



sabda.grouperprise.com

RR#1 Englishtown, Cape Breton, Nova Scotia B0C 1H0

SABDA (*St Ann's Bay Development Association*) has hosted a wide range of business management and operations training programmes, several in conjunction with Workplace Education. Given the very rural nature of our community, together with the almost total absence of multi-staff employers, attendees generally come from several different businesses (most often being the owners themselves). This adds an interesting dimension to our sessions.

Each programme has been very well received; attendees themselves have recognised that the benefits they enjoy extend well beyond their own businesses, to helping us build our business community with a sense of shared needs and purpose, and adding capacity to the community's non-profit organisations, as well. This time, as previously, participants specifically noted how much they learned by hearing the different points of view and experiences of fellow business owners, who came with different business models, years of experience, and business type.

SABDA partnered with another development association in a nearby rural community, in an effort to find a more central location for the sessions—our experience has been that people travel from much further north than from even our own community for sessions we have done in the past, so we thought to accommodate them for a change.

Eight participants signed up for this programme—in our rural, uncentred community, a pretty good number. Of those who registered, seven people attended regularly and completed the training. All but one attendee was a business owner; the last was a bank manager whose own work is focussed on the needs of business owners and community groups.

The curriculum for this course was developed based on programming previously offered in our community, building upon it, and also calling on trainers who had proved popular in other courses.

We spent 2 of 5 days learning/reviewing bookkeeping concepts, and practising keeping records using only pens and paper. Many former students of bookkeeping and accounting software felt the need to truly understand double-entry record-keeping, and accrual accounting, in order to get the most out of their investments in software and hired professionals—their bookkeepers and accountants. With the understanding gained in this training, attendees felt better able to use their software to produce more meaningful reports, or to deliver better-organised raw materials to their providers, saving both time and money. Several attendees have scheduled private followup sessions with the trainer to help them improve their processes and software setups, with their new understanding in mind. Very exciting!

The remaining 3 days were devoted to developing and practising a range of business tools, including things like management reports, time management, adding value to existing products, marketing, and business growth planning. Participants were very engaged, and came away feeling reinvigorated in their own ideas.

Once again, full-day sessions were a format of choice for these attendees. Our community is very large, geographically, and lacking in child-care resources. A number of people did express a desire to attend this programme, but could not find the necessary child care (before and after school, or daycare). Fuel costs were a consideration for some, as well.

It remains an issue that seasonal operators are very busy during the season, but are not necessarily resident here in the off-season. Finding the “right time” to present these sessions is a challenge. So, they are very much appreciated by those who can attend, but not everyone who wants to attend can.

It is interesting to note that this group of attendees decided to spend the “celebration” money offered for windup ceremonies to purchase business reference books instead. Learning was a top priority, and won't stop at the door.

| TRAINERS | | | | | |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|--|
| Funding | I. Carroll | D. Nicholson | Other Costs | Admin Fees | |
| 500.00 | | | 500.00 | | |
| 500.00 | 200.00 | 300.00 | | | |
| 300.00 | 120.00 | 180.00 | | | |
| 100.00 | | | 100.00 | | |
| 3,840.00 | 1,536.00 | 2,304.00 | | | |
| 1,100.00 | | | | 1,100.00 | |
| 6,340.00 | 1,856.00 | 2,784.00 | 600.00 | 1,100.00 | |
| | | | <i>Total Costs</i> | 6,340.00 | |