

Working Hard For Our Members



Catalyst | Connector | Convenor | Champion



durangobusiness.org

From the CEO's Pen by Jack Llewellyn, Chamber CEO

Advocating for Local Business!

Summer is in full swing here in Durango. And after the winter we just had, it's safe to say we are all ready for warmer days.

Here at the Chamber, we are excited about all the opportunities the season provides to gather as a community to participate in some good old fashion fun. While we have been busy at the Chamber hosting programs and events, from Get To Know The CEO, to Eggs and Issues to this month's Business After Hours at Sky Ute Casino, I wanted to take a moment to highlight some other ways The Chamber is working behind the scenes to support the businesses that call Durango "home."

Our membership consists of 700 local businesses and organizations comprised of approximately 20,000 employees. Subsequently, our role as an advocate for these members, 80% of which employ fewer than ten people, is at the core of who we are as an organization.

Representing our members and businesses that form the backbone of our community is a mission we don't take lightly. This means it is essential to partner with other local organizations to ensure that Durango businesses receive fair representation at the city, county, and state level when impactful decisions are made.

Recognizing this need, the Durango Chamber of Commerce, in partnership with the Durango Area Association of Realtors (DAAR), La Plata Energy Council, and the Home Builders Association of SW Colorado, formed the Legislative Affairs Coalition (LAC).

The LAC monitors city, county, and other governmental agencies, participating in various commissions and meetings. In April-May alone, the LAC attended 30 meetings. It monitored more than 35 pieces of legislation, from important housing and healthcare initiatives to ones addressing land use and labor/

employment. After close review, each LAC organization determined whether to support, oppose, or monitor each piece of legislation in the best interest of the businesses we represent.

The LAC writes monthly summary reports, which the Durango Chamber of Commerce shares to keep our members in the loop. These reports can be found on our [website](#), under the Program/Workshops tab, then select Government Affairs Reports.

This spring, we also wrote letters of support for businesses like Durango Motor Company, which recently applied for a Plaza Grant from the Colorado Energy Office to help support the necessary infrastructure and installation of a DC FastCharge (DCFC) station in Durango. In addition, we advocated postponing changes to the Lodgers' Tax allocations and supported boundary adjustments for the Enterprise Zone program in the "Mid-Town area" of Durango.

We recently hosted a wrap up of the state legislative session during our quarterly Eggs and Issues with executive director of the Colorado Competitive Council, Rachel Beck, and Travis Berry, lobbyist with PoliticalWorks. They gave a recap of the state legislative session and discussed pertinent issues with attendees.

If you want more information on decisions impacting Durango businesses or to register to attend upcoming chamber programs, we encourage you to refer to our website at DurangoBusiness.org or call us at (970) 247-0312, ext. 2.



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Making the Downtown Sparkle!

The Durango Chamber & the Durango Business Improvement District partnered again this year to clean up downtown in time for Memorial Day weekend. Thank you to the City of Durango, Durango Joe's, Create Art & Tea and Keller Williams for supporting this effort.



See more great photos [here](#).

Upcoming Programs & Events!

Find more information [here](#).

Thurs. Jun. 22 5:15pm **Ribbon Cutting Blue Rain Gallery**

Wed. Jun. 28 **Lunch & Learn Workshop PR Strategies for Small Business**

Thurs. June 29 5:15pm **Ribbon Cutting Union Social House New Food Truck Courtyard**

Sat. July 1 **Taste of Independence** at Fairgrounds

Thurs. July 6 5:15pm **Ribbon Cutting Berkshire Hathway Home Services new location**

Mon. July 10 5:15pm **Ribbon Cutting ParkerDane Salon & Boutique**

Tues. July 11 11:45am **Leads Group Meeting**

Wed. July 12 5:30pm **LLP Steering Committee**

Thurs July 13 5:15pm **Diplomat Monthly Meeting**

Tues. July 18 12:15pm **Ribbon Cutting at the Hampton Inn – Remodel**

Thurs. July 20 5-7pm **Business After Hours at Happy Pappy's Pizza on North Main**

Wed. July 26 noon **Lunch & Learn Workshop**

Tues. Aug. 1 8am **Coffee Connections Durango Jin Shin Jyutsu**

What's Happening with our Chamber Members

Jun 23 Medicare 101 with AIS Medicare & More

Jun 25 Veterans 6th Annual River Raft Trip & Picnic

Jul 1 Taste of Independence & Pie Eating Contest

Jul 3 Music & Movies in Buckley Park

Jul 4 All American Gourmet Breakfast with the Durango Rotary Clubs

Jul 4 July 4th Parade at 5pm

Jul 4 Street Dance & Drone Show 6:30pm – 9:30pm

Aug 4-6 Pino Nuche Indigenous Art Market & Juried Show

Aug 5 Fort Lewis College Skyhawks Club Casino Night

Do you want your program or event listed? It's free through your member online portal. Questions, ask Hannah@durangobusiness.org or call (970) 247-0312 ext 2

Buck says ...

Buy Durango!



Register Now for Public Relations Strategies for Small Business Workshop | Wed, Jun. 28 from noon to 1pm

Theresa Blake Graven with Treehouse Communications will offer PR strategies that small businesses can use to manage internal & external communications. Learn how to create a PR plan and track results. Sponsored by TBK Bank. Only \$10/members. [Reserve your spot!](#)



Get to Know the CEO Series with Kerry Siggins, StoneAge Waterblast Tools

Kerry Siggins was the featured speaker for the Get to Know the CEO series in June. Stay tuned for the next quarterly Get to Know speaker series. This event is free to all Chamber members.



Lunch & Learn Workshop on Leveraging Social Media Tools for Small Businesses

Thank you to Marketing Concepts Squared for providing tips on which tools & apps to use to tell your story and create great social media posts. Sponsored by TBK Bank.



Make Connections through the Chamber Diplomat Program!

The Chamber Diplomats help support the business community by assisting with member retention, recruitment and engagement. They also meet key business members, build relationships, help celebrate accomplishments, and enhance community involvement. There are a few spots available for 2023! Find out more [here](#).



Receive Referrals with Leads Group Monthly Meetings!

Want more qualified business referrals? Join the Chamber's Leads Group which meets once a month with individual sessions set up beyond the group. Each group offers an exclusive seat from different industry sectors, and all industries are welcome! Limited space is available in the Chamber's two Leads Programs. Learn more [here](#).





Business After Hours – July 20, 5-7pm Happy Pappy's Pizza-N-Wings

Join us for an evening of connections, celebrations, and fun! Door prizes are generously provided by Happy Pappy's Pizza-N- Wings and Star Liquors!

Pre-register online & SAVE!



[Sunshine Gardens Senior Community](#) is celebrating being an integral part of living a healthy senior life in Durango. They are proud to continue to serve area seniors with some of the best in memory care and assisted living.



Congratulations to [Alpenglow Properties](#) on their new location, 110 W. 9th Street!



[Dough!rango Dough Bar](#) hosted a Ribbon Cutting to celebrate their Grand Opening at 500 Main Avenue!



Congratulations to [Jack-a-lope Acres](#) on their expansion of summer experiences.



The Chamber Diplomats celebrated the Grand Opening of [Laura's Artisan](#), located at the Powerhouse Science Center!



Join us on June 29th, 5:15pm for [Union Social House](#) Ribbon Cutting located at 3062 Main Ave. They are celebrating their new food truck additions!



Join [Blue Rain Gallery](#) for a Ribbon Cutting, 934 Main Avenue on Thursday, June 22nd at 5pm.



Featured Leadership La Plata Alumnus: Chris Lopez

What do you do for a living? I am the Community Relationship Manager for SW Colorado Housing and Finance Authority (CHFA), serving nine counties and the two tribes

What LLP class were you in?

Class of 2021-22

What do you love about LLP? The focus on self-awareness and self-improvement, exposure to a variety of assets, resources, and programs our communities have to offer, and making new friendships through multiple networking opportunities and events.

What do you like about the chamber? The Chamber's staff are both professional and fun at the same time, providing numerous events and opportunities to learn more about our local businesses and organizations. I personally benefit from the knowledge and expertise that are shared, as well as connecting with other community partners and stakeholders.

What do you love about Durango? Easy access to the outdoors from the desert to high alpine environments, small-town laid-back vibes, and being far from anything but close to everything.

Fun fact about you? I was born in raised in Santa Fe, New Mexico, and have been coming to ski Purgatory since the mid-1970's when Bull Run was the backside, and my favorite runs are Wapiti and Styx.

Interested in participating in LLP? Learn more about LLP plus how to become involved in LLP committees. DurangoBusiness.org/LLP



What is your favorite part of being a DIP? Meeting all the business-oriented individuals across all the generations. In the last 3 decades in Durango, so much has changed globally, but the values of many of these individuals are similar despite any age differences.

What are your favorite things to do in Durango? Volunteering in the community has brought me the most satisfaction. The ability to connect with different people on their terms is a wonderful opportunity for my personal growth. Physically, I enjoy pursuing new activities. Currently, ICE CLIMBING has become a real passion. I think next up will be white water rafting.

Fun fact about you: I once tour cycled from China to India through Tibet and Nepal.

Learn more about the Diplomat Program [here](#).

YPOD Feature of the Month: Sean Perry

YPOD Board Member

What do you do? I am a junior account manager for Verde Brand Communications, which is a public relations agency working with outdoor industry brands. This means that I work to secure media coverage for our clients in order to increase public awareness.



Why did you want to be a YPOD board member? I enjoyed attending YPOD events and meeting new people in the Durango community. I wanted to be a part of creating a community of young professionals by organizing events and other opportunities with YPODs.

How do you like to spend your time? I enjoy nearly any outdoor sport but my main one is mountain biking. I also like to read, cook, and enjoy Durango's restaurants and breweries.

Information about the YPODs can be found [here](#).

Featured Chamber Diplomat: Ken Duncan

What is your business?

Durango Financial Planning

How long have you lived in Durango?

I have lived in Durango 30 years.

How long have you been a DIP?

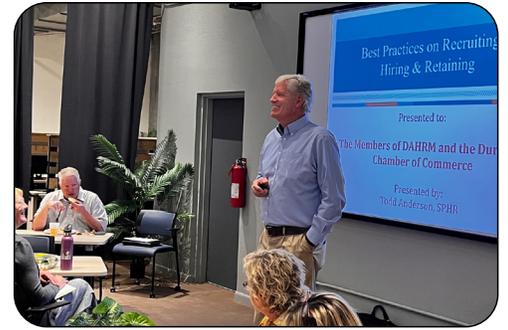
Currently serving my second go round as a Diplomat. Total 11 years

Why did you become a DIP? To help the community grow stronger through economic empowerment. This is a foundational value of mine.



HR Workshop On Hiring, Firing and Retaining

Thank you to [The Leavitt Group](#) for providing lunch and hosting our featured speaker, Todd Anderson with Platinum HR who shared beneficial HR information to more than 60 individuals. The Chamber continues to partner with the [Durango Area Human Resource Managers](#) organization to bring businesses helpful HR information to staff and business owners. Watch for more sessions: August 16, the Annual Employment Law Update, and November 9th Ask a Lawyer. [Learn more here.](#)



Supporting Durango's Business Community!

The Chamber, in partnership with the Durango area Association of Realtors and the La Plata Energy Council formed a governmental affairs coalition that participates in meetings and monitors local and state policies and legislation. Each organization educates, supports or opposes issues as they are related to each of their membership organizations.



If you are interested in learning the policies and legislation that the Legislative Affairs Coalition reviews, see the latest report [here](#).



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Business Connection

Kent Curtis | President & CEO
First Southwest Bank

By Sara Lynn Valentine

What makes First Southwest Bank unique among banks in Durango? “We are one of only two Colorado banks with Community Development Financial Institution certification,” says President and CEO Kent Curtis, “and the only one serving the Four Corner’s states. We’re locally owned and serve as a traditional FDIC-insured bank here in Durango, but our primary mission is to promote community prosperity.”



First Southwest Bank was originally chartered in the San Luis Valley over 100 years ago for the purpose of serving low and moderate-income rural families, agriculture interests and small businesses that lacked credit and had little or no access to the banking system. Contemporary CDFI banks occupy a small niche, with only 170 CDFI certified banks nationwide (out of approximately 3,500 banks). First Southwest operates six branches in southern Colorado, with executive offices in Durango.

“We’ve been in Durango since 2004,” Kent says. “We focus on traditional banking here, in addition to offering community development programs to meet a variety of local needs, including providing capital for entrepreneurs and small businesses that may not be bank-ready.” First Southwest has formed important partnerships with SCAPE, the SW Colorado Small Business Development Center, and the La Plata Economic Development Alliance.

First Southwest offers beneficial mortgage rates for affordable housing, and rental assistance programs that make loans available to renters to cover first and last month’s rent and security deposits. They’ve partnered with LPEA to offer customers low-interest energy efficiency and solar loans that help homeowners save on electric costs. Their community investments have included helping Westside Mobile Home Park residents purchase the mobile home park. The bank offers business owners financial counseling and sponsors local non-profit organizations. In 2022, First Southwest invested \$170,890



in 102 regional non-profits. They must re-certify each year to maintain CDFI status, and typically push for 70% or greater investment in community development projects.

Kent is actively working to bring significant resources to our region, most recently in his capacity as Board Chairman of the Community Development Bankers Association, the national trade association for over 100 CDFI banks. First Southwest has received several awards, including Durango Chamber of Commerce’s ‘2020 Business of the Year,’ and ‘2021 & 2022 Community Rural Lender of the Year’ from the U.S. Small Business Administration. They are breaking new ground with the founding of [HelloBello](#), a technology platform launching in the fall that will help CDFI banks and nonprofits connect communities with capital. In a nutshell, First Southwest invests in local businesses, organizations, programs, and people that make Durango a better place to live. Community banks like First Southwest use the deposits of local customers to support local businesses and community organizations.



You will find First Southwest Bank at 600 East 2nd Avenue. Visit their website at www.FSWB.bank.

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NEW! Value-Based Memberships

The Durango Chamber is now offering value-based memberships with the ability to choose what works best for your business. The previous structure was a “fair share” model, based on the number of employees with 15 total membership levels. The Chamber has been working on this change for several years, and hasn’t altered its structure in 10+ years, nor has it changed pricing in 5 years. The current 15 levels are being simplified to 7 and all members are being offered a choice of what’s best for them.

The new Value-Based Membership Structure allows business owners to determine what’s important in their partnership with the Chamber, what their needs are, and how they want to take a leadership role in the business community. The Chamber is also making it easier by featuring investment payments via check or credit card. Payments can

be scheduled as frequently as monthly, quarterly, semi-annually, or annually. Some benefits are a la carte and pay as you go, so businesses can still utilize marketing, advertising, networking, branding, and sponsorship opportunities, even if it’s not included in the membership level.



The transition began in January 2023, and the Chamber works on a rolling 12-month year, so member anniversary months remain the same. The next **Membership Workshop & Open Office Hours is Wed, July 19 from 4pm to 5:30pm**. If you have questions, please contact the Chamber at 970-247-0312 ext 2.



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*Subject to credit approval



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Eyeing Productivity, Jobseekers Want Control Over Their Schedules and Employers May Agree

40-Hour Work Weeks Could Be a Thing of the Past

Latest Results from The Harris Poll

American jobseekers and companies may be rethinking the traditional 40-hour work week as long as productivity remains at, or exceeds, current levels.

This is according to a recent survey from The Harris Poll commissioned by Express Employment Professionals.

When given the option of working an 8-hour workday (but flexible start time), traditional 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. or a compressed schedule such as 10 hours per day for 4 days a week, jobseekers most commonly pick an 8-hour day with a flexible start time (40%). Nearly 1 in 5 (18%) would prefer a compressed schedule.

And, if given the ability to design their own work schedule (i.e., working non-traditional hours for the same pay), most feel they would be more productive (56%) or they would have about the same level of productivity (39%).

And it appears that companies may also be embracing the idea of non-traditional work schedules.

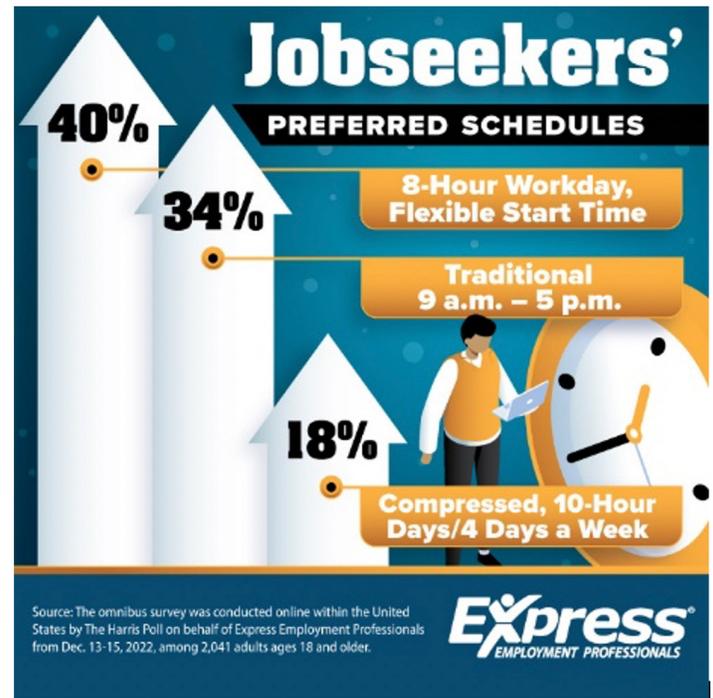
More than 9 in 10 hiring managers (94%) report employees at their company are productive—with nearly half (48%) saying they are very productive currently. And, if given the ability to design their own schedules, hiring managers feel employees would have about the same level of productivity (53%) or even be more productive (35%).

Ultimately, it appears 40-hour work weeks are not necessarily needed to have a productive workforce. And, two-thirds of jobseekers (66%) agree they will soon be a thing of the past.

However, there still appears to be some hesitation in companies offering this amount of flexibility.

Three-quarters of hiring managers (75%) say they have some concerns about their company offering flexible work hours, including decreased productivity (30%), increased distractions (29%), delayed communications (28%) and an inability of employees to collaborate (28%).

Despite the return of some segments to the workforce, businesses are still desperate for workers, and figuring out what incentives work best for employees at individual



companies is key, according to Express Employment International CEO Bill Stoller said.

“If production can remain high while offering flexible scheduling options, it may be worth it to try,” he said.

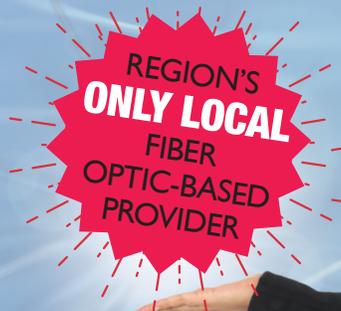
Survey Methodology

The Job Insights survey was conducted online within the United States by The Harris Poll on behalf of Express Employment Professionals between Dec. 1 and Dec. 15, 2022, among 1,002 U.S. hiring decision-makers (defined as adults ages 18+ in the U.S. who are employed full-time or self-employed, work at companies with more than one employee, and have full/significant involvement in hiring decisions at their company). Data were weighted where necessary by company size to bring them into line with their actual proportions in the population. Respondents for this survey were selected from among those who have agreed to participate in our surveys. The sampling precision of Harris online polls is measured by using a Bayesian credible interval. For this study, the sample data is accurate to within + 3.2 percentage points using a 95% confidence level. This credible interval will be wider among subsets of the surveyed population of interest.

The Durango Express office is located at 321 So Camino Del and serves the Four Corners area. Local businesses and applicants are encouraged to stop by, visit ExpressPros.com/durangoco or call (970) 403-8780.

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Juice Plus & Tower Garden with Louetta

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10676 Hwy. 151
Ignacio, CO 81137
[website](#)

Mountain High Catering

Chase Edwards
3187 W. 2nd Ave.
Durango, CO 81301
[website](#)

Salvation Army

Carla Wood
10 Burnett Court
Durango, Colorado 81302
[website](#)

The Mac Ranch

Matt Lee
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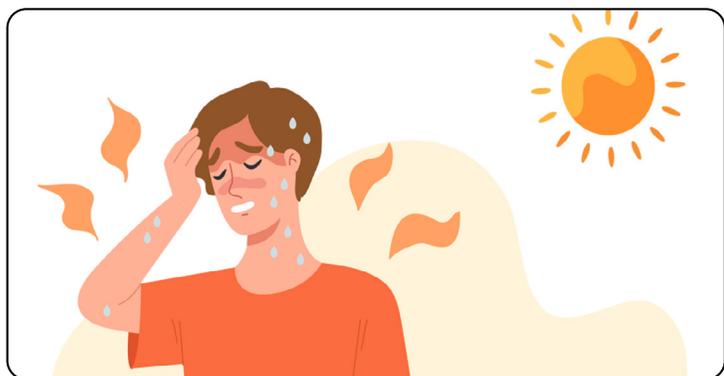
Business After Hours – May 18

Thank you to 11th Street Station who hosted Business After Hours in May.



La Plata County Extension: Health Tip of the Month *by Nicole Clark*

Thirsty, but not for water, what's a better choice?



If you're looking for a thirst quencher on a hot day, but desire something other than water, what's a good choice? Here's what you need to know about some popular beverages.

Sports drinks aim to replace water, sodium and potassium lost through sweat and calories burned through exercise. Typically, you don't need a sports drink unless you've been exercising for an hour or more. For most, a sports drink (33-ounce container) is a quick and unnecessary way to consume added calories (200) and up to 48 grams of added sugar (that's the daily limit for adults). If you like the flavor, consider a no to low-calorie version. Average cost per ounce = \$0.04.

Coconut water provides a significant amount of potassium, but not a lot of calcium or sodium (electrolytes). Again, unless you've been exercising for over an hour, most will have an adequate amount of electrolytes obtained through food. Being 95% water, with very few carbohydrates (if unsweetened), coconut water can be hydrating without providing unnecessary calories. Average cost per ounce = \$0.17.

Black, green and herbal teas are an excellent way to hydrate since it is practically 100% water. Tea also provides a good source of polyphenols, which are a type of antioxidant. So long as you don't add sweeteners, tea has no calories. It tends to be mild

in flavor, which is less appealing to some, so consider adding cut fruit or vegetables to your tea or allow it to steep for an extended period of time for more flavor. Average cost per ounce = \$0.03 (homemade).



Lemonade sure can hit the spot when it's hot and you're thirsty. But watch out! It has a ton of calories and sugar. A 33-ounce serving is 400 calories and about 100 grams of added sugar! Add a splash of this to your favorite tea for a healthier alternative. Cost per ounce = \$0.05.

Beer, the one you've all been waiting for. The good news is beer is 95% water, so on a technicality, it is hydrating. It also contains calories, about 900 if you hydrate with a whole six-pack. It provides a small amount of amino acids, vitamins and minerals - but don't count on this for good health. The diuretic effect of alcohol is unlikely to result in dehydration, but excess alcohol is clearly associated with negative health impacts. Consider limiting to 1 - 2 beers, or opt for a non-alcoholic beer. Cost per ounce = \$0.33 (six-pack).

[How sweet is it?](#) Check out this list of beverages to learn more.

References:

Marcos, A., Serra-Majem, L., Pérez-Jiménez, F., Pascual, V., Tinahones, F. J., & Estruch, R. (2021). Moderate Consumption of Beer and Its Effects on Cardiovascular and Metabolic Health: An Updated Review of Recent Scientific Evidence. *Nutrients*, 13(3), 879. <https://doi.org/10.3390/nu13030879>

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/30/2012/10/how-sweet-is-it-color.pdf>

Nicole Clark, RDN
Family and Consumer Science Educator
Colorado State University Extension/La Plata County

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LLP Monthly Focus:

Good Leaders Understand

Strengths and Weaknesses

By Stacy Reuille-Dupont, StudioB



All of us weren't made to row. Some of us are better at tacking the sails, some at spotting land, and others are reading the river. A good captain knows how to capitalize on each team member's strengths and balance out weaknesses to efficiently get the boat where it needs to go.

In order to evaluate team members effectively a good leader needs to know their own strengths and weaknesses. As I write this, the current LLP class is celebrating their graduation and final day of class known as visioning. Visioning is a very important step to really knowing your own strengths, weaknesses, and determining direction for your goals.

A good leader is able to set the vision for the team and direct each member using a set of skills including communication, assessment, reflection, and strategy. How is one able to excel at those skills? By knowing themselves of course.

When we know ourselves well, we have what is called self-awareness. We understand how we deal with stress, what triggers us, and how to successfully manage relationships when we are stressed. We understand how to communicate our inner experience appropriately to the situation and the audience. We also know how to draw out our team members to better understand their inner experience and better understand the value they bring to our team.

To be an effective communicator, we must assess our own communication styles. Are we a person who wants the story or bullet point lists? Do we want lots of details and direction or would we rather give a broad directive and let the team members figure out the rest. To be effective not only do we need to understand our own communication style but we must also understand our team member communication styles as well.

When we accurately assess ourselves, we can embrace our weaknesses honestly. We have power to work with



them. We can look to where we can up level skills. We can shamelessly admit where we need support. We can be authentic in our personhood and work to be a positive contribution to the team balanced with other members.

When we accurately assess ourselves, we can reflect on experiences which create opportunities for growth. We can also see areas where our strengths bring value to our organization. Once we know where we want to go and how we fit in, it's time to set strategy to get there.

Each of us has a different style of learning and executing our knowledge. Each of us has a different flow to our work focus and we each engage in problem solving according to our unique experiences. As a result, the strategy we implement to complete a project will differ as we work to bring our most productive self to the task at hand.

Setting vision and building self-awareness elevates our ability to succeed. Leaders work on self-awareness. They face their fears and find weaknesses to either learn a skill or let another shine. Successful leaders know themselves and they know their teams.

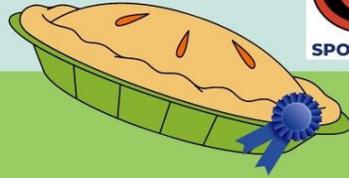
To build your self-awareness, consider learning more about and following LLP online as the next class begins their journey, learning about themselves and our local community. You can also find us on Instagram and Facebook.

Author: Stacy Reuille-Dupont, PhD, LAC, CPFT, CNC - [Learn More About Me](#). She owns [Studio B](#) a place to Create.Your.Self. We are passionate about helping people create a vibrant life using psychology and physiology.

A Taste of

INDEPENDENCE

& Pie Eating Contest



A celebration of La Plata County's Independent Food Truck Owners!



La Plata County Fairgrounds

- Pie Eating Contest**
- Starts at 2:30 PM**
- Open to the first 12 entries**
- \$10 Entry Fee**
- Prizes for 1st, 2nd & 3rd**

JULY 1ST

NOON - 3 PM

FOOD TRUCKS & PIE EATING CONTEST



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