

**Workshop Title:** Leadership Training

**Speaker(s) & their title(s):** Michelle Wolf – certified coach, workplace education trainer and Director of Training for Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia (FMNS)

**Executive Summary:**

Michelle runs a very interactive session, highlighting leadership qualities for vendors, market managers and market organizers. She discusses leader attributes, types of leaders and leadership tips. Michelle uses storytelling to illustrate her content and calls on the audience to share their experiences and insights.

**Detailed Notes**

-Michelle asks the audience a few questions to begin:

- “What do you think a leader is?” An audience member says, “someone who inspires others”.
- “Who are our leaders in organic agriculture?” Answers include “innovators, connectors”.
- “What are the things that make these people leaders?” Answers include “Taking action, having guts, taking steps to create dialogue”.

-Michelle asks the audience to think of leadership as a verb, not a noun. Skills and competencies of leadership must be shared.

-Michelle discusses 9 attributes of a leader (see slides 6-9 for full list):

- Passion symbolizes leadership
- Dedication is an important piece
- Being a leader means having a vision and basing your goals on that vision
- Integrity and honesty have to be part of your professional life
- Effective leaders take calculated risks and are always looking for the next possible idea

-Leadership is the ability to develop and hold a vision that motivates others to move toward a common goal, passionately.

- A participant comments that leadership can be demonstrated in ways other than your task or job.

-Michelle asks the audience to watch two videos and read two resources (see slides). Presentation slides will be sent to workshop attendees via email.

-There are two kinds of leaders: “front of house” and “behind the scenes”:

- Both types of leaders are needed in order for organizations to thrive
- Michelle asks the audience to think about whether their market staff is appropriately placed in these roles

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- Michelle discusses leadership in staff. She says, attitude cannot be taught. We need to look for leaders, not task-doers.

-What leaders possess:

- Knowledge that one's decisions make a difference in the lives of others
- The ability to assess the impact of their actions on situations and others, and be critically self-reflective
- The understanding that if you never meet a challenge, you will never find out what you are worth

-Michelle shares a leadership tip from the slides. She says "innovation is not always about producing something new or a novelty product".

-Michelle shares a story with the audience, a story about leadership that uses metaphors:

- The spirit of the squirrel is about doing worthwhile work that serves the greater goal. This is about "doing the right work".
- The way of the beaver is about giving people autonomy over the things they are in charge of. When staff have autonomy over the work they are assigned to they are much more productive. This is about "doing the right work, the right way".
- The gift of the goose symbolizes that we all need to be supportive and cheer each other on. This is about "the right reward".

-Michelle asks the audience to remember the bigger picture and what they are working towards:

- Workshop attendees are asked, "What helps you lead?" Answers include "being a role model", "being prepared and planning", "commitment".
- An audience member discusses optimism as a way to think about making a difference.
- Michelle notes that there is no real 'truth' in the world, there is only perception. For example, not every community has the perception that they need a farmers' market. You cannot change perceptions.

-Michelle opens the floor to comments and questions:

- An audience member notes that real leadership is demonstrated in times of uncertainty, and not only in times of success.
- Another audience member discusses third party opinions in market culture. He says, "If the customer isn't showing up, it is because we, as vendors, are doing something wrong, not the customer".