

## Introduction

---

### Welcome to the HR Tool Kit!

This *HR Tool Kit* is designed to provide practical, basic tools that can help small businesses take beginning steps towards implementing quality human resource (HR) management practices.

#### These tools:

- Are easy to understand and use by the business owner and employees.
- Are necessary, because they deal with basic principles.
- Are useful, because they adapt to the reality of small businesses.
- Contribute to increased productivity and competitiveness.

This tool kit was developed through the **National HR Pilot Project**<sup>1</sup>, which tested a new, simplified “one-on-one approach.” In this approach, a staff person from a community organization (who normally works with small business clients) provides encouragement and guidance to a small business while the business uses the tools in the kit. The person who provides support to a small business is referred to as an “Agent” throughout this kit.

### What types of organizations would work with this tool kit?

This tool kit is designed for any type of community organization who regularly works with small business clients. The tools can be offered by the organization to its small business clients as extra support or as an add-on service. Examples of such organizations include:

- Member groups of the Community Futures Network of Canada (such as CBDCs, CFDCs, CFs, or SADCs)
- Community Economic Development Agencies (CEDAs)

These tools are specially designed for **small** business clients that do not already have well-developed HR practices (businesses normally without an HR Department, without anyone on staff with HR expertise and without HR policies and procedures in place.)

### What is the “one-on-one approach”?

As mentioned, this tool kit is designed to be used in a “one-on-one approach,” between an Agent from a community organization and a business. The Agent assists the business in identifying necessary tools (according to that business’s needs), and provides copies of these tools to the business. The Agent follows-up with the business, and provides reminders and suggestions. The majority of these instructions are therefore written for this Agent, so that this individual is equipped to encourage and guide business clients through the use of the tools.

1 To learn more about the National HR Pilot Project, consult Special Features on the CD

## Who could be an “Agent”?

The Agent could be any existing staff person who already works regularly with small business clients at a community organization. For example, at a CBDC or CFDC, this could be an existing staff person who works in a small business loans program. This **Agent** need NOT be an expert in human resource HR management, as these tools deal with basic HR concepts and practices.

## What have past users said about these HR tools?

A business owner who used these tools with the support of an Agent:

*“The process is excellent! My business is in the process of major changes...we are giving credit to the HR Tool Kit which is helping us move forward so confidently.”* (Entrepreneur, Saskatchewan)

An Agent currently working with this tool kit:

*“Most SMEs that I work with will require some aspect of HR management and this (tool kit) has given me a better respect for its importance and how I stress it to them. It has also given me the tools to help!”* (Agent, Thebacha Business Development Services, Northwest Territories)

## What is the first step?

We strongly recommend completely reading this section, including **Diagram 1** and the **Agent Guide**. These provide step-by-step directions, an explanation of the potential benefits to Agents and to small business clients, as well as the winning conditions. NOTE -- there are two different ways to use this kit – the **Quick Process** or the **Complete Process** -- see **Diagram 1** for an illustration of each.

## What is on the accompanying CD?

Everything in this kit can also be found on the CD. You can print any of the tools directly from the CD, according to your needs. Where we particularly recommend going to the CD is indicated with this CD icon: 

You will also find additional **Special Features** on the CD, such as:

- Video testimonials from participants in the *National HR Pilot Project*, including small business owners and Agents.
- Information about the *National HR Pilot Project*.
- A bibliography.

---

NOTE: The colours in **Diagram 1**, and throughout this kit, follow the same coding system: – BURGUNDY for **Instructions**, BLUE for **HR Tools**, and GOLD for **Policy and Procedure (P&P) Templates**.

---