

The **ESSEX** FREE PRESS **BUSINESS**

Small Business 101

Small business and the shortage of qualified labour

Finding the people they need to fill positions in their firms is becoming increasingly difficult for small business owners. In a recently released report CFIB estimates that there were 251,000 full- and part-time positions in small- and medium-sized businesses unfilled for at least four months in 2006. This is up from 233,000 in 2005. If small firms, who create the bulk of all jobs in the economy, are unable to find people with the skills they need, it limits their ability to expand and create prosperity.

The government of Canada website (<http://canadabusiness.gc.ca>) provides many resources for the small business owner looking to hire skilled workers. If you are interested in learning more about government programs available to you, please visit the sites listed below:

- Employers and students interested in participating in the Summer Work Experience program should contact the Service Canada Centre in their region, visit <http://www.youth.gc.ca> or call the toll-free Youth Info

Line at 1 800 935-5555 (TTY 1 800 926-9105) for a free copy of the Summer Work Experience 2006 brochure. For further information on this program, please visit: <http://news.gc.ca/cfmx/view/en/index.jsp?articleid=201009>

- Foreign Worker Program: A program to support economic growth in Canada by hiring foreign workers to help address skill and labour shortages. http://www.hrsdc.gc.ca/en/gateways/nav/top_nav/program/fw.shtml

- Employers may adver-

tise job vacancies on Job Bank: this service allows employers to post jobs in Service Canada's Job Bank. http://www.jobbank.gc.ca/Intro_en.asp

- As a small business owner you can also work with your local high school or college to make sure students are aware of apprenticeship programs and opportunities available in the skilled trades.

The lack of qualified workers is a problem for business owners in every province, but is particularly acute in Western Canada.



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Long-term vacancies were common in all sectors, but smaller firms in the construction, agriculture and hospitality sectors were particularly hard hit. Firms in the hospitality industry experienced the highest jump in the vacancy rate since 2005, going from 2.7 per cent to 4.3 in 2006.

There is a role for business to play in being creative with their means of attracting and retaining staff, and in making sure they look at all available pools of labour. Late last year, CFIB released a major study on Canada's

immigration system. CFIB is pleased government has made progress on some of our recommendations and urges further action to find solutions that would improve the long-term workings of the labour market.

To view a copy of CFIB's report Help Wanted please visit <http://www.cfib.ca>
Small Business 101 is an information service provided by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business. It is not intended to replace legal and/or accounting advice.

Cover your assets – Managing your organization's risk

Insurance costs, risk, funding, responsibilities and liabilities are all concerns that community organizations are managing today. For these organizations, many of them small, volunteer-led, not-for-profits, changing practices and implementing new policies and procedures can be chal-

lenging. Board members need to be knowledgeable about their role as directors to ensure their organizations are accountable, transparent and managing the risks of their events and volunteers.

Essex Community Futures Development Corporation will offer a one-day seminar called

“Cover Your Assets – Managing Your Organization's Risk” at Pelee Days Inn, Leamington on Friday, April 13.

A registration fee applies and includes resource materials, breaks, lunch and informative speakers. Pre-registration is necessary and information can be found at ontario.ca/omafra in the 'Up Front' section or by calling 1-877-424-1300.

This seminar will be of special interest to organizations that hold meetings and events such as agricultural societies, horticultural societies, chambers of commerce, farmers markets, commodity groups, youth organizations, and community organizations. All organizations are welcome to attend.

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Business Notes

Identifying counterfeit money

The Essex Business Improvement Area will host a seminar on how to detect counterfeit money at their next regular meeting, April 10 at the Town Hall. This is a free seminar for Essex BIA members and their staff. To register, contact the BIA office at 519-776-9811 by March 27.

Do you have office space for lease?

The Windsor-Essex County Development Commission is updating its list of office space for lease. To have your property included contact Sandy Smith at 519-255-9200. There is no cost for this service.

Unemployed?

Interested in starting your own business?

There may be assistance available.*



Give us a call or stop in to see if our program applies to you.

Self Employment Service
215 Talbot St. E.
Leamington, ON
326-0237

* If you are unemployed, receiving E.I. or have received E.I. in the last 3 years or if you have received Maternity or Parental benefits in the last 5 years and are now returning to the workforce, you may be eligible to apply for the Self Employment Benefit program. Ask us for more details.

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