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*“Brilliance
Within:
Leadership
in Action”*

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Alan Thorlakson

MA, CMC, C.I.M., P.Mgr., F.CIM, FLMI, CTM

A self-professed “strong advocate of life-long learning”, Alan Thorlakson of Winnipeg, MB is an outstanding role model for management and employees alike.

Having abandoned school with a grade 9 education, Thorlakson spent five years commercial fishing on Lake Winnipeg. During that time, he concluded that education is important after all. He returned to complete his high school education, and two years in Business Administration, before going on to university to earn a double major B.A. with distinction, followed by an M.A. in Psychology.

This was only the beginning of his scholarly lifestyle. More recently, he earned the prestigious designation of Certified Management Consultant. In fact, his passion for learning is such that he admits to enjoying training and developing others.

A dependable self-starter, from first glance at Thorlakson’s biography, it is obvious that he takes commitment and dedication very seriously indeed. He is described as having high energy and has the ability to develop and maintain long-term business relationships. His career boasts more than 27-years experience in management positions with Great-West Life Assurance Company, and 14-years of management consulting with the Harris Consulting Corporation Ltd. During the last ten years with the life insurance company, he was also President of A. J. Thorlakson Consulting, where he designed and presented workshops and seminars for firms in both the public and private sectors. In 1966, he received an Officer’s Commission with the Queen’s Own Cameron Highlanders of Canada.

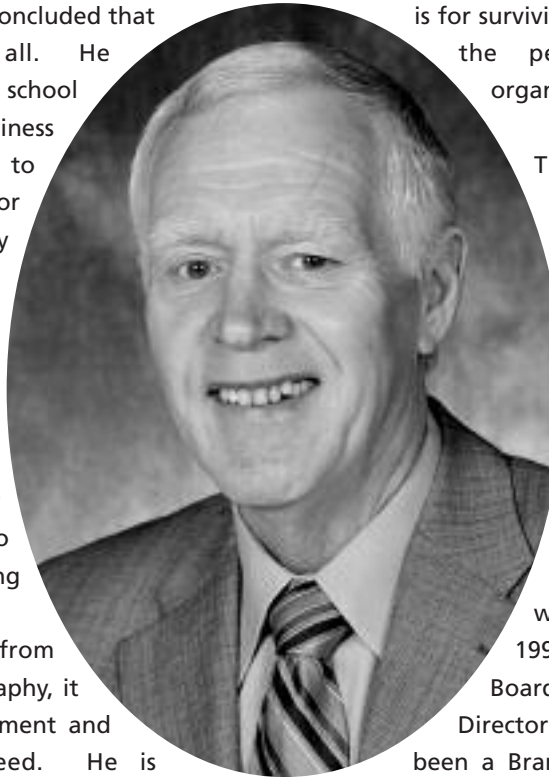
Since 2003, Thorlakson has been the Senior Vice-President and Partner of The Harris Consulting

Corporation Ltd. His responsibilities include management consulting; career management; executive coaching; integration coaching; performance improvement counselling; psychometric assessments; succession planning; and career transition counselling. One aspect of career transition counselling that Thorlakson promotes is for surviving employees. “Often the needs of the people that remain with the organization are forgotten,” he observes.

A member of CIM since 1984, Thorlakson states that, of all the boards he has been on, CIM has been his favourite. He admits that one of the major benefits of membership is the life-long friendships made. Thorlakson has served in various roles with the Winnipeg Branch: Vice President of Programs & Publicity, Programs & Development, Member Services and Education. He served as Director of the P.Mgr Program, and was Branch President from 1995-1996. He also served on the National Board of Directors from 1999-2000 as the Director of National Vision. Thorlakson has been a Branch Life Member of the Winnipeg Branch since 2004.

Heavily in demand as a public speaker at universities and organizations, Thorlakson has also been the guest speaker for CIM. A Competent Toastmaster (CTM) and recipient of Toastmaster of the Year Award, his specialized skills enable him to speak on business related topics such as Emotional Intelligence, Management and Organizational Effectiveness, and Career Management. Other honours include the Martine J. Lyons Best Business P.R.I.M.E. Award; and Finalist in Manitoba Business Awards, sponsored by Manitoba Chamber of Commerce.

Thorlakson is proud of his Icelandic heritage and describes himself as the Happy Viking with an optimistic motto, “Smile, be Happy”.



With working days spent on performance improvement and psychometric testing, Thorlakson's hobbies and interests logically lean towards tangibility. He is an avid birder and his creative interests tend to involve plenty of sawdust - building anything from birdhouses, decks and homes, to the intricate woodcraft, Intarsia. He enjoys gourmet cooking, photography and, after taking a course at the Art Gallery, takes pleasure in painting landscapes using acrylics, oils, and watercolours. In his own words, his hobbies are "balancing for me". Thorlakson has mastered the admirable ability to read five to ten books at a time - anything that peaks his interest, whether instructive, mystery, or history. Currently he is enjoying Charles Dickens' Great Expectations.

Thorlakson's custom built home overlooks the Red River - with "a view to die for". Together, he and Roma, his wife, are landscaping their property using intricate stonework designs and xeriscaping, a technique that incorporates natural grasses and conserves water.

Alan's mantra, which relates to both business and home life, is "**Have fun and get the job done**". He adds that it's not always in that order.

Alan Thorlakson can be contacted at The Harris Consulting Corporation, telephone 204-942-8735, or drop him a line at alant@harrisconsult.com.

Sheila Sproule

"Have fun and get the job done"

ABOUT THE CANADIAN INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT

The **Canadian Institute of Management** is Canada's senior management association. As a non-profit organization, the Institute was established in 1942 and is dedicated to enhancing managerial skills and professional development. Currently, there are 17 branches coast-to-coast with the National Office in Barrie. Since its inception, the Institute has helped over 55,000 managers to develop a broadly based education in management skills with a rich and diversified series of programs from individual courses to professional designation.

The Institute's programs are available through many educational institutions in cities across Canada. The programs are also available in a variety of forms and structures:



- National accredited study programs offered through universities and colleges
- International recognition of individual achievement
- Contact with practicing management professionals
- Local branch activities and services including workshops and seminars
- Self-study programs for maximum flexibility