

## **5 Questions on Innovation with Bridget Oland, Crosby's Molasses:**

### **1. How do you encourage innovation in your organization?**

Innovation is quite a mindset change for our traditional company and it's very new to us. That said, we have embraced it with gusto and innovation is now a key pillar in our growth strategy. A colleague and I took part in Simplicity training last fall and we have used the process in-house a few times. And we held a company-wide innovation contest, soliciting ideas from employees in every part of the business. We have been working hard to develop an efficient and effective innovation process to guide our innovation efforts and continue the momentum.

### **2. What are some of the biggest barriers to innovation?**

I believe a corporate commitment to innovation is essential to success. Otherwise employees are trying to cultivate ideas and nudge them along in their spare time. (That approach ends up being scattered, inefficient and sometimes overwhelming.) And of course, you need a solid process to follow. That's been a great learning for us at Crosby's – defining a process to keep us on track. (Defining the process is a process in itself – we're learning -- but we're improving by leaps and bounds.)

### **3. Why do you think innovation is important for Saint John and the province?**

We all know that innovation is an engine for economic growth but it's important for other reasons too. Innovation is best when it's collaborative and that collaboration helps our community, and province, grow in meaningful, inspiring ways. Working together to solve our challenges will help us to become a better province.

### **4. What are some simple things you've done to drive change?**

We now have a cross-functional Innovation Team that is helping to shepherd opportunities through the innovation funnel. We created "Innovation" GL codes. Both are simple changes that have made innovation part of our daily operations.

### **5. What success have you had with innovation in your organization?**

We're up to our elbows in new product development ideas and are off and running with a couple of ideas. We have much to learn but innovation is now part of our corporate lexicon and as a management team we're energized for growth.