

Dear Gifford,

a couple of general comments: since Cortesians in my experience don't understand the importance of business planning, anything that goes out should include a gentle sell (don't want to scare off entrepreneurs) of the necessity of business planning in general – how good planning often makes or breaks a new business and protects personal assets.

I would charge \$40 for the course, say it is for materials or something, and mention that you usually give it for \$1000. It will give it more value in the eyes of those who don't really understand the value of what you are offering.

I divided up the context section, the new “marketing” section should probably be somewhere in the curriculum.

A few edits below in italics, primarily aimed at simplifying language.

Cortes School for Woodworking Entrepreneurs

For local economic benefit from Cortes Island forests to be realized, we need effective and ambitious wood entrepreneurs to develop significant value added from milling and woodworking. The Cortes School for Woodworking Entrepreneurs is a course to help Cortes woodworkers develop businesses that will use the wood from the island's forests. It is a free course provided to all skilled woodworkers and sawmill operators on the Island. The course will take place in the fall of 1999 over a month and a half. There will be 8 days of classroom training in three sessions (3 days, 3 days and 2 days) with homework between. The course will benefit participants by increasing their knowledge of business and raising funds and will support the CES application for a community forest on the lands now chartered to CanFor.

Purposes:

- 1. To support the CES application for a community forest by demonstrating the jobs that would be created by the existence of a community forest that is managed according to eco-forestry principles.**

A primary objective will be to create business plans for value added wood product businesses proposed by class participants. We will also create plans to more fully utilize existing sawmills and shops and [] to expand these capital assets. For example, someone who is building houses today, but prefers fine woodworking, might use the course to create a plan for building a shop and going into the furniture building business. A very part time sawmill owner might find a potential partner and build a plan for expanding the business. When possible, whole teams should attend the workshop. Sole practitioner craftspersons should consider bringing their significant other.

- 2. To help Cortes woodworkers to develop and/or grow their businesses.**

The course will address many of the issues of starting and expanding a business in a remote area. []Each participant or team [] will create a business plan for their venture. *This process [] will uncover pitfalls and opportunities in starting a small business.* It will also be a selling tool for obtaining financing from banks, friends and family and venture capital On the last day of the course, these plans will be presented to a panel or real venture capitalists for feedback and perhaps in some cases investment.

The Course Schedule: October 15- November 28

We have scheduled the course to run mostly on the weekends in hopes that that would be most convenient for most potential participants. If the community would prefer, it could be run on weekdays.

I. October 15-17: Becoming a More Effective Entrepreneur

- A. The Nature of the Successful Entrepreneur
- B. Choosing an Idea
- C. Defining your Customers
- D. Defining your Idea as a Business
- E. The Competition
- F. Marketing and Sales

II. November 12-14: Your Business Plan

- A. Refining your Offering
- B. The Financial Plan
- C. Production Numbers
- D. Your Team and Your Support Group
- E. Identifying and Managing the Risks
- F. Timeline Planning

III. November 27 and 28: The Venture Capital Review

- A. Dress Rehearsal of Business Plan Presentations
- B. Last Minute Fine Tuning (Based on Feedback)
- C. Presentation to Venture Capital Panel
- D. Planning Your Next Steps

Marketing

For local economic benefit from Cortes Island forests to be realized, we may need Cortes wood product marketing organizations. Such organizations might sell FSC certified wood products on the web, act as a manufacturers' representative to retail establishments and interior designers, or open a "Cortes Store" in Vancouver or New York. We will explore the feasibility of creating such an organization to support the woodworking and other craft industries of Cortes.