



The Pelican

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IT'S TIME TO EAT AN ELEPHANT

All of us, in some manner, are set in our ways. Change can seem difficult if not foreboding. Today, we are faced with the challenges of a “new normal” and the realities of an ever-changing economy. This leaves us little choice but to look for ways to improve how we operate - from small tweaks at one end of the spectrum to wholesale change at the other. Are we at a “bump in the road,” or are we facing a new reality where there is no turning back? It’s difficult to say. Like all difficult choices, the answer is probably somewhere in between.

The Internet is full of change experts offering their advice. Inevitably they will tell you to embrace change with a positive can-do attitude.

This is easy for them to say. Change experts rarely have roots in a small rural community where a history of a lifestyle doing business a certain way made sense for so long. So if change, either radical or moderate, is inevitable, where do we start? The answer is “baby-steps.” My advice might seem rather simplistic, but I will argue that it works almost every time. By taking small steps to improve what we do every day, we can build momentum and, in a relatively short period, make a great deal of improvement to the big picture - more than you thought you would ever be able to handle. Here is a great way to get started. The people who work within your organization are in the best position to know where operational improvements

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GEOTHERMAL AND WASTE HEAT - AN UNTAPPED ENERGY SOURCE IN THE LAC LA BICHE REGION

Heat is often overlooked when we think about energy diversification. Waste heat from industry or geothermal heat that occurs naturally below the earth's surface are abundant and most often underutilized.

use of heat generated from the oil and gas sector or heat inherent in the earth for other purposes, like generating electricity back to the grid, or recycling the heat for industrial or residential purposes. As a by-product, heat provides an effi-

discussion about the potential of waste and geothermal heat in the Lac La Biche region. A summary webinar and round-table discussion about potential energy projects took place on July 28th. Over 70 participants took part in these events hosted by Community Futures and Lac La Biche County, and sponsored by the province's Community Generation



Capacity Building Program (CGCBP). If you missed the presentations and would like to get up to speed, please view the recorded sessions at :<https://www.terrappingeo.com/hub>. Anyone who would like to discuss potential energy projects in Lac La Biche County is encouraged to call Gene Wesley at 780-623-2662. Watch for upcoming webinars in our "Generating Ideas" Series. ■

(Gene's column cont. from page 1)

can be made. While it's essential to get feedback from customers and vendors, don't overlook employee feedback. As a business leader, you spend most of your time on the big picture, so the smaller details that significantly affect your business' outputs can go unnoticed. However, by surveying your team, you can learn about areas of your business that need improvement.

Change experts like to call this process "Continual Process Improvement" or CPI, I like to refer to it as baby-steps. If every business in Lac La Biche County is willing to take a few baby steps on a regular basis, it will soon add up to a giant leap for our entire community. ■

What are your diversification ideas? Here are some local energy options:

Alternative

Renewable



Fossil Fuels

- CHP
- Waste Heat Recovery



Geothermal

- Direct Use
- Geo-Exchange



Biomass

- Direct Combustion
- Anaerobic Digestion



Solar

- Photovoltaics
- Heat Engine
- Thermal



Nuclear



Hydro



Wind

Waste heat and geothermal heat can be used to produce electricity or used as heat. In fact, 60% of Canada's energy needs are used for heating. In other words, when we think of making use of these heat sources in the Lac La Biche Region, we think about how we can make

cient, lower cost in the long term, source of energy, and can be used to encourage residential and industrial development in the area.

On July 14th and 23rd, Terrapin Geothermics presented webinars and led



Window Washing Warriors- A Small Business is Making a Big Impact

David Schultz isn't your average Portage College student. He also isn't your average entrepreneur. While dabbling in his father's lawn care business and returning to school as a mature student, he decided to jump into the window washing business in a big way.

Seeded from an idea given to him by family members, David started washing windows part-time, gradually growing his client base to about 15 regular clients. This growth, through word-of-mouth and client recommendations, made it easy for him to decide to go full-time into the window washing business in 2015.

David is vested in the Lac La Biche community and truly believes that "a rising tide will lift all boats." If the Lac La Biche business community thrives as a whole, so will his business venture, whether it be window washing or anything else he might choose to do in the future. For David, this is more than just a nice thing to say – he is quick to show how he "walks the talk" to demonstrate the value of this philosophy and how he uses his Window Washing Warriors to promote Lac La Biche and other businesses in the region.

After participating in online marketing training through the "#LLBOnline"



Festival, sponsored by Lac La Biche County, Community Futures and the Chamber of Commerce, David has put a

great deal of effort into Facebook promotions and live-stream videos. In doing so, he provides window washing tips, promotes his community, and (the genius of it) promotes the business whose windows he is washing. By providing a much-needed service and working to promote other businesses in the Lac La Biche region, David has found a marketing niche that few entrepreneurs take advantage of, and it's built on building his reputation through the promotion of others. As David suggests, "business is about serving people, and if you show genuine care, that avenue becomes much easier."

To find out more about Window Washing Warriors and see what his live stream video marketing is all about, visit his Facebook page at www.facebook.com/WindowWashingWarriors or call **780-404-7977**. To view all of the Streaming Events that were part of the **Festival** search for "**#LLBTogether**" in Facebook. ■



Upcoming Events and Webinars

Webinars:

COVID-19 Personal Finance Support DEBT/BILLS OVERLOAD

AUGUST 25 a from 12PM-1:PM

To register go to: <https://bit.ly/3kVQgp1>

Thriving in the New Reality - Positioning Your Business for Success

August 27 at 10AM or 1 PM, Contact Sean Smith at ssmith@stingray.com to register.

Generating Ideas Series:

Watch for upcoming webinars on Solar Energy and Rural Energy Efficiency.

Visit: www.llbevents.ca to see what else is happening in the LLB Region

Didja KNOW?



Living and working in Lac La Biche, we often hear the phrase "northeast Alberta" to describe our region. By definition, this is what we mean:

The northeast region of rural Alberta encompasses an area of approximately 25,000 square kilometres in the northeast portion of the province. The region includes the M.D. of Bonnyville and the City of Cold Lake, County of St. Paul, Smoky Lake County and Lac La Biche County as well as the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB), including the urban service area of Fort McMurray. The region also includes all the villages and summer villages within these boundaries.*

*The Economic Contribution of Rural Alberta (Nichols Applied Management, 2018).

DO YOU SWOT? - IF NOT, YOU SHOULD

Do you know what a SWOT analysis is all about? Have you participated in one? Has your business undergone one? A SWOT analysis is a simple way to review your business' **STRENGTHS**, **WEAKNESSES**, **OPPORTUNITIES**, and **THREATS**, and to start thinking strategically about any particular issue. A SWOT can be done at any time. It is a great way to gain input from a group of people in an organized way, whether it be a small group or your entire company. You can also do one on your own. A SWOT analysis will help you do the following:

- Analyze any particular internal function of the organization to better understand what is performing well and where improvements are required, including:
 - understanding core competencies
 - developing a focus on the future
 - dealing with weaknesses
 - building on strengths
 - optimizing overall performance
- Explore external resources to improve either performance or profitability
- Review the competition and external factors to prepare your company for environmental and economic threats that may impact your sustainability or growth

- Offer a way to make difficult decisions in an open and inclusive way
- Engage your entire team in an organizational review
- Provide a foundation for strategic planning and change moving forward.

Typically, a SWOT analysis is set up in a simple chart format. Simplicity is essential because it allows for a quick review to facilitate decision-making. Although a SWOT analysis chart may take a variety of formats, keeping things highly visual and organized will promote team engagement during the process and better buy-in when decisions are made. Below is a typical example that may be used to format your SWOT. If you are working as a group, projecting the template for everyone to see and asking for suggestions to fill the template also works well.

SWOT ANALYSIS

	Helpful to achieving the objective	Harmful to achieving the objective
Internal origin (attributes of the organization)	STRENGTHS List your: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Advantages • Unique and low-cost resources • Why you are successful 	WEAKNESSES List your: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disadvantages and limitations • What you could do better • Factors that affect sales
External origin (attributes of the environment)	OPPORTUNITIES List your: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chances to improve • Opportunities that you can spot • New ideas to make sales 	THREATS List your: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • External barriers that affect business • Obstacles • Competitors and what they are doing

Although the process may seem time-consuming and may create several solutions to any particular issue, a SWOT analysis will help you avoid rash choices and enable proactive rather than reactive decision making. If you would like some customized business coaching, advice, or even help writing your company SWOT, please contact Community Futures at 780-623-2662. ■

FUNNY Things You Hear...

Mike and Carol applied for the same position at Lac La Biche oilfield services company. Both applicants, having the same qualifications, were asked by the manager to take a written test. Upon completion of the test, both applicants answered the same nine questions correct and had the same one wrong. The manager then had a conversation with Mike.

Manager: "Thank you for your interest, but we've decided to give Carol the job."

Mike: "And why would you do that? You said we both got the same nine questions correct."

Manager: "We have made our decision on the way you each answered the question you had wrong."

Mike: "How would one incorrect answer be better than the other?"

Manager: "Simple. On question #5 Carol put down, 'I don't know.' You put down, 'Neither do I.'"



Put your business on the map and be part of the App by registering it on the Lac La Biche Region Business Directory at: www.llbbusiness.com

Download the phone App on iTunes or Google Play. Search "Lac La Biche Region."

Telephone contact: 780-623-2662

E-mail: contact@cfllb.com

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