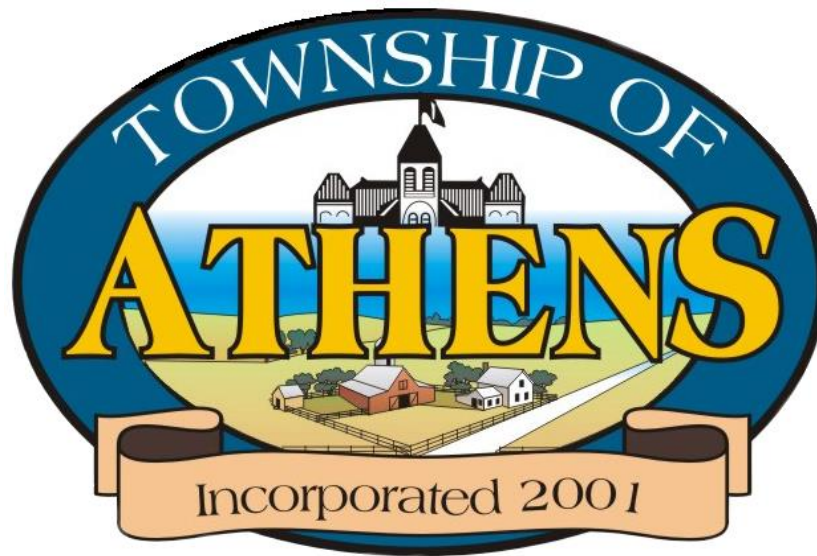


Township of Athens

Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

2024 Business Survey: Report



March 25, 2024

Survey Timeframe: February 6 – March 10, 2024

Prepared by:

**United Counties of Leeds and Grenville
Economic Development Office
32 Wall Street, Suite 300, Brockville, ON**



invest.leedsgrenville.com/reportsandplans

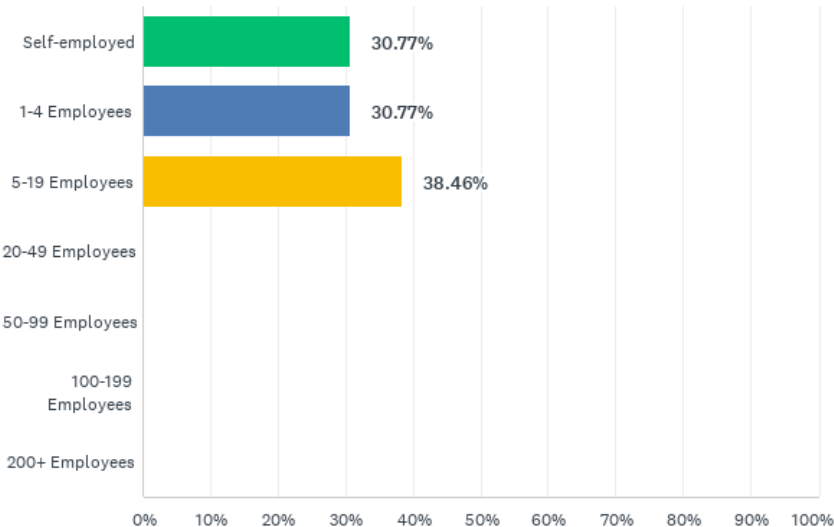
#2 What sector is your business primarily operating in?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Manufacturing and Production	30.77%	4
Agriculture, Forestry, Fish and Hunting	15.38%	2
Food Services	15.38%	2
Retail Trade	15.38%	2
Accommodation	7.69%	1
Construction	7.69%	1
Healthcare and Social Assistance	7.69%	1
Administrative and Support - Business Services	0.00%	0
Arts, Entertainment and Recreation	0.00%	0
Education Services	0.00%	0
Finance and Insurance	0.00%	0
Not-for-profit	0.00%	0
Personal Services	0.00%	0
Repair and Maintenance	0.00%	0
Tourism Attraction	0.00%	0
Transportation and Warehousing	0.00%	0
TOTAL		13

#3 Typically, how many full-time equivalent employees does your company have?

Answered: 13 Skipped: 0



#3 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Self-employed	30.77% 4
1-4 Employees	30.77% 4
5-19 Employees	38.46% 5
20-49 Employees	0.00% 0
50-99 Employees	0.00% 0
100-199 Employees	0.00% 0
200+ Employees	0.00% 0
TOTAL	13

#4 For medium / large business (50 and above employees) -

Are your employees unionized?

Answered: 0 Skipped: 13

No responses.

#5 For medium / large business (50 and above employees) -

What are your top infrastructure issues, and why? i.e. hydro, natural gas, rail, etc.

Answered: 0 Skipped: 13

No responses.

#6 For medium / large business (50 and above employees) -

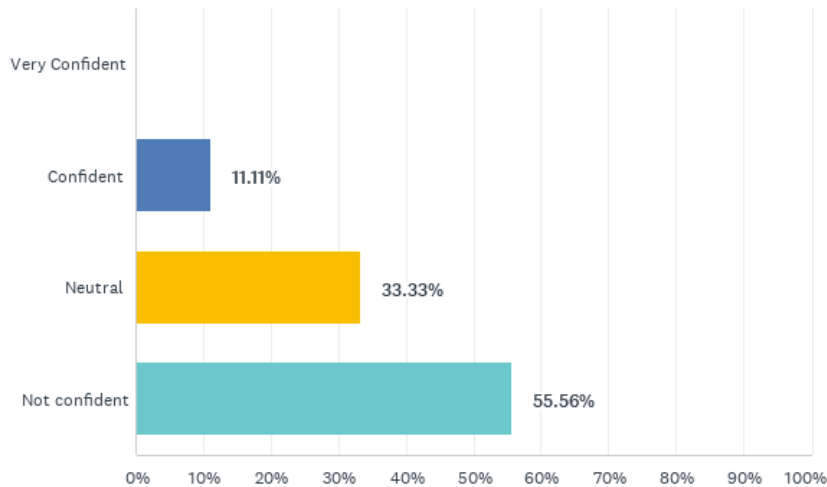
Are you interested in participating in an Ottawa job fair in October?

Answered: 0 Skipped: 13

No responses.

#7 How confident are you in the strength of the economy?

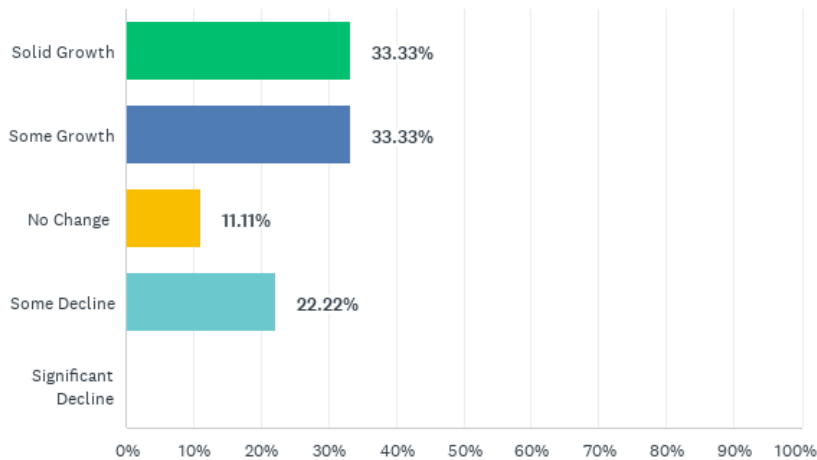
Answered: 9 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Very Confident	0.00%	0
Confident	11.11%	1
Neutral	33.33%	3
Not confident	55.56%	5
TOTAL		9

#8 In the last couple years, what has your business experienced?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 4



#8 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
▼ Solid Growth	33.33% 3
▼ Some Growth	33.33% 3
▼ No Change	11.11% 1
▼ Some Decline	22.22% 2
▼ Significant Decline	0.00% 0
TOTAL	9

#9 Rate the level of challenge to your business for each item.

Answered: 9

Skipped: 4

	1-NOT A CHALLENGE	2	3-SOMEWHAT CHALLENGING	4	5-VERY CHALLENGING	TOTAL
▼ Increasing overhead costs	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	22.22% 2	55.56% 5	9
▼ Increasing product prices	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	25.00% 2	25.00% 2	50.00% 4	8
▼ Changes in demand for your product / service	33.33% 3	0.00% 0	44.44% 4	0.00% 0	22.22% 2	9
▼ Borrowing costs	37.50% 3	12.50% 1	12.50% 1	12.50% 1	25.00% 2	8
▼ Repayment of CEBA loan	71.43% 5	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	0.00% 0	14.29% 1	7
▼ Supply chain instability	50.00% 4	12.50% 1	12.50% 1	25.00% 2	0.00% 0	8
▼ Ability to find skilled employees	12.50% 1	0.00% 0	12.50% 1	25.00% 2	50.00% 4	8
▼ Ability to offer competitive wages and benefits	33.33% 3	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	11.11% 1	44.44% 4	9
▼ Ability to retain employees	37.50% 3	12.50% 1	50.00% 4	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	8
▼ Absenteeism due to reliable child care	88.89% 8	11.11% 1	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	9

Comments:

- Very hard to find suitable professional health care worker.
- Affordability. In-ability to re-invest in facilities, therefore no growth. Carbon tax on inputs.

#10 Rate the level of challenge to your employees or as a self employed individual for each item.

Answered: 9 Skipped: 4

	1-NOT A CHALLENGE	2	3-SOMEWHAT CHALLENGING	4	5- VERY CHALLENGING	TOTAL
Available housing / accommodation	37.50% 3	0.00% 0	25.00% 2	25.00% 2	12.50% 1	8
Available daycare	75.00% 6	0.00% 0	12.50% 1	12.50% 1	0.00% 0	8
Cost of Living ie. inflation	12.50% 1	0.00% 0	25.00% 2	25.00% 2	37.50% 3	8
Public transportation	66.67% 6	0.00% 0	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	22.22% 2	9
Caring for elders	55.56% 5	11.11% 1	22.22% 2	0.00% 0	11.11% 1	9

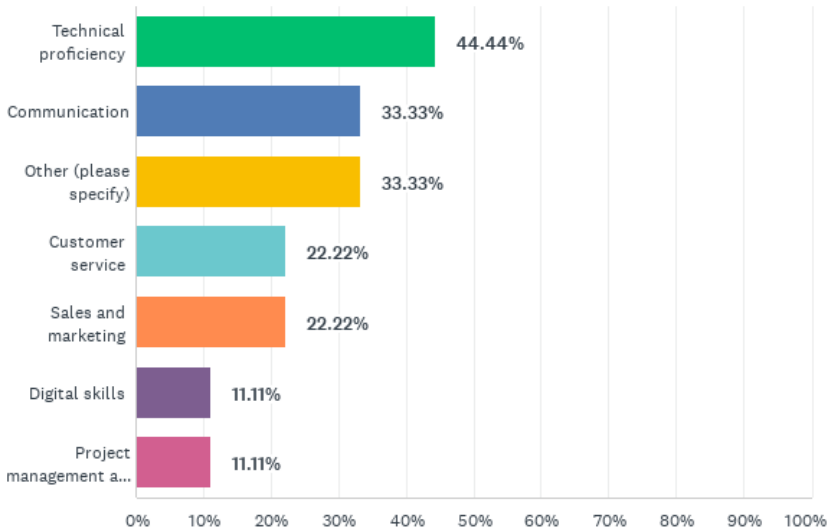
Comments:

- Rural remote location for part-time seasonal contracts.

#11 What skill gaps do you believe exist within your employees?

(Choose all that apply)

Answered: 9 Skipped: 4



#11 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Technical proficiency	44.44%	4
Communication	33.33%	3
Other (please specify)	Responses 33.33%	3
Customer service	22.22%	2
Sales and marketing	22.22%	2
Digital skills	11.11%	1
Project management and organization	11.11%	1
Total Respondents: 9		

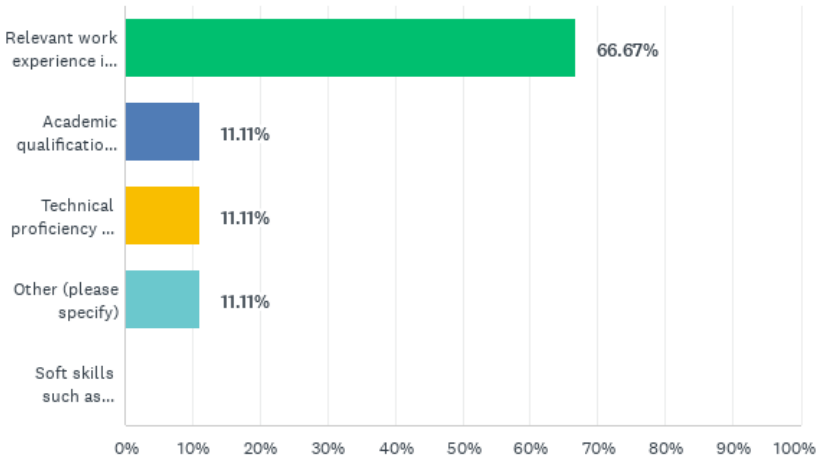
Other, please specify:

- We don't have any employees other than us. We are looking for one since 6-8 months.
- It's better to hire a qualified person than "just a warm body". Better to do without, then termination or resignation.

#12 When hiring new employees, which is the most significant? (Choose 1)

Answered: 9

Skipped: 4

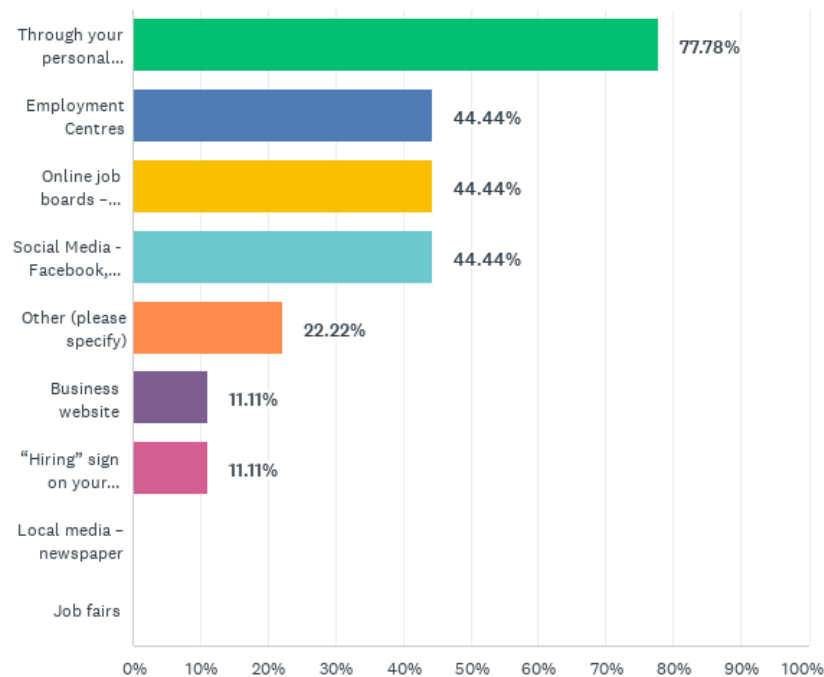


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Relevant work experience in a similar role	66.67%	6
Academic qualifications and certifications	11.11%	1
Technical proficiency and specific job-related skills	11.11%	1
Other (please specify)	Responses 11.11%	1
Soft skills such as teamwork and communication	0.00%	0
TOTAL		9

#13 What methods do you utilize for employee recruitment?

(Choose all that apply)

Answered: 9 Skipped: 4



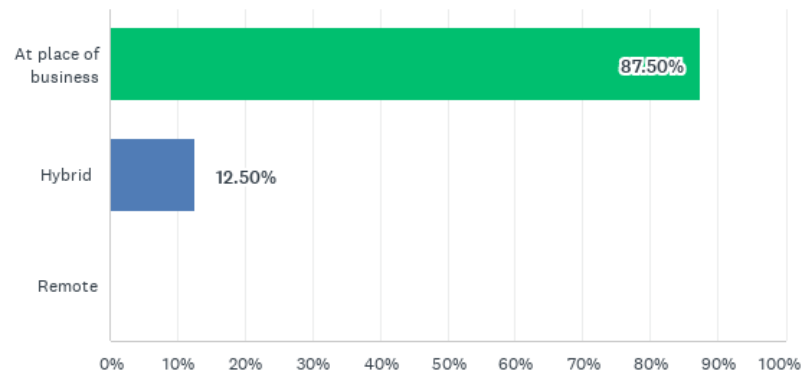
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Through your personal network	77.78%	7
Employment Centres	44.44%	4
Online job boards - Indeed, LinkedIn	44.44%	4
Social Media - Facebook, Instagram	44.44%	4
Other (please specify)	Responses22.22%	2
Business website	11.11%	1
"Hiring" sign on your premises	11.11%	1
Local media - newspaper	0.00%	0
Job fairs	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 9		

Other, please specify:

- Referrals.

#14 What type of work environment do you offer?

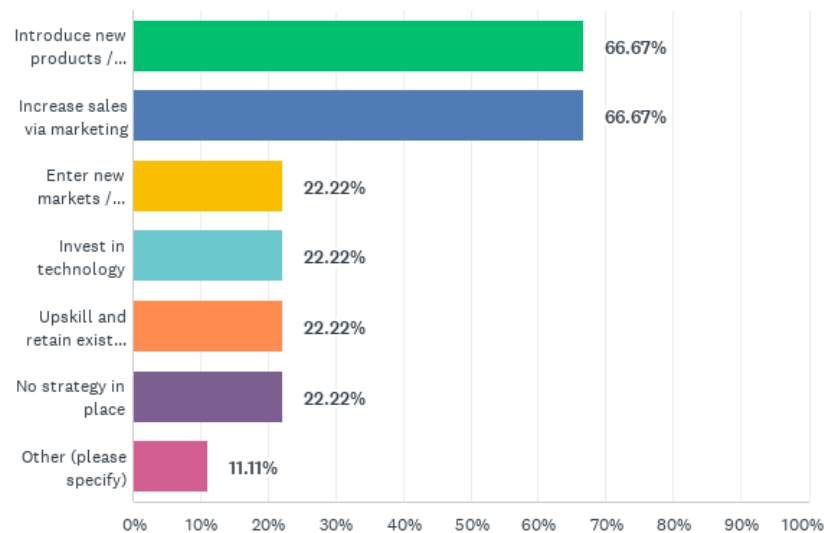
Answered: 8 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
At place of business	87.50%	7
Hybrid	12.50%	1
Remote	0.00%	0
TOTAL		8

#15 What are your top 3 strategies for growing your business. (Choose 3)

Answered: 9 Skipped: 4



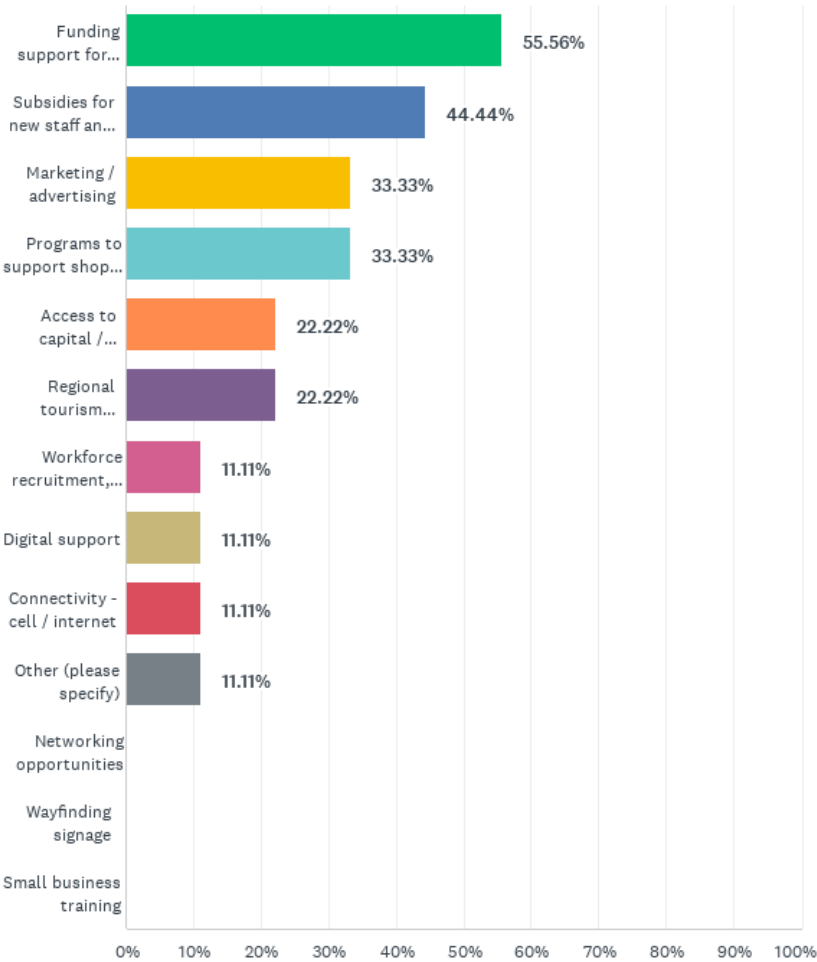
#15 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Introduce new products / services	66.67%	6
Increase sales via marketing	66.67%	6
Enter new markets / export	22.22%	2
Invest in technology	22.22%	2
Upskill and retain existing talent	22.22%	2
No strategy in place	22.22%	2
Other (please specify)	Responses 11.11%	1
Total Respondents: 9		

- Strategic "break even" with minor maintenance & operational upgrades. Playing a long game to stay open.

#16 What are the 3 top areas of support that would be most helpful to your business right now? (Choose 3)

Answered: 9 Skipped: 4



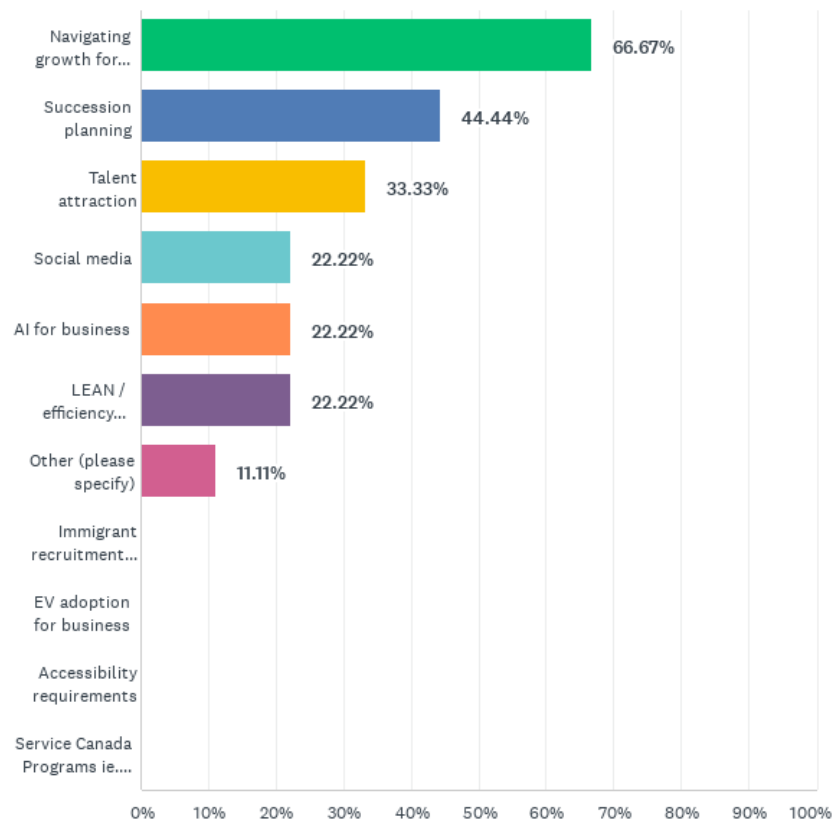
#16 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Funding support for business expansion	55.56%	5
▼ Subsidies for new staff and training	44.44%	4
▼ Marketing / advertising	33.33%	3
▼ Programs to support shop local	33.33%	3
▼ Access to capital / business loans	22.22%	2
▼ Regional tourism destination development – products, marketing	22.22%	2
▼ Workforce recruitment, hiring and resourcing staff	11.11%	1
▼ Digital support	11.11%	1
▼ Connectivity - cell / internet	11.11%	1
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 11.11%	1
▼ Networking opportunities	0.00%	0
▼ Wayfinding signage	0.00%	0
▼ Small business training	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 9		

- Recognition at Municipal level that agriculture is a thriving BUSINESS (not potential land for development); and transferring Economic Development from OMAFRA to the Ministry of Municipal Affairs

#17 What type of workshops / training would you like to see offered? (Choose 3)

Answered: 9 Skipped: 4

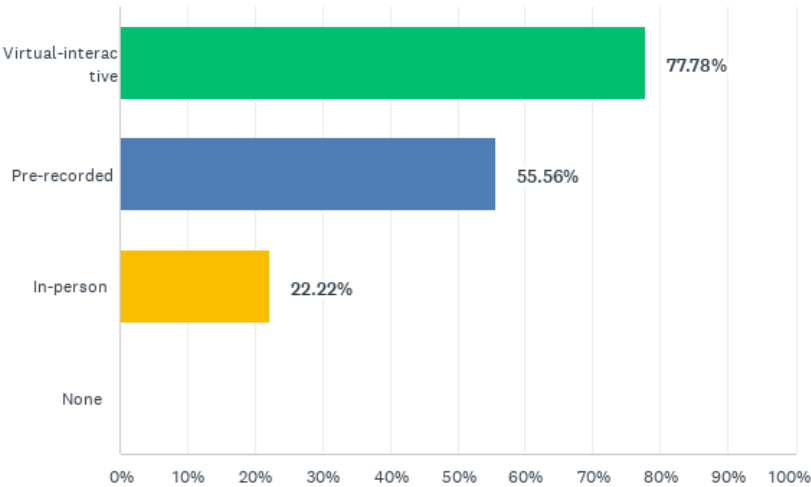


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
▼ Navigating growth for small business	66.67%	6
▼ Succession planning	44.44%	4
▼ Talent attraction	33.33%	3
▼ Social media	22.22%	2
▼ AI for business	22.22%	2
▼ LEAN / efficiency training	22.22%	2
▼ Other (please specify)	Responses 11.11%	1
▼ Immigrant recruitment programs	0.00%	0
▼ EV adoption for business	0.00%	0
▼ Accessibility requirements	0.00%	0
▼ Service Canada Programs ie. work sharing, record of employment	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 9		

- Other, please specify:**
- Training is available everywhere, do not duplicate. Offer webinar links to compliance, regulatory & legal updates by others.

#18 How do you prefer the delivery of workshops / training? (Choose all that apply)

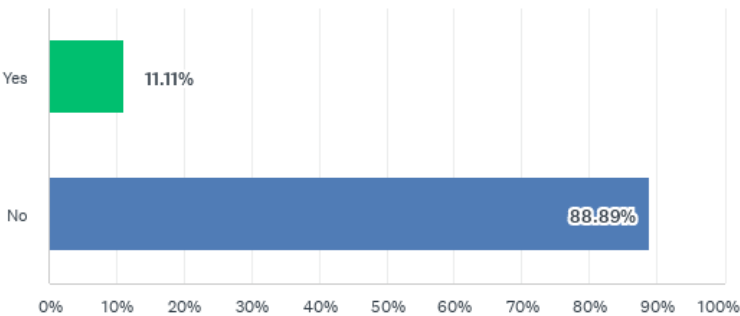
Answered: 9 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Virtual-interactive	77.78%	7
Pre-recorded	55.56%	5
In-person	22.22%	2
None	0.00%	0
Total Respondents: 9		

#19 Do you have plans to close your business or transfer ownership in the next 3-5 years?

Answered: 9 Skipped: 4

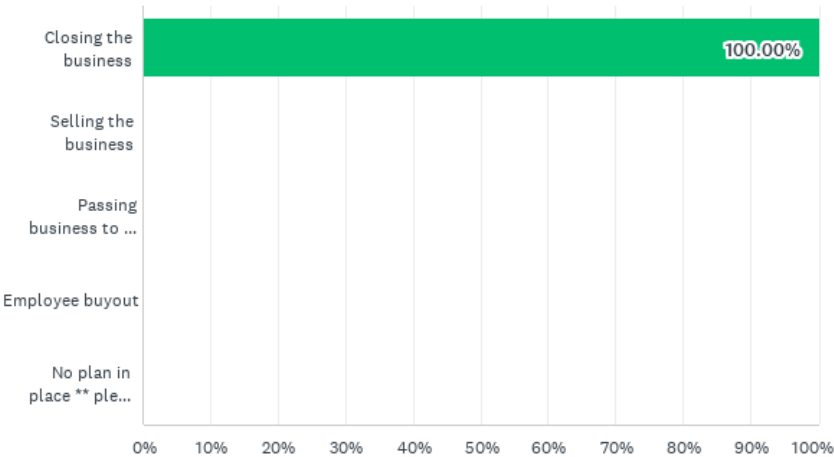


#19 continued...

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	11.11%	1
No	88.89%	8
TOTAL		9

#20 If yes, what is your succession plan?

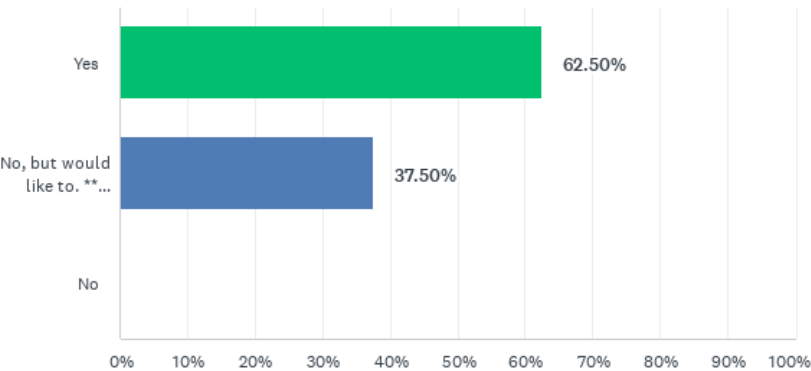
Answered: 1 Skipped: 12



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Closing the business	100.00%	1
Selling the business	0.00%	0
Passing business to a family member	0.00%	0
Employee buyout	0.00%	0
No plan in place ** please provide contact info at end of survey for support	0.00%	0
TOTAL		1

#21 Do you currently receive the Leeds Grenville business eNewsletter?

Answered: 8 Skipped: 5



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	62.50%	5
No, but would like to. ** Please provide contact info at end of survey	37.50%	3
No	0.00%	0
TOTAL		8

#22 Please provide any additional comments related to your business viability and your challenges as a business owner.

Answered: 4 Skipped: 9

- I find out the most challenging thing is finding professional therapist. And try to learn about marketing on social media and making advertisement.
- Work life balance and personal health.
- I would like to know how I can put up additional signage on nearby corners so people know we exist.

#23 If you would like to speak to someone regarding support available to business

Answered: 5 Skipped: 8

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Contact Name	Responses	100.00% 5
Business Name	Responses	100.00% 5
Contact Number	Responses	100.00% 5
Email	Responses	100.00% 5

Additional Notes:

- Survey Timeframe: February 6, 2024 to March 10, 2024
- Survey Distribution: Businesses that were part the Counties Economic Development business directory, with active email addresses, received the survey directly. In addition, some members of Business Support Working Group distributed the survey through their membership lists and social media channels.

Business Support Working Group:

Municipalities

Athens | Augusta | Brockville | Edwardsburgh Cardinal | Elizabethtown-Kitley | Front of Yonge | Gananoque | Leeds and the Thousand Islands | Merrickville-Wolford | North Grenville | Prescott | Rideau Lakes | Westport

MP / MPP

MP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

MPP Office of Leeds-Grenville-Thousand Islands and Rideau Lakes

Community Futures Development Corporations

1000 Islands CDC | Community Futures Grenville | Valley Heartland CFDC

Small Business Centres

Leeds Grenville Small Business

Small Business Advisory Centre – Smiths Falls | Lanark

Chambers of Commerce

1000 Islands Gananoque | Brockville and District | Lyndhurst, Seeley's Bay & District | Merrickville and District | North Grenville | South Grenville | Smiths Falls

BIAs

Downtown Brockville | Downtown Gananoque | Downtown Prescott | Old Town Kemptville

Employment Services

CSE Consulting | Employment and Education Centre | KEYS Job Centre

Other Business & Education Agencies

Regional Tourism Organization 9 | St. Lawrence Corridor Economic Development Commission | Eastern Ontario Workforce Innovation Board | St. Lawrence College | Kemptville Campus Education and Community Hub | Ontario Tourism Education Corporation | St. Lawrence-Rideau Immigration Partnership | Ministry of Economic Development Job Creation and Trade – East Region

THANK-YOU!

On behalf of the Business Support Working Group, I would like to thank each business who took the time to complete the survey. Members of the Working Group will be reaching out to assist businesses who indicated they would like assistance. The Working Group contact list is available on the webpage, along with any new programs and resources as they become available.

Ann Weir, Economic Development Manager

United Counties of Leeds and Grenville

W: invest.leedsgrenville.com/reportsandplans | E: ann.weir@uclg.on.ca