



“Silos are Good for Farms, and Not Great for Leaders”

A Case for Community Leadership in Saskatoon

Shannon Floer, MSc. Curriculum Specialist



The central component of Leadership Saskatoon’s flagship 10-month program is a focus on “core personal leadership”. We use tools and topics to assist leaders in reflecting and gaining clarity regarding their personal values and what has shaped their perspective or the lens in which they view themselves and others so they can confidently lead with integrity and authenticity.

Effective professional leaders need solid foundations, and this is achieved by engaging participants in a curated suite of cross-sectoral competencies which are transferable and relevant across all sectors. We recognize that leadership can be lonely, and it can be challenging to find time to implement learnings from workshops and conferences. Leadership Saskatoon has been praised for the high degree of trust we build with our participants which in turn allows them to feel connected and comfortable engaging in an immersive personal and professional leadership journey.

The strength and value of learning over a period of ten months is the ability to build solid relationships with other leaders and have time to practice and implement new skills. There is also increased accountability for learning. Each month participants are asked to reflect on the skills they have practiced in their organization since the last learning day and augment and enrich their learning by listening to the experiences of the other leaders in their class cohort.

While we can often be divided by the way we engage in our paid work, everyone is part of the community. For communities to be vibrant and healthy they need: all skills, all knowledge, and all passions.



If our diversity is our strength then our community needs people who can pair their personal interests and passions with their professional skills and exercise them in the community when supporting the most vulnerable in our city, coaching and mentoring youth, engaging other citizens, actively participating in decision-making, speaking up, and appealing for change.

Why are we a community leadership program? We know that the strongest and most successful leaders are the ones who have engaged in the deep work of self-reflection and have invested the time and effort of studying effective leadership practices. When these types of leaders participate in the community - via community associations, coaching youth, sitting on boards of community-based organizations, organizing awareness campaigns, and engaging in complex community issues - they contribute to the strength and vitality of our community as a whole. The community is also a great incubator for developing practicing and leadership skills which provides dividends in a professional context.

If there is one community issue we can be sure of, it is that vibrant communities are the best ones to live in. We don't aim for good communities, we aim for great ones and we want our program to be the catalyst that inspires people to strengthen and grow their leadership and in turn their families, work places, and the greater community. Our name is our brand: Leadership Saskatoon.

Our goal is to assist leaders to recognize and re-ignite their passions and demonstrate how to pair them with the leadership skills and competencies they have learned in our program to actively contribute to the community we want to live in, one that values citizen engagement, collaboration, diversity and inclusion, and life-long learning.

**Grant funding for our 2020-2021 curriculum review was provided by the Community Initiatives Fund.*