First Start Planning Ltd.

Course Guide

HEATHER LYON

Heather is the owner and operator of FirstStart Planning Ltd. and a Certified Professional Bookkeeper who provides training and business consulting services to her clients throughout western Canada for more than 20 years. Heather's enthusiasm and insight make for a lively and enjoyable experience for her clients whether one-on-one or in her group workshops. Heather works closely with her business clients to ensure a well-planned start-up, and also works with existing business owners to develop systems for efficient and effective operations. Whether learning new skills for setting up their bookkeeping system or trying to get focused on an idea or a direction, Heather's clients appreciate the knowledge and experience she shares both as an understanding individual counselor or stimulating group facilitator. Classes are available in person and live online.

WORKSHOP TOPICS

Financial Management

Accounting for the Non-Accountant (2 days)
This two-day workshop covers the basics of accounting and financial systems for business. Using a series of hands-on and simulation exercises, participants are given a basic understanding of accounting systems used in a business and learn about the basic information included in the Balance Sheet and Income Statement. This course is ideal for the small business owner who wants to gain a great understanding of their financial records, or for people who have recently taken on a management position that requires some basic knowledge of accounting.

Financial Basics for Non-Profit/Volunteer Organizations (3 days)
This is a three-day workshop that teaches volunteers and staff members of non-profit programs/organizations the basic information they need to understand the financial aspects of their organizations. In addition to developing an understanding of the financial statements for non-profits, the program includes details on liability issues, financial controls, requirements under the Societies Act and other important information to ensure an accurate and honest accounting of your organization's finances.

Certified Professional Bookkeeper Training
This program consists of 10 days of training that is designed to enhance the knowledge of people presently employed in a bookkeeping or finance position or interested in pursuing a career in a bookkeeping position. The program includes comprehensive information for bookkeepers working in Alberta or the Northwest Territories and will help prepare them to obtain their designation as a Certified Professional Bookkeeper through the Certified Professional Bookkeepers of Canada if they choose.
The program includes seven modules varying in length from 1 to 3 days. The courses are delivered in conjunction with an accounting simulation developed by Blue-Sky Publishing. The simulation includes realistic source documents for a small business, so students get to learn using real-life documentation. These courses include training in manual bookkeeping as well as a computerized software program (Sage 50 or QuickBooks).

Reading & Analyzing Financial Statements (2 days)
You pay all kinds of money to your accountant to prepare annual financial statements for your business, but do you really know how to read them? This workshop goes through the sections of basic financial statements including balance sheets, income statements and supporting documents to give you a thorough understanding of the information they contain. You will learn how to use common ratios used by lenders and investors to determine the health of your business, as well as ways to thoroughly analyze the information contained in the statements. This will allow you to manage your business through better use of your financial statements.

Board Development

Boards That Work (1 day)
This one-day workshop is for new or existing board members who want to increase their skills and abilities to become more effective in their positions. Topics include board governance; communication - between board members and with stakeholders and staff; and financial controls to protect your organization and its staff. Come and learn techniques to make your board more successful!

Financial Basics for Boards (1 day)
This one-day workshop is for board members to gain a better understanding of the finances of their organizations. Topics include financial controls, requirements of the Societies Act, liability issues and how to read and understand the financial statements of the organization.

Strategic Planning for Organizations (1 day)
Many organizations spend hours on strategic planning, but often the plans don't seem to materialize. Change happens so quickly in the workplace that it is difficult to stay on top of our goals, let alone achieve them. In this 1-day session, you will learn practical tips on how to move through the strategic planning process, so you end up with a realistic plan that you can start implementing immediately. The class will teach you the steps in creating a strategic plan through setting up an evaluation and control method to ensure that goals and plans are reviewed continually.

Organizational Management

Team Building – Moving Your Team from "Storming" to "Performing" (1 day)
This full-day workshop is designed to allow participants to learn more about themselves and the members of their team and provide insight into ways they can improve communication within their team. The workshop consists of a variety of interactive and entertaining activities that will teach concepts about team communication, including an understanding of differences in personalities and perception and how to coach other team members in a more effective manner.

From Receivable to Believable – Collections for Small Business (1 Day)
This is a full-day workshop for small business owners or individuals who are responsible for approving credit applications and collection of accounts receivable. This hands-on workshop gives participants an opportunity to learn techniques for collection that will prevent the necessity to take legal action. A combination of real-life anecdotes from the "frontlines" of a collection agency and group exercises such as "Track Down the Deadbeat" make for an entertaining learning experience.

Developing a Policy and Procedures Manual for Your Small Business (2 days)
A well-written policy and procedures manual can effectively create the systems you need in place to reduce conflict and improve productivity in the workplace. Learn about the difference between policies and procedures, sections to be included, and how to write clearly and concisely to ensure the manual is effective for your workplace.

Effective & Efficient Meetings (1 day)
Many people involved in businesses or in the non-profit sector have not received formal training in chairing or participating in meetings. This workshop is designed to give you the skills you need to make your meetings more productive and take less time! Topics include timed agendas, Rules of Order, meeting preparation and follow-up, dealing with 'hot topics' and much more.

Robert's Rules of Order (1 day)
Have you ever played a team sport where only a few of the players knew the rules? The same types of challenges can occur in your meetings if your group does not understand how to properly "play the game". In this one-day session, you will learn the basics of Robert's Rules of Order, the foremost manual on parliamentary procedures that is used by most organizations with boards of directors. By following these rules and other tips included in this session, you can ensure your meetings will be fair, efficient, democratic, and orderly.

Writing & Editing Skills (2 days)
Good business writing leads to good business decisions, which leads to good business. This course emphasizes business writing (letters, memos, emails, documents, web material) with the reader and readability in mind. In two days, you will focus on new formats, writing style, tone, clarity, conciseness and results while exploring new skills and time saving approaches.

Skills for Making Effective Decisions (2 days)
Making effective decisions requires good communication, confidence, and creativity. Problem solving calls for critical thinking, risk management, trouble shooting and a focus on solutions. This course provides skill development in all of these areas. The approach in this course is to take action rather than reaction; to see solutions over problems, to look for what's next versus what's past and to analyze rather than to be paralyzed.

Employment Standards
This 1-day class goes over the employment standards that most employers in your province or territory are required to uphold. These standards are updated from time to time, and the material will include what has changed in the newest version of these standards, along with the basics that remain the same. This class will help to ensure that you are meeting these minimum standards in your workplace.

Business Start-Up & Development

Starting a Small Business (1 day)

This one-day course is designed for people who are considering starting their own business and want basic information on how to do this. The course includes information on general business start-up as well as details specific to your region. By using an imaginary business idea (or an actual one of their own), participants start by deciding if self-employment is right for them and move right through to learning how to develop their business idea. They will also learn the steps required in starting a business in their community.

Developing Your Business Plan (2 days)

Economic change in the region means many opportunities for new businesses. Unfortunately, many new business owners take an "If I build it, they will come" approach to starting their business, and end up struggling with financial loss and mental stress. Most banks and funders require a business plan from new business applicants because they know how important it is to be prepared for all aspects of the start up and development of a business. This workshop will take participants through the steps involved in developing a business plan that will act as a 'road map' to help them navigate the start up and development of their business and increase their chances for funding approval as well as business success.

Marketing Your Business (1 day)

Is your business the best kept secret in town? You may have a great business with excellent products and terrific services. But if no one knows about it, how will you ever succeed? A marketing plan allows a business owner to take a step back in order to get a big picture of who their target market really is and how best to market their product or service to that market. This "hands-on" full-day workshop allows business owners to work through the various aspects of a marketing plan for their business. By the end of the day, they will have developed a framework for how best to get the word out to customers everywhere about their "best kept secret"!

Basic Record Keeping for Small Businesses (2 days)

This two-day workshop covers the basics of setting up and operating a basic record-keeping system for a small business. In hands-on exercises, students set up and make entries for a fictitious company using a simple synoptic journal. (This can be done in a manual journal or using the Excel program if a computer lab is available.) In addition to monthly synoptic entries, students learn how to keep track of accounts payable and receivable, invoicing, payroll, and government remittances. This course is ideal in teaching new business owners how best to keep track of the paperwork and stay in compliance with basic government requirements.

<u>Professional Development for Staff</u>

Delivering Exceptional Customer Service (2 days)
Customers today have high expectations. They are more demanding and less patient. Providing a positive, productive, and proactive response is the key to exceptional customer service. Service skills always require updating, careful analysis, review, and practice. This course examines the key to exceptional customer service (both in person and over the telephone) by emphasizing the importance of first impressions, a positive service image and a customer-focused approach.

Minute Taking (1 day)
This full-day workshop is for people who are responsible for taking minutes in meetings. You will learn how to prepare for the meeting, take accurate minutes and how to present, distribute and maintain the minutes most effectively. Topics include agenda preparation, different minute taking styles & formats for different types of meetings, some basics on Rules of Order, understanding motions and more.

Writing Effective Proposals (2 days)
This 2-day course is designed to teach students how to write an effective proposal, whether to obtain work for a business or funding for an organization. The steps involved are covered from obtaining the needed information to prepare the proposal right to the layout of the final document. Through a combination of lecture and hands-on work, students will work through the development and preparation of an actual proposal. Bring your laptop!

Every Minute Matters (1 day)
Time – the greatest non-renewable resource in the world! While it may not be possible to put more hours in a day, it is possible to make better use of the 24 that we have. Learn techniques for managing your time to get the things done that you <u>need</u> to do and <u>want</u> to do (and the wisdom to know the difference!)

Speak Up, Speak Out (1 day)
Surveys indicate that many people list public speaking as their greatest fear – while fear of death is listed farther down the list! If you are someone who would rather die than speak up in public, this one-day course is for you. In addition to learning what it takes to be effective in any public speaking situation – whether making a formal presentation or just offering an opinion in a meeting, you will gain valuable experience in facing your fear and moving through it.

Personal Development

Change Your Financial Future (1 day)
"They say money talks – all it ever says to me is good-bye!" If this statement reflects the way you feel about your money, then this is the workshop for you! Whether you are struggling to pay the bills each month, or just feel that you need to take control of your money (rather than letting it control you), this course will give you new insights into how you can change the way you deal with, and even think about, your money. Learn how to develop budgets and plans to change your financial future!

Look Back, Move Forward – Successful Goal Setting (1 day)
We often have goals that must be met – some that are set by others and some that we set ourselves. Whether you are striving to meet the sales targets for the month, improving your 'on-the job' performance or just working on some personal areas of your life, this workshop will give you the tools that you need to develop winning strategies for success.

Money Matters – The Basics of Personal Finance (1 day)
This one-day workshop combines lecture, discussion, and a fun and educational board game – "This Little Piggy!" to teach the basics of personal finances. Topics covered include dealing with banks, information on operation of bank accounts, online and telephone banking services, applying for and repaying loans and mortgages, dealing with credit, negotiating with lenders, understanding financial terms and much more.

Communicate with Confidence (1 day)
Often we find ourselves getting frustrated and angry when communicating with others. This can lead to aggressive or passive-aggressive behavior, which prevents us from achieving success. Learn how to communicate assertively through an examination of behaviour patterns and the development of interpersonal skills so you can get the success you deserve!

The Triple A Employee
If you were your boss, would you hire you? Learn how to be the kind of employee who not only survives on the job but thrives! Work so you your employer sees your value and rewards your efforts. (This 2-hour LIVE online session is for all new employees and can be used as part of the orientation process.)

Respect in the Workplace (1 day)
Respect – Every employee wants to be treated with respect – by their bosses, their co-workers, and their customers. Learn what it takes to deal respectfully with others and ensure the same respect is given back to you!

Computer Software Training

Intro to Zoom (1/2 day)

Learn how to get more out of this online software program whether you are a presenter or a participant. Topics include how to schedule and join a meeting, switching views, breakout rooms, and more!

Sage 50 Accounting (Desktop version)

This series of half-day sessions provides training on the basics of the Sage 50 Accounting Software Program (Desktop version). There is an additional full-day session on Sage 50 -Beyond the Basics for experienced users of the program as well (listed below).

Intro to Sage 50 (half-day)

This half-day session includes an overview of the Sage 50 program and features, as well as a description of the different versions available. This is an ideal session for people who are just starting to work with the program or are in the process of choosing an accounting software program for their business or organization

Sage 50 Module 1 – Customers and Sales (half-day)

This half-day session looks at the Accounts Receivable module of the Sage 50 software program whether for inventory or non-inventory sales. Topics include: Customer Record setup; Entering Accounts Receivable Sales and Receipts; Entering Sales Invoices paid by Cash or Credit Card; Entering Credit Invoices; Correcting and voiding sales and receipt entries; Recurring entries; Customer and Sales Reports

Sage 50 Module 2 – Vendors and Purchases (half-day)

This half-day session looks at the Accounts Payable module of the Sage 50 software program whether for inventory or non-inventory purchases. Topics include: Vendor/Supplier Record setup; Entering Accounts Payable Purchases and Payments; Entering Purchases paid by Cash or Credit Card; Entering Credit Invoices; Correcting and voiding purchase and payment entries; Recurring entries; Inventory Adjustments; Vendors and Purchases Reports

Sage 50 Module 3 – Employees & Payroll (half-day)

This half-day session looks at the Employees & Payroll module of the Sage 50 software program. Topics include: Employee Record setup; Entering paycheques; Payroll Advances; Releasing Vacation Pay; Adjusting and voiding Paycheques; WCB Remittances; Receiver General Payroll Remittances; Employees & Payroll Reports (including T4 and Record of Employment forms)

Sage 50 Module 4 – GST & Banking (half-day)

This half-day session looks at how GST is tracked and reported in the Sage 50 software program, as well as the Bank Reconciliation feature. Topics include: Tracking GST; Tax Codes; Preparing and posting your GST Return; Entering bank deposits; Undeposited Funds Account; Entering service charges and automatic withdrawals; Transfers between accounts; Bank Reconciliation

Sage 50 – Beyond the Basics (1 day)

If you have been working with the Sage 50 program for some time now, you are likely familiar with all the basics involved in purchases, sales, and payroll. This full-day session is designed for the advanced user of the program and will give you information on some of the additional features of the program, as well as tips and tricks to make the program work better for you. This class will also include a review of the newest features that have been added in the most current version of the Sage 50 program.

QuickBooks Accounting (Desktop Version)

This is a series of half-day sessions designed to give users of the QuickBooks Accounting Desktop software a good understanding of the program. We start with an Intro session to help you understand how the program works and what features it includes. Then we continue with four more sessions that each focus on one module of the program including Sales, Purchases, Payroll, & GST/Banking. Finally, we spend a full-day session on learning some of the additional features (or for experienced users of the program), as well as tips and tricks to make you even more proficient with the program.

Intro to QuickBooks

This half-day session includes an overview of the QuickBooks Accounting program and features, as well as a description of the different versions available. This session gives a basic overview of how the program works and reviews the various modules and features in the program. This will help deepen the understanding for new users or for those who are in the process of choosing an accounting software program for their business or organization.

QuickBooks Module 1 – Customers and Sales

This half-day session looks at the Customers module of the QuickBooks software program whether for inventory or non-inventory sales. Topics include Customer Record setup; Sales Item setup; Entering Accounts Receivable Sales and Receipts; Entering Sales Receipts for sales paid by Cash or Credit Card; Entering Refunds and Credits; Correcting and voiding sales and receipt entries; Memorized Transactions; Customer and Receivables Reports

QuickBooks Module 2 – Vendors and Purchases

This half-day session looks at the Vendors module of the QuickBooks software program whether for inventory or non-inventory purchases. Topics include Vendor Record setup; Entering Accounts Payable Purchases and Payments; Entering Purchases paid by Cash or Credit Card using the Write Cheques feature; Entering Credit Invoices; Correcting and voiding purchase and payment entries; Recurring entries; Inventory Adjustments; Vendors and Payables Reports

QuickBooks Module 3 – Employees & Payroll

This half-day session looks at the Employees & Payroll module of the QuickBooks software program. Topics include Employee Record setup; Entering paycheques; Payroll Advances; Releasing Vacation Pay; Adjusting and voiding Paycheques; WCB Remittances; Receiver General Payroll Remittances; Employees & Payroll Reports (including T4 and Record of Employment forms)

QuickBooks Module 4 – GST & Banking

This half-day session looks at how GST is tracked and reported in the QuickBooks software program, as well as the Bank Reconciliation feature. Topics include Tracking GST; Tax Codes; Preparing and posting your GST Return; Entering bank deposits; Undeposited Funds Account; Entering service charges and automatic withdrawals; Transfers between accounts; Bank Reconciliation

QuickBooks – Beyond the Basics

If you have been working with the QuickBooks program for some time now, you are likely familiar with all the basics involved in purchases, sales and payroll. This full day session is designed for the advanced user of the program and will give you information on some of the additional features of the program, as well as tips and tricks to make the program work better for you. Topics include customizing the program, backup and restoring, setting up users and passwords, memorized transactions, customizing reports, setting up budgets, and customer jobs/classes. This class will also include a review of the newest features that have been added in the most current version of the QuickBooks program.

QuickBooks Accounting (Online version)

Intro to QuickBooks Online

This three-hour session includes an overview of the QuickBooks Online Accounting program and features, as well as a description of the different versions available. This is an ideal session for people who are just starting to work with the program or are in the process of choosing an accounting software program for their business or organization.

QuickBooks Online Module 1 – Customers and Sales

This three-hour session looks at the Customers module of the QuickBooks Online program whether for inventory or non-inventory sales. Topics include Customer Record setup; Sales Item setup; Entering Accounts Receivable Sales and Receipts; Entering Sales Receipts for sales paid by Cash or Credit Card; Entering Refunds and Credits; Correcting and voiding sales and receipt entries; Recurring Transactions; Customer and Receivables Reports

QuickBooks Online Module 2 – Vendors and Purchases

This three-hour session looks at the Vendors module of the QuickBooks Online program whether for inventory or non-inventory purchases. Topics include Vendor Record setup; Entering Accounts Payable Purchases and Payments; Entering Purchases paid by Cash or Credit Card; Entering Credit Invoices; Correcting and voiding purchase and payment entries; Recurring entries; Inventory Adjustments; Vendors and Payables Reports

QuickBooks Online Module 3 – Employees & Payroll

This three-hour session looks at the Employees & Payroll module of the QuickBooks Online program. Topics include Employee Record setup; Entering paycheques; Payroll Advances; Releasing Vacation Pay; Adjusting and voiding Paycheques; WCB Remittances; Receiver General Payroll Remittances; Employees & Payroll Reports (including T4 and Record of Employment forms)

QuickBooks Online Module 4 – GST & Banking

This three-hour session looks at how GST is tracked and reported in the QuickBooks Online program, as well as the Bank Reconciliation feature. Topics include Tracking GST; Tax Codes; Preparing and posting your GST Return; Entering bank deposits; Undeposited Funds Account; Entering service charges and automatic withdrawals; Transfers between accounts; Bank Reconciliation

PowerPoint Basics (1/2 day)
If you are new to working with this presentation software, this 3-hour session is for you! You will be introduced to the capabilities of the program and learn some basic techniques for creating and delivering a simple slide show.

Powerful PowerPoint Presentations (1/2 day)
Learn more about creating PowerPoint presentations that pack a punch in this three-hour session. You will learn some of the tips and tricks for working with the software, but the session includes even more, such as the five rules for creating great PowerPoints, how to ensure that your audience gets your message, and that they remember it long after you finish!

Microsoft Word Software

This series of half-day sessions covers the basics of using the MS Word program.

Word Basics

This half-day session will introduce you to the capabilities of the MS Word program. Learn the basics of what you can do with this powerful word processing program including:

- Types of documents
- Moving around the screen
- Using the ‘Ribbon’
- Entering text
- Find & Replace
- Using undo and redo
- Creating new documents
- Switching between documents
- Saving documents
- Viewing & printing documents

Formatting the Document

Make your Word documents look more professional by learning how to properly format various types of documents quickly & easily. In this half-day session, you will learn how to work with:

- Text alignment
- Fonts & sizes
- Borders
- Colours and patterns
- Format painter

- Themes & Styles
- Page Setup
- Inserting the Date & Time

Tables & Illustrations

In the Word program, you can insert a variety of items to enhance the information and make it more visually appealing to your audience. Learn how to use the following items:

- Working with Tables
- Inserting a Picture
- Working with Shapes
- SmartArt Graphics
- Inserting Screenshots
- Working with Charts

Word Extras

You know the basics of the Word program. Now learn about what else you can do to make working with this program even easier and more effective in this half-day session. Topics include:

- Working with Tabs
- Envelopes & Labels
- Mail Merge
- Tracking Changes
- Using comments
- Proofing Tools
- Headers & Footers
- Page Numbering

*****Please note:** If you prefer, a more detailed and lengthier workshop can be delivered using manuals from CCI Learning. There are Microsoft Word Associate & Expert Level manuals available.*

Microsoft Excel Software
Intro to Excel

This half-day session will introduce you to the capabilities of the MS Excel program. Learn the basics of what you can do with the powerful electronic spreadsheet program including:

- Purpose of spreadsheets
- Moving around the screen
- Using the 'Ribbon'
- Entering data
- Creating basic formulas
- Selecting cells
- Working with workbooks
- Viewing & printing

Formulas, Functions & Fill

In this half-day session, learn how to set up formulas and functions to get the Excel program to do the math for you. Topics include:

- Creating and editing formulas
- Mathematical operators
- Common functions
- Conditional functions
- Referring to other workbooks
- Fill Functions
- Absolute & relative cell references
- Displaying & Printing Formulas
- Protecting your workbook

Formatting the Worksheet

Make your Excel workbooks look professional and readable by learning how to properly format all the aspects of your spreadsheet. In this half-day session, you will learn how to work with:

- Formatting dates & numbers
- Cell alignment
- Fonts & sizes
- Borders
- Colours and patterns
- Format painter
- Themes & Styles
- Conditional formatting

Charts & Tables

In the Excel program, you can convert your data from a spreadsheet into a table and/or chart. Learn how you can turn dry financial and statistical information into a vibrant visual display that will have a powerful impact on your audience!

- Charts vs. Tables
- Creating a chart
- Changing chart types
- Changing chart layout and location
- Using sparklines
- Creating a table
- Creating a Pivot Table

Excel Extras

You know the basics of the Excel program. Now learn about what else you can do to make working with this program even easier and more effective in this half-day session. Topics include:

- Working with graphics
- Inserting a screenshot
- Sorting & Filtering
- Using hyperlinks
- Using comments
- Drop-down lists
- Grouping & Subtotals

Advanced Excel

This full-day session is for people who are very comfortable with the basics of the Excel program and want to learn some of the more complex features available. Topics include:

- Advanced Functions & Formulas
- Advanced Features of Pivot Tables & Pivot Charts
- Creating Forms
- What-if Analysis Tools
- Handy Excel Shortcuts

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These and other courses can be tailored to your specific group. Group facilitation, Software consulting, and professional writing services are also available.

For more information on services and fees, contact:

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