

Miramichi Business E-Newsletter

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SME Diversification Initiative Continues Helping Local Businesses

The SME Diversification Initiative recently launched its third phase toward helping local businesses. The Initiative was initially launched in 2007, supported by all levels of government, RDC, PETL and BNB along with ACOA and Enterprise Miramichi. The first 2 Phases were geared toward Business, Trade and Innovation projects for pre-qualified economic base SMEs who were directly or indirectly feeding into the forestry industry. Due to tremendous success of the first two phases, an amendment was issued allowing for Phase three which will run until March 31, 2012.

The focus of Phase three is Management Development. The SME Diversification Initiative will contribute up to 75% of total project costs to have professional industry consultants work with qualified enterprises toward increasing Managerial skill sets through the following types of Initiatives: Management Assessments, Management Coaching and Mentoring, Financial Management, Recruitment and Retention, Innovation and Certification Readiness. Overall, the objective of this initiative is to ensure the long term viability of our local businesses by helping them to diversify their products and markets and to improve their overall management skills.

Working with Kelly Sherrard, SME Diversification Coordinator, the position of SME Diversification Development Officer has now been filled by myself, David Hamilton. I joined the Enterprise Miramichi team after spending the past 11 years working in the Business Consulting and Project Management fields. The majority of my work was in Sales, Project Coordinating, and Project Managing. I have obtained by Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in Finance from UNB. I am excited to be a participating member increasing the economic development of this great city we call home, through the SME Diversification Initiative.



David Hamilton
Development Officer at
Enterprise Miramichi

For more information, about the SME Diversification Initiative, please contact David at 622-5256 or david.hamilton@ent-miramichi.ca, Kelly at 622-5266 or kelly.sherrard@ent-miramichi.ca, or drop into our location at 120 Newcastle Blvd, Suite 2 (2nd Floor), Miramichi, NB E1V 2L7

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The Holidays Are Coming: Tips to Stay on Track



**Jessica Sargent,
Registered Dietitian,
Mango Program,
Horizon Health Network**

As the holidays approach, you are likely planning Christmas parties and gatherings with co-workers or with family and friends. This can be a difficult time to stay on track with a healthy lifestyle as you will likely be exposed to an unlimited amount of not-so-healthy foods. Not to mention how cold it will be outside, and who wants to exercise outdoors in the winter?

With all these things working against you, it can be very easy to over-indulge and pack on a few pounds over the holidays. It's important to realize that if you convince yourself you're going to gain weight this holiday season, you probably will. Relax. Here are some tips to keep you on track:

- Think about the few holiday treats that you enjoy most. Allow yourself to enjoy a few favorites but aim for healthy choices the rest of the time.
 - Bring a healthy appetizer to the party; a vegetable tray, hummus, shrimp cocktail, home-made salsa and guacamole are all great options!
 - Ensure you have a healthy snack before heading to a holiday celebration. It is much easier to avoid those tasty treats when you are less hungry.
 - Try to exercise regularly- even if it's not as much as usual. Being active for at least 30 minutes each day will help you maintain a healthy weight.
- Be prepared for the "food-pushing host." If someone is pressuring you to eat more, try saying, "everything I ate was wonderful. I wouldn't want to spoil the great meal by overdoing it, but thanks for the offer."
 - Don't make excuses by vowing to diet come January 1st. Thinking that you will soon be starting a restrictive eating plan may encourage you to binge or go crazy with bad foods over the holidays because you anticipate you'll be giving them up.

Aim for balance now. Look forward to 2011 as a fresh start and the beginning of a peaceful time when you can map out healthful meals. You'll be less tempted, and—if you've been mindful—you won't have to dig yourself out of weeks of over indulging.

For more information, contact Mango at (506) 627-7564

Business Loan Program



The Community Business Development Corporation (CBDC) Northumberland is a non-profit, non-governmental organization which focuses on maintaining employment and fostering entrepreneurial growth in Northumberland County. It is one of ten CBDC's in the province, supporting all of rural New Brunswick. Available CBDC programs include the *Business Loan Program*, the *Seed Capital Connexion Loan*, *Women in Business*, the *Self-Employment Benefit Program*.

We provide term loan financing to individuals and businesses, with viable projects, that are not able to access loans via traditional lending sources or government agencies. Loans granted are limited to \$150,000 total to any one individual.

Eligibility:

- Must show reasonable chances of viability and demonstrate that a demand exists for its product (s) and/or service(s);
 - Must have acceptable skills and an acceptable credit history;
 - Must invest, or have invested, a reasonable amount of personal equity in the business;
 - Acceptable security must be provided for the loan;
- There must be an element of job creation or maintenance

For more information on the above programs, please contact Greg McNulty, CBDC Northumberland Inc. General Manager at greg.mculty@cbdc.ca or by phone at 778-2121.

Addressing the Human Resource Challenges of the Food & Beverage Industry

Last April, Enterprise Miramichi met with over 47 representatives of the Food Service Industry to discuss present Human Resource challenges. The Food Service Industry has long been having difficulties attaining and retaining staff, resulting in high demand for skilled individuals. Throughout the discussions, employers mentioned the need for both industry specific and essential skill training of individuals prior to employment. While the majority of employers felt that individuals were approaching their business for employment, these individuals did not have the skills required for the available positions. These initial discussions were critical in assisting Enterprise Miramichi to develop solutions to these issues through a better understanding of the industry challenges.

After reviewing all of the feedback given by the employers, a project was developed and presented to the industry. Through a partnership with Post-Secondary Education Training and Labour’s Workplace Essential Skills (WES) Program and Tourism Industry Association of New Brunswick (TIANB) the *Food and Beverage Service Program* was initiated.

This program builds on the essential skills and the industry specific skills of unemployed individuals to assist them in attaining work within the Food and Beverage Service Industry. At present, 9 individuals are participating in a 12 week program which includes 130 hours of workplace exposure – giving the learner real experience in the industry. A large portion of this program focuses on the workplace essential skills. These are the 9 skills needed for work, learning and everyday life. They provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. Through extensive research, the Government of Canada and other national and international agencies have identified and validated nine Essential Skills. These skills are used in nearly every occupation and throughout daily life in different ways and at different levels of complexity.

The 9 essential skills are;

Reading text	Working with others	Computer Use
Document use	Oral Communication	Thinking Skills
Numeracy	Continuous Learning	Writing

Essential skills can take many forms, ranging from simple tasks, such as filling in credit card receipts, to more complex tasks, such as writing scientific reports.

Brie McMahon, the Regional Coordinator of the Workplace Essential Skills in Miramichi, emphasizes the need for employers to provide opportunities for employees to enhance their essential skill level. “Building on the essential skills of employees ensures they are not only able to complete the tasks required by their job, but also increases their productivity, their potential to innovate and their ability to grow within the company.”

TIANB provided industry specific training for the participants of the *Food and Beverage Services Program*. Participants attended classes focused on Super Host, responsible beverage, workplace etiquette, food safety, food and beverage standards, professionalism, WHMIS, First Aid and CPR. Through this training, participants are more prepared to enter the Food Service Industry. They have acquired the skills, knowledge, and experience, required and are motivated to build a career in Food Service.

“When we started the training, some of the learners were unsure of the benefit this program would have and questioned if they were cut out for the food service industry. Now, half way through the program, they are eager to get into the workforce and have set high goals for themselves. A large number of participants would like to become managers, while others are interested in eventually starting their own restaurant or obtaining Red Seal Certification,” Stated McMahon.

This program was developed in response to the request of the employers. However, in addition to meeting the demands of the employers by developing a pool of skilled individuals available for work, it will also meet the demands of the participants by enhancing their ability to obtain long term employment.

If you are interested in learning more about the Food & Beverage Services Program, or exploring the potential of similar initiatives for other industries, please contact Enterprise Miramichi at 622-7890.



**Kelly Sherrard,
SME Diversification
Initiative Coordinator at
Enterprise Miramichi**

New Start 55 + successful in assisting workers over the age of fifty-five

The Miramichi Region is embracing the opportunity to have individuals over the age of fifty-five years re-enter the workforce for long term sustainable employment. Employers in this region do not refer to our “aging” population as “old”. They tell me this age group is irreplaceable. Experienced, dedicated, and the ability to mentor are the new words replacing “old” in today’s workplace.

New Start 55+ has been successful in assisting workers over the age of fifty-five and find ways to shift the emphasis away from aging toward their ability to make a tangible contribution in the workforce. For many, their age is seen as less relevant when they are perceived as a valuable team member of a business or organization.

The frustration of job search is most difficult for those over the age of fifty because we are living in a changed world that no longer values traditional skills or accumulated years of experience. The “experienced workers” in our communities are finding that there is a shift in hiring from experience to formal education. Today’s workforce is demanded to keep up with the fast-paced knowledge of new technologies causing changes in hiring techniques just to keep up with times.

When one experiences a job transition period, low energy and pessimism can be present. The pain associated with job loss can be overwhelming. There is no book or guidelines to see one through it all. It’s tough, it’s hurtful, and it often leaves one feeling shattered!

The training component for New Start 55+ is giving many an opportunity to overcome the challenges faced with closures, downsizing and job loss. By embracing continuous education, the “employable” are better understanding the



Kim Drisdelle, Coordinator of the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers at Enterprise Miramichi

seriousness of changing their internal attitude on “self” and aging. After a short training period,

they soon realize that “internal attitude” is as significant as attitudes towards community, employers, government and society! A chance to hone their skills and to re-evaluate their transferable skills is contributing to the success of employers regaining employees who offer irreplaceable mentorship and dedication on the job.

Over and over again, the employers of our communities

have declared their trust in the abilities of our “experienced” worker. It is they who are putting meaning back into the lives of many who have experienced job loss and change! Any employer wishing to explore the possibilities New Start 55+ has to offer, please do not hesitate to contact me at 622-5259. I have a pool of resourceful individuals who may just be the answer to your employment needs and demands. Funding will be available on a 70-30 per cent cost-shared basis.

As indicated by the Honorable Diane Finley, Minister of Human Resources and Skills Development (2009) “Our government has a deep concern for older workers who are left jobless because of industry downturns. At a time when Canada is facing labor shortages, the experience of older workers should not and cannot be overlooked. With some active support and practical help, these workers will continue to make an important contribution to their communities, and that is why we are implementing the Targeted Initiative for Older Workers, (“New Start 55+”).”

Enterprise Miramichi is one of 15 regional Enterprise agencies throughout the province.

Our role is to develop and implement the regional economic development plan and to work directly with local businesses to stimulate growth and prosperity in the region.

Our goal is sustainable community economic development.

We focus on innovation, productivity and export to achieve global competitiveness.

The strategy to achieve our goal consists of:

- Workforce development
- Business development and expansion
- Investment and relocation strategies
- Strategic community partnership

For more information on Enterprise Miramichi’s programs and activities, please contact us at:

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