



**Warning:**  
 You're about to be  
 let in on the  
**BEST KEPT SECRET  
 IN BUSINESS:**

# Co-operatives

...are twice as likely to remain in business after 10 years, compared to other business enterprises. Co-ops come in all shapes & sizes. From fan-owned sports teams, to band-owned record labels, ANYTHING can be a co-op!

## What is a Co-operative (Co-op)?

A business that is democratically owned and run by its members, who share the profits or benefits. Therefore, YOU GET AN EQUAL SAY in how the business is run! Some types are: worker, consumer and producer co-ops.

**A worker co-op** is a business that is democratically owned by the workers who make all of the decisions for the business (i.e. not one boss or CEO deciding how much the staff will earn, or work).  
*Example: London Skateboard Co-op & Urbane Cyclist Worker Co-op*

**A consumer co-op** is a business where the customers are also the owners, and democratically make the decisions for the co-op (i.e. where profits should go, who to hire as the CEO). *Example: Mountain Equipment Co-op, Green Bay Packers, Credit Unions*

**A producer co-op** is where members share equipment and pool their marketing to reach more customers.  
*Example: Gay Lea Foods, record label co-ops.*

## Built on Principles

The Co-operative Business Sector is a HUGE "family" of businesses connected by the same principles. In fact, it's the ONLY business model in the world to follow a set of Universal Principles. There are 7 co-op principles, some of which include:

- One Member = One Vote
- Co-operation Between Co-operatives
- Concern for Community



750,000 co-ops worldwide  
 51,000 credit unions  
 1 Billion members on Earth  
 + 1,300 Co-ops in Ontario alone

= ALL following the SAME CODE



# Create Your Own Co-op!



Co-ops come in all shapes & sizes. From fan-owned sports teams, to band-owned record labels, **ANYTHING** can be a co-op!

## Some examples of cool co-ops are:

Skateboard Stores

Coffee Shops

Record Labels

Co-op Grocery Stores

Tutoring Services

Community-owned Ski Hill

Video Game Designer Co-op

Bike Courier Services

Filmmaker & DJ Co-ops

Wedding Services

A Co-operative is a Business that is created to **FILL A NEED**. In the space below, jot down some answers to the following questions:

- What is a need in your life? In your school? In your community?
- What is missing in your city? What service could you benefit from?
- What is difficult to access or obtain due to high costs, or location?

How could we fill this need with a co-operative approach?  
Brainstorm some ways people could come together and fill this need by pooling resources, money, talents, space, and/or knowledge.

