

## What's holding us back? The Top 10 Barriers to Competitiveness

• By: **Sandra Dueck, Policy Analyst, Peterborough Chamber of Commerce**

What are the issues and policies that are preventing Canadian businesses from realizing their full potential?

For the fifth year in a row, the Canadian Chamber of Commerce has identified the Top 10 Barriers to Competitiveness. The 2016 version is a list of key impediments that are preventing Canadian businesses from reaching their goals and, in turn, Canada from improving its productivity and economic prosperity.

As the Canadian Chamber stated in a recent press release, "in a fiercely competitive world, business needs more than its own skills to win—it also needs a supportive environment and public policies to encourage competitiveness. This annual list of barriers points to economic hurdles of our own making, self-imposed limits on the growth of Canadian businesses. Through this initiative, the Canadian Chamber is bringing these barriers to the forefront and is urging all stakeholders to act more swiftly to improve our country's ability to compete globally."

"Although the policies involved may have started with positive goals, they now hinder business success, and many of the issues on our list were repeated from previous

years," says the Hon. Perrin Beatty, President and CEO of the Canadian Chamber of Commerce. "We need to act now. We've identified a series of improvements that can be put in place rapidly. We ask the government to remove these obstacles before conditions worsen."

### Top 10 Barriers

- 1. Public policies block small companies from becoming bigger**  
To grow Canada's companies, the government needs to change the corporate tax rates and breaks that penalize growth.
- 2. Canada is vulnerable to cyber crime**  
Canada loses \$3.12 billion to cyber crime per year, and nearly half of all small businesses have been the victim of a cyber attack because they are less equipped to handle attacks.
- 3. Canada's trade agenda – new agreements are just the start**  
Canada needs to help businesses scale up internationally. Canada also needs to ratify the Trans-Pacific Partnership and the Comprehensive Economic and Trade Agreement with the European Union, get new deals done with China and India, and cooperate on regulations with its trade partners.
- 4. Canadian resources cannot get to world markets**  
Governments need to support pipelines and other infrastructure that will allow Canadians to trade with the world. The Energy East Pipeline project would create 250 high

paying jobs at GE Peterborough.

- 5. Poor literacy numeracy and digital skills are limiting productivity in segments of Canada's workforce**  
Canada needs a plan to make sure people have the skills for tomorrow's jobs.
- 6. Canada needs a more aggressive and effective innovation strategy**  
Canada needs to reinvest in an innovation ecosystem that supports the capability of business to rapidly respond to change.
- 7. Canada is not ready for climate change**  
Canada needs clear federal policy on carbon regulation and a climate adaptation strategy.
- 8. Internal barriers to trade cost Canadians billions and restrict investment**  
To get free trade within Canada, the federal government should apply pressure on the provinces and expand the right of private parties to seek redress.
- 9. Lack of clarity regarding businesses' responsibilities to Aboriginal peoples constrains investment**  
Canada needs meaningful

reconciliation with its Aboriginal peoples; however, it is not clear to businesses what reconciliation means and what they need to do to do their part in achieving it. The federal government, as the primary interlocutor between Aboriginal peoples and other constituencies, needs to lead the way.

- 10. Canada's brand does not support business competitiveness**  
The world sees Canada as a great place to live but not to do business, and Canada has not been doing a good job at changing those perceptions. The government must increase its efforts to improve its business brand through tourism and investment promotion.

"These barriers are of our own making. They are the result of acting wrongly or failing to act at all, but we can eliminate them if we have the will to do so," says Mr. Beatty. "Government can provide the leadership to remove these hurdles. This is the opportunity to take another step towards a Canada that wins."

Read the full report at [peterboroughchamber.ca/policypublications](http://peterboroughchamber.ca/policypublications)



## OCC calls for help to offset ORPP

The Ontario Chamber of Commerce (OCC) is calling on the Government of Ontario to support businesses' transition to the Ontario Retirement Pension Plan (ORPP) through a series of offset measures.

"Our objective is to ensure that the ORPP does not weaken Ontario's economic recovery," said Allan O'Dette, President & CEO of the Ontario Chamber of Commerce. "The government projects that the ORPP will provide economic benefits to Ontario over the long-term. In the short-term, however, the plan will

place new costs on employers at a time when their costs are already rising as a result of increasing electricity rates and weakened purchasing power."

According to the OCC's analysis, the average employer will face significant cost increases in 2022, the year when both EI and the first wave of WSIB reductions are in full effect.

Employees making:  
\$30,000 a year = \$306 in new costs;  
\$50,000 a year = \$554; and  
\$90,000 a year = \$1,331.



Read the full analysis at: [occ.ca](http://occ.ca)

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ONE MEMBER AT A TIME.**

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## Member Milestones: #TeamPtbo

### Michael Skinner named Interim CEO of Innovation Cluster

Board Chair John Desbiens announced Skinner's appointment following the recent resignation of President & CEO, Martin Yuill, who has accepted a position in the Atlantic Canada bioscience sector.

"My role as interim CEO will be to ensure that the Cluster remains a strong, sustainable organization, well positioned to take advantage of emerging opportunities, and laser focused on key strategic areas," Skinner said.

For more information, check out [www.innovationcluster.ca](http://www.innovationcluster.ca)


### Aside Architects opens new office in downtown Peterborough

Architect Neil Campbell has 20 years experience ranging from cultural to multi-unit residential to commercial, plus the occasional single family residence, cottage, or addition. As a sole practitioner, Neil works closely through the preliminary design, schematic design, design development, construction documents and construction. Located at 148 Hunter Street, Suite 201. Call 705-812-2451 or go to [asidearchitects.ca](http://asidearchitects.ca)

Member Milestones:  
[peterboroughchamber.ca/member-milestones.html](http://peterboroughchamber.ca/member-milestones.html)

**Office Space for rent in the Chamber Business Centre.**

**Come join our work family in an historic downtown building.**



**Learn more at [peterboroughchamber.ca](http://peterboroughchamber.ca)**



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Peterborough Petes @PetesCHLhockey - Feb 18  
Talk about [LoveLocalPtbo!](#) @LoganDeNoble77 bangs home a rebound and it's 1-0 vs. @KingstonFronts in the 1st!

[www.peterboroughchamber.ca](http://www.peterboroughchamber.ca)

## Event Calendar



**TUESDAY,  
March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016**

### An Active Business Community

The Athletics Centre at Trent  
1600 West Bank Drive  
**4:00pm – 6:00pm**

**Details:** Learn more about the Athletics Centre and their community partners. You are encouraged to bring your gym clothes and running shoes to try out the facilities after the PBX event.



**TUESDAY  
March 8<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

### Carousel Restaurant

116 Lansdowne Street East

**Coffee's on at 7:00am**

**Speakers from 7:30 – 8:30am**

**Cost:** Pay for your breakfast



**WEDNESDAY  
March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016  
(Chamber & WBN members only)**

### Harness the Power of the Inbox

**Chamber Boardroom**  
175 George Street North  
**12:00pm – 1:00pm**

**Speaker:** Javed Khaan, Empression Marketing  
**Cost:** Free (bring your own lunch)  
**Sponsor:** Bell  
**Note:** Pre-registration is required



**WEDNESDAY,  
March 16<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

**Chamber Boardroom**  
175 George Street North  
**7:00pm – 9:00pm**

**Details:** The Holistic Group meets on the third Wednesday of the month to discuss issues affecting holistic practices and network with other holistic businesses in the community.



**THURSDAY  
March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2016**

### Meet Us @TheVenuePTBO

286 George Street North **THE VENUE**  
**5:30pm - 7:00pm\***  
**Event:** Join us for networking and a couple of special guests  
**Cost:** Admission is free, courtesy of The Venue PTBO  
**Note:** Pre-registration is preferred  
[www.peterboroughchamber.ca](http://www.peterboroughchamber.ca)




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## An ideal relationship


Nexicom has been one of the main sponsors of 4th Line Theatre from the beginning and our relationship has always been something special.

Like us, they are an independent enterprise that started small and has grown over the years.

But more than that, they are mentors who take a personal interest in our activities and inspire us to succeed.

They have never wavered in their enthusiasm for what we do and that's a level of support that I did not expect.

Rob Winslow,  
Founder & Creative Director, 4th Line Theatre



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