

SMALL BUSINESS SUCCESS



May, 2010

Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, June 23rd, 2010 at 7:00 p.m.
Tisdale Civic Centre



Come and experience Codie performing some of the many hits from his CD's

**CODIE PREVOST AND OUR
20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION**

**Entertainment
to follow at
8:00 p.m.**

**FREE
admission**

**Come out and
help us
celebrate our
20th
Anniversary**

Video Conferences Available at the Newsask Office

May 10	1:00 – 3:30	Winning the Jury's Attention: Writing Arts Grants	C/MBSC
11	2:00 – 4:00	Introduction to Pricing & Costing	C/MBSC
12	12:00 – 1:00	PST Information Session presented by Sask Finance	SK Video Conf Net.
13	6:00 – 8:00	I am Accessible – Embracing Diversity in the Workplace	C/MBSC
14	2:00 – 4:00	Seven Business Questions for Artists	C/MBSC
18	9:30 – 12:30	GST Information Workshop	C/MBSC
19	12:00 – 1:00	The Importance of Implementing Basic HR Policies & Procedures for Small Businesses by Maryanne Laroque	SK Video Conf Net.
19	12:30 – 3:30	CRA - Small Business Tax Information Workshop	C/MBSC
20	11:00 – 3:00	Writing Clear Job Descriptions	C/MBSC
21	10:00 – 12:00	Networking Out Loud – Networking for Artist Entrepreneurs	C/MBSC
26	2:00 – 5:00	Your Business Plan – The Home Stretch – Operations & Financial Summary	C/MBSC
26	12:00 – 1:00	Marketing Your business presented by Lance LaCroix	SK Video Conf Net.
27	10:00 – 12:00	27 Common Business Mistakes & How to Avoid Them	C/MBSC
31	1:00 – 3:00	Financial Fitness for Self-Employed Arts Entrepreneurs	C/MBSC
Jun 1	1:00 – 3:00	Opportunities and Pitfalls of High Risk Capital	C/MBSC
1	5:30 – 7:30	Business Opportunities and ideas – Choosing the Right One!	C/MBSC
2	1:00 – 4:00	Are you Ready to be an Entrepreneur	C/MBSC
2	12:00 – 1:00	Successful Networking by Lance LaCroix	SK Video Conf Net.
3	2:30 – 4:30	Business Communicating – Writing for Professionals	C/MBSC
8	10:00 – 12:00	Business Plan Re-Boot	C/MBSC
9	12:00 – 1:00	Business Valuation	SK Video Conf Net.
9	1:00 – 4:00	Should I Provide Credit to My Customers by Len LaFreniere	Sagehill
9	1:00 – 3:00	Critical Elements of Customer Service	C/MBSC
15	10:00 – 12:00	Knowledge Building Cluster, Marketing part 1 – Marketing Basics	C/MBSC
15	12:00 – 2:00	Knowledge Building Cluster, Marketing part 2 – Marketing Research	C/MBSC
16	10:00 – 12:00	Knowledge Building Cluster, Marketing part 3 – Advertising & Promotion	C/MBSC
16	12:00 – 2:00	Knowledge Building Cluster, Marketing 4 – Developing a Marketing Plan	C/MBSC
17	1:00 – 3:00	Trade Show Selling	C/MBSC
23	7:30 – 8:30 am	Market Positioning	SK Video Conf Net.
24	11:15 – 12:15	Selling Your Product or Service to the Government of Canada	C/MBSC
29	10:00 – 12:00	Developing Proposals	C/MBSC
30	12:00 – 4:00	Recruitment & Selection	C/MBSC

There is a fee of \$10.00 per participant per session, pre-registration is required.

Register for one or several.

Community Futures Newsask in partnership with the Saskatchewan Video conference Network is pleased to offer various presentations. Learn from professional and experienced presenters in a casual classroom environment, via video-conference from The Business Link offices in Saskatoon to our boardroom here in Tisdale. To register, contact us at:

admin@newsaskcfdc.ca

www.newsaskcfdc.ca

1-888-586-9855

Check out Community Futures Newsask on Facebook to access detailed descriptions of these seminars.



If your office is interested in renting our Video Conferencing facilities for a group or for your own video conferences the costs are as follows:

- Regular Business Hours - \$50/hour/site (To a maximum of \$250.00/day/site)
- Weeknight After 6:00 - \$120/hour/site
- Saturday (by request) - \$140/hour/site
- Sunday – Closed
- 50% discounts will be available for Not- For- Profit organizations
- 25% discounts for small businesses
- 10%-20% discounts available for bulk purchasing. (Greater than 10 hours)



Sagehill presents...

"Should I Provide Credit To My Customers?"



Date: Wednesday, June 9, 2010
Time: 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.
To register: Call 1 888 – 586- 9855
Fee: \$10.00

Deciding to extend credit to your customers is always a tough decision. Do you have a credit policy? When is an account in arrears? What types of action can be taken? This seminar will provide participants with the necessary tools to help make these important decisions.

Facilitated by: Len LaFreniere of Credit Bureau of Saskatoon Collections

7 Major Hiring Trends for 2010

In the last number of years, trends in hiring have changed dramatically from what they were for decades prior. As the globe continues to shrink and expectations of workers changes, small and large businesses alike have had to make dramatic shifts in how they view hiring and recruitment. The Employment Office is a world--wide recruitment and HR firm with offices around the world (www.theemploymentof@ice.ca), operating one of their offices out of Vancouver, BC. They have conducted a fascinating study on Canadian hiring trends in 2010. The study showed that generally, companies are optimistic about hiring in 2010 and are taking measures to ensure future growth. Following are seven trends for the new year; trends you may want to be aware of as you look to grow your business in the coming year.

#1 Replacing Low--Performing Workers:

Some companies are using this economic recovery period to strengthen their workforce by recruiting top talent to replace low performing workers. **Survey said: 42% of employers said they planned to hire A--players to replace low performers in 2010.**

#2 Flexible Work Arrangements:

Companies plan to continue providing employees with greater flexibility in hopes of maintaining a better work--life balance. **Survey said: 43% of employers say they plan to provide more flexible work arrangements in 2010, which include:**

- Alternate schedules – come in early, leave early OR come in later, leave later – **72%**
- Telecommuting options – **55%**
- Compressed workweeks – work the same hours, but in fewer days – **41%**
- Summer hours – **30%**
- Job sharing – **25%**
- Sabbaticals – **16%**

#3 Rehiring Laid--Off Workers:

As the job market continues to stabilize and show signs of growth, some companies are reversing strategies taken to manage through challenging economic times. **Survey said: Of employers who had layoffs in the last 12 months, nearly 29% reported their company is planning to bring back some employees they let go earlier in the year. Looking ahead, 10% reported they plan to bring back workers in the first quarter, while 9% plan on doing so in the second quarter. An additional 5% said they would rehire employees in the second half of 2010. Companies also indicated that their layoff decisions in the last year may have been made too quickly; 25% of employers said they thought they cut workers too soon and that it ultimately had a negative impact on their business.**

#4 Green Jobs:

Employers plan to continue to be environmentally aware in the new year. “Green jobs” are positions that implement environmentally conscious design, policy and technology to improve conservation and sustainability. **Survey said: One-in-five (20%) employers say they plan to add “green jobs” in 2010, compared to 13% who said they planned to add them in 2009.**

#5 Recruitment Tools:

As employers increase headcounts in 2010, they will turn to a mix of hiring vehicles to find the right candidates. **Survey said: Employers’ report that they plan to increase their recruitment spending on the following:**

- Online recruitment sites – **29%**
- Staffing firms and recruiters – **13%**
- Career fairs – **19%**
- Social and professional networking sites – **18%**
- Business and trade magazine ads – **5%**

#6 Freelance or Contract Hiring:

As many companies rebuild their workforces, they are turning to more freelance or contract workers to help move their businesses forward. **Survey said: 48% of employers anticipate hiring freelancers or contractors in 2010; 13% expect to employ more freelancers or contractors than last year, while 18% expect to hire the same amount and 17% plan to hire fewer.**



#7 Less Business Travel:

While employers are moving away from cost containment and more into growth, one area they still plan to save money on is business travel. **Survey said: More than half (52%) of employers report that there will be less business travel at their organization in 2010 than in 2009.**

Trend spotting is not an exact science, but it is based on some concrete patterns that have been determined by people's past behaviours and ways they indicate they intend on behaving in the future. As you think about growing your team in 2010, keep these trends in mind. They may have an impact on the decisions you make (and those your competitors are already making).

Customer Service Training for Your Staff

There was a time when customer service was exactly what it said it was. It seemed to be universally understood what was involved in making your customers happy, and what it looked like to take good care of your customers. It's not that way anymore. You can't assume that people you hire or even those who already work for you, know what customer services means to you. Your customer service philosophy is something you should be imparting to your staff on an ongoing basis. This is the only way to ensure that your customers are getting the service you want them to have. Training doesn't have to be onerous. It's just sharing your values and expectations with your staff. Here are some things to think about when training your staff on how to deliver the kind of service you expect for your customers.

1) Provide goals and expectations.

What exactly do you want your staff to do to deliver your kind of service? How do you want them to behave – on the phone, behind the counter, on the floor? Your answer will be unique to your business, the product or service you provide and the type of customers you serve. Regardless of the kind of business you have, you need to have a clear idea of the end results you're looking for. Employees need to have clear expectations; they need to know what success "looks like" and how you will be judging their efforts. Be specific with expectations. Don't assume that employees know what you expect.

2) Provide the tools to deliver on your expectations.

Employees need tools, and they need to know how to use those tools, to serve customers effectively. Have they been given the appropriate amount of training for adequate product knowledge? Do they have the right software or equipment to do what is expected? Do they have the authority to make decisions in the customer relationship? Do they know what your policies and practices are with regard to satisfying customers and responding to complaints? The more flexibility you're able to offer and the more clearly you communicate these guidelines, the better able employees will be to meet customer needs. Customers benefit too, when employees are able to resolve situations "on the spot" instead of having to "talk to my manager."

3) Provide practical, relatable training.

Your customer service training should be based on real life experiences – yours and those of others in your company or your industry. Use examples of things that have actually happened to help to highlight bad/good/better/best examples of working with clients and customers. Use your most successful people to assist you in training and coaching others. Use role-play to provide examples of how to deal with common challenging situations. Provide employees with an opportunity to "practice" their responses. When a "real situation" occurs they will have a higher comfort level about their ability to respond effectively.



4) Provide opportunities for shared learning.

Have everyone on the team involved in the training process. Ask them for their worst customer service experiences – allow them to tell the stories of how they didn't do very well because those situations are perfect for teaching "what could you have done different?" You need a good balance of both failure and success stories to build a strong service culture. Similarly, take time to celebrate your successes and to share these success examples with all employees. Sometimes the best customer service training for staff can be a good debriefing of either a positive or negative customer service situation.

5) Provide an example.

Your staff will watch not only how you interact with customers, but what you say about your customers. If your attitude toward customers is disparaging, this sends a very strong, negative message to employees. In fact, it shows a distinct disrespect for your customers, and no matter what you say you want them to do, they are not likely to respect your customers any more than you do. Make sure you're being a strong role model --- both in word and deed. Gone are the days when you can hire someone in a customer service role and just assume they know what that looks like. If you really want your staff to deliver excellent service, you must take the time to show them what that means. Your customers will see the difference, and so will your business.



PO Box 357 903-99th Avenue, Tisdale Saskatchewan S0E 1T0

Tel: 306-873-4449 Fax: 306-873-4645

admin@newsaskcfdc.ca

www.newsaskcfdc.ca