

# Excellence

## Certificate of Leadership Excellence

*The Banff Centre's Certificate of Leadership Excellence recognizes individuals who have made significant advances in the areas of leadership and management development and personal growth. More and more individuals are taking successive Banff Centre programs because of the impact these programs deliver. In recognition of those individuals who are committed to becoming better leaders and managers, we offer the **fifth** program tuition-free.*

*The five programs are not required to be taken in any specific order. We recommend taking the program that meets your immediate leadership needs. These programs can be taken from either the core competency or the emerging capacities programs.*

We are pleased to recognize **Michael Pfeifer**, the latest recipient of The Banff Centre's Certificate of Leadership Excellence.

Michael has been awarded The Banff Centre's Certificate of Leadership Excellence for successfully completing the following programs: Building Personal Leadership Capacity, Team Leadership and Facilitation, Leading and Managing for Results, The Leadership Challenge: Leading Change Successfully, and Leading Strategically.

Michael is President of Pfeifer Consulting Inc. based out of Calgary, and associated with Schuler Associates Inc., which is the North American subsidiary of Schuler Consultants in Germany. Michael's current role is with Schuler Associates Inc. as a Project Manager. Schuler Associates provides management and consulting engineering service worldwide, specializing in the wood processing and furniture manufacturing industries. Areas of expertise include corporate strategy, organization, information, and manufacturing technology. The company employs 40–50 project engineers worldwide, servicing organizations whose sales range from \$1 million to \$700 million a year. Michael works out of Schuler Associate's Calgary office and provides expertise to the furniture and wood processing industry across Canada, United States, and Germany. On a typical project Michael works directly with business owners, vice-presidents, production managers, engineering managers, and shop floor supervisors. Based on the project scope, Michael leads and facilitates teams throughout the customer's organization to achieve given objectives.

We had a chance to ask Michael several questions about his experiences attending our Leadership Development programs. Here is what he had to say:

### **How has attending our programs changed the way you work with others and the way you now approach your work?**

As a European I wanted to interact in a North American setting and to know how it felt to be immersed in North American culture. As well, my own issues around how to interact with people more effectively motivated me to come and attend the Leadership Development programs here at The Banff Centre. In Germany we have a very different approach in this area and I needed some coaching around this.

The Leadership Development programs have assisted me significantly in shifting my focus to a more balanced approach. Today when I talk with customers I now put as much energy into the human side of negotiating as I put into the engineering side. Today, if we fail in a project, it is not because of technology or processes, but because organizations don't deal with the human aspect. I believe people make it happen – for success, people are key.



**Michael Pfeifer**, President – Pfeifer Consulting Inc.

### **What is the benefit of taking five different programs? Any key learnings re-emphasized? Are you also adding new perspectives?**

Some sections were repeated and you are refreshed, yet each program has its unique aspect that you can apply on a daily basis. Remember it always starts with you, and what you take home and practice. Use your systems thinking, or dealing with conflict, by practicing. The key is to practice and remember how to use the tools, so keep them close to your desk. Within two weeks of attending Team Leadership and Facilitation I had an opportunity while in China to apply the skills I had just learned, which assisted me tremendously.

### **How do you feel the mountain environment contributes to learning?**

It reminds me of the basic things in life, like why do we spend so much time working so hard? The Banff Centre is a great environment for a variety of learning experiences, like the outdoor activity – it really gets you thinking. The programs gave me time to reflect, but also to remember we still have to go back to real life. My experience has been very personalized. I've made great friendships and I have maintained contact with 95% of the facilitators. The return is amazing. For what you pay, you get more back.