



Business Essentials Toolkit

Learning Guide For Entrepreneurs

Presented By

Niagara Falls Small Business Enterprise Centre



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Small Business Enterprise Centre

The Niagara Falls Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) is your one stop for information and advice on starting or growing your small business. We offer free and confidential consultations (by appointment) to discuss your business and assist you in the development of your business plan.

We foster a space for growth and collaboration, prioritizing trust, learning, and open communication. With tailored guidance and resources, we empower entrepreneurs to overcome challenges, seize opportunities, and build thriving businesses.



Our Pillars

Mission:

To empower business owners with the right questions, tools, and connections to thrive while building a strong, supportive and inspiring entrepreneurial *community*.

Vision:

To build a thriving, inclusive, and resilient business community in Niagara Falls, where entrepreneurs are empowered with the connections, knowledge, and resources to achieve their goals and reach their full *potential*.

Our Core Values:

- Communication
- Community
- Diversity
- Empathy
- Integrity
- Passion
- Respect
- Collaboration and Teamwork
- Trust
- Adaptability

Business Basics

Building a Strong Business Foundation

Access **free online training** opportunities designed to help you understand the core principles of business management, covering essential topics like business plan development, the initial steps for starting a business, key considerations for startups, and strategies for growth and long-term success.

Program	Description	Duration
Start Your Own Small Business	Learn how to take your dream of starting a business and put it into action.	12 lessons
Business Basics	Explore general considerations and soft skills required to develop your business idea.	11 lessons
Creating a Successful Business Plan	This course will also guide you through the key components of a business plan.	12 lessons
Start Up - Sustainability Strategies	Get guidance on preparing an action plan, equip you with tools, resources and support to ensure your start-up is sustainable and positioned for growth.	10 lessons
Business Development: Strategic Planning	Learn how to clearly define your vision and goals, create strategic initiatives, and implement your plan.	54 min
Business Growth Planning	Thinking about growth? Learn about launching into new areas, adding employees, improving business processes.	10 lessons

Modules are delivered through self-paced learning platforms, and certification requirements vary from course to course. For additional questions and registration, please email Aki Cook at niagara@contactnorth.ca with your contact information and a list of the training courses you are interested in.

Financial Foundations

Navigating Small Business Financials

This section offers **free online training** opportunities to help you build a strong financial foundation, from understanding basic financial concepts to learning the essentials of bookkeeping and QuickBooks. Whether you're just starting out or looking to strengthen your financial management skills, these courses will provide the knowledge you need to manage your business's finances with confidence.

Program	Description	Duration
Financial Essentials for Small Business	Manage your small business successfully with these finance essentials from accounting professors Jim and Kay Stice. They explain the five reasons so many small businesses fail and outline strategies—such as tracking your accounting, managing your operating cycle, and forecasting cash flow—that will help you manage your small business better.	51 min
Introduction to Bookkeeping for Small Business Owners	Learn how to set up your bookkeeping file and the process to enter your business activity accurately, and get tips on how to organize your documentation for tax preparation and making required estimated tax payments.	1 h 38 min
Introduction to QuickBooks Online	Learn to set up a new company, navigate QuickBooks Online, and manage customers, sales, suppliers, expenses, and other company activities. Receive 1 year free access to the QuickBooks online software	Based on learner progress

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Management Essentials

Planning and managing for success

This section offers a range of training opportunities to help you build strong business management skills, from mastering strategic planning to enhancing leadership abilities. Whether you're looking to refine your approach to business development, improve your leadership style, or foster employee growth, these courses will provide the knowledge and tools you need to lead your organization effectively and drive long-term success.

Program	Description	Duration
Business Development: Strategic Planning	Use strategic planning to develop your business. Learn how to clearly define your vision and goals, create strategic initiatives, and implement your plan.	54 min
Coaching Skills for Leaders and Managers	Learn coaching skills that can help you develop your employees and add value to your organization.	34 min
Coaching and Developing Employees	Learn to apply the power of coaching in the workplace to facilitate employee upskilling and career mobility	1 h 25 min

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Marketing Toolkit

Essential Marketing Skills for Small Business Owners

This section offers a variety of training opportunities designed to help small businesses effectively leverage marketing tools to boost their online presence and reach more customers. From mastering the basics of social media platforms to implementing advanced advertising strategies, these courses will provide you with the skills you need to succeed in today's competitive digital landscape.

Program	Description	Duration
Marketing on Facebook: Managing a Company Page	Learn how to effectively manage your company's Facebook page using Meta Business Suite. This training covers key topics such as securing your page, building a content strategy, increasing reach, and tracking performance.	47 min
Advanced Facebook Advertising	This training covers the key elements of creating impactful videos, the unique advantages of each platform, and strategies for using hashtags, trends, and influencers effectively.	1 h 35 min
Social Media Marketing Strategy: Tiktok and Instagram Reels	Gain the skills to use TikTok and Instagram Reels to enhance brand awareness and audience engagement. Learn techniques for creating effective short-form videos, along with platform-specific strategies.	Based on learner progress
Social Media Marketing for Small Business	This course teaches you how to create a social media marketing strategy that aligns with your business goals. Learn key practices for goal-setting, team building, reaching customers, content creation, and measuring success to strengthen customer relationships.	Based on learner progress

Modules are delivered through self-paced learning platforms, and certification requirements vary from course to course. For additional questions and registration, please email Aki Cook at niagara@contactnorth.ca with your contact information and a list of the training courses you are interested in.

Digital Main Street courses

Program	Description	Duration
Empowering businesses to be cyber resilient	This course provides the essential tools and knowledge to help small businesses protect themselves against the rising risk of cybercrime.	Based on learner progress
How to thrive in the Internet economy	Provide main street businesses with a blueprint for how to attract customers across a variety of channels	Based on learner progress
Leveraging digital to grow your business	This program will help small business owners learn how to leverage various aspects of digital technology and marketing to grow their businesses.	Based on learner progress

The courses are delivered through an easy-to-use, self-paced online platform, allowing you to learn at your own speed. Certification requirements vary by course. For more information or to register, please reach out to the Digital Main Street team at info@digitalmainstreet.ca or register online at <https://digitalmainstreet.ca/dms-courses/>