



# Why Continuous Learning Matters in Business

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*“It does not matter how slowly you go, as long as you do not stop.” — Confucius*

WHEN I FIRST ENTERED the world of business more years ago than I care to remember, it was a very different place. Word processors were just making an appearance and sending a fax was the ultimate in high speed communication, the internet barely existed and Amazon wasn't even a glimmer in Jeff Bezos' eye.

Fast forward to 2018 and while the basic principles of business remain the same, the way we DO business is infinitely different. Technology has changed how we make decisions, how we execute on strategy, how we transact business, how we communicate. Equally, we have access to more information and educational resources than ever before. For the small business owner today – more than ever – to ignore the need for continuous learning is to remain stagnant at best, fail at worst.

At the Emerging Enterprise Center we hone in on business processes that every small business and entrepreneur needs while tying into the ever-evolving business environment, with one-on-one business coaching, Growth Wheel Workshops, and Learn with the Experts seminars. Areas of continuous change include:

**Data & Innovation:** “Innovate or die” has become a 21st century mantra and rightly so. Failure to innovate led to the slow demise of companies like Eastman Kodak, Blockbuster, Sears and, more recently, Toys ‘R’ Us. In today's world we are seeing shorter and shorter life cycles due to rapid technological development, changing tastes and increasing competition. And data is everywhere – customer interactions, marketing metrics, and industry data. Megabytes of data are available for analysis. Businesses that fail to use data and update their products or services are gradually squeezed out

of the market. Innovation doesn't have to be disruptive – it can be gradual and incremental. The key is to remain relevant!

**Globalization:** Globalization can be a hotly contested topic but has nevertheless had a profound impact on business with increased competition, expanded markets, increased resources, and technology transfer. The increased ease with which business can be transacted internationally means that even the smallest of businesses can access customers and markets which in the past may have seemed unreachable, either directly or through strategic business alliances.

**Sales, Marketing & Communication:** Thirty years ago sales and marketing were almost synonymous. Today the world of sales and marketing couldn't be more different. At the Emerging Enterprise Center, sales and marketing is a key focus area as we work with member companies to clarify the nuances between strategic marketing, marketing communications, advertising, and sales so that they can develop and implement more effective business growth plans.

**Mobility:** Working at a desk with a computer and phone system is more and more a thing of the past. Virtual offices, applications managed by a third party in the cloud, online collaboration tools, and virtual meetings are becoming daily realities for large and small businesses alike. Do you know what's out there and how to leverage these tools to maximize operations and profitability?

For more information on upcoming workshops at the Emerging Enterprise Center, or if you would prefer a customized on-site workshop, please contact Erica Crell at [crelle@ncccc.com](mailto:crelle@ncccc.com) or (302) 294-2063. ■