



Mayor Joseph Curtatone Invites You to:

Somerville Business Development Workshops, Programs and Info Sessions

The City of Somerville, Office of Strategic Planning & Community Development, Economic Development Division presents this series of business development workshops and networking events. These educational programs assist Somerville residents, entrepreneurs, and existing businesses to build business skills, advance economic development, and expand networking opportunities within our community.

Space in these workshops is limited. Attendance is open to any Somerville Business or entrepreneur.

To register for activities, or to get more information, please contact David Guzman, OSPCD at 617.625.6600 x2546 or dguzman@somervillema.gov – for more information log on to the City's website at: www.somervillema.gov / under the section 'Businesses'

Workshops, Program and Classes tailored for entrepreneurs, start ups and existing businesses.

Seminar: Financial Fundamentals of Running a Business
Date: Wednesday, March 11, 8:00am – 10:00am
Presenter: Sherri Lane, loan officer at ACCION USA

This workshop will discuss financial management tools that will help you to better understand your business' financial health. We will also cover several business survival strategies given the current economic slow-down.

In this workshop you will learn to:

- Efficiently organize business records
- Better assess your financial health using key financial tools such as break- even analysis, cash flow analysis, income statements, and balance sheets
- Incorporate effective marketing principles to build awareness of your business and allow it to grow.

The workshop will be taught by Sherri Lane, a Loan Officer for ACCION USA's New England office. Sherri has a strong background in business and works daily to help entrepreneurs strengthen their businesses, obtain funding and access financial literacy services.

Seminar: Marketing Strategies to Overcome the Crumbling Economy
Date: Wednesday, April 8, 8:00am – 10:00am
Presenter: Elizabeth Garlow, ACCION USA

Hard economic times demand creative marketing strategies. Come on and join us in this seminar where ACCION USA bring a set of creative ways of engaging customers with low or even zero budget.

Seminar: Best Retail Practices Program *NEW

Date: Coming soon –April-
Presenter: TBA

A Brand new program to generate economic revitalization by educating small retailers, restaurateurs and storefront service businesses about the best practices used in their industries, and by offering technical assistance to participants to help them improve the appearance, marketing and operational efficiency of their stores. Topics to be covered:

- Elements of an effectively designed retail environment
- the importance of communicating with and listening to your customers and techniques on how to survey them for their needs;
- techniques to attract and retain a stronger customer base, especially in economic downturns;
- Marketing, branding and management practices, tips, and collaborative efforts among business owners.

Participants business may be eligible for an one-on-one consultation(Part II) in the following fields: exterior and approach, signage and lighting; window display, entry; design and experience – store layout and décor; merchandising, fixtures, interior signage, interior lighting, merchandise selection, wall, floor and ceiling treatments, security, cleanliness, hours of operation, staffing; Marketing and public relations - business identity and positioning, messaging and communication, customer service, identifying customer mix and desires, communicating effectively with customers.

Seminar: Tools to Enhance Social Networking Online

Date: Wednesday, May 6, 8:00am – 10:00am
Presenter: Joe Grafton, Director of Somerville Local First

Everybody keeps talking about Social Networking, Facebook, YouTube, Twitter...but what does it really mean for your business? Join us for an interactive workshop that will help you get to know and start using these (mostly free) tools right away.

Seminar: Requirements for Licenses and Permits Info Session

Date: Tuesday, May 19, 6:00-8:00pm
Presenters: OSPCD Planning director Madeleine Masters
City's Clerk John Long
Inspectional Services Department Commissioner George Landers

Most part of the time, entrepreneurs often have to deal and comply with local, state and federal regulations. Navigating the whole process may be overwhelming, time consuming, and frustrating. Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development is committed to streamline and facilitate to constituents understanding onto City's permitting and licensing process. This info session provides the opportunity to listen from head departments (Planning, Inspectional Services, Clerk Office, Health) insight on the recommended steps to successfully open and operate your business and comply with local regulations. Topics to be covered:

- Special Permit and Variance
- Somerville Zoning Ordinance
- Building permits and Certificates of Occupancy
- Licenses and Permits

Seminar: City of Somerville Small Business Support Programs

Date: Tuesday, June 23, 8:00am – 10:00am
Presenter: David Guzman, Economic Development Planner

Starting and managing a business takes motivation and talent, research and planning. Also, the process of acquiring all the necessary approvals on the local level can seem daunting! Mayor's Office of Strategic Planning and Community Development brings a whole set of technical and financial resources to support

the growing community of small, local and independent business. In this info session, we will talk about programs like the Storefront Improvement, the Retail Best Practices, the Small Business Loan Program, and resources available to entrepreneurs like access to a market information, technical assistance providers, and funding sources.

Seminar: Legal Issues for Businesses

Date: Wednesday, October 7

Presenter: 8:00am – 10am

There are a multitude of legal issues to think about when it comes to starting and operating your business. Everything from your business name to its structure to its operation has legal implications. This seminar brings insight and perspective in one of the most candid areas that entrepreneurs have to deal with: business law. The seminar will cover topics like type of business entity, financing considerations, leasing, insurance, immigration issues, health care requirements, taxes, employees, among others topics. Join this seminar brought to you by the Somerville Chamber of Commerce.

All workshops, programs and classes meet in the **BOA Chambers at Somerville City Hall, 93 Highland Ave, Somerville, MA.** Seminars are free of cost.

