



# The Pelican

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The Pelican is published by Community Futures Lac La Biche. Please forward any comments, suggestions, or story ideas by e-mail to [manager@cfllb.com](mailto:manager@cfllb.com) or call 780-623-2662.



Gene Wesley, General Manager, Community Futures Lac La Biche

## GET THAT MONKEY OFF YOUR BACK!

The saying goes that if you want something done, you should ask a busy person. That sounds counterintuitive, but in reality, busy people tend to get things done. Here are three techniques that I find invaluable to cope with being busy:

**1. Learn to say no.** Saying no is very hard to do; however, even if you may want to help everyone, simply put, you can't. You would burn out. What you need to ask yourself is A) Is this something I should do? Is it in your scope of expertise, work plan or in your strategic plan?; and B) Do I honestly have the time? It's hard to learn to say no, but it is wise to admit you have previous time commitments.

**2. Use a calendar as a to-do list.** What do I mean by that? If I have a new to-do, I add it to my

calendar as soon as possible, blocking ample time to accomplish the task. I don't forget about it this way, and I have literally set the time aside to get it done! If it has to be pushed back, I push it back to a later date until I can get it done.

**3. Get the Monkey off YOUR back.** If you are a business owner, especially if you have staff, this is a critical technique to learn. Picture someone walking into your office and asking you something. What they are doing is trying to put an unruly Monkey on your back. They want you to deal with it.

**Do anything to avoid that Monkey.** Ask them what they think and ask them to look into it and get back to you. Maybe they can delegate it to someone else. If it is, in fact, something you need to deal with and you have the time, then deal with it right then and there. Quickly dealing with an issue usually takes the least time, and besides that, you will appear to be responsive to the needs of your clients and staff. Otherwise, add it to your calendar.

DREAM

HOPE

BELIEVE

DARE

RISK

TRY

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TownFolio is an online resource that provides up-to-date statistics on communities across the province, including Lac La Biche.



Whether you need information to support the development of a business plan or are just a concerned citizen, TownFolio has the statistics you need to make informed decisions. Check it out at: <https://townfolio.co/ab/lac-la-biche-county/overview> ■

Some may think that owning a small business provides an opportunity to do whatever you want, whenever you want. Although this is true in part, the reality is that a small business owner must be a master at juggling several conflicting priorities regularly. Thus, every successful small business owner needs to master the skill of time management. Here are some ways you make the best use of your time every day.

While not having any schedule at all might hide under the pretense of thinking that you are ready for anything that should happen, in reality, it is one of the most unproductive ways to manage your day. Without a set schedule, it is very easy to waste your time. Organize your week by creating themes for each day like inventory on Mondays, invoicing on Tuesdays, staff meetings on Fridays, and so on. Organize each day by the hour based on these themes. This way, you will never need to wonder what to do next. You will also ensure that everything necessary gets some attention. Yes, the unexpected always happens, so leave yourself a bit of time each day to deal with unplanned events as well.

Even though various things are going on that might require your attention, keeping your focus is necessary to get anything done at all. Set specific times of the day to return phone calls or answer email rather than dealing with each one as it comes in. In other words, multitasking is not a good thing to do. By keeping your focus on the given task at hand, you will increase productivity and create a sense of accomplishment.



An often fatal mistake of small business owners is to micromanage everything. While you need to ensure that you and your staff are on the same wavelength, once that is accomplished, the next important step is to empower the people that work for you to get the job done. By doing so, your business will be able to accomplish so much more than it could if it relied solely on your personal ability to oversee every task and decision. Delegating will allow you to maintain focus on more strategic issues like company growth and planning. Of course, delegating requires that you hire the right people and trust them to do the job.

Balance in all things is an integral part of your work and personal life. Balancing your business and family commitments





are often the most common considerations in this regard, but small business owners should consider a few other things as well. Balancing the time you spend mentoring your staff with the time you take for your professional development is also essential. Creating a balance between the time you spend servicing existing customers and putting into securing new clients is another one. You get the idea. There are lots of areas that are worth considering. The critical thing to remember is that balance doesn't necessarily mean giving each and everything the same amount of attention. What it does mean is that you've carefully given each and everything the appropriate amount of attention.

#### STOP WASTING TIME

While this is easier said than done, the best thing to do to eliminate time-wasters during your day is to make a list of all of your activities during a typical day. Don't leave anything out, whether it is merely making a phone call to a friend or stepping out for a cup of coffee. Once you have created this list, carefully look at it and decide which activities are essential or not. Maybe some activities are crucial but do not need to be done each day. Eliminate anything that isn't important

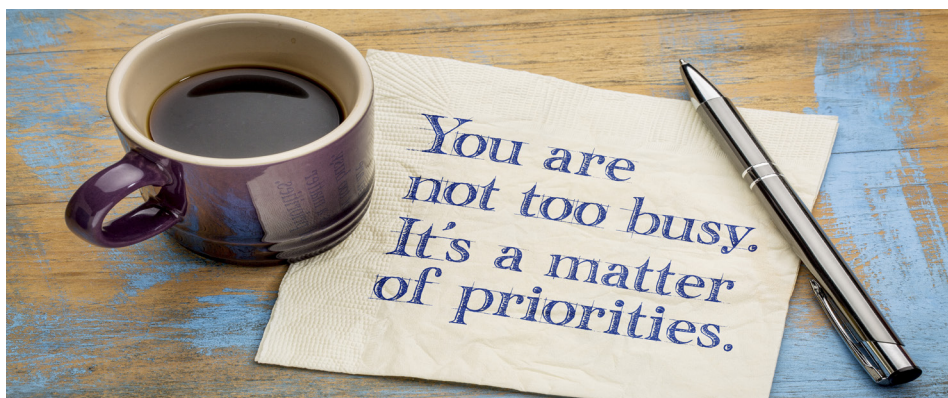
to your success or peace of mind—schedule other items to specific days or times that would be more efficient.

#### ORGANIZE YOUR SPACE

It is often said that a cluttered space is a reflection of a cluttered mind. By keeping your work area or place of business organized, you can keep everything in perspective, be more productive, and make better decisions.

#### BE SMART ABOUT TECHNOLOGY

While it might seem cool to do everything on-line, from marketing to billing, you can easily be consumed by the thousands and thousands of opportunities that seem to be a better way of doing something you are already doing. While some level of automation makes sense for almost every business, making the right choice of what technology is suitable for you is more complicated and critical. When considering using new technology, do some research. Investigate several different solutions. Find out what your competitors are using. Determine the efficiencies and cost of potential automation before moving forward. If you've implemented the right technology, your customers and staff will see positive changes in both productivity and customer service, and you will have more time to focus on other things. ■



## Didja KNOW?

The largest population of Lac La Biche County, AB is the age group between 50 and 54 years old, and the least populated age group is 85+ years old. 66.39% of the population are in the working age group between 15 to 64 years old, while 30.65% make up the younger population which will be a part of labour force in less than 2 decades.

(From TownFolio <https://townfolio.co/ab/lac-la-biche-county/demographics>)

## Upcoming Events and Webinars



**Project Gazelle is a program offering FREE workshops to FEMALE entrepreneurs.**

### START UP SERIES

**Entrepreneurship?**  
January 20th

**Creating a Business Plan**  
January 27th

**Understanding Cash Flow**  
February 3rd

**Pitch with Confidence**  
February 10th

*All Workshops start at 5 PM*  
**TO REGISTER**, go to:  
[www.bit.ly/gaz01](http://www.bit.ly/gaz01)

## It's Free!

Questions?

email: [projectgazelle@albertacf.com](mailto:projectgazelle@albertacf.com)



# Recruiting for Customers? On-boarding & Orientation of Your New Employee(s)

Contributor: Shirley Leonard, Pinnacle Organizational Performance Solutions

Exemplary customer service doesn't happen by accident. It is a bona fide intentional business strategy with specific actions and individual choices made by owners and employees to consistently deliver to every customer, every time, regardless of the delivery medium (in-person, online, telephone, email). Service starts with on-boarding and orientation of the new employee. They are not the same thing; each is a separate category of planned activities designed to:

- familiarize the new employee with the business they have been hired into (on-boarding) and
- engage the new employee in capably being able to perform his/her unique role (orientation).

## On-boarding:

- Occurs BEFORE the employee starts the role to prepare for the formal entry into the business
- Includes information such as: important policies (i.e. privacy, confidentiality, use of IT equipment, Code of Conduct, OHS critical information) and procedures (payroll procedures for CRA, pay deposits, IT systems logon access, completion of Security Clearance Checks, specific uniform/footwear requirements, where to appear for work and who to find on the first day of work) to name some of the important details that help the new employee feel less 'new' and more 'I understand and feel included'.

## Orientation:

- Typically begins on the FIRST day of the employee's new role and continues for a period (up to one year)
- Is a planned learning and engagement process to support the new employee to learn the job, learn about the team, the business, and become familiar with the overall organization. Within the complexity of completing the work, it is essential to know 'How we do what we do' and 'Where do I fit?' as the new employee adopts, adapts to and demonstrates the culture of the company.

## Why Do This? What's in it for me (WIIFM)?

- Successful businesses know and experience immediate and long-term benefits of improved customer service, attraction, and retention by implementing on-boarding and orientation processes with new employees.
- Employees who participate in planned orientation (and are provided with a "Learning Buddy") experience a higher degree of engagement with the mission and goals of the business and the team.

Increased engagement results in less inter-personal conflict, churn/turnover, and longer retention: all good indicators for increasing the degree of effective customer service experiences.

- Employees who receive on-boarding information and orientation experience are more productive (faster), have reduced 'new job start-up time', make fewer (and less costly) mistakes, and can confidently and consistently provide more effective service to customers. Hmm... this will bring customers back to your business – and bring their friends and family, too!



Making just one small adjustment or taking one tiny step forward is a game-changer. If you are unsure where to start or would like to discuss your on-boarding and orientation strategies/processes, I would be delighted to talk with you! This is a differentiator between your business and a competitor.

*What are you waiting for? ■*

*Shirley Leonard is the Owner of Pinnacle Organizational Performance Solutions (Edmonton, Alberta), offering Human Resources and Organizational Effectiveness consulting, coaching and facilitation services. Pinnacle provides leadership and team development, employee engagement and strategic change management planning to business, leaders and managers. She can be reached via: Shirley@pinnacleperformance.ca, (cell) 587-982-3314, or visit her website: www.pinnacleperformance.ca ■*

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