

Leading the way: tips to succeed in changing times – an interview with Adrienne O’Pray



Over my past 20 years in business almost every year was THE year of unprecedented change. Each year was faster than the one before, this year’s technology was ‘the’ game changer and, the old adage that the “only thing you can count on is change.”

So really what does it take to thrive as a business in these ever challenging and changing times?

In my work with the leaders of the NB Business Council, I am fortunate to hear their stories of challenge and success, change and growth. So, when asked the question “What does it take to succeed in New Brunswick?”, a few themes come to mind.

If I had to choose the top three distilled from these many conversations and my own experience it would be: **Tenacity**, **Collaboration** and **Reflection**.

Tenacity: the ability to roll with whatever comes your way and move toward the challenge to overcome is critical. Everyone has a story of tough times that required courage and determination – the failed technology, the loss of a major client or an industry that is turned on its head seemingly overnight. Stories of resourcefulness, pushing through to find a better way, a better market, a better product are heart wrenching and inspiring at the same time – yet they prevail.

Collaboration: I love the description of networking in New Brunswick – ‘1 degree of separation.’ When people come to our province and share their experiences, one of my favourites is about how easy it is to meet, connect and get help from the people here. People are willing to make connections, share honest advice and give others a chance. Don’t get me wrong...collaboration is hard work but the desire to build a relationship that is beneficial for all involved is the hallmark of our region. It’s what makes working here one of the best places to do business – the people and their generosity of spirit, so that all can win.

Reflection: Susan Forward, author of ‘Fierce Conversations’, has a great concept she explores “Gradually then Suddenly....”. This concept brings home the point that if we had really taken time to step back, pause and reflect, then what seemed to just happen overnight was happening all along, we just chose not to see it. For the leader, building time to reflect is building your business. The discipline of pausing, asking questions, looking for feedback from those around you is a skill that, in these ‘crazy busy times’ could be the marker of success for a leader of tomorrow.