

Prairie Manufacturer

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Magazine



Embracing Human Rights in Business

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Clients, Colleagues, and Community

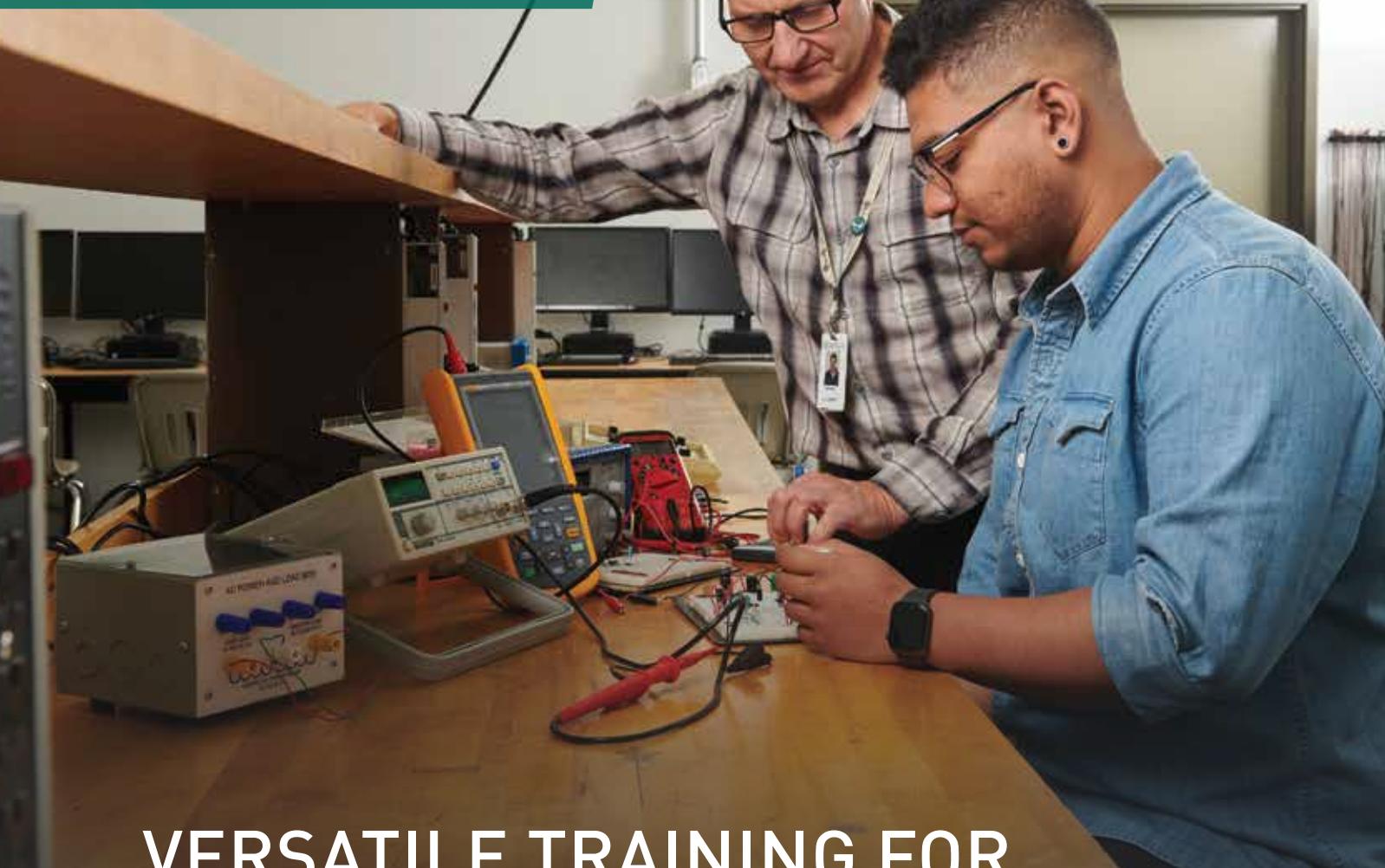


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Consul Rebecca Molinoff at the US Consulate in Winnipeg shares her insights to the uniquely close relationship between the United States and Canada and talks about how the Consulate works to support and enhance the trading relationship that benefits manufacturers on both sides of the border.





It's not actually the end of anything

Amazing things are happening, and there's more yet to come

By Jeff Baker

It's that time of year again. The nighttime is significantly longer than the daytime; the trees have dropped their leaves, and we have to shovel the precipitation that falls from the sky.

It's also that time of year when many folks and businesses go all out with the seasonal decorations, and despite the gloominess of a sunset at 4:00pm, the world seems a heck of a lot brighter thanks to the countless strings of holiday lights and festive colours adorning just about every lamppost and window in town.

It's like we make a concerted effort to let our spirits shine brighter in the times of year when the sun seems to make only 'guest appearances,' and we put in the time and energy to show others our good nature and generosity. It's almost

as if some big, bearded guy in red were watching us from over the horizon.

Prairie manufacturers are an amazing bunch of folks, and our team here at *Prairie Manufacturer Magazine* has the privilege and honour of sharing the stories from the industry with their peers, supporters, and other community members.

After years of covering the stories from and about the industry, and getting to know the people behind the headlines, we can say for certain that manufacturers don't wait for the holidays to show their spirit of generosity and community-mindedness. All the reason this industry needs is a day that ends in 'y'!

Between the covers

In this issue of *Prairie Manufacturer*, you'll meet some amazing folks doing

some incredible work in and connected to the region's manufacturing sector. I think you will agree that this issue is chock-a-block with something for everyone. The team here is super excited to be able to share such high-calibre content and contributors with you!

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights shares why human rights is a concern for everyone everywhere—it's not an issue 'over there'—and needs to be top of mind for Prairie manufacturers, their employees, and their customers. Learn how your organization can work with the Winnipeg-based national museum to understand and become a champion for human rights.

Under international human rights law and Article 25 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, every

person has the right to housing. Habitat for Humanity, a global non-profit housing organization with presence in more than 70 countries around the world, is working across the Prairies to turn the vision of a world where everyone has a decent place to live into reality. They're not alone in this endeavour, however; Prairie manufacturers are stepping up and providing materials, labour, and other support to help address the housing crisis that's affecting so many.

Consul Rebecca Molinoff of United States' Consulate in Winnipeg offers insights to the relationship between Canada and the US and how interconnected our countries' manufacturing industries really are.

Lori Schmidt, President of Loral Management Group, offers a personal take

on the power of knowing when (and how) to say goodbye to a job, a client, or even a project, even if it's something or someone you've been with right from the start. It's something that just about everybody has experienced but it's a skill only a few of us have mastered and embraced.

And Jayson Myers is back with the Economic Roundup to explain what might be at stake as the next American president storms takes office in January.

What's it really all about?

Throughout this issue, you'll find a common thread winding its way through every article and column: Prairie manufacturers are making more than just the products they sell and send around the world; they're building community right here at home.

As another year comes to an end and a new year arrives to take its place, remember that it's not actually an end to anything—it's a brand-new start for everything amazing yet to come!

On behalf of the entire *Prairie Manufacturer* team, I wish you and yours the best of the holiday season and a safe and productive 2025!

Until we chat again, I hope you enjoy the read. 

After years of covering the stories from and about the industry, and getting to know the people behind the headlines, we can say for certain that manufacturers don't wait for the holidays to show their spirit of generosity and community-mindedness.



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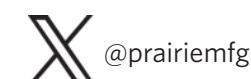
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Cover photo courtesy of The Canadian Museum for Human Rights.

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Is Your Workplace Toxic? Building a Civil Workplace Culture

By Dr. Lewena Bayer

Workplace culture plays a pivotal role in organizational success, especially in the manufacturing sector, where collaboration, efficiency, and safety depend heavily on the attitudes and interactions of employees and leaders. To ensure a thriving work environment, leadership must assess and address factors contributing to workplace civility.

An effective workplace culture audit can be initiated by addressing three critical questions. These questions, when carefully examined, reveal the underlying dynamics that may contribute to or detract from workplace harmony, productivity, and morale.

Let's explore these questions to learn what they mean for the manufacturing sector and what actions organizations can take to address them.

Does leadership understand the difference between "respect" and "trust"?

Respect and trust are often conflated but have distinct implications for workplace dynamics. Respect is about valuing individuals for their intrinsic worth, while trust is earned over time through consistent actions. A lack of understanding between the two can lead to misaligned leadership approaches and employee dissatisfaction.

In manufacturing environments, where teamwork and precision are critical, the distinction becomes even more significant. A respectful workplace fosters collaboration and minimizes conflicts, while trust ensures reliable performance and open communication.

According to a study by the Society for Human Resource Management

(SHRM), 61 per cent of employees cited a lack of respect as a primary reason for leaving a job. For companies where skilled labour shortages are common, they cannot afford high turnover due to perceived disrespect. Retaining your current employees is always going to be preferable (and much less costly) than recruiting new ones.

In terms of productivity, *The Journal of Organizational Behavior* found that teams working in environments characterized by respect reported 26 per cent higher productivity levels compared to those where respect was lacking. Similarly, trust between team members and leaders is essential for compliance with safety protocols. Research from the National Safety Council shows that workplaces with high trust levels experience 32 per cent fewer safety incidents.

How to offset low trust or respect

Addressing diminished trust or respect takes a three-pronged approach, including training, feedback, and recognition.

Your company can implement training programs that educate leaders on fostering respect and building trust. Role-playing exercises and scenario-based training can highlight these distinctions in real-life contexts.

Create anonymous channels for your employees to provide feedback on respect and trust levels within their teams and across the organization. This could be as simple as a voicemail line or a 'suggestion' box, or you could engage the services of an external human resources contractor to keep the feedback fully separated from internal administration.

Without a clear definition of civility, employees and leaders may operate based on subjective interpretations, leading to inconsistent behaviour and conflict.

chains, benefits from clear civility guidelines. A study by Gallup found that workplaces with explicit behavioural standards experienced a 27 per cent reduction in interpersonal conflicts.

Without a clear definition of civility, employees and leaders may operate based on subjective interpretations, leading to inconsistent behaviour and conflict.

What can leaders do to embed civility in their organizations?

It's important for leadership teams to include civility-related expectations in employee handbooks, job descriptions, and onboarding materials to ensure the concept of civility permeates all levels of the business. For example, outline behaviours such as active listening, constructive feedback, and respectful language and clearly communicate the organization's expectations for employees to actively engage in civility in their day-to-day.

Beyond capturing the expectations and desired behaviours in the corporate policies and documents, the leadership team must consistently show civil behaviour through their everyday actions and their words, setting real-life examples for their teams of what the company is looking for. This is critical as the last thing you want is a situation where 'do as we say, not as we do' becomes an organizational norm.

Once you've got everyone—from the senior executives to the new hires—on board and 'walking the talk' of civility, you'll want to implement another tool familiar to the manufacturing sector: a regular audit or review of your performance. Regular and consistent reviews of your team's workplace interactions will help you ensure alignment with civility standards and give you the opportunity to address any gaps with targeted training sessions.

How many nonverbal "flinches" are observed in daily interactions?

Nonverbal cues, such as flinches, sighs, or averted eye contact, often indicate discomfort, mistrust, or dissatisfaction within teams. These micro-expressions may seem insignificant but can reveal deeper issues in workplace relationships, and such

cues may signal poor communication, unresolved conflicts, or leadership issues that, if unaddressed, could escalate into larger problems.

Nonverbal behaviours are particularly critical in environments where teamwork and co-ordination are essential, such as assembly lines or quality control processes.

We often put a lot of weight on verbal communication and ignore the nonverbal aspects, often to the detriment of our interpersonal relationships at work and away. The proverbial 'body language' has a tremendous impact. In fact, a study

on nonverbal communication from the University of California, Los Angeles, reported that up to 93 per cent of communication effectiveness is determined by nonverbal cues.

If the nonverbal 'flinches' might be signs of stress, it is critical to address the root causes of the stress and not just treat the symptoms. While every workplace or job has some level of stress, it can become a costly and difficult challenge to address if left unchecked. According to research by the American Psychological Association, workplace stress costs American businesses over US\$300 billion annually, driven by absenteeism and healthcare costs.

Also contributing to companies' absenteeism and healthcare costs is their safety performance, as outlined in its Report on Trust and Workplace Safety, the National Safety Council noted that manufacturing organizations with high trust report 32 per cent fewer safety incidents.

What can leaders do to reduce social 'flinches'?

Companies can train managers to recognize and interpret nonverbal cues during daily interactions and undertake immediate interventions to address observed discomfort promptly by

checking in with employees and resolving potential conflicts.

It's also important to implement initiatives to reduce workplace stress, such as mental health support and team-building activities. Companies can work with their benefit providers to incorporate an Employee Assistance Program for their employees and negotiate mental health coverage into their benefit programs.

The benefits are real

Investing in a civil workplace culture directly impacts the bottom line through reduced turnover, enhanced productivity, improved safety compliance, and a workforce that enjoys improved morale and engagement and celebration of diversity and inclusion.

Manufacturers with strong workplace cultures are better positioned to attract top talent, secure contracts, and enhance their reputations. For instance, companies listed in *Fortune's Best Workplaces in Manufacturing & Production* consistently outperform peers in profitability and employee satisfaction.

Addressing the three critical questions—understanding the difference between respect and trust, defining and embedding civility, and observing nonverbal cues—provides a robust framework for transforming workplace culture. In an industry where efficiency and safety are paramount, the benefits of a civil workplace extend beyond employee well-being to encompass tangible business outcomes.

By committing to these principles, manufacturing leaders like you can create environments where employees thrive.⁴

Dr. Lewena Bayer is CEO of Civility Experts Inc., an international training group with 500+ affiliates in 43 countries. Recognized as a leading expert on civility at work, Lew is a 23-time published author, respected thought-leader, and social justice advocate.

Trade under Trump: Canada in the Crosshairs?

By Jayson Myers

The votes are in. Donald Trump has been elected the next President of Canada's next-door neighbour and largest trading partner, the United States of America.

There was a lot of rhetoric during the presidential campaign. Trump pledged to slap 10 per cent tariffs on all imports into the US – or was it 20 per cent? – even more on imports from China. Such dire steps are unlikely to happen quickly, if at all. The President would need congressional approval, and there are some very important US business interests that would be bound to object. However, Canada and Mexico are entering into an era when trade tensions with the US will be ramping up. The Canada-US-Mexico Trade Agreement is up for review and renegotiation in 2026. We can expect some pretty tough bargaining from the new Trump administration.

Should we be concerned? Last year, Canada exported C\$547.9 billion worth of goods to the United States. That represents 71 per cent of our total merchandise exports and just under 20 per cent of our Gross Domestic Product (GDP).

If the Trump administration imposes tariffs on all goods imported from Canada, we should be very concerned, but that's not very likely to happen. A

10 per cent tariff on all imports would likely push prices up in the US by about two per cent. That's not something that a new administration committed to taming inflation would likely want to do, but it's not out of the question. The United States depends a lot less on imports than Canada.

Some of Canada's export sectors may be more at risk than others. Energy and minerals account for 29 per cent of our exports to the United States. Unrefined oil and gas top the list of what we sell south of the border. Sales last year exceeded C\$143 billion, almost a quarter of our total exports to the US. They help to power American homes, cars, and industry and should be less exposed to the threat of tariffs. Import tariffs would likely do little to reduce US energy demand in any case – they'd just make it more expensive for American industry and consumers.

Manufactured and processed materials and components—intermediate products—are more exposed; they represent 28 per cent of the goods Canada sells south of the border. We know that aluminum, steel, aerospace, and auto parts will be under the gun. Final goods producers in the food and consumer products and equipment sectors account for the remainder of our exports to the US and are probably at highest risk.

Canada's top 10 exports accounted for half of what Canada earned from sales of goods to the US in 2023. Eight out of that top 10 list are manufactured goods – automotive equipment and parts (C\$53 billion), refined petroleum products (C\$23 billion), aluminum and aerospace products (C\$13 billion each), vegetable oils and pharmaceuticals (C\$10 billion each), steel (C\$9 billion), and softwood lumber (C\$8 billion).

No need to panic; there is a lot of room for negotiation with Washington. The integrated nature of our industrial supply chains means that it would be extremely damaging, difficult, and costly to break them apart. Canada may even emerge as a winner if the US focuses on penalizing goods originating in China or Chinese content in North American manufacturing. Nevertheless, it will take some very sharp negotiating skills on the part of our federal and provincial officials and business leaders to make the case that Canada is an integral partner when it comes to trade and industrial competitiveness. Luckily, the export profile of the Prairie provinces can help make the case.

Manitoba at higher risk

Manitoba exported C\$15.5 billion in goods to the United States last year. That's 71 per cent of the province's exports and 17 per cent of its GDP.

The province's top 10 exports to the US accounted for just less than a third of the total. However, except for electricity and oil and gas exports (C\$702 million and C\$610 million in 2023), the rest of the top 10 were

If the Trump administration imposes tariffs on all goods imported from Canada, we should be very concerned, but that's not very likely to happen.

finished goods like processed food products (C\$2.8 billion), pharmaceuticals (C\$2.4 billion), agricultural equipment (C\$868 million), trucks (C\$539 million), plastic products (C\$474 million), and aerospace equipment (C\$374 million).

Every province will need to get states on board to help them make their case, and Canada's, to administration officials in Washington. Manitoba's five most important trading partners are, in order of precedence, Tennessee, Minnesota, Illinois, North Dakota, and California.

Saskatchewan's exports are resource rich

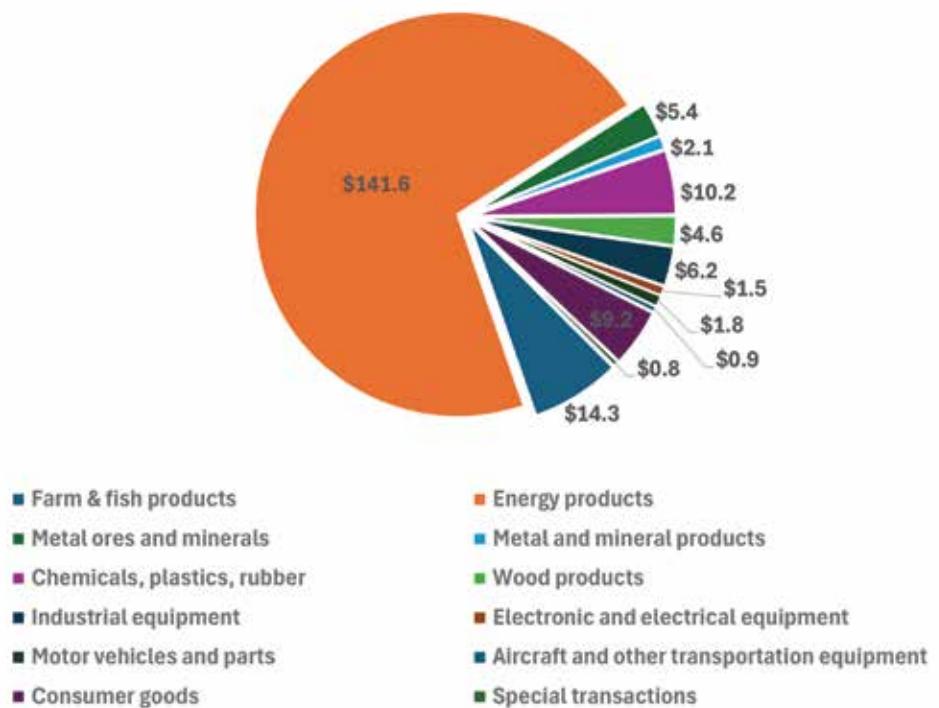
Saskatchewan exported C\$27.1 billion in goods to the United States in 2023, representing 54 per cent of the province's total exports and 25 per cent of its GDP.

Saskatchewan's top 10 exports account for almost 89 per cent of what it sells south of the border. Natural resources like oil and gas (C\$11.7 billion last year), mining ores (C\$5.0 billion), wheat (C\$537 million), and other grains (C\$380 million) make up roughly two-thirds of Saskatchewan's exports to the US. The rest of the top ten are manufactured or processed goods like vegetable oils (C\$4.2 billion), refined petroleum products (C\$692 million), agricultural equipment (C\$660 million), flour (C\$470 million), chemicals (C\$442 million), and steel (C\$388 million).

Prime targets for state support are Illinois, Minnesota, Montana, California, and Oklahoma.



Prairie Exports to the United States 2023
(Billions of Canadian Dollars)



Alberta's exports are powered by petroleum

Alberta is even more trade-exposed than the other two Prairie provinces. In 2023, it exported C\$156.1 billion worth of goods to the United States, representing 89 per cent of its total exports and 35 per cent of provincial GDP.

The predominance of Alberta's petroleum sector doesn't come as a surprise. Oil and gas topped Alberta's list of exports to the US last year at C\$121.2 billion, accounting for 78 per cent of all sales to the US and nearly 70 per cent of Alberta's total worldwide exports. Oil and gas-based products accounted for a further eight per cent of exports to the US, including refined petroleum products

(C\$6.0 billion in 2023), rubber (C\$3.8 billion), fertilizers (C\$1.5 billion), and petrochemicals (C\$1.4 billion).

Other top 10 exports from the province were animal carcasses (C\$3.4 billion), vegetable oils (C\$2.1 billion), lumber (C\$1.0 billion), beef cattle (C\$993 million), and wood products (C\$854 million). Alberta's top ten accounted for 91 per cent of all goods sold to the US.

Alberta's targets for state allies aren't too different than the other Prairie provinces. Illinois is by far the province's largest customer, followed by Texas, Washington, Oklahoma, and Minnesota.

Where do we go from here?

The importance of a proactive, focused, and commonly aligned trade strategy for Canada when dealing with a new Trump administration can't be

overstated, and the Prairie provinces will have a major role to play in making the case that Canada is America's most critical trading partner.

The stakes are high. The Prairies are more trade-exposed with the US than Canada as a whole.

All told, the Prairie provinces exported C\$198.6 billion worth of goods to the United States in 2023, accounting for 81 per cent of all international exports from the Prairies and for just over 30 per cent of the region's GDP.

However, 71 per cent of that total are energy products and a further three per cent are critical minerals – exports, in other words, that are rather important when it comes to keeping the US economy running. Those same products represent one-quarter of all the goods that Canada sells to the United States.

Canada's argument in Washington—and in all state capitals—must be that we are a reliable partner in trade, a critical part of our countries' integrated supply chains, and a backstop for US manufacturing. There can be no better case made to Americans than what they import from Canada's Prairie provinces. Let's hope they're listening.

Jayson Myers is CEO of Next Generation Manufacturing Canada – the country's Global Innovation Cluster for advanced manufacturing. An award-winning business economist and leading authority on technological change, Myers has counselled Canadian prime ministers and premiers, as well as senior corporate executives and policymakers around the world. ⁶

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Navigating Change: The Evolving Landscape of Safe and Respectful Workplaces

By Jeff Palamar and Jocelyn Shymko

Change is a constant, and the pace of change is constantly accelerating.

Change can range anywhere from inescapable and conspicuous to subtle and nuanced.

Culture changes far more quickly than the law. If and when the law changes, it typically follows cultural change.

Cultural change can lead to abrupt changes to the law. More frequently however its impact is shown over time, as new perspectives incrementally appear after the examination and application of the law through a new lens of the changing culture.

Workplace culture and how legally we are required to treat one another (and are entitled to be treated by others) have long been subject to ongoing change. In recent times these changes perhaps have been more nuanced, yet they remain every bit as profound in impact and so vital to understand and incorporate into the modern workplace.

Broadly stated, employers must provide a safe and respectful workplace and take all reasonable steps to deal with and address acts or omissions that fail to meet acceptable standards. On the other side of the coin, employees have to fulfill their part of the bargain and likewise do what reasonably can be done with the goal of a safe and respectful workplace in mind.

Employers don't have absolute control over what happens in the workplace but certainly are the dominant power, and with that that power comes primary responsibility over that workplace. Employers have to address what they actually are aware of and what they ought reasonably to be aware of. The buck stops with them and a certain reasonable degree of diligence and attention to detail is necessary.

Employers are required to know the current state of the law and apply it in their workplaces and must follow today's requirements, and when those change, they too must adapt and change. Simply because something was acceptable (or at least not expressly unacceptable yesterday) does not alone make it acceptable today.

At the root of some of this change is a desire (or even a need) for inclusivity, but with boundaries. There is an increasing emphasis on the right of self-expression, individuality, and acceptance. Each of us has the right to be whomever we are and believe what we do and have that respected in the sense of being accepted or at the least tolerated and not held against us.

This necessary respect for everyone else can be challenging however as ultimately we do interact, and where we are and

what we do may well impact those we work alongside. This does not mean escalating and irreconcilable conflict in the workplace but just increasing challenges to be navigated and refereed by employers.

This cultural shift has prompted a need to look at challenges arising from issues such as language and gender. Technology further complicates things as it ever increasingly integrates the workplace with our personal lives.

Everything is the same yet different. Harassment and discrimination continue to exist but include different acts or omissions than in the past. What was unacceptable back then still is unacceptable now, but due to cultural changes we have to redefine and expand what the word "unacceptable" includes.

We quite intentionally focus on that redefined and expanded meaning here, acknowledging the type of harassment and discrimination that historically has occurred, sadly continues.

Navigating the ignorant yet still inappropriate

Comments or compliments possibly offered in a well-intended manner are not always harmless and acceptable.

Many will remember the television sitcom "The Office," with its main character Michael Scott. Michael was a buffoon, and notorious for his comments on the physical appearance, race, sexuality, etc. of others. Michael generally was likeable rather than vilified because he was breathtakingly ignorant about that which was so remarkably obvious to most viewers.

Michael served as an entertaining example of an alternative type of harassment. He was not the classic "creep" but cringe worthy all the same.

In a real-life example of this, the founder of a company who was in his 70s made comments about a 20-something sales associate's appearance which made her feel uncomfortable and degraded. Among other things, he called her a "beautiful girl" and a "beautiful lady." He encouraged her to "smile more."

She objected, which led to an awkward meeting and the end of her employment. She then filed a human rights complaint in which the Tribunal noted none of the comments were inherently sexual, the founder had never made any sexual advances, nor was there any attempt to flirt or pursue a sexual relationship. His comments were described as "misguided, non-sexual, attempts to be friendly and warm." The comments were "among the subtle forces which continue to reinforce, perpetuate, and exacerbate the disadvantage faced by many women in their workplaces."

Women have long fought for the right to be evaluated on their merits. One persistent barrier to that goal is the conflation of a woman's worth with her appearance. Society continues to impose expectations on women to be pleasing to the people around them, particularly men. Their appearance and outward manner are important components of that. While telling a woman to smile may feel like harmless banter, it imposes a burden on her to please people in a way that is disconnected from the tasks of the job, and the skills she brings to it.

The Tribunal concluded:

Calling her "beautiful" or commenting on her appearance reinforces the message that her value is in how she is seen by others and not in the strength of her ideas, her skills, and her contributions to the work. And finally, calling a grown woman a "girl" in the context of her employment infantilizes and patronizes her. It signals that she is not an adult worthy of being taken seriously in their profession. Most often, these are not burdens or messages shared with men. The impact of this type of behaviour is to subtly reinforce gendered power hierarchies in a workplace and, in doing so, to deny women equal access to that space.

Gender identity

People may identify with a gender that does not conform to the traditional binary of male and female. It is that person's internal and individual experience of gender. It is their sense of being, somewhere along the gender spectrum.

Gender identity is distinct from gender expression. It's the way a person outwardly expresses gender through things such as clothes, behaviour, speech, and pronouns.

In an old Monty Python skit, a character shows his utter indifference to an unmistakably male shopkeeper by addressing him as "Miss." Today's real-life world expects more. As lawyers, when we attend court, we all proactively declare our pronouns so as to offer inclusivity to all and not make it a noticeable event if someone does self-declare.

In a recent case, some employees asked the owner of the bar at which they worked to refer to them using "they/them" pronouns. The owner refused, insisted on using "he" and "him," and claimed they were being "oversensitive." He openly called them "trannies" in conversation with customers. The employees were awarded compensation for injury to their dignity, feelings, and self-respect, as well as for lost wages.

A "dead name" is the name given at birth to a person but is no longer their chosen name.

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Denny was born a biological female but became a transgender male. He had used a male name for some 15 years but had not legally formalized any changes and so his driver's licence, banking, and tax information all still used his dead name.

Shortly after being hired as a truck driver, Denny advised the employer and work colleagues that although his dead name was still his legal name, he used the name Denny and masculine pronouns. He asked them to do so as well.

This had little effect as Denny was frequently dead-named and mis-gendered by co-workers and management. Their reason for this was their opinion that "to call anyone by a name other than their legal name...would be unprofessional and illegal." Denny successfully pursued a human rights complaint. There was no legal space for personal opinion when it came to respecting another's identity, but only room for respect of that individual's choice.

Digital dilemmas

Our phones and social media increasingly blend personal and work lives.

A male employee reported to a female supervisor, and they frequently and properly exchanged work related text messages. Then the male started to insert personal comments in the messages. He began calling his boss pet names like "dear" or "good looking," and sent her internet images he thought were funny.

One day the male was using his phone to show his boss pictures of his truck. He suddenly swiped over a picture displaying his genitals, with an "Oops, shouldn't have done that." He later offered (twice) to send her the pictures. The supervisor complained to management, who investigated, and fired the employee. Despite his 30-year discipline-free employment record, the dismissal was upheld at arbitration.

In another case, a laboratory technologist at a university frequently posted controversial content, including anti-Semitic views and racial stereotypes. While he did this on his own time, the employee had provided sufficient details on his Facebook account such that any reader would clearly know where he worked.

The Facebook posts sparked complaints about hate propaganda and racism and led to the university firing the employee.

The dismissal was grieved and then went to hearing where the case turned on whether the posts were connected to the workplace, and whether they caused undue disruption to the work environment.

Not surprisingly, the arbitrator held the posts violated the university's policies regarding safe and respectful workplaces. The posts caused conflict at work, negatively impacted the employee's coworkers, and made them uncomfortable and

unwilling to work with him. The posts were also linked directly to his employment and so harmed his employer's reputation. The dismissal was upheld.

A recent Ontario case dealt with the popular communications tool, WhatsApp, where five employees had exchanged messages including sexually inappropriate comments about female coworkers. Although the chats happened on their personal devices and during off-hours, they were discovered during an unrelated workplace investigation.

The employees were fired, and then filed grievances, arguing this was, in essence, a private conversation that should not affect their employment.

An arbitrator initially ruled in favour of the employees, but a court overturned that decision. The court emphasized how even private messages can negatively impact the workplace if they leak into it as if it had occurred there. That inappropriate content had created a hostile work environment, and the employer had a legal duty to address it.

The court noted how the person who had come forward specifically asked that nothing be done, and so there was no complainant challenging the misconduct. Regardless, once the employer had some knowledge of the matters, it had a legal obligation to investigate and act even in the absence of a complainant. The misconduct impacted not just the specific victims, but rather the workplace overall.

Moving forward, embracing change

As the world evolves, so too does the way we must define and understand what it is to be a safe and respectful workplace. This requires vigilance and attention to far more than the well-established and obvious.

Ensuring safety and respect requires more than just creating, publishing, and responding to complaints or a basic policy preventing a boss from abusing power and trying to obtain sexual favours from subordinates.

Safety and respect instead must be embraced as a core value which adapts to our changing culture relating to individuality, inclusivity, and boundaries.

Jeff Palamar is the leader of the Labour and Employment Law Practice Group at Taylor McCaffrey LLP in Winnipeg. Since 2008, Jeff has been listed in the peer-selected Best Lawyers in Canada in his field. He spends most of his time as an arbitrator and mediator, but also helps clients thrive by finding creative and proactive solutions to the challenges they face.

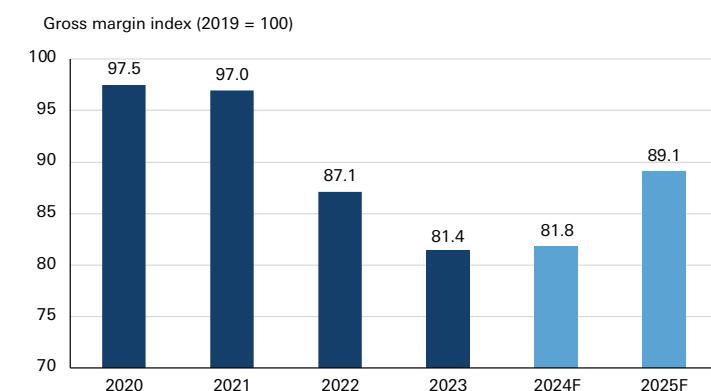
Jocelyn Shymko is an articling student with Taylor McCaffrey LLP.

Taylor McCaffrey LLP is the exclusive Manitoba member of the Employment Law Alliance, the world's largest network of labour and employment lawyers.



Food and beverage sector: 2024 mid-year update

Figure 2: Food and beverage manufacturing gross margin index showing improvements



A look back on our 2024 Food and Beverage Report on how food and beverage manufacturing has performed this year and trends to watch in 2025.

Sales to fall in 2024

We expect sales to fall in 2024, although not as much as estimated in the Food and Beverage Report earlier this year. We're now expecting a 0.7% drop in 2024 nominal sales, that is, the value of sales measured in dollars. Our original estimate was more pessimistic at -1.4%.

Table 1: Food manufacturing sales are up in the first half of 2024, with declines likely in the second half

	2024 H1		2024 H2f		2025 H1f	
	\$, BILL.	%, Y/Y	\$, BILL.	%, Y/Y	\$, BILL.	%, Y/Y
Food and beverage	82.1	0.7	84.1	-2.1	82.1	-0.2
Food	74.8	1.5	76.2	-2.2	74.6	-0.4
Bakery and tortilla products	9.0	6.7	9.2	-2.0	9.0	0.6
Dairy products	9.3	4.1	10.1	8.7	10.1	8.3
Fruit and vegetable preserving and specialty food	5.6	6.7	6.2	11.6	6.0	6.8
Grain and oilseed milling	9.4	-12.8	8.5	-19.4	8.3	-11.5
Meat products	21.2	4.6	21.7	-3.5	21.2	0.1
Seafood preparation	3.2	1.5	3.0	4.4	3.3	5.5
Sugar and confectionery products	3.1	16.7	3.6	16.9	3.2	1.6
Beverages	7.3	-6.6	7.8	-1.0	7.5	2.2
Soft drinks	2.9	3.2	3.1	14.8	3.1	7.7
Breweries	3.0	-14.3	3.1	-14.1	2.9	-2.8
Distilleries	0.8	-4.1	0.8	3.5	0.8	-0.3
Wineries	0.7	-10.8	0.8	-0.2	0.7	2.9

Source: Statistics Canada, FCC Economics

Where are margins heading?

Food and beverage manufacturing gross margins remain under pressure this year. Our gross margin index is still anticipated to improve, up 0.5% on average this year but slightly below our earlier predictions of 1.5% (due to high input costs like wages and benefits). Margins are expected to improve significantly in 2025 as costs continue to moderate despite lower sales.

Source: Statistics Canada, FCC Economics

Trends to watch

Consumers are tapped out

Over the next year, consumption will likely remain under pressure due to high debt servicing (restraining household budgets) and a weakened labour market, which is more than offsetting the benefits of declining interest rates and lower inflation.

Temporary Foreign Worker Program

Although job vacancies have dropped from the highs seen during the pandemic, filling jobs remains a challenge for food and beverage manufacturers, many of whom have had to leverage temporary foreign workers, who now account for nearly 15% of the sector's workforce.

Grocery Code of Conduct

All major grocery retailers signed the Grocery Code of Conduct (Code) in July, which is expected to be implemented by June 2025 to improve transparency, certainty and fair dealing across the grocery supply chain.

Bottom line

- Food and beverage sales are expected to decline slightly this year.
- Expect to see soft sales in the second half of 2024 into the first half of 2025.
- Food and beverage manufacturers must also deal with rising labour costs and pressured margins.

For additional forecasts and commentary, read our full mid-year review at fcc.ca/Economics

Amanda Norris, Senior Economist

PROMOTING OR HIRING NEW ? PEOPLE

Designed to build the skills and confidence of the manufacturing workforce using a Skills for Success framework, EMC's Manufacturing Essentials Certification (MEC) streams focus on problem solving, innovation, collaboration and communication. Each stream has been developed to support the manufacturing industry with increased productivity, improved workplace culture, higher employee engagement and stronger leadership.

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Encourage communication and collaboration

PRODUCTION WORKERS

Engage your employees in the problem solving process

EMC's MEC training streams are the most thorough skills development initiatives for Canadian manufacturing employees. Participants are provided an unmatched level of manufacturing knowledge, experience and expertise. Class sizes are limited, so don't delay - enroll your team today!

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TRANSFORMATIVE TRAINING

Embracing Human Rights in Business

In a world that can feel both more connected and more divided than ever, fostering a sense of belonging within organizations is an urgent priority for many businesses throughout the prairies. As an employer, you may often find yourself contemplating how to create an environment where your employees and your customers all feel that they truly belong. One powerful avenue is through professional development focused on human rights.

"By emphasizing dignity and human rights for all, we provide individuals and organizations the confidence to engage in difficult conversations and create inclusive spaces." - Lise Pinkos, CMHR

The Canadian Museum for Human Rights (CMHR), located in Winnipeg, offers both practical training and deep insights to help organizations navigate today's complex social climate. The CMHR uses a unique storytelling approach and offers a full complement of professional development programs that can be customized to give you a competitive and compassionate edge. Whether it's trying to reduce polarization around the watercooler or making sure that important decisions are being made with many perspectives and voices around the table, the CMHR's education programs can help your team take steps that positively impact business.

"By fostering connections, understanding, and empathy, we inspire individuals to rise as upstanders, prepared to drive lasting change."



PHOTO COURTESY: CMHR

Understanding human rights and inclusion

At the heart of human rights is a simple yet profound truth: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights." This fundamental principle, drawn from the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, lays the groundwork to help your organization promote belonging and reduce disruption. But even if you're convinced your employees would benefit from human rights training, it can be hard to know where to start.

"I have spoken with many leaders in the private sector who know their success

relies on attracting and retaining the best and brightest, and making sure that every employee comes to work with a sense of pride and belonging," said Riva Harrison, VP of Education and Public Affairs. "The question then becomes how—and that's where the Canadian Museum for Human Rights offers the answer."

The business benefits of training

Investing in human rights training isn't just the right thing to do—it's also good for business as studies have shown consumers care about company culture and values. Organizations that foster

belonging are often seen as more socially responsible and ethically sound, attracting a broader base of customers and investors. Other benefits may include:

- *Enhanced Innovation and Problem-Solving:* Teams that understand different perspectives are better able to drive groundbreaking ideas and solutions. Training at the CMHR empowers employees to leverage this diversity, fostering collaboration and creativity in tackling complex challenges; thus, giving organizations a competitive advantage by harnessing the ingenuity of their team.
- *Increased Productivity and Performance:* An inclusive work environment is a significant driver of productivity and overall financial success. Equipping employees with the tools to foster an atmosphere of acceptance and belonging will increase efficiency and effectiveness.
- *Enhanced Talent Attraction and Retention:* Companies that prioritize foundational human rights learning appeal to a broader pool of job seekers. By partnering with the CMHR for professional development, organizations can create workplaces where employees feel valued, leading to lower turnover rates and reducing retraining costs.
- *Improved Customer Satisfaction:* A diverse workforce is better equipped to understand and meet the varied needs of a broader customer base, translating to heightened customer satisfaction and loyalty.
- *Reduced Workplace Conflict:* Effective training fosters understanding between employees, reducing conflict and misconduct in the workplace, and avoiding the loss of talented team members and the need to navigate complicated HR issues.

Strong, foundational learning

To navigate complex societal issues, it helps to create a better understanding of human rights. The CMHR's distinctive



PHOTO COURTESY: CMHR

approach to professional development, which deepens knowledge of human rights principles, provides teachings that are different and more broadly-based than typical diversity, equality, and inclusion training.

"In these polarized times, we know there are people who are feeling left behind, and this can be disruptive in a workplace," explains Lise Pinkos, Director of Education at the CMHR. "By emphasizing dignity and human rights for all, we provide individuals and organizations the confidence to engage in difficult conversations and create inclusive spaces."

A proven approach—engaging educational programs and workshops

At the core of the CMHR's work is a diverse range of educational offerings designed to meet the urgent needs of today's workplaces. Every week, organizations—ranging from corporations and educational institutions to non-profits—turn to the CMHR for human rights professional development. Currently, the museum works with

growing number of employees from over 1,000 organizations every year.

These educational programs vary in scope and intensity, catering to participants at any stage of their human rights learning journey. Whether it's a one-time 60-minute session to multi-day programming, the CMHR will work with organizations to meet their unique needs.

"Our programs are designed to meet people where they are on their educational journey," notes Pinkos. "No matter your starting point, we work together to promote a deeper understanding of human rights."

A growing need for human rights education

As global crises and social injustices increasingly affect workplace dynamics, the necessity for human rights education becomes clear. The CMHR is not only a resource but also a trusted partner in the quest to build inclusive organizations. Each program is tailored to adapt to individual and organizational journeys in human rights.

"We are experiencing increased demand from companies and

organizations who call us and ask if we can help bring this type of knowledge to their employees," Harrison notes. "With nearly a decade of collaboration with Canadian businesses to our advantage, we are well positioned to expand our offerings and delve deeper into helping companies and organizations thrive."

A vision for a just future where everyone thrives

The CMHR envisions a world in which everyone values human rights and takes responsibility for fostering respect and dignity.

"Our vision is ambitious but attainable," says Harrison. "We aim to create a society where everyone feels empowered to advocate for human rights, to share who they are authentically in the workplace and at home, and to make sure that respect and dignity for all are the bedrock of our communities."

As businesses navigate the challenges of today's world, investing in human rights professional development demonstrates a profound commitment to equity, respect, and dignity. By participating in CMHR's programs, organizations can effectively fulfill their responsibilities to employees, customers, and communities, while significantly enhancing their social responsibility and reputation. This transformative engagement aligns organizational culture with vital societal values, positioning businesses as leaders in social accountability and integrity.

"The CMHR is here to equip organizations with the tools they need to effect genuine change," emphasizes Pinkos. "By fostering connections, understanding, and empathy, we inspire individuals to rise as upstanders, prepared to drive lasting change. Partnering with us not only propels organizations forward but advances society toward a more just and equitable future for all."

Located on Treaty 1 territory in Winnipeg, Manitoba, the Canadian Museum for Human Rights is the first museum solely dedicated to the evolution, celebration, and future of human rights.

The Business Case for Human Rights

Benefits and opportunities for your company



Reduces risk

Robust human rights practices can reduce business risks. Human rights complaints or abuses can be damaging to your company, resulting in legal actions, regulatory measures, financial costs, negative media attention, loss of revenue, and more. Human rights abuses can also have serious consequences on people—from your employees to those living in local communities where you operate.



Increases trust and attracts customers

A good human rights record is simply good business. It can enrich your company's brand and reputation. It can help you build trust with employees, customers and other stakeholders. And it can help you earn new customers and deepen relationships with existing ones.



Opens access to capital

Many financial institutions and credit agencies are paying more attention to a company's human rights performance before financing or investing in them. In the absence of key human rights practices, your business may not qualify for credit funding and other financing opportunities.



Improves community relations

The world is seeing a new landscape of company-community relations. With the rise of social media, local communities that may be adversely impacted by a business are being more proactive to ensure companies respect human rights, engage communities in dialogue and support local development. Businesses that do so are rewarded with strong community relationships and continued business.

From Export Development Canada (edc.ca/en/guide/human-rights-101.html)



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Saskatchewan's Diverse Manufacturing Sector a Source of Pride for the Province

Everything from drones to ambulances being produced in the land of the living skies

When considering Saskatchewan's economic landscape, manufacturing isn't necessarily the first thing that comes to mind. Although the province is mostly known for its strong natural resource and agriculture sectors, manufacturing is playing an increasingly important role in economic development in Saskatchewan.

Strength in diversity

The diversity found within Saskatchewan's manufacturing landscape is what makes it so strong. Yes, the province produces agricultural equipment and everything from major mining machines to smaller equipment for the mining industry, thereby supporting its most prominent economic sectors... But did you know that Saskatchewan also produces high-tech drones and ambulances that are shipped across the world?

Draganfly Inc. is a Saskatoon-based company that has become a world leader in the commercial drone industry by creating enterprise drone solutions, contract engineering services, and custom software. Crestline, a company also based out of Saskatoon, manufactures high-quality ambulances. These two companies are proudly showcasing the diversity and strength of Saskatchewan's manufacturing sector.

Some other industries that are served by the province's sector include aerospace and defence, forestry, oil and gas, and construction.

When it comes to construction, the province is home to one of the most innovative companies in Canada currently operating in the industry, 3Twenty Modular. This design-build general contractor delivers projects using a modular building process, with a focus on providing turnkey building solutions to the commercial, education, institutional, and industrial markets in Western Canada. Just some examples of their work include the design and construction of numerous schools, health centres, a net zero house on Mistawasis First Nation, Muskoday First Nation's store and gas bar, SSR Mining's camp expansion and even NOV's mobile drill rig in Alaska. Talk about diverse.

Vital to rural economic development

More than half of Saskatchewan's population lives in small towns and cities scattered across the province. This means that manufacturers located outside of the two major urban centers of Saskatoon and Regina play a crucial role in spurring rural economic development in the province. These companies are vitally important to build strong and vibrant communities across Saskatchewan.

A great example of a company that is having a major impact in their community, is Bourgault Industries Ltd., located in the Town of St. Brieux, Saskatchewan. With approximately 500,000 square feet of manufacturing and

office area, and close to 1,000 employees, Bourgault is a world-class company that markets its agricultural equipment to all corners of the world.

Some other prominent rural-based Saskatchewan manufacturers include Honeybee Manufacturing in Frontier, Vaderstad Industries in Langbank, Schulte Industries in Englefeld, S3 Manufacturing in Swift Current, and Doepler Industries in Annaheim. The list could go on and on...

These companies and many more, are creating well-paying jobs and economic opportunities that are helping their local communities flourish.

An important factor to consider when looking at the long list of rural manufacturers in Saskatchewan is that a significant portion of them produce agricultural equipment. These companies were started by people with practical experience, and this hands-on knowledge helped to contribute to the serviceability and quality that defines Saskatchewan's agricultural equipment globally.

Economic reconciliation in action

Saskatchewan is home to a number of Indigenous-led manufacturing companies that are contributing to economic reconciliation in the province.

One such company is Pro Metal Industries Ltd., which is one of the premier metal fabrication, custom manufacturing, and assembly specialists in Western Canada. On top of that, it is 100-per-cent owned by Pasqua First Nation.

Another successful Indigenous owned Saskatchewan manufacturer in the province is STC Industrial Group. This company is wholly owned by the Saskatoon Tribal Council and its seven-member communities and is dedicated to creating quality careers for Indigenous people in and around Saskatoon.

Manufacturing prosperity

Saskatchewan's manufacturing sector contributed nearly \$5 billion to the province's 2023 real GDP of \$77.9 billion. In 2023 alone, Saskatchewan's international exports of manufactured goods reached a record \$11.6 billion. This accounts for 23.5 per cent of the province's total international merchandise exports for that year. What's more? Capital investment in Saskatchewan's manufacturing sector for 2023 was \$970.9 billion. This is an increase of over 27 per cent from 2022, the highest percentage increase among the provinces.

All of this shows how manufacturing continues to be an important sector for growth in Saskatchewan, contributing significantly to the economic prosperity of the province.

Saskatchewan is proud of its continued strength and diversity within the manufacturing sector. Curious to learn more? Visit InvestSK.ca.

Saskatchewan
Manufacturing
Sales Topped

\$24 Billion
in 2023



Manufacturing Success

Saskatchewan has the infrastructure and workforce to drive manufacturing growth:

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- One of the most productive workforces in Canada

Saskatchewan's Ministry of Trade and Export Development will work with you to help you grow your business or start a new venture in Saskatchewan.



Pressure's off

How compressed air system improvements can save industrial facilities energy & money

From powering pneumatic tools and cleaning parts to conveying materials through pipes and hoses, compressed air systems play an important role in manufacturing operations. The versatility of these systems has made them a popular technology in many industrial facilities, especially in applications where using electricity may present safety concerns. No matter how large or small the operation, compressed air is a practical tool that can result in notable manufacturing efficiencies.

However, in addition to the many benefits associated with compressed air systems, there is one potential disadvantage — they can be incredibly energy intensive. On average, 10% of most industrial energy costs are related to the electricity required to run compressed air systems, and any inefficiencies associated with the system can lead to energy and financial losses. The costs associated with inefficiencies can be difficult to manage, from increased monthly energy bills to higher operating and maintenance costs. Leaks are a particularly common culprit; they can represent 30% of compressed air loads when not managed properly.

The rationale for compressed air system improvements

To maximize the overall efficiency of a facility, it's important to diagnose and correct issues associated with its compressed air system. Whether it's properly sizing the system, identifying and eliminating leaks, maintaining and monitoring the system, or replacing it altogether, taking appropriate action now can lead to long-term savings and benefits. In fact, system optimization efforts can lower energy costs by an average of 30%, and in some cases, upwards of 85%. They can also correct issues such as low air pressure, moisture in air lines, poor reliability, and production outages.

The multitude of competing priorities in your manufacturing facility and challenges associated with system improvements may make the task feel complicated and labour-intensive. Luckily, Efficiency Manitoba can make the process straightforward and more affordable.

Efficiency Manitoba is here to help

Efficiency Manitoba, Manitoba's Crown corporation dedicated to energy efficiency, understands the complexities involved with compressed air technologies. That's why they're equipped to help industrial facilities make improvements to their systems, providing them with technical support to guide them through the process and even offering financial incentives. Whether it's time to look at replacing or upgrading your equipment or you'd like to assess the way your existing system is running, Efficiency Manitoba's variety of offers can facilitate the assessment and proper sizing of new equipment, as well as the maintenance of your systems for optimal use.

Efficiency Manitoba can conduct a free benchmark study on your system to identify energy-saving opportunities. This begins with a compressed air contractor gathering baseline data of your existing system. Efficiency Manitoba's technical experts analyze the data and prepare a benchmark study that can aid in properly sizing replacement equipment, identifying other areas for improvement, and estimating the energy savings associated with these upgrades.

Efficiency Manitoba can also quantify any financial incentives available to offset your capital investment through their Custom Energy Solutions Program, which provides performance-based incentives of \$0.15 per kilowatt-hour (kWh) and \$0.30 per cubic metre (m³) of energy saved. The greater the energy reduction,

the higher the incentive. Their network of experienced vendors and contractors will work with customers to implement these upgrades.

If a capital upgrade isn't in your budget, Efficiency Manitoba also supports energy waste reductions by addressing leaks in compressed air systems. Leak audits are an effective way to maintain and optimize your system; not only can they reduce wasted energy, but they can also minimize unnecessary wear on compressors and prevent operational downtime.

Being available to assist customers throughout the entire improvement process is important to Efficiency Manitoba. Their systems-level approach resulted in several successfully completed projects throughout the province, including two recent projects in Altona and Headingly.

Big savings at Buffalo Creek Mills

Buffalo Creek Mills, an oat ingredient producer of high-quality ingredients suitable for human consumption, pet food, and feed markets, works in partnership with local farmers as well as buyers and distributors from Manitoba and around the world. This Altona-based business is growing rapidly, leading to increased production needs.

"As we were preparing for an expansion, our production facility's existing compressed air system needed to be upgraded to increase its supply capacity," said Phil Carriere, Director of Operations at Buffalo Creek Mills. They reached out to Efficiency Manitoba to make this vision come to life.

With assistance from Efficiency Manitoba's offers, Buffalo Creek Mills was able to successfully upgrade their compressed air system. The project started with their contractor, Air Unlimited, performing a baseline logging of their existing compressed air system. The industrial systems engineer at Efficiency Manitoba analyzed the data and prepared a benchmark study. The facility then began exploring options to optimize their compressed air system, which ultimately led to installing a new higher-efficiency compressor, a heated blower desiccant dryer with dewpoint control, oversized filters, a central regulator, and two 660-gallon storage tanks.

"We've already seen a difference in our energy use with these upgrades," Carriere said. "Efficiency Manitoba estimated we'd save 356,000 kWh in electricity and \$23,200 on our energy bills

annually, which are huge savings for us." These savings meant Buffalo Creek Mills received an incentive of over \$41,000 from Efficiency Manitoba, resulting in a payback of under three years.

"The financial and technical support Efficiency Manitoba provides through their programs was instrumental in us identifying potential improvements and designing efficient solutions for the customer," said Juan Londono, Applications Engineer at Air Unlimited. "We knew that system control was a potential issue, and efficiency and reliability were top priorities with the new system at Buffalo Creek Mills."

"Efficiency Manitoba was a big help in modelling the overall system reliability and energy usage. Their modelling helped to confirm that our approach for setting up the system would ensure it runs at the highest efficiency for the customer."

New savings opportunities at Norspan

Norspan, an engineered wood products manufacturer and supplier located in Headingly, wanted to make improvements to their facility, and Efficiency Manitoba's Compressed Air Small System Initiative was an ideal fit. This program is tailored to businesses like Norspan that operate a smaller single compressor system. For projects less than or equal to 25 horsepower, this program removes the need to conduct baseline and verification logging by estimating system load using the compressor size and the industry type of the system. This simplifies the process for small systems while still maintaining a great deal of accuracy in system sizing.

Efficiency Manitoba worked with Norspan and Pritchard Industrial (a local air compressor supplier) to install a new 15-horsepower variable-speed drive compressor at the facility. With the new system in place, Norspan is expected to save approximately 9,600 kWh of electricity every year.

"Participating in Efficiency Manitoba's program was easy" said Sue Matic, CEO. "They provided us with an incentive of over \$1,400 for the project. This is a valuable bonus on top of the savings we're going to see on our monthly energy bills for years to come."

Get started on your own energy-saving project

Improved compressed air systems are creating significant energy savings at industrial facilities — and that's only part of what Efficiency Manitoba does. They're committed to providing industrial customers with programs, incentives, and technical support to help make your operations more energy efficient to optimize your energy needs, lower your operating costs, and reduce your environmental impact. To learn more about their offers for energy-efficient industrial and commercial technologies and systems, visit efficiencyMB.ca/industrial.





PHOTOS COURTESY: HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Industry leaders come together to address housing crisis across the Prairies

By Lisa Fonseka

The housing crisis is top-of-mind for so many of us. Rising interest rates, rental prices, and the cost of living is putting pressure on families, especially those who can't access safe, affordable homeownership.

"Whenever I rented a place, my landlords sold their properties or decided to live in them. Rental companies increased prices, or the units had major issues like no heat in the winter," says Kateryna, a future Habitat for Humanity homeowner in Calgary. "No matter how hard I worked, the housing prices and rent increased faster than anyone could have predicted."

These experiences are shared by thousands of families across the country. Caught in punishing cycles of unpredictable rent increases, overcrowded conditions, or lack of access to affordable financing, these families are living with a constant burden of uncertainty, stress, and fear.

As Canada's only national affordable homeownership organization, Habitat for Humanity knows that there are solutions. Across the Prairies, local Habitats are working alongside industry leaders to bring these solutions to life every day.

By donating funds, building materials, product to Habitat ReStores, or taking part in team Build Days, these four leaders are showing how the industry can come together to address the housing crisis and make a tangible difference for families in our communities.

Building Together

Price Industries Limited has a 15-year history of supporting affordable homeownership through Habitat for Humanity Manitoba. This has ranged from donations of funds and building materials to event sponsorship and, most recently, participation in Habitat Manitoba's Team Build Days. This program allows team members to step onto a Habitat construction site to help build affordable homes.

Locally owned and operated, Price's partnership with Habitat aligns perfectly with their values, including including family, integrity, and respect. The company recently launched an employee program aptly titled "Building Together" - a

"It's quite nice to be part of a local company that is reinvesting their efforts, both time and money, into our community. Being able to give back to our local non-profits is one of our passions. Our team is able to really get into the community and see the impact of what they're doing."

- Brett Nickol, Price Industries

community engagement initiative that allows their team to invest time in four charities.

"It's quite nice to be part of a local company that is reinvesting their efforts, both time and money, into our community," says Brett Nickol, Employee Experience Manager of Human Resources at Price Industries in Winnipeg. "Being able to give back to our local non-profits is one of our passions. Our team is able to really get into the community and see the impact of what they're doing."

Being part of Habitat Manitoba's largest development in its history has been inspiring for the Price teams. Three acres of land will transform into 55 affordable townhomes when the project is complete in 2026, changing the lives of approximately 175 children.

Nickol recalls attending an event to welcome new Habitat homeowners into their homes. "It took the words out of my mouth," he says. "I just wanted to step back and let them discover their home and be there to welcome them with open arms without having to fill the space with words."

And while Price's investment is helping to build a stronger community, their team also experiences their own set of benefits.

"What Habitat has done for our employees is endless. On the team-building side, they are able to go out with teams they are currently on projects with, or teams that they are new to," Nickol says. "It's so easy now to quickly send an instant message and not really have community or human interaction, so it's nice to have those opportunities to break up the day-to-day."

Leaving a legacy

How many of your family memories revolve around your kitchen? From family dinners to Saturday morning pancake parties, our kitchens are the heart of our homes. That's part of what makes Legacy Kitchens' partnership with Habitat for Humanity Southern Alberta so special.

For 40 years, Legacy Kitchens has been building transformational spaces. Since 2000, they

"Supporting affordable housing is a way to put our values into action and help ensure that our community has the foundation it needs to thrive today and for future generations. By supporting Habitat for Humanity, we're directly supporting an organization that provides sustainable, affordable housing to those who need it most." - Derek Wu, Collaborative Construction

have brought those efforts to Habitat by donating entire kitchens for local builds.

"Our passion as a company revolves around creating opportunities for transformation," says Stephen Buller, CEO of Legacy Kitchens. "We're looking for charities that are doing transformational work and Habitat specifically does that."

Meeting future homeowners is something that Buller describes as the moment "where the rubber meets the road."

"Every Habitat homeowner has a story and their own set of circumstances. When you get to see the faces of the folks that we've had a direct impact on, that's huge," he says.

Mildred is a future homeowner in Livingston in northeast Calgary, where Legacy recently donated kitchens for 24 townhomes, including hers. "Home means family, safety, belonging, peace. And after we move into our Habitat home, home will also mean stability," she explains.

By investing in their local Habitat, Legacy Kitchens' employees also get a deeper connection to the community.

"It's all about creating a bigger purpose for your employees - something they can connect to that's beyond the day-to-day work and giving a sense of purpose to the work that they're doing," Buller says.

"We want our employees to be able to engage in the work. There's the alignment of being in the same industry, and then through Build Days, our employees can really get involved at the grassroots level and that's part of what makes Habitat so unique."

Helping people help themselves

Helping families through Habitat for Humanity Edmonton is engrained into the culture at Western Archrib, an Edmonton-based leader in structural wood systems. Cecil Fargey founded the company in 1951 and was joined by his son Jim shortly after, who began the relationship with Habitat. The concept of helping families help themselves resonated strongly.

Cecil's grandchildren, Kent and Joan, also joined the family business and have played pivotal roles. Though they recently passed ownership along to Northland Forest Products, Kent still has a finger on the pulse of the company and their partnership with Habitat for Humanity.

"[My father] recognized that it was not easy for people to get into a home and our products were aligned with the needs of Habitat for Humanity, so it was a natural fit and our staff were very supportive of it," Kent Fargey says.

Over the years, the company's partnership has evolved and since 2000, they have contributed nearly \$500,000 towards Habitat Edmonton through philanthropic gifts and product donations to the Habitat ReStores.

"The housing crisis right now is a fact of life. It's a really challenging situation, but Habitat for Humanity has been working to solve this problem for years. It's complicated, but Habitat's role has been supporting solutions forever, and they continue to do it."

Seeing a single mother with three children who would soon become a homeowner, thanks to the support of people and companies like Western Archrib, makes the impact palpable.

"It's a great feeling to help someone along the way. You're helping people help themselves. It's tangible because you see the people that benefit from the housing. You can correlate it back to people," Fargey says.

Collaborating for community

Collaborative Construction is locally owned in Regina, and they bring their expertise to both residential and commercial projects. They have supported families through Habitat for Humanity Saskatchewan in several ways, the latest being the design and implementation of kitchens and vanities at a recent Habitat build in Regina. They have also been involved in renovations for Habitat Saskatchewan's buyback program, volunteered at events, donated product to

Habitat ReStores, and invested financially through events and sponsorships.

"At Collaborative Construction, we too have vested interest in Regina's affordable housing and developments alike," says Derek Wu, co-owner of Collaborative. "Working with Habitat has allowed us to contribute directly to the community with hopes that it helps support families and create a stronger, more stable local economy."

Not only do Collaborative and Habitat share an industry in common, but their values align in a way that makes their partnership a natural fit, including integrity, reputation, passion, and family.

"For Collab, supporting affordable housing is a way to put our values into action and help ensure that our community has the foundation it needs to thrive today and for future generations in Regina," Wu says. "By supporting Habitat for Humanity, we're directly supporting an organization that provides sustainable, affordable housing to those who need it most."

For Wu and his team, the impact of the work becomes real when they have the chance to meet the people who are benefiting from their support.

"These Habitat homeowners have always greeted us with a smile and a very positive attitude. We have even been offered food and beverages as we enter their new homes. It's a humbling experience to say the least."

Wu encourages other industry leaders to look for ways to support their local communities.

"Giving back doesn't have to be complicated. Start by reaching out to local organizations like Habitat for Humanity, identifying where your team's strengths can best contribute, and involving your employees in the process," he says.

"When we give back through construction, we're not just supporting individual families; we're investing in the future of our communities, strengthening our local economy, and contributing to a better quality of life for everyone."

Lisa Fonseka is Manager of Marketing and Communications with Habitat for Humanity Southern Alberta.



Habitat for Humanity is one of the most powerful non-profit brands in the world.

A 2018 World Value Index and 2018 Enduring Brand Index ranked Habitat as a Top Five Brand that inspires consumers most with their mission. Habitat's brand equity is valued at \$15.6 billion.

Whether you're interested in motivating and engaging your team, giving philanthropic gifts, or sponsoring events or builds, Habitat for Humanity can help your organization better engage consumers and employees.

Benefits of partnering with Habitat for Humanity

In addition to positive brand association, partnership with your local Habitat helps you achieve your Environmental, Social, and Governance and business goals by allowing you to:

- Profile your commitment to community investment
- Provide meaningful engagement opportunities for staff and key stakeholders
- Highlight a commitment to sustainability
- Show your support for equitable, diverse, and inclusive communities

Habitat for Humanity will work with your organization to create a customized partnership plan that meets your strategic giving objectives. Examples include:

- Philanthropic gifts or sponsorships
- Donations of building materials
- Participation in corporate team-building activities
- Product donations to Habitat ReStores

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The Courage to Close: Recognizing the Signs for New Beginnings

By Lori Schmidt

"When we find the courage to say goodbye, we unlock the door to new beginnings and endless possibilities." - Anonymous

As a builder, I thrive on the creative process and the endless possibilities it offers. However, the challenge of letting go is a universal experience that can be incredibly difficult. Whether it's parting ways with clients, transitioning from a job, or moving on from a cherished project, recognizing when it's time for change is crucial for both personal and professional development. Navigating this journey requires courage, self-awareness, and strategic planning to ensure a positive and healthy transition.

I'm diving into this universal challenge of letting go—a journey filled with a mix of emotions and practical steps. By recognizing the signs and learning how to handle these transitions, I have found that you can open yourself up to new beginnings with confidence and clarity. I'd like to explore how to balance holding on and moving forward, sharing insights that might help you make these big decisions with greater grace and ease.

Recognizing when it's time to move on is a pivotal skill that can dramatically shape our personal and professional journey. This awareness is crucial because it acts as a catalyst for growth, preventing stagnation and opening doors to new opportunities. By making timely decisions to let go, we gain increased clarity and a renewed sense of energy, enabling us to focus on new goals with vigour and purpose. Embracing this change isn't just about leaving something behind; it's about making space for the possibilities that lay ahead. Understanding the importance of this transition empowers

us to navigate our paths with confidence and insight, ultimately leading to a more fulfilling and dynamic life.

Identifying the signs it's time to let go

Recognizing when it's time to let go is a vital skill in both personal and professional realms. It begins with identifying the signs that suggest a change is necessary, and these indicators can be both emotional and practical.

The first is stagnation. When you or your business feel stuck in a routine with no prospects for growth or innovation, this could be a signal that change is needed. Stagnation can manifest as a lack of progress or excitement in your work, indicating that the current situation no longer serves you. Recognizing this sign early allows you to explore new avenues, fostering creativity and development before finding yourself in a rut.

Next, consider alignment with your values. Life's journey is deeply aligned with our core values and long-term goals. If your current situation diverges from these values, it's worth reassessing your path. Misalignment can create internal conflict, leading to dissatisfaction and stress. By identifying this mismatch, you can take steps to realign your actions and seek opportunities around what truly matters, ensuring that your pursuits contribute to a more fulfilling life.

Another indicator could be your energy drain. Consistent exhaustion or a persistent lack of enthusiasm can be a clear indicator that it's time to let go. When a project, job, or client

By making timely decisions to let go, we gain increased clarity and a renewed sense of energy, enabling us to focus on new goals with vigour and purpose.

drains you of energy rather than invigorating you, it might be causing more harm than benefit. Recognizing this drain on your vitality is crucial to prevent burnout. By addressing it, you can redirect your energy towards endeavours that inspire and recharge you.

Interpreting these signs requires honest reflection and a willingness to acknowledge when the current path no longer serves your best interests. By recognizing these signs early, you can make informed decisions that not only prevent burnout but also realign you with your personal and professional goals. This proactive approach ensures that you stay energized and engaged, ready to embrace new challenges and opportunities with enthusiasm.

Understanding the emotional landscape

Navigating the emotional landscape of moving on from clients, a job, or personal projects can be an intricate and often challenging journey. These transitions can stir deep feelings, challenging us to let go of the familiar and venture into the unknown.

Fear of the unknown is that daunting aspect of saying goodbye and the fear of what lies ahead. This fear can feel paralyzing, making it difficult to take the leap into new beginnings. However, embracing this fear as a natural part of the process is crucial. Instead of letting it hold you back, focus on the potential for growth and learning that change often brings. By reframing fear as an opportunity, you can transform apprehension into anticipation.

It's common to develop strong attachments to roles, clients, team members, or projects. These attachments can cloud our judgment and make it hard to see when it's time to move on. Identifying these emotional ties is the first step towards making clearer, more objective decisions. Reflect on what these attachments mean to you and how they influence your choices. This awareness can help you disentangle emotions from practicality, allowing you to act in your best interest.

The process of saying goodbye can evoke feelings of grief and loss, similar to mourning. It's important to give yourself permission to grieve—acknowledge what you're leaving behind and honour the role it played in your life—but also remind yourself of the

Having people to lean on can ease the emotional and practical challenges of transitioning. They can offer encouragement, help brainstorm solutions, and even connect you with new opportunities.

new possibilities that await you. While it's normal to feel a sense of loss, focusing on the potential for new experiences can provide solace and motivation.

Managing these emotions requires empathy and patience with yourself. Consider establishing a support system of friends or mentors who can offer guidance and perspective. Practise self-care to nurture your emotional well-being during these transitions. By acknowledging and addressing these emotional aspects, you not only ease the burden of letting go but also empower yourself to embrace new opportunities with hope and resilience.

Some practical steps for the transition

The first step as you consider a transition is to evaluate the impact of moving on from clients, a job, or stepping away from ongoing engagements. This requires a balanced assessment of the potential risks and benefits. A thoughtful analysis can guide you in making informed decisions that align with your goals and well-being.

Start by conducting a thorough analysis where you examine both the positive and negative outcomes of moving on. This involves understanding the full scope of the decision's impact on various aspects of your life. So, begin by identifying some key factors: What are the financial implications? Consider the immediate and long-term financial effects. Will leaving a job affect your income stability? Will moving on from a client affect your business's cash flow? Ensure you have a clear understanding of your financial situation and any safety nets you might need.

Next, consider the potential of your personal growth opportunities. Evaluate how the change could contribute to your personal or professional development. Will it allow you to pursue new skills, roles, or projects that align with your aspirations? Think about how this transition might open doors for new experiences and growth.

Life's journey is deeply aligned with our core values and long-term goals. If your current situation diverges from these values, it's worth reassessing your path.

It is critically important to consider your emotional well-being and reflect on the emotional impact. Will moving on alleviate stress or dissatisfaction? Could it potentially bring about a sense of loss? Balancing emotional outcomes with practical considerations is crucial for a well-rounded decision.

Once you have conducted an analysis, weigh the factors. Create a "pros" and "cons" list to capture the advantages and disadvantages of moving on. Creating a visual aid for this part of the process can help clarify where the balance lies and highlight the most significant factors influencing your decision.

Now, it's time to seek advice from trusted sources. Consult with mentors, colleagues, or friends who can provide perspective and advice. Their experiences and insights might reveal aspects you hadn't considered, helping you see the bigger picture.

Also, take the time to consider your long-term goals and how to align your decision with your long-term goals. Will this change bring you closer to achieving your personal or professional aspirations? Sometimes short-term discomfort is worth the long-term benefits.

After deciding to move on, it's crucial to acknowledge the significance of this step and ensure a smooth transition through careful planning and thoughtful execution. Navigate this part of your journey by...

Planning: Before initiating any changes, it's crucial to have a comprehensive plan in place. Start by assessing your financial situation to ensure stability during the transition. Consider setting aside savings or creating a budget to cover any gaps. Additionally, explore new opportunities that align with your future goals, whether that's applying for new jobs, networking for potential clients, or brainstorming your next personal project. If you're part of a team or have clients dependent on you, prepare them in advance by delegating responsibilities or offering solutions to ensure continuity.

Communicating: Open and honest communication is key to easing the transition. Clearly articulate your decision to all parties involved, including supervisors, colleagues, clients, or collaborators. Explain your reasons succinctly and provide as much notice as possible to allow others to adjust accordingly. This transparency helps maintain good relationships and leaves the door open for future opportunities.

Seeking support: Don't underestimate the power of a strong support system. Reach out to mentors who can offer valuable advice, colleagues who can share insights from their own experiences, or friends who can provide emotional support. Having people to lean on can ease the emotional and practical challenges of transitioning. They can offer encouragement, help brainstorm solutions, and even connect you with new opportunities.

By thoughtfully evaluating whether it's time to move on and planning ahead to create a roadmap that alleviates uncertainty, you can ensure a graceful exit. Clear communication helps minimize misunderstandings, and a strong support network provides the reassurance and assistance needed to navigate change effectively. Together, these strategies empower you to move forward confidently, ready to embrace the next chapter of your journey.

Now you are ready to envision and plan your future of what comes next!

"Every new beginning comes from some other beginning's end." Semisonic

Lori Schmidt is President of Loral Management Group, an Edmonton-based competitiveness and executive advisory firm, and a Distinguished Fellow of the Global Federation of Competitiveness Councils, a Washington, DC-based global multi-stakeholder membership organization committed to disseminating best practices to accelerate productivity, growth, and prosperity for countries, regions, and cities. Prior to this she was CEO of GO Productivity, a not-for-profit productivity and innovation service provider. Her career has included work in manufacturing, economic development, and strategic planning and innovation implementation for SMEs and non-profit organizations.



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Q&A with Consul Rebecca Molinoff on U.S.-Canada Trade

Q: What is the role of the U.S. Consulate in Winnipeg, and what is your role as the Consul?

A: The Consulate in Winnipeg plays a role in extending the reach of U.S. diplomatic efforts in Manitoba. We are a smaller post, but our location is intended to strategically enhance U.S. engagement with local communities, businesses, governments, and Indigenous communities. We meet with a variety of people, businesses, and organizations to learn about the issues in Manitoba, and where they might intersect with U.S. issues.

Our primary focus is on facilitating trade and investment and fostering cultural ties and exchanges. Of course, the United States and Canada are so integrated that often these exchanges happen seamlessly. But we work to continue to build relationships and find any areas we can help improve.

Q: When did you arrive in Winnipeg? What was your background prior to arrival?

A: My family and I are new to Winnipeg – we arrived earlier this fall and have enjoyed getting to know the city. I grew up in Ohio, just across Lake Erie from Ontario. I have fond memories of visiting Canada growing up and now I get to share another part of Canada with my family.

Prior to Winnipeg, we were in Bucharest, Romania, where I served as the Acting Deputy Political Counselor at the U.S. Embassy. I've also served overseas in Jamaica and Moldova, with stints in London and at the U.S. Mission to the United Nations in New York. I've also worked in Washington D.C. as the Latvia and Lithuania Desk Officer. Before joining the State Department, I worked in finance in London.

I'm happy to bring all my past experiences to work on the U.S.-Canada relationship.

Q: How big is the U.S.-Canada trading relationship?

A: Canada is the United States' top trading partner, with goods and services trade totaling US\$922 billion in 2023. That works out to an astounding US\$2.5 billion in cross-border trade daily, roughly C\$3.4 billion. This robust trade partnership supports millions of jobs on both sides of the border and encompasses a wide range of industries, from automotive and agriculture to technology and energy. Canada is the largest export market for the United States, and the U.S. is Canada's largest trading partner. In 2023, 73 per cent of Canada's goods and services exports were destined for the United States. Thirty-six U.S. states have Canada as their number one export destination for U.S. goods.

This deep economic integration is facilitated by shared values, geographic proximity, and strong political ties, making the U.S.-Canada trade relationship a cornerstone of both nations' economies.



Q: What work do you and your colleagues do to support and enhance that trading relationship between Canada and the United States, particularly in manufacturing?

A: The breadth and depth of the bilateral relationship between Canada and the United States is unparalleled. There is a cross-country network of U.S. Consulates, Consulates General, and the Embassy in Ottawa, meaning that we can connect with Canadians in every province and territory.

For example, we have Foreign Commercial Service (FCS) offices across the country. Our FCS colleagues work with U.S. businesses interested in working in Canada, but also facilitate connections with Canadian businesses, such as through the Department of Commerce's SelectUSA program. Each year, FCS brings Canadian businesses to Washington D.C. as part of SelectUSA's conference to build business-to-business connections in a variety of sectors. Next year's SelectUSA Summit will be from May 11-14, 2025, in Washington D.C.

Apart from meeting directly with businesses, my colleagues and I also participate in trade-related events or panel discussions to raise awareness of policies or opportunities in the United States and how Canadian businesses might benefit.

Q: What are some policies the United States has to improve supply chain resilience?

A: The United States is taking historic action to strengthen supply chains and reduce costs, increase competitiveness, and reduce emissions through billions of dollars of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law investments. The funding includes US\$17 billion for port infrastructure and waterways and US\$25 billion for airports to address repair and maintenance backlogs, reduce congestion and emissions near ports and airports, and drive electrification and other low-carbon technologies. The law also authorizes US\$110 billion in additional funding to repair our roads and bridges to support the movement of goods across the supply chain. These investments also benefit any Canadian companies that look to do business in the United States by reinforcing our supply chain resiliency. We have also prioritized work on critical minerals to build a secure supply chain for North America. This includes working with dozens of Canadian mining companies to discuss funding opportunities through the Department of Defense, Defense Production Act, with six Canadian companies already receiving over US\$88 million in awards for projects on both sides of the border.

Q: What opportunities are there for Canadian businesses in the United States?

A: Canadian businesses have a wealth of opportunities in the United States, thanks to the strong economic ties and geographic proximity between the two nations. Key sectors where Canadian companies can thrive include technology, energy, automotive, agriculture, and healthcare. The United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA)

has further streamlined trade and investment, making it easier for Canadian businesses to enter and expand in the U.S. market.

The USMCA, or CUSMA in Canada, is the cornerstone of our regional economic future. It establishes the rules of the road for over US\$1.8 trillion in trade among the United States, Canada, and Mexico each year.

The U.S. offers a large and diverse consumer base, advanced infrastructure, and a business-friendly environment, which are significant advantages for Canadian enterprises. Additionally, the cultural similarities and shared language reduce barriers to entry, allowing for smoother operations and marketing efforts. For Canadian businesses looking to grow, the U.S. market presents a dynamic and lucrative landscape full of potential.

Q: On the CUSMA, or USMCA, agreement - what are the strategic priorities for the 2026 review of the agreement?

A: We are mindful of the 2026 review and some discussions have started internally in the United States. The USMCA is not a static agreement, it is dynamic, and there is meant to be open reflection along the way by all parties about how it is working overall. Ahead of the 2026 review, the USMCA Implementation Act requires the U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) to solicit public comments and report to relevant Congressional committees. The USTR will publish a federal register notice in Fall 2025 regarding the review and hold a public hearing. Just as the USMCA modernized our trading relationship from 2020 onwards, all parties can continue to look for improvements to ensure the agreement keeps up with the pace of our economies.

Q: With the change in U.S. presidential leadership in 2025, what's next for the U.S.-Canada relationship?

A: First, I would not want to presume to speak for an incoming administration because the President-elect was elected by the American public; he has the right to make his own decisions.

While I can't comment about what might happen, I can say that, as we speak, there continues to be exceptional work done between our countries as a result of those close ties: the work that ensures safe and efficient travel and trade across our shared border; the work that drives our economies; the work that keeps our countries safe and also defends our shared values around the world; and the work that combats climate change. No matter who is in leadership, this work and the enduring relationship between the United States and Canada is undeniable, as it's not just between our federal governments. It's between our states and provinces, our businesses, and person-to-person. As a result of these close relations, I'm confident that the United States and Canada will remain engaged neighbours, prosperous partners, and stalwart allies.

Hannover Messe 2025

PHOTO COURTESY: NGEN



An Unmissable Opportunity for Canadian Business

With a history spanning more than 70 years, Hannover Messe has cemented itself as the world's premier industrial trade fair. In 2025, Canada will serve as the official partner country—a distinction that opens unprecedented opportunities for Canadian manufacturing and technology companies. This partnership is a generational opportunity that brings Canada's advanced industries into the global spotlight and opens doors to new, transformative business relationships. For Canadian companies, Hannover Messe 2025 represents a unique chance to expand market reach, secure international partnerships, and showcase the very best of Canadian innovation.

Why Hannover Messe matters

Drawing a crowd of over 100,000 distinguished business leaders and featuring thousands of exhibitors from around the globe, Hannover Messe is not just a trade fair; it is an engine for ideas, innovation, and strategic alliances that will shape the manufacturing sector's future. By attending Hannover Messe, Canadian companies gain access to an unparalleled audience of decision-makers, partners, and clients, opening possibilities for business beyond North America.

Canada's role as the partner country magnifies these opportunities, positioning our companies as key players in global manufacturing. This special status grants Canadian companies higher visibility and the privilege of showcasing their products, solutions, and technologies in targeted forums, exclusive pavilions, and premier locations within the event space.

Canada has long held a reputation for excellence in several critical sectors, including sustainable technology, advanced manufacturing, AI, automation, and clean energy solutions. Canadian manufacturers have a prime opportunity to display their innovations across these sectors at Hannover Messe.

It's a significant advantage, as the partner country title amplifies Canada's influence and establishes Canadians as natural collaborators in a world focused on innovation, sustainability, and efficiency. For Canada's manufacturing sector, Hannover Messe 2025 is not only a promotional opportunity but a potential catalyst for long-term growth in global markets.

What's in it for Canadian companies?

For Canadian manufacturing firms, the benefits of Hannover Messe 2025 go far beyond the immediate exposure. First and foremost, the event provides unparalleled exposure on a global scale, where Canadian brands can reach an international audience actively seeking cutting-edge solutions. Canadian products, technologies, and innovations can resonate with industry leaders from across Europe and Asia keen on adopting sustainable and efficient solutions.

Networking is another substantial advantage. By participating, Canadian companies gain direct access to thousands of potential partners, suppliers, and customers worldwide. Hannover Messe is structured to foster partnerships, from formal networking sessions to casual encounters with decision-makers and thought leaders. Canadian companies attending the fair can expect to establish contacts that could lead to profitable collaborations or strategic alliances for market expansion.

Another compelling opportunity lies in investment and collaboration. Hannover Messe attracts substantial attention from investors looking for viable partnerships and innovative technologies. Previous partner countries have successfully leveraged Hannover Messe to secure investments and expand their industry influence. Canada can do the same by promoting its image of reliability, innovation, and environmental consciousness.

Key sectors and innovations to highlight

Canada has long held a reputation for excellence in several critical sectors, including sustainable technology, advanced manufacturing, AI, automation, and clean energy solutions. Canadian manufacturers have a prime opportunity to display their innovations across these sectors at Hannover Messe. Advanced manufacturing technologies, such as smart factories and Industry 4.0 solutions, will certainly resonate with an audience that prioritizes operational efficiency, safety, and intelligent automation.

Additionally, Canada's leadership in clean energy and sustainability aligns with the fair's emphasis on green industrial technology. Hannover Messe 2025 is expected to focus significantly on decarbonization, renewable energy integration, and eco-friendly industrial processes—all areas in which Canada is making significant strides. Canadian manufacturers working in these fields can

demonstrate technologies and methodologies that help companies reduce their carbon footprint and embrace a sustainable industrial model.

Prairie presence at Hannover Messe 2025

Throughout 2024, NGen travelled across the country to recruit a roster of Canadian exhibitors and we are proud to be joined by a fantastic Prairie contingent who are sure to represent the region well.

These organizations are seizing the opportunity to bring their brands to a global audience of executive decision makers looking for their next partner.

- mode40
- 4D1
- TANGENT Design Engineering
- Hydraulitechs Solutions
- Alberta Machine Intelligence Institute
- Quantized Technologies
- Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute
- Regen Replica Systems
- University of Saskatchewan
- PTRC Sustainable Energy
- Saskatchewan Polytechnic
- Saskatchewan Trade & Export Partnership (STEP)

How to get involved

Interested in joining Team Canada? Contact info@ngen.ca to indicate your interest as an exhibitor or as part of our Delegate program while seats are still available.

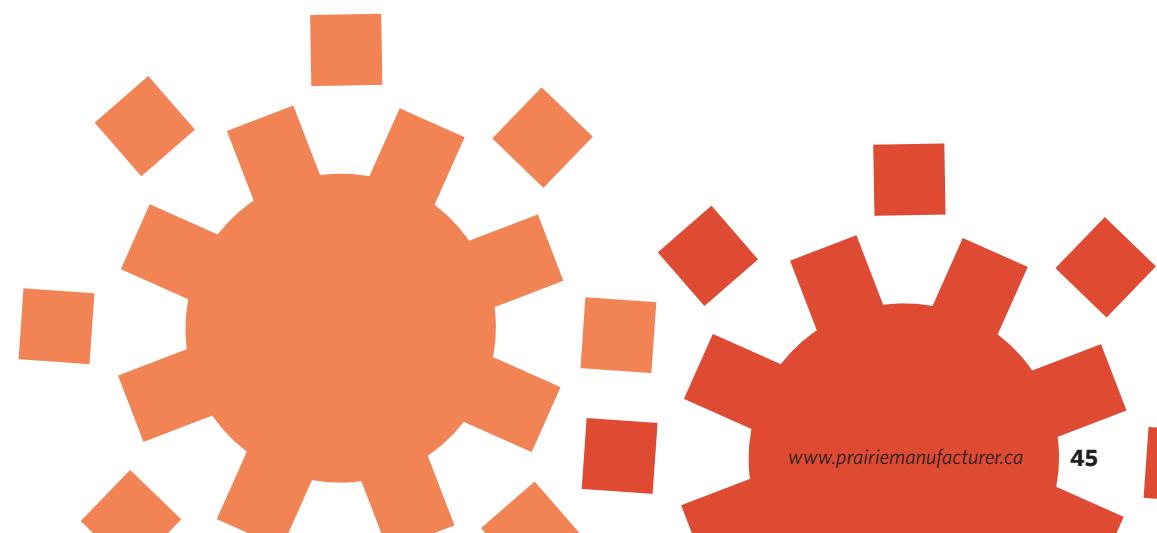
Canadian companies aiming to capitalize on Hannover Messe 2025 should take a proactive

approach to their preparations. First, pre-event networking is essential. Many connections at trade shows are facilitated before the doors open, so Canadian manufacturers are encouraged to reach out to NGen who can facilitate intros to German and European industry contacts in advance. Establishing connections before the event maximizes the chances of meaningful engagement and allows companies to focus their efforts once the fair begins.

Another essential strategy involves targeted marketing. Canadian companies should tailor their brand messaging to resonate with European audiences, emphasizing values like innovation, sustainability, and precision. Researching the specific needs and values of European partners can help Canadian firms appeal more directly to the market's preferences.

Finally, companies should develop a robust follow-up strategy to turn leads into long-term partnerships. Following up on connections made at Hannover Messe is crucial for maintaining momentum. With thoughtful follow-up, Canadian manufacturers can convert trade show interest into lasting business relationships, creating pathways for ongoing growth.

For Canadian manufacturers, this is more than just an event—it's a launchpad into new markets, a chance to attract investors, and an opportunity to foster connections that could shape the future of their business. By seizing this moment, Canadian companies can help mark a new era in Canadian manufacturing, one in which "Made in Canada" becomes synonymous with cutting-edge, sustainable, and globally competitive industrial solutions. ↗



herjourney

SUPPORTING WOMEN APPRENTICES IN CANADIAN MANUFACTURING

HerJourney is a growing network of women apprentices and journeywomen who are committed to increasing the success, support, and retention of women apprentices in Red Seal trades within Canada's vibrant manufacturing sector.

Get involved in EMC's HerJourney Network to support:

- Researching, understanding and raising awareness of the challenges for women apprentices in manufacturing.
- Finding ways for employers to mitigate challenges for women apprentices in manufacturing.
- Showcasing activities, resources and training, including mentorship, to women apprentices.



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Manitoba Aerospace honours industry excellence

On November 28, 2024, Manitoba Aerospace held its 21st annual Aerospace All-Stars Awards of Excellence to recognize four recipients for their achievements in the local aerospace and aviation industries.

The event recognizes teams or individuals who have demonstrated excellence in a variety of areas from leadership to business growth. Nominated by their industry peers, the 2024 Award of Excellence recipients are:

Award of Excellence for Leadership

17 Wing Winnipeg
RCAF Centennial

Since its establishment in 1925, 17 Wing in Winnipeg has been a cornerstone of our community, employing approximately 800 aviation personnel and supporting nearly 2000 DND/CAF members who ensure the safety of Canadians every day. As we celebrate the RCAF's 100th anniversary in 2024 and 17 Wing's 100th anniversary in April 2025, we honor the dedicated members and their families. The squadrons and units that make up 17 Wing include 402 Squadron, 435 Transport and Rescue Squadron, Barker College, the Canadian Forces School of Survival and Aeromedical Training (CFSSAT), and the RCAF Band. These entities work tirelessly to benefit Manitobans and the RCAF. They have also created partnerships with local organizations, such as the Grace Hospital and the United Way of Winnipeg, which foster community growth and support. The families of our military members also contribute valuable skills and volunteer efforts locally, enriching our community in countless ways. It is because 17 Wing is a pillar of excellence and community leadership that it deserves this esteemed 2024 Award of Excellence.



Award of Excellence for Industry/Government Collaboration

StandardAero

Women Transitioning to Careers in Aerospace 2.0

StandardAero strives to foster a workplace culture prioritizing diversity, equity, and inclusion, to ensure all employees feel valued and empowered. This commitment is exemplified by the Women in Aerospace 2.0 program, addressing gender equality, workforce diversity, and economic empowerment. In collaboration with Manitoba Aerospace, MITT, Neeginan College, and with funding through the Winnipeg-Eastern Service Area (Province of Manitoba), the program tackled skills shortages through a strong industry and government partnership. It insured relevant training, job placements, internships, and guaranteed employment for graduates, offering them immediate opportunities as well as long-term career growth through mentorship, coaching, and continuous learning. The program helped the women gain good paying jobs and also created role models who can inspire future generations of women to pursue aerospace careers. By challenging gender stereotypes and increasing women's workforce representation, programs like this foster a more inclusive, innovative, and collaborative industry. Congratulations to StandardAero for its commitment to gender equality and workforce diversity, thereby earning this distinguished 2024 Award of Excellence.



Award of Excellence for Education

Randy Herrmann and Peter Jordan

ReNew World Ideas: Indigenous Ingenuity in the 21st Century

Randy Herrmann is the Director of the Engineering Access Program (ENGAP) at the University of Manitoba and has been pivotal in supporting Indigenous education. Peter Jordan is a renowned storyteller and founder of Birch Bark Canoe Productions. He has dedicated his career to highlighting innovation and cultural heritage within Canada. In partnership with Manitoba Aerospace, the "ReNew World Ideas: Indigenous Ingenuity in the 21st Century" initiative began in 2012. It has created documentaries and teacher's guides that highlight Indigenous contributions to not only engineering and science but also to the Canadian way of life. It has inspired Indigenous youth to pursue STEM careers, and integrated Indigenous STEM perspectives into the curriculum of classrooms in Manitoba and beyond. The exceptional dedication and collaborative efforts of both Randy and Peter on the project have significantly enriched our understanding and appreciation of Indigenous innovations. Their unwavering commitment to education and the promotion of Indigenous knowledge makes them truly deserving of this prestigious 2024 Award of Excellence.



Randy Herrmann



Peter Jordan



"We are excited to recognize the recipients of the 2024 All-Stars Awards for their significant contributions to the Manitoba Aerospace Industry," said Brent Ostermann, Chair of the Board of Manitoba Aerospace Inc. and StandardAero's VP of Product Assurance and Quality.

Helping students and industry take flight

"This evening celebrates our current recipients and supports the future of the Manitoba Aerospace Industry by raising funds for the Manitoba Aerospace Student Endowment Fund. Since its inception, the fund has raised over \$434,000 CDN and assisted more than 150 deserving students," commented Ostermann."

"Many of these students have graduated and become contributors to our aerospace industry, developing key specialized skills in aerospace or aviation through our provincial academic institutions. We are proud to bring the Aerospace community together to celebrate successes of our colleagues, while supporting the development of our future."

This year's student recipients from the Student Endowment fund are from Tec-Voc High School, Neeginan College of Applied Technology, Red River

College Polytechnic and the University of Manitoba - Price Faculty of Engineering.

Aerospace in Manitoba

Manitoba's state-of-the-art aerospace, aviation, and defence sector is the largest in western Canada and is the third largest hub in Canada, producing and selling more than \$1.6 billion dollars of products and services annually. Aerospace is one of the province's premier industries and directly employs more than 4,000 highly skilled Manitobans.

About Manitoba Aerospace

Manitoba Aerospace is a not-for-profit sector association that works to connect the local aerospace industry to national and international markets and also aims to develop a world-class workforce to meet industry's needs through partnerships with Manitoba educational institutions and other key stakeholders. We support and promote the local aerospace and aviation sectors through human resource initiatives, business development, as well as innovation, research, and technology.

For more information on the Manitoba Aerospace All-Star Awards of Excellence and past recipients, visit www.mbaerospace.ca

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WHAT POWERS THE DREAM FACTORY?

THE MAGIC GEARS YOU MIGHT NOT KNOW ABOUT

If you've always known The Dream Factory as an organization that sends kids and their families on amazing adventure vacations – you're correct. It's absolutely true!

But, did you know that, **we also support families throughout their child's entire medical journey and beyond?**

For Dream Kid Drea, that meant years of support and care, and countless moments of fun as she bravely battled brain cancer.

If you'd like to support kids like Drea this holiday season, every donation **up to \$30,000** will be matched by Bonafide Construction Solutions. **Scan the QR code below to make your gift today!**

MATCHING GIFT SPONSOR



MEET DREA!



Safe Sanctuary

We create a warm and welcoming environment for families, ensuring that from the moment they first meet with The Dream Factory, they feel safe and supported throughout their entire medical journey – and beyond!



Supportive Solutions

The Dream Factory provides financial assistance to families by helping cover the costs of parking at the hospital, gas and groceries, additional childcare, or supplementing income lost from parents needing to leave their jobs to care for their children.



Special Smiles

Little actions, such as outings to sporting events, art workshops, princess parties, treatment milestone celebrations, and other special experiences, can have a really big impact that will create lasting memories and bring joyful smiles to children and their families when they need it most.



The Dream Come True

The part of the adventure you know best. These special “big dream” moments are as impactful for the families as they are for the kids. Described by kids and families as the highlight of their medical journey, the dream come true creates a memory so vivid and joyful that it makes the hardships fade into the background, bringing light and happiness to their lives.



Serving Up Success: How Financial Support Fuels Women in Food Production

By Lindsay Stewart Glor

For women entrepreneurs working in food production, what often starts with a single recipe, evolves into a business with complex requirements, from online payment platforms to refrigerated shipping options.

"I think food processing is unique because so many people come to it because they have a passion for food. We don't hear a lot of food processors that get into the business because they love packaging or they love accounting," offers Hannah Messineo from the Small Scale Food Processor Association (SSFPA).

And what might have started with seed money from personal savings, friends and family, or credit cards, eventually requires more substantial and reliable avenues of capital. And that can be a major barrier to growth.

"I would say that the biggest issue that we've identified as a barrier to women in food processing is definitely access to finance," says Messineo. "We know that access to finance is an issue faced by women across sectors, but it's specifically hard in the food industry because food processors have a difficult time securing financing in general."

This was the case for Saskatoon entrepreneur Desya Hrytzak, a co-founder of HG Foods, which includes In a Pinch Perogies. "[Accessing funding] was a struggle at first," she says. "Some of the bigger places didn't believe in food. They made a lot of very hard asks and it was a difficult process."

"We found that the intersection of being a woman and being a food entrepreneur can make access to financing to scale and grow your business really, really difficult."

Many lenders and investors don't know how to properly evaluate food processing businesses, says Messineo. "They often get lumped in with restaurants, which is traditionally a very risky business model. We found that the intersection of being a woman and being a food entrepreneur can make access to financing to scale and grow your business really, really difficult."

In an effort to remove barriers for women in food processing, which comprises more than 65% of their members, the SSFPA launched its Women's Initiative in 2018, in partnership with Women and Gender Equality Canada. The program offers inclusive resources and support programs, including a venture-capital ready training program, while also tackling broader systemic issues.

The SSFPA Women's Initiative is one of many programs and organizations working to connect and support women entrepreneurs in the food processing sector across the Prairies.

Looking for advice and support in her home province of Saskatchewan, Hrytzak connected with Female Entrepreneurs in Agri-Food Development (FEAD), Prairie Food Link, and Women Entrepreneurs of Saskatchewan (WESK). The relationships built through these organizations have been game changers says Hrytzak, helping her find retail space, suppliers, and less expensive products.

You're worth the investment

Loans created for women entrepreneurs

The **WEOC National Loan Program** offers an innovative approach to meet the unique needs of women-owned businesses. Transform your enterprise with accessible and flexible financing supported by the expert guidance of our regional loan fund partners.

All across the prairies, we're helping women like you get the credit you deserve.

- Loans in any amount up to \$50,000
- No minimum credit scores
- Flexible terms up to 5 years
- Expert advice and support



Let's get started

Learn more at
weoc.ca/loan-program

Connect with the WEOC loans team at loans@weoc.ca

It was at WESK that she was introduced to the WEOC National Loan Program, through which she secured financing that facilitated a move to a larger space with increased freezer capacity.

"WESK and WEOC have been so amazing, and the loan process has been so easy," she says. "A lot of the back end of things are new to us and WEOC has been so understanding without being pushy. I would recommend it to anyone."

One reason the WEOC National Loan Program can be an excellent fit for women in the food manufacturing space is the wide range of items the funds can be used for, says loans manager, Heather Sadowy. "Many traditional lenders have limitations in what they can finance or may require the entrepreneur to provide a certain percentage as a down payment. WEOC's flexibility allows us to fund 100 per cent of a client's project or purchase, which is particularly helpful for a new business just starting out."

For Hrytzak, her mother's family recipes remain the foundation of the business, which continues to grow, from home deliveries and farmer's markets, into larger retail stores. Along with packaging, an expanded manufacturing space is once again on the horizon, she says, with goals of expanding across the Prairies.

WEOC National Loan Program eligible expenses

Women entrepreneurs in the food manufacturing sector are unique, says Heather Sadowy, so they could be interested in any of the eligible funding areas. "Some of the things we've been able to help finance for women entrepreneurs in this space include renovations to a commercial kitchen, purchasing manufacturing equipment, funds for tradeshow participation and

"WEOC's flexibility allows us to fund 100 per cent of a client's project or purchase, which is particularly helpful for a new business just starting out."

demos, packaging/labelling costs, certifications, and inventory.

Eligible funding areas include:

- Capital assets (including machinery/equipment, leasehold/property improvements)
- Office and equipment rental
- Salaries and benefits (excluding owner's salary)
- IT/software licence purchase
- Professional services
- Inventory/supplies
- Intellectual property
- Working capital (payroll, lease payments, accounts management, rent, overhead costs)
- Digital (including website/E-commerce development)
- Marketing/advertising/business promotion
- Employee training
- Short-term receivable financing (i.e., financing to service a contract)
- Business start-up costs (legal fees, business incorporation fees, business plan preparation, etc.)

Lindsay Stewart Glor is Communications & Engagement Manager with Women's Enterprise Organizations of Canada (WEOC), a national not-for-profit organization supporting a diverse membership of organizations that directly impact the growth and success of women entrepreneurs and working with organizations around the world to share best practices, collaborate on initiatives, and advocate for women's entrepreneurship.

GATHERING ALBERTA MANUFACTURING LABOUR MARKET INSIGHTS

To build solutions for the future!

EMC is currently conducting an unprecedented deep-dive labour market study in Alberta's manufacturing sector. The purpose is to understand the state of manufacturing in 20+subsectors, engaging with 3,000 manufacturers, and resulting in a solutions roadmap informed by industry. Additionally, EMC will be focusing on youth, our next generation of workers and newcomers as important and sometimes overlooked contributors to the labour market.

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