



Grant Black, Calgary Herald

Corporate trainer and author Gerry Madigan, who uses breaking wood as part of his management training techniques, is giving a public workshop Thursday at the Radisson Hotel on 16th Avenue N.E.

Companies focus on better workplaces to lure people

Demand for management training grows

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CALGARY HERALD

Alberta's skilled labour shortage is fuelling a heightened demand for more personal leadership training and management programs as companies move to create better workplaces to attract and retain employees.

Gerry Madigan, an author, marathon runner, lecturer, life-coach, corporate trainer and professional speaker, said people are now attracted to companies where they know there is a good working environment.

"They are also attracted to a company where there's a good leadership culture — there's a high trust culture — within the organization," said Madigan, president and CEO of **MMI Personal Leadership Training**, who is giving a one-day public workshop Thursday at the 16th Avenue N.E. Radisson Hotel. The workshop is based on his book *The Five Plateaus of Progress*. "That's created I believe by having people in the positions of leadership who have developed these leadership skills and who are down line.

"If you're serious about developing the leadership culture in your organization, you create an environment where people know they're respected, they're appreciated, they've got job satisfaction, they've got fulfillment. Loyalty really transcends money all the time, but it's a rare quality to find in people."

Deborah McCaig, director of Executive Education at the University of Calgary's Haskayne School of Business, said the school offers a variety of

courses and programs in management training and leadership.

"We take the programs right up to the corporate director's level," said McCaig. "All of our programs are really geared for truly executive levels. So mid-level management right up through the board."

The university also does a customized program with corporate clients.

"Succession planning and their internal leadership development has become a really, really important issue right now," said McCaig, adding there is a trend toward more customized programs in recent years.

"Some of the driving factors (in Alberta) would be the economy itself and the tight, tight labour market. Companies are facing a situation where they can no longer rely on being able to find the right person out in the market who is already fully trained and fully capable of stepping into a role within the organization and running with the ball.

"So they're having to look inward a little bit more than they had to in the past and rely a little more heavily on internal development and encouraging people to stay with their company and learn, develop and grow."

When Madigan gives his personal leadership training workshops, he asks people on the first day to write down the corporate vision of their employers.

He's never had anyone correctly write out that vision. Most get bits and pieces of the vision, but not all of it.

Madigan said leaders are those who have a vision of how things could be and strive towards making that vision a reality.

"To me, leadership is about becoming. Becoming the person you're capable of becoming," said Madigan. "It's not learning about leadership. It's about learning leadership. And there's a big difference.

"Knowledge is one thing, but if it's not translated into action and application it's empty rhetoric. It doesn't mean much. It's just academic knowledge . . . Leadership at the end of the day is about relationships."

Madigan began with the leadership training program in Calgary just over a year ago. He came to Calgary in 1999 from Ireland and intended to launch his version of leadership training here at that time, but got sidetracked and did a project with his son — who was involved with drugs — for a number of years.

His leadership training program was developed while lecturing with the Dublin Institute of Technology. Madigan was lecturing in leadership and communications and also had a small consulting company.

"I developed this framework and then I started testing it out and it worked brilliantly," said Madigan, who has been involved in personal leadership training and development for almost 20 years.

He has now brought his concept to corporate Calgary and it comes at an opportune time as many corporations are involving their employees and managers in leadership programs.

Madigan said that without strong leadership, there is no success. Everything rises and falls on leadership.

For information on Madigan's workshop, contact gerrymadigan@shaw.ca.

“Leadership is about . . . becoming the person you’re capable of becoming”

GERRY MADIGAN