

Business Growth Academy

Fall Cohort 2026

Wednesday evenings | Sept. 16th – Nov. 18th | 6:15 PM– 8:45 PM

Room 285 at the Aurora Downtown Waubonsee Community College

Sept. 16 | Week 1

Orientation and Expectations

Get to know your classmates and connect with each other. Learn the techniques of Networking.



Sept. 23 | Week 2

Sizing up Your Company

Where are you today? Focus on clarifying your mission, establishing goals, and identifying core competencies.



Sept. 30 | Week 3

Exploring Growth Opportunities

Where will you go? Assess your readiness for growth, identify and screen growth opportunities, hone market research skills



Oct. 7 | Week 4

Making Strategic Decisions

How will you get there? Analyze the competition and identify key differentiators; explore business model options; evaluate exit strategies



Oct. 14 | Week 5

Financial Tools & Performance

How do we afford growth? Explore tools and techniques for forecasting and financial analysis. Understand financial ratios and how to manage the business from a financial perspective.



Oct. 21 | Week 6

Strengthening the Product/Service

How do we improve? Define features/benefits and competitive advantages; Product/Service life cycle; Intellectual property; Pricing strategies

Oct. 28 | Week 7

Seizing the Market

How do we grow our customer base? Learn strategies and tactics to build a strong brand, analyze your market and reach target markets

Nov. 4 | Week 8

Lead, Organize, Plan

Am I an effective leader? Learn how to evolve as a business leader as your company grows. Effective strategies to address growing pains, hire a strong staff and implement systems and processes needed to support scalability.

Nov. 11 | Week 9

Next Steps for Success

What's next? Define next steps as you move forward with your growth strategy.

Nov. 18 | Week 10

Graduation

BGA Alumni Q + A panel, sharing business goals and celebrating!

Learn more at
waubonsee.edu/sbdc



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