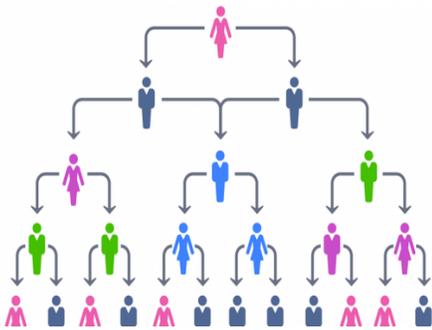


What is a Worker Cooperative?

Worker cooperatives are businesses that are owned and democratically controlled by the workers. Worker cooperatives are “values-driven” and place worker empowerment and community at the core of their business. Workers collectively and democratically make key governance and management decisions: **one person, one vote**. Workers own financial shares in the company, and make decisions about how profits are distributed. Workers are empowered to make financial decisions for their personal and collective benefit as well as the company's.



How is this different from a traditional business?



- Traditional businesses are owned and controlled by a single owner or a very small group of shareholders, whose interests are not in line with the interests of the employees of the business
- Traditional businesses are concerned primarily with the “bottom line” of maximizing profits
- Control of business determined by the amount of capital that owners invest into the company
- Workers have little to no decision making ability, and are thus vulnerable to exploitation by the owners

What types of businesses can be worker-owned?

- In short, all of them - any type of business can be worker-owned, in any industry, and at any size
- In the US, successful worker cooperative businesses exist in health care, the trades, manufacturing and engineering, technology, education, media and the arts, the service sector, and retail

How are worker cooperatives started?

- Cooperatives can be started from scratch by individuals looking to create a business that creates wealth for marginalized communities and espouses equitable business practices
- Worker cooperatives can be started by workers self-organizing to save a closed business
- Retiring owners can choose to sell their business to their workers

Want to start a worker cooperative? Cooperation Buffalo can help!

We provide technical assistance for starting and running a democratic workplace

We match businesses who align with our values to non-extractive loan capital

Contact us to get started or for more information!