

# Project Team Guide

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## Getting Started

This guide is intended for the use of cluster and stand-alone project teams. The guide describes how to start and run a Workplace Education program in your organization/business. It is to be used to help your project team get organized, hire an instructor, and deliver a successful program.

The guide has been prepared by Nova Scotia's Department of Labour, Skills and Immigration (LSI). It is available online at <https://novascotia.ca/lae/workplace-education/>.

## What is Workplace Education?

The Workplace Education Initiative (WEI) provides business skills training for working Nova Scotians. This training enhances individuals' workplace skills and supports businesses and organizations to be more successful, open to change and ready for growth.

This program is offered by LSI in partnership with business, industry, and community organizations. It is primarily funded by the Government of Canada through the Canada–Nova Scotia Workforce Development Agreement (WDA).

The main roles involved in the design, delivery and administration of WEI programming include the Regional Workplace Education and Training Coordinators and the Host Organization and/or Business and WEI Project Team.

The host organization must first determine the business community's training needs. Refer to Appendix A for a Pre-Assessment Survey that can be used to inform this. Once the needs have been identified, host organizations will work with a WEI Coordinator to:

1. Establish a WEI Project Team. This may involve recruiting activities such as information sessions. The WEI Project Team should be representative of the whole organization, business community and/or the business workforce. For example, there needs to be a selection of stakeholders and partners in business cluster training and frontline staff, management, and potentially labour in stand-alone training.
2. Coordinate an Organizational Needs Assessment (ONA) (if applicable). This includes applying for funding, assisting in the facilitation of the ONA, and reviewing the ONA report and validating the recommendations.
3. Create a WEI training plan (with support from the WEI Coordinator). This includes scheduling and prioritization of WEI training, creating a plan to evaluate and monitor business and learning outcomes (based on the ONA), and working with the WEI Coordinator on the budget for training.
4. Apply for WEI training funds from LAE through the Labour Market Programs Support System (LaMPSS).
5. Arrange for training space and promote WEI training in the business or community.
6. Hire a WEI Instructor to design and deliver WEI training.
7. Collect participant data as per Government of Canada reporting requirements and register participants.
8. Evaluate and monitor WEI training based on participant evaluations and ongoing communication with the WEI Instructor and Coordinator.

9. Assist in the coordination and facilitation of closing celebrations.
10. Assess whether WEI training met the learning and business outcomes as identified in the ONA and the learning objectives of the training plan.
11. Make recommendations for further workplace training.

WEI Project Teams may look quite different based on whether the WEI training is being hosted by a community organization as a business cluster or an individual business for a stand-alone program:

- Business Cluster WEI Project Teams are generally made up of the WEI Instructor, WEI Coordinator, and representative(s) from the host organization and government and business community stakeholders (e.g., Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency [ACOA], Community Business Development Corporations [CBDCs], Chambers of Commerce, and Nova Scotia Business Inc. [NSBI]).
- Stand-alone WEI Project Teams are made up of the WEI Instructor, WEI Coordinator, and representatives from all levels of the organization (management, frontline, HR, labour etc.). Having participant representation on the WEI Project Team is very important in stand-alone programs.

### Workplace Education Initiative Service Delivery Model

The training offers participants 40 hours of training over approximately 10 weeks, customized to individual and organizational needs. WEI delivers programs in individual companies and sector councils, and in clusters of small businesses hosted by community organizations. Classes are kept relatively small with 8 to 12 participants. This allows for individual attention and support throughout the training, positioning participants for success.

WEI provides training for working Nova Scotians and entrepreneurs in the following workplaces:

- NS businesses (for profit and not for profit)
- business/sector/industry associations
- private-sector unions
- social enterprises

There are two types of WEI programs:

1. Stand-alone programs (individual companies) are meant to address identified business skills training needs in a single business or organization.

If a business is interested in hosting a WEI training program, they contact their regional WEI Coordinator, who supports them to apply for an Organizational Needs Assessment (ONA). The ONA documents the training needs of the organization after assessing the organization's challenges related to workforce planning, business processes, and/or plans for growth and expansion. ONAs involve activities such as individual interviews, focus groups, surveys, and workplace tours.

The WEI Coordinator then works with the Project Team to build a training plan and apply for LSI funding (made up of employees, management, union representatives, etc.). The team recruits participants, hires an instructor, secures space for training and monitors the WEI training.

2. Cluster programs address the needs of a collection of businesses that have common business skill challenges (communication, digital literacy, etc.). WEI cluster programs are hosted by community-based organizations where industry and businesspeople tend to gather – for example, Industry Sector Councils, Chambers of Commerce, or Community Business Development Corporations (CBDCs). The organizations are given a stipend for hosting WEI training, and their responsibilities include:
  - identifying the need for WEI training
  - applying for LSI funding with support from their regional WEI Coordinator
  - advertising and administering the training (hiring the instructor, securing training space, and monitoring the program, etc.)
  - Service Registration

Cluster programs are developed to meet regional business needs. Project Teams for business clusters tend to have regional representation of business and industry as well as program participants to ensure that the program matches the actual training needs in the region.

### Skills for Success

Essential business skills are on a continuum of skills, aptitudes and competencies needed in order to be successful in the workforce. WEI Frameworks are aligned with Skills for Success that have been identified by the Government of Canada. These skills are used in every job to varying degrees and at different levels of complexity. These business skills provide the foundation for learning all other skills and enable people to evolve with their jobs and adapt to workplace change. The business skills for success include:

- Reading
- Creativity and Innovation
- Writing
- Numeracy
- Communication
- Problem Solving
- Digital Skills
- Collaboration
- Adaptability

### Reading

Reading is your ability to find, understand, and use information presented through words, symbols, and images.

The changing labour market and advances in technology require reading skills for learning and work. Strong reading skills allow you to do your job and to work safely, and efficiently. You use reading skills to learn other skills, for example, by reading online learning resources. Reading is also important in day-to-day activities, for example, to understand road signs or to follow the instructions on a medicine bottle.

### Creativity and Innovation

Creativity and innovation is your ability to imagine, develop, express, encourage, and apply ideas in ways that are novel, unexpected, or challenge existing methods and norms.

Creativity and innovation skills help you come up with new, unique, or “outside the box” ideas or to approach something completely differently than in the past. A curious mindset that finds inspiration from a broad range of experiences and perspectives helps develop creativity and innovation skills. Employers are increasingly seeking people who can apply creativity and innovation skills to their work in our increasingly diverse settings, and to come up with new solutions or approaches to tackling challenges. With strong creativity and innovation skills, you can also support and inspire others to develop their own creativity and innovation.

### Writing

Writing is your ability to share information using written words, symbols, and images.

The changing labour market and advances in technology require writing skills that are suitable for different situations and digital platforms. At work, we use writing skills to write memos, emails, or reports. Writing skills are also needed in daily life to fill out a credit card or job application. Knowing what to write, how much to write, and in which style to write is important. Writing skills ensure your writing is suitable for your purpose, the intended reader, and the context

### Numeracy

Numeracy is your ability to find, understand, use, and report mathematical information presented through words, numbers, symbols, and graphics.

The modern economy requires numeracy skills that go beyond basic arithmetic, and understanding numbers remains critical to functioning in today’s society. Many jobs require the ability to work with numbers and math. For example, we use numeracy skills to measure materials or count inventory at work. Numeracy skills are also needed in a wide variety of daily contexts. For example, you use numeracy skills to manage your finances or to make sense of statistics in the news.

### Communication

Communication is your ability to receive, understand, consider, and share information and ideas through speaking, listening, and interacting with others.

Strong communication skills help you share information in a way that others can clearly understand. You also need strong communication skills to listen to, pay attention to, and understand others. In all jobs, communication skills are important for developing good working relationships with co-workers and clients, including those from different backgrounds and cultures. You also need these skills to work effectively in a team, and to gather and share information while problem solving.

### Problem Solving

Problem solving is your ability to identify, analyze, propose solutions, and make decisions. Problem solving helps you to address issues, monitor success, and learn from the experience.

Every day you use information to make decisions, solve problems, and take actions. This can include thinking about different ways to complete a task and choosing the best solution, or deciding what to do first when several activities are competing for your attention. The ability to think, make decisions, and solve problems effectively improves the way you carry out activities, and meet goals and deadlines at work or in other daily life situations. Strong problem-solving skills will help you gather the right information, identify, and solve problems, and make better decisions. As you learn from these

experiences, you will strengthen your problem-solving skills and more quickly and effectively adapt to change.

### Digital Skills

Digital is your ability to use digital technology and tools to find, manage, apply, create and share information and content.

Digital technology has changed the way you find and share information, solve problems, and communicate with others. Most jobs now use digital skills, and you need them when you apply other skills such as reading, writing or numeracy. Digital skills help you keep up with changing demands in the modern workplace. In daily life, you need digital skills to connect safely socially and to make use of online resources and services.

### Collaboration

Collaboration is your ability to contribute and support others to achieve a common goal.

Today people are more connected within communities, across the country, and around the world. Modern workplaces are more diverse, and many jobs require you to work with others from different backgrounds and cultures to complete tasks and solve problems. It is important to be able to work respectfully with people who have different professions, experiences, cultures, and backgrounds. Collaboration skills help you perform better in a team by understanding how to support and value others, manage difficult interactions, and contribute to the team's work. Strong collaboration skills help you build and maintain positive relationships with others at work, in school, and in other parts of your life.

### Adaptability

Adaptability is your ability to achieve or adjust goals and behaviours when expected or unexpected change occurs. Adaptability is shown by planning, staying focused, persisting, and overcoming setbacks.

Major changes in society are affecting how you work, live, and learn and requiring you to constantly adapt to change. Strong adaptability skills will help you deal effectively with change and to learn new skills and behaviours when needed, stay focused on your responsibilities and goals, and not give up when situations are difficult. They will help you stay positive and manage the stress that can come from change in the workplace, community, and your life at home.

## Six steps to a successful program

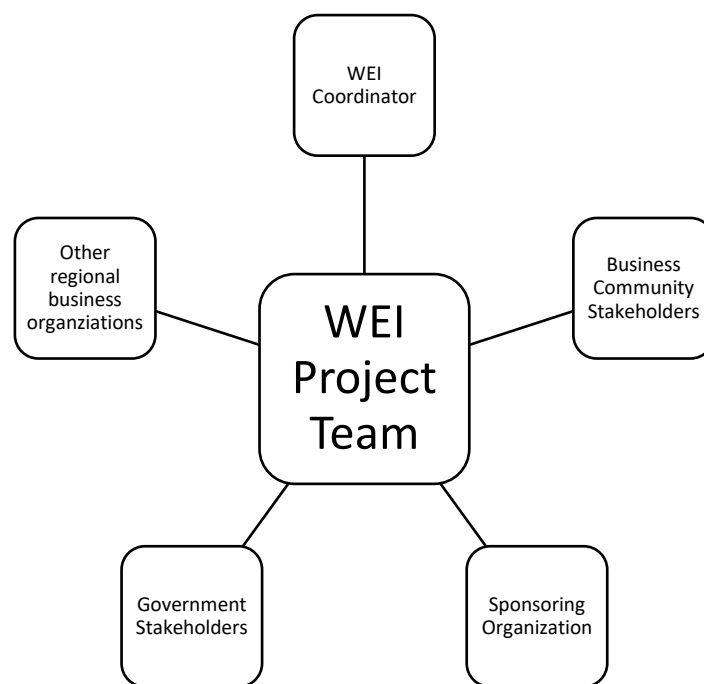
1. Set up a project team to oversee the Workplace Education program.
2. Do an organizational needs assessment (ONA) to learn more about the issues and challenges in your workplace/business. Your Workplace Education and Training Coordinator will lead the process (if applicable).
3. Set goals and create a plan to achieve them.
4. Hire an instructor to deliver the program. The instructor will tailor the program to meet the specific needs of the workplace, businesses and employees.
5. Evaluate the program.
6. Celebrate success.

## Step 1: Set up a Project Team

The Project Team is a coalition of interest groups. It includes management representatives, business owners, sponsoring organization, worker representatives, and union representatives, where applicable.

Diversity and commitment are two of your Team's greatest assets. A diverse team can:

- Increase support and commitment to change.
- Help everyone to see the big picture.
- Encourage ownership of the Workplace Education program.
- Advocate for organizational and individual goals.
- Share skills and expertise.
- Improve lines of communication within the workplace/business.



Workplace Education Initiative Project Team

### Role of Regional WEI Coordinators

WEI Coordinators administer WEI training primarily in their regions. They coordinate training budgets, manage resources, facilitate planning activities for the overall WEI program (for example, developing new programs and curricula), and ensure the smooth running of the design and delivery of WEI programs. To do this effectively, they work directly with the host organizations and WEI Project Teams to:

1. Assist in the promotion of WEI Training within the community or business (e.g., through information sessions and networking)
2. Determine if WEI programming is a fit for their organization and potentially identify other resources such as Workplace Innovation and Productivity Skills Incentive (WIPSI) that might be more appropriate

3. Assist with the applications for Organizational Needs Assessments (ONA) and funding for WEI training
4. Establish and coordinate (as needed) the WEI Project Team
5. Ensure the host organizations meets the WEI training agreement requirements (e.g., reporting to LSI) and track their compliance with the agreement
6. Ensure that the WEI training has fidelity to the model by providing and funding resources for WEI Project Teams and instructors (e.g., policies, WEI Instructor manual, WEI curricula and frameworks), giving educational guidance and monitoring training
7. Evaluate and monitor WEI training, ensuring the training is of high quality by visiting classrooms (if applicable) and communicating regularly with WEI Instructors and Project Teams
8. Interview, recruit and support WEI Instructors in their design and delivery of WEI programming
9. Work with partners to guarantee that the needed resources are in place to successfully deliver WEI training
10. Assist in the coordination and facilitation of closing celebrations
11. Assess whether the WEI training met the learning and business outcomes as identified in the ONA and the learning objectives of the training plan and make recommendations for further workplace training

## Role of the Project Team

The Project Team will:

- Gauge interest for the Workplace Education program
- Arrange information sharing sessions involving interested groups and the Workplace Education Coordinator
- Support the ONA process by:
  - informing participants about the process
  - setting up interviews and focus groups
  - identifying barriers to involvement
  - reviewing the needs assessment report
- Set goals and priorities, based on the results of the ONA
- Apply for funding
- Hire and support the instructor
- Promote the Workplace Education program and recruit participants
- Register course participants in LaMPSS
- Meet regularly to ensure the following:
  - The program is on schedule and on track to achieve the goals
  - The program complies with company policies and procedures
  - Monitor course progress and participant attendance
  - Complete financial and activity reports
  - Organize a closing celebration to celebrate the success of participants who complete the program



## Step 2: Assess the Needs

The Workplace Education and Training Coordinator, or a consultant hired by the coordinator, leads the ONA. The ONA lays the essential groundwork for a successful Workplace Education program. The result is a report that documents the business skill needs and goals of management, business owners, and employees, along with recommendations about how to meet those needs.

### Methods

Typically, the coordinator or consultant gathers information from 15 to 20 per cent of the employees, including businesses, management and employees. The information may be gathered in some or all of the following ways:

- face-to-face interviews
- meetings
- focus groups
- surveys
- workplace tours

It is important to assure participants about the following:

- Participation is voluntary
- All information is strictly confidential. The assessment report will not identify the participants of the interviews, focus groups, or surveys
- Interviews and focus groups will be conducted by the Workplace Education and Training Coordinator or consultant. Each session will take approximately 45 to 60 minutes. The sessions will be informal and require only verbal responses from participants.

### Scope

Topics might include:

- training practices in the workplace
- attitudes about training and learning
- business skills required for business owners and employees
- strengths and weaknesses of communication in the workplace
- barriers to participation in workplace education/training
- recommendations about the types of programs that would benefit business owners and employees and about preferred locations and scheduling

## Step 3: Set Goals

Each member of the Project Team will have ideas about what the Workplace Education program should achieve. Writing goals can bring all the different opinions together. Goals will focus the team's attention on common, agreed-upon ways to meet the needs identified in the organizational needs assessment and ensure compliance with the WEI model, adult education principles, direction from the WEI Project Team, WEI Coordinator and the policies and guidelines.

For example, based on the ONA, the Project Team might decide on the following goals and objectives:

Goal 1: Develop a learning culture within the businesses

Objectives:

- Offer WEI programs to all employees
- Customize the training to the business or community
- Ensure that training is flexible so that all employees can attend
- Promote the program(s)

Goal 2: Evaluate the effectiveness of WEI programs

Objectives:

- Instructors ensure ongoing participant evaluation reporting to the WEI Project Team and WEI Coordinator on the progress of participants and identifying any challenges or safety issues as relevant, and adapting the WEI training as needed and appropriate
- Coordinators evaluate and monitor WEI training, ensuring the training is of high quality by visiting classrooms (if applicable) and communicating regularly with WEI Instructors and Project Teams
- Sponsoring organizations evaluate and monitor WEI training based on participant evaluations and ongoing communication with the WEI Instructor and Coordinator
- Instructors complete a summary report to the WEI Project Team and WEI Coordinator on the overall experience of the WEI training, the progress of the group, how the business and learning outcomes identified for the training were met, and a plan for additional training (if relevant and appropriate)
- Participants complete program survey at the end of the program. Note: for instructors who do ongoing participant evaluations, participant confidentiality will be maintained.

## Step 4: Hire the Instructor and Deliver the Program

The project team creates a selection committee to handle the hiring process, if there is a need for an interview process. We recommend that your selection committee be made up of at least four members. For example, the selection committee might include:

- Workplace Education and Training Coordinator
- Sponsoring organization
- Business community stakeholder
- Government stakeholder
- Other business organization representation

Project team members may recommend an instructor who could be included in the competition. The Workplace Education coordinator can help the team by providing the resumes of qualified subject matter experts who have participated in WEI Foundational Training and have experience teaching in a workplace context.

The selection committee will interview potential instructors and provide hiring recommendations. The final hiring decision belongs to the Project Team.

## Workplace Education Instructor Job Description

The Workplace Education Initiative (WEI) Workplace Education Instructor will work in partnership with project teams and the WEI Workplace Education Coordinator.

### Job Overview

Workplace Education Instructors provide customized business skills programming to businesses and organizations in Nova Scotia. The purpose of WEI programs is to strengthen the essential skills of working Nova Scotians to enable them to be stronger and more effective in their work.

### Responsibilities and Duties

- Meet with all potential program participants to conduct Individual Needs Assessments
- Participate on WEI Project Teams
- Coordinate with WEI Project Teams and WEI Coordinators to ensure that needed resources are in place for the WEI training
- Develop a 40--hour instructional program using WEI curricula (if relevant), WEI Course Frameworks and information gathered from Organizational and Individual Needs Assessments, workplace tours, and meetings with Project Teams
- Ensure that the training is customized to the specific needs of participants and their organizations and that examples, materials and training exercises match workplace activities to promote the transfer of learning to the workplace
- Provide training plans to WEI Project Teams and WEI Coordinators prior to the beginning of training
- Instruct WEI training, ensuring ongoing participant evaluation, reporting to the WEI Project Team and WEI Coordinator on the progress of participants and feedback from evaluations, identifying any challenges and/or safety issues as relevant, and adapting the WEI training as needed and appropriate
- Collect and report on participant data as requested and required by WEI Project Teams (e.g., evaluation forms, attendance reports)
- Respond positively to feedback from participants, WEI Project Teams and WEI Coordinators and implement into the classroom as relevant and appropriate
- Ensure compliance with the WEI service delivery model, adult education principles, specific direction from WEI Project Teams and Coordinators, and WEI policies and guidelines
- Apply for WEI training completion certificates
- Attend and assist in the facilitation and coordination of closing ceremonies and the collection of participant evaluation forms
- Write and present summary reports to WEI Project Teams and WEI Coordinators on the overall experience of the WEI training, the progress of the group, how the business and learning outcomes identified for the training have been met, and recommendations for further training (if relevant and appropriate)

### Qualifications

WEI Instructors are expected to have the following general qualifications:

- working knowledge and experience with delivering adult education training and Skills for Success
- demonstrated excellence in facilitation skills
- basic computer skills
- ability to work independently and with diverse stakeholders and partners
- a commitment to service leadership (i.e., putting the participant first), adult education principles, the WEI service delivery model, and continuous learning in instruction and their field of expertise
- certification in WEI Foundations and Literacy in the WEI Classroom, or a commitment to complete this training within one year of instructing WEI training

Workplace Education programs are typically delivered over a ten-week period. This work may require travel.

### Workplace Education Instructor Interview Questions

1. Explain /describe the Workplace Education model in terms of overall identification of need, purpose of the program and partnership.
2. Briefly outline the principles of adult education as they would relate to this position.
3. The program you are being interviewed for is based in Essential Skills. How would you use that knowledge to prepare for the instruction of this program?
4. How would you use the participant Individual Needs Assessments to plan and deliver this program?
5. Describe your subject matter expertise as it applies to this program.
6. Using specific examples detail how you would customize the program to the participants and their workplaces.
7. Using specific examples describe three instructional methods that you would use in the delivery of this program.
8. How would you ensure that you have accommodated all learning styles in the instruction of this program?
9. How will you know that transfer of learning to the workplace is taking place?
10. Please provide an outline for a 40-hour program that build skills incrementally from week one to week ten.
11. Please provide a lesson plan for a four-hour class complete with learning objectives, learning activities and any handouts that would accompany the lesson.
12. This program will be delivered from .....to ..... Are you available for this time period?

### Orientation and support for the instructor

Once the instructor is hired, it is important to provide the person with a strong orientation to the workplace.

The Project Team will ensure that the instructor

- has a copy of the ONA report
- is aware of the program goals
- signs the contract before starting the program (refer to Instructor Policy manual)
- develops an understanding of the workplace by

- touring the workplace, where applicable
- attending project team meetings
- familiarizing themselves with the Instructor Guide and Policy Manual

The more an instructor is able to customize class sessions to the real learning needs of the individual and the work site, the more likely it is that learners will be able to learn and apply their enhanced skills.

### Individual needs assessments (INAs) for the instructor

The instructor conducts an individual needs assessment (INA) with each worker to talk about learning goals and needs. The assessment generally takes one half hour. It is a relaxed and informal process.

The assessment may include sample learning activities so that the instructor can measure the skill level of each learner.

### Instructor's guide

The Workplace Education and Training Coordinator will provide the instructor and Project Team with the LSI Instructor's Guide.

## Step 5: Evaluate the Program

The Project Team works with the instructor to prepare an evaluation plan. The plan includes

- continual monitoring to ensure the program is on schedule and to respond to concerns as they arise
- regular meetings to review progress
- a follow-up evaluation with all groups involved in the program
- a written summary and supporting documentation. The summary describes the results of the program, and gives both short-term and long-term recommendations on how to continue to provide essential skills training in the workplace

Evaluation involves informal methods, such as discussions and check-ins with participants, and formal methods, such as forms and structured questions.

The Instructor's Guide includes/provides guidance on consideration when creating an evaluation plan.

The evaluation results offer concrete evidence of what worked and what didn't work. This evidence helps partners to grow in confidence. It provides a solid foundation upon which to build plans for the future.

## Step 6: Celebrate Success

The participants in a WEI program work hard to learn new skills. They deserve recognition for what they contributed to the program, what they learned, and how they are using their skills in their workplace. By taking the time to celebrate success, you reinforce the message that your organization values learning and teamwork.

LSI will provide a digital certificate for each participant who completes 80% of the program hours. If the program is in person, the Project Team might want to host an awards ceremony to present these

certificates, along with other tokens of appreciation. This is an opportunity to share stories, enjoy some food, and give and receive thanks.

Here are some other ways you might celebrate the success of your program:

- Print an article in the company/ organization newsletter
- Post a “congratulations” sign in the lunchroom or other place where staff meet
- Share news of your program with other organizations in your community and your business sector

## Appendix A – Pre-Assessment Survey: Is Workplace Education for you?

This pre-assessment is designed to help organizations and businesses identify needs and ability to fully engage in workplace training initiatives in the foreseeable future.

1. Have you invested in training in the past three years?  
 Yes       No
  
2. Which of the following groups have received this training (choose all that apply)  
 Business Owner  
 Management  
 Staff  
 Other (please specify)
  
3. Which of the following groups could benefit from training in the areas of oral and written communication skills? (choose all that apply)  
 Business Owner  
 Management  
 Staff  
 None of the above
  
4. Given your response in the previous question, which group(s) would you prioritize for training in the areas of oral and written communication skills within the next year? (choose all that apply)  
 Business Owner  
 Management  
 Staff  
 None of the above
  
5. Which of the following groups could benefit from training in the areas of creativity, innovation and problem solving? (choose all that apply)  
 Business Owner  
 Management  
 Staff  
 None of the above
  
6. Given your response in the previous question, which group(s) would you prioritize for training in the areas of creativity, innovation and problem solving skills within the next year? (choose all that apply)  
 Business Owner  
 Management  
 Staff  
 None of the above

7. Which of the following groups could benefit from training in the area of digital technology?  
(choose all that apply)
- Business Owner
  - Management
  - Staff
  - None of the above
8. Given your response in the previous question, which group(s) would you prioritize for training in the area of digital technology skills within the next year? (choose all that apply)
- Business Owner
  - Management
  - Staff
  - None of the above
9. Which of the following groups could benefit from training in the areas of adaptability and collaboration? (choose all that apply)
- Business Owner
  - Management
  - Staff
  - None of the above
10. Given your response in the previous question, which group(s) would you prioritize for training in the areas of adaptability and collaboration skills within the next year? (choose all that apply)
- Business Owner
  - Management
  - Staff
  - None of the above
11. Which of the following groups could benefit from training in the areas of finance, budgeting, and/or working with numbers? (choose all that apply)
- Business Owner
  - Management
  - Staff
  - None of the above
12. Given your response in the previous question, which group(s) would you prioritize for training in the areas of finance, budgeting, and/or working with numbers within the next year? (choose all that apply)
- Business Owner
  - Management
  - Staff
  - None of the above



13. Which of the following groups could benefit from training in the area of specialized technical skills such as software, equipment operation, process improvement, etc.? (choose all that apply)

- Business Owner
- Management
- Staff
- None of the above

14. Given your response in the previous question, which group(s) would you prioritize for training in the area of specialized technical skills within the next year? (choose all that apply)

- Business Owner
- Management
- Staff
- None of the above