

Small Business Success

December, 2011



Community Futures Newsask



Video Conferences Available at the Newsask Office

Newsask is committed to offering citizens in the region video conference training, seminars and workshops that are made available through the Saskatchewan Video Conference Network. There are many sponsoring entities including: Canada Business Infosource, Women Entrepreneurs, Canada Revenue Agency, and the Province of Saskatchewan. An amazing variety of video conferences are available to anyone interested but they must register in advance with the Community Futures Office. Learn from professional and experienced presenters in a casual classroom environment, via video-conference to our boardroom here in Tisdale. There is a \$10.00 charge for each session to cover costs and any handouts. The facilities are also available to community groups for a reasonable rental fee.

Newsask is utilizing a Facebook page to list the Video Conferences available, the dates and a short description. To access the information, log onto Facebook, and search for: "Community Futures Newsask."

For information or to register, contact our office at 306-873-4449 OR 1-888-586-9855. E-mail: admin@newsaskcfdc.ca or checkout the website at www.newsaskcfdc.ca

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1-Dec	10:00-12:00	Business Opportunities and Ideas- Choosing the Right One!	cmbsc
8-Dec	10:00-12:00	Introduction to Pricing & Costing	cmbsc
8-Dec	1:00-4:00	CRA- Year End T4 Preparation Seminar	cmbsc
13-Dec	5:30-8:30p	GST/HST- New HST Rules and Information Seminar for New Registrants	cmbsc
14-Dec	10:00-1:00	CRA: Small Business Tax Information Workshop	cmbsc
15-Dec	1:00-5:00	Writing Clear Job Descriptions	cmbsc
4-Jan	1:00-3:00	Business Opportunities and Ideas- Choosing the Right One!	cmbsc
10-Jan	10:00-12:00	The Basics of Exporting	cmbsc
10-Jan	1:00-3:00	Introduction to Balance Sheets	cmbsc
11-Jan	10:30-1:30	GST/HST- New HST Rules and Information Seminar for New Registrants	cmbsc
11-Jan	2:00-3:30	PST: An introduction to Provincial Sales Tax	cmbsc
12-Jan	1:00-4:30	CBSA Custom Workshop	cmbsc
12-Jan	5:30-9:30p	Interviewing Skills	cmbsc
17-Jan	5:30-7:30p	Facebook for Business	cmbsc
18-Jan	1:00-4:00	Electronic Services for Business Seminar	cmbsc
18-Jan	6:00-8:00p	Selling your Business: Why Selling to your Employees may be the Smartest Decision	cmbsc

19-Jan	12:00-2:00	Lunch and Learn: Optimize Your Sales and Grow your Business	cmbssc
25-Jan	2:00-4:00	Survey Design for Customer Research	cmbssc
25-Jan	6:00-8:00p	Co-op Myths& Misconceptions Panel: Questions Answered	cmbssc
26-Jan	1:00-4:00	CRA- Year End T4 Preparation Seminar	cmbssc
28-Jan	9:00-12:00	Your Business Plan- Getting Started	cmbssc
28-Jan	1:00-4:00	Your Business Plan- Home Stretch: Operations and Financial Summary	cmbssc

Check out **Community Futures Newsask** on **Facebook** to access detailed descriptions of our workshops & seminars.



Challenge 4 Communities

Thank-you for your continuous votes. Our winners will be announced in January's Newsletter.

4 weeks, 4 challenges, 4 winners, 4 prizes.
 1st - \$3,000; 2nd - \$2,000; 3rd - \$1,000; 4th - \$500



Simply Accounting Premium 2011

Community Futures Newsask is offering training for Simply Accounting Premium 2011.

The time: 7:00 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (3 hours)
 The dates: Jan 16, 18, 23, 25, and 30, 2012. (5 sessions)
 Registration deadline: January 4, 2012 (we need to order the manuals.)
 Please note: our office is closed Dec 26 – 30, 2011

The Level 1 courseware covers:

- Introduction – Setup and the General Journal
- Inventory & Services
- Accounts Payable
- Accounts Receivable
- Payroll
- Reporting, Miscellaneous & Period End Procedures



The cost: Tuition - \$200.00; Manual - \$36.00 (including GST)

For complete course information and computer requirements, go to our website at <http://www.newsaskcfdc.ca/Simply.html>, drop into our office or contact us for registration information.
 Phone: 306 873-4449 (in Tisdale) or 1 888 586-9855 toll free
 Email: admin@newsaskcfdc.ca

Video Conference Equipment and Room Rental

Do you have meetings throughout the province requiring travel time, expenses and meals?

The Community Futures network in Saskatchewan has 12 offices equipped with Video Conferencing equipment that can save you travel time and expense to have your meetings. You can see and talk to your co-workers or make presentations for clients in another region of the province. Our Video Conference can be linked with non CF offices as well.

Save considerable time and expenses by having meetings in your community or region.

The Ministry quotes, “Over the past few years, the Saskatchewan Ministry of Agriculture has held a number of successful video conference meetings and presentations. The Ministry has been able to connect directly to producers across Saskatchewan and save substantially on staff travel costs.”



Community Futures Offices in Saskatchewan with Video Conference Facilities:

Community Futures Newsask (Tisdale)	Community Futures Sagehill (Bruno)
Community Futures South Central (Assiniboia)	Community Futures Southwest (Swift Current)
Community Futures Sunrise (Weyburn)	Community Futures Ventures (Yorkton)
Community Futures Visions North (LaRonge)	Community Futures Northwest (North Battleford)
Community Futures Beaver River (Meadow Lake)	Community Futures East Central (Broadview)
Community Futures Meridian (Kindersley)	Community Futures MidSask (Outlook)
Community Futures Prince Albert & District (Prince Albert)	

Check with each location for their rental fees. Our website at www.newsaskcfdc.ca has “Links” for each CF office.

Other locations with Video Conference equipment may be able to link in as well. In the past, our clients have had presentations from other sites such as Calgary — eliminating the need for the expense to bring in a speaker or presenter.

Community Futures Newsask has to offer...

YES, Newsask will come to your community & complete the following workshops for as few as four people.

- Introduction to Business Management
- Introduction to Entrepreneurship
- Introduction to Marketing
- What is a Business Plan
- Branding your Business



Business by Design

Using Visual Tools to Generate Excitement for Your Business

In your mind you have a very clear vision for your business. You know exactly where you see it going and how you are going to get it there. You live it and breathe it every day and it rolls around in your head during almost everything you do. You are looking at that picture 14 hours a day. But are the people on your team (your family, your employees, your partners) seeing the same picture? Do they know what you see and are they aware of their role in helping you get there? Having it written down in a formal plan is effective, especially in helping keep you on track, but using creativity and visual tools can help the people around you get on board with your vision in a much more powerful way. Think of the difference between watching a movie on the big screen and having someone else tell you about the movie. Which has more impact? When they see the picture too, they can get excited about it. When they see their role in the picture, they'll work twice as hard to make it happen. Here are some creative ways you can start that process.

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Map

Just like we use maps when we are looking for directions to get from point A to point B, draw a map that shows where you are now, where you want to go, and the route you want to take to get there. One method, if you're particularly creative, is to draw the map yourself and then present it to your team and discuss the details. You might find it more helpful to simply enter your start and end points and have your team brainstorm the potential routes. You might be surprised at the things they come up with. Use all the typical things you'd find on a map - roadblocks, street signs, bridges, rivers or lakes, expressways and back-roads. There are all kinds of processes to get where you want to go. You might even want to discuss alternate routes in case you run into construction, or road closures. Once your team has created the map, have it reproduced in a large format and hang it in your staff room or office as a visual reminder of your chosen direction.



Stairway

Another effective visual is the image of a staircase. Draw a staircase with the bottom step being where you are now and the top step being where you'd like to be in a given timeframe (say 3 years). Write down the broad steps that need to be taken to achieve your goal (with timeframes for each step). Once you've listed the broad steps, break each step down into a smaller staircase and write down the micro-steps you need to take to get to the next main level. Again, once you're done, enlarge it and place it somewhere prominent so it becomes a daily reminder of your goals.

Blueprint

If you've ever built a house, you'll know it's impossible to do so without a blueprint. This is another visual tool that can be effective in imagining your vision. It's a bit more metaphorical than the first two, but can be fun nonetheless - especially if you or someone on your team is familiar with the blueprint process. What is your foundation? What do your studs consist of? Where will you place the walls and why? Where are the doors and in which direction will they open? Where will your windows be located? How much room do you need for storage? How many floors will your building have and how will they be organized? What will make up your roof? What materials will you use to build with? Create your blueprint and display it so your team can see how you're progressing on the building of your business "house."

Drawing

Drawing can be a fun and creative way to envision business success. Gather your team together and let them come up with the metaphor that will represent your business. Maybe it will be a farm, or a city, perhaps a playground, an office complex, a resort, or a small town. Let your creative juices flow. Once you've created your metaphor, draw it out and ask yourself the questions that might be pertinent to that image. If you've chosen a small town for example, where will you put your town hall, the library, the industrial sector, and what do each of these represent in your business? Have some fun with this. You could even hire an artist once you're done to create a professional representation of your work. Hang it in your reception area. It will be a great conversation starter for people who come in to your business and will give you and your staff the opportunity to share your vision with them as well.

Photograph Collage

If you're a hobby photographer, take pictures of things that represent your business success and vision. It might be the wide open spaces of a cornfield that represent infinite possibility, it might be a mountain climber that represents commitment and dedication to a task, it could be a computer chip that represents progress, innovation and the future. Combine them to create an artful collage of the elements that are important to you. Get your team to contribute their photos and/or ideas to add to what's already there. Look at each photo you've presented and ask what other images or ideas are generated from that photograph. Once all your photos are collected, mount them onto a large board and laminate it to display in your workplace. Don't let not being a photographer stop you from trying this exercise. There are plenty of sites on the web to download stock photos inexpensively. These sites are highly searchable so you could type in concrete words like "field" or "street signs", but you can also type in context words like "dedication" and "ingenuity" and it will bring up images that relate to your chosen theme.

If you're feeling a little stuck and want to generate excitement about your business vision, try one of these creative activities. They'll not only give you and your team a concrete visual reminder of your goals, but will provide some fun, out-of-the-ordinary experiences for everyone to build a stronger sense of team and synergy in your business.

Killer Clutter

Three Ways That Clutter Can Affect Your Business Productivity

If your business isn't client-facing and you don't regularly see customers at your location, you might not think that keeping your office clean and clutter free is important. After all, if you're the only one who sees the clutter, does it really matter? So your desk is a mess with piles of paper everywhere - you know where everything is right? So you've got a few days of dirty dishes on the counter - who's going to notice or care? And those boxes, spread throughout the office that need to go into storage? They'll get there eventually. You need to focus on your business and not tidying up, right? Even if no one but you sees it, clutter can negatively effect your personal productivity. Here are some good reasons to think about giving your office a top-to-bottom clean-up, and then keeping it that way.

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Clutter Undermines Your Productivity

Clutter is a distraction, whether you realize it or not. You might think you're concentrating on something else, but those dirty dishes and wayward boxes really are on your mind, even if only subconsciously. They're on your mental "to do" list for when you have a moment, and while they are sitting there, they're taking up valuable space and causing you to be less focused on what you're doing. When your space is tidy, your mind is able to concentrate more fully on the tasks at hand. When your space is clean, you'll actually find yourself calmer, more physically relaxed, and more focused.

Clutter Leads the Way to Procrastination

Clutter calls you from one thing to another, and if you are the procrastinating type, it keeps you from focusing on your work by constantly demanding your attention. Say you are working on a difficult project and you get stuck. You get up to take a stretch break before you get back to the problem, but as you look around the room you notice the piles of paper on the counter and head over to begin sorting through them. You then want to put the papers away but realize your filing cabinet is overflowing and you can't put the organized papers in there until you clear out the top drawer. Once the drawer is clear and you've filed your papers, you need to do something with all the stuff you've taken out of the drawers, and on it goes. Your cluttered environment can seriously affect your concentration. If there was nothing to distract you because your environment was neat and tidy, you'd be much more likely to simply sit back down after your stretch, and dive back into the problem.

Clutter Kills Time

It is simply not possible to be organized when your environment is full of clutter. Whenever you need something, you will waste valuable time searching for it. Hours can be spent looking for things, and over time those hours add up. The time that you waste could have been spent on valuable business activities like producing quality work, marketing your services, selling your product, or meeting potential new clients.

Take a look around you. Be honest. What is the clutter factor in your workspace? Could you use a day's worth of de-cluttering? The time you spend clearing up your space will pay you back in spades with increased concentration, more energy, and greater productivity. When you're done, you'll breathe a sigh of relief and wonder why you didn't do it sooner!



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