

Chris Fields

Speaker, Writer, Principal at Rynic

What if we could achieve the exceptional?

In our home – our community – exists our ability to realize a world of possibilities. In family, work, hobbies, and the deeper meaning of life we pursue in our community, lies the soul of humanity. In our community, we are our most powerful in our individual and collective potential.

BUT – our potential isn't being fully realized. We take community-building for granted. Worse, we have fallen out of trust with government and institutions – paralyzing the ability to aspire and achieve. We live in a competitive world of accelerating change that can pass a community by with a whoosh. We sit on the sidelines and assume someone else need to create the change we want to see in the world.

In a turbulent era, now is the time to re-energize people around their aspirational community-building mission. Chris' 33 years of award-winning economic development & marketing experience has been dedicated to reconnecting people to the power of community-building. His dry sense of humour and no nonsense, cut-through-clutter style challenges conventions and leaves people with inspiration to "make community-building personal."

Presentation Topics

All presentations are 45-60 mins unless otherwise discussed.

5 Ways to Create Exceptional Places & People

Each of us wants to rise to the occasion – in our personal lives, professional lives, and as part of a community creating a bright future. But the big question – the stumbling block we often run into – is how? What's holding us back and how do we plan for an ambitious future amidst a world of exponential change and the inherent challenges of democratic governance? In a presentation that is described as informative, entertaining, and a little bit crazy, five ways to leap the hurdles that stand in the way of exceptional spaces, places, and people are explored. You will be challenged to think differently about what you do and what you can do to elevate your community, workplace, and your daily life.

Note: has been delivered with content specific to each of economic development and tourism.

Do The One Small Thing

How powerless we can feel in a world of change, 24/7 go-go, and negative news. How easy it is to fall into the trap of thinking there's no personal way to make a difference despite our hearts that ache to do exactly that. Now is the time to take control. Assume responsibility. Train your mind to see the beautiful all around us – and tap a powerful ability to effect big change from small things YOU can do this week. A personal empowerment framework is presented. Discussion of real world examples helps refresh spirits, and seeks to inspire in our own actions.

Follow The Leader

Follow The Leader – Dig a moat around Town Hall! What? Well think of it as an unconventional (ok slightly facetious) communications idea to get people to read the municipal budget. There's a million books about leadership, but not much in a government context – where every resident is a member of the Board of Directors and consensus-building is more likely to lead to gray hair than results.



Thirty-four years of experience working with organizations in all forms yields practical municipal and economic development leadership principles you can apply to your work today.

Dare to Be Different: Sell With Sizzle

While the comedian Steven Wright facetiously said “Everyone has a photographic memory... some just don't have film,” the truth is that being memorable is core to strength of a product, a brand/marketing, and business success. How do we create great “film” as designers of experiences that drive a business bottom line? Join in on an energetic and pragmatic exploration of obstacles and memory-making in a noisy marketing world that craves your stand-out pursuit of the exceptional.

Coaching for Life

We teach dribbling or skating around cones. We helicopter. We yell. We have medals for everyone. We think our kid will be the next superstar. And...we miss the point of it all. Kids crave mentors that care. They crave mentors that help them push themselves to fully realize a potential they often don't know the bounds of. At its best, sport is a metaphor for life to come. Character development leads – and yes that includes competitive spirit. It should serve what we all want: to raise kids to be the best version of themselves. How do we make this happen? Ten Character-Building Principles are discussed, inspired by nine years of coaching, three Provincials medals, and two kids in competitive sports. Stories – from hummingbirds to boiling water – offer additional insights into the soul of sports.

Canada to the Nth: Seeking Pathways to Yes in a Turbulent World

Oh Canada. We need a new CAN-DO spirit!

From 6th to 18th productivity ranking of 38 OECD member nations between 1970 to 2022*. A facetious observer might say we are following Homer Simpson's advice: “You tried your best and you failed miserably. The lesson is, never try.”

From interprovincial trade barriers to workforce supply and housing, our challenges can seem daunting. Our future prosperity and economic competitiveness relies on tackling productivity challenges head on, and more aggressively.

Are there some coping tools as Step 1 that bridge over our self-protective Homer Simpson escape hatch? Are there some Step 2 things that might gather us around the organization, community, and country campfire of common cause to fix, to elevate, to legacy-build for future generations? Can we find more paradoxical inspiration in the words of Friedrich Nietzsche who declared that “efficiency is intelligent laziness”?

Well let's scratch the itch a bit in this frank talk from a guy old enough to bend down to tie his shoes and wonder what else he can do while there – which affords perspective about the power creativity, innovation, and economic development and commerce have in a Canada searching for new ways forward.

*Src: RBC Economics June 4, 2024

The Grey Zone: Where Planning & Economic Development Converge

Let's start with a wild premise that will satisfy few who participate in modern day investment-related development approvals processes: the development industry isn't bad. The municipality isn't bad. Protectionist community interests aren't bad. But Houston we have a problem: we are struggling to find overlap in the productive zone of common interests.

What could Plan B – where we tip over the apple cart of our conventional urban planning perspective and re-imagine it - look like? Can we stitch together an optimist's world where we successfully address some big challenges of the day like ambitious vision setting, missing commercial middles and entrepreneurial ecosystem development, missing housing middles and housing attainability and affordability, asset management, market economics awareness and investment value proposition development, placemaking, development approval process efficiency and effectiveness, and brand and communications with effect?

The answer is yes – well or we should at least try. But to get there, we need to be willing to let go of the past. In the “grey zone,” we liberate ourselves to design the future we imagine.

Presenter Information

Name: Chris Fields
Title: Principal, Rynic (www.rynic.org)
Contact: e: chris@rynic.org c: 403-862-4011

Bio:

Chris is an informative, entertaining, and insightful strategic humorist with a serious message: dare to be different and reach highest aspiration or join the burgeoning ranks of the unnoticed. Chris' 33 years of award-winning community economic development experience has been dedicated to reconnecting people to the power of community-building. His dry sense of humour and no nonsense, cut-through-clutter style challenges conventions and leaves people with inspiration to "make community-building personal."

Frequently Asked Questions

Travel

Travel fees are calculated based on flights out of the Calgary International Airport, or mileage from Okotoks, Alberta. Chris does not have any special travel requirements.

AV / Presentation Requirements

- Chris prefers to use a wireless lapel mike but can work with any wireless mike. He tends to wander around the stage, so a stationary mike is less ideal.
- He does not require a podium, nor does he require a stage for smaller venues.
- Preference is to use his own laptop, given use of embedded video/audio content, which requires connection to a projector with HDMI connections (i.e. not the older blue VGA-style pin connection).
- Please advise if the projector and/or display screen is a traditional 4:3 format vs widescreen 16:9 format (effects presentation formatting).
- He desires an external speaker system that plugs into a laptop. Please advise if a speaker system isn't available so that presentation adjustments can be made.
- Chris carries a Bluetooth slide transition remote should the situation require it.

Workshops / Breakout Sessions

- Chris is happy to facilitate/present secondary sessions at conferences and events, or to participate in panel discussions.

For More Information About Chris

- Rynic Website: <http://rynic.org/speaking/>
- Chris Fields, LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/chrisfieldsab/>



Do The One Small Thing

By Chris Fields, Senior Strategist On a beach sits a box of tennis balls. A sign in the box has a picture of a dog on it and says: "In loving memory of Phoebe. Please help yourself to a tennis ball for your dog to enjoy. You may wish to pop it back in the [...]"

[Read More >](#)

For Chris' writing, visit: www.rynic.org/articles

Conference Keynotes: 2023-2025

- Economic Developers Association of Canada: Niagara on the Lake - upcoming
- BIABC: Vancouver.
- Association of Kootenay Boundary Local Governments: Cranbrook
- Coronach (SK) Connects
- Economic Developers Association of Canada: Summerside
- Economic Developers Association of Canada: Edmonton
- Lloydminster Economic Development Breakfast
- Northern BC Tourism Conference: Prince George
- Saskatchewan Economic Development Alliance: Saskatoon
- Weyburn Chamber of Commerce
- Community Planning Association of Alberta: Edmonton
- Shuswap Business Forum: Salmon Arm
- Growing the North Conference: Grande Prairie

Testimonials

"You were the #1 speaker on our feedback survey so you should feel proud! Well delivered and well received!" Kate Watson, Business Developer/Marketing Coordinator, Salmon Arm Economic Development Society (Shuswap Business Forum, 2024)

"When are you writing your book?" Shuswap Business Forum 2024 Attendee

"Best of Day 2 was from Chris Fields - on pathways to yes in productivity but also on breaking through the noise. I have so many takeaways from this one." Jodi Fulford, Economic Development Specialist, City of Spruce Grove (LinkedIn post, EDAC Annual Conference, 2024)

"Funny and thought provoking." Verona Thibault, CEO, Saskatchewan Economic Development Alliance, 2024 (SEDA Annual Conference)

"Chris was the perfect way to wrap up our summit! Our attendees left feeling inspired and invigorated to initiate change as soon as they returned to their offices. His use of humour had the room fully engaged and leaning in to glean more from his presentation. It has been two months since the event and people are still talking about his presentation! You were rated as one of the most beneficial parts of our program!" Jennifer Moore, Business Resiliency Specialist, Northern BC tourism Association (Northern BC Tourism Summit, 2024)

"Post-event I had eight individuals reach out, for no particular reason other than just to let me know how much they appreciated the Breakfast, particularly your delivery. I think the ultimate test for the event is that our planning team asked for your contact so they could share it with their associations for their next conference/personal development events, and survey responses for the Land Use Bylaw significantly increased!" Katlin Ducherer, Economic Development Officer, City of Lloydminster, 2023 (Lloydminster Economic Development Breakfast)

"Chris' keynote at EDAC 2022 national conference was a huge hit with our audience of EDOs from across Canada. Chris spoke on "We Rise - crisis stirs urgency and passion for change"; his presentation was thought-provoking, inspiring, uplifting and fun, really connecting with the audience and their roles as conduits, catalysts and connectors. Chris really focuses on delivering the exceptional in his keynotes, just as he does with his consulting work." Wendy Dupley, Economic Developers of Canada President, 2022