
PROFILE: LINDA PICKARD PH.D.



Linda is an educational psychologist and an award-winning facilitator and designer of leadership development programs. She was named as instructor of the year in 2010 by McMaster University's Centre for Continuing Education. In 2012 she received CCE's "Instructor Appreciation" award. Linda designed and delivered an advanced leadership program for McMaster managers which won a combined five program awards in 2010 from the Canadian Association of University Business Continuing Education (CAUCE), Canadian Association of University Business Offices (CAUBO), CAUBO Ontario, McMaster President's award and the Canadian Society for Training and Development (CSTD).

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Samples of Experience

Change Management

Local government - The senior management team for an I.T. division of a municipality was faced with an underperforming service desk team while in the midst of implementing the *Prosci Adkar* change management system. Dr. Pickard coached and mentored the project management team and the supervisor of the service desk team to engage the latter team in taking ownership for the changes required. Through a series of hands-on workshops, the team members identified their key issues and causes and developed a method to track progress while testing out new ways of working. Central to the change was ongoing dialogue among team members which accelerated personal and team awareness, shared insights and problem-solving. Along with *Prosci Adkar*, we taught the team to utilize *The 4 Disciplines of Execution* methodology to chart and steer progress. One year later, the service desk team had coalesced into a stronger functioning team better able to tackle priorities while also dealing with the daily whirlwind of unexpected challenges and necessary service.

Community College - The pressure of obtaining accreditation to evolve to a polytech university was disrupting and challenging every part of the college. Teachers without PhDs were worried about their job security. The demand for staff training, particularly those who are in managerial or supervisory roles was high. Shakeups in the top leadership severed long-standing relationships. Linda partnered with the OD leaders to design and deliver a multi-module, six-month leadership program to train all senior leaders in guiding the most significant transition in the organization's history. The top executive team, including the Provost, took the training as an intact team. The neuroscience of leadership, the emotion-reason connection to behaviour and change, was a key integrating theme throughout the range of topics covered in the program. Various change models were taught to participants as "micro-tools" - opening up awareness, igniting intrinsic motivation, expanding knowledge capacity based on evidence, learning and practicing new habits and skills and sustaining engagement.

Strategic Planning and Strategy Execution

University Continuing Education - Escalating disruptions in the social, technological, environmental and political environments worldwide have increased competition among universities for attracting, enrolling and retaining students in continuing education and converting them to degree programs. Targeted and effective marketing, a constant stream of new products and a focus on the student experience are a must. Linda assisted the senior and middle management teams through a series of interactive, skill-building workshops and coaching sessions to formulate a new strategic plan and to update the business plans of each unit.

Diversity and Inclusion

Auto Industry - Given the increasing diversity of work forces due to demographics, immigration, human rights, gay rights, gender parity issues, education levels, changing skills and competition for quality, an international auto manufacturing company embarked on a goal of training all employees in diversity and inclusion. Using a pre-determined curriculum, Dr. Pickard to this day delivers a highly interactive program for front line workers and intermediate and advanced sessions for managerial employees. Participants are introduced to inclusive micro-tools for boosting team productivity, ways to reduce micro-inequities, and strategies for becoming more aware of hidden biases that undermine relationships.

Ability and Flexibility to Adjust Learning and Development

Linda's deep knowledge of leadership across a range of disciplines enables her to adapt on the spot to the specific individual and team requirements. In the spirit of "how to make learning stick" (for example, providing opportunities to challenge and build on a person's pre-existing knowledge and understanding and applying it within their organizational culture), Linda deliberately adapts the generic aspects of any desired learning and development to a client's change issues. That may include enhancing small group activities with questions or current examples pertaining to the client situation, spending more time on an area of interest, reinforcing or reviewing concepts already covered as they apply to the team (in a fun and meaningful way) or deepening a debrief with additional relevant information, often gleaned from the participant group as a whole.

When shared issues arise, Linda works with the wisdom of the group to trouble-shoot, using the tools of the program and the collective intelligence of the group. If necessary, timing is adjusted elsewhere in the curriculum to ensure all content is still covered.

The Challenge of Change for Individuals and Teams - Emotions Then Reason

There is no easy path to habit and skills improvement in a perpetually evolving work environment. It is an emotional journey first followed by reason and driven by dedicated deliberate practice until a habit becomes automatic. To boost self-awareness, "learning stickiness" and new habit development within strategic priorities, a learning design opportunity or a set curriculum, Linda draws on stories and examples from history, the arts, media and other domains. They encompass, but are not limited to, decision science, brain science, physics, evolutionary biology, learning science, behavioural economics, leadership/team science, positive psychology, design thinking and emotional intelligence.

Background

Linda is founder and CEO of Pickard & Laws, dedicated to teaching aspiring and experienced managers to “tune up” their leadership abilities. In keeping with her abiding curiosity in science, Linda started her career as a clinical dietitian (lifestyle change) and public health nutritionist (community development). She gained further experience in academia as an assistant professor in charge of practicums for Master of Health Sciences students and also in the private sector in food research and management consulting.

Pickard & Laws clients include universities, cities, towns, city-regions, conservation authorities, and organizations in financial services, telecommunications, pharma, health care, food services, professional services, not-for-profits, industry associations and logistics.

Throughout her career Linda has continuously investigated the psychology behind personal change, top performing teams and system progress.

Education

Linda is a graduate of University of Toronto with a Bachelor of Science (nutrition), Diploma in Public Health Nutrition, Master of Education and Ph.D. in educational psychology. She also completed her dietetic internship (R.P.Dt.) at St. Joseph’s Hospital in Toronto, Ontario.

Praise for Linda Pickard

Working with Linda is a life-changing experience. It’s like a neuroscience “boot camp”. Practical and proven ideas abound on how to grow high-performing teams, design happy workplaces and accelerate progress. The return on investment is exponential.

/Christine Brooks-Cappadocia, Associate Director, Marketing and Enrolment Management,
York University, School of Continuing Studies

Linda exemplifies devotion to her passion (leadership). I have had the wonderful opportunity to work with Linda in co-delivering leadership programs. Through Linda’s support, guidance and understanding of how learning works, we developed a real-life, interactive and emotional leadership case study for my session. I have seen firsthand the satisfaction of the attendees and the loyalty of her partners.

/Norm O’Reilly, M.B.A., Ph.D., CGA. Professor & Chair, Department of Sports Administration,
College of Business, Ohio University

We achieved our productivity goal within two years, then, greatly exceeded it within four years. This outstanding performance could never have been achieved without the help of Linda Pickard from Pickard & Laws.

/Rodney Butt, Former Director of Clinical Research, Boehringer Ingelheim Canada
& Founder of Canadian Ethics Review Board

Linda is an interesting and passionate speaker: great interaction with the group, entertaining, very informative, and relevant to dealing with diverse personalities and lots of ideas to apply in the future.

/Comments by delegates, World Conference on Disaster Management