

Northern Ontario Women's **2005**  
**Leadership Forum**  
*www.womensleadership.ca*  
*Vision & Voice*

# Summary of Workshops

**Thursday, November 17 - Friday, November 18, 2005**  
**Thunder Bay, Ontario**





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## ***Introduction***

As so many of our delegates noted, the calibre of speakers at the Northern Ontario Women's Leadership Forum was outstanding, making the task of summarizing the Forum workshops somewhat daunting. Nonetheless, we believe you will agree that our speakers have done an excellent job of capturing the key messages of their presentations for you in the pages that follow.

Presented by a Steering Committee of local and regional women, the Northern Ontario Women's Leadership Forum was organized with the goal of providing local, regional and Northern women and men the opportunity to receive high-level training in leadership and other skills without having to travel to southern Ontario or other locations. Judging from your feedback, that goal was more than accomplished.

The Forum received a great deal of very useful feedback from you, our delegates, on what topics you would like us to feature in future Forums. Please be assured that this information will be integral in the planning of the next event. In the meantime, the organizers have been extremely gratified by your overwhelming endorsement of the first-ever Northern Ontario Women's Leadership Forum. Scoring an amazing 4.6 out of a possible 5 (with 5 being "extremely useful"), the Forum was clearly a hit with those who participated.

We hope you will find the information in this Summary of Workshops useful and that it will serve as a pleasant reminder of the Forum.

## ***A Letter from North Superior Training Board***

Dear "Women's Leadership Forum 2005" Delegates:

The North Superior Training Board is very honoured to have served as a founding Presenting Sponsor and to provide project management services for the first Northern Ontario Women's Leadership Forum. Our thanks to other Presenting Sponsors, FedNor, the Northern Ontario Heritage Fund and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada Networking Initiative for their financial support to create this first-ever pan northern event.

The role of the North Superior Training Board is to engage communities and community partners in local labour market development. By conducting and analyzing labour market research, the Local Training Board determined there was a need for leadership training and innovative strategies to navigate the complex, changing world in which we all live and work. When a group of local women decided to undertake planning of an event that would address these issues, a vision became a reality and a strong community partnership was formed. Through a series of workshops, panel discussions, keynotes and activities, delegates in Thunder Bay had the opportunity to explore leadership development, while at the same time, thanks to Lakehead University and its web-casting capabilities, and to the Contact North sites, delegates from across the north were able to participate and enhance their individual capacity by taking advantage of this learning opportunity.

This document has been prepared to provide you with a summary of presentations and workshops and we hope that this forum helped to provide you with the tools you need to successfully address leadership issues. The incredible leadership exhibited by the many talented and dedicated women who made up the steering committee to plan this event over the past 14 months was awe-inspiring. Our thanks to the very generous contributions of so many businesses who made this event such a success and to all the speakers who shared their insights and wisdom with delegates across the north. We will pass the torch with great pride to the planners of the 2nd Women's Leadership Forum to be held in Sudbury in 2007.



Madge Richardson  
Co-Chair Business  
North Superior Training Board



Francis Bell  
Co-Chair Labour  
North Superior Training Board

## ***A Message from the Chair***

Thank you to the delegates who attended the first-ever Northern Ontario Women's Leadership Forum, to the speakers, to the sponsors as well as to the many involved, enthusiastic, innovative leaders who participated on the Steering Committee. What an exciting venture!

The idea of staging a high-calibre leadership training event in the North came from a few local women who were informally discussing the lack of affordable, quality learning opportunities in our region. As William Shakespeare said, "Our remedies oft in ourselves do lie". These women quickly decided that, rather than complain about what has been a very long-standing problem, they would do something about it. Many other local and regional women from all walks of life and interests joined the team. For over a year, we worked to organize an outstanding forum that would provide training and inspiration as well as opportunities to connect with one another.

Great care was taken to attract outstanding keynote speakers and workshop presenters, both female and male, young and "seasoned". We welcomed those who travelled as well as the talented local people who joined us to share their knowledge and experiences.

Sponsors were key to financially supporting the Forum. With their generosity we were able to attract top line speakers. We provided our speakers with special locally made gifts from local artisans. Bright neon coloured delegate bags were filled with a variety of treats from large pads of paper to flashlights and juice. Sizeable gifts were given to each delegate from Union Gas and Terra Nova.

After hearing the speakers, networking and setting up meetings with other delegates to further their business opportunities, delegates rated the Forum the "best I've attended"; "a fantastic learning experience"; "when is the next Forum – I want to be part of it". One delegate summed it up for everyone: "As a young woman emerging on the work force it was very beneficial to hear the struggles and successes of other successful individuals. I learned several 'tricks of the trade' that I will take with me into my working day. I left the conference feeling motivated and energized to be a strong leader in all aspects of my life and to trust myself through the ups and downs I may encounter".

Delegates enjoyed their time at the Forum and left inspired by the story of the team of women who recognized, no matter the hurdles along the way, that leadership is all about the commitment to turn an idea into a reality.



Rebecca Johnson  
Steering Committee Chair

### ***Mission Statement***

**Professional women from Northern Ontario come together annually to learn, share, mentor and network at the Northern Ontario Women's Leadership Forum.**

**This forum is open to all women and men who are interested in the acquisition of new skills, developing a network of like-minded individuals, sharing knowledge and mentoring professional women.**

**It is offered to all individuals in the region who are interested in participating no matter their profession, age and/or seniority.**

**This forum is organized by a Steering Committee annually on a not-for-profit basis.**

## **Workshops 1A and 3A–Influence and Impact: Executive Presentation Skills**

### **John Miers, Chairman, Black Isle Communications**

John Miers, who founded Black Isle Consultants in 1990, shows speakers what makes people listen to them and remember them. Here is an important sample of the revisionary process that the Black Isle approach takes:

Stop and really listen to a conversation between two people. What you'll notice is that broken grammar and sentence fragments abound. Thoughts stop in mid-flight, veer off in new directions, or get reiterated in a different way. Several sentences combine into a long string or get chopped up into pieces. Highly educated or not, this is how we talk.

If you use this same conversational style in your presentations, your audience members will tune in. Remember, our brains are hardwired to intuitively process this type of information. Without even consciously realizing it, your audience members will analyze your speech and conclude that you are having a conversation with someone. A few seconds later, human nature being what it is, they will also arrive at the conclusion that the person you are having a conversation with is them.

Conversation, by definition, is a two-way street. When you speak in a conversational style, your audience realizes you're providing one half of it. Even though they may never actually speak, in their heads they will intuitively participate in your presentation to complete the dialogue.

Contrary to what many people think, the speaker is not the one in control in a two-way conversation. The listener sets the pace and determines the outcome. Most of us know this instinctively when talking one-on-one. That's why we're saying based on what we get from the other person. We may slow down or speed up. We may skip something we were going to say, or go back and reiterate something else. It's in this way that the listener's cues guide the conversation.

If you doubt this, think about the stereotypical party bore that's appeared in countless films. What makes him such an awful conversationalist? He drones on and on, oblivious to the reactions of the people he's talking to. He's a speaker who doesn't understand that listeners control the conversation. He's what is not so affectionately known as a "conversation hog."

Unfortunately, when most people speak in front of groups, they become conversation hogs. They forget that the audience controls the dialogue, not them. They barrel through their material without checking in.

Just as people unconsciously recognize the casual speech patterns of conversation, they also unconsciously know how people behave during a conversation. When you break the listener rule, it throws them right out of the dialogue. At best, you've lost your connection with them. At worst, as with a particularly overbearing conversation hog, it can be downright unpleasant for them.

Even if you can't actually see the audience, behave as if you're waiting for feedback now and again. Your presentations will improve dramatically.



*"I left the Forum feeling motivated and energized to be a strong leader in all aspects of my life."*

## **Workshop 1B-Conflict and Crisis**

### **Jackie Dojack, CEO, Dojack Associates Limited**

Conflict emerges when something important is threatened – by disagreements, competition, annoyances or inequities. If this initial conflict is not resolved, certain feelings (e.g. hurt, frustration, depression, embarrassment, decreased trust) and behaviours (e.g. threatening, bullying, getting even, blaming, becoming a victim) will tend to escalate the conflict.

A widely used “newer” method of resolving conflicts is called “problem solving dispute resolution” or “alternative dispute resolution (ADR)”, or the “Harvard model of dispute resolution”.

The steps of this method are:

1. Separate the people from the problem.
2. Focus on interests, not positions.
3. Invent options for mutual gain.
4. Base the result on some objective standard.

Yes, but...Develop your BATNA – Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (i. e. have a good Plan B)  
(Source: “Getting to Yes, Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In”.)

In most disputes, there are substantive issues which involve specific levels of money, goods, services, and resources. There are also relationship issues which fall into three basic categories: perception, emotion, and communication. What is recommended in the Alternative Dispute Resolution process is to separate the relationship issues from the substantive issues, and then to resolve them.

Perception issues can be resolved with strategies such as “putting yourself in the other person’s shoes” and paying attention to “face saving”.

Emotional issues can be addressed through strategies such as letting the other person vent anger, apologizing, and acknowledging both your emotions and the other person’s.

Communications issues tend to be of major significance in many disputes. Active listening techniques such as encouraging, clarifying, restating, reflecting, summarizing, validating and reframing can be of great assistance in a mutual understanding of what caused the conflict and in reaching resolution.

In this process, once both parties have had an opportunity to tell the “story” from their perspective, using active listening techniques, the needs and interests of both parties are clarified. The conflict is defined as a mutual problem to be solved, focusing on common interests.

The parties then brainstorm possible solutions that will meet their common interests, eliminate solutions that are unacceptable (using objective standards) and choose solutions that will meet both parties’ interests.

Finally, if an acceptable solution is reached, the parties develop a plan to implement the solution.

The power of a strong BATNA for each of the parties, helps to ensure that the parties do not feel intimidated to agree to a particular solution, thus increasing the probability of a more acceptable and lasting solution to the dispute.



*“Wonderful job! Great cross section of women leaders. Speakers were of an excellent calibre.”*

# **Workshop 1C-Mount Kilimanjaro: The Challenge of Business and Leadership**

**Catherine Daw, SPM Group Limited**

## **Everything you ever needed to know about running a business you could learn by climbing a mountain**

### **Develop goals**

- Create a life list
- Write them down - what's written is real.
- They are not to be pursued strictly as a destination but to help understand what we need to learn next.
- Goals force us to:
  1. Focus on the most important factors in our lives and give us energy
  2. Choose and decide on best opportunities for success allowing for a sense of direction
  3. Communicate and take action while building confidence
  4. Be accountable through a sense of meaning

### **Plan**

- Preparation is everything – make sure you are ready, willing and able.
- Visualize the end and have an idea of what it takes.
- Make sure you have all the tools you need.
- Enlist experts and support – you can't do it alone.

### **Execute and Manage**

During execution of the plan to reach your goal live by these five key guides:

1. Strength – have the strength for the heavy lifting required along the way
2. Endurance – some days will be long and the going may get tough
3. Adaptability and Flexibility – not everything goes according to plan, be willing to adjust and be flexible; take advantage of situations which may look beyond recovery
4. Risk - be prepared to take chances you might normally not take, allow yourself to step outside your usual risk tolerance – go for it!  
Don't forget your intuition. Trust your instincts.
5. Communicate – up and down, early and often

### **Reaching the Summit**

- Just because you are at the top you may not be finished. Tie up all the loose ends before moving on.
- Celebrate and bask in the glow of your accomplishment(s). Share it with everyone.

### **Lessons Learned**

- Make sure you make time to reflect.
- Look back with the future in mind.



*"This was a great experience to meet people and listen to excellent speakers.  
As a new manager, the information was invaluable. Great job!"*

## **Workshop 1D-Women and Leadership: Provoking Thoughts**

### **Marilyn Gouthro, Director, Lakehead Public Schools**

Today's work and business environment is the exact antithesis of a world of order. It is turbulent and highly competitive. The requirements for success appear to be agility, speed, an ability to seize opportunities and proactive people who can make decisions on the spot.

This new environment is completely changing the way we manage and the way we view the skills needed for leadership.

So what does leadership mean when the pace of change is so rapid that decisions are made with minimal information and short timelines?

Most of all, I think it takes courage to face reality and to help people face change. Ronald Heifetz says: "There are lots of things in life that are worth the pain; being a leader is one of them." Mustering the courage to question the existing situation is a central function of a leader. And that requires the courage to ask at least three important questions:

- What values do we stand for? And are there gaps between those values and how we actually behave?
- What are the skills and talents of our company? And are there gaps between those resources and what the market demands?
- What opportunities does the future hold?

Imagine the differences in behavior between leaders who operate with the idea that leadership means influencing the organization to follow the leader's vision and those who operate with the idea that leadership means influencing the organization to face its problems and live up to its opportunities. This idea – mobilizing people to tackle tough challenges—is what I believe defines the new job of the leader.

There are also some new critical characteristics which have emerged: thinking globally, appreciating cultural diversity, demonstrating technological savvy, building partnerships and sharing leadership.

For too long, we have been hearing the human side of business referred to as the "soft" side. Encouraging the heart is not soft; it is a powerful force in achieving high standards. This is also the only area in research where there is a significant difference in how men and women see themselves as leaders. Female leaders report themselves as engaging in more such behaviors than men, but female constituents do not report that their leaders demonstrate this any more than male constituents.

Excellent leaders who have this quality can be tough and tender and have: guts and grace; firmness and fairness; fortitude and gratitude; passion and compassion. These leaders have courage and they give it to others.

At the end of the day, good leadership is all about keeping hope alive. We do this when we set high standards and real optimism about an individual's capacity to achieve them. This is true in all of our work. We give hope when we give feedback and publicly celebrate and recognize a job well done. Most important, we keep hope alive when we set an example.



*"Excellent speakers, great ideas, opportunity to network, extremely well organized. Congratulations!"*

## ***Workshop 2A-Women and Leadership: Thriving on the Edge*** **Marion Balla, Director, Adlerian Counselling and Consulting Group**

Women owned businesses are growing at a faster rate and succeeding more often than men led businesses in Ontario. The top reasons cited for business success by Canada's Top 100 Women are: teamwork (46%), a focus on customer service (29%), having positive and motivated employees (26%) and an excellent product or service (18%). The greatest challenge presented by these women is balancing work and personal life. It is also clear that relationships are at the top of women's priorities in the workplace.

Women leaders work to enable others to act, model the way, encourage the heart while frequently inspiring a shared vision and attempting to challenge the status quo. They have high expectations for themselves and do not always recognize their leadership abilities.

Kouzes and Posner, well respected researchers in the area of leadership, present their definition of Leadership as, "the art of mobilizing others to want to struggle for shared aspirations."

This definition reinforces the importance of being in relationships and focusing one's efforts on teamwork and customer service. Women leaders tend to have more of a desire to build than a desire to win and they make themselves accessible as well as provide more frequent encouraging feedback to their team members.

Two essential components of strong leaders who thrive on the edge are a sense of humour and being focused in the present time zone. Recognizing that everything is not life or death and that there are many options to deal with each issue as well as encouraging others to grow and develop ensure success and rewards as women leaders.

Within the workshop, each participant had opportunities to give input and share previous experiences as leaders with each other. They were challenged to "lighten up", celebrate how far they have come, create laughter in the workplace and appreciate the abundance in their lives. Further, it was suggested that they challenge their self talk and replace it with positive messages. Participants were encouraged to find a support network of other women with whom to learn, laugh and discuss their evolution as leaders.



*"Fabulous. The sessions were terrific."*

*"It was brilliant and I enjoyed it a great deal."*

*"Very impressed with each of the speakers and how smoothly everything ran."*

## ***Workshop 2B-Panel: The Northern Economic Engine and the Role of Women***

**Livio DiMatteo, Professor and Chair, Department of Economics, Lakehead University**

**Evelina Pan, President, Thunder Bay and District Labour Council**

**Mayor Lynn Peterson, City of Thunder Bay**

**Moderator: Mary Long-Irwin, President, Thunder Bay Chamber of Commerce**

**Livio DiMatteo** – According to standard economic growth theory, the basic determinants of economic growth include the stock of resources, technology, capital and labour. Given that the proportion of the population is approximately 50 percent female, the size, quality and skill composition of the female labour force is also an important determinant of economic growth. The female labour force is certainly an important component of economic activity in the economy of Northern Ontario.

According to the 2001 Census, the size of the female labour force in Northern Ontario's two largest urban centres (Thunder Bay and Sudbury) totaled nearly 66,000 (about one-fifth of northern Ontario's total labour force) and represented 47 and 48 percent of the labour force in each of the respective cities. The female proportion of the labour force in these two cities was slightly higher than the Ontario average suggesting that the northern economy is somewhat more dependent on the female labour force as an economic engine. Average earnings for females were substantially below that for males but female earnings have remained stable over time while male earnings have declined. Moreover, while male employment rates have declined over time, female employment rates have actually risen. This suggests that the female labour force is an important stabilizer when it comes to regional income and subsequent aggregate demand.

When it comes to occupational distribution of the labour force, males tend to dominate in the resource, manufacturing and construction industries while females have tended to be a relatively large share of the labour force in health and education. Moreover, the proportion of the female labour force in health and education is much higher in Northern Ontario than in Ontario as a whole.

Given the decline in traditional Northern Ontario industries such as resource based manufacturing and growth in the broader service sector over time, female employment has been an important economic driver for the region as well as a stabilizing force in the economy. One area of concern is that female employment is still more likely to be lower paying and part-time than male employment though this gap has narrowed over time and will continue to narrow over time given growth in female participation in post-secondary education.

**Evelina Pan** – I was born in New York City to recent Chinese immigrants and we were always encouraged to remember our Chinese roots. My parents instilled in us a sense of fair play and responsibility for each other.

My first foray into social justice and politics came during my first semester at university, when I got involved with the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). The Vietnam War moved my political thinking a little further ahead, as did my first real job.

Because I was young, female and non-white, I was "encouraged", read "pushed" into speaking out publicly on this or that issue. I was raised to do what I was told, so, even though I was really shy and quite reticent to be a public spokesperson, I felt I couldn't say "no". Now I'm glad because I can stand in front of almost any crowd, at any time, and talk about issues that are important to me. And the older I get, the more I realize how important it is that people who are different are seen in the public eye, so we can serve as role models. When I was younger, I didn't like being the token person but, the years have made me somewhat mellower, and I'm not quite so hard-line about tokenism if it's a way for people to see a Chinese woman stand up for an issue.

When we moved to Thunder Bay, I became a member of a union because I work for the public school board where almost everyone is unionized. I started attending union meetings and because I knew the issues and was articulate about them, I started getting elected to various executive positions in my local. My favourite was labour council delegate. Labour Council was the most exciting place I had ever been because we talked about real issues and real change.

Until I became Labour Council President, I didn't really think that being Chinese held me back – certainly no more than being a left-wing politically active woman of a certain age, working with labour and community organizations to advance the cause of working people under attack by corporations and various levels of government. Today, even in communities in the northern part of Ontario, the vista is changing – many more women are active in many roles in the economy and society. Aboriginal workers are

moving to the cities, and away from their home reserves, victims of federal government policies amounting to cultural genocide. New challenges confront us as political-economic forces try to undermine the rights and well-being of working people. We can expect women to be in the forefront of standing up for decency.

**Mayor Lynn Peterson** – Mayor Peterson discussed her personal path to leadership then offered her observations on the role of women in the Northern Economic Engine:

Women are community leaders with vision, energy and spirit. This plays a tremendous role in accomplishing our goals and realizing our dreams as a community. Examples of this spirit include the Northern Ontario Women's Leadership Forum, Thundering Women Festival, Girl Power Conferences, Lunafest & Luna Sings Festival and the Northern Ontario Business Influential Women of Northern Ontario Awards.

Women offer a collaborative, partnership approach. This approach is the way of the future as we address complex issues and challenges that can only be solved by many minds and many hearts working together.

Women represent a relatively large share of the health and education labour force. And, in Northern Ontario, the proportion of women working in health and education is much higher than elsewhere in the province. The Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre and the new Northern Ontario School of Medicine represent a new era for Thunder Bay as a leader in health care and health education. The Mayor's Health Sector Task Force was created in winter, 2004 with 20 health sector partners to bring focus to health as a major growth engine for our community.

The Task Force has been working together ever since on a three-pronged approach of:

- Developing a broad strategy for the growth of the health sector in our community.
- Sharing information and fostering collaboration among health sector partners.
- Using a community-led Action Team approach to develop specific opportunities (examples include the Lake Superior Centre for Regenerative Medicine [Tissue Bank] and Family Physician Incubator).

SHI Consulting estimates we could see as many as 1,600 skilled jobs created in the next decade as a result of the impact of School of Medicine and its partners. This is good news for women. As we look to the future, there are other exciting opportunities for economic development in Thunder Bay including the creation of a mechanism to leverage the energy of the community. That, again, is good news for women, who are leading growth in small business and entrepreneurship.



*"This was a powerhouse Forum. I met new fascinating women, learned something from every session I attended and feel energized to make a difference in my community."*

## **Workshop 2C-Jump out of the Safety Net: Progressive Challenges for Leaders**

### **Dorothy A. Wright, CAO, Northern Ontario School of Medicine**

Dorothy Wright shared her journey of leadership development through public and private sectors culminating in the experience of leading the administrative development of the Northern Ontario School of Medicine (NOSM). NOSM is the first new medical school in Canada for over 30 years, and the first medical school in the country established through collaboration between two universities. All other medical schools in Canada function within one university. In many ways, the establishment and development of NOSM is a new endeavour for which there is little or no precedent. The challenges of implementing a unique organization of significance to Northern Ontario where there was no roadmap was explored, and the leadership challenges and skills required were examined.

Leadership challenges ranged from managing the expectations of the diverse stakeholders, to recruitment of human resources, to technology development, and most recently, the integration of two other medical education organizations into the School. The pace of development is rapid.

Some of the critical skills include: the willingness to take risks; courage to question; high tolerance for ambiguity and change; and continuous learning. Humility, self-awareness, and strong commitment due to value alignment are some of the factors which were discussed. What motivates you to take on an undertaking of this magnitude? Would you do it again? Hindsight is great, however if only I had known...

Participants were encouraged to share their thoughts by addressing the following questions in an open forum:

1. How do women develop these skills? Can you truly develop these skills without jumping out of your safety net whatever you define that to be?
2. What are the barriers to your becoming what you choose to be? Are they perceived or real?

The Ten Commitments of Leadership as taken from The Leadership Challenge by James Kouzes and Barry Posner were shared with participants:

#### *Challenging the Process*

1. Search out challenging opportunities to change, grow, innovate and improve.
2. Experiment, take risk, and learn from the accompanying mistakes.

#### *Inspiring a Shared Vision*

3. Envision an uplifting and ennobling future.
4. Enlist others in a common vision by appealing to their values, interests, hopes and dreams.

#### *Enabling Others to Act*

5. Foster collaboration by promoting cooperative goals and building trust.
6. Strengthen people by giving power away, providing choice, developing competence, assigning critical tasks and offering visible support.


#### *Modelling the Way*

7. Set the example by behaving in ways that are consistent with shared values.
8. Achieve small wins that promote consistent progress and build commitment.

#### *Encouraging the Heart*

9. Recognize individual contributions to the success of every project.
10. Celebrate team accomplishments regularly.

The session ended with a reflection of what constitutes success, and on our uniqueness as women whose leadership is so necessary to make a difference!



*"Having access to such a variety of keynote speakers and workshops has really made a difference to me. I feel I have the motivation now to take the risks and do what I need to do to get to where I want to go."*

## **Workshop 2D-Achieving Success while Maintaining Balance**

### **Esther Bast, CFP, Senior Vice President, Financial Services, Ontario, Investors Group**

Women with demanding leadership roles often must work hard to maintain a healthy balance between their professional and personal lives. Esther Bast has built a successful career at Investors Group while remaining focused on her family. She believes we must work as hard at the personal side of our lives as at the professional side to get the life we want, to have balance. The same principles apply to both. She has found professional and personal success using these five basic principles:

#### *1. Focus on your strengths*

You have to really know yourself, your abilities, and your ideologies. Many people find it easier to list their weaknesses than their strengths. Focus on your top five strengths and see how you can raise the bar. If you are already at a record setting level in some areas, then focus on your methods. Break down the components of your practices and reconstruct and fine-tune them.

#### *2. Set goals*

Vocalize your goals. Set short- and long-term targets for yourself, and be as specific as possible. Set a goal to delegate where you can...at work and at home. Have a vision of where you want to be professional, personally and financially.

#### *3. Be committed and persistent*

High performance athletes do what to improve performance? They are committed to their training. Tiger Woods, after his Masters victory, put in hours of practice to analyze his swing, deconstruct it, and build a new one from scratch. Making this commitment to excellence takes courage.

#### *4. Engage mentors*

Mentors are guides who can help you reach your career and personal goals. Don't wait for one to come to you. Determine which individuals are the strongest at what you want to enhance/expand. Shadow many people for their strengths. Then adapt them and make them your own.


#### *5. Remember, attitude makes the difference!*

To paraphrase Charles Swindell, "Life is 10% of what happens to us and 90% of how we react to it." We have a choice every day regarding the attitude we will embrace for that day.

There are many approaches to personal change. You need to find the trigger that will allow you to see yourself, and your life differently, allowing for change. People who have attained success have taken an honest look at themselves and their environment to get at the truth of how they live, which allows change to happen. Here are some concepts to consider when striving for change:

- It is important to acknowledge how stressful our lives can be. Life IS challenging. Changing our habits so we can grow is VERY challenging. We must give ourselves permission to recover energy, because our energy is finite. Self care is very important. We must learn the art of energy management, not time management.
- Our attempts to change may also be undermined by our subconscious "underlying commitments" that get in the way of the commitments we want to have. For example, we may think we are committed to the idea of saving money, but we may be more committed to the idea of rewarding ourselves by buying ourselves things we don't really need.
- It may be helpful to think of ourselves as the storytellers of the story of our lives. If we see ourselves as the main character in the story of our making, we can gain control of the story. We cannot change the secondary characters in our story, but we can make change happen by changing what we believe about ourselves – the main character.

"We must become the change we want to see." – Mahatma Gandhi



*"Thank you for providing a wonderful arena in which to learn, share experiences, network and gather new ideas.  
The last two days have been awesome!"*

## **Workshop 3B-Strong Leadership Equals Strong Teams** **Marion Balla, Director, Adlerian Counselling and Consulting Group**

**“We see things not as they are but as we are.”**

Perception is reality and within teams, each individual brings his or her own interpretations to every situation which differs, to some degree, from every other member of the team.

Teamwork is hard work but also rewarding work!! The challenge women face as team leaders is to create “practice” sessions for the team. The fact that sports teams practice 95% of the time and play 5% serves as an example to human resource teams. We must build practice sessions on skills, attitudes and behaviours which augment strong and effective teamwork.

Leadership is essential for effective teamwork. Through the workshop, participants were asked to reflect on their own personal experiences in leadership roles from childhood to the present. This serves as the foundation for confidence and self awareness of abilities and knowledge to take on a leadership position.

TEAM was defined as Together Everyone Achieves More, e.g. The whole is greater than the parts.

Participants discussed strong teams as demonstrating energy, enthusiasm, focus, productivity, personal investment, laughter, success, a sense of validation and recognition for self and others and a sense of belonging.

Stephen Covey outlines eight criteria for a successful team and work environment: Commonality, Mutual Respect, Long and Short Term Goals, Communication, Relationships, Flexibility, Results, Appreciation and Recognition. It takes time to build teams and to sustain them. However, if leaders do not invest the time and energy, they spend more time on managing issues and conflicts, dealing with low motivation in employees, staff turnover and absenteeism.

Strong Teams demonstrate a desire to be together, value their team meetings and invest their “best” to ensure success for everyone. They encourage each other to take pride in their accomplishments, look for ways to make new ideas work rather than finding reasons why they will not work, act with initiative and courage and do not give up or give in during challenging and stressful times. Providing leadership with enthusiasm, positive feedback and building on what is already working in the team set a tone and climate that enhances everyone’s work experience as well as their team relationships. Everyone feels essential to the process and outcomes. Absenteeism and low morale are reduced whereas fun and productivity is increased. It is also much more encouraging to be the leader or a member of these teams. Together Everyone Achieves More and has a good time doing it!!



*“Fabulous event that was more than well worth the time and money investment. I learned more than I ever thought I would!”*

## ***Workshop 3C-Insights and Adventures in Collaboration***

**Michael Fox, Partnership Development Advisor, Nishnawbe Aski Development Fund and  
S. Brenda Small, Dean, School of Access and Literacy and Negahneewin College of Indigenous Studies**

### **Michael Fox**

Resource-based sectors as it relates to First Nations' opportunities in Ontario's Far North are becoming the recent 'enablers' for community leadership to emerge. Current First Nation regional economic initiatives as well as future business and partnership potential have triggered regional, national, and global firms to start to discuss and negotiate commercial arrangements with First Nations in Northern Ontario as well as mutually learn from each others' interests and imperatives. Cultural insights on and sensible approaches to partnership arrangements and joint ventures with First Nations will be crucial to any project success. Resource development sectors continue to be a critical part of Northern Ontario's economy and, therefore, decisive leadership by all stakeholders will be crucial in making the vision of northern prosperity materialize for all to be beneficiaries.

### **S. Brenda Small**

In Northwestern Ontario the prospect of transforming educational environments to those that recognize Aboriginal world views, indigenous knowledge and perspectives is great. As the population of Aboriginal peoples increases in Canada there is an enormous challenge for all sectors of the educational system to respond positively to the burgeoning numbers of young Aboriginal students and the presence of Aboriginal perspectives across all learning contexts.

At Confederation College, the work undertaken by Negahneewin Council and Negahneewin College of Indigenous Studies is a real example of how a collaborative effort between Aboriginal peoples and a mainstream "Canadian college" is being operationalized. Collaborations such as these are being developed through leadership principles and strategic partnerships culminating in classroom learning processes.

On the ground, the majority of people engaged in this work are Aboriginal and Canadian women. The leadership of women is profound in this work. The deliberation and diligence that has been taken with regard to this work reflects the energy and tenacity of these women to build, along with men, a place in which cross cultural dialogue and learning can grow. Further, the engagement with one another across cultures and perspectives has been enriched because of the intelligence, experience, warmth, humour and perseverance of committed individuals.

We are creating opportunities whereby Aboriginal and Canadian professors, students, academic managers and staff are learning about Aboriginal and Canadian relations. In a mainstream learning institution, this requires all of us to have a new set of lenses and a questioning of our own assumptions. This shift in thinking and acting requires a heightened sense of responsibility towards and amongst people. Negahneewin is the Anishnabe word for "leading the way" and it is this meaningful term that requires us to work together, every step of the way.



*"Congratulations on a very well-run and inspiring conference! Your sponsors have made a good investment."*

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