

Community Futures

Central Island

NEWSLETTER

Something new...

On September 2nd this year, a new coworking space opened in Parksville. Spark House Coworking, located at #110 - 198 East Island Hwy in the heart of Parksville, provides a flexible, fully equipped workspace to freelancers, remote professionals, small businesses and entrepreneurs in the Oceanside region.



Spark House is more than just a place to work - it's a community-driven hub designed to fuel productivity and connection. With thoughtfully designed spaces that balance comfort and professionalism, Spark House offers a range of flexible membership options to suit every working style and schedule.

Tours are available to book online, and prospective members are invited to visit their website at sparkhouse.ca



How is Your Business Using AI?



The Ministry of Jobs, Economic Development and Innovation wants to hear from you about your real-world experiences with artificial intelligence (AI), especially as it relates to your business or industry.

By sharing your story, the B.C. Government hopes to better understand your thoughts on what worked, what didn't, and what could help.

Your insights will support the development of future AI initiatives and direction so future government decisions will reflect the needs and realities of B.C. businesses. This experience-based engagement includes 16 questions and can take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete.

While you are able to return to previous questions, you are encouraged to complete the questionnaire in one session as the platform does not support saving and returning later.

To find out more and to take the survey, click [here](#)

Emergency Preparedness

In an ever-changing world where natural disasters can strike with little warning, the unpredictability of these events poses significant challenges for local businesses striving for stability and growth.

The reality is that inadequate insurance coverage can lead to devastating consequences. The Provincial Ministry of Emergency Management has produced a blog post outlining the importance of having appropriate coverage in place. Read the article [here](#).



Have Your Say: Help Improve the Business Climate in B.C.

The Government of British Columbia is seeking feedback from business owners and stakeholders to better understand and improve the ease of doing business in our province.

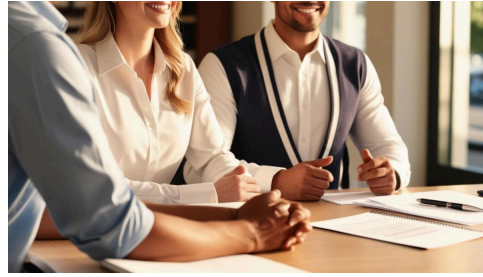
Take the short EaseBiz BC survey today: [Click here](#).

Your input will help shape future programs, policies, and services that support a stronger, more responsive business environment across all communities—including rural and remote regions.

Survey closes August 30, 2025. Don't miss this opportunity to be heard!

#CommunityFutures #BCBiz #HaveYourSay #EconomicDevelopment
#PolicyMatters

Four ways to attract younger Talent



In a world dominated by social media, it can be increasingly challenging to know how to attract younger workers to your business - and then, retain them.

In 2024 Forbes magazine published an [article](#) on how to attract young talent. In addition to discussing creative ways to attract younger workers, the article also includes links to other content that provides insight into the issues that matter to Gen Z.

Happy reading!



My Adventures in AI

When I started my work life 40+ years ago, computers were just entering the workplace. Mainframe computers were huge and filled entire rooms. Word processing was done on a separate machine, and fax machines were the latest in instant communication.

Over the years, this "wind of change" became a gale force storm, which then became a full-on cyclonic vortex, blowing away old technology as new processes took over. While I felt I was on the cutting edge of technology at the time, I am now left gasping for breath in the whirlwind of new tech.

I have tried to keep up (somewhat) over the years and now find myself trying to understand Artificial Intelligence - while not being frightened to death by its potential.

I started slowly; creating AI generated images for this newsletter. Although I have been generally successful, I have had my struggles. There was the time I tried to get ChatGPT to create an image of a world map with each country a different, bright colour. What ChatGPT gave me was an image that included Greenland as part of the U.S., while neglecting Alaska and Hawaii. No matter how I tried, I could not dissuade ChatGPT from its position. In the end, I gave up.

My most recent endeavour was to ask ChaptGPT to create a graphic for me using Maslov's Heirarchy of Needs; creating an image of the Heirarchy of Needs for small business owners. This is what it produced.

HIERARCHY OF NEEDS FOR SMALL BUSINESSES



1. Survival (Physiological Needs)

Core Focus: Basic operational viability

- Cash flow to cover expenses
- Access to capital or startup funding
- A viable product or service
- A few paying customers
- Basic infrastructure (internet, workspace, equipment)

2. Security & Stability (Safety Needs)

Core Focus: Stability and risk mitigation

- Consistent revenue streams
- Legal and regulatory compliance
- Business continuity planning
- Insurance and risk management
- Reliable suppliers and contracts
- Data protection & cybersecurity basics

3. Belonging & Relationships (Social Needs)

Core Focus: Connections and community

- Customer loyalty and brand recognition

- Strong team culture and employee engagement
- Strategic partnerships and networks
- Involvement in industry or local business communities
- Good relationships with advisors/mentors

4. Esteem & Growth (Esteem Needs)

Core Focus: Growth, credibility, and recognition

- Expanding market share
- Staff development and leadership building
- Innovation and process improvement
- Reputation management and brand authority
- Competitive differentiation
- External validation (awards, press, testimonials)

5. Self-Actualization (Purpose & Vision Fulfillment)

Core Focus: Purpose-driven impact and long-term legacy

- Clear mission and values alignment
- Social or environmental impact
- Visionary leadership and succession planning
- Industry leadership or influence
- Sustainable scalability
- Empowering others (mentoring, community investment)

The process was fun, and I was encouraged with the outcome. What I learned through this exercise was ... to achieve the best results, the prompts you enter into ChatGPT are important. Being specific in your request will make the difference between success and a mountain of frustration. I will discuss this topic in more detail in upcoming newsletters.

Wellness Reminders

In the exhilarating journey of entrepreneurship, it's all too easy to overlook the essential practice of self-care. It is not merely a luxury—it's a crucial pillar of both personal and professional development! By prioritizing your wellness, you're not only investing in yourself but also equipping yourself with the resilience and clarity needed to tackle any challenge that comes your way.

The wellness checklist below is an incredible resource designed to help you recharge, reconnect, and refocus on your ambitious goals. Try to incorporate one or two of the ideas listed in each category below into your daily routine.



Remember, your well-being is the cornerstone of your success, and there's no time like the present to embrace this mindset!

Mental Wellness

- Take a 5–10 minute mental break each hour
- Celebrate at least one small win today
- Set and respect your work/life boundaries
- Delegate one task or responsibility
- Write down one thing you're grateful for
- Avoid comparing your progress to others
- Connect with a peer or business support group

Physical Wellness

- Go for a short walk or stretch break
- Drink at least 6–8 glasses of water
- Eat a balanced, mindful meal
- Get 7–8 hours of sleep tonight
- Stand or stretch every 2 hours

Emotional & Social Wellness

- Do a quick self check-in: “How am I feeling?”
- Reach out to a friend, family member, or mentor
- Say no to one thing that doesn't serve you

Mindfulness & Stress Management

- Practice 3–5 minutes of deep breathing
- Unplug from devices before bed
- Do a short meditation or yoga session
- Spend 10+ minutes outside today
- Reflect on your business “why”

REMINDERS

Entrepreneur in Residence Program

- Are you looking to start a business and have questions that you need help with?
- Have you recently started a new business and now need some guidance or help with things that have you scratching your head?
- Are you already in business and wonder how to increase your sales or profit margins?
- Are you looking to expand or grow your business but are unsure if it is the right time?

If so, you are a perfect candidate for the Entrepreneur in Residence Program. The purpose of the Entrepreneur in Residence program is to allow prospective entrepreneurs and current business owners in the Central Vancouver Island region access to invaluable advice from a successful entrepreneur. The Entrepreneur in Residence will provide counsel, offer advice and discuss business best practices. And, best of all, they will work with you on your schedule with mutually agreed upon appointments. Work on your business; get small business help. The perfect solution, now!

Community Futures is committed to the success of small and medium sized business and subsidizes this program so more can participate. The cost to participants is:

- \$175 for 6 sessions; or
- \$300 for 12 sessions

Sessions are 1 hour in length but can be combined into fewer meetings, are mutually set up between coach and applicant, and must be completed within a 6 month period.

For more information and to check out our line up of coaches, visit our [website](#).



Looking for funding or grants?

The Provincial Government provides a one stop shop for information about programs and funding available to citizens and businesses that can save you money.

[The B.C. Benefits Connector](#) not only provides information on benefits available to assist small business owners, it also includes information on supports available for families with children, renters and homeowners, seniors, and for those struggling with other issues.

Did you find this information helpful?





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