expedited regulatory frameworks to ensure cross-border infrastructure can be built and operationalized in a timely fashion. This one seems self-evident, but increased coordination can bolster energy security and enhance the sector's ability to address cyber and other physical security threats — a policy cornerstone of the United States.

The sixth recommendation is to improve protection of intellectual property, including — but not limited to — exploring policy options in Canada to counteract judicial interpretations of IP rules, which serve to invalidate longstanding pharmaceutical patents. It is time for Canada's parliament to fully explore legal options that, in recent years, have been left solely to Canadian courts, to the serious detriment of innovation and American investment.

Number seven involves the creation of rules to promote and govern digital trade, encompassing provisions that prohibit data localization and digital customs duties, which would enable cross-border data and secure basic non-discrimination principles for digital products.

Eighth on our list is updating the rules governing the movement of people across our shared border to reflect modern categories of employment, such as those who work in the digital economy and those serving companies with operations in both Canada and the U.S.

The ninth recommendation calls for the enhancement and modernization of joint security arrangements to foster faster, freer cross-border movement

of goods and services, as well as more reliable and predictable border processing.

Finally, since the new NAFTA will potentially serve as a model for future agreements the way its predecessor did, now is the time to take a firm stand against currency manipulation. It is not an issue here in North America, but can pose a serious problem with other economies, even if Trump isn't willing to take it on at the moment.

These 10 recommendations aren't easy, but they are possible; and, if they are achieved, could provide a meaningful

"NAFTA truly is in legitimate need of an update. The deal is, after all, 23 years old, and was negotiated in an entirely different era — one without widespread access to the internet, and a decade before Apple introduced the iPhone. Some of the biggest and most robust sectors of the North American economy did not even exist when NAFTA was first enacted."

boost to the flow of commerce, the pace of trade, and the health of Canadian and American economies. They would lead to minimal disruption and, in fact, would ease regulatory burdens on countless businesses and industries. They'd cut costs and red tape. And they'd open up lucrative new markets for those sectors that have existed under protectionist regimes for too long.

We are heading into a dynamic, new age of technological advances that are demanding the United States and Canada come together as partners like never before. These new advances are almost

as unpredictable as the next 100 days of the Trump administration. Almost.

In both instances, though, it is worth focusing on what needs updating in NAFTA and to create a blueprint for how our countries can do business together for generations to come. ☞

Maryscott Greenwood is the CEO of the Canadian American Business Council, which represents member companies totalling more than two million employees and nearly \$2 trillion in revenues. Earlier this year, Greenwood was named one of Canada's top 100 lobbyists by The Hill Times.





Great beer, down to a science

Meet the Newfoundland grad who turned in her stethoscope for a lab coat en route to becoming Saskatchewan's newest brewmaster

By Joanne Paulson

Amanda Butt is in the 'party room' at Saskatoon's Great Western Brewing Co., sipping a fresh batch of beer out of a small glass sleeve. She wrinkles her nose, and notes this beer is young; she won't allow anyone outside the testing team to even take a sniff. Not before it's perfect.

Butt took the helm as brewmaster after only two weeks learning the ropes. Her pride in the brand, however, was fully in place the minute she walked through the door.

In brewing circles, Great Western's history is a story of legends — how 16 employees bought the company from Carling O'Keefe in 1989, when the beer company merged with Molson and the plant was slated for closure. Great Western has been a revered local institution ever since.

"When I heard it, I thought the story was super cool," recounts Butt. "I left 'big beer' to get into the craft beer scene; and then to hear about a group of 16 folks who were like, screw it, we're buying the brewery and we're going to keep it open — that's cool, right?"

Another draw was the opportunity to learn from one of the best.

Vivian Jones, or Viv as he is affectionately referred to by staff, spent a decade as brewmaster at Great Western, capping a 50-year career in the business. He was also Butt's mentor for the first couple weeks on the job.

"How do you say *no* to mentorship from someone who has been in the industry for longer than you have been alive?" asks Butt. "There are processes in modern breweries we do every day that he helped create and perfect. It's incredible. You have to say yes to an opportunity like that."

So she did. Now settled in Saskatoon alongside her family, Butt is a long way from home. Born in Grand Falls, NL, Butt studied pre-medicine at Memorial University in St. John's, but quickly realized the profession was not in her future.

Instead, she switched to biochemistry, with no clear idea of the types of jobs the degree could land her. She found the field fascinating, yet the notion of sitting in a lab behind a microscope for the rest of her life was woefully unappealing.

Fortunately, fate — or, more specifically, a professor — intervened.

Butt was part of a group of soon-to-be graduates taking a bridging course. In its final days, the professor queried students what they planned to do with their education.

"He stopped and asked us, 'Why is no one going into beer?'" says Butt. "In truth, I didn't think it was an option. I enjoy beer, but I never really considered who made it. I guess you could say it all started there."

Inspired, Butt volunteered at a local brewery, and went on to obtain her master's degree in science, specializing in brewing and distilling, from Heriot-Watt University in Edinburgh, Scotland.

She returned to Canada and landed with Labatt, before relocating to Boston to try her hand with a smaller enterprise. Then, she saw the posting for Great Western.

Her path has been anything but expected. And while she credits her degree in biochemistry as the launching pad for her career, Butt maintains there was much more to learn on the road to becoming brewmaster.

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Amanda Butt (top) in the Great Western Brewing Co. facility, and Saskatchewan Polytechnic Provost and Vice President, Academic, Anne Neufeld (left).



"I don't think I could rely just on biochemistry to be successful," she says. I don't think I could have just relied on the master's degree, either. It has taken a lot of experience and on-the-job learning to gain the insight and know-how to be successful steering the development of a new beer — or an entire brewery, for that matter.

"You need to know about yeast fermentation, and enzymatic reactions and activity. You need to know about food science. You need to understand a bit of engineering and process technology. And then you need to understand how to perform tests and make decisions based on the results."

There's the artistic element, too. "Beer is incredibly complex and unstable," she points out. "It's not like wine or spirits, where you can put it on a shelf and it stays the same. A lot of

factors impact mouth feel, flavour, and aroma. Intuitively creating recipes and knowing what will work together and discovering what won't — there's an art to it that drew me in. It's not only about science."

Nevertheless, Butt routinely finds herself in the minority. Despite comprising more than half of the national workforce, less than a quarter of Canadians in science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) careers are female. That percentage drops significantly for brewmasters.

It's not an issue, though, Butt spends much time focusing on. For her, it's all about pursuing individual passion.

"I grew up in science. My grandfather is an engineer; my father is a funeral director. We were raised in that world, so it felt very natural to continue that type of education."

"Beer is incredibly complex and unstable. It's not like wine or spirits, where you can put it on a shelf and it stays the same. A lot of factors impact mouth feel, flavour, and aroma. Intuitively creating recipes and knowing what will work together and discovering what won't — there's an art to it that drew me in. It's not only about science."

"And it's becoming more popular. Tech Girls Canada, for instance, wasn't around in my day, but they do great work. I don't think young people in particular understand what they can do — what kinds of jobs are out there, what kinds of fields are out there to have a career in. Exposing people to those opportunities generates interest."

Anne Neufeld agrees wholeheartedly.

The provost and vice president of academic at Saskatchewan Polytechnic — and the first woman to hold those posts — has taken a personal interest in supporting girls and women interested in STEM careers.

"Part of it is connecting girls and young women to role models in the fields they'd like to pursue," she explains. "We need to get better at that, and do it well at a younger age."

The college's Women in Trades and Technology program, in place since 1991, or its Girls Exploring Trades and Technology camps, focused on students in grades six through eight, have proven to be important tools in that improvement. The latter has reached more than 3,500 youth across the province alone, providing experiential learning opportunities in laboratory and workshop-style environments.

There's no doubt the landscape is changing — albeit slower than many would like.

Accelerating that shift, says Neufeld, will require businesses and organizations to deepen their understanding of the role diversity plays in workforce performance.

"When we look at science jobs, there is some evidence that women and men will approach solving problems in a slightly different fashion," she adds. "I think that can only be beneficial when we have as many perspectives and backgrounds as possible. It's just going to make the scientific community that much stronger."

Neufeld feels Saskatchewan Polytechnic and, by extension, post-secondary institutions across Canada can serve as catalysts.

"Our role is to show what the career has to offer, and to remove barriers to their advancement into these STEM

careers," she says. "It's about these young people following their dreams. When people follow their passion, they will be committed employees, they will be very dedicated, and they will make a very significant contribution."

We can all cheers to that. ☺



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Manitoba Premier Brian Pallister (left) and CME Vice President Ron Koslowsky (right) face off in a ceremonial puck drop to officially launch the 2017 Dare to Compete conference.

PHOTOS IN THIS FEATURE COURTESY DANIEL CRUMP

The puck drops on Manitoba Manufacturing Week

By Jill Knaggs

It is one of the most prolific sports metaphors in corporate Canada: “Skate to where the puck is going, not where it has been.”

Those words, first uttered by Walter Gretzky and immortalized through his son, Wayne, formulated the rallying cry this past March, as manufacturers from across the Prairies converged on Winnipeg for the 2017 Manitoba Manufacturing Week — a weeklong series of events celebrating one of the region’s most important economic sectors. There was even a ceremonial puck drop.

At the heart of the week was the annual Dare to Compete conference — or *(un)conference*, as it is referred to by attendees.

Now in its 15th iteration, Dare to Compete has grown into the largest recurring manufacturing event in Western Canada, bringing together a world-class line-up of speakers and thought-leaders to tackle industry trends, challenges, and future growth opportunities.

This year’s keynotes included political pundit Andrew Coyne; Michael Gardiner, director of strategy, advanced manufacturing, and *Industry 4.0* for Siemens Canada; and leadership guru Stephen Shedletzky.

“From the frontline to the C-suite, manufacturers value the opportunity to step out of the office and reconnect with the Prairie manufacturing community,” says Brian Klaponski, president and CEO

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“From the frontline to the C-suite, manufacturers value the opportunity to step out of the office and reconnect with the Prairie manufacturing community. [Dare to Compete] is a great forum to step away from my desk and my issues, and talk to business leaders to get their perspectives on the manufacturing world, and to sit in on some great sessions to get a sense of what’s on the horizon.”

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Nine breakout sessions, organized in three separate streams, helped to ensure the one-day showcase featured something for everyone, from sessions on human rights and safety to best practices for employing individuals with disabilities.

Not surprisingly, operational excellence and continuous improvement were also popular topics.

“Dare to Compete is an outstanding opportunity for our team to learn the latest about lean manufacturing and benchmark our progress,” says Chris Parker, plant manager for Winpak. “We send a variety of people every year, from shop floor facilitators to operations management. It is a great chance to reinvigorate our improvement teams.”

Meanwhile, steps outside the conference lobby, high school students vied for more than \$30,000 in scholarships, bursaries, and prizes in the finals of the Canadian Manufacturers & Exporters (CME) Discovery Program.

This renowned competition tasks students with designing, building, and developing a business case for remote-controlled hovercrafts. The prototypes are run through an on-site course, and then students must present in front of a panel of industry leaders.

The Discovery Program is widely regarded as one of the best initiatives in the country for connecting youth into hands-on manufacturing career pathways. The team from J.H. Bruns Collegiate took home top honours in 2017.



Gala Awards Dinner 2017

No Manitoba Manufacturing Week is complete without taking in the iconic Gala Awards Dinner.

More than 500 guests packed into the RBC Convention Centre to pay tribute to this year’s award winners:

Pioneer Award

Emeric V. Duha IX (awarded posthumously and accepted by his son, Rick Duha)

With the support of his wife, Gwen, and his sister, Margaret, Emeric championed The Duha Group’s booming expansion

from a printing press in the family home in Osborne Village, setting the stage for the company’s global success. Today, The Duha Group maintains a presence in nine countries across four continents.

Emeric, known as *Rick* and *E.V.* to friends and colleagues, had an eye to the future. With the proliferation of printers in the 1950s, he identified unique opportunities in a niche market: Specialized colour-merchandising tools. The company soon expanded from Winnipeg with a second location in Gimli, focusing on colour cards, fandecks, and colour systems.

Emeric’s dedication to the relentless pursuit of customer value, employee empowerment, and teamwork developed the framework to help The Duha Group grow and compete internationally.

Hall of Fame Award

Neil Carlson, The Carlson Group

Neil Carlson joined the family business, Carlson Decorating Co., in 1964. Under his leadership, the company grew from 35 employees and sales of \$500,000 to a team of 350, with sales of more than \$50 million, serving Winnipeg and North America across multiple industries.

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Currently, the Carlson Group is composed of four companies: Carlson Engineered Composites, a Canadian manufacturer of fibre-reinforced plastic components for original equipment manufacturers; Carlson Engineered Composites USA, whose services include moulding, pattern and tooling, and specialty coatings; Carlson Commercial and Industrial Services, offering commercial painting and sandblasting; and Carlson Truck Outfitters, a leading installer of spray-in box liners and accessories.

During his 52-year leadership tenure, and with his wife, Marilyn, and children, Terri, Marni and Neil Jr., by his side, Neil took the company to become a market leader in Canada and the United States, with offices in Winnipeg; St. Cloud,

Minnesota; and Anniston, Alabama.

Among other roles, he is a past chair of the Construction Labour Relations Council, past chair of the Trade Section of the Winnipeg Construction Association, and was awarded the Insignia of Commander of the Royal Order of the Polar Star Sweden. He also sits on the board of directors of the Swedish Council of America and, since 1980, has served as honorary consul of Sweden.

Emerging Award

The Winning Combination

The Winning Combination (TWC) is a home-grown success. TWC innovates and manufactures two flagship product lines, *Kaizen* and *Bodylogix* — premium supplements for active lifestyles, which are distributed across Canada, the

United States, and in select international markets.

Dedicated to developing natural products that empower consumers to lead healthy lives, TWC has experienced year-over-year double-digit growth for the past five years, contributing to and investing in the Manitoba economy by employing more than 100 employees at its five Winnipeg facilities.

With a vision to uphold the highest standards in quality and purity, TWC has become the dominant player in Canadian sports nutrition. It has raised industry standards by voluntarily opting to pursue NSF Certification, the world's gold standard in independent testing, and was one of the first in sports nutrition to make the switch to naturally-derived ingredients.

Export Award

Friesens Corporation

From humble beginnings in 1907, Friesens Corporation has blossomed into a premier short-run book manufacturer and packaging specialist, producing high-quality solutions for top publishers, schools, and consumer brands throughout North America. Their products include art and coffee-table books, yearbooks, self-publishing services, rigid carton packaging, and highly decorative thermoformed packaging.

Friesens is 100 per cent employee-owned and -operated. Based in Altona, Manitoba, the company employs nearly 600 people, which translates to roughly 14 per cent of the entire community.

Friesens has grown largely through steady export sales and strategic foresight. During the 2008 economic downturn, the company maintained a full salesforce in the United States, while many others cut back. Despite challenges, when the book publishing market finally began to rebound in 2014, Friesens was well-positioned for profitable growth. Today, the company exports 50 per cent of its products to the United States. *✍*



"Manitoba Manufacturing Week and Dare to Compete are about more than celebrating our industry or recognizing achievement," says CME Vice President Ron Koslowsky. "They're about rekindling the drive to continuously improve — to embrace best practices, to respond to change, and to share ideas for the future. That only works through the involvement of manufacturers and the commitment of generous sponsors; so, thank you to all those who made this year's events an overwhelming success." Koslowsky also reminds us it's never too early to start planning for next year. The 2018 Manitoba Manufacturing Week begins March 19; registration opens this October. Visit daretocompete.ca for more information.

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What I've learned from women leaders

Alberta industry champion and commentator, Jeff Baker, talks focus, commitment, and the power of working with both your head and your heart

By Jeff Baker

When I began my career nearly 15 years ago, I was green to any sort of 'real' industry, having not been exposed to much in the way of manufacturing and processing in my formative days.

Since then, however, I've had the privilege of meeting and getting to know many of the major industrial players across Alberta, Canada, and beyond, spanning such sectors as energy, forestry, environmental and professional services, and — of course — manufacturing.

Manufacturing in particular

held a certain fascination for me. Despite having the odd peek behind the proverbial curtain, there was always a 'black box' mystique around what happens as raw materials are transformed into finished products.

I admit that I grew up with a stereotypical view of manufacturing. I knew it as the exclusive domain of men — rough and tumble, dirty and dangerous. That's just how it was portrayed in popular culture.

As we all know, though, that is not necessarily the case — and has not been for quite some time.

It takes a village

I was brought up in a family with parents who were individually and collaboratively strong, in a community and context where traditional gender roles or expectations weren't strictly observed. I grew up believing that a strong work ethic and commitment are key to current and future success, regardless of who you might be or from where you come.

Throughout my career, I've worked with leaders — male and female — who have epitomized the definition of a *leader*, and who have lived the qualities so fully that it is clear they were coming from a place of authenticity and passion.

Gender was never a limiting factor or a qualifier on a person's skills and experience. Everyone we meet offers something unique to the world, in a way that can change others for the positive. Men and women both offer valuable lessons, but I'm focusing this column on the things I've learned from the female leaders in my career.

Learn from the best

From my early days with the provincial government in Alberta to my latest adventure in an executive role with GO Productivity, one of Canada's leading providers of operational excellence and continuous improvement services (with hundreds of manufacturing clients, coast-to-coast), I've experienced leaders of all ages, from various backgrounds, with all sorts of professional and volunteer experience. From each of them, I've taken with me something that sticks to this day.

I've spent my working life surrounded by strong women who have pushed the

boundaries and limitations imposed on them by societal stereotypes. Seeing these individuals change their world in their own unique ways has, in turn, inspired me.

I'm a perpetual learner. I have a thirst for knowledge and experiences that can help me grow as an individual and push my own boundaries of what I thought possible.

That's why it has been an honour and privilege to know these women, to work with them, and to learn from them — so I can become a better professional and team member wherever my work takes me.

Head and heart together

Intelligence isn't a simple thing to understand or appreciate. It is an intricate concept that millions of experts around the world have dedicated reams of paper to exploring, contemplating, and offering so-called 'solutions' for.

It is more than being 'subject smart' or having mass amounts of detail crammed into one's grey matter. And it is more than just being in-touch with one's emotions or having them in-check for any given situation.

Women leaders, like Chris Buerger of Edmonton-based LHAS Corp., have taught me the key to success is ensuring the head and heart are working together in concert — doing so in the right way at the right time to get the best results possible.

Being ruled only by one's head or heart can lead to decisions that appear correct at first blush, yet the effects and end results will be far from optimal. Rushing to a conclusion can lead you to miss an important alternative or perspective that may enhance the outcome.

Over the various positions I've held, I've come to understand it often helps to seek out additional heart and head 'capacity' from trusted colleagues and

advisors. There have been many times when I couldn't quite see around the corner of a problem or couldn't get to that elusive best solution. But, by bringing in another perspective — and a different kind of head and heart — the solution would reveal itself.

Knowing how you make your decisions, and recognizing the balance between your head and your heart, is key. Learning what balance is needed for a specific situation is something that takes time and practice, and can feel very uncomfortable at the onset.

It's about the people

All the leaders who have significantly impacted my life have held a common credo: *It's not about me personally; it's about my people and my customers, and how I can serve them through my leadership.*

Ensuring the 'people factor' is central to all decisions made in the business is critical. After all, it's the people who are the foundation of the culture, the operations, the technology, and the relationships within and beyond your company. Your team needs to be served by the company's leadership and equipped and empowered to deliver the desired results — not an afterthought of technically correct decisions.

It is not about keeping everyone happy all the time; rather, it is having the voice at the table to speak to the people that are affected by the decisions. This includes your team, your suppliers, and your customers.

One leader I worked for and I admire greatly, GO Productivity CEO Lori Schmidt, made a point of bringing together her employees with the customers and suppliers involved in a current product line, and who would be directly impacted by decisions resulting from a new business focus. The transparency of the process, combined with the inclusion of the people, pushed the boundaries of what was

possible and led to an adjustment in the products and services that delivered higher value for both clients and the company.

Situations like that were eye-opening to me — an analytical-brained individual, who could sometimes gloss over the people factor in decisions and processes. It helped push me to better thinking and to better leverage the skills and talents of my colleagues.

Focus and commit

It is one thing to have an idea about where you are going with your career or your business; it is another thing entirely to have a laser focus on the direction, the timing, and the desired outcomes of your work.

I learned from the women leaders in my life, including Laureen Regan, founder of Calgary-based Regan Productions and president of Boom Group, that a key to success is a sharp, multi-level focus on the things that matter to your businesses. These leaders know where they're heading; they know what success is going to look like; and they commit fully to the work and people needed to get there.

Lack of focus in one's business can manifest as trying to be 'all things to all people,' or trying a bunch of new things without following through to conclusion. Having focus means, despite the current path being muddy and bumpy, you'll be able to navigate towards your destination. It's like when you're skidding in your car: Steer into the skid and commit to regain control.

The women leaders with whom I've worked have attributed their greatest business achievements to applying the focus and commitment after deciding with both their heads and hearts on the path forward. Often stated is that, "It became easier once I focused and put my all into the work to lead in that direction."

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"The women leaders with whom I've worked have attributed their greatest business achievements to applying the focus and commitment after deciding with both their heads and hearts on the path forward."

Change the narrative

We all have that little voice in our heads — the inner monologue that is amplified when we are heading into the new and unknown. Often, it is not giving a narrative of encouragement and positivity. Instead, it's a voice of doom.

The women leaders in my career have told me that it is important to acknowledge the little voice, but it is equally crucial to understand the voice is yours, can be changed, and is not in charge. They have told me it continues to take work to quiet the negativity and amplify the positivity, no matter how many times you've done it.

The voice will often come from the part inside you that is not getting appropriate attention in the decision-making process — the head or the heart — and the volume is proportionate to how much you're ignoring it.

Because the voice comes from within, you can control it. You can silence it or get it on-board to be the

internal champion it should be.

Some folks have told me it's not about ignoring the little voice, and just diving in the deep end at every turn. Far from it. It is more a case of aligning your internal narrative with the decisions you've made or are making, and in-line with the focus and commitment you're giving to the endeavour at-hand.

As one leader told me, "If you can't be your own biggest fan, you can't expect anyone else to be."

What is it all about?

The women in leadership who have impacted my career are still the voices that resonate most loudly in my head as I continue along my own path.

I've taken these lessons from the women leaders in my life and made them foundational to my journey as a leader. I make sure my team members understand these ideas and commit to applying them.

There are many people who will never encounter a formal female leader in

their lives beyond their own mothers or wives, and still there are others who have difficulty accepting women in leadership roles. It's unfortunate this can still be the case.

The pace of change in business has never been faster, and the up-and-down cycles have never been so dramatic. To impose or maintain limits or barriers grounded solely in gender is asinine and counterproductive.

Take these lessons from the women leaders I've known, and make them work for you and your business. Then, pay it forward by sharing with your own people the lessons from the leaders who have positively impacted your career.

In the end, it's all about manufacturing our own future success. [£]

Jeff Baker is a former managing director with GO Productivity, based in Edmonton, which specializes in lean, Six Sigma, value stream mapping, as well as plant layout advisory and training services for both manufacturing and non-manufacturing clientele.

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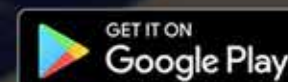
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The business case for inclusiveness

By Jennifer Findlay

American essayist Ralph Waldo Emerson once said, “Doing well is the result of doing good. That is what capitalism is all about.”

For Greg Cruson, general manager of Dutch Industries near Regina, the nexus of that equation can be found in the company’s policy toward inclusiveness.

The agricultural equipment manufacturer has hired several workers with intellectual disabilities over the years — not only to the benefit of the employee, but also to corporate morale and the overall bottom line.

“My grandfather was an immigrant from Holland, so coming from another country, he had a *disability* in the sense that he had to learn a new language and understand a new culture,” explains

Cruson. “I can resonate with that experience. It’s always something we’ve felt important in our business.”

Recently, Dutch Industries brought on a disabled employee to pack bolts to include in global shipments. The result has been a dramatic decline in error rates — to virtual elimination — as well as improved customer satisfaction levels.

“Accuracy is very important in his position,” notes Cruson, “and he has a heightened sense of making sure things are correct. Attention to detail is a valued skill in any worker, so having an employee with a laser-like focus has benefits beyond measure.”

But to be successful, he adds, companies must implement a well-

designed system to communicate to employees exactly what their goals and objectives are in a manner they can absorb. For example, if a worker has difficulty with reading comprehension, photos and videos can be a much more useful conduit to establish a common understanding.

According to the Conference Board of Canada, only one in five disabled workers require any special type of accommodation whatsoever. Of those, 65 per cent result in a direct cost of less than \$500.

In the case of this particular employee, the only necessary accommodation was to ensure co-workers were aware of how his disability manifests and what to do about it.




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“If you recognize everyone has something to contribute, that makes it much more clear what you can do. We expect no less of him than any other employee. They become part of the team, and we create value for customers. It’s not a handout — it’s real employment.”

“If you recognize everyone has something to contribute, that makes it much more clear what you can do,” says Cruson. “We expect no less of him than any other employee. They become part of the team, and we create value for customers. It’s not a handout — it’s real employment.”

Few leaders appreciate this sentiment more than Audra Penner, the president and chief executive officer of Winnipeg-based ImagineAbility Inc.

The organization runs a day program for adults living with disabilities, assisting more than 200 individuals to find and retain employment in a variety

of contract manufacturing, assembly, and packaging environments, including with such clients as Boeing Canada and Kitchen Craft.

“Manufacturing is an ideal sector for the inclusion of persons with disabilities,” says Penner. “We focus a lot on continuous improvement and lean principles — especially visual management. It really helps with our processes and enables people to do more.”

Just like any other new hire, Penner is adamant it’s all about finding the right match.

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J. Randolph (Randy) Lewis was the former head of supply chain and logistics at Walgreens in the United States for 17 years until his retirement in 2013. Over his last decade there, he created a program in its distribution centers to integrate large numbers of people with disabilities as equals into its workforce. He is the author of the book *No Greatness Without Goodness*, and the founder of NOGWOG Disability Initiative — a low-cost and sustainable disability hiring model for employers.

Lewis will be the keynote speaker at the employABILITY EXPO on October 12, 2017, at the Norwood Hotel in Winnipeg. For more information, visit www.employabilitymb.com.



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With roughly four million disabled Canadians of working-age, success requires patience and an investment in time to find the right people — and resources. Job coaches for disabled workers are a popular tool for more seamless integration and forging better communication channels with supervisors.

“Once a person with a disability is employed with a company, that person tends to stay,” says Penner. They’re very loyal, and they want to stay with you.”

Data published by Ready, Willing & Able — a national partnership between the Canadian Association for Community Living, the Canadian Autism Spectrum Disorders Alliance, and their member entities — shows the average annual turnover rate for workers across all industries hovers just under 50 per cent. The turnover rate for employees with intellectual disabilities, meanwhile, is a meager seven per cent.

That translates into good social practice and good business.

As for Cruson, who was recognized with the 2016 Saskatchewan Association of Rehabilitation Centres *Employer of Excellence* award, his best advice: Start slow, but don’t hesitate to jump in with both feet.

“We identified early on six or seven locations in our plant where a person with a disability could work,” he explains. “It’s been a really good thing for our business, from both a financial perspective and a human one.”

“It’s worked out well because it advances the skills of all involved. It might be someone’s first job, yet it’s much more than that. It really is a catalyst for change.”

5 QUESTIONS

about manufacturing and Indigenous Peoples

With Roberta Soo-Oyewaste, manager of the Pasqua First Nation Group of Companies

A little over a year ago, Pasqua First Nation acquired Pro Metal Industries in Regina — the band’s first investment in manufacturing. Why manufacturing and why now?

For starters, Saskatchewan has led Canada in manufacturing growth over the past decade, outpacing the national average more than 13 times over. Wages have kept pace as well, creating sustainable, quality employment opportunities for our people. And finally, it helps to deepen our relationship with the commodities sector — specifically, oil and gas producers and potash mines. This diversification, toward strategic areas of our economy, better positions us to leverage some of the major, new capital projects in the region, from the K+S potash mine in Bethune to the Enbridge Line Three replacement, which will run through Treaty Four Territory (which Pasqua First Nation is a part of).

What is the approach you have taken to strengthen those relationships in the resource sector?

Resource developers recognize the need to engage Indigenous Peoples. It is not the sole responsibility of those companies, however, to do so on their own. First Nations have an equal role to play in coming to the table. Through the leadership of Chief and council, we made the decision early on that we wanted to be a supplier of high-value solutions — not just of temporary labour or low-value services. That is why the band and Pro Metal have invested heavily in the clean technology space, exploring partnerships and manufacturing opportunities to provide developers with Indigenous-made solutions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and meet their ecological obligations. Some of the technology we are pursuing we believe will be game-changing. As the traditional keepers of the land, water, and air, it makes a lot of sense for Indigenous Peoples to take a leadership role in solving those big-picture problems.

How do you transition brand new Indigenous employees into that kind of a complex environment?

The short answer is that Pro Metal has had to vary its revenue mix to expand the types of positions available. For example, in a minimal amount of time, we have become the first — at least we think — 100 per cent Indigenous-owned military supplier in Canada. Perhaps more importantly, we’ve also brought on production of an agricultural implement line. Most fabrication jobs, such as welders and machinists, require an advanced set

of skills. But, by introducing an assembly-style workflow, we’ve been able to bring on otherwise untrained workers and provide them the training once they are in the business and demonstrate what they have an interest in. Over the course of roughly 16 months, we’ve doubled the size of the company and have gone from zero Indigenous employees to roughly 50 per cent.

What advice do you have for other manufacturers looking to increase their Indigenous workforces?

Indigenous or non-Indigenous, everyone is a unique individual. So, why would you treat everyone the exact same? Take the time to get to know your employees, who they are, where they come from, and what they’re passionate about. It can be a daunting experience for an Indigenous person to enter a workforce where there are no other Indigenous peers. Just imagine for a second yourself in his or her shoes if the roles were reversed. That’s why you tend to find some organizations with a strong Indigenous presence and many with none. Therefore, onboarding multiple employees, or at least in close succession, can be an effective strategy. The best approach, though, is to be open, proactive, and sincere in your conversations. Take a genuine interest. Break down artificial barriers. Understand and embrace different cultures. There will undoubtedly be discussions — like how to manage Treaty Day, which is generally a holiday for Indigenous Peoples — that will impact your entire team. It’s best for everyone to have a shared understanding and a common language.

What do you think the future holds for Indigenous Peoples and the manufacturing industry?

It would be fair to say there is a close correlation between improved employment outcomes for Indigenous Peoples and the number of Indigenous-owned businesses. To that extent, I think there is immense opportunity for First Nations investment in the manufacturing sector. And it is something we are already starting to see on the Prairies. As with any investment in any business, however, it is essential to do your due diligence, ask the right questions, and ensure you have the right people on the bus. We have been fortunate to benefit from the help of an excellent team that has expert knowledge in acquiring, reconfiguring, and growing globally competitive manufacturing enterprises. There’s no doubt that has been a big part of our success, and we’re hoping it can serve as a model for others to follow.

Protect yourself this summer from skin cancer

You’ve worked hard all year — you deserve that vacation. But remember: Safety cannot stop you when you leave the office or shop floor.

By Dr. Marni Wiseman

What are the different types of skin cancer?

There are three primary types of skin cancer: Melanoma is the most serious; basal cell carcinoma is the most common; and the third is squamous cell carcinoma.

Why is early detection so important?

Early detection is vital, because it may lead to better patient outcomes. Patients who are diagnosed earlier may have smaller scars, better cosmetic results, and in some cases, particularly with melanoma, an improved rate of survival.

What are the different treatments?

A person’s treatment depends upon the type and location of their cancer. Surgery is the most common treatment for skin cancer; however, some skin cancers may also be treated with radiation, different types of anti-cancer creams, or occasionally chemotherapy.

What can be done to protect you and your loved ones?

Prevention is so important. The sun is a major cause of skin cancer, so be sure to take precautions this summer:

- *Seek the shade.* Stay in the shade or under an umbrella, if possible.
- *Cover up.* Wear a hat with a wide brim, as well as clothing to protect the skin from the sun.
- *Wear sunblock.* A broad-spectrum sunscreen with a minimum SPF of 30 is recommended.

- *Avoid the most dangerous rays.* On sunny days, try to participate in outdoor activities either before 10 a.m. or after 4 p.m. It is during mid-day that the sun is at its strongest.
- *Be aware of your skin.* If you are worried about a spot, bring it to the attention of your doctor or healthcare provider as soon as possible.

The Canadian Dermatology Association has an excellent website at dermatology.ca. Additionally, the SKINWISE DERMATOLOGY website contains helpful information, which can be found at skinwise.ca.

Who is at risk for contracting skin cancer?

Although skin cancer can occur in anybody, it is more common in people who have fair skin, freckles, light hair, blue eyes, or people who have had significant sun exposure. It is never too late to protect yourself from the sun, even if you have had a significant amount of exposure in the past.

There is never any reason for people to intentionally tan, in tanning beds, or outdoors. These harmful rays lead to sun damage and may give rise to skin cancer and advanced aging.

Dr. Marni Wiseman is the owner and medical director of SKINWISE DERMATOLOGY. She also serves as an associate professor at the University of Manitoba and as director of cutaneous oncology at CancerCare Manitoba.

“Turns out we’d been under-forecasting.”

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