

New Year's Resolutions for Small Business

As hokey as it may sound, business owners that make small, specific and measurable resolutions are 10 times more likely to attain their goals than owners who don't. Below are a few resolutions to consider from **Entrepreneur Magazine**.

1. **Work the Plan:** The benefits of a formal, written business plan include itemizing your business needs and goals and prioritizing how to spend your time and money. The WindsorEssex Small Business Centre offers free workshops on writing a business plan. See their workshop schedule at www.windsorEssexsmallbusiness.com.
2. **Get Ahead of the Competition:** Taking time to research and understand your operational landscape will increase your knowledge of your market and key competitors. The research you undertake will help you identify new customers and refine your target marketing. To learn more about conducting a market analysis see www.wellsfargoworks.com.
3. **Tweak Your Payment Options:** What can you do to make payments more convenient for customers? Talk to your provider about upgrading chip cards or credit card options, or accepting mobile payments, for example.
4. **Learn to Manage Your Cash Flow:** Owing more at the end of the month than you're taking in is not uncommon, but by preparing a cash flow projection you can identify and manage cash shortfalls and mitigate their risk. A 12-month rolling plan can help identify ways to reduce expenses, show times to increase revenues or prices, or shop for suppliers with better terms.

A great tip not included in the article is **NETWORK ...** attend peer meetings, workshops and events to learn from others and grow your contacts.

Wishing you a Happy New Year and much success in 2016.

Take the Survey! The EmployerOne Survey, conducted by Workforce WindsorEssex, is a comprehensive survey of local employers focused on the demand-side of the Windsor-Essex labour market. It is designed to collect information annually on a range of HR issues — labour turnover, hard-to-fill positions, recruitment, and current and future skill shortages — so that the community can accurately respond to the needs of our local employers.

As an employer/business you will have the opportunity to take a good look at your workforce:

- Identify and expand opportunities for growth
- Plan for the future
- Get a customized workforce profile for your organization immediately

Make sure your sector has a strong voice! Share the EmployerOne Survey with your sector colleagues. The survey is open January 4 to February 1, 2016. <http://workforcewindsorEssex.com/portfolio-view/employerone-2016/>



**Economic
Development
Office**

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Upcoming Events

January 19

Basics of Writing a Business Plan

WindsorEssex Small
Business Centre, 39
Maidstone Avenue East,
Essex Centre. 10:00am -
11:30am. Pre-registration
required.
Contact 519-776-1116.

February 2

Basics of Starting a Business

WindsorEssex Small
Business Centre, 39
Maidstone Avenue East,
Essex Centre. 10:00am -
11:30am. Pre-registration
required.
Contact 519-776-1116.

February 6 & 7

Digging into Farming

Two-day course.
Atlas Tube Centre
Boardroom, 447 Renaud
Line, Lakeshore. 10:00am-
3:30pm. \$200 per person/
\$360 per farming pair.

Facilitator: Joe
Grootenboer of River Bell
Market Garden. For more
information visit:
[www.farmstart.ca/
programs/training/
workshops/](http://www.farmstart.ca/programs/training/workshops/) or contact
margaret@farmstart.ca

Local Food Investment Fund Now Open Deadline March 30, 2016

The Greenbelt Fund is accepting inquiries on an ongoing basis for grants under its **Local Food Investment Fund**. The Local Food Investment Fund supports innovative local food projects that increase demand and sales of Ontario food, stimulate private sector investment and strengthen the province's agri-food sector.

The Fund provides support through three grant streams:

Broader Public Sector - Increasing local food purchases by public sector organizations and institutions

Market Access - Increasing the access of small and mid-sized farms and processors to markets

Local Food Literacy - Improving understanding of where local food can be found, what local foods are available, and how to use them.

To be considered for funding you must first submit an inquiry. Applicants submitting successful inquiries will be invited to submit a full proposal for review by the Fund's Board of Directors.

For eligibility criteria, information on how to submit an inquiry and examples of projects that have received grants, visit www.greenbelt.ca.

Ontario's SaveONenergy for Business Incentives

The SaveONenergy for business electricity conversion program, made available through local distribution companies, with the support of the Independent Electrical System Operator (IESO), offers financial incentives to help small business with the costs of installing energy-efficient equipment and improving the energy of their buildings. Programs include Audit Funding, Small Business Lighting, a Retrofit Program and Energy Manager initiatives. Find out more online at:

www.saveonenergy.ca

The Town of Essex established the Economic Development Office to advance the business and economic development interests within the community. The primary purpose of the office is to promote the growth and development of the Town's economic base, assist in the retention and expansion of existing business, and seek out new business for the community.