

ESSENTIAL SKILLS Managers Need for a Positive Work Environment



Donna Belbin, AMM Events Coordinator

FOCUSING ON RELEVANT EXPERIENCES

The 2009 AMM Education Program began on February 27 with a seminar focusing on how leaders and managers can build productive and positive work environments.

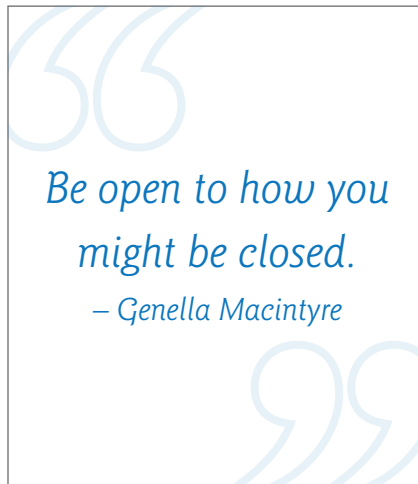
Seminar leader **Genella Macintyre** offered her coaching and mediation skills and personal leadership experience to the group of 70+ municipal officials. As the principal of Partners in Discovery, Genella's background includes experience in human resource management, executive leadership, personal and executive coaching. Her passion lies in providing practical solutions for personal and professional challenges.

So, how can leaders and managers create the "ideal" work environment? It begins by building positive and trusting relationships with employees. Genella created a relaxed learning environment and there's no doubt that the lessons learned would be easily implemented back at the workplace using four main guidelines – giving feedback, coaching for performance, documenting discipline and dealing with conflict.

FEEDBACK

Participants were encouraged to provide effective feedback by focusing on the person's behavior, not the individual. For example:

- Whether the feedback is positive or critical, be sure to focus on specific behaviours.



- When giving positive feedback, be sure to let the person know about the positive impact their behavior has had.
- With critical feedback, sometimes called constructive criticism or negative feedback, again, define the behavior specifically. You must be able to see or hear the behavior you want to address.
- And always give the person the opportunity to respond or to ask for further clarification.

COACHING

Coaching is not just about what you do, it is about how you view your role as a leader in your organization. If you view yourself as the leader who

works with employees to assist their learning and development as it relates to their performance success, you are acting as a coach. Coaching also allows employees to gain the skills, abilities and knowledge they need to develop themselves professionally and become more effective in their jobs. Coaching is an effective and useful strategy because it places emphasis on motivating employees and developing their skills versus managing their performance.

DISCIPLINE

Documenting discipline is a necessary tool as a coach/leader and beneficial to the employee; be sure to keep a clear record on file. The acronym FOSA is used as follows:

F – FACTS – Note what happened, when it happened, where it happened and who was involved.

O – OBJECTIVES – What are the performance expectations and when were they communicated to the employee?

S – SOLUTIONS – What forms of assistance or coaching were offered to the employee to help them solve the performance problem?

A – ACTIONS – What are the consequences for the employee if they do not improve their performance?

Be sure to take advantage of the next AMM Education Seminar:

The 'Ethical' Moment & Effective Self Management

Friday, April 17, 2009 Keystone Centre in Brandon.


Visit the AMM website for session details and to register.

www.amm.mb.ca

CONFLICT

Conflict is not always about confrontation, arguments or even a heated debate. Conflict is a situation where one person's concerns are different from another person's. There are many causes of conflict, and Genella advised that a conflict resolution strategy should incorporate the following:

- Both perspectives – yours and the other person's;
- Solving the problem versus winning or losing;
- Suspending judgment by being open to all explanations for the other person's behaviour;
- Listening well;
- Understanding that emotion is part of conflict and helping to defuse the other person by allowing them to vent their feelings; and
- Watching for defensive behavior and validating while gently and firmly redirecting.

Genella noted that leaders are the "most contagious" in an organization. A leader who demonstrates and values good communication, trust, participation, respect, accountability and professionalism will garner motivated employees who feel valued and perform at their highest level. An employee who is unaware of their performance and their leader's expectations, is not included in decision making and not looked on as an individual becomes de-motivated, causes conflict and ultimately adds to employee turn-over. Most employees leave a manager, not a job. 



Workshop Leader Genella Macintyre with (L-R) Alice Bourgouin, AMM Interlake District Director - Rural, Councillor Gord Grenkow, RM of Rosser, and Councillor Herb Dick, City of Winkler.



Over 70 participants attended the first AMM Education Seminar of 2009.



TRANSPORTATION MATTERS

A commitment to building a safe, modern and reliable transportation system is a commitment to a prosperous and competitive economy for all Manitobans.

As Canada faces a total transportation and infrastructure deficit of more than \$120 billion, it is clear that municipal and provincial governments cannot fix the problem alone, it requires sustained federal participation.

The Manitoba Heavy Construction Association will continue to press all governments to make transportation and infrastructure a top policy priority.

Phone: (204) 947-1379 • Fax: (204) 943-2279 • www.mhca.mb.ca



Presence. Profile. Impact.