FRESH WIND CONSULTING

GUIDE, PARTNER, IMPACT

LAUNCH READY · SESSION 1 OF 8

From Idea to Opportunity

Turning a skill or passion into a business idea worth testing

Toronto Public Library · York Woods Branch
Entrepreneur in Residence · Fall 2026 · Leo Bailey

OUR EIGHT WEEKS TOGETHER

1	From Idea to Opportunity	TONIGHT
2	Your Business Plan, One Page at a Time	
3	Money Matters: Budgeting & Pricing	
4	Funding Your Vision	
5	Rules of the Road	
6	Marketing on a Community Budget	
7	Selling with Confidence	
8	Community Launch Circle	

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LAUNCH READY

Eight weeks, one journey

1
From Idea to Opportunity

2
Your Business Plan, One Page at a Time

3
Money Matters: Budgeting & Pricing

4
Funding Your Vision

5
Rules of the Road

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Marketing on a Community Budget

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Selling with Confidence

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Community Launch Circle

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SESSION 1

Today's session

1. Where good business ideas come from
2. Testing an idea before you spend a dollar
3. Low-cost research in our own community

YOU LEAVE WITH

Your Idea Map and a plan for 10 customer conversations this week

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START HERE

A business is a solution to a problem that someone will pay to have solved.

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IDEA SOURCES

Where good ideas come from

1

What you are good at

The skill people already ask you for: braiding, catering, fixing phones, tutoring.

2

What frustrates you

Something missing or done badly around here that you keep noticing.

3

What our community travels for

What people drive downtown or to Brampton to buy. That gap is an opening.

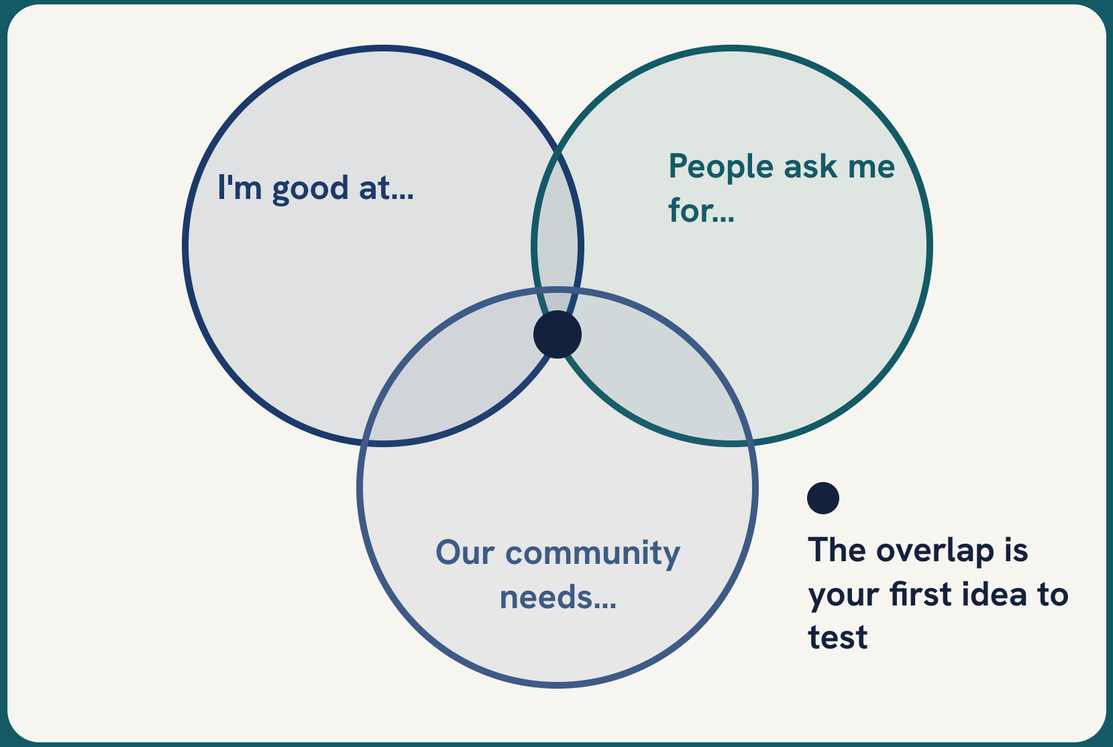
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YOUR TURN · 8 MINUTES

Pen and paper · copy this into your notebook

Draw your Idea Map

1. Draw three big overlapping circles on a blank page
2. Label them like the picture
3. Write at least three things in each circle
4. Circle anything that shows up in two or more



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BEFORE YOU SPEND · WRITE THESE DOWN

Four questions for any idea

1 **Who exactly has this problem?**
Name a real person, not everyone.

2 **How do they solve it today?**
Every problem has a workaround, even a bad one.

3 **Would they pay to solve it better?**
Complaints are free. Payment is proof.

4 **How much, and how often?**
$20 once a year is a different business from $20 a week.

In your notebook: on a new page, write the four questions and answer each one for the idea in your overlap. Keep this page. We build on it every week.

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TEST CHEAPLY

Test it before you spend a dollar

1. **Talk to 10 people.** Not family. People who would actually be customers.
2. **Make a simple sample.** A tray of food, a free first session, a photo of the product.
3. **Ask for a deposit or pre-order.** Money on the table is the strongest signal there is.
4. **Show up where people are.** A church event, a market table, the barbershop, the library.
5. **Write down what happened.** What they said, what they paid, what they asked for.

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RESEARCH

Market research on a community budget

1

Conversations

Ask about the last time they bought something similar.

2

Observation

Visit competitors. Note prices, line-ups and busy hours.

3

The library

Free business databases and librarians who can help you search.

4

Online signals

Search the need locally. Read reviews of similar businesses.

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ASK BETTER QUESTIONS

Questions that get the truth

Instead of asking...	Ask...
Would you buy this?	When did you last pay for something like this?
Do you like my idea?	What is the hardest part of this problem for you?
How much would you pay?	What did you pay last time, and was it worth it?

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OVER TO YOU

Local businesses we love

SHOUT ONE OUT

What is your favourite local business, and why?

A shop, a restaurant, a barber, a caterer, someone who sells from home.

WHAT THEY HAVE IN COMMON

1 **They started small**
A kitchen, a spare room, a market table.

2 **Their first customers were neighbours**
Family, church, friends of friends.

3 **They grew by word of mouth**
One happy customer told the next.

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PAIR SHARE · 4 MINUTES

Pen and paper · write it in your notebook

Say it in one sentence

1. Write the sentence in your notebook and fill in the blanks
2. Turn to the person beside you and read it out
3. Swap. Ask each other one of the four questions

I help ____ who struggle with ____ by ____.

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TAKE HOME

Your homework: 10 conversations

COPY THIS LOG INTO YOUR NOTEBOOK

#	Who (not family)	Last time they bought	What they paid	Biggest frustration
1				
2				
3				
… 10				

Talk to people who could really be customers. Ask about the last time they bought, not what they might do.

NEXT WEEK

Your Business Plan, One Page at a Time

Bring your notebook: your Idea Map, four questions and conversation log.

Questions? Book a one-on-one session.

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