

WOMEN ON TRACK

mentoring project

Business Mentoring for Women Entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION for MENTEES





Prince Edward Island Business Women's Association
Charlottetown PE
www.peibwa.org

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INTRODUCTION for MENTEES

Prince Edward Island Business Women's Association (PEIBWA) Business Mentoring for Women Entrepreneurs

PEIBWA is conducting a project to identify an effective business mentoring model that meets the needs and wants of Island business women.

Throughout 2016 we are conducting a small scale business mentoring program across PEI to see what works best. This is what is known as a feasibility study or 'pilot.' By conducting a pilot, we can explore new approaches for mentoring women entrepreneurs and learn what is viable in PEI.

PEIBWA aims to develop a business mentoring model that will support women entrepreneurs to be:

- T**RANSFORMED Confident, with a strong sense of *"Yes, I can!"*
- R**ENEWED Able to start again in the face of adversity or failure
- A**CTIVATED Motivated to lead and challenge the status quo
- C**ONNECTED Networked with peers and professionals
- K**NOWLEDGEABLE Able to acquire new business knowledge and skills

As a result, more women in rural and urban PEI will be successful in their businesses and supported by a network of community mentoring partners.

If we are unable to accommodate you at this time with an appropriate match, keep in touch. We may be able to find a good match for you during the next round.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a relationship between mentors, individuals with experience, and mentees, individuals who are seeking help with their business. Mentoring is both developmental and transformative.

Through mentoring, a mentee can grow personally and professionally. Mentors experience the benefits of giving back to their community and helping another person grow and succeed.

The model for PEIBWA's business mentoring program for women is designed to help you as a mentee succeed as an entrepreneur. You will be matched with an experienced business mentor who will listen to you, advise you, and challenge you. You will also have the support of other mentees such as yourself—what is known as peer mentoring—to expand your business network.

The program will support you, but remember that the real key to success is your commitment to the mentoring relationship, your focus on attaining your goals, and the effort you put into it. In a productive mentoring relationship, the mentee is in the driver's seat.

The 2016 Pilot Program

The pilot program will run throughout 2016. We will begin in different locations at different times of the year:

- Charlottetown area: starts January 2016 (winter cohort)
- Summerside area: starts April 2016 (spring cohort)
- Montague area (East Kings): starts July 2016 (summer cohort)
- Alberton area (West Prince): starts October 2016 (fall cohort)

Women entrepreneurs from across the Island will participate as mentees in this pilot, based on the eligibility criteria and the availability of a good match with a mentor. The eligibility criteria ensure that the program is the best fit for you at this time.

Participation in this program is *free of charge*, but please note that we require a six-month commitment to the program.

Steps in the process

- ✿ **First, review the eligibility criteria.** At this time, we also encourage you to think carefully about what you want and need to put into and get out of a mentoring relationship.
- ✿ **Second, check the mentoring cohort schedule.** We will start mentoring cohorts in different locations at different times of the year. If you are in a seasonal sector (such as tourism, fishing, or agriculture) that is very busy in the late spring, summer and early fall, the winter or fall cohorts may be your best choice.
- ✿ **Third, complete the application form.** If you meet the criteria, submit the form to PEIBWA by the deadline for each cohort: please refer to the table on the last page of this booklet. The application form is available on the PEIBWA website. Just fill it in and press 'SUBMIT.'

The project manager will contact you by telephone or email for a brief follow-up about the information you provide in the application form. This information will help us get to know you and find a mentor who is a good fit with your interests, background, and goals. If we have a match for you in the appropriate cohort, we will notify you about two weeks prior to the start date.

During the first week of your cohort's program, we will hold an orientation session. During this session, we will review what a productive mentoring relationship looks like, program policies, what you can realistically hope to achieve, and provide you with guidelines.

- ✿ **Fourth, work with your mentor and participate in events.** At the start, you will complete a confidential online questionnaire about your business-related knowledge and skills: your strengths, weaknesses, and gaps. This information will help you and your mentor identify what you should work on together.

From time-to-time we will hold events in your area to celebrate our mentoring community, provide you with information about the mentoring program, get your input, and ask you about your progress.

- ✿ **Finally, celebrate your successful completion of the program.** At the conclusion of your official part in the program, we will conduct exit interviews and ask you to repeat the online survey to see how far you've come. We will present you with a certificate of completion at a wrap-up event to celebrate!

Mentoring Pilot Program Schedule by Cohort

MENTORING COHORT LOCATION	START DATE (2016)	ORIENTATION SESSION (2 hours)	COMPLETION DATE (2016)	APPLICATION DEADLINE
Charlottetown area (Winter cohort)	January 4	Week of January 4 to 8	June 30	December 1, 2015
Summerside area (Spring cohort)	April 4	Week of April 4 to 8	September 30	March 1, 2016
Montague area (Summer cohort)	July 4	Week of July 4 to 8	December 31	June 1, 2016
Alberton area (Fall cohort)	October 3	Week of October 3 to 7	March 31, 2017	September 1, 2016
Seasonal sectors* (Winter cohort)	January 4	Week of January 4 to 8	June 30	December 1, 2015
Seasonal sectors* (Fall cohort)	October 3	Week of October 3 to 7	March 31, 2017	September 1, 2016

*Seasonal sectors such as tourism, fishing, and agriculture are very busy during the late spring, summer, and early fall months. Accordingly, we will organize mentoring cohorts for these sectors to begin during the 'off' seasons (winter or fall).



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