

Representing the Interests of Business for the Growth and Prosperity of Our Members and Communities

President's Message

Greetings!

The Yorkton Chamber of Commerce is here to represent the interests of business for the growth and prosperity of our members and communities.... the long and short of it is that small business is our business! As you are well aware, every year in October one week is dedicated as National Small Business Week, a week to recognize and show appreciation for small business. It is during this week that Small Business gets special attention, there are special sections in local newspapers, and special appreciation events are organized such as the Chamber's Business After Hours event to show support and appreciation for small business in our city. While it is necessary that we set aside this time to acknowledge and show appreciation for the efforts of small business, it is important to note that this appreciation extends well beyond "Small Business Week"! Each and every business in our city right down from the small home based businesses to large corporations contribute to the make up of our business community and on behalf of the Yorkton Chamber of Commerce we want to again thank you for the significant contributions that you make to our community!

As we are soon approaching the end of the year, the Chamber has begun planning for 2009 by accepting nominations for the 2009/2010 Yorkton Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors. Chamber members have the opportunity to provide input into that process based on a one vote per member basis. Strong dedicated people are the key to the great successes the Yorkton Chamber of Commerce has had in the past, present and will have for the future so please take the time to vote! Voting will take place electronically from November 10th to November 17th so watch for your voting password to arrive in your inbox shortly!

Congratulations are extended to the Yorkton Exhibition Association as this year marks the 20th anniversary of the Grain Millers Harvest Showdown which takes place from November 6th to 8th. The Harvest Showdown has grown to be very popular bringing many visitors to the city as this top-notch event highlights the importance of agriculture throughout our region. Everyone is invited to join us as we once again partner with the Yorkton Business Improvement District and the Yorkton Exhibition to cook you breakfast in the Prairie Oyster Bar & Grill on Friday, November 7th. I look forward to seeing you there!

Lori Walsh
President
Yorkton Chamber of Commerce



Lori Walsh
President



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If you are interested in becoming a
 Chamber Member,
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 Remember, your first year is free!



YOUR MEMBER FIRST REFERRAL

September 2008 ~ Just to name a few!

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Workplace Essential Skills Could Help Your Business

Juanita Polegi, PA - Executive Director

It comes as no surprise to anyone reading this document that there is a labour shortage in the Yorkton area! Recruiting and retaining employees is proving to be a challenge for more and more of the Chamber's members.

Recently, I met with Gail Gorchynski, a Career and Student Support Services Counsellor at the Parkland College. We discussed a pilot program the College is offering to employers in the area entitled "Workplace Essential Skills". Essential Skills are those skills that are the foundation on which other skills may be learned. As Gail describes it, "they are the Velcro to which other training sticks!" Nine skills have been identified as essential including:

Reading text
Document use
Writing
Numeracy
Oral communication
Thinking skills
Working with others
Computer use
Continuous learning

As it takes a great deal of time and effort to recruit a new employee, you employers know how frustrating it is to discover that your newly hired employee, or the one that was just promoted, is struggling. This is a good sign that the employee may be struggling with one or more of the essential skills. Gail is quick to assure that such struggles can be quickly overcome. "With the proper training, we find that for most people, they can develop competency in the essential skills within 4 - 6 weeks!" she said.

If you're concerned about an employee, you may wish to contact the College to arrange with the employee an evaluation of the employee's essential skills. If some of the skills require a little bolstering, you may then arrange to have the college work with the employee to bring him/her to the desired competency level. While the term "evaluation" may distress the employee, it is not intended to do so. "The evaluation is not intended to keep people out of the work force; its intent is to build the skill level of those already in the workplace," Gail said. She added that many employees who have been struggling with some of their work tasks gain a much greater sense of satisfaction from their jobs

when their essential skill levels improve.

In addition to happier employees, there are many other benefits to employers who implement Workplace Essential Skills evaluations with their employees. Some of these benefits include improved safety performance; increased productivity; and lower hiring costs and better employee retention.

If the Workplace Essential Skills project is something from which you believe your small business may benefit, contact Gail at 786-2597 or g.gorchynski@parklandcollege.sk.ca

And here's a plug for the Chamber of Commerce - you must be a member of the Chamber in order to be eligible for this project!

Finally, keep in mind that membership in the Chamber enables businesses to take advantage of the Chamber of Commerce Insurance Plan.

If you have comments or suggestions for the Chamber, please drop by the office, give us a call or drop us an email! We're always interested in hearing from our membership.

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY TOONIE AT THE TILL BLITZ

November 1st to 8th, 2008

Habitat For Humanity Yorkton is conducting a "Toonie at the Till Blitz" to run in conjunction with Habitat For Humanity Week in Yorkton. The Blitz is a Point of Sale requests for a Toonie/Loonie at all participating businesses that week. Your business will be supported with a media kit and media exposure as a participant throughout the campaign. Habitat For Humanity hopes you will support their goal to build a home for a deserving family in Yorkton. Remember, Habitat For Humanity is a Hand Up—Not a Hand Out!

For more information on this program or Habitat For Humanity Yorkton please contact:

Andrew Rae, Volunteer Network,
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