

Workshop: Brain Gardening - Tools for Cultivating Team and Team of Team Growth

Instructor: Linda Pickard Ph.D.

Linda Pickard is President of Pickard & Laws Consulting Group Inc. which she founded after gaining enriching experiences in the corporate sector, local government and academia. Linda is an educational psychologist who started her career as a nutritionist-dietitian where she began to question how people learn to learn so that it “sticks”. Her journey of inquiry includes graduating from the University of Toronto with a Ph.D. in Educational Psychology, a Master of Education in adult education, postgraduate diplomas in dietetics and public health nutrition and a Bachelor of Science in nutritional and food sciences. Linda’s firm serves clients in both the for-profit and not-for-profit sectors such as financial services, pharmaceuticals, telecommunications, logistics, technology, public health, hospitals, cities and regions and colleges and universities.

Linda is an award-winning designer and facilitator of multi-module leadership development programs. She is also a consultant, writer and educator focused on inclusive and engaging strategic planning, accountable strategic execution and simple evidence-based practices for building team performance and change-adaptable organizational cultures. Her practical tool kits for skill mastery draw on research from a number of disciplines. They include learning and brain science, decision science, evolutionary biology, anthropology, sociology, behavioural economics and positive psychology. The art and science of “deliberate practice”, essential for developing expertise quickly, is a key take away from Linda’s seminars.

Workshop Description

Like bees, highly productive teams oscillate between exploration outside the team and intensive social learning and connection within their respective teams. The flow of ideas feeds into a quality decision making process offsetting team dysfunction and potential unintended consequences. Called “social physics”, the social connectivity of teams and teams among teams we now recognize is a key generator of engagement and performance. In an increasingly chaotic yet interdependent world where finding solutions to complex problems predominate, an updated, soft skill team tool kit is needed to bring technical skills to life.

Topics Covered

- Offsetting “group think”
- Sustaining idea meritocracy
- Managing the “two selves” in decision making process - fast and slow thinking
- Clarifying group norms
- Creating safe spaces
- Building trust
- Gaining prospective hindsight
- Moderating time urgency while enhancing “social synchrony” - relational smoothness and flow of interaction
- Downshifting for insight
- Managing for conflict and consensus
- Celebrating small wins
- Changing habits with deliberate practice

Learning Outcomes

- Use five “ brain gardening” practices to cultivate an environment for astute and agile adaptation to change within and between teams
- Accelerate ability to guide a team through constructive “conflict” in viewpoints to reach decisions of improved quality
- Limit the dominance of a few people in any team situation to create a team atmosphere where everyone feels comfortable to contribute ideas
- Draw skillfully on the energy, intuitions and assumptions of team members who are either on the upside or the downside of change.
- Undertake desired habit changes with greater confidence in achieving success

Key Coaching and Follow up Questions

- What habit is the most important one for you to cultivate when either leading a team or many teams or participating in a team?
- What is the trigger or situation that signals your need to change?
- What do you usually do?
- What are you going to do differently?
- How are you going to track your progress?