

Food Service & Nutrition

CANADIAN SOCIETY OF NUTRITION MANAGEMENT NEWS

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Nutrition Management

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Summer 2015

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BALANCING EXPECTATIONS

Benchmarking and
crunching the numbers

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The food service industry in Canada is growing. As suppliers seek innovative ways to improve their products, members of the CSNM pursue excellence in delivering them to their clients.

Mutual support among suppliers, Nutrition Managers and the CSNM ensures a bright future for the food service industry.

To learn more about the CSNM, visit our website.

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CSNM: Still Passionate After all these years

By Lorrie Plein, NM



Being declared the 51st CSNM president is an honour and inspires me to continue to grow as a professional. While I follow in the footsteps of many great leaders, I am amazed at how far our profession has come. The vision of several food service supervisors has guided our society towards 50 years of strength and growth. At the 50th Anniversary Celebration, I had the pleasure of reconnecting with some of my predecessors who are still passionate about nutrition management.

The CSNM board is a dynamic group of leaders from across Canada who are devoted to promoting the nutrition management profession. Over the last two years, the board has created a Strategic Plan, revised Bylaws to be in compliance with the Canadian *Not for Profit Act* and updated policies. The foundation is laid. This year, the board will be focusing on membership features, answering the question: "What does CSNM do for me?" At the conference, I asked each member: student, active or corporate, to explore what their membership can do for them. We look forward to hearing your ideas.

Our Volunteer Coordinator has recruited many volunteers willing to assist the association. Currently, we are looking at how to best utilize their talents. We are also looking at ways to give more voice to our student and corporate members.

A personal goal for this year is to have elections for all vacant board positions of three or more candidates. Our membership deserves choice as to who governs their society. If you are interested in serving on the CSNM board, let us know how the board can help you prepare for this role. =A call for nominations will be made in the new year.

This year, CSNM awarded their first Mentor Award to a member who had mentored students by teaching and sharing their experience. As president-elect at the time, I was part of the awards committee and was privileged to read about the great things our members are doing to promote our profession. Help us recognize your peers by nominating them for a CSNM award.

Nutrition management is an honourable profession! Everyone deserves access to good food with the assistance they need in a safe and stimulating environment. CSNM members help make this happen.

Lorrie Plein, NM
President, CSNM



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When Hot is Cold and Cold is Hot

Thermometer strategies and options to avoid thermo-nightmares

By Melissa Vaccaro, MS, CHO

Throughout the day in a food service facility, employees are asked to double-check temperatures. Is the hot food hot? Is the cold food cold? Is the thermometer working correctly? Is it giving an accurate temperature? Is it being used

correctly and is the correct type of thermometer being used? Thermometers are one of the most important tools in a food service facility. Don't underestimate their value.

Take those thermometers out of the desk drawers or pockets and use them. There is simply no way to know for

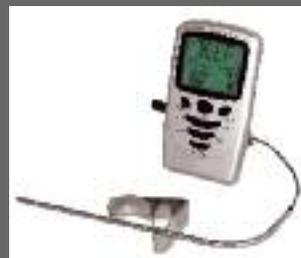
sure if food is being prepared, cooked or stored at the proper temperature without using a thermometer. There have been many studies to prove that colour, look, texture or "feel" of the food are simply not sufficient ways to determine if the final cook temperature has been reached.



Thermocouples



Thermistors – digital instant stem read



Oven cord thermometers



Dial thermometers

It is important to recognize what kind of thermometer you have, its intended use and limitations. Read the manufacturer's instructions and keep them handy for reference. Thermometer readings may be correct most of the time, but they do require care and attention to be accurate.

Aside from thermometers to take food temperatures, there are many other pieces of equipment in a food facility that have built-in thermometers (i.e. ovens). It is important to not only check these thermometers regularly, but to know how to verify that they are working correctly and giving a correct temperature measurement.

THERMOMETER BASICS

Thermometers must be in degrees Celsius (C) or both in Celsius (C) and degrees Fahrenheit (F). Thermometers only in Fahrenheit (F) must be accurate to +/- 2°F. Thermometers with both C and F scales must be accurate to +/- 1°C.

Check the accuracy of each food thermometer at least once a day, every time it is dropped and after it has been exposed to extreme temperatures. Keep a log book to track your thermometer checks. In the end, if it's not correct, calibrate it.

There are two ways to check the accuracy of a food thermometer: ice water and boiling water. Many bi-

metallic stem food thermometers have a calibration nut under the dial that can be adjusted. Check the package for instructions. Even if the food thermometer cannot be calibrated, it should still be checked for accuracy using either method. Any inaccuracies can be accounted for when using the food thermometer or better yet, it can (and probably should) be replaced.

Ice-point method: Fill a large glass with finely crushed ice. Add clean tap water to the top of the ice and stir well. Immerse the food thermometer stem a minimum of 2 inches into the mixture, touching neither the sides nor the bottom of the glass. Wait a minimum of 30 seconds before adjusting. Without removing the stem from the ice, hold the adjusting nut under the head of the thermometer with a suitable tool and turn the head so the pointer reads 0°C (or 32°F).

Boiling water: Bring a pot of clean tap water to a full rolling boil. Immerse the stem of a food thermometer in the boiling water to a minimum of 2 inches and wait at least 30 seconds. Without removing the stem from the pan, hold the adjusting nut under the head of the food thermometer with a suitable tool and turn the head so the thermometer reads 100°C (or 212°F). For true accuracy, distilled water should be used and the atmospheric pressure must be one atmosphere

(29.921 inches of mercury). Water boils at a lower temperature in a high altitude area.

MONITORING AND CORRECTIVE

ACTIONS

Time and temperature abuse of foods is one of the leading causes of foodborne illness. Preventing that abuse is a critical responsibility for managers in the foodservice industry. Guests want hot foods hot and cold foods cold. However, if the food was mishandled before consumption, temperatures abused, or not cooked fully due to an inaccurate thermometer, simply referring to food as "hot" or "cold" will not keep them from getting ill. Temperature measuring devices provide food employees a way to monitor foods during storage, transport, preparation and holding.

Foodservice managers determine what types of thermometers are used, where they are used and how often they are checked. They will also determine who will be checking. When making these determinations, consider the scope of production and the menu. Focus in on "Time and Temperature Controlled for Safety" foods (TCS foods) – those foods most likely to cause a foodborne illness. Employee education on proper use of thermometers they use in their daily activities is essential.



Bimetallic-coil thermometers



Bimetallic-coil stem thermometers



Disposable temperature indicators



Infrared thermometers

Make thermometer checks and food temperature checks a part of your daily (by shift) and weekly food safety plans. Use log sheets to document when food temperatures are checked and when thermometers are calibrated. At minimum, calibrate thermometers weekly. Do not assume that the thermometer is always working correctly. All thermometers can fail to work properly and all refrigeration and/or freezer units will fail at some time or another. The more often thermometers and temperatures are checked throughout the facility, the sooner a problem is caught and resolved quickly with little loss of food.

Managers should monitor and verify with a system of daily monitoring, i.e. double check the checker. This is not to assume that an employee did something wrong, but temperatures can be fragile – the slightest deviation could be cause for concern.

Every facility should have corrective action plans in place for situations where a critical limit is not met or equipment failure occurs. This is a pro-active way to deal with a situation before it happens. Employees should know exactly what to do in an emergency. For example, if an in-use thermometer is found to be incorrect, the employee should first determine if there is a possibility that any food may be unsafe due to the thermome-

ter's inaccuracy. If the faulty thermometer was used to determine a final cooking temperature, the food may not have reached its required final internal temperature; a corrective action plan would require that the product be cooked further. If the cooking temperature cannot be reached, another corrective action would call for the product to be held and destroyed. Always check with your regulatory agency to determine any safety standards for corrective actions that are permitted.

What happens when the freezer fails to work, but the bi-metal temperature gauge on the outside of the unit says -18°C? The gauge is not working and the unit temperature is rising and is currently -2°C. Aside from contacting a repair person, the corrective action plan may have several options. If there are additional freezers within the freezer, move the food to the alternate unit. If the food has begun to thaw, that does not mean it is bad. As long as the time and temperature controlled for safety (TCS) foods have not elevated over 5°C, the foods can be safely removed from the broken freezer and placed into a refrigerator for thawing. The corrective action plan would detail these decisions.

The goal of the corrective action plan is to ensure that unsafe food is

never served to anyone. Corrective action plans allow employees not to panic when they find out that something has gone wrong. They should know where to find the plans and how to implement and document the corrective actions effectively.

The temperature measuring device industry has grown exponentially in the last decade. There is a temperature measuring device for everything and many are now linked to computerized systems for more detailed monitoring, verification and analysis. However, even the simplest thermometer is an invaluable tool in the foodservice industry. It is important that the correct device is used for its intended purpose. Monitoring and verification of food temperatures with accurate thermometers is imperative to ensuring food is safe.



Melissa Vaccaro, MS, CHO, is a food program specialist for the PA Department of Agriculture and an executive board member for the Central Atlantic States Association of Food and Drug Officials (CASA). She is co-author of the *SURETM Complete HACCP Food Safety Series*, which features HACCP manuals for managers, employees and trainers.



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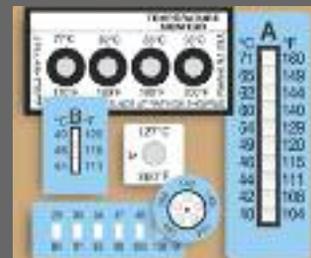
Liquid-filled thermometers



Bimetallic-coil appliance and oven thermometers



Dry-storage temperature monitors



Package indicators



BALANCING EXPECTATIONS

Benchmarking and crunching the numbers

By Karl Maier, MBA

The economy of Alberta is linked to the price of oil and, with the price hovering at approximately half of its 20-year historical average, the provincial government is looking at an estimated \$7 billion shortfall. As Alberta faces tough economic times, departments are reviewing costs and making tough decisions. In this global economy, no matter where you are in the country, knowing your numbers is important!

When making those decisions in food service, phrases like *benchmarking* and *cost per patient day* are bound

to come up in conversation. One definition of benchmarking is this: "The process of measuring an organization's internal processes then identifying, understanding and adapting outstanding best practices from other organizations considered to be "Best in Class."

A favourite benchmarking phrase is: "Without data, all you have is an opinion!" and more than opinions are needed to see a clear picture. Remember that benchmarking is not the answer, it is a tool used to answer why costs are currently as they are. There are many other tools that are used to show costs; graphs, spreadsheets and

month end reports. Keeping an open mind and knowing that a combination of information will provide the most data and the least number of opinions to inform your decision making.

WHERE DO WE GET THE NUMBERS?

What do all the numbers mean and how do we find them? The first place to start is a *patient day*. This number is usually a midnight census or a count. How many patients or residents are in a bed at midnight? A count is taken each day for that month and added up. That will become the Month to Date (MTD) patient days and, as the

budget year progresses, a Year to Date (YTD) number will also be calculated. This number will be used as the denominator or divisor to get a net cost per patient day. Next are the costs, which are usually categorized into four main categories: Salary and Benefits (Labour); Food; Supplies; and, Other Supplies.

Labour is the expense of the front-line staff who produce, assemble and deliver the trays or meals; in larger sites this will also include diet office functions. Each site or company will have a process for determining if management staff are in or out of this labour cost with the trend being to have all staff (including management) included. Typically the only labour cost not included in the labour expense is Clinical Nutrition or Clinical Dieticians.

Food expenses are categorized by Management Information Systems (MIS) codes to certain categories with the ability to drill down into individual costs. MIS codes are the national standard for financial and statistical healthcare reporting in Canada and maintained by the Canadian Institute of Health Information (CIHI). An example of categories include *Fresh Fruit and Vegetables* or *Milk and Dairy*.

A common question is: "What's the difference between *Supplies* and *Other supplies*? Supplies are simply the items used to create a tray or a meal. This will vary from site to site, as trays are not commonplace for Long-Term Care (LTC). This would include napkins, straws, etc. Other Supplies are all the indirect expenses such as travel, education, etc. which support the staff.

The four category expenses are then prorated to get a net cost per patient day. The difference between the cost per patient day and the net cost per patient day takes into account revenue from various sources such as retail or another internal department for supplies.

THE BENCHMARKING JOURNEY

These four categories are the most basic costs to start comparing both internally and externally. One strategy is to compare costs of similarly sized sites or like sites by bed numbers (Acute Care to Acute Care, LTC to LTC, etc.). Now that you have your Month to Date (MTD) and Year to Date (YTD) number, what's next?

One mistake that can happen on the benchmarking journey is to wait

until the numbers being collected for external benchmarking are an exact comparison of apples to apples. It is more important to have a starting point to compare, rather than getting hung up on the data needing to be exactly the same. Think of it as comparing Gala and Macintosh apples, both are apples, and that might be close enough to start comparing. A phrase used to define when one is stuck on the numbers, not on the actions



needed to change the numbers is *Analysis Paralysis*. This can happen while searching for the perfect data. Another common phrase in benchmarking is *Variance is Our Enemy!* One example of variance is the difference between three different costs; lowest cost, average cost and the highest cost. Many examples of benchmarking take the average of the like group and then measure how close each site is to the average. Those with costs the farthest from the average have the most work to bring costs in line.

A point to consider first is where the majority of the costs are created. In most healthcare sites, labour is the largest component contributing to the net cost per patient day. Approximately 70 to 80 per cent of overall costs are labour. That is a staggering figure; the remaining 20 to 30 per cent would include all costs for warewashing, chemicals, groceries, paper supplies etc.

Now that a basic knowledge of the benchmarking costs are known, what's next? Understanding what makes up these numbers is very important. Starting at the site level, some of the main questions relate to what your staff is doing at what time. This is where benchmarking, patient or resident satisfaction and process improvement collide. A common LEAN term is *Going to Gemba* (Gemba means where the work is being done). Understanding what tasks staff are performing at certain times of the day will be key to controlling labour.

Are staff being as efficient as possible in their tasks? Rates of pay, shift differentials and premiums are not something that can be adjusted, but ensuring that staff are starting and finishing at the correct times and performing their duties as optimally as possible are paramount. Some areas to look at are the activity schedules,

preparation, serving and warewashing duties. Are staff travel times minimized from the kitchen to the nursing units? Being able to see what staff are doing in 15 minute increments gives the granularity needed to get a good picture. Often, activity schedules don't match what staff are actually doing; finding out the truth provides the most accurate view. Other forms of labour waste can be related to transportation, motion or waiting.

The dishroom or the warewashing area is another area to look for waste. Plate waste audits are the most effective way to investigate food waste. If patients or residents aren't eating their meals, there's an issue. Is the food poorly prepared? Are the portion sizes too large? Questions to ask in the dishroom include: Are staff batching items in the warewashing area? Are dish racks being fully and correctly loaded to reduce water and chemical waste? From a sustainability perspective healthcare does not pay enough attention to the cost of utilities, as departments are rarely asked to be accountable for that usage.

IT COMES DOWN TO THE FOOD

When it comes to food cost, the menu will drive the majority of the costs. This is where standardization is so important when comparing similar sites; having the same menu and similar services levels the playing field. Waste is the biggest factor attributing to a high net-food-cost-per-patient-day. Are the cooks overproducing and creating waste? Are food items being overcooked and discarded and then having to be replaced? This is where the buy prepared versus taking raw products and cooking the products comes in. As the industry changes and more commercially prepared foods are being used, it is even more important to ensure that these highly priced

items are not wasted.

Another food waste is not using the correct serving utensils to serve the food on a beltline, cell or dining room. Ensuring that proper scoops, ladles and serving utensil are used can ensure accurate portion control and reduce waste.

Supplements and snacks are another area where waste is easily generated. The supplement and snack costs also have a labour component as the snack items need to be prepared and supplements are usually poured into glasses and labelled. A "three-strike rule" has been mentioned by some. This means that if the supplement or snack ordered was not consumed by the resident or patient three times in a row, continuation of it would need to be reviewed.

In LTC facilities, having a great relationship with nursing is vital to ensuring the supplement or snacks are given to the appropriate resident or patient and they're being persuaded to consume it. Another strategy is to make all staff and nursing aware of supplement costs. Awareness of costs makes everybody more accountable.

How can costs be contained in a retail environment? Ensuring that items are properly priced is very important. The hours of operation and non-peak-hours staff can affect overall cost. Theft is unfortunately another area that needs to be reviewed as the loss in profit can add up quickly. If embedded retail within a site is not accounted for and is combined with cost per patient day, these costs can skew the numbers positively, but more likely negatively. This may mean that patient food services is subsidizing retail services.

Another measure of efficiency is worked hours per patient day. Instead of dollars, the number of worked hours are used as the main measure. This

number is then again divided by patient days and measures overall efficiency. The advantage of this measure is that it negates any comparisons due to wage, benefit or shift premium differences. Each similar bed group has an average worked hours per patient day value and variance within the bed groups can be compared.

Scorecards are another way to get a quick visual representation of many measures. The power of the scorecard is that you can see your key performance indicators (KPI) at a glance and make changes accordingly.

The importance of knowing your numbers and how they compare to your peers is becoming more and more important as healthcare is being asked to be more efficient and ensure sustainability. How can it cost \$5 more per patient day for two similar or like sites? That is where the discussion can begin. Nutrition and Food

Services is fortunate that, as a professional group, those tips, tricks and best practices are willingly shared between colleagues – the power of having wisdom at our fingertips is NFS's largest resource. Picking up the phone or emailing a colleague to talk about costs and overall satisfaction should be a habit and become the greatest tool in the toolbox.

The most important take away from benchmarking is that a site's costs are just one of the measures needed to be compared to understand performance. Patient and resident satisfaction or quality and cost will always be two measures that need to be balanced. How much more are we willing to pay for a service that may not have any more perceived value? This question will continue to be front and centre moving forward in NFS and in healthcare.



CONTINUING EDUCATION COMPETENCY

Competency 7.C

Financial/Business Management

Describe financial management principles, performance indicators in cost-control systems and in the development, evaluation and revision of budgets.

CSNA Canadian Society of Nutrition Management

Karl Maier, MBA, is currently the Director of Business Performance for Nutrition Food, Linen and Environmental Services for Alberta Health Services. Benchmarking is one of the areas of Karl's portfolio. He assists 106 sites within Alberta to understand their numbers.



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Live and Learn

CULTIVATING THE ART OF INSIGHT

By Patricia Katz, MCE, CHRP, HoF

When you first engage in any profession, there is a tremendous amount to learn about every aspect of your role. It can seem daunting to think that you would ever master it all. And, the truth is, despite your best efforts, it's unlikely

that you ever will. You see, knowledge is a moving target. As your tenure grows there will always be more to learn along the way.

The good news, though, is that there is a huge payoff when you remain alert for new learning and insights as you go about your everyday activities. As you

search them out and welcome them, you continue to grow in depth of knowledge and effectiveness. What's more, you become a strong living model for others – demonstrating what it takes to maintain your professionalism and to engage in ongoing development beyond the classroom.

Another reason to pay attention is because circumstances around us are always in flux. Changes are not always in your face and impossible to ignore. They also sneak up on us as we're coasting along in "same ol' same ol'" mode.

What was once new and unique becomes old hat or old school. Technology evolves, and the expectations for how we organize and manage our work change, too. Products and services grow out of date and out of fashion. Fresh research redefines quality practice. Workplace priorities are altered, and teams are called on to shift direction, too. A new generation calls for a fresh approach to leadership or prefers communicating in new ways.

Our ability to stay relevant, creative, and innovative, to adapt and adjust, to jump the rut, rests in the knack of approaching life with Beginner's Mind – that moment to moment ability to learn as life unfolds.

This article describes the nature of beginner's mind, why it matters, and three practices that will help you put it to work in your life and your organization.

WHAT IS BEGINNER'S MIND?

Spend time around an infant or a toddler and you'll witness firsthand the marvel of "live and learn" in action. Children are fearless and relentless in their attempts to master new skills and make their way in a new-to-them world.

Think back to early challenges in your career: your first attempts to master a skill like driving a car or riding a bike, or your introduction to parenthood. You may recall how it felt to hold rank amateur status. Everything was fresh and challenging. Everything called for a concentrated effort. And, everything consumed your undivided attention.

The thing that is unique about the early stages of learning a skill, art or

profession, is that we have no choice but to approach it with Beginner's Mind.

We bring an attitude of openness, eagerness, optimism, creativity, zeal, and a lack of preconceived notions about the subject at hand. It is in the state of Beginner's Mind that we are most open to new learning and fresh insights.

WHY DOES IT MATTER?

As we grow in skill and experience in our professional and personal lives, we become more masterful. Many things become familiar. It's easy to fall into a "Been There...Done That...Seen It All" mindset. Holding on to Beginner's Mind becomes a challenge and fresh insights are few and far between.

That's a problem, because fresh insights spark creativity and innovation, keep us engaged in growing our skills and deepen our understanding. And, fresh insights fuel new possibilities that lead to changes in our behaviour and new habits for success.

Environments that value learning, make time for it and place a priority on it, are places where people keep learning. We're intrinsically motivated to do this. Motivational expert, Daniel Pink, describes Mastery – the ability to learn and grow in skill and understanding – as one of three core motivators. It's right up there with Purpose and Autonomy. And mastery doesn't just happen in a classroom. It unfolds in the laboratory of everyday life.

Learning engages and motivates employees, and the resulting transformation helps organizations stay competitive and relevant.

CULTIVATING BEGINNER'S MIND

Reclaiming 'Beginner's Mind' rests in three practices: granting permission to

pause for reflection, exercising your powers of observation, and developing your skills in questioning. In short: Step Back, Tune In, Dig Down.

STEP BACK

Grant yourself and others permission to pause for reflection. Very little learning takes place without a commitment to reflection. Time out to think can be tough to cultivate in a world that prizes relentless busy-ness, but pausing to think is where it all begins.

It's only when we make room to reflect on what is happening that true, deep learning takes place and new habits take hold.

Learning organizations are fueled by individual action. Employee willingness to make time for learning is influenced by the example set by organizational leaders.

If you are a leader in your organization, what do you and other leaders do to encourage time out? Do you model that behaviour yourselves? Is an investment in reflection considered to be a giant waste of time or important, legitimate and necessary? Do you speak of reflection with respect or disdain? Are stories shared that reinforce the value of stepping away from the action to consider the options and imagine the possibilities? Are fresh insights and new ideas honored and celebrated?

All these things influence whether or not people throughout an organization feel secure in cultivating the practice of making time to think.

Good times to step back are at the end of an activity or an event, or at a break in the process, where there is a natural punctuation point for review.

TUNE IN

Once permission to reflect is in place, tapping into insight depends on noticing what's going on around you and

within you. Exercise your powers of observation. Use every sense that makes sense, starting with looking and listening. Don't ignore your "spidey sense," that often elusive intuitive messenger that chatters away in the back of your mind or the pit of your stomach.

Pay attention to more than the "facts" of a situation. Take the time to notice your reactions and the responses of others as well. Throughout our daily activities, as we work on projects and interact with others, emotional responses are an important indicator that signal an opportunity to tune in and explore what's going on.

- Excited or delighted? There's probably something awesome at the root of the experience that you might want to repeat and experience again.
- Frustrated or stressed? That's a likely indicator that you had expectations of outcomes that were thwarted by how things unfolded.
- Angry or disgusted? Whatever occurred likely offended one or more of the values you hold to be important.
- Worried or fearful? Chances are good you are facing the potential loss (real or imagined) of something that means a great deal to you.
- Envious or jealous? Could be an indicator of something you aspire to as a goal for yourself, or a sign that you feel you aren't being treated fairly.
- Stuck and discouraged? The familiarity might suggest a life lesson you haven't yet mastered that is being presented for you to learn yet again.

DIG DOWN

Having paused to reflect, and tuned in to an opportunity to learn, develop the skill of asking great exploratory questions.

How do you know if you're working with great questions? The most effective questions create clarity, explore connections between events

and outcomes, help people think more critically, inspire reflection and breakthrough thinking, challenge assumptions, and poke holes in the status quo. They suggest new directions and next steps. Try experimenting with a few of these forms of questioning.

AFTER-ACTION REVIEW

Sit down after an event is over, with a paper and pen, and ask yourself these three questions.

- What went well?
- Where did things go wrong?
- What did you learn for next time?

"WHAT" TO THE POWER OF TWO

Tune into the experience that is unfolding or event that just took place and ask yourself so what and what now.

- So What? What just happened? Why did things occur that way? What does it mean? How did you feel?
- What Now? What is the lesson to be learned? What rule of thumb or point of wisdom does it suggest for the future? How and where will you put this insight to work?

LOOKING INWARD

This set of reflective questions is inspired by Stephen Brookfield, an expert in critical thinking. Ask them as you look back on a specific incident or experience. See where they take you and what you learn.

- When was I most engaged?
- When was I most distanced?
- When/by what was I most affirmed?
- By what was I most puzzled or surprised?
- What was the single most important thing I learned today?
- What would have made this experience that much better?
- How will I capitalize on these insights in the future?

MINDFUL MOMENT OF AWARENESS

Here's an approach to use in the heat of a moment. When you find yourself caught up in the emotion of an event, pause, step back and work through this series:

- What is happening right now?
- What do I want right now?
- What am I doing right now to prevent myself from getting what I want?
- How might I make another choice and move on?

Don't let life's lessons pass you by. Be as active in learning as in living. With mindfulness and intention, build fresh approaches and habits based on what you learn along the way. ■■■■

CONTINUING EDUCATION COMPETENCY



Patricia Katz, MCE, CHRP HoF, is a Canadian speaker and author who works with organizational leaders to ease the load and fuel the spirit. This best-selling author shares her wisdom weekly with thousands of readers of her e-zine, *Pause*.

- www.pauseworks.com



You Must Be Good to be Lucky

Having a shamrock in your logo is lucky, but Flanagan Foodservice thrives on more than luck

By Stan Michalak



Drive the highways of Ontario, using Kitchener, Sudbury and Owen Sound as your bases, and your foodservice delivery routes might end up looking a little like the outline of a shamrock. How fitting that your company is Flanagan Foodservice?

The shamrock in Flanagan's logo speaks to founder Joe Flanagan's Irish roots, but it really does represent the routes Flanagan vehicles follow on their deliveries throughout the province. Flanagan is the largest, Canadian-owned, independent foodservice distributor in the country. That makes the company sound like a giant, but the truth is: Flanagan is more like David than Goliath.

Marilyn Hofstetter is the senior account manager, health-care, and has been with Flanagan for 29 years. She says Joe Flanagan started in 1977 with a food wholesale business in his home town of Kitchener.

"Joe noticed customers coming in and placing large orders," says Hofstetter. "So, he started a distribution system in the Kitchener area, taking the product to the customer."

Truly a family company, Joe's four sons have all been involved in running the business. Dan Flanagan is the current president and his brothers are shareholders. A fleet of 70 trucks serves the Ontario market within the boundaries described by the shamrock logo.

"We're large enough to play with the big boys," says Hofstetter. "But, we're small enough to provide the kind of personal service that our customers like."

A number of Flanagan's employees are also shareholders; having a stake in the company's success is a strong motivator to avoid being swallowed by the industry giants. Hofstetter says many of the country's small, family-owned foodservice companies have been bought out. If Flanagan is David versus Goliath, then this David has matured enough to hold his own against any future Goliaths.

"In all our years, we've always gone forward," she says. "We've never had a year when we've gone backwards in sales."

Hofstetter also says that there is a personal touch being delivered all across the company that is evident from the moment one walks in the front door. This brand of customer service is not only good for repeat business it places the com-

pany in a preferred position in the community as an ethical and responsible organization – a business with a heart.

"We are always involved in what our customers are doing in the community with donations or with helping them run fundraising events," says Hofstetter. "We are part of the *We Care* network that raises funds for the Easter Seals campaign to help physically disabled children get to summer camp. We have employees who have children with special needs, so we understand how important that is."

The green in the company's logo isn't just a nod to Ireland. It also symbolizes Flanagan's commitment to the environment. From using solar energy to recycling rain water, the company is committed to reducing its carbon footprint.

"We're the first in Canada to use an ammonia coolant in our freezers," says Hofstetter. "We also retrieve heat generated by our equipment through a system of exchangers to direct it back to our heating system, we have a full recycling program in place and we work with other companies to reduce as much packaging as possible."

For a more far-reaching environmental impact, there's *Ocean Wise*. Developed by the Vancouver Aquarium, *Ocean Wise* is a conservation program that raises awareness of sustainable seafood products, and Flanagan is an active partner.

The future involves continued growth. Hofstetter says the company is always looking for new partnerships to improve the options available to the customer with the ultimate goal that Flanagan be the best foodservice company in Ontario. The pace of growth has been steady, adapting to changing demands, particularly the gap between the older meat-and-potatoes generation currently residing in retirement and long-term care homes, and the younger, more food-savvy customers who frequent high-end eateries.

If the example set by Joe Flanagan in 1977 is still alive and well at Flanagan Foodservice, the future growth of the company will be dictated by the personal touch and by sticking to its motto: "The difference you deserve." ■ ■ ■ ■

Stan Michalak is the creative director of Cutting Edge Communications, publisher of *Food Service & Nutrition* magazine.

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Take Another Look at Conflict

Using conflict to create positive opportunities for your team

By Frema Engel



Conflict between people is a normal and inevitable part of life. Whenever there is an interaction, differences and disagreements can occur.

Although we all have a life-long experiences, it is surprising how many people at work feel uneasy or ill-equipped to deal with conflict. Rather than understanding that it is a natural part of a relationship dynamic, conflict often creates stress and is perceived as inevitably leading to a confrontation that is best to avoid.

For many people conflict conjures up unpleasant memories and feelings. Past negative experiences set in motion a fight or flight response or win-lose posturing, intensifying negative feelings and escalating a dispute. Unresolved conflicts led to rising emotions, more hurt feelings, drawn battle lines and polarized positions. The longer the conflict dragged on, the more difficult it was to talk things out.

A conflict does not have to destroy a relationship. Nor does it have to end with a “winner and loser.” The process used to resolve the conflict can create a feeling that everyone wins. It can be an enriching exercise that will strengthen relationships and improve teamwork, performance and contribute to a healthy, vibrant work culture.

REFRAMING CONFLICT

Conflict is a normal, healthy byproduct of a human interaction, the result of converging, competing interests, goals or values. With each of us having different needs, opinions and perspectives, we can easily have multiple viewpoints about an issue and different ideas on what to do about it.

Our different viewpoints are not problematic. Rather, it is whether or not we choose to find a solution and how we choose to do this. Aside from the effect on the relationship, conflicts and their resolution also affect positively or negatively performance, teamwork, service delivery, absenteeism and health and safety. Regardless of whether the conflict involves two people or a team, unresolved or badly handled conflict resolution can lead to an escalation and to bullying, harassment, behaviour problems, team splitting and an unhealthy or toxic work environment. Conversely, a solution that comes from respectful dialogue and a fair, inclusive and

transparent resolution process can be a catalyst for a harassment-free, collaborative and respectful workplace – an environment in which people want to work.

Through words and action, the manager sends a message to the team about how conflicts are to be handled. While we all have our own styles for dealing with conflict, it is important to understand the effect your style has on the way problems get resolved and on your relationships.

CONFLICT RESOLUTION STYLES

Each of us has a primary style for resolving conflict. The widely-used *Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument* describes the styles as competing, accommodating, avoiding, compromising or collaborative. Each style reflects a different way of resolving conflict, involves a degree of assertiveness and cooperation and has consequences for the parties involved.

In the competing style, the individual firmly pursues his or her own views and forces a solution and action, despite the resistance of or at the expense of others. At times this style may be appropriate, such as during a crisis when someone must take charge and quickly decide on a course of action. However, people do not like being forced to do something in which they have no stake. Forcing solutions on people can build resentment. When done routinely, aggressively or with hostility, this can damage your relationship with the individual or your team, dramatically lower your credibility as a competent and trusted manager and lead to resistance to your plans.

People who are uncomfortable with conflict tend to ignore or evade it because they do not want to deal with it. Sometimes the issue is trivial and not worth the effort or it may be better not to engage with the other parties when emotions are high. However, avoiding conflict can create frustration and disappointment. Employees want and expect conflicts to be resolved. A manager who routinely avoids conflict is seen as weak or passive or as someone who does not care enough to deal with issues. Anger and frustration builds due to the inaction and can set the stage for increased conflict, harassment and incivility.

Accommodating puts other people’s concerns first rather than dealing with one’s own. This style can be useful as a give

Conflict is a normal, healthy byproduct of a human interaction, the result of converging, competing interests, goals or values

and take – if you give in on some issues, you can hold firm on those you consider more important. When the style is to always accommodate, the manager runs the risk of being abused. It is therefore important to maintain a balance between accommodating others and getting your own needs met.

Compromising looks for an expedient and mutually acceptable solution that will at least partially satisfy the parties involved. It can be a practical way to lower tension and get to a solution when time is a factor or as a temporary measure while seeking a long-term one. Since compromise can result in a situation where both parties are not fully satisfied with the outcome, it may gradually lead to renewed tension. This style can be a good way to resolve problems, but it may also require ongoing monitoring and control to ensure that all the parties are respecting the agreement.

Collaborating is the superstar style of conflict resolution. It may not be a practical approach to use when time is an issue or a quick solution must be found. It is, however, ideal when conflicts are complex, feelings are deeply hurt, relationships have been severely damaged and the team cannot work together. This approach requires time and work. Everyone must agree to engage in the process. People will need to feel safe enough to express themselves and find ways to build consensus and a win-win solution that will most clearly satisfy everyone's concerns. The process of finding and establishing a win-win consensus-building approach strengthens relationships, develops deeper trust and leads to more cohesiveness and creativity in the team. Consensus-building leads to a shared experience, stronger relationships and greater team cohesion.

No one style fits all conflict situations. However, the manager charged with the responsibility and task of resolving conflicts within the team should be aware of the pros and cons of using each style and its effect on relationships, problem-solving, performance, the group's cohesiveness and how the team views its manager.

Conflicts and their resolution should be seen as opportunities for change and improvement. Handled wisely, the process of resolving the conflict can become an enriching experience in personal and team development. It can strengthen team cohesiveness and help people to understand that they have a shared interest in finding solutions to troublesome issues that previously divided them.

FIVE STRATEGIES TO RESOLVE CONFLICTS IN YOUR TEAM

Regularly set aside time to air issues of concern. Give everyone the opportunity to share their views and feelings and express how the issues affect their work. Redefine the issue so that it is depersonalized and clearly understood. Then, brainstorm solutions and find the one that everyone can agree with and will follow.

Involve the team in defining and establishing a fair, inclusive, transparent decision-making process that spells out how decisions will be taken by the group and the steps involved.

Develop values that describe how the group will work together and a code of conduct that defines unacceptable behaviour and details how it will be dealt with.

State your expectations that the team use the processes agreed upon and monitor it to ensure success. Be the role model for everyone to follow.

Hone up on your own problem-solving and win-win conflict resolution skills and use them to coach and lead your team in good conflict resolution practices.

SEIZING OPPORTUNITIES FOR CHANGE

Workplace conflicts are more frequent and far more complex than ever. Not only do managers have the responsibility to resolve conflicts, their performance will be judged on their ability to do this and to maintain a psychologically safe and healthy work culture.

So, sharpen your conflict resolution skills and embark on a journey with your team. Empower your team to tackle the problems that divide them and to find ways to settle their disputes that make everyone feel part of the solution. By doing so, you will create an engaged, inspired, cohesive and high-performance team.



Frema Engel is a social worker, anti-bullying activist, conflict resolution facilitator and builder of healthy relationships and workplaces. She has a passion for bringing out our best behaviour so that we can enjoy healthy relationships and great environments.

• www.fremaengel.com

Why Accreditation

How accreditation is paving the way for nutrition managers of the future

By Heather Truber, NM



For more than 20 years, CSNM has had an accreditation process in place for educational institutions which provide training and education in nutrition management in Canada. Nutrition managers working in the Canadian healthcare system will be very familiar with accreditation as it relates to healthcare facilities and the process that is followed by Accreditation Canada.

Educational accreditation is slightly different in that it focuses on the needs for the industry and ensuring success for graduates in that industry. It is a type of quality assurance process under which the services and operations of an educational institution's programs are evaluated by an external body to determine if applicable standards are met. If the standards are met, accredited status is granted.

Accreditation in higher education is defined as a collegial process based on self and peer assessment for public accountability and improvement of academic quality. Peers assess the quality of an institution or academic program and assist the faculty and staff in improvement.

An accreditation of an academic program typically involves two major activities: The faculty conduct a self-study using the accrediting organization's set of expectations (standards, competencies) as their guide; and, a team of peers, selected by the accrediting organization, reviews the evi-

dence, visits the campus to interview the faculty and staff and writes a report of its assessment including recommendations to the program for improvement. Guided by a set of standards and competencies, the accreditation review team reviews the evidence and makes a recommendation of an accreditation award of either three or five years or declines to make a recommendation. The award decision is communicated to the institution.

The CSNM Accreditation standards and competencies are based on the knowledge and skills that an entry level nutrition manager would require to have success in the workplace. The competencies are reviewed every five years to ensure that what is required continues to be relevant and that any changes in the industry are reflected in the educational requirements.

The review process typically includes review of all feedback that has been received in regards to educational needs and/or gaps in education; discussion with educational institutions regarding challenges or suggestions they may have and accreditation reviewer input in regards to the accreditation documents themselves.

CSNM Accreditation is built around eight core competencies including professionalism; quality management; nutrition and healthy living; clinical nutrition; food service systems management; human resources management; financial/business management; and, marketing and promotion. These

eight are then broken down into knowledge and performance indicators each with specific components. There are over two hundred and fifty indicators that have to be addressed in an educational institution's curriculum to ensure compliance. The core competencies also form the basis for the continuing education that is provided and/or approved for graduate nutrition managers both through the CSNM quarterly magazine or through educational sessions and conferences.

The CSNM Accreditation reviews are conducted by nutrition managers who volunteer their time to perform a review of the self-study documents from the program. Following the paper review, two of the three reviewers on the team visit the educational institution to conduct the site visit during which the reviewers meet with faculty, students, graduates, advisory committee members and employers to validate the information that was provided in the self-study documents. Every two years CSNM will put out a call to members who wish to volunteer with the accreditation portfolio.

CSNM Accreditation is a dynamic process that ensures the education provided to students in nutrition management programs across Canada is relevant and that the content is based on established competencies. Employers who hire nutrition managers can be confident that their education has met an established and consistent applied standard regardless of where they were trained in the country.

Once granted accreditation, colleges

Employers who hire nutrition managers can be confident that their education has met an established and consistent applied standard

are then permitted to advertise that their program is accredited by CSNM and display the CSNM logo in relevant advertising material. CSNM also lists all accredited colleges on its website. Graduates of accredited programs are automatically eligible for membership in CSNM and, if they apply within two years of graduation, are not required to write the entrance exam. Students in the accredited programs are also eligible to become students members of CSNM.

In order to ensure that the educational institution continues to maintain the level of education and training demonstrated during the review the institution is annually required to submit an annual report to CSNM outlining current numbers of enrollment; any significant changes to the program and identify how the program has actioned any recommendations from the last accreditation review.

There are currently ten educational institutions within Canada with accredited nutrition and food service

CSNM-ACCREDITED FOODSERVICE & NUTRITION PROGRAMS

Algonquin College

Bow Valley College

Centennial College of
Applied Arts & Technology

Fanshawe College

George Brown College of
Applied Arts & Technology

HealthCareCAN

Humber Institute of Technology
and Advanced Learning

Langara College

Saskatchewan Institute of
Applied Science and
Technology

Université de Guelph,
Campus d'Alfred

management programs. CSNM also supports the programs by offering the directors of the programs the opportunity once a year to get together to discuss relevant issues; learn about CSNM initiatives and discuss any challenges with the accreditation program.

The comprehensive CSNM accreditation review of educational programs ensures that the content of programs, teaching resources and outputs are of consistently high quality to meet expectations and to support future professionals in their area of expertise. Accreditation provides the strong foundation upon which the profession of nutrition management in Canada is based!



Heather Truber is the director, Provincial Safety and Supply Management with Alberta Health Services. She is responsible for the operation and provincial direction for food safety; quality improvement; business continuity; contracting; purchasing practice; inventory management and Workplace Health and Safety for Food, Nutrition, Linen and Environmental Services within Alberta Health Services.

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Gordon Food Service Show
Edmonton, AB
10 am – 4 pm
www.gfs.ca

OCTOBER 26 – 27

Canadian Food Summit 2015
Conference Board Centre for Food in Canada
Toronto, ON
www.conferenceboard.ca/conf

OSNM

OSNM IS EXCITED TO BE HOSTING ITS ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM at the Ajax Convention Centre, September 23 to 25. Our theme is *Back to the Future – Everything Old is New Again*. Topics include: Dealing with difficult people, how to live to 100 and still remember your name, harnessing social media, making small changes to generate big savings, dining with dementia and the event gala with membership recognitions awarded.

The blended membership with CSNM is now in place. We have had 266 members renew through CSNM and 15 expired members reinstate their membership. We have even recruited 30 new members. A big thank you to CSNM for supporting this initiative! However, we still need a stronger voice to lobby on behalf of OSNM.

OSNM has become an affiliate member with OHEA (Ontario Home Economics Association) and OLTC (Ontario Long Term Care Association).

OSNM is offering some choice business programs for members ie. Discounts with Telus phone plans. Check our website for further discounts.

OSNM board has completed the strategic plan for the next five years and will start to roll out to each portfolio including memberships, communications, advocacy, education and marketing.

SSNM

SSNM HELD ITS ANNUAL CONFERENCE AND AGM at the Saskatoon Golf and Country Club on April 25, 2015. This year's theme was *Leading with Confidence in Changing Times*. The keynote speaker, Penney Murphy, gave a three-hour workshop on *Confident Leadership Building* that included energetic, fun and interactive activities to build both self-confidence and leadership. The closing speaker, Alleson Mason, spoke about *Cultural Diversity in the Workplace*.

This year, there were 19 graduating students from the Food & Nutrition Management program at Saskatchewan Polytechnic. Karen Kwan, CSNM Saskatchewan Rep., and Gwen Koob-Roach, Saskatchewan Polytechnic Liaison, were invited to the annual BBQ and Practicum Report-Out hosted by the Polytechnic's Acting Program Head, Joanne Smart, in May. Each student presented a report on where they went for their field placement, projects they did and their future plans. Congratulations to the graduating class of 2015!

ASNM

THIS YEAR, THE ASNM BOARD PUT FORWARD DONNA Kubista's name for the position of Alberta Representative to CSNM. Donna was chosen by acclamation by the CSNM membership and will be in this position for one term.

The ASNM annual general meeting was held on May 1, 2015, at the annual Food Matters conference in Edmonton. It was decided at the AGM that a sub-committee be formed to plan an educational event in October 2015; the date has yet to be determined. Our new board is energized and excited about the educational opportunities that lay ahead.

ASNM members have been renewing their membership through the CSNM website and, to date, this process has been successful. We are continuing to build our ASNM membership and we are looking forward to the upcoming year and our fall educational event.

PSNM

PSNM HELD ITS FIRST MEETING OF THE NEW TERM IN JUNE 2015 in Surrey, B.C. at Westminster House, a private, non-profit, 120-bed, multi-level care facility. Sixteen members and guests of PSNM were treated to a lunch sponsored by Burnbrae Farms prepared by guest speaker Zsolt Szeredi, Territory Manager.

PSNM is preparing to celebrate its 40th Anniversary, September 28 and 29 at the Sandman Inn and Suites in Abbotsford, B.C. The 2015/2016 CSNM board will be joining us for this celebration. The event will start on Monday with a Meet and Greet. Keynote speaker Linda Edgecombe will start Tuesday off with *To Shift or Get Off the Pot*, followed by Alicia Mazari-Andersen who will speak about GMO. After lunch, we plan a drive to Singletree Winery to taste some local wines followed by a visit to Lepp Farm Market to hear about local farming. The final is a Ruby Gala, come in your finest ruby-coloured attire. For more information and to register online, go to csnm.ca/client/upcomingEvents.html

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CONTINUING EDUCATION QUIZ



YOUR NAME

MEMBERSHIP NUMBER

PHONE NUMBER

DATE

BALANCING EXPECTATIONS

Competency 7.0 *Financial/Business Management*

1. What does "Best in Class" refer to when discussing Benchmarking?
 A - Dog shows
 B - 5 Stars
 C - Honour roll
 D - Best practice
2. Where can the "three-strike rule" be used?
 A - Supplements and snacks
 B - Food supplies
 C - Baseball diamond
 D - Labour
3. What category makes up the majority of the cost per patient day?
 A - Food
 B - Supplies
 C - Other supplies
 D - Labour
4. 15 minutes is the perfect time for...?
 A - Cooking chicken
 B - Intervals for activity schedules
 C - Calculating patient days
 D - Cooking an egg

LIVE AND LEARN

Competency 1.0 *Professionalism*

1. Stepping Back, Tuning In and Digging Down are the three practices essential for...?
 A - Beginner's Mind
 B - Professional Perspective
 C - Responsible Leadership
 D - None of the above
2. An After-Action Review consists of asking which of these questions?
 A - What went well?
 B - Where did things go wrong?
 C - What did you learn for next time?
 D - All of the above.
3. According to motivational expert, Daniel Pink, people are intrinsically motivated by...?
 A - Appreciation, Challenge and Integrity
 B - Excellence, Respect and Justice
 C - Purpose, Mastery and Autonomy
 D - Wealth, Power and Competition
4. When tuning in to learn from an experience, it is recommended that, in addition to the facts of a situation, you also pay attention to your "spidey sense." This can be defined as...?
 A - Your knowledge of insects
 B - Your intuition or gut reaction
 C - Your communication network
 D - Your psychic powers

COMPLETE THIS QUIZ ONLINE!

GO ONLINE TO WWW.CSNM.CA • CLICK ON **MEMBERS ONLY** (UPPER RIGHT) • LOGIN - COMPLETE THE QUIZ

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