Whether you choose to work from home, create and develop products, purchase franchises or are offering consultation services, strategic planning increases the likelihood of success and reduces risk.

Being an entrepreneur creates the satisfaction of witnessing results produced by your own effort and allows the freedom of being your own boss. To succeed, there will be many challenges, hard work and the development of different skills to effectively run a small business.

**STEP 1: SELF-ASSESSMENT**

Assess and evaluate your skills against those required to be a successful entrepreneur and understand the demands of starting your own business and how it may affect your lifestyle. Visit Canada’s Business Development Bank (www.bdc.ca) to check your readiness: Advice centre tab > Benchmarking tools > Entrepreneurial potential self-assessment.

**STEP 2: EXPLORE NEW BUSINESS IDEAS & MARKET POTENTIAL**

- Does your idea help to satisfy customer needs and demands?
- What is the competition like? Will it be profitable?
- Do you possess the skills required to make the most of this opportunity?
- Do you have contacts that have attempted a similar strategy to speak with or get more information?

Franchising
Marketing and promotion is the key to making people aware of your business. For more information about branding your business and franchising check out the Canadian Franchise Association (CFA) (www.cfa.ca)

Creating A Not-For-Profit Organization Or Charity
- Assemble a governing body or a Board of Directors (a legal requirement in the Province of Ontario)
- Have a clear goal and create your mission statement and vision for your organization
- Plan logistics, name for your organization, location, finances and organizational chart listing role for your organizational members
- You can choose to incorporate your business, become a registered charity or do both
  - Canada revenue Agency – Non-Profit Organizations (www.cra-arc.gc.ca/tx/nnprft)
  - Charity Village – Starting a Non-Profit (https://charityvillage.com/topics/quickguides/starting-a-nonprofit.aspx)

**STEP 3: CREATE A BUSINESS PLAN**

A business plan will outline your plan of action and is a requirement by many financial backers to show your likelihood to succeed. Visit the Canada Business Service Centre (www.canadabusiness.ca) for more information.

**STEP 4: FINANCES & FUNDING**

Some popular funding and financing resources in addition to your own bank include:

- Canadian Youth Business Foundation (www.cybf.ca) – offers loans up to $15,000
- SmartStart Program (www.oce-ontario.org/programs/collaborative-commercialization/smartstart) – offers approved students and recent grads funding and mentorship in the fields of Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics up to $60,000
- Summer Company Program (www.ontario.ca/business-and-economy/start-summer-business-students) – offers up to $3,000 grant to eligible students between ages 15-29
- BDC (www.bdc.ca) - the only bank dedicated exclusively to entrepreneurs with loans up to $50,000
- List of funding and financing: Mars (http://marscommons.marsdd.com/startup-library/funding-your-startup) and Canada Business (www.canadabusiness.ca/eng/page/2740/sgc-35/#sgcselect)
STEP 5: EDUCATION, TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT

**Enterprise Toronto** (www.enterprisetoronto.com) is an excellent resource which offers seminars on topics of “Business Planning” and “Marketing” and a free one-hour consultation services to provide prospective entrepreneurs business plan feedback.

**Entrepreneurship Programs**
Many colleges offer entrepreneurship programs including George Brown College’s Small Business Entrepreneur Post-Graduate Program (see full time calendar for details) or George Brown College’s Continuing Education Online Course on Entrepreneurship (see con-ed calendar for details).

STEP 6: CERTIFICATIONS

**Canadian Institute of Entrepreneurship (CIE)** (www.canadianinstituteofentrepreneurship.com) is a professional association dedicated to promoting education in entrepreneurship. CIE grants the CIE Certification academic designation in partnership with Canadian post-secondary institutions.

OTHER GREAT RESOURCES

- **Enactus** - amazing entrepreneurship program for students (www.enactus.ca/get-involved/students)
- **Ontario Network of Entrepreneurs** (www.onebusiness.ca)
- **Ontario Small Business Network** (www.yoursmallbiz.net)
- **Innovation Centre** offers services for Entrepreneurs (www.innovationcentre.ca)
- **Startup Canada** - entrepreneur support, resources and network (www.startupcan.ca)
- **Mars** Resources for Science, Technology and Social Entrepreneurs (www.marsdd.com/entrepreneurs-toolkit)

START GEORGE BROWN COLLEGE

**Start George Brown College** (www.georgebrown.ca/research/start) is George Brown’s very own gateway to entrepreneurship. You can attend events, access online resources and get your questions answered from a mentor. **Start GBC** (http://startgbc.com) is a blog with great information and resources.

LIBRARY RESOURCES & RESEARCH ASSISTANCE

Finding reliable information, statistics and data will help give you the evidence and knowledge you need to make informed business decisions.

GBC’s Library Learning Commons has a wealth of resources that will help prepare you for a career as an entrepreneur including a research guide (http://researchguides.georgebrown.ca/entrepreneur).

And remember, the library is here to help support students with their research so check out the link if you need additional assistance with your assignments (http://georgebrown.ca/lhc/contact/ask).

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**Casa Loma Career Services**
Room C317
(416) 415-5000 ext: 4100
clcareercentre@georgebrown.ca

**St. James Career Services**
Room B-155
(416) 415-5000 ext: 3818
sjcareercentre@georgebrown.ca

**Waterfront Career Services**
Room 017
(416) 415-5000 ext: 5301
wfcareercentre@georgebrown.ca

**OptimalResume** – build cover letter, résumé or practice interview skills: georgebrown.optimalresume.com

**GBCareers** – view job postings and events: gbcareers.georgebrown.ca

Georgebrown.ca/careerservices

*Updated Sept 2017*