



e-Journal

a digital dialogue

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Message From the CEO



fmi*igf springs into action in 2019

At fmi*igf, we have a spring in our step.

With the snow finally gone (fingers crossed after that winter), we turn to spring and its annual rejuvenation, and at fmi*igf our e-Journal continues to grow, too.

We also have PSMW 2019 coming up in Vancouver as well. More on that in a bit. But first the e-Journal.

In this edition, we engage in 10 Questions with longtime fmi*igf member and former president Martha Thomas. We have a timely article from Design Thinking expert Nilufer Erdebil that explains why innovation in government is so important. And Tim Philips, the Director of Programs for the Pacific Region of the CRA, also weighs in on innovation with his story: The Idea Journey – An Approach to Inspiring Innovation in Government.

Then there is our Chapter News wrap-up that keeps everyone up to date from coast

to coast (A special congrats to our Ontario Chapter after an amazing event it held in early March. Read on to learn more). And Sandy Boucher from Grant Thornton offers up an informative piece on whistleblowers and what needs to be done to protect them.

There's more to share, too. We have an interesting conversation with Alain Séguin – the recipient of the fmi*igf 2018 Honorary Lifetime Membership Award following his esteemed career in the federal government. Motivational speaker and the president of Culture Connection Carol Ring entertains us with a guide on how to motivate your staff titled: 5 Secrets to Lead Your Troops Out of the Trenches.

We also appreciate your input to the e-Journal. If you would like to submit an article for consideration or share a subject matter you would like to learn more about, please contact Trevor Bunke at trevor.bunke@fmi.ca.

This spring will also see fmi*igf launch a joint course with CPA Canada on ethics and hold a webinar on Good Practices in Public Financial Management in conjunction with ACCA.

PSMW 2019 is just around the corner as well. fmi*igf will host the 32nd edition of the two-day learning event in Vancouver on May 13-14 at the River Rock Hotel in Richmond. It will feature a range of speakers and panels focusing on timely topics like climate change and the economy to the Belt & Road Initiative to the cannabis industry. For more information, go to: fmi.ca/events/psmw/psmw-2019/

And get ready to “Engage” in November when we will host our annual PD Week. This year, PD Week will be held from Nov. 18-22 at the Hilton Lac Leamy in Gatineau.

Thanks for reading.

— Christopher Egan, CEO

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5 Secrets to Lead Your Troops Out of the Trenches

by Carol Ring

Every day when you arrive at work do you sigh as you go through the door? Do you think: “Just once I’d like to be a cast member at Disney, rather than a middle manager where I am today.” If only this place was as exciting and fun to work at as Zappos or Google!

Life is too short to be working in a miserable environment. Yet, what can we do, from the trenches of management, to make change? After all, we can’t authorize the building of gymnasiums, or introduce new policies giving employees two paid days per year to work for their favourite charity, or front expensive employee development programs. That’s for the top executives to do. They’re the ones responsible for creating amazing workplace cultures, right?

It’s true that the culture of an organization is based on the behaviours of its leaders. However, even managers in the middle are leaders. I once thought that I had to wait for head office to drive changes and set the stage for how we worked together. Then I decided to become the general of my own army.

Leading from the Trenches

As the leader of a regional team, we went to work on becoming a high-performance team. This included addressing how we worked together as a management team and also how we could pull together to better manage our employees. We developed a vision for our business unit and agreed on the

values that were most important for our combined success.

Over the course of several years, we were able to shift things from being silo functions merely existing in the same building to a cohesive, aligned and committed, results-oriented team. When we felt that Headquarters wasn’t providing enough information, we didn’t complain about it. Instead we invited key players with the information our team needed to our management meetings. We became proactive.

It wasn’t long before people at Headquarters began to send compliments our way. “You guys are so easy to work with” and “Whenever I want to pilot something, I always choose



Carol's business unit because they just love a new challenge."

So, what can you do to make your business a better workplace for your employees?

5 Steps for Middle Managers

Step 1 – Assess what your current environment is really about. Is it filled with teamwork or mistrust?

Step 2 – Get crystal clear on the purpose of your business unit and how it contributes to the greater organization. Communicate to your employees the purpose and how each and every one of them can contribute to its success.

Step 3 – Define what you'd like the workplace to look like. Maybe you'd like it to be more social – more like a family. Maybe you'd like to see ongoing professional development. Outline what

is needed in order to deliver effectively.

Step 4 – Make a list of the things you can change within your own sphere of influence. If you don't feel your team has the right information to get the job done – how can you improve it? Be proactive.

Step 5 – Build an action plan with dates, resource requirements and accountabilities. Build it into your annual business plan.

Don't let the fact that you're working in the trenches of middle management in your organization stop you from improving your culture.

Every operation needs a strong line of defence, as well as an offence that keeps everyone moving forward.

You can, and should be, the commander in charge of the corporate culture around you.

About the author Carol Ring

Carol Ring, FCPA FCMA, is the Founder and President of The Culture Connection. For more than 25 years, Carol had the privilege of working for companies, including Ultramar, Coca-Cola and Rogers Communications. Her high-performance corporate results earned her recognition as one of Canada's Top 100 Most Powerful Women. Today, as a certified culture consultant, Carol is obsessed with creating workplaces that move employees from passive passengers to passionate partners.

Carol offers culture specific assessments, leadership workshops and training, and conference keynotes. Clients who work with Carol experience reduced employee turnover, improved productivity and better bottom line results.

She is the author of ***IGNITE Your Culture – 6 Steps to Fuel Your People, Profits and Potential and Awakening the Workplace.***

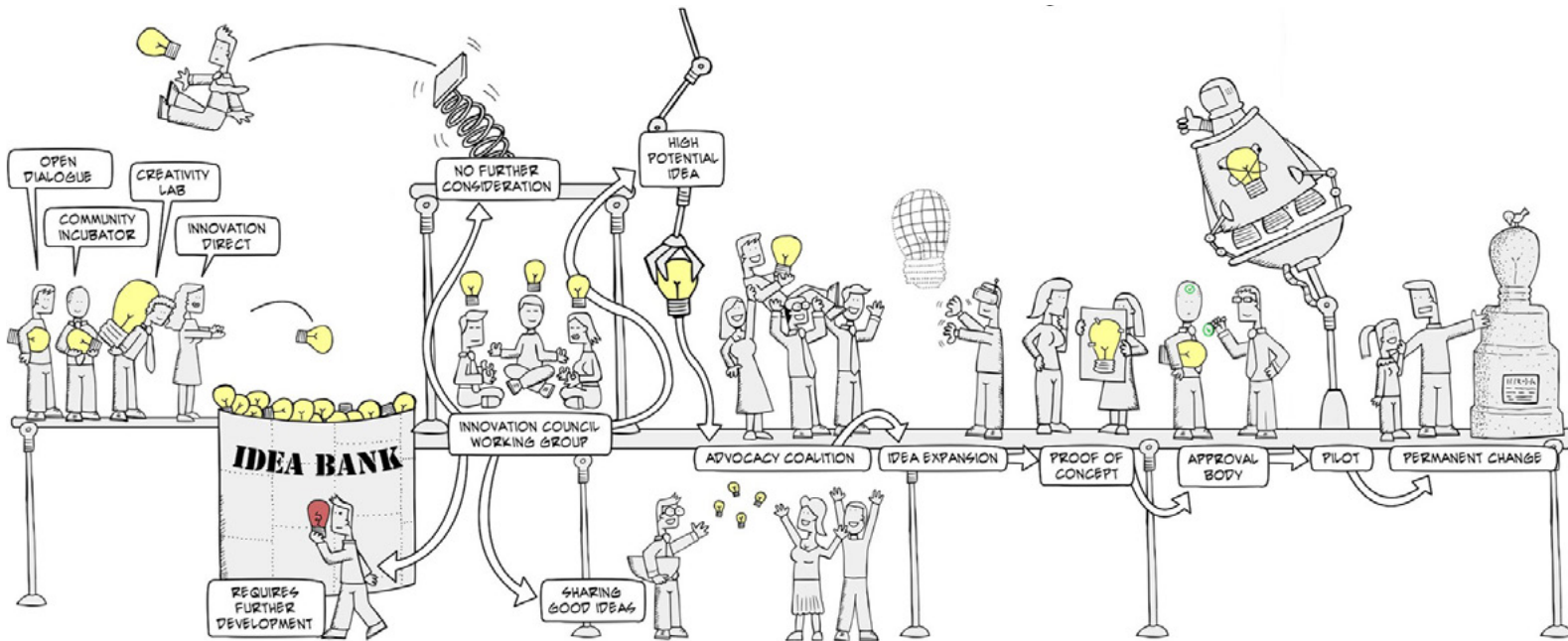
Learn more about Carol at www.carolring.ca



You can, and should be, the commander in charge of the corporate culture around you.

The Idea Journey

An Approach to Inspiring Innovation in Government



Graphic: John Sutton

by Timothy Philps

On a warm Roman spring morning in 30 AD, a young man named Appius walked down the Via Sacra toward the Foro Romano. He had a bounce in his step as he anticipated the many discussions that would ensue when he got to the Basilica Julia, the grand hall in the centre of the Forum. The Basilica was the place where Appius went to hear about issues, proposals, and news from faraway places. He was excited to share his ideas with other smart minds.

What Appius was a part of – almost 2,000 years ago – was not just a place where ideas could be exchanged and developed, but a broader culture of innovation that existed in Rome's late republic and early imperial period. It produced some of the most staggering innovations in history. Well-known innovations, such as concrete or the arch, allowed for the building of now-famous structures like the Pont du Gard aqueduct or the Roman Coliseum. The Romans created a culture where innovation was treasured. Leaders encouraged learning, valued knowledge, and rewarded accomplishments. They created a culture of prolific innovators.

Innovation in the Roman Empire, however, was not without challenges, and the barriers they faced were surprisingly like those faced by today's large government organizations. The absence of competitive pressures that influence commercial organizations can produce a stand-pat mentality and resistance to change. Increasing public intolerance for missteps by government organizations has increased their aversion to risk. The hierarchical governance of the public sector has produced a top-down approach to innovation which overlooks the employees on the ground. Finally, increasing centralization of organizations has narrowed the catchment potential for ideas.

A Culture of Innovation

Creating an innovative culture in large government organizations, whose core business is not innovative, is difficult. The skill sets and expertise of employees is largely focused on the core deliverables of the organization, such as financial regulation, tax administration, economic development, health management, or

education, just to name a few. Government organizations often look longingly at commercial companies that have clear innovative cultures such as those in high tech or emerging industries. That comparison, however, is not fitting. Commercial organizations often have a mandate to create something faster, smarter, and newer and their core values reflect that. It is different for government. What government organizations do have is an entrenched set of values; and that is where we will start.

The core values of most government organizations are some combination of integrity, respect, collaboration, cooperation, reliability and fairness. Managers and employees are made aware of these values from the time they join the organizations. They live them and practice them throughout their careers. That respect for core values creates a culture. The key to creating an innovative culture in government organizations therefore is to embed innovation as a core value and send a clear message that innovative behaviours are valued as much as behaviours associated with the other traditional core values.

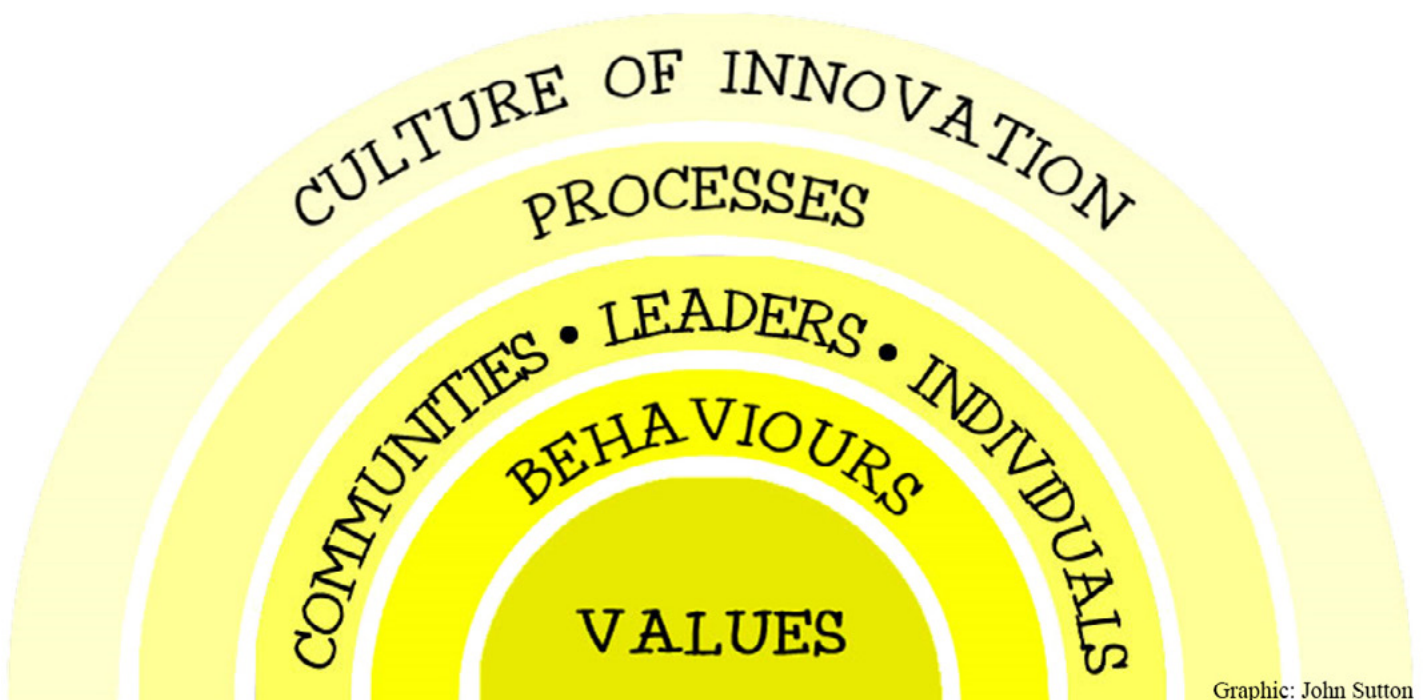
There are several key innovative behaviours that the organization should value. An innovative culture requires collaboration with a focus on working together. Determination must be valued, along

with an element of provocation. Egos need to be checked and organizations must be open and transparent about ideas and initiatives. Hits must be recognized, and misses supported.

Who in the organization should demonstrate innovative behaviours and values? The short answer is everybody, but more easily identified as leaders, communities and individuals.

Leaders must provide inspiration, support and encouragement. Leaders must model innovative values and allow employees to take risks and ensure an environment where failures are not fatal. They must create a fearless environment. Leaders must also take a step back when successes are recognized and a step forward when an idea fails.

Organizations are comprised of dozens of communities such as work teams, management groups and special committees. These communities must challenge themselves to be creative and seek common solutions. They must support each other and use their collective influence to promote the innovative culture. Individuals should feel free to challenge what has been the norm. They must be passionate and relentless. They should be comfortable taking thoughtful risks.



When we refer to thoughtful risks, it is perhaps instructional to reflect on the Roman experience. A story is told that around 50 AD a glassmaker invented a type of glass that was extremely durable. He obtained an audience with Emperor Tiberius, where he demonstrated its incredible properties and boasted that he was the only person that knew how to make it. Fearing that the material would adversely affect the value of his vast stockpiles of silver and gold, the Emperor had the inventor beheaded. Understanding the current risks of any innovation is a clever tip.

A culture of innovation exists when leaders, individuals and communities embrace innovative values and behaviours. Yet, inspiring innovation in government goes beyond the requirement for an innovative culture. There must also be a process to capture ideas and development them to reality; I call that process the Idea Journey.

The Idea Journey

The Idea Journey receives its oversight from the **Innovation Council** which is comprised of employees and managers from throughout the organization. It is important that a variety of levels and disciplines from all offices are included to ensure a diversity of opinion and perspective.

Hierarchy does not matter in the Innovation Council; everyone is an equal contributor. A member's involvement is in addition to their regular duties and amounts to about two days a month. They meet in-person a couple times a year with the balance of their interaction being virtual.

An **innovation website** is necessary to manage the Idea Journey. The website engages all employees in an interactive process to collaborate and express innovative ideas, store the ideas, provide transparency as the ideas move through the journey, and most importantly is a communication vehicle for promoting an innovative culture.

The purpose of the Idea Journey is to make it easy for every member of the organization to suggest any ideas they may have.

Opportunities for discussing, creating and submitting ideas are much more fulsome than the age-old suggestion box. The Idea Journey has four ways to **capture ideas**.

1. **Innovation Direct** is the portal for anyone to submit their idea directly to the Innovation Council. It consists of an online form that identifies the submitter and requests a brief description. Innovation Direct gives a voice to employees who feel their ideas or suggestions may be obstructed by superiors who either kill their idea or simply claim it as their own. It is important that ideas are not submitted anonymously. Firstly, recognition is an important feature of an innovative process; employees should be acknowledged for their submissions. Secondly, the submitter is best positioned to assist in advancing their idea and working with the Council since they alone know what was envisioned.
2. **Open Dialogue** is a crowd sourcing or virtual discussion utilizing social media. Conversations occur on a specific topic with the goal of fleshing out an idea that will eventually be submitted to the Innovation Council. Social media engages employees who are more comfortable on this platform to collaborate and express innovative ideas.
3. The **Community Incubator** is a mobile, facilitated discussion forum that is inserted into existing management forums, team meetings and other gatherings with the specific intention of generating new ideas and submitting them to the Innovation Council. The many meetings that employees attend therefore become a source and opportunity for capturing ideas.
4. The **Creativity Lab** is the Innovation Council itself and utilizes its understanding and expertise of innovation to generate original ideas. Brainstorming and discussion occur in a creative, unconstrained and diverse environment.

All ideas that are submitted are captured in the **Idea Bank**. Managed by the Innovation Council, the Idea Bank is where ideas are organized and assigned to an **Innovation Working Group**. The Idea Bank is visible on the innovation website and open for

comment by anyone wishing to share. Innovation Working Groups are smaller sub-groups of the Innovation Council and are assigned ideas to evaluate, consider, triage and shepherd through the Idea Journey.

The ideas are triaged by the working groups into four categories:

1. **No longer considered** – these ideas have insurmountable barriers or have no usefulness.
2. **Need further development** – these ideas have merit but require further development and are sent to the Creativity Lab.
3. **Worth sharing** – these ideas have value but require no additional work and are therefore posted on the website as being best practices.
4. **High potential** – these ideas should be advanced without delay and are worthy of investing resources in their development.

Ideas that have been determined to have high potential and which require additional effort are moved to the next step of the Idea Journey; the **Advocacy Coalition**. One of the most significant barriers for employees wishing to develop their ideas is often their lack of access to those in the organization that can make things happen. It is often difficult to break out of their hierarchical or organizational constraints and engage IT, HR, HQ, Finance or anyone necessary to develop an idea. The Council uses its influence to draw together the essential components to form the Advocacy Coalition which includes technical experts, project leaders, strategic partners and corporate support.

The idea has almost completed its journey and has now reached a point where it can be clearly articulated and receive the appropriate risk assessment. A proof of concept is prepared for presentation to the Innovation Council. The Innovation Council ensures that everything has been considered, risks have been addressed, and the idea is ready for submission to the **Approval Body**. It is this step that would have been helpful for our doomed Roman glass-maker.

As I offered at the outset, there are many differences between government organizations and commercial innovation-centred organizations. It cannot be forgotten that government organizations have an accountability to citizens to exercise impeccable stewardship and trust. Any innovation process must include – with whatever rigour is suitable for the idea or organization – an approval step by a management body. Depending on the implications or scope of the idea, this could be a local management team, regional management team, or whatever is appropriate. The purpose of the approval body is to authorize the idea becoming a pilot or prototype.

A **Pilot** or prototype is then used to evaluate and adjust the idea. At any time, the idea can loop back to any stage for further development. When the idea moves out of the pilot stage, it has ended its journey and has now become permanent.

The Idea Journey addresses the two critical components that I feel are necessary for inspiring innovation in government organizations: i) developing a culture of innovation through values, behaviours, individuals, leaders and communities and ii) providing a comprehensive process that engages the entire organization in capturing, developing and implementing ideas.

On that spring day in Rome, Appius was optimistic that his ideas would be accepted within a culture of innovation and be part of a process to make them a reality. Modern government organizations can provide the same inspiration to their innovators by adopting the Idea Journey.



Tim Philps, BA, MBA, CPA, CMA, is the Director of Programs for the Pacific Region of the Canada Revenue Agency. Tim was co-chair of PSMW 2005 in Vancouver and is a graduate of the Senior Executive Fellows program at Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government.

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Setting a better standard for whistleblower protection

by Sandy Boucher, Senior Manager, Forensics, Grant Thornton LLP

Helping protect whistleblowers

Historically, whistleblowers in Canada and around the world have been seen in a largely negative light. They are often perceived as meddling outsiders or self-serving snitches rather than as honest, forthright individuals who are simply trying to do the right thing.

As a result, they have frequently been the victims of retaliation – job loss, reputation smearing and physical threats when their names have become known. Whistleblower retaliation is depriving organizations of the invaluable information that whistleblowers can provide.

This situation is beginning to change on a global scale, with the realization that whistleblowers are a critical part of the fight against

fraud, corruption and other white-collar crime. In fact, whistleblower systems have been shown to be the cheapest and most effective way to detect a wide range of wrongdoing.

While Canada has a number of laws designed to encourage and protect whistleblowers – and has international obligations to implement and maintain such protections – our legislation remains fragmented and provincially diverse, trailing much of the world in terms of comprehensiveness and effectiveness. With this in mind, it's important to take a closer look at whistleblower issues in Canada and consider what can be done to better protect these rights going forward to benefit from this precious resource.

Ireland's new whistleblower legislation, for example, represents a new standard, protecting all employees who have a "reasonable

belief” that they have uncovered wrongdoing in the workplace.¹ The U.S., UK, Australia, Ghana, Serbia and South Korea are other countries that have put similarly potent laws in place.

These laws are critical because whistleblower retaliation stories and cases are legion. In Montreal, for example, police officers who came forward with serious allegations against senior department members were fired, with the department’s internal affairs division allegedly “making up incriminating evidence to discredit them and justify their dismissal.”² The lack of confidentiality and absence of a system to enable it, in this case and in many others, puts whistleblowers at risk and discourages others from coming forward in the future.

The confidentiality challenge

In many cases, there is an inherent paradox at work with respect to whistleblower protection. In the workplace, particularly in the private sector, whistleblowers often have little statutory protection and must rely on their employer’s policies – a situation that can be obviously problematic if the whistle is being blown on that very employer. That’s why confidentiality – where the details of who made a report and what they reported is very closely guarded – is so vital to proper investigation and complaint resolution.

Putting in a whistleblower hotline and telling people to call it to report any wrongdoing simply isn’t enough. If a whistleblower’s name becomes known – as poorly managed systems can easily allow – their jobs, reputations and even lives can quickly be put at risk. Indeed, statistics show that 80% of all whistleblowers suffer negative consequences of some kind.³

Steps to protecting whistleblower confidentiality

It should be clear that – even with the best intentions – an expectation of confidentiality is not enough. The only concrete step that whistleblowers can take to protect themselves is to maintain their own anonymity. Only through a system designed to maximize anonymity can confidentiality be effectively preserved.

Of course, even anonymous systems aren’t 100% secure. In many cases, when a whistleblower makes an anonymous report, their identity may never be known. Sometimes, however, the individual’s identity may be inadvertently revealed during the investigation. For instance, if their information can be connected to a specific department or function, it may be possible to narrow down the list of people who could be the whistleblower and it is quite common for the identity of a whistleblower to become a significant focus in their organization. This was highlighted in a recent UK case in the financial services industry.⁴

Despite this, many whistleblower systems in Canada do not allow anonymous reports, including some of those mandated for public employees. It is now widely recognized that the practical impact of such policies is that potential whistleblowers who fear retaliation if they are identified will simply choose not to make a report. As a result, the effectiveness of the system is undermined, and valuable information may never be delivered to management.

Sometimes disclosure is unavoidable

In addition to unintended confidentiality and anonymity gaps in the system, there are circumstances when the law or courts can insist on disclosure of a whistleblower’s identity, even when companies have said that they will make all reasonable efforts to keep identity and information confidential. Despite a company’s best intentions and established policies, sometimes there is no choice but to disclose any information they may have regarding the whistleblower.

1. Don Butler. “Guess which country is a surprising gold standard for whistleblowers,” in The Ottawa Citizen (December 6, 2016). Accessed at <http://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/guess-which-country-is-a-surprising-gold-standard-for-whistleblowers> on May 1, 2017.
2. Paul Cherry. “It was 10 years of living hell,” former SPVM whistleblower says,” in the Montreal Gazette (February 24, 2017). Accessed at <http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/it-was-10-years-of-living-hell-says-former-spvm-whistleblower> on May 2, 2017.
3. Public Concern at Work, 2016. “Whistleblowing: Time for Change.” Accessed at http://www.pcaw.org.uk/content/6-campaigns/2-time-for-change-review/pcaw_5yr-review_final.pdf?1480418791
4. Ben Martin. “How the whistleblowing scandal at Barclays unfolded.” The Telegraph (April 10, 2017). Accessed at <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/business/2017/04/10/whistleblowing-scandal-barclays-unfolded/>



Sandy Boucher,
Senior Manager, Forensics
Grant Thornton LLP

Sandy Boucher has worked in the forensic group of Grant Thornton LLP since 2009. His practice includes conducting large complex investigations and helping companies to prevent and detect corruption and fraud. As part of his practice, Sandy manages the Grant Thornton CARE (Confidential Anonymous Reporting for Employees) whistleblowing program and is a regular speaker on issues relating to whistleblowers and whistleblower systems.

Sandy is a seasoned investigator with more than

35 years of experience in both the public and private sectors. In 2015, Sandy was chosen to be the Vice Chair of the Canadian Standards Association working group developing a guideline for organizations wishing to develop a whistleblowing system. Sandy was instrumental in the formation of the project and was a significant leader and contributor throughout the process. The “*Whistleblowing Systems – A Guide*” is a leading Canadian resource on the topic of whistleblowing systems.

Sandy has been a Senior Fellow with the Centre for Free Expression at Ryerson University since early 2017. He is one of the founder members of the centre’s Whistleblower Initiative and is working with that group to advocate for whistleblowers and improve protections for Canadian whistleblowers. Sandy was recently selected as a member of the Standards Council of Canada mirror committee working on SMC/ISO/TC 309 Governance of organizations which focuses on whistleblowers.

Applying Design Thinking to Government Experimentation



by Nilufer Erdebil, CEO, Spring2 Innovation

Let's unpack what experimentation is, and how we can do more experimentation within the public service by applying design thinking.

Design Thinking is a methodology that is being increasingly adopted across the public sector. It encourages organizations to look at challenges and opportunities from an end-user perspective to truly understand the end-users' needs and wants. The end-user can be a client, consumer, citizen, or an internal group and are those that will be using your product, service, policy, process, program or regulation.

Design Thinking has 5 phases – Empathize,

Define, Ideate, Prototype and Test—and uses a methodological human-centered approach. As we know from our own experiences, one-size does not fit all, which further emphasizes the need to understand our end-users when creating policies, services, programs and products. In order to empathize, we need to better understand our end-clients and gain a better understanding of their needs, and we do this by categorizing end-users into personas. Personas capture the essence of the various end-user groups, highlighting their unique goals and challenges.

Experimentation is something most of us do on a daily basis, often without

realizing it. From taking a different route home to trying a new cooking recipe, experimentation is about finding new ways of doing things – and is very similar to prototyping. The difference between experimentation and prototyping in the design thinking realm is that when prototyping you are looking for further insights about your end-users, whereas with experimentation you are looking to test out an outcome.

Within Canada, there is currently a move to encourage public servants to experiment more. The Treasury Board Secretariat (TBS) has created a direction on experimentation. The TBS definition of experimentation is:



Testing new approaches to learn what works and what does not work using a rigorous method. This stemmed from understanding that there is a need to find ways to address ‘persistent problems that traditional approaches have failed to solve.’

In order to fully unpack what experimentation means for every department, and every part of each department, we need to look at and understand the people in the organization before determining what experimentation does and can mean for each of them. When we are looking at who will be experimenting, we are identifying the clients of the experimentation policy.

If we step back and apply design thinking to experimentation, we will see that what experimentation means is quite different for everyone in your organization; from policy makers, to regulators, finances teams, administrative groups, managers, researchers, and program managers. These groups are the end-users for the experimentation direction. To understand how regulators can experiment we need to better understand what they do and what their current journeys are like, then work with them to develop an understanding of how they can experiment in their areas of expertise. We also need to work with end-

users to understand what rigorous methods means for each category/persona.

Once we have a clear understanding of who our end-users are, we can define the problem or opportunity for each persona, and then come up with ideas on how experimentation can be done for each persona. Not all methods of experimentation may work, so we will select some of the ideas to prototype and test. As we prototype and test each of the methods, we will learn more about the end-users and how they can experiment more, and effectively, in their organizations and departments.

If we take time to go through what experimentation means for each persona/ category in the public service, we will come up with more impactful outcomes for experimentation rather than outputs. At the end of the day, we are encouraged to experiment to find solutions for persistent problems and create added value for us, our departments, and our citizens. This added value can be achieved if we take the time to look at things from an end-user perspective.

Individually, how do you start experimenting? Look at what is happening in terms of experimentation in your

department and in other departments. There is experimentation happening at all levels and scales. Are there some ideas you can extrapolate? Take a few minutes to think about how you can vary the work that you are doing and do it in different ways. Think both big and small—even how a document is presented can be experimented with. What is one thing you can do today to experiment at work or with your work? Observe the outcomes as you experiment.

Interested in learning more? On May 6, in Toronto, Spring2 Innovation will be hosting [Design Thinking for Public Servants](#).



Nilufer Erdebil is the Founder and CEO of Spring2 Innovation. Nilufer has over twenty years of experience in innovation within various fields including defense (General Dynamics), telecommunications

(Marconi, Bell Canada, CrossKeys), application development, program management and IT management. She has worked with senior management teams, senior executives, engineering and technical staff to develop and implement strategy, bring about major change and solve challenges faced by organizations and introduce new products and services. Throughout her career she has always had a passion and ability to bridge the gap between technology and business while navigating change.

Nilufer has designed and developed many design thinking sessions for the federal and provincial governments. She is the designer behind the Policy Innovation Course Curriculum developed for TBS. She brings unique ways of blending existing and new methods used in business to the public sector.

A 2014 recipient of the Ottawa Business Journal Forty Under 40 Award and a 2016 recipient of the WCT Leadership Award from Women in Communications and Technology, she is a leading authority on innovation and design thinking. Nilufer is a Professional Engineer with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering and an MBA from Queen's University.

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Volunteering with fmi*igf is a great way to gain experience and take on a leadership role – plus according to a [recent study done by Deloitte](#), 82% of hiring managers indicated that they would be more likely to choose a candidate with volunteer experience on their resume.

7. Personal Growth

Volunteering with fmi*igf can provide a personally rewarding experience. In some

cases, you will find yourself involved in projects you normally wouldn't have the opportunity to work on. Volunteering also provides you with a real sense of giving back, and who doesn't feel good about that!

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ALAIN SÉGUIN

“flattered” by fmi*igf award

So, what does an esteemed public servant do as soon as he retires? He jumps right into consulting game and begins the next chapter of his working life without skipping a beat.

At least that is what Alain Séguin did when he retired in August after more than 32 years in the federal public service.

At his retirement, Alain was with the Office of the Comptroller General as Assistant Comptroller General, Financial Management Transformation.

Prior to joining the Office of the Comptroller General, the 59-year-old was the Chief Financial Officer (CFO) of Employment and Social Development Canada and was previously the CFO of the RCMP and the Assistant Chief Statistician Management Services with Statistics Canada.

The Ottawa native has also held senior level executive positions at Natural Resources Canada, Western Economic Diversification and the Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada.

Now, Alain has made himself available for senior executive management consulting.

“I have basically made myself available, mostly to former CFO colleagues, to assist them with a range of issues that someone with my background and experience can be of help,” said Alain.

“This could be with financial issues or management frameworks or transformation activities that require a more seasoned and senior touch.”

That senior touch was recognized last November at PD Week, when Alain was presented with the fmi*igf Honorary Lifetime Membership Award – following his nomination by colleagues.

While Alain is not one who craves recognition, he appreciates and understands the importance of identifying good, hard work.

“I was very honoured to receive such a noteworthy award. I am personally, for me that is, not one to chase after awards and recognition. I have, however, devoted considerable time and energy in recognizing and awarding staff on a regular basis,” said Alain.



Alain Séguin (centre) is honoured by FMI CEO Christopher Egan (left) and the Comptroller General of Canada Roch Huppé at PD Week 2018.

“I think it is important for management to spend the time in recognizing and applauding staff accomplishment.

“I just did not think it was important for me to receive awards. However, when (the Comptroller General of Canada) Roch (Huppé) called me at home and told about the award, I was definitely not expecting it and was very flattered and honoured by the recognition.”

It was also Roch Huppé who presented Alain with his award



Alain Séguin

during the President's Reception at PD Week. That it was Roch holds special meaning for Alain.

“It meant a lot to me to have Roch take the time out of his very busy day to present me with the award. I have a lot of respect for Roch, and I found his comments very appropriate and very touching.

“I trust and hope there will be other individuals in the future that can be touched as I was in being bestowed this or a similar honour.”

Alain has been a big booster of fmi*igf for many, many years.

“I am very supportive of FMI and of PD Week. I have devoted much of my time in financial management in government in contributing to the professionalization of the community. Obviously, FMI is a big part of that professionalization,” said Alain.

“I have been a member of FMI in the past, however more recently in the past 15 or so years as a CFO with some 1,000 employees across the country, my role has been mostly to encourage and support staff in attending the PD Week and the PSMW events. I have also supported and encouraged government policy to be more supportive of conference attendance as an important training vehicle.”

And Alain backs up those words, as he has spoken on several occasions at PD Week and other fmi*igf events – just don't ask to remember how many.

“Frankly, I have lost count how many times exactly, however, if you include the regional PSMW events I think it comes to close to about 10 times overall.”

Q&A



10 Questions with Martha Thomas

1. Who is Martha Thomas? Where are you from and how did you wind up where you are today?

Who is Martha Thomas? Honestly, I am still trying to figure that out. I am sure I will never truly know. Having said that, I am someone who wants to be a good citizen, a good human and a good mother.

I grew up in Toronto – and I mean downtown Toronto not Hamilton or Guelph. I left Toronto after graduating from the University of Toronto and moved to B.C. I had visited Vernon in 1988 and fell in love with the mountains. After two years of working in restaurants and bars, I decided I needed to go back to school. With no idea what I truly wanted to do I did what many would do with a History degree, I decided to teach. After taking one of the prerequisite math courses, I discovered I actually had an aptitude for numbers

and registered for the Business Admin program at Camosun College. From there I went on to study accounting.

2. What is your current position and what are some of the other jobs you have held along the way?

Currently, I am the Manager, Internal Audit for BCI (British Columbia Investment Management Corporation). After spending 17 years in government and working my way up to the Chief Financial Officer position, I decided I needed something new. I basically took a leap of faith and restarted my career.

Here is the fun part of this question. I have been a lifeguard, swim instructor, waitress, bouncer (yes, it's true), store detective, a cashier for a grocery store and a bartender at an army camp. Once I enrolled in the accounting program I completed my articling

time at Hutcheson and Company in Victoria and then started in government as a Senior Internal Auditor for the Ministry of Finance.

3. What is a day in the life of Martha Thomas look like at work?

Right now, I wake up at 6:15 a.m. and get ready to drive my daughter Jordan and a few other students to either jazz band or jazz choir practice at their school. On the way, I always get a cup of Timmy's Steeped Tea. I avoid coffee as a community service to the people around me. Once I navigate through the "Colwood Crawl" and get to work, I chat with my colleagues and get started on whatever project I am working on.

The rest of my day is usually a combination of phone calls and meetings. I am currently the Chair of our Investment Club. We don't trade real money, but it is a great informal way to learn about our industry. When I am not attending an investment club meeting, I do try and use my lunch hours to get some exercise.

After work, I start to think about dinner and I head home. When I get to the door I am usually greeted by my daughter, Drew (her boyfriend, Drew), and their Golden Retriever, Finn. After dinner, I read, watch Netflix, do laundry and go to bed. These are days that I am not attending a board meeting.

4. How did you first become involved with FMI?

I suspect like many of us, I was invited to a meeting and asked to help plan an event. Before I knew it was asked to be the next Victoria Chapter Vice-President. Being the Chapter Vice-President and Chapter President gave me exposure to the National part of FMI and I was hooked.

5. How long have you been associated with FMI and what positions have you held?

I believe that I started around 2008-2009 in the Victoria Chapter. I started as Director, Programs, moved to Chapter Vice-President

and then Chapter President. I was chosen as the inaugural Chair for the newly formed Chapter Advisory Council (CAC) and from there invited to run for the National Board, where I held the Vice-President, President and Director of Strategic Planning roles.

6. Where do you think FMI is headed?

FMI is going in such a great direction. The National Board did a lot of work to fix some of the governance issues we were having and hired a strong CEO with a long-term vision for the organization. A vision for FMI that focuses on agility and relevance. FMI has become one of the most trusted providers of professional development in the public sector in Canada

In order to stay there, we are improving our social media presence, upgrading our products and our service infrastructure to be able to meet the ever-changing demand of our target audience.

While our flagship event is still PD Week in Ottawa/Gatineau every November. We have recently launched a new e-Learning course on Leadership, built new strategic relationships with CPA and IFSD Canada to build more content and have more opportunities to provide professional development.

We have 14 Chapters across the country which are led by dedicated and incredibly competent volunteers. Each Chapter presents its own flavour of events based on the needs of its community. All levels of government support us in our efforts to help keep their staff updated on current events and practices.

7. What is the value of FMI to CPAs and those within and outside the FI community?

FMI provides incredible value at very reasonable prices. That is where we exceed. We strive as a nation organization to stay current and give the public sector relevant and timely information to make them more valuable to their organizations. FMI also stays as adaptable and forward-thinking as possible. This has allowed us to provide development opportunities on a number of different platforms. While we have a regular events for people to attend in

person, we have also created webinars and more recently begun to develop the curriculum for our online learning platform. I highly recommend the first course on Leadership.

8. How important is it to bring together different levels of government within the community?

Collaboration, communication and information sharing are always valuable. They can provide a perspective that people might not have otherwise seen or appreciated when they work at their desks. Our events also provide opportunities to share best practices which could work for all levels of government and may facilitate better communication or understanding among areas that may interlink.

9. What do you think would entice people to become involved or more involved with FMI?

I can't fully express the value FMI has provided to me professionally and personally. As volunteers, we put on events that benefit the public sector and facilitate their development. There is honour and value in that. I have learned how to lead a board of

directors at the Chapter and National level. In terms of furthering my career, that experience has been invaluable and opened so many doors. Above all of that, I have a country-wide community of people who have become lifelong friends. It has truly been an incredibly rewarding and fulfilling experience.

10. Is there anything else you would like to add?

I can't express just how valuable the volunteers are to FMI at both the Chapter and National levels. We would not be the organization we are today with them. Only the National Office has paid employees. Every other person in this organization donates their time and expertise to making this organization as successful as it is.

About Martha Thomas

Martha Thomas is the Manager, Internal Audit for BCI and has been a member of FMI for more than 10 years. After joining the Victoria Chapter, where she held the positions of Vice-President and President, Martha was chosen as the Chair of the inaugural Chapter Advisory Council (CAC). From there Martha was invited to run for the National Board, where she has held the positions of Vice-President, President and Director of Strategic Planning.



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CHAPTER UPDATES

> CAPITAL UPDATE

Capital Chapter hosted another successful PD Day, Current Trends in Accounting, on Feb. 21 at the Sheraton Hotel. The event welcomed more than 85 delegates and featured a number of exquisite speakers along with great discussions and presentations.

Following opening remarks by Capital Chapter President **Sherry Sharpe**, the first session was kicked off by **Diane Peressini**, from the Office of the Comptroller General, who spoke about the Upcoming Accounting and Auditing Standards in the Government of Canada. Following Diane, **Kateri Khoury**, also from Office of the Comptroller General,

presented about Capital Assets.

After lunch, PwC Director **Tim McCormick** and PwC Manager **Clarissa Ahnert** engaged the audience in a discussion about Current Trends in Internal Controls/Continuous Monitoring. **Eugene Ng**, Partner at MNP LLP, followed with a fantastic and energizing session on Cybersecurity.

The conference finished with an insightful panel on Artificial Intelligence, moderated by **Adam Ali**, Partner at MNP LLP, and featuring panelists **Arun Thangaraj** (Assistant Deputy Minister and CFO at Global Affairs Canada), **John Craig** (Director, Solutions Delivery,

MindBridge Ai) and **Hash Qureshi** (Partner, Enterprise Risk Services, MNP Eastern Canada AI Lead).



PwC Manager Clarissa Ahnert and Director Tim McCormick engage the audience in a discussion about Current Trends in Internal Controls/Continuous Monitoring during a Capital Chapter PD Day held on Feb. 21 at the Sheraton Hotel.

> CHARLOTTETOWN UPDATE

The Charlottetown Chapter has been active over the last few months, with three well-attended events since the fall. The first session on Nov. 14 captivated the audience as RCMP Constable **Gavin Moore** presented “Mass Marketing Fraud – Crimes of Persuasion” while **Nathan Hardy** from Veterans Affairs Canada presented “IT Security in Government and at Home.” We

followed up with a Fiscal update on Jan. 17, featuring the Honorable **Wayne Easter**, Member of Parliament for Malpeque, chair of the Standing Committee on Finance, and the Honorable **J. Heath MacDonald**, Minister of Finance for the Government of Prince Edward Island. On Feb. 20, **Mike Haley**, Co-President of our Halifax Chapter and President of Landmark Decisions Inc., travelled to

Charlottetown to present “Enhancing Resource Management and Costing through Collaborative Planning.” Attendees left the presentation with a new appreciation of how collaboration can make a difference in costing and planning, and knowledge of some of the tools that can help. Next on our agenda is an Ethics session that is being planned for May.

> FREDERICTON UPDATE

Every year, the Fredericton Chapter is pleased to have the New Brunswick Auditor General present an update and on Feb. 14, **Kim MacPherson**, CPA, CA, spoke on important notes directly from the AG's reports. The presentation highlighted New Brunswick's year-end financial results and matters arising from the annual financial audit. The presentation also included summaries of two performance audits that took place in 2018, including an

audit on WorkSafeNB governance. This is a topic that affects all Canadians since these organizations are responsible for the wellbeing of the citizens of each province. The AG's session always draws a crowd of provincial and federal professionals. For an in-depth view, the Auditor General's Reports can be found at: www.agnb-vgnb.ca.

The Chapter hosted a breakfast event on Nov. 29 featuring guest speaker **Nadia**

Diakun-Thibault, of Transport Canada. The insightful presentation provided participants an opportunity to learn about Blockchain and Identity, and participate in a question period with an enthusiastic, and often animated, presenter. Nadia is an obvious expert in her field and her knowledge takes the audience from the basics of Blockchain, to learning its intricacies, to how it's applied in the professional field.

> HALIFAX UPDATE

The Halifax Chapter has had a busy winter season with two exciting sessions on the calendar.

On Jan 23., the Nova Scotia Auditor General, **Michael Pickup** spoke on Taking the Boredom out of Financial Management and Controls. His session highlighted key learnings from recent financial and performance audits, as well as new approaches for publicizing audit reviews.

On March 6, **Louie Velocci**, National CIO Advisory Leader and Managing Partner of KPMG's Halifax Office spoke with us

about the Cyber Threat Landscape. His talk and real-life examples highlighted the importance of vigilant IT security practices in all levels of government, business and personally.

The Halifax Chapter is currently in a recruiting phase for both its membership and Board. We would welcome anyone who might be interested in volunteering to help support the Chapter and its mandate for delivering 5-6 high-quality PD sessions per year. Please contact **Mike Haley**, Chapter Co-President at mhaley@landmark.ca or 1-902-499-5425



Halifax Chapter Treasurer Valerie Gauthier, Nova Scotia Auditor General Michael Pickup and Halifax Chapter Co-President Jeff Pottie pose for a photo during a Chapter event on Jan. 23.

> SOUTH-EAST NEW BRUNSWICK UPDATE

In 2018-19, the South-East New Brunswick (SENB) Chapter has hosted two successful half-day professional development events in Moncton. Planning for a third event in the spring is well underway. Stay tuned for an update.

On Feb. 27, our training session at the St. James Gate Event Room in Moncton

was attended by 54 participants. In attendance were members from several different federal government departments, the Province of New Brunswick, the City of Moncton, as well as students from two local universities. **Heather Steeves**, Assistant Professor at Crandall University, presented on "Financial Literacy and Presenting Financial Information to Non-

Financial Managers," during which she talked about the significance of financial literacy and stressed the importance of communication skills in our profession. She also provided tips on building effective communications so that the right information overcomes the wrong decisions. The second speaker of the morning was **Angela Harris**, Founder of

Work of Heart Creative. The theme of her keynote was: “Inspired Action: Maximizing your Time in Life and Work.” Angela explained her personal journey and how she was able to find happiness. She shared several tips on how to achieve a healthy work-life balance (or in her words: work-life integration). She also shared a powerful video with the group that demonstrated the importance of time and why we should never take it for granted.

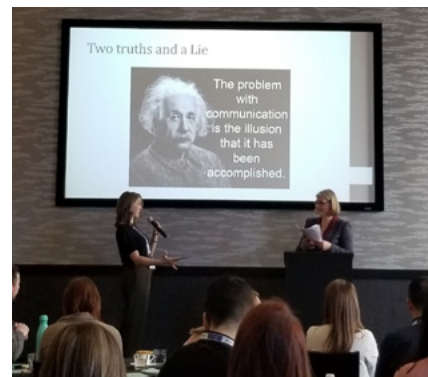
On Nov. 6, 40 finance professionals from all levels of government were welcomed into the brand new Avenir Centre in downtown Moncton, less than two months after its grand opening. The events centre, which opened in September 2018, is home to the Moncton Wildcats of Quebec Major Junior Hockey League. Officials from the City of Moncton (CFO **Gregg Houser**

and Head Engineer **Jack MacDonald**) were on hand to discuss the project from conception to completion. They talked about things such as funding sources, project management, construction challenges and anticipated economic impacts. Both played instrumental roles in the \$113-million project and were able to skillfully field questions from the audience, providing insightful details. Following the presentation, participants were taken on a guided tour of the state-of-the-art facility. After the tour, **Pierre-Marcel Desjardins**, an economics professor from Université de Moncton, provided an update on economic trends and the local tourism industry.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

We are pleased to announce the addition of three new members to our board: **Gillianne King**, **Meghan Gaudet** and **Christiane**

Gauvin. We would also like to take the opportunity to thank directors who have left their positions in the past several months: **André Léger**, **Nancy Léger**, **Mélissa Ward** and **Paula Randell**.



South-East New Brunswick Board member Isabelle Savoie thanks speaker Heather Steeves following her presentation on Feb. 27 at the St. James Gate Event Room in Moncton.

> ONTARIO UPDATE

It was a full house on March 5, where more than 100 participants gathered in Charbonnel Lounge, University of Toronto, to partake in the Ontario Chapter's Public Service Resilience professional development event.

More than 200 participants also joined in from 22 different webcast locations, viewing the live-stream from as far west as Thunder Bay to as far east as Ottawa. New offices joining us for this event were Concord and Ottawa (provincial), Walkerton (agency), as well as other agency and provincial offices throughout downtown Toronto.

The Ontario Chapter is committed to providing sustainable professional development opportunities to finance professionals working in government that are accessible and cost-effective.

The Chapter now has a new record of 28 webcast partners across the province.

This was the Chapter's seventh in-person event since its relaunch in October 2016, targeting finance professionals at all levels of government, across the province.

At this event, participants received the important message from industry executive



Cheryl Fullerton from Corus Entertainment shares her presentation during an Ontario Chapter PD Day event on March 5 at the University of Toronto.



Metrolinx's Chief Human Resources Helen Ferreira-Walker delivers her talk to more than 100 people at the University of Toronto on March 5.

leaders of not only how to remain resilient while experiencing major change, but also were equipped with how to develop strategic insights to better support decision-making impacting our organizations through informed discussions.

Joining us were **Cheryl Fullerton**, Executive

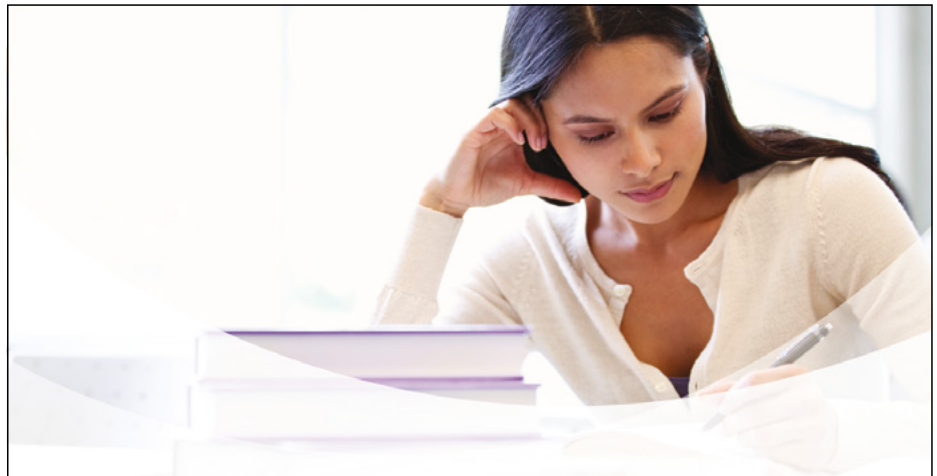


Lois Tullo from the Global Risk Institute delivers her presentation on March 5 at the University of Toronto to not only the 100-plus people who were in attendance but to more than 200 who joined by webcast.

Vice-President, People and Communications for Corus Entertainment, who presented on All We Did Was Change Everything: The Story of Creating an Entertainment Empire; **Heather Ferreira-Walker**, Chief Human Resources Officer for Metrolinx, who presented on Bold Enterprise Change: How to Get Everyone on Board; and **Lois Tullo**, Executive in Residence for Global Risk Institute, who presented on Back to Future: 2007 to 2030 – Changing Implications and Management of Nonfinancial Risk.

Participants agreed that the topics were “relevant” and “timely,” and one attendee told us the session was “very applicable to our time” – we couldn’t agree more.

Thanks to all those who attended the event. If you would like to learn more about our past and future events, please visit, <http://fmi.ca/chapters/ontario/>, for more information.



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