

June 2023

CHUKUNI
Communities Development Corporation



*Serving the Red Lake
and Ear Falls Area of
Northwestern Ontario*



Small Business Newsletter

A golden trophy with two handles, sitting on a hexagonal base. It is illuminated by spotlights from above, creating a dramatic effect against a dark background with a starry pattern.

**CHUKUNI BUSINESS
AWARDS**

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 30, 2023

SAVE THE DATE

Entertainment will be:
THE PATRICIA PLAYERS



Cultivating a Beginner's Mind

In today's fast-paced business world, the pressure to constantly innovate and improve can be overwhelming, particularly for small business owners. Cultivating a beginner's-mind approach can give you an edge over your competition.

The beginner's mind is a concept from Zen Buddhism, which refers to approaching a task or problem with an open and curious attitude as if you were experiencing it for the first time. This mindset can help you see your business in a fresh light, identify new opportunities, and find innovative solutions to problems.

Let's explore four ways to incorporate this thinking into your business life. In each case, we have used a bakery business as an example of how it might work in practice.

1. Question Assumptions

One of the most significant advantages of the beginner's mind is that it allows you to question assumptions you may have taken for granted. As a business owner, you may assume that your products or services meet your customer's needs, but is this the case? Are there untapped markets or new niches that you could be serving? By asking these questions, you can open up new possibilities for growth and innovation.

A bakery owner might assume their customer base is primarily individuals looking for special occasion cakes, such as wedding or birthday cakes. However, by questioning this assumption, the owner might discover a new market opportunity: corporate clients looking for catering for events or employee gifts. The bakery could increase its revenue and customer base by exploring this possibility.

2. Embrace Curiosity

Another aspect of the beginner's mind is a sense of curiosity and wonder about the world. Small business owners always seeking to learn and explore new ideas are more likely to be successful than those who are content with the status quo. By embracing curiosity and a sense of adventure, you can discover new markets, technologies, and business models that could transform your company.

For example, in the case of our baker, they might be curious about new trends in pastry making, such as vegan or gluten-free options. By exploring these trends and experimenting with new recipes, their bakery could attract new customers with specific dietary needs or preferences.

3. Cultivate a Growth Mindset

The beginner's mind closely links to a growth mindset, which believes one can develop abilities and intelligence over time through hard work, practice, and learning. Small business owners who cultivate a growth mindset are more likely to see setbacks as opportunities for learning and growth rather than insurmountable obstacles. This approach can help entrepreneurs bounce back from failures, adapt to changing circumstances, and continually improve their business.

Our bakery owner might have experienced setbacks, such as a drop in sales during a slow season or a negative customer review. By adopting a growth mindset, the owner could view these setbacks as learning opportunities and make changes to improve the business. For example, the owner might offer more variety in their menu or invest in marketing to increase their visibility.

4. Experiment and Iterate

Cultivating a beginner's mind encourages experimentation and iteration. Small business owners willing to try new things, even if they fail initially, are more likely to find breakthrough solutions to problems. By constantly iterating and improving your products, services, and business processes, you can stay ahead of the competition and build a thriving company.

A bakery owner cultivating their beginner's mind to improve their business might experiment with innovative flavors or decoration techniques. By constantly iterating and improving their products, they could differentiate themselves from their competitors and attract more customers. Another example might be experimenting with different pricing strategies or delivery options to see what works best for their customers.

The beginner's mind is a powerful tool for small business owners who want to succeed in today's fast-paced, constantly evolving business environment. By approaching your business with an open and curious attitude, you can question assumptions, embrace curiosity, cultivate a growth mindset, and experiment and iterate to find innovative solutions. If you feel stuck or overwhelmed in your business or want to take it to the next level, try cultivating a beginner's mind. You never know what new possibilities you might uncover.



Understanding and Using Personal Pronouns

In recent years, there has been a growing awareness and acceptance of gender diversity and the emergence of new pronouns. Pronouns are an essential part of language and serve as a way for individuals to refer to themselves and others. In everyday business, we must understand and respect the various commonly used personal pronouns.

Pronouns are words used to refer to someone or something without using their name. Traditional English pronouns include “he,” “she,” “him,” and “her.” These pronouns refer to people who identify as male or female, respectively. However, as our understanding of gender and sexuality expands, so does the need for new pronouns that reflect the diverse identities of people.

The most commonly used new pronouns are “they/them,” which have been used for a long time in English. “They/them” are now also being used as singular pronouns to refer to people who identify as non-binary or genderqueer. Non-binary refers to individuals who do not identify as exclusively male or female, while genderqueer refers to a person whose gender identity cannot be categorized as solely male or female (Source: Merriam-Webster Dictionary).

Another new pronoun is “ze/hir,” which are gender-neutral pronouns that some non-binary individuals prefer. These pronouns are not as widely used as “they/them,” but we should still recognize and respect them. Note: “ze” is pronounced “zee,” and “hir” rhymes with “here.”

Some people use pronouns that reflect their gender identity, such as “he/him” or “she/her,” but also “they/them,” “she/they,” they/he,” “ze/she,” or “hir/him.” This is known as using “multiple pronouns,” and it acknowledges that gender is not a fixed or binary concept, that the person doesn’t define their gender in a single word. When someone identifies with multiple pronouns, remember, it is not “or,” it is “and.”

It's essential to note that using someone's correct pronouns is crucial to respecting their identity and creating a safe and inclusive environment for everyone. Refusing to use someone's preferred pronouns is disrespectful and can cause harm and distress to the person.

It may take some time and effort to get used to using new pronouns, but it's worth the effort to make everyone feel comfortable and accepted. If you're unsure what pronouns someone prefers, the best thing to do is ask them politely. Remember, it's okay to make mistakes, but what matters is that you're trying to be respectful and inclusive.

Understanding and respecting new pronouns is essential to creating a more accepting and inclusive society. By using the correct pronouns, you can support the diverse identities of all individuals and create a safe and welcoming environment for everyone. As small business owners, it behooves us to do our part to embrace gender diversity and make the world a better place for everyone.



Coach's Corner - Five Ideas for Coaching Your Staff

Coaching your staff is an essential aspect of managing a team. It is a process of imparting knowledge, skills, and guidance to help your team members improve their performance, reach their full potential, and ultimately benefit the organization's goals and objectives.

Effective coaching can positively impact employee satisfaction, motivation, and engagement. It can also increase productivity, better quality work, and higher job satisfaction. Here are five tips to help you coach your staff effectively.

1. Understanding your team member's strengths, weaknesses, and learning styles is crucial. You can identify these through regular one-on-one meetings, performance reviews, and informal conversations. Ask them questions about their learning styles and what motivates them. Once you understand your staff well, you can tailor your coaching approach to suit their unique needs.

2. Establish specific goals and objectives for your team members. This will give them a clear understanding of what you expect of them and help them stay focused on achieving their targets. With defined goals, you can monitor their progress and provide feedback regularly.
3. Provide regular feedback to your team members on their performance. Include questions on how they are feeling about their progress and what challenges they are facing. Feedback should be constructive and include positive and negative aspects of their work. While positive feedback can motivate employees to maintain and improve their performance, constructive negative feedback can help them identify areas for improvement.
4. Give your employees opportunities to learn and develop their skills. This could include training and development programs, assigning challenging tasks, and encouraging them to take on leadership roles when appropriate. Investing in their growth will benefit them and enhance your organization's capabilities.
5. Be open to receiving feedback from your staff. Coaching should be a two-way process, and your team should feel comfortable sharing their thoughts, concerns, and suggestions with you. It is an excellent way to build trust and strengthen working relationships.

Coaching your staff is a continuous process that requires patience, commitment, and effort. With effective coaching, you can help your team members develop the skills and expertise they need to perform at their best while achieving organizational goals and objectives. By taking the time to understand their unique needs and providing regular feedback, training, and development opportunities, you can create a positive working environment and build a high-performing team.

Paul Abra

Motivated Coaching

GENDER-SPECIFIC & GENDER-NEUTRAL PRONOUNS

GENDER-SPECIFIC PRONOUNS

are the ways we refer to each other in the third person. People who are transitioning in some way might choose to change their pronouns.

SHE

HIS

HE

HERS

GENDER-NEUTRAL PRONOUNS

THEY
THEM
THEIR



I saw Lauren come to work today and **they** seemed really happy. I wonder if it has anything to do with **their** weekend. I hope I see **them** soon to hear all about it!

ZE [ZEE]
SIE [SEE]
ZIE [ZEE]
HIR [HEAR]



I saw Lauren come to work today and **ze** seemed really happy. I wonder if it has anything to do with **hir** weekend. I hope I see **hir** soon to hear all about it!

ASK



You cannot tell someone's name or pronoun just by looking at them.

RESPECT



If someone takes the time to let you know their name and pronoun, use and respect it. It's not up to you to decide someone else's identity.

PRACTICE



If you have difficulty using someone's pronoun and name, practice. Ask co-workers, peers, and friends to point out when you've made a mistake.

Hi everyone, my name is Lauren. My pronouns are she and her.



Start meetings with everyone introducing themselves and stating their pronoun.

ASK! If you find yourself unsure of someone's pronoun, be attentive to how others refer to this person. If you are still unclear or concerned that people might be using the incorrect pronoun, politely and **privately** ask that person what pronoun they use.

All name tags and name plates can also have a spot to show someone's pronouns.

HELLO
my name is

LAUREN

PRONOUNS: She & Her

#TRANSINCLUSION

INFOGRAPHIC DESIGN BY
LIGHTUP THE SKY CO.

HEAR STOP
IT! IT!
PHOTOGRAPHERS

WU 519
SPACE FOR CHANGE

“In the beginner's mind there are many possibilities, in the expert's mind there are few.”

- Suzuki



Upcoming
JOB FAIR

WATCH

FOR MORE NEWS



Made with PosterMyWall.com

Small Business Newsletter

PO Box 250. Red Lake ON P0V 2M0

Phone: 807-727-3275

cathy.quesnel@chukuni.com

www.chukuni.com



Federal Economic Development
Agency for Northern Ontario

Agence fédérale de développement
économique pour le Nord de l'Ontario

Canada