

# Members Explore Culture Development

by [Scott McNeil-Smith](#) - 23 hours ago

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EMC's Eastern Ontario consortium members, along with **Blommer Chocolate Canada**, **Bristlecone Learning**, **St. Lawrence College** and the **Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs (OMAFRA)** hosted a special networking & learning event - and EMC's inaugural Food Sector initiative session for Eastern Ontario manufacturers recently.



EMC members, community partners and other manufacturers - located from Toronto through to Cornwall - were delighted to participate in a hands-on workshop: "**Creating a Sustainable Continuous Improvement Culture - developing Culture Before Tools**". The presentation welcomed **Doug Harper** and **Jim Morris**, who outlined a four step process that helped them to successfully implement organization-wide continuous improvement at Blommer Chocolate.

After exploring the concept of culture and the methodology and usage of Denison Cultural Surveys, group exercises were conducted utilizing a variety of plant scenarios. There was an excellent discussion on the impact that culture can play in our continuous improvement efforts. Members also shared some of their own best practices relating to sustaining a continuous improvement culture.

Doug and Jim also explained the critical elements of continuous improvement and utilized the case examples & exercises to aid participants in understanding their model and applying the tools involved.

**Some interesting thoughts to ponder from our workshop discussion...**

- We are all "learners" rather than experts
- Lean is driven by culture - culture is not driven by lean
- Where are you in relation to mission, vision & adaptability (external cultural influences)?
- Quality-Quantity/Speed: Can't have all 3!
- Where do you fit in (engagement point of view) for a shared responsibility for change?
- Have you ever conducted a Culture Survey?
- How are you involving all of your people in problem solving?

**Thanks to all who participated and made this event a terrific learning experience!**

*This presentation was a culmination of a series of culture-based continuous improvement articles authored by EMC member Doug Harper and author Jim Morris. These articles have been published in the EMC Update and online in the News & Blogs section, available at: [www.emccanada.org/blogs](http://www.emccanada.org/blogs)*

