



# **Business - Ensuring Your Business is Strong - Professional Development**

By Dr. Linda Hancock

## **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled "All Psyched Up" for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of "Life is An Adventure...every step of the way" and "Open for Business Success" is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

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There is no maintenance in life. You are either moving forward or going backwards. Professional development is a way for you to move forward in a healthy way that will increase your knowledge, skills and abilities for the benefit of your clients.

There are several ways that you can experience professional development including:

1. Formal Training - Universities and professional bodies often provide courses or programs where you can develop or enhance your knowledge and skills through scheduled classes.
2. Internships - You may be able to arrange a placement with another professional who can teach you about a specific topic and then supervise you as you develop expertise in that area.
3. Conferences and Conventions - Keynote speakers and break-out sessions often focus on new techniques or areas of practice that you are interested in learning about.
4. Developing a mastermind group - Often individuals can learn from each other by forming a group with specific learning goals and planning methods of ensuring that the goals are met.
5. Consultation - Perhaps you can arrange to have consultation sessions either in person or by telephone until you have mastered specific skills and reached outlined goals in an area of practice.
5. Self-study - You can develop expertise by reading books or journals, researching on the internet or interviewing individuals who are proficient in the topic area.

Technological advances have opened up almost unlimited opportunities for you to have interesting and creative professional development experiences. Webcams and teleseminar development allow you to learn from others in distant locations for a low cost without having to even leave home! The only thing that will limit you is your imagination!