

Myths and Realities of Being Self-Employed



**Mary Mathews
President
Northeast Entrepreneur
Fund**

Being a content business owner involves understanding the reality of being a business owner. Let's explore what self-employment really means.

Myth: All business owners make lots of money.

Reality: Not all business owners make a profit. To be profitable, a business owner needs to understand their profit is made and manage the business accordingly. Very few business owners just get lucky and make lots

of money without doing planning.

Myth: All existing business owners know what they're doing.

Reality: Nobody who is going to start a business, or who already owns a business, is strong in all of the areas needed to run a business effectively. The key is to understand your strengths and capitalize on them, and compensate for your weaknesses.

Myth: There are lots of grants and free money to help me start a business.

Reality: There are few, if any, grants available to small business owners.

Myth: It will take 3-5 years for my business to show a profit.

Reality: There are many businesses that can be profitable from day one. It is true that sales and profit will often increase over time.

Myth: I know what I'm doing-I don't need to write a business plan to be successful.

Reality: According to the

Small Business Administration, about half of all small businesses will fail within two years. For customers who obtain loans from the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund, 95% are still in business after two years, largely attributable to developing and following a solid business plan. Doing a complete business plan will substantially increase your probability of being successful.

Myth: Writing a business plan is really hard to do.

Reality: Writing a business plan may take a little time, but it need not be a difficult task. An adviser such as the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund can help you understand what to do and how to do it. It usually takes a lot less time to complete a business plan than most people think it will.

Myth: Business owners don't need to work as hard, since they are the boss.

Reality: Business owners often work much harder than employees. As an entrepreneur, you will reap the rewards of your hard work, and being self-employed

involves hard work.

Myth: My credit is bad, so a loan is out of the question for me.

Reality: Any lender will evaluate your credit history and, in part, base its loan terms and interest rate on that factor. Some lenders, though, are able to provide "micro loans" to people who have experienced past credit problems.

Mary Mathews is president of the Northeast Entrepreneur Fund, which helps people start and grow successful small businesses. NEF provides training, consulting and financing to emerging and small businesses in northeast Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin. To learn more, visit www.entrepreneurfund.org, or contact Jane Bymark, business developer in Grand Rapids, 218-326-941, janeb@entrepreneurfund.org.

**By Mary Mathews
President
Northeast Entrepreneur
Fund**



A ribbon cutting was held for ActionCOACH Business Coach Ann Backes Dodge. ActionCOACH is the World's #1 Business Coaching Firm bringing over 344 powerful, yet simple, sales, marketing, and team building strategies to business owners through workshops and coaching. Your Action Business Coach will be your experienced, objective guide to mentor you in growing your business to its highest level of profitability. For more information regarding ActionCOACH and upcoming events, contact Ann Backes Dodge at 218-206-3406. Pictured: Diane Skelly - Chamber Ambassador, Ann Backes Dodge - Action Coach Business Coaching & Ann Killian - Chamber Ambassador

Ribbon Cuttings



The Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce conducted a ribbon cutting ceremony for Paul Bunyan Telephone Wednesday, April 23 at the new location in Grand Square, 1220 South Pokegama Ave., Grand Rapids. Paul Bunyan Telephone Cooperative is committed to meeting the needs and expectations of members and customers by providing quality innovative communication services. Pictured, from left are Shannon Rajala, chamber ambassador, Fred Trappe, chamber ambassador, Michael Negron, Mary Jane Knapp, Derek Rolle, Maria Kuechle and Diane Skelly, chamber ambassador.



A Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce ribbon cutting ceremony for Ogle's Marketplace Foods was held Tuesday, May 6. Pictured, from left, holding the ribbon are Todd Knuth, marketing director for Johanneson's Inc., Rich Johanneson, vice president, Johanneson's Inc., Leon Merck, retail operations director, Johanneson's Inc. and Dan Erkill, Grand Rapids City Council member; middle row, Alec Covington, president/CEO Nash Finch Company, Kurt Ogle, store director, Don Braun, retail councilor, Nash Finch Companies, Keith Johanneson, president, Johanneson's Inc., Curtis Zahrt, division president, Nash Finch Companies; back row, Zach Griemann and Kristina Clark, chamber ambassadors. The Johanneson Companies of Bemidji purchased the store from Bruce and Karen Ogle in February of this year. The store has literally been transformed with a new seafood and service meat department, expanded produce, bakery and deli departments, a new international section as well as new decor and associates, led by Kurt Ogle, geared up to serve the community of Grand Rapids.



The Chamber of Commerce performed a ribbon cutting on May 17th for Sherwin Williams during their open house. The pursuit of excellence is a commitment, not an achievement for Sherwin Williams. This commitment is a vital part of the Sherwin-Williams culture. It is a pledge that joins every employee together in service to our customers and shareholders. Stop by and visit the new store at 300 SE 29th Street, Grand Rapids, MN 55744 or call Phone: 218-327-6007. Left to right: Rick Burgess (District Manager), Leon Rudnick (GR Store Manager), Andy Nelson (GR Asst. Manager), and Peggy Schagh-Chamber Ambassador. Store Hours are: M-F 7:30am-6pm, Sat. 8am-4pm



The Grand Rapids Area Chamber of Commerce held a ribbon cutting for Bear Creek Coffee, 1300 East Highway 169, next to Rainbow Bottle Shop on Tuesday, May 20. Bear Creek Coffee offers a variety of coffees, breakfast and lunch sandwiches to go with convenient double drive thru windows. Espresso, lattes, cappuccino, mochas, italian sodas, frozen blended coffees and fruit smoothies are some of their specialties. Sweet treats such as muffins and cinnamon rolls are also on the menu. Kids menu also. Hours M-F 5 a.m.-6 p.m.; Sat. 7 a.m.-3 p.m.; Sun. 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Call 999-7041. Pictured, from left, are June Johnson, chamber ambassador, Sean Janecek, owner, Kristina Clark, chamber ambassador, and Michelle Rossi, chamber ambassador.

2008 - Board of Directors

- | | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Sherry Frick, Chair | Minuteman Press |
| Margie Ritter, Vice Chair | Minnesota Power |
| Amy Trast, Treasurer | American Bank |
| Karen Lindgren, Past Chair | Carteret Mortgage Corporation |
| Judy Nesvold | Itasca Realty GMAC |
| Sholom Blake | Sholom R. Blake, CPA |
| Peggy Schagh | US Bank |
| Cindy Feyder | Edward Jones |
| Michelle Rossi | Mike Ives Realty |
| Mike Iaizzo | KMFY/KOZY |
| Rick Utech | IEDC |
| June Johnson | Northern Business Products |
| Brandon Sharp | Wal-Mart |
| Chad Simons | Sugar Lake Lodge/Visit Grand Rapids |
| Wayne Bruns | Grand Rapids State Bank |
| Gary McInerney | RE/MAX |
| Cheryl Lemler | Kettle Korn |
| Jane Bymark | NE Entrepreneur Fund |
| Greg Chandler | UPM/Blandin |

Our Gang
STAFFING SERVICES Inc.
Time-saving solutions for your business needs.
Brittany Venaas, CSP
Staffing Specialist
Ph: 218-327-6762 • Fx: 218-327-4179
ourganggr@2Z.net
www.ourgangstaffing.com

Tower
Corporate Office
218-969-3493
Grand Rapids
218-327-6762
Hibbing
218-262-1692
888-480-6769
1215 SE 2nd Ave.
Grand Rapids, MN
55744
GRH08035118

WMM
WASTE MANAGEMENT
Complete waste collection services
Call today for a FREE estimate.
328-6212

**Commercial
Residential
Construction
Industrial
Recycling
Demolition**

COLDWELL BANKER
Northwoods Realty
218-326-3455 ext. 20
Residential & Lakeshore Specialist,
Native to the Area with a licensed fulltime assistant to help meet all clients needs.
812 Pokegama Ave. S., Grand Rapids, MN 55744
GRH07026558

TINA KANE
Multi Million Dollar Producer

Charlotte McDermott
Broker®, CRS, G.R.I.
charlotte@prudentiallakesrealty.com
Designations of a True Professional!
• Certified Residential Specialist
• Graduate of Realtor Institute
608 South Pokegama Avenue,
Grand Rapids, MN 55744
(218) 259-9696
(800) 784-7269
Please visit my website: www.charlottemcdermott.com
An independently owned and operated member of the Prudential Real Estate Affiliates, Inc.

Financing For Your Business
Start-ups • Expansions • Relocation
Purchase of Existing Business
Call us today!
218-326-8210
1-800-422-0374 toll-free
www.entrepreneurfund.org

Bob Voss
Loan Fund Manager

Jane Bymark
Business Developer

Over \$7 million loaned to area businesses since 1989!

LASALLE ST.
LA SALLE ST. SECURITIES, L.L.C.
located at
The First National Bank of Coleraine
W. HWY 169, P.O. Box 158 - Coleraine, MN 55722
218-245-4002 • 218-360-1585 (cell)
Fax 218-245-4015

Kathy Pliska
Investment Representative
ktielke@lasalle-st.com

THE LATEST TECHNOLOGY FROM ONE RELIABLE SOURCE

Paul Bunyan Telephone
(218) 999-1234
(888) 586-3100
www.paulbunyan.net

Local & Long Distance Telephone Services
Digital Television
High-Speed Internet