

Small Business Success

March, 2011



Loans Advice Support

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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|--------|--------------|---|--------|
| 15-Mar | 3:00-5:00 | Facebook for Business | C/MBSC |
| 15-Mar | 10:00-1:00 | Are You Ready to be an Entrepreneur? | C/MBSC |
| 16-Mar | 1:00-3:00 | Insurance Specialist- Jason Thompson | C/MBSC |
| 17-Mar | 1:00-4:00 | Your Business Plan - Getting Started | C/MBSC |
| 17-Mar | 12:00-2:00 | Payroll Information Seminar | SVCN |
| 23-Mar | 1:00-5:00 | Interviewing Skills | C/MBSC |
| 23-Mar | 7:30-8:30am | Part Time or Contract Workers, Which Suits Your Business? | SVCN |
| 24-Mar | 1:30-2:30 | Exporting Seminar | SVCN |
| 24-Mar | 3:00-4:30 | Importing Vehicle Seminar | SVCN |
| 24-Mar | 10:00-12:30 | Importing Seminar | SVCN |
| 30-Mar | 1:00-3:00 | Marketing Specialist- Cal Harrison | C/MBSC |
| 30-Mar | 1:00-4:00 | Your Business Plan- Operating and Financial Summary | C/MBSC |
| 31-Mar | 10:30-12:00 | PST: An introduction to Provincial Sales Tax | C/MBSC |
| 31-Mar | 12:30- 3:30 | New HST Rules and Information Seminar for New Registrants | C/MBSC |
| 5-Apr | 10:00- 12:00 | Microsoft Office Word 2007- Tips for Small Business | C/MBSC |
| 5-Apr | 12:00- 2:00 | Microsoft Office Word 2007- Tips for Small Business | C/MBSC |

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|--------|--------------|---|---------|
| 6-Apr | 9-12:00 p.m. | Small Business Seminar (Presented by: Darlene Kennedy) | NEWSASK |
| 6-Apr | 1-3:30p.m. | LIVE- GST Seminar (Presented By: Darlene Kennedy) | NEWSASK |
| 6-Apr | 1:00- 3:00 | Accounting Specialist- Brian Walker | C/MBSC |
| 6-Apr | 10:00- 12:00 | Microsoft PowerPoint '07 Tips for Power Profess.Presentation | C/MBSC |
| 7-Apr | 1:00- 5:00 | Effective Employee Relations | C/MBSC |
| 7-Apr | 12:00-1:00 | Saskatchewan Provincial Sales Tax (PST) Seminar | SVCN |
| 13-Apr | 1:00- 3:00 | Project Management Specialist- Roger Samuel | C/MBSC |
| 13-Apr | 12:00-1:00 | What You Need to Know About Protecting Your Intellectual Property, Trademarks | SVCN |
| 14-Apr | 12:00-2:30 | GST Seminar | SVCN |
| 20-Apr | 1:00- 3:00 | Legal Specialist- Joel Dudeck | C/MBSC |
| 21-Apr | 3:00-5:00 | Search Engine Part 1- Optimization (SEO): On Page Tactics | C/MBSC |
| 27-Apr | 7:30-8:30am | How to Build Your Brand | SVCN |
| 27-Apr | 1:00- 3:00 | E-Business Specialist | C/MBSC |
| 28-Apr | 3:00- 5:00 | Search Engine Part 2- Marketing (SEM): Off-Page Tactics | C/MBSC |

Check out Community Futures Newsask on [Facebook](#) to access detailed descriptions of our workshops & seminars.



Coming Events

Some Video Conferences that may be of a "timely" interest

... All this for only \$10.00

Facebook for Small Business

March 15, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m. Presented by Sagehill

Topics covered will include the following:

- How your Business can maximize its presence on this still growing online platform
- Modern earth web design
- What every Business needs to have a strong presence on Facebook
- Advanced Strategy for those Businesses who want to maximize their leverage on this dynamic and highly popular platform.
- Information technology

Darlene Kennedy

Darlene Kennedy is coming to Tisdale, SK to present two seminars to anyone who is interested. She will be here in person to deliver her presentations.

Small Business Seminar. April 6 from 9:00 to 12:00. This seminar is for people who have just started or are about to start a small business. We will be covering topics such as:

- starting your business
- record keeping
- fiscal periods and accounting methods
- income and expenses
- capital vs. operating expenses
- payment of taxes



GST/HST New Registrant Seminar. April 6 from 1:00 to 3:30 at Community Futures Newsask

- How to complete the GST Tax Return for Registrants
- The Basics of the GST
- Services offered by Canada Revenue Agency, Client Services
- Methods to simplify tax collection and remittance

Maximizing Marketing Using Email and Social Media

Email, Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, YouTube... to name a few. For an excellent introduction to many "Social Media" marketing sites, go to <http://img.constantcontact.com/docs/pdf/get-started-building-your-social-media-presence.pdf> and access "Get Started Building Your Social Media Presence"

This article provided in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Many small business owners have embraced email marketing as an important strategic component to their marketing plans. Given how quickly things are changing with the onset of social media, business owners must be savvy and quick to respond to the way customers are receiving messages. Gail Goodman, CEO of Constant Contact (www.constantcontact.com), a web-based provider of email, social media and event marketing and online survey tools for small businesses says, "For email marketers, there only appeared to be one major trend that mattered in 2010. It's [social media] a game changer that presents both opportunities and challenges for businesses to connect with customers. Because of the impact of social media, you can't just "talk at" customers anymore. They now expect to be part of the conversation and part of your business story. Social media has irrevocably changed the email marketing landscape."

In order to be effective in today's marketplace, your email marketing needs to persuade readers to share the content you've provided. This will only happen if you tap in to what's important to customers and you provide content that not only solves their problems, but is also entertaining and invites participation. "Email marketing and social media are complementary." says Goodman. "While email offers a way to directly contact your customers via their inboxes, social media provides new ways to share your content and engage in conversations with networks of people. One without the other is an incomplete solution to your marketing needs."



Here are some things you can do to create an experience for your customers through your email marketing.

1. **Make use of social media tools that allow for sharing.** Put social media buttons in your newsletter. If you haven't already got a Twitter and Facebook account, get going. Include a Like/Tweet button or other ways to share information in every email newsletter. You will maximize your marketing if you can get your existing customers to share your newsletter with their network.
2. **Find a way to get people actively involved.** Readers are no longer happy with just static information. They want to be engaged. You can do this by leading them to other places from your newsletter. Have links to related articles or items that are "hot" topics in your industry. Create links to special coupons or offers, or to an exclusive contest or survey you're featuring on Facebook. Offer a free or discounted item to people through Twitter. The more engaged they are, the greater your message distribution, and the more likely they are to come back to your website.
3. **Solicit feedback.** Goodwin advises, "Invite questions and feedback, and join the conversation. Then use the frequently asked questions and the feedback gathered as material for newsletter content. At the same time, spark a conversation and continue it via email and social media." Offer rewards to people who respond with information you actually use. Also, simply ask them for feedback on the newsletter itself. Do they have any suggestions for improvement, what would they like to see more/less of?
4. **Monitor your efforts.** Not every tool will work for you, but you need to know which ones do. When you set up social media tools, make sure you have a way to monitor how they are used. Perhaps your customers will be active "tweeters", or maybe they gravitate to Facebook. Make sure you have a way to check out which of the additional links to information or offers are being used most often. Maximize your use of the tools that your customers are using most often.
5. **Use a professional to help you get set up.** While developing social media options is not terribly difficult - anybody can set up a Twitter or Facebook account - it will not be effective if you aren't using it properly. Find someone who does this professionally to help you set up a social media strategy for your business.

They will help you look at your industry, your customers, your product or service, and recommend the best tools for you. They will also assist you with the monitoring process, a vital component to an effective strategy. The investment you make will more than pay for itself in a short period of time.

"Today's opportunities for email marketers to share content and reach customers on social media were unimaginable just a few years ago." says Goodwin. Social media marketing is here to stay, and customers who are growing up with social media will never go back to the static type of messaging we saw in years past. Adapting to the needs and desires of this new generation of customers is essential for small business success in the future.

Looking for Work? Looking for Sales?

As a career assessment coach, I'm in the business of teaching people how to more effectively look for work. As a small business coach, I'm in the business of teaching entrepreneurs how to look for sales. I had always thought these two aspects of my business were very different, but recently I was struck by the parallels between them. Looking for a job and trying to generate sales for your small business are really quite similar. The context may be different, but the activities are the same. People in career transition want to make themselves attractive to potential employers. Entrepreneurs want to make themselves attractive to potential customers. The job seeker is selling him or herself and their skills and experience; the entrepreneur is selling his or her product or service. A small business owner can apply the same principles to generating sales for their business. Here are the steps a job seeker takes in finding a new job, and the steps a small business could take in finding new sales.

This article provided in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Step 1 - Update your business resume (your marketing tools)

Job seekers these days are taught to keep their resumes crisp, clear, professional and current. When you are trying to generate new sales, you need to ensure that your marketing tools are also up-to-date and reflect your products or services accurately. This means your print materials are not outdated, that your website is accurate and current and, that your advertising is targeted. Nothing says "shoddy" like marketing that is out of date or inaccurate.

Step 2 - Network like crazy (tell everyone what you're up to)

I coach job seekers to use every event as an opportunity to network. When you are trying to generate new sales, it's as important as ever to make sure you are using your networks effectively. Attending networking meetings and events, talking to existing customers about your offerings, getting together with other business owners to generate new leads, working with complementary businesses to generate reciprocal referrals - these are all vital activities for generating new leads and more sales.

Step 3 - Customize your search (know what your customers want)

Every job seeker is looking for a perfect match between their skills and experience, and the employer's needs - someplace they will "fit". Understanding what your customers want and creating a "fit" between their needs and your offerings is really at the core of the sales process. If you don't know what's important to your customers, how can you possibly create a match with your product? Engage in market research often so you can keep your finger on the pulse of your customers' needs, wants and expectations.

Step 4 - Target your search (qualify your prospects)

Targeting your job search means you are only applying where you know there will be a good fit between you and the employer. In sales, qualifying your prospects saves you hours of time that could be wasted trying to sell to people who will never buy. Know who your customer is, and don't waste your time on people who are not a good fit for your business. Not everyone is your customer, so spend your time finding the people who are.

Step 5 - Prepare for the interview (review your sales presentation)

Being prepared to answer all kinds of interview questions is an important part of the job search process. So is being able to



confidently talk about yourself and your skills. Don't get lazy. Make sure your sales presentation is current, interesting, error free, and engaging. Your capacity to clearly talk about your business offerings creates consumer confidence, and that leads to sales. Practice, review, and be ready!

Step 6 - Follow up (make an impression)

Regardless of whether a job seeker gets the job, I advise them to follow up with a note of thanks for the interview or the opportunity. When you don't get the sale, do the same thing. Send a note thanking the prospect for spending time with you, and let them know you'd love to hear from them if anything changes. When you do get the sale, show the client your appreciation for choosing your business. Either way, you make an impression that could lead to more sales down the road.

Think about your sales process as you would approach looking for a job. In a way you ARE looking for work with your business. A job seeker is looking for an employer who will pay him for his skills and expertise. You are looking for a customer who will do the same.

5 Rules of Management

In Richard Templar's book, [The Rules of Management](#), he offers 100 rules for effective management. This little book is more than worth its price as the advice is based on common sense and solid business principles, and is practical and doable for anyone in management. Some of the principles are about managing others, some of them are about managing yourself; all are great for small business owners as they consider how to effectively manage their businesses. In this article you'll find five of Templar's Rules.

This article provided in cooperation with [Blue Beetle Books](#)

Know what you are supposed to be doing, and what you are actually doing.

Running a small business requires activity. Lots of activity. But the activity isn't always moving you toward your goal, even though it may keep you busy. What is your end goal? A specific income level? A measure of business growth? Time for your family? Money to travel or to create a retirement nest egg? Be clear about where you want to go, and ensure that the things you're doing will get you there. Take stock of all the "activity" that goes on in your business, and measure it against your goals. If they are moving you forward, keep going. If they have little or nothing to do with your goal, stop doing them. Sometimes simply becoming aware of what you are actually doing as opposed to what you are supposed to be doing, helps you to prioritize and reorganize your tasks to make them congruent with your ultimate goals.



Be ready to unlearn. What works will change, and so must you.

Anyone who's been in business for any length of time will have experienced this. You do things a certain way and everything's working out fine, so you keep doing it. Until one day, for no reason that makes sense to you, it doesn't work anymore. Trying harder to do those same things will only result in frustration. Things change. People change. The economy changes. Your competitors change. Your industry changes. Sometimes success is in your capacity to unlearn what you've done successfully, and to find a new thing that works. "Don't get stuck in any ruts. Be ready to spin on a coin if you have to." says Templar. "Good management is about adapting to change rapidly and skillfully. If you don't, you'll go the way of the dinosaurs." Be alert to what's working in your business, and be ready and willing to quickly make changes when what used to work, no longer does.

See the forest AND the trees.

Some people are really good at seeing the big picture. Some people are great at details. Business owners must be good at both. It's imperative that you have a strong vision of your business from 10,000 feet up. You know what it's supposed to look like, and where it's headed. You also need to know how to make it happen, and that's in the details. It's in the choices you make every day, the people you hire, the directions you take, what you are willing and not willing to do. Seeing the big picture of your business is important, but you can't stay up in the air and be effective on the ground. You also can't put your head down and work the details without knowing what the big picture looks like. Develop your capacity to see the forest in its entirety, and get good at working among the trees as well.

Adopt minimalism as a management style.

According to Templar, minimalist management is about getting more by doing less. He is talking about simplicity, not laziness. Management should be simple and have great clarity. "Minimalism means not issuing lengthy reports, or sending out memos every 20 minutes. It means keeping the rules to a minimum and letting people get on with their jobs. It means mission statements that make sense and are clear and easy to understand." says Templar. If it takes you 10 steps to do something you should be able to do in two, or if you're spending more time explaining complicated processes than getting the work done, you're wasting valuable time. Minimalistic management means simplifying everything in your business so that it can be clearly understood by everyone, from your staff to your customers, and can be executed with clarity and simplicity.

Keep learning, especially from your competitors.

"Nothing teaches us better than a better competitor." says Templar. Are you the type of business that gets angry when a competitor steals a customer? Or do you ask yourself what that competitor did to make that customer willing to walk away from you? Templar suggests spending time each week examining what your competitors are doing. How are they being effective in the marketplace? How are they doing things better than you? How can you change what you're doing to earn a greater share of the marketplace? Competition grows the market, and if you don't embrace it and learn from it, you'll be left in the dust.

Apply these five "rules" and you'll see a difference in your business success. Do yourself a favour and pick up this international best seller to see how the other 95 rules can impact the way you manage your business!



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