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*Minnesota Council for Quality Stakeholder Update*  
*January 2005*  
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In This Issue:

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1. A Message from the President: Lessons in Excellence from Health Care
2. Council Reaches Milestone of 200 Members; Recognizing Fourth Quarter Members
3. Looking for Experts to Join the 2005 Board of Evaluators; Training Dates Set
4. Internal Communication and Employee Engagement: Key to Organizational Change -- PIN Discussion 1/6
5. Unleashing the Power of our People: Successfully Operating a Talent and Values-Driven Organization -- MSLF 1/25 Discussion
6. Intentional Interventions -- MNODN 1/26-27 Workshop
7. 3rd Annual Manufacturers' Marketplace -- PMA & MPMA Manufacturers Supplier Exposition 1/25/05
8. Using the Balanced Scorecard to Improve Performance: -- U of M Course 3/15
9. Century College Announces Winter/Spring Courses; Council Members Receive \$50 Discount
10. South Central Technical College Announces Winter Courses; Council Members Get 10% Discount
11. St. Thomas Announces Winter Courses; Council Members Get 15% Discount

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1. A Message from the President: Lessons in Excellence from Health Care

I know: that title probably baffles you. After all, we occasionally hear horror stories on the news about medical errors that have killed or handicapped a patient -- of operations on the wrong limbs, of accidental medical record switching, of missed drug interactions or misinterpreted script abbreviations. And we all frequently hear complaints about the high cost of health care, the perceived low service (such as wait times), and the lack of efficiency (paper records, slow processes, inaccurate billing, etc.).

But in this month's column, I will offer a very different perspective on health care: a perspective that may surprise you, and some lessons that certainly translate to business and other sectors.

Last week, our organization hosted an extraordinary event: "Achieving Excellence in Health Care." Attended by well over 200 professionals (with a waiting list of 50+ more), this one-day event featured executives from the three health care recipients of the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award: Baptist Health Care Corporation in Pensacola, St. Luke's Health System in Kansas City, and SSM Health Care in St. Louis. The executives spent eight hours outlining how their organizations reached performance excellence. And there is no doubt that they have indeed reached extremely high levels of

performance...consider these examples:

- \* Patient (customer) satisfaction: Baptist has maintained an extraordinary 99% patient satisfaction rating (the highest in the country) for all quarters since 1997, except for once in late 2002 (they were at 98%);
- \* Employee satisfaction: Baptist has an employee turnover rate under 14% and SSM is about 11% (the industry average is between 20-23%); this is in spite of considerable staffing pressures in nursing;
- \* Financial: St. Luke's has nearly 350 days cash on hand (the required level for an A-Bond rating is 150); Baptist has seen its revenue per patient increase nearly 50% over the last five years;
- \* Clinical: At SSM, 85% of myocardial infarction patients are discharged on ACE inhibitors (which is approaching the top 10% of the industry); the use of dangerous abbreviations at SSM has decreased from 24% in 2002 to 6%; patients receiving tPA following ischemic stroke at St. Luke's is nearly 30% (the next best provider is about 9% and the industry average is 3-4%).

I probably could have listed dozens of measures that demonstrate these three organizations' superior performance, but hopefully you get the sense that these health care providers are indeed role models.

In listening to their stories, I noticed that each organization (appropriately) had their own methods and approaches for managing their processes and operations: their strategies differed slightly and their approaches were therefore customized to advance their different objectives. However, the other thing that struck me was the similarity in many parts of their management systems. I thought these insights might apply to all organizations regardless of sector, so I offer some thoughts for your own organizations' consideration:

- \* All three organizations made a firm commitment to advancing organizational excellence. This commitment manifested itself in the stretch goals that leaders set, the vision for excellence, and the continual communication, reinforcement, and rewards for achieving objectives. The commitment came from the top and seemed to radiate through each organization.
- \* All three organizations recognized the importance of creating a culture that motivates staff, creates ownership, and inspires change. Leaders of all three organizations focused on creating an environment that encouraged innovation, empowerment, and trust.
- \* All three organizations saw the value in using data -- including in-process measures (or leading indicators) -- to make decisions, monitor organizational progress towards goals, and deploy strategic plans. And while these organizations relied heavily on measures,

they also attempted to focus on the data that were the most important for managing their business.

\* All three organizations focused on aligning their organizational systems through their strategic planning process, their measurement system (two used a scorecard method), their communication processes, their performance management and reward systems, and other processes. All three recognized that their organizations would only reach optimized performance levels with a high degree of alignment and integration of their systems and activities.

\* And finally, all three organizations recognized the importance of finding appropriate comparative data to judge their relative performance, to set suitable targets, and to motivate future improvement. And these organizations were not insular; rather, they continue to learn from and benchmark with other high performing organizations, both within and outside their sector.

So see: we CAN learn from health care! These role model organizations offer tremendous insight from which any organization can learn. If you attended last week's event, I'm sure you identified best practices that could help your organization improve. If you did not attend and would like to see handouts from last week's event, please visit our website at [www.councilforquality.org](http://www.councilforquality.org). If you are interested in obtaining a video of the event (for a nominal charge), please email me at [brian.lassiter@councilforquality.org](mailto:brian.lassiter@councilforquality.org); tapes will be available later this month.

Yours in Improvement,

Brian S. Lassiter  
President, Minnesota Council for Quality  
[www.councilforquality.org](http://www.councilforquality.org)

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2. Council Reaches Milestone of 200 Members; Recognizing Fourth Quarter Members

The Minnesota Council for Quality is proud to report that it recently reached 200 members. "This is a testament to the commitment organizations and individuals in this state have to on-going improvement," says Brian Lassiter, president of the Council. "This is also a significant milestone in the Council's continued transformation -- further evidence that we are indeed now providing value for our members."

The Council has 202 members representing over 140,000 employees in and beyond Minnesota. "The Council had 17 members in May of 2002," says Lassiter. "While the tremendous growth in membership should be celebrated, we have a long way to go to reach our vision. In fact, many of our core services -- tools such as our on-line improvement Clearinghouse, our Consultant Referral Network, and the benchmarking relationships we create -- will become more valuable as we increase the number of

members. As a result, we hope to double our member community over the next year or so.”

The Council would like to recognize 71 organizations and individuals who joined or renewed their membership in the fourth quarter of 2004. Special recognition goes to Benedictine Health System, Fairview Health Services, Medtronic Corporation, and Xcel Energy for joining (or renewing) as Sponsoring Members. Their contributions help support more affordable memberships for individuals and smaller organizations.

“Xcel Energy -- and NSP before them -- has been a long-time supporter of the Council’s mission,” says Lassiter. “We thank them for their continued support. Benedictine and Fairview are two very significant health care providers in the state, and both are intensely interested in high quality clinical care as well as improving operational performance. Medtronic’s focus on product and process quality is unparalleled in Minnesota; their emphasis on reaching six sigma quality is evident in their results. All four organizations represent leaders in their industries, and we thank them for their support.”

In addition to Benedictine, Fairview, Medtronic, and Xcel Energy, these individuals and organizations became members last quarter (asterisks indicate renewal members):

Andrew Tool and Superior Tool and Machining, Plymouth  
AQS Management Systems, Inc., St. Paul  
Bank of Elk River, Elk River\*  
Becky Bartels, St. Paul  
Benedictine Health System, Cambridge  
Cathy Berglund, St. Paul  
Biasca & Associates Inc, Highlands Ranch, CO  
Tim Bloudek, Eden Prairie\*  
Carstens Consulting Corporation, Spring Lake Park\*  
Century College Customized Training, White Bear Lake\*  
Bob Christenson, Brooklyn Center  
clientek, Minneapolis  
Colder Products, St. Paul\*  
Karen Copp, River Falls\*  
Dairy Strategies, LLC, Lauderdale\*  
Db Ink, Big Lake\*  
Duncan Co., Minneapolis  
Dunwoody Institute, Minneapolis\*  
Elk River ISD 728 Administrative Team, Elk River\*  
Emerald Quality Services, Minneapolis\*  
Employee Communications, Apple Valley  
Endurant Business Solutions, Eden Prairie\*  
Fairview Health Services, Minneapolis  
Gary Floss, New Brighton\*  
Steve George, St. Louis Park\*  
Great River Energy, Elk River

Justin Grussin, St. Paul  
Hayfield School District, Hayfield  
Hazelden Foundation, Center City\*  
HealthPartners Central Minnesota Clinics, St. Cloud  
Hillswick Group, LTD, Brooklyn Park\*  
Rick Hokanson, Bloomington\*  
Huberty Performance Learning, Minneapolis\*  
In\*sight Solutions Group, Inc., St. Paul  
Indian Health Board of Minneapolis, Minneapolis  
insightformation, Inc., Golden Valley\*  
ISD 283 School Board & District Office, St. Louis Park  
James Haedtke, Burnsville\*  
Johnson Consulting Group, Minneapolis\*  
Dale Johnson, Minneapolis  
George Karayianes, Eden Prairie\*  
Mark Lanz, Edina\*  
LJ Menke Consulting, Shoreview\*  
Lynn & Associates, Shorewood\*  
Lois Mackin, Plymouth\*  
Management Mastery Inc., New Brighton\*  
MDA Leadership, Minneapolis  
Medtronic, Inc., Minneapolis\*  
Micro-Tech Hearing Instruments, Plymouth\*  
Steven Nelson, Brooklyn Park  
North Memorial Quality Services Department, Robbinsdale\*  
Northland Community and Technical College, Center for Outreach and Innovation, Thief  
River Falls  
Northstar Quality, Inc., Kilkenny  
Opportunity Services, Inc., Red Wing\*  
ProMation Systems, Inc., Blaine\*  
Quest Analytical, Inc., Eden Prairie\*  
Lori Ramberg, Minnetonka  
Schwarz Williams Companies, Inc., Minneapolis\*  
Jim Stahley, Burnsville\*  
Stat-Ease, Inc., Minneapolis  
Stora Enso Duluth Paper Mill, Duluth  
Al Strauss, Bloomington\*  
Sunny Fresh Foods, Monticello\*  
Synergy Resource Group, Inc., Plymouth  
Tetra Pak Chilled Inc. IQe Department, Minneapolis\*  
The Bailey Group, Golden Valley  
The Text Doctor, Elizabeth Fricke, North St. Paul  
University of MN College of Continuing Education, St. Paul\*  
US Bank, Client Services Group, St. Paul  
Virchow, Krause and Company, Bloomington\*  
Xcel Energy, Minneapolis\*

We thank all members for their support. A complete list of members is available at <http://www.councilforquality.org/member.cfm>.

Why should you or your organization consider membership? There are many reasons. Your or your organization receives: recognition (in this newsletter, in press releases, on the website, and with a certificate/letter); discounts to Council services (Evaluator training, organization assessments); access to Council services (Clearinghouse, Consultant Referral Network, and free admission to Performance Improvement Network discussions); and discounts to our partners' services (other improvement-related non-profits, universities/colleges, and professional/trade associations).

Individual memberships are \$100 and organization memberships begin at \$250. For more information on the benefits of becoming a member, please visit [www.councilforquality.org/member.cfm](http://www.councilforquality.org/member.cfm) or email the Council at [info@councilforquality.org](mailto:info@councilforquality.org).

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3. Looking for Experts to Join the 2005 Board of Evaluators; Training Dates Set

Are you interested in learning more about what makes organizations successful? Are you interested in helping other organizations -- such as schools, hospitals, non-profits, and businesses -- around the state improve their performance? Would you be interested in networking, learning, and sharing with others who feel the same way?

The Minnesota Council for Quality is seeking candidates for the 2005 Minnesota Quality Award Board of Evaluators. There are many benefits to becoming an Evaluator, such as:

- \* strengthening your ability to understand what factors drive organizational results,
- \* networking with peers across the state,
- \* forming deep relationships with professionals and leaders interested in organizational improvement,
- \* reviewing performance of organizations throughout the state (and possibly identifying best practices for your organization), and
- \* developing other professional skills such as analysis, consensus- and team-building, interpersonal, written communication, interviewing, and systems thinking.

Many Evaluators consider the experience to be among the most valuable of their careers. Furthermore, Evaluators can now earn post-graduate credit for participating in training. For interested Evaluators, the University of Wisconsin-Stout will offer three (3) hours of credit in partnership with the Minnesota Council for Quality.

If you are interested in joining the 2005 Board of Evaluators, please note the following training dates: the spring session will be March 22-24 (in the Metro); the summer session will be June 28-30 (in Rochester); and the fall session will be September 20-22 (in the Metro). You may select the session that best meets your needs. In addition to the full three-day training session, new Evaluators are also required to attend a one-day orientation. New Evaluators can select one of three dates for the spring orientation: February 16, 21, or 25.

Applications for new Evaluators are due February 9 and for returning Evaluators on March 8.

We hope that you would consider (re)joining the Board of Evaluators and/or encourage others to do so. For more information or for an application, please visit [www.councilforquality.org/assess.cfm](http://www.councilforquality.org/assess.cfm), email us at [kathryn.mackin@councilforquality.org](mailto:kathryn.mackin@councilforquality.org), or call 612-462-3577.

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4. Internal Communication and Employee Engagement: Key to Organizational Change --  
PIN Discussion 1/6

The Minnesota Council for Quality is pleased to welcome Kelly Groehler, Account Supervisor with Padilla Speer Beardsley (PSB), to the February 3 Performance Improvement Network (PIN) discussion. Kelly's discussion, "Internal Communication and Employee Engagement: Key to Organizational Change," will focus on the importance of internal communication and employee engagement in organizational change.

As we all know, employees drive your organization's success. Depending on their level of engagement, they can propel your business to new heights or run it into the ground. Employee retention and performance may never be of greater value than it is today, particularly in the case of organizational change. At the same time, the relentless drive for true profitability has heightened the need for excellent employee performance. When employees are engaged, they stay, perform, influence others to perform well, and recommend the company as a model for success. Through case studies and data, Kelly will look at how internal communication helps drive these behaviors, and how companies can take advantage of organizational change to increase engagement.

The discussion is from 8:00-9:00 a.m. on February 3 (networking and continental breakfast begin at 7:30 a.m.) at the University of St. Thomas in downtown Minneapolis. Note the new room: OPUS Hall Room 201 (across the skyway from the old location). Admission is FREE for Council members; \$10 for partner organizations; \$20 for the public. For more information or to register, visit [www.councilforquality.org/perform](http://www.councilforquality.org/perform) or email [brian.lassiter@councilforquality.org](mailto:brian.lassiter@councilforquality.org).

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## 5. Unleashing the Power of our People: Successfully Operating a Talent and Values-Driven Organization -- MSLF 1/25 Discussion

The Minnesota Strategic Leadership Forum (MSLF), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is pleased to announce their January 25 discussion “Unleashing the Power of our People: Successfully Operating a Talent and Values-Driven Organization.” The discussion will be facilitated by Shari Ballard, EVP of Best Buy Human Capital and Leadership.

Ms. Ballard’s presentation will begin with an overview Best Buy, followed by a discussion of the culture that is needed to create an organization that constantly renews itself. Shari will follow up that discussion with the tools in place to operate that model successfully.

Shari Ballard is executive vice president of human capital and leadership for Best Buy, North America’s leading specialty retailer technology and entertainment products. Each day, Ballard strives to unlock the talent of Best Buy’s 100,000 employees and align that talent with the strategies of the Fortune 100 company. She oversees leadership development, human resources operations, and human resources service delivery; additionally, she is responsible for the company’s legal department. Ballard began her career at Best Buy in 1993 as an assistant store manager and has been a general manager a member of the retail change implementation team, vice president of organizational effectiveness, and senior vice president of retail service delivery.

The discussion will be held Tuesday, January 25. Registration, networking, and breakfast is at 7:00 AM; the program is from 7:45-9:00 AM. The meeting location HAS MOVED TO the University of St. Thomas, 1000 LaSalle Ave in Minneapolis, Opus Hall. Cost is \$35 to the public or \$25 for members of Council (free for MSLF Premium members). For more information or to register, visit <http://www.slf-minnesota.org/calendar.htm>.

Also note MSLF’s next Saturday Strategy Seminar on February 12. The topic, “Strategic Management: the Art and the Science -- Trends, Framework, Processes, and Business Models,” will be facilitated by Kim Korn, President of Business Architecture, Inc. More information can be found at [www.slf-minnesota.org](http://www.slf-minnesota.org).

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## 6. Intentional Interventions -- MNODN 1/26-27 Workshop

The Minnesota Organization Development Network (MNODN), a partner of the Minnesota Council for Quality, is hosting a workshop January 26-27 entitled “Intentional Interventions.” The workshop will develop the attendee’s knowledge and skills in intentional interventions. In this forum, you will learn powerful, practical ways to intervene effectively with your client organizations to gain involvement in and commitment to desired changes. The attached information describes the outcomes you can expect and how to register.

Roland Loup and Paul Tolchinsky will be the session leaders. Roland has been instrumental in developing Large System change conference methods with Kathy Dannemiller and Paul has been an innovator in applying organizational design methods to optimize technical and social systems. These people are creative innovators in the field of organizational change and we are lucky to have them for this session.

The discussion will be held January 26-27 from 8:30-4:30 both days at 451 Opus Hall, University of St. Thomas Minneapolis Campus. Cost is \$300 (\$275 before January 10) for MNODN or Council members; \$350 for the public. For more information, visit <http://www.mnodn.org> or contact Al VanArsdal at 952 210-7676 or [vanarscon@aol.com](mailto:vanarscon@aol.com). To register, call Pat at Bushee Services at 952 891-3500.

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7. 3rd Annual Manufacturers' Marketplace -- PMA & MPMA Manufacturers Supplier Exposition 1/25/05

As a supplier or service organization, you will not find a more economical way to display your wares than the Third Annual Manufacturers' Marketplace. Sponsored by PMA and the MN Precision Manufacturing Association (a partner of the MN Council for Quality), this expo was designed for vendors Midwest Manufacturing industry. Over 500 customers are expected to be at this marketplace: you do not want to be absent! Who will attend? Shop foremen, manufacturing, industrial and quality engineers, inspection personnel, business owners and managers will all be in attendance (there is no cost to attendees, and complimentary hors d'oeuvres will be served).

The MPMA and the PMA join together to draw in the real decision makers. Plus, as an added attraction, Battle Bots and Super Mileage Displays will add to the excitement. A keynote speaker will be announced soon, adding to the attraction. Exhibitor space consists of display tables six feet in length with cloths and skirts. A maximum of two tables may be rented. Table reservation is only \$250 for members of either of the two sponsoring associations, \$500 for non-members, and \$350 for members of the Council who are not members of either PMA or MPMA. Reservations are on a first serve basis. All fees must be paid prior to the event.

The specifics...

Date: Tuesday, January 25, 2005

Location: Hennepin Technical College, Brooklyn Park Campus

Time: 3:00-7:00 p.m. Warm hors d'oeuvres (and cash bar): 4:30-7:00 p.m.

For more information or to register, call MPMA at 763-566-5696 or email at [mpma@mpma.com](mailto:mpma@mpma.com).

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8. Using the Balanced Scorecard to Improve Performance: -- U of M Course 3/15

The Balanced Scorecard (BSC) is still one of the most popular management tools of the last decade. Thousands of organizations are using the framework and thousands more are considering it. The University of Minnesota's College of Continuing Education is pleased to offer a one day course, "Using the Balanced Scorecard to Improve Your Organization's Performance" on March 15.

The course, taught by Brian Lassiter, president of the Council, will introduce the BSC as a strategic measurement and management framework and demonstrate how it can be used in any organization -- of any size, any sector, or any marketplace. Through a highly interactive discussion, the course will also provide the participant with tools that can be taken back to your job to help you design and use a scorecard.

The course is March 15 from 8:30-4:30 at the University of Minnesota's Continuing Education and Conference Center (formerly Earle Brown Center) on the St. Paul Campus. Cost is \$595; Council members receive a discount (inquire at registration). For more information, visit [www.cce.umn.edu/professionaleducation](http://www.cce.umn.edu/professionaleducation) and enter ID number 177117. Or call 612-624-4000.

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9. Century College Announces Winter/Spring Courses; Council Members Receive \$50 Discount

Century College, White Bear Lake, is pleased to announce their winter and spring quality curriculum. Council members are entitled to a \$50 discount for the following courses:

- \* Fundamentals of the Balanced Scorecard Methodology; 1/18 and 1/25; \$259 Council members, \$309 non-members
- \* Building a Balanced Scorecard; 2/8 through 3/22; \$875 Council members, \$925 non-members
- \* Six Sigma Executive Overview; 2/1; \$345 Council members, \$395 non-members
- \* Appreciative Inquiry; 2/14; \$325 Council members, \$375 non-members
- \* ISO 9001:2000 Internal Quality Auditor; 2/8-9; \$545 Council members, \$595 non-members
- \* Certified Quality Manager (CQM); 1/18 through 3/1; \$745 Council members, \$795 non-members
- \* Certified Quality Improvement Associate (CQIA); 5/3 through 5/24; \$525 Council members, \$575 non-members
- \* Certified Quality Engineer (CQE); 3/2 through 5/25; \$825 Council members, \$875 non-members

\* Certified Quality Auditor (CQA); 3/29 through 5/10; \$745 Council members, \$795 non-members

You can also find more information on the Council's Clearinghouse at [http://www.councilforquality.org/improve\\_events.cfm](http://www.councilforquality.org/improve_events.cfm). Century College offers a comprehensive program of Quality training, certificate and certification courses to meet the needs of business and industry. Courses may be customized and delivered to your organization's work site. For more information on the above courses or any of Century's offerings, please contact Nancy Hogle, CQM at 651-747-4048 or [n.hogle@century.edu](mailto:n.hogle@century.edu).

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10. South Central Technical College Announces Spring Courses; Council Members Get 10% Discount

South Central Technical College, Faribault and Mankato campuses, is pleased to announce their spring quality and performance improvement curriculum. Council members are entitled to a 10% discount for the following courses at the Faribault campus (prices before member discount):

Applying SPC & Statistical Tools; 2/24; \$235  
Geometric Dimensioning & Tolerancing; 3/8-3/9; \$375  
Understanding & Implementing ISO 9001:2000; 3/15; \$235  
Internal Auditor Skills; 3/16; \$235  
Introduction to Lean Manufacturing; 3/17; \$235  
Problem Solving Tools & Methods; 4/7; \$235  
Introduction to Quality; 4/19-4/20; \$370  
Supplier Quality Management & Improvement; 5/5; \$235  
Certified Quality Manager (CQM) Review; 1/4-3/1; \$450  
Certified Quality Technician (CQT) Review; 1/24-2/28; \$250  
Certified Mechanical Inspector (CMI) Review; 1/24-2/14; \$250  
Certified Quality Auditor (CQA) Review; 5/5-6/2; \$250

Council members are entitled to a 10% discount for the following courses at the Mankato campus (prices before member discount):

Introduction to Lean Manufacturing; 3/16; \$235  
Introduction to Quality; 3/30-3/31; \$370  
Project Management; 4/6; \$235  
Corrective & Preventive Action Systems; 5/3; \$235  
Introduction to Six Sigma; 5/5-5/6; \$390  
Certified Quality Technician (CQT) Review; 1/25-2/22; \$250  
Certified Mechanical Inspector (CMI) Review; 1/25-2/15; \$250  
Certified Quality Auditor (CQA) Review; 5/5-6/2; \$250

For more information, please contact Laura Hardy at 507-332-5802 or at [laura.hardy@southcentral.edu](mailto:laura.hardy@southcentral.edu). You can also find more information on the Council's Clearinghouse at [www.councilforquality.org/improve\\_events.cfm](http://www.councilforquality.org/improve_events.cfm).

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11. St. Thomas Announces Winter Courses; Council Members Get 15% Discount

The Center for Performance Excellence at the University of St. Thomas Minneapolis Campus is pleased to announce their winter improvement curriculum. Council members are entitled to a 15% discount for the following courses:

- \* Mini MBA Program, 1/11-4/12
- \* Project Management: Project Initiation, 1/19
- \* Introduction to Six Sigma, 1/20-1/21
- \* Mini Master of Financial Management, 1/24-4/25
- \* Mini Master of Marketing Management, 1/24-4/25
- \* Decision Tools For Managers, 1/25
- \* The New Leader, 1/25- 5/18
- \* Mini MBA in Family Enterprise: Information Session, 1/26
- \* FastTrac II – Planning (From our Small Business Development Center), 1/26-4/6
- \* Project Management: Conquering Chaos, 1/28
- \* Six Sigma Black Belt Certificate, 2/7-5/23

For more information on any of these courses or to register, visit the Center for Business Excellence's website at [www.stthomas.edu/cbe](http://www.stthomas.edu/cbe) or call 651-962-4600.

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This newsletter is provided as a benefit to Council members, friends, and stakeholders. Feel free to forward it to your colleagues. If you wish to be removed from the distribution, please email us at [info@councilforquality.org](mailto:info@councilforquality.org).