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FCCQ Members Newsletter



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Message from the Chairman of the Board and the CEO

The year 2006-2007, which wrapped up in style at our Annual General Meeting in Rivière-du-Loup, was an opportunity for us to reflect on how far the FCCQ has come over the past five years and to look to the future as we enter consultations in the design phase of our 2008-2012 strategic plan.

If the years 2003 to 2005 were about restructuring, the years 2005 to 2007 were certainly about mobilizing for action. Drawing on the principles and priorities set out in our economic vision statement, *Building a Successful Quebec*, we took advantage of all public and media opportunities to speak out on strengthening business competitiveness in the province, breathing new life into local entrepreneurship and fostering economic vitality in all regions of Quebec.

That's because we, the province's business people, believe that only joint action, driven by the strength of our network, will enable us to respond with determination to the challenges ahead and build a successful Quebec together.

As such, we're counting on you to be our eyes and ears on the ground and to report back on the progress of planned economic initiatives throughout Quebec. We need your participation in order to track these projects through their various milestones. By ensuring vigilance, and thanks to the influence of our network, we can help facilitate the achievement of projects that have a strategic impact for Quebec society.

Of course, as the largest business network in Quebec, the FCCQ has continued to speak out on all questions likely to affect the competitiveness of the province's businesses. Since the start of 2007-2008, we have been very active in various consultations on issues such as the provincial government's manufacturing strategy, health care funding, immigration and the question of tax assistance for resource regions. On this last issue, the FCCQ met with a task force led by Professor Robert Gagné in order to present its recommendations and explain how its Manufacturing Committee and Board arrived at its conclusions.

In October, we unveiled our second annual economic report, *L'Indicateur 2007*, which charts the economic vitality of all regions of Quebec and the progress achieved on the priorities set out in our economic vision statement.

This fall, we also toured Quebec to present information on the CSST plan regarding uncharged expenditures (DNI). The aim of our tour was to inform employers, employers' associations, managers of mutual insurance companies, occupational health and safety professionals and the media of planned changes to uncharged expenditures and the challenges arising from the CSST's latest proposal, which could reduce the impact of the many efforts made by employers in recent years to manage and prevent workplace injuries.

In order to respond as proactively as possible to the needs and concerns of our members, the FCCQ is already laying the groundwork for the 4th Quebec – New York Economic Summit, to be held in 2008. This event will allow key players from the business and political communities of Quebec and the State of New York to convene next May at the Quebec City Convention Centre. We will also be in Quebec City and Ottawa before and during budget presentations to voice the concerns of our members. As the largest business network in Quebec, the FCCQ will continue to advocate on any issues that may affect the competitiveness of Quebec businesses.

To conclude, and with the holiday season just around the corner, the FCCQ would like to take this opportunity to extend to you our best wishes for happiness and prosperity in 2008!

WINNING STRATEGIES... FOR A MORE COMPETITIVE QUÉBEC!

From September 21 to 23, 2007, more than 300 business people from all corners of Québec attended the Annual General Meeting of the FCCQ, held in the Bas-Saint-Laurent region. Under the banner of "Winning Strategies...for a More Competitive Québec!", the 2007 AGM allowed participants to discuss a number of issues of concern to the business community, share innovative ideas, expertise and experience, and above all work together to promote the economic vitality of Québec. Here are the highlights of this year's presentations.



Raymond Bachand, Minister of Economic Development, Innovation and Export Trade, hosted the traditional Friday keynote luncheon address, during which he spoke on key issues including immigration.

Anticipation means innovation

Christian Roy, Principal Associate, SECOR-TAKTIK, moderated this plenary session on the key role played by innovation and the way effective anticipation can help companies benefit from evolving technologies and market globalization. Pierre Talbot, Vice President, Innovation, Research and Development, Premier Tech, along with Frédéric Lebel, President, Groupe Lebel, and Pierre Morency, CEO, NOVA Envirocom, shared their experiences on this issue. According to all speakers, innovation is not only about products, but also about procedures, business processes and even the value chain. Companies innovate to create value, sustain growth and remain competitive, and while this approach is generally focussed on clients, whose needs are constantly evolving, it also has to do with retaining employees and seeing the company itself become more productive. To conclude, there are no miracle solutions for successful innovation. Innovation only generates results when it strengthens a company's competitive edge and is well managed. Companies that succeed do so by adapting their strategies to evolving markets, which is why it is so important to recognize patterns of change in one's sector and anticipate coming trends.

Human capital: A key company asset

How can you become more competitive by investing in your work teams? That was the question addressed by three speakers who came to share their experiences in a workshop entitled "Human Capital: A Key Company Asset", moderated by Marcel Bérubé, President of Groupe Perspective. According to Dominique Brown, President of Beenox, a video game developer in Québec, companies need to attach as much of a premium to their human resources as they do to their business objectives. Beenox, which currently employs more than 120 people, is able to boast 100% employee loyalty in an industry where competition is increasingly strong and manpower increasingly rare. The secrets of its success: communicating a clear vision and a concrete action plan, equipping itself with the tools to assess the health of the work environment and, above all, transforming data into short and medium term objectives and using feedback tools to track progress.

For Diane Quimper, Director of Human Resources at Vézina, Dufault Inc., a damage insurance services firm, a company's most valuable asset is the competence and professionalism of its human resources. That's why the firm has developed a work philosophy based on listening to employees and implementing various everyday mechanisms and measures that promote initiative, stimulate creativity, develop competencies and encourage recognition.

To wrap up the discussion on human capital, Pierre-Étienne Simard, a lawyer with Fasken Martineau, drew a portrait of the wave of "Generation Y" employees currently entering the workforce. According to Mr. Simard, Generation Y is stimulated by work environments that actively value ongoing learning and competency development. The arrival of this group in the labour force means changes for employers, who need to adapt their approach to HR management if they want to attract and retain Generation Y workers. Mr. Simard underscored the fact that Gen Yers are looking for employers who offer flexible work conditions focused on quality of life. Ultimately, what Gen Yers really want is to achieve personal success, with work being just one of a number of means involved in doing so.

Benefits of competitiveness

Pierre Duhamel, columnist and blogger with the weekly magazine L'Actualité and editor of the magazine Montréal Centre-ville, moderated the plenary session on "The Benefits of Competitiveness", which was very popular with attendees. It's no secret that, in today's market, all organizations are subject to a variety of pressures and need to adapt to outperform the competition, which is constantly honing its own tools and approaches. According to Gaëtan Lussier, President of Gaëtan Lussier and Associates, Michael Brossard, Senior Vice President, Marketing at RONA Inc., and Stéphane Lamarre, Plant Manager at Hubbell Canada LP, human resources are key to allowing companies to maximize the efficiency of all other systems and methods already in place. However, the path leading to an effective use of employees in a company is extremely complex. The speakers shared their experiences and gave attendees advice on how to carry out organizational change. In their discussion, they emphasized the fact that change is an ongoing process and that all stakeholders need to be sensitized to the importance of a shared participatory approach for introducing a culture of change. The key to success usually depends on the implementation of a simple, clear and unanimously supported vision that is aligned with the mission, values and culture promoted by the company.



During the brunch that closed the AGM, renowned magician Alain Choquette presented his workshop and performance entitled "The Power of the Magic Inside Us All," inspired by his personal and professional experiences.



Collaborative puzzle

Attendees had the opportunity to test their patience and experience the phenomenon of collaboration by taking part in Puzzle, a game moderated by Pierre Daems, Director of SECOR Consulting.

The teams received puzzle pieces and had 20 minutes to assemble five squares of the same size. However, the teams were bound by rules that complicated the task early on and allowed them to fully appreciate the meaning of collaboration. Participants had to carry out the activity in complete silence and could only exchange puzzle pieces under the following conditions: they could not ask for pieces and could only take the pieces they were offered.

The goal of the game was to invite teams to think about how to promote everyday collaboration among the chambers of commerce themselves and between the chambers and the FCCQ, with the goal of building a powerful, influential and united network. This activity also served to prove that successful collaboration dedicated to promoting competitiveness in Québec depends on the sharing of resources, whether in the form of knowledge, ideas or support.

The Fédération des chambres de commerce du Québec (FCCQ) acknowledges the support of its major partners during the 2007 Annual General Meeting:

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Effective practices for a proactive board of directors

What are the roles and functions of a board member? How can board members best contribute their talents to the development of an organization? In his workshop on boards of directors, Marco Baron, Governance Consultant for OSBL Plus, shed light on these questions by reviewing the eight roles that boards must assume, as well as 18 practices boards need to adopt to increase their effectiveness. According to Mr. Baron, five fundamental principles are involved in good governance, namely accountability, solidarity, integrity, delegation and longevity. Mr. Baron also insisted on the complementary competencies that enable a board to train an effective management team.



The FCCQ Congratulates the 10 Chambers of Commerce Accredited in 2006-2007

During its Annual General Meeting and taking advantage of the presence of Sean Finn, Outgoing Chair of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce, the FCCQ heartily congratulated 10 Quebec chambers of commerce on their successful completion of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce accreditation process in 2006-2007.

Chambers of commerce accredited with distinction

- Chambre de commerce et d'industrie Saint-Eustache, Deux-Montagnes, Sainte-Marthe-sur-le-Lac
- Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de la Rive-Sud
- Chambre de commerce de Sherbrooke

Accredited Chambers of commerce

- Chambre de commerce et d'industrie des Bois-Francs et de l'Érable
- Chambre de commerce et d'industrie Lac-Saint-Jean-Est
- Chambre de commerce et de l'industrie Les Maskoutains
- Chambre de commerce Pierre-Le Gardeur De Repentigny
- Chambre de commerce et d'industrie du secteur Roberval
- Chambre de commerce et de tourisme de la Vallée de Saint-Sauveur
- Chambre de commerce de Sainte-Adèle



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NORTH AMERICA'S RAILROAD

And the Winners Are...

2007 Chamber of Commerce of the Year Award

The 2007 Chamber of Commerce of the Year Award was presented to the Chambre de commerce de Québec (CCQ). Since joining forces with the Chambre de commerce des entrepreneurs de Québec, the CCQ has become the leading advocate for economic development in the region. The CCQ also stood out for its ability to bring together the region's business people and mobilize them around joint initiatives on issues such as the labour shortage, immigration, special events planned to celebrate the 400th anniversary of the City of Québec and the planned construction of a methane terminal in Lévis (Rabaska).

The Selection Committee, headed by Mr. Richard Payette, President and CEO of Raymond Chabot Grant Thornton, also called attention to the quality of the applications submitted by the two other finalists, the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie de la Rive-Sud and the Chambre de commerce de Val-d'Or.



The team of the Chambre de commerce de Québec receiving the 2007 Chamber of Commerce of the Year Award from Mr. Claude Béchard, Minister of Natural Resources and Wildlife and Minister responsible for the Bas-Saint-Laurent region, the Côte-Nord region and the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region (centre). This award, which comes with a \$2000 grant sponsored by the Business Development Bank of Canada, was presented by Mr. François Séguin, Rimouski Branch Manager (left).

Arthur Earle Award

The Arthur Earle Award for outstanding recruitment efforts was presented to the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie du secteur Roberval. In addition to its many accomplishments over the past year, the Chamber grew its membership by close to 60%, from 161 to 257 members, representing almost 50% of entrepreneurs in its sector.



The team of the Chambre de commerce et d'industrie du secteur Roberval receiving the Arthur Earle Award from Mr. Richard Côté, FCCQ Chairman of the Board for 2007-2008 (left).

Volunteer Recognition Award

This year, the Volunteer Recognition Award went to Mr. Normand Pinard of the Chambre de commerce de Fleurimont. Mr. Pinard is actively involved in his community and greatly appreciated by business people in the region. In his public service activities, he has sat on the boards of numerous committees and supported a multitude of causes, participating among other things in many fund-raising initiatives for organizations in the region.



Mr. Normand Pinard, from the Chambre de commerce de Fleurimont, receiving the Volunteer Recognition Award from the Outgoing Chairman of the FCCQ, Mr. Patrice Simard.

Special Tribute to an Outgoing Regional President

The FCCQ also took advantage of the event to pay tribute to an outgoing regional president on the Board of the FCCQ. Mrs. Karine Veilleux, Outgoing President of the Chambre de commerce régionale Chaudière-Appalaches, was honoured for her generous involvement in the economic development of her region and her skill at rallying the chambers of commerce of the Chaudière-Appalaches region around the importance of moving forward together and mobilizing to actively promote a number of regional initiatives.



Mrs. Karine Veilleux, from the Chambre de commerce régionale Chaudière-Appalaches, receiving the Special Tribute for an Outgoing Regional President, presented by Mr. Robert Cloutier, FCCQ Chairman for 2006-2007.

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