

WELCOME TO THE BIGGER ROOM:

A REGIONAL EMPLOYER ACTION PLAN



OVERVIEW

On September 27, 2017, a facilitated meeting was held to develop a Regional Employer Action Plan. This was the second of two meetings to take place. The first meeting - entitled "Welcome to the Room" - was held in June 2017, with a focus on bringing together employers of all sizes, from all sectors, from across the region, to identify and prioritize the workforce challenges they face. Over 30 employers clarified common issues and came to consensus on four priority areas where immediate action was needed. Part of this first meeting also entailed employers identifying individuals, groups and organizations who would need to be in the room, to plan next steps and make action happen.

The follow-up meeting was called "Welcome to the Bigger Room." Employers, organizations and groups from across the "region" – loosely defined as Hastings, Prince Edward and Lennox and Addington Counties - were invited to take part in a half day targeted session to identify strategies, timelines and first actions that align with the four priority areas.

At the end of the session, the four priorities were validated and concrete strategies for each were established. Attendees agreed that all four priorities needed to be collectively acted upon immediately, with employers taking a lead role.

The Steering Committee supported by East Central Ontario Training Board (ECOTB) and Human Resources Professionals Association (HRPA) Quinte & District Chapter, will continue to lead the implementation of the process. The success of this plan is dependant on the continued active involvement of session attendees.

This plan requires collective action and execution. The regional priorities involve and touch numerous people and groups including: employers from all industries and of all sizes, current and future workers and their families, young workers and youth, secondary and post-secondary educators and institutions, school boards, regional promoters and marketers, economic development personnel and offices, municipalities and counties, Chambers of Commerce, employment service providers, students, immigrants, representatives from indigenous communities, retirees, employment and literacy support networks, training boards, professional associations, transportation providers, child care providers, health care providers, and government ministries.

No one group can do it alone, and no one community will be as successful as a region working collaboratively.

Regional Employer Action Plan Priorities



PRIORITIES AND STRATEGIES

For each of the four priorities, strategies were developed that were identified as being possible to undertake immediately, and completed within a timeframe of approximately 1 year.

1: Build A More Skilled (Soft Skills & Hard Skills) Workforce

- a. Develop a process to network and connect community partners and stakeholders to create a shared vision of a 'skilled workforce"
- b. Create stronger connections between employers and schools through activities like job shadowing, co-ops & work prep programs
- c. Define the "soft skills" needed for today's workforce, and develop a program to build them
- d. Encourage education that includes a focus on employment needs & prepares students for the workforce

2: Create Greater Understanding of the Benefits of Doing Business in Our Region

- a. Conduct future-focused research & strategy for business development
- b. Involve youth in a youth-led attraction strategy
- c. Create intentional government & business communication and collaboration strategies (structures & processes)

3. Attract, Recruit & Retain Qualified Candidates to our Region

- a. Develop integrated 24/7 transportation options across the region
- b. Host collaborative social gatherings in workplaces and the community, for workers and their families
- c. Create a regional ambassador/ mentorship program to increase regional pride
- d. Use and capitalize on social media to centralize and coordinate recruitment and retention efforts

4. Clarify, Simplify, Streamline & Address Regulations in Innovative Ways

- a. Deepen the understanding of the need for regulations
- b. Reduce & simplify regulation applications
- c. Reduce & clarify the need for "Red Tape"

COLLECTIVE ACTION

The Employer Regional Action Plan was developed on the premise of collective action. For each of the priorities and corresponding strategies, attendees at the session were asked to identify a first step that can be taken, what other actions should follow, and what they can do to make this happen. The offers of assistance were vast and extensive. Although every effort was taken to accurately capture the offers of collective action, omissions may have been made. The Steering Committee supported by ECOTB and HRPA will assume responsibility for reconvening the next meetings and reaching out to individuals and organizations which have offered assistance.

Employers and Organizations in Attendance:

In total, there were 31 attendees from 26 employers or organizations at the session, as noted below. Every effort was made to ensure that there were more employers in the room than support organizations.

Beclawat Manufacturing (Beclawat)	Bay of Quinte Marketing Board (BOQMB)	Ministry of Advanced Education and Skills Development (MAESD)
Black Diamond (Parmalat)	Belleville Chamber of Commerce (BCC) – representative for the six local Chambers	Municipalities – Economic Development (represented by Belleville Economic Development) (EcDev)
Convergys (CVG)	Community Learning Alternatives (CLA) – representing Employment Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills Providers	Ministry of Education (MoED)
GH Manufacturing (GH)	East Central Ontario Training Board (ECOTB)	Prince Edward Chamber of Commerce (PECC) – representative for the six local Chambers
Highline Mushrooms (Highline)	Hastings County (Hastings)	Quinte Economic Development Corp. (QEDC)
IS2 Workforce Solutions	Hastings Prince Edward District School Board (HPEDSB)	Prince Edward Learning Centre (PELC) –representing Employment Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills Providers
RilleaTech (Rillea)	Human Resources Professional Association (HRPA) Quinte & District Chapter	Meta Employment Services (Meta) - Employment Ontario Employment Service Providers
Safety Guys Training (SGT)	Loyalist College (Loyalist)	Military Family Resource Centre Trenton (MFRC)
Sigma Plastics (Sigma)	Trenton Cold Storage (TCS)	

PRIORITY #1:

How might we work collectively to build a more skilled (soft skills and hard skills) workforce?

Strategy 1a:

Develop a process to network and connect community partners and stakeholders to create a shared vision of a 'skilled workforce'

FIRST STEP: Host a meeting of interested community partners

What Can I Do/Contribute To Make This Happen:

BOQRMB	Hold business get-togethers related to tourism and resident attraction
MAESD	Explore getting the Ontario government to pay for the forum; participate in meetings
Loyalist College	Facilitate
BCC	Represent business and engage our membership
QEDC	Bring manufacturers to the table
Hastings County	Participate
MFRC	Tap into Quinte Employment Network (QEN)
CLA	Participate in related initiatives and provide location tours
Municipalities	Offer meeting space, host meetings of all partners
HPEDSB	Participate in partnership community meetings
Parmalat	Participate and contribute to meetings
PECC	Share county workforce partnership results (Nov. 2017)
MoED	Continue to join in on partnerships like this one to share information and connect innovative idea
HRPA	Help build network, participate in committee / steering group

Community **Champion** Identified: Chambers of Commerce

Strategy 1b:

Create stronger connections between employers and schools through activities like job shadowing, co-ops and work prep programs

FIRST STEP: Familiarize ourselves with the programs and connections that are currently available by hosting a “What I Know About/ What I’m Wondering About” event.

What Can I Do/Contribute To Make This Happen:

Parmalat	Take part in this initiative
PECC	Use County Workforce Partnership to facilitate
MAESD	Look for ways to leverage the \$198 m investment in career kickstarter in 2017 budget; Participate in presentations to schools with employers to discuss OYAP and skilled trades
CVG	Offer physical space, advisory committee, and be a ‘host’ employer
Municipalities	Help with transportation, funding and connections
BOQRMB	Offer marketing assistance
Loyalist	Offer a 100% commitment from loyalist; will meet with ANYONE immediately
Hastings County	Participate and/or organize going to classrooms to discuss employer needs
BCC	Connect with small business that can engage in experiential learning opportunities
Highline	Offer co-op placement
MoED	Reflect unique regional needs and differences when developing policies and program
TCS	Participate in finding appropriate co-op placements
QEDC	Contact manufacturers to participate

Community **Champion** Identified: Loyalist College

- Convergys as an employer has been approached to help with this strategy
- School Boards should be invited to participate as a Champion as well

Strategy 1c:

Define the 'soft skills' necessary for today's workforce and develop a program to build them

FIRST STEP: Determine employer needs, and common transferrable soft skills

What Can I Do/Contribute To Make This Happen:

MAESD	Develop programs to address needs
Loyalist	Facilitate research
BOQRMB	Help create a soft skills internship network and take a few on short-term in our office
HRPA	Partner to help prepare people for the workforce, and plan events
BCC	Advisory input from small to medium business
SGT	Offer hands on programs and training
MFRC	Soft skills information at Loyalist PLAR conference in May of 2018; join committee to build and calculate survey/ interview data
PECC	Join the Committee; understand what our members require for soft skills and communicate
MOE	Bring information to MOE to consider for curriculum refresh
Hastings County	Develop training programs and deliver to potential applicants
QEDC	Elevate Plus Program includes integrated soft and technical skills development
CVG	Sit on committee for funding; current sector partnership planning grant for this, for manufacturing
Beclawat	Offer information, time and experience
Parmalat	Provide input into desired skills for large manufacturers
CLA	Offer customer service and other soft skills training for adults

Community **Champion** Identified: Loyalist College (tie to Strategy 1d – Youth Piece)

Strategy 1d:

Encourage education that includes a focus on employment needs & prepares students for the workforce

FIRST STEP: Determine employer needs and identify common, transferrable ‘hard skills’

What Can I Do/Contribute To Make This Happen:

Beclawat	Provide Co-op placements
BOQRMB	Teach use of social media as an effective communication/marketing tool
CVG	Sit on advisory committee; understand community needs; offer student talks
Hastings County	Participate in school presentations at all levels – presentations for skills required
PECC	Keep pulse of current and future skills requirements of members and communicate with schools; Contact PECC re: SHSM
MAESD	Focus EO programs to address needs
SGT	Offer training
Loyalist	Recommit to this priority
ECOTB	Facilitate a local conference with current employers
MOE	Provide more information on EDU’s education and career life planning program called Creating Pathways to Success
HPEDSB	Liaise with businesses and employers
Parmalat	Provide information sessions to students; provide input at high school and college level
TCS	Student tours, help on a committee rep for employer needs
Rillea	Student talks
MFRC	Sit on a committee re: HR and job in employment and education
MoED	Share a link to on-line survey re: revisions to the Grade 10 careers
CLA	Training for adult learners including upgrading, specific skill development, support for credit placements
QEDC	Connect with extensive manufacturing network
HRPA	Get the word out (email) to 200 HRPA Quinte District Chapter members
Meta	Work with employers to identify strategies to develop and implement at the workplace

Community **Champion** Identified: Youth-2-Youth Summit Youth Leaders

Priority #2

How might we Create a Greater Understanding of the Benefits of Doing Business in Our Region?

Strategy 2a:

Conduct future-focused research and strategy for business development

First Step: Strike a Steering Committee

What Can I Do/Contribute To Make This Happen:

BOQRMB	Provide information to new organizations regarding what resources are already available; be an active part of the group leading this initiative
PECC	Federal programs – career focus, skills links, opportunities fund, youth retentions- should coordinate regionally
Loyalist	Will be at the table
CVG	Participate, offer physical space for meetings
BCC	Identify gaps in businesses and services our community needs = opportunity
Municipalities	Implement recommendations; provide funding, organize influencers, provide space and administrative support
GH	Participate in the process; offer company support
Rillea	Offer time and talent
TCS	Participate in the committee and discussions
HRPA	Get the word out the HRPA Quinte and District Chapter

Community **Champion** Identified: Quinte Economic Development Commission, Startup Bay of Quinte

- Quintevation should be invited to participate as a Champion for this strategy

Strategy 2b:

Involve Youth in a Youth-Led Attraction Strategy

First Step: Bring representatives from existing youth committees together to form one group focused on this issue

What Can I Do/Contribute To Make This Happen?

MAESD	Consider experiences for younger students to build interest in their community (K-12) and provide opportunities for experiential learning
Municipalities	Champion and fund
Loyalist	Take part in activities focused on attracting youth to the region – this is a focus of the college
GH	Speak with schools and collaborate with students; hire local youth
BCC	Engage with employers to talk about ALL job opportunities
HPEDSB	Help businesses liaise with school board
Sigma	Help coach youth in business
Highline	Offer summer employment and weekend employment, and future co-ops
ECOTB	Promote this as something Youth to Youth Committee could lead; continue to be a backbone of support; offer community connections
MFRC	Connect to military youth
PECC	Help promote initiative to membership and community

Community **Champion** Identified: Youth-2-Youth Summit Youth Leaders

Strategy 2C:

Create intentional government and business communication and collaboration strategies (structures and processes)

First Step: Hold a regional caucus strategy session

What Can I Do / Contribute To Make This Happen?

CVG	Participate, invite greater understanding of CVG
MAESD	Participate in discussions; facilitate forums or fund them in some circumstances
GH	Participate and promote
Loyalist	Contribute however possible
HRPA	Volunteer to be on Committee or steering group
BOQRMB	Continue to strengthen our organizations' regional partnership; lobby for increased funding both locally and provincially
Municipalities	Provide funding and admin support; provide regional leadership
MFRC	Connect to military communities and stakeholders
PECC	Help to create communication lines for back and forth communication
Sigma	Participate
BCC	Provide contacts
HPEDSB	Provide space / facilities for meetings
HRPA	Get the word out to HRPA Quinte and District Chapter

Community **Champion** Identified: Regional Workforce Group

Priority #3:

How Might We Work Collectively to Attract, Recruit and Retain Qualified Candidates to our Region?

Strategy 3a:

Develop integrated 24/7 transportation options across the region

FIRST STEP: City of Belleville to initiate collaboration of providers, organize regional meeting of communities, with employers at the table

What Can I Do / Contribute To Help Make This Happen:

PECC	Be part of a steering committee on behalf of the Chamber's members
HPEDSB	Will participate in transportation planning
TCS	Committee member
CLA	Connect Central Hastings Transit to this Conversation
ECOTB	Research GIS mapping of current area make-up; be part of a steering committee
Highline	Offer my time to be on a committee
BOQRMB	Be a part of the planning
QEDC	Coordinate with manufacturing to see which employers would participate
HRPA	Get the word out via email through HRPA Quinte and District Chapter

Community **Champion** Identified: City of Belleville

Strategy 3b:

Host collaborative social gatherings in workplaces and the community, for workers and their families

First Step: Create a list of interested employers

What Can I Do / Contribute To Help Make This Happen:

CVG	Facilitate/ organize a social gathering
Meta	Promote and assist with data collection on 'what's happening in the community'
Municipality	Provide space, organize, fund, advertise
MFRC	Hold a collective employer information for employers to share their opportunities
HRPA	Participate in gatherings
Loyalist	Offer space and catering

Community **Champion** Identified: META Employment Services

- Convergys as an employer has been approached to help with this strategy

Strategy 3c:

Create a regional ambassador/ mentorship program to increase regional pride

First Step: Define a Local Ambassador / Mentorship program

What Can I Do / Contribute To Help Make This Happen:

PECC	Facilitate / organize locally; act as an ambassador
BOQRMB	Drive this ambassador program through BOQ RMB; host an event /or present at an event
CVG	Offer physical space and host
CLA	Provide speakers about LBS Literacy and Basic Skills programs
Rillea	Get information on Kingston Retired Executive Program
HRPA	Join committee

Community **Champion** Identified: Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board

Strategy 3d:

Use and capitalize on social media to centralize and coordinate recruitment and retention efforts

(e.g. central repository of job opportunities/job boards, developing YouTube videos to promote/market businesses and the area)

FIRST STEP: Develop an inventory of current resources available for recruitment and retention

What Can I Do / Contribute To Help Make This Happen:

Meta	Partner in centralized job posting site
BOQRMB	Build employment into all of our social channels, develop a focus on jobs video build out quintejobs.ca
PECC	Share social media via our chamber connections
QEDC	Promote the 'Bay of Quinte' region, use QEDC social media
CLA	Provide media for LBS programs
ECOTB	Convene a steering committee
Loyalist	Will participate and contribute to strategy; let leadership know this is an issue
Highline	Share recent video of highline
HPEDSB	Continue to tweet about skills and competencies, and connect to employers
MFRC	Share job postings with military community; get information out via website and twitter
PELC	Have young people that can be profiled as people staying and being successful in the region
CVG	Offer insight into our organization's social media program
Municipalities	Fund it, use our social media channels
BCC	We have social media followers through the chamber
HRPA	Retweet and share (LinkedIn) using HRPA social media

Community **Champion** Identified: Bay of Quinte Regional Marketing Board

Priority #4:

How might we work collectively to clarify, simplify, streamline and address regulations in innovative ways?

Strategy 4a:

Deepen the understanding of the need for regulations

First Step: Offer Training and workshops on regulations based on offerings (Municipal, HS&E, etc.)

What Can I Do/ Contribute To Make This Happen?

PECC	Offer results from county workforce partnership – COJG, Second Career, OW/ODSP and education; Offer a workshop on why regulation exists and how to navigate
Loyalist	Encourage education about regulations and why they exist; share this issue with the college leadership
QEDC	Facilitate information session for manufacturing
SGT	Offer training session
MoED	Look at the policies I have some influence over, discuss ways to simplify with my management
HRPA	Share information with over 200 Quinte and District chapter members
Municipalities	Offer seminars, sessions and literature to clearly define city regulations and why they exist
HPEDSB	Review our Board policies and procedures connected to experiential learning

Strategy 4b:

Reduce and Simplify Regulation Applications

First Step: Identify resources to assist with simplification

What Can I Do / Contribute To Make This Happen?

PECC	On-line tutorial; champion and lobby ministries to use technology to simplify regulation applications
CVG	For HR related regulations, offer legal firm names providing free webinars
QEDC	Bring Ministry and manufacturers together to talk about the reasons why and the impact the regulations have
CLA	Offer information about clear and plain language
Rillea	Offer support through local associations
HRPA	Share information with over 200 Quinte and District chapter members
Municipalities	Provide staff support when completing any applications
HPEDSB	Review our Board policies and procedures connected to experiential learning

Strategy 4c:

Reduce and Clarify the Need for Red Tape

First Step: Bring in resources to liaise with different programs

What Can I Do / Contribute To Make This Happen?

PECC	Find out from members what 'red tape' has become redundant or is duplicated and address with Ministry
Municipalities	Create a Working Group to work with business to reduce city 'red tape'
ECOTB	Develop a workshop/ one day conference for government and business
HPEDSB	Educate my staff on regulations and compliance best practice
MAESD	Offer assistance when applying for one of the MAESD programs; Offer one-on-one assistance to employers in applying for programs
CVG	Offer/speak on HR related topics at meetings
Hastings County	Provide time to research and advise

Community **Champion** Identified: For all three strategies that have been identified under Priority #4, it is felt that due to the complexity of the issues and strategies that have been identified to address the priority, the Steering Committee as a whole should Champion these strategies.

HRPA Quinte & District is considering whether all three topics could be addressed at a Regional HRPAC Conference in 2018.

Next Steps

- With the confirmation of Community Champions for each strategy, bring the Advisory group back together to set schedules in place to effectively move each strategy forward
- Engage youth
 - Bring the Youth-2-Youth Summit youth leaders into the advisory committee
 - Speak to youth about what they are learning and determine from their perspective is it effective?
This could be led by Loyalist Research
- Ask if there are any community partners that are missing and should be invited to help with the strategies