

## Mazda Canada drives forward with renewed clarity

**A**manda Lewis, senior specialist, network development, at Mazda Canada, was one of 10 members of a cross-functional team this year that was given an assignment to develop a new recognition program for company employees.

“Each of us came from a different part of the company,” she says, “with a different level of experience and seniority.”

Given 60 days to complete the project, the team set out to obtain feedback from about 50 people, including the president, David Klan. “We all had our regular jobs to do,” Lewis says, “so if someone got too busy for a while, someone else would step in.”

With 10 days to spare before their deadline, the team completed its assignment and presented the new recognition program to the company’s human resources director.

Teamwork is one of the elements in Mazda Canada’s formula for success.

“There’s an emphasis here on collaboration,” says Lewis. “It’s part of a cultural initiative that breaks down silos and encourages cross-functional work teams.”

Operating in Canada for 50 years, Mazda Canada has addressed the evolving challenges of the automotive industry by continually adjusting and reinventing its culture. With its head office in Richmond Hill, regional offices in Montreal and Vancouver and 164 independently owned, franchised dealers, the company is part of a global organization of distributors, research centres and affiliated companies.

“Five years ago, we set out to clarify who we are and where we’re going,” says



PRESIDENT & CEO OF MAZDA CANADA, DAVID KLAN, SPEAKING AT THE COMPANY'S 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY

Klan, who became Mazda Canada’s president and CEO in March 2019. “Then we made a clear decision to change.”

The change was as dramatic as it was challenging, and it extended beyond the employees of Mazda Canada to include its dealer partners across the country.

The change was well under way by the

“There’s an emphasis here on collaboration. It’s part of a cultural initiative that breaks down silos and encourages cross-functional work teams.”

– Amanda Lewis  
Senior Specialist,  
Network Development

time Lewis joined the company. In fact, its forward-thinking culture was one of the reasons that she decided to work there.

As a fourth-year commerce student at Queen’s University in Kingston, Lewis attended a presentation by Mazda Canada’s current senior director, regional operations and sales. “It was great to see a strong female in a leadership position in the automotive industry,” she says.

Impressed by the speaker, with a passion for cars that she’d nurtured growing up in Ottawa and already leasing a Mazda CX-5, Lewis joined the company in 2015, less than a year after she graduated with a bachelor of commerce degree. She found the culture at Mazda Canada even more advanced than she’d expected.

“We’re very diverse, very collaborative,” says Lewis, who oversees sales and service agreements between the company and its dealers. “We’ve challenged the status quo, broken down the silo mentality. Everyone is held accountable to our leadership values.”

From employees to dealers to vendors, Mazda Canada now operates with a clear purpose, says Klan, the company’s first Canadian president since 2006. “It galvanizes, aligns, attracts and retains people.

“There’s clarity of who Mazda is and where we are going,” adds Klan, who joined the company 28 years ago. With an emphasis on culture and leadership at all levels, “we’re an automotive company but also an experiential company.”

Looking out her window at lunchtime, Lewis says the reinvigorated, collaborative culture extends to Mazda Canada’s charitable initiatives.

“Right now, I’m watching a ball hockey tournament in the parking lot,” she says, “organized by our cross-functional charity committee.” ■

**166** FULL-TIME STAFF  
IN CANADA

**52** WEEKS, MATERNITY &  
PARENTAL LEAVE  
TOP-UP PAY

**3** WEEKS, STARTING  
VACATION ALLOWANCE

**34%** OF EMPLOYEES ARE  
WOMEN

WITH THE RIGHT PEOPLE  
BEHIND THE WHEEL,  
EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE.



Thank you to all our employees for making Mazda one of the GTA's Top Employers.

