

Support Your Local Businesses!

Durham is a wonderful region with many talented individuals and businesses offering fantastic services and products. This publication is your guide to these resources.

In this magazine we shine the light on business owners and operators who launched their thriving businesses with the support of the Self Employment Benefit Program in Durham.

The collective experience and abilities of this group of people and their success in numerous fields is beyond what you would find anywhere else. Enjoy our publication. Support your local businesses.



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From the Editor

I have to admit that when I was first approached about editing a new magazine expressly for the Durham region business community, I couldn't see it. As my beleaguered tax accountant will tell you, I am certainly not a businessman! I've been a longtime arts-and-culture writer and editor, working with artists and politicians, activists and celebrities. I traded in my leather dress shoes for Chuck



Taylor sneakers long ago because the bland synergy-speak and corporate obfuscation of most business people just left me cold.

Yes, the very idea of editing a business magazine seemed ridiculous.

Until I started talking to the people. Until I started reading the stories submitted to me. Until I started recognizing that primal thrill of starting a new business, a new venture, a new life. I was never interested in business because of the musty old stereotypes of fat-cat suits in corporate boardrooms, plotting takeovers of hapless subsidiaries. But individual entrepreneurs change the game, recognizing that community is every bit as important as competition and that statistics and formulas are still no substitute for personality and passion.

The internet age of the last decade has upended a great many industries, paradigms and sacred cows. Democracy is king: people are running businesses out of their homes, armed with only a web page and a dream, and it's an exciting time for people willing and able to make that leap into a new life of working solo. Geography has been exploded: we used to need corporations or unions to bring like-minded business people together; now we can do it ourselves on Facebook. For entrepreneurs, moving to Toronto is no longer the only option and the next decade or two will see whole new ways of living, working and connecting throughout Ontario and beyond.

Connection is what it's all about and what this magazine plans to foster. In these pages, you'll see your colleagues and friends, your towns and industries, your hopes and plans. We're out to celebrate the Durham region, to document the challenges of the entrepreneurial life and, most importantly, to tell the stories of remarkable people.

Let's get started!

Scott Dagostino Editor-in-Chief



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Small Business Owners face some staggering challenges

Statistics show that **96%** of all companies fail within 10 years and even more staggering is that a corporation fails every 3 minutes.

How can we help stem the tides? In an economy where there are more challenges coming at us than ever before?

There are **26,000** new products introduced each year...consumers change brand loyalty up to **30** percent more easily from just one night of watching commercials on TV and **74** per cent of consumers are buying outside their preferred brands.

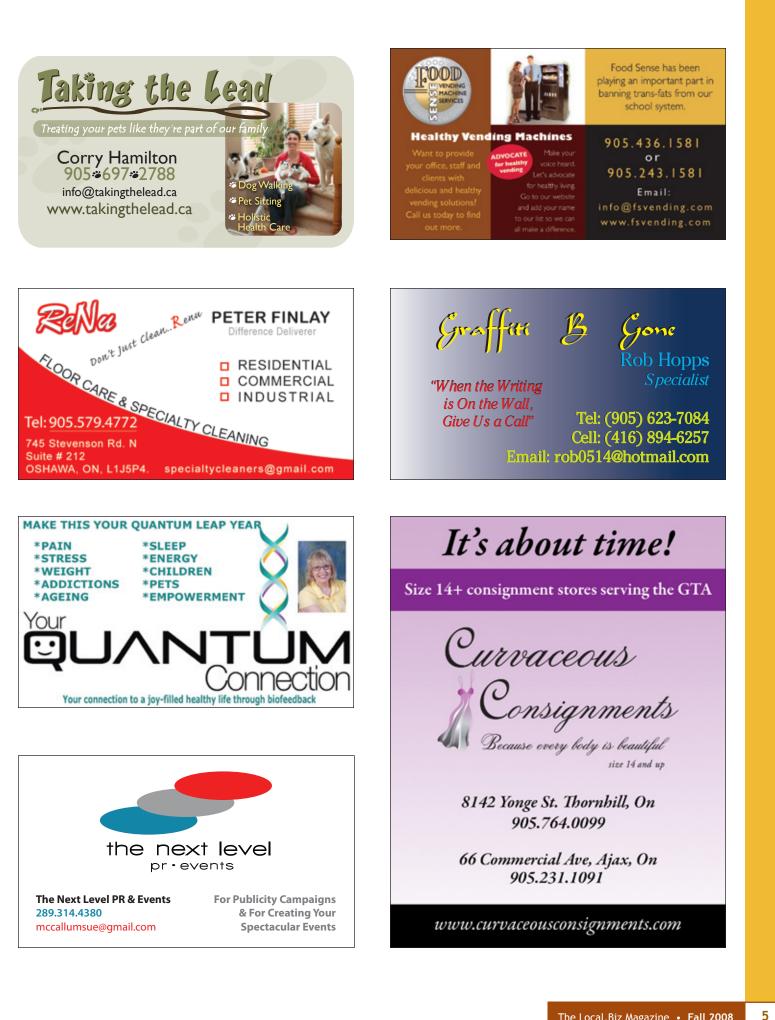
These are just a few challenges that small business owners face each day. Gone are the days of brand loyalty and worse traditional advertising methods may not be cutting it...if you want to manage your business and roll through the days of increasing-competition, rising costs then you want to tune into the Small Business Big Ideas Show. Live to air Sunday morning at 9 am on Oshawa's Oldies 107.7 FM and 1580 CKDO or online at **www.ckdo.ca** and now on our pod cast page at

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The Dream Team's Garden Makeover

As with most accomplishments, it started with a simple act of goodwill. Kathleen Matinlassi read an article about a Port Perry nursing home and their hopes of making their senior citizen's dreams come true. "I was starting my own family filming business," explains Matinlassi, "I offered to help make a resident's dream come true of making a story of her life in the home for her to share with distant friends. I said I would do this for them free of charge." She brought along sports videographer David Blacker, another video business student in her class, to help film the 65th birthday of Ms. Marie Breen.

But while creating a cherished, personalized DVD for Ms. Breen, Matinlassi wondered what other residents had wished for. Karen Sansom, the Activity Director of the Home, explained that everyone in the home was unhappy with their unsafe, overgrown mess of a courtyard and Matinlassi decided to do something. She went back to her Essential Communications class and asked her colleagues for help

"27 hands went straight up in the air," she says, "They didn't know what, when or how to get going, but I said I'd look after the details." Together with Sansom and Warren Lloyd, Matinlassi formed a team. She sought to find a way for all the business volunteers to use their specific skills—showcasing their own new businesses in the process—or to just provide the muscle for this fabulous garden makeover.

On May 28, 2008, this "Dream Team" rolled up their sleeves and got to work, with print and TV news coverage from around Ontario covering Courtyard Renovation day. The event also attracted various nursing home industry professionals. "I had them all shake my and my colleagues' hands with heartfelt thanks and congratulations on our efforts," beams Matinlassi.

The courtyard now has a wheelchair swing, over 2000 square feet of beautiful annuals and perennials, safe pathways, wheelchair accessible planter boxes, an ornamental wishing well and a massive cedar pergola for shelter on the rainy days. Matinlassi and her "Dream Team" showed just what combining business savvy and community goodwill can accomplish!

Making Fast Food Make Sense

"This is scary stuff," says Maggie Cavalier. Working at the Heart and Stroke Foundation, she saw soaring rates for childhood obesity, along heart disease and type II diabetes. She also watched her grandson struggle with Aspbergers Syndrome and obesity. "He is now in high school," Cavalier explains, "and the only products available to him in vending machines are chocolate bars, potato chips and pop which have an adverse effect on both of his problems. 28% of our youth are overweight or obese...our education system has to put our youth ahead of the commissions they have been receiving."

"There has to be a major shift in thinking," Cavalier insists, "and I believe that schools are the opportune place to support healthy lifestyles." She decided to lead the way by starting her business Food Sense Vending Services. For three years now, Cavalier has been an advocate for healthier fast food options in schools. "This is such an easy fix and it makes sense," she says, explaining that healthy, fresh foods are really no more expensive or harder to maintain than the typical junk food. "We handle fresh sliced fruit, baked product instead of fried, diabetic-friendly food, some product that is gluten-free, energy bars, granola-type bars, peanut-free items, yogurt, pudding, fruit cups. We also specialize in nutritional fitness products. Food Sense looks at a vending machine and can see endless possibilities."

Cavalier's company sponsors various youth organizations like the YMCA, Durham Indoor Soccer, Big Brothers and the Jennifer Ashley Foundation. "We believe in supporting our youth as our future," she says, noting that there's often a disconnect between the food choices for kids and their activities. "We send our children off to hockey, swimming lessons or soccer but seldom do they have dinner or snacks with them. They exercise to the best of their capability and the only food available to them is the junk food in the vending machines." Cavalier's passion, she says, lies in closing this gap: "We have elementary schools in Durham Region that can't get milk for their students but they use chocolate bars for fundraisers." And all the while, she says, "the World Health Organization has called childhood obesity an 'epidemic.' We need to do more."



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I recently met a dog who was diagnosed nearly a year ago with a grapefruit-sized tumour in its lung. The dog was happy, had great energy and a shiny coat. If the owner hadn't told me that his dog had cancer, I wouldn't have known. Traditional treatments were not an option for his family's dog, so they found an alternative. They make their dog's food and give him herbs and supplements. Their dog is truly a testament to how effective complementary



treatments can be. The cancer is still there, it's true, but the dog's quality of life is greatly improved.

What is holistic medicine? It is a different way of looking at disease. While traditional medicine is geared toward treating everything as unrelated and using treatments to control, stop or inhibit symptoms, holistic

medicine believes that everything is connected. It looks at emotional, mental and physical components. If one area of the body is out of balance, it can throw other areas out of balance. The main goal of holistic medicine is to rebalance the energy in the body so that the body can begin to heal itself.

There are many different complementary treatments that are available. Acupuncture, massage, diet, reiki, homeopathy, chiropractic, herbs, naturopathy and the list goes on. All of these treatments work on rebalancing energy.

People have been using these therapies for years with great success. Now when their pets are becoming ill and traditional medicine either hasn't worked or the side effects from traditional treatments are affecting their pet's quality of life, they are turning to complementary treatments.

Complementary treatments are non-invasive and animals are the perfect test subjects. They have no

preconceived ideas about holistic health care. They do not respond to placebos and therefore, the treatment either works or it doesn't. Just like people, not every treatment will work for everybody. You do have to be patient. If your pet



has had an allergy for years, you can't expect it to be cured in seven days. It could take weeks, months or even years.

Traditional and complementary treatments can work



synergistically. You don't have to choose one over the other. One form of treatment isn't better than another. You simply have to make an informed decision for you and your pet. There several holistic are vets and an animal chiropractor serving the Durham Region.

Even your own health care professional can educate you on how complementary therapies may help your pet.

Just remember, you always have a choice.

Corry Hamilton of *Taking the Lead* loves anything with fins, fur or feathers. She wants to see pets happy, healthy and treated like part of the family.



We are bombarded with advertising for all kinds of cleaning products in our lives but it's time to take a closer look at labels and encourage fellow business owners to purchase green products. If we choose to look the other way, there could be consequences.

Recently, one of our cleaning clients decided to clean their bathroom themselves using a regular store-bought product but got a shock when their cat Tinkerbell became suddenly ill from licking the water drippings in the tub. They were told by their vet that Tinkerbell was going to die of chemical poising within two days. The owner acted fast and force-flushed the poor cat's system with an eyedropper of water every hour. I'm happy to say that Tinkerbell is now paw-printing our client's bathtub once again and they are back on the green wagon. It's a sad truth that many common household items can pose a threat to our animal companions so ensure your environment is cleaned with green products that help aid in the protection of your pets, family, friends and coworkers from harsh damaging chemicals.

Durham Region is a leader in going green. Residents are doing their part every day by composting and recycling so

it's no surprise that our Durham Business sector is in the forefront of the green revolution:

- The Municipality of Clarington, the Clarington Green Advisory Committee and Channel 12 have recently introduced the Clarington Green Challenge
- The City of Oshawa achieved a gold award at the 2007 International Awards for Liveable Communities
- The Town of Whitby is currently undertaking a review and update of the Whitby Official Plan Sustainable Community Planning and Design
- The Town of Ajax is working on the Ajax Parks and Open Space Restoration Project
- Pickering is recognized as a leader in sustainability with regular workshops and town hall meetings for the public.

The Green Challenge is about reducing our impact on the environment by challenging residents, retail businesses, corporations and manufacturers to all find ways to reduce energy and waste and start using green products.

Beverly Thomson of *Maid-Mart* loves testing environmentally friendly products. She goes to bed each night with visions of sparkling clean houses.



In the spring of 2009, Ontario's province-wide pesticide ban comes into effect and homeowners will no longer be able to buy or use traditional lawn care methods. Next spring, the best defence to keeping your lawn weed-free will be to keep it healthy and lush.

But there's a little secret that others in the lawn care industry don't want you to know about—a low-maintenance grass seed called EcoLawn that's been held back for ten years now. This grass is a blend of seven fine fescue grasses and taps a very deep root. Most lawns have turf with roots two to three inches deep but EcoLawn delves nine inches (22.86 cm) in clay soil and 14 inches (35.56 cm) in sandbased soils. All the nutrients your lawn needs are right there for the EcoLawn grass root.

What all this means for homeowners is that, once this grass is established, you don't need to water as much, you don't need to fertilize, you don't need to aerate, you don't need chemicals for weeds or insects, you just don't need lawn care. The grass grows slowly (only nine inches a year) so you only have to cut it once a month or, if you choose, not at all. EcoLawn has been shockingly absent from the big box stores and gardening centres after it was pitched to the big guys ten years ago and denied. Such a block made sense at the time: a low-maintenance grass would cut into the profit margins of lawn mowers, fertilizers, pesticides and the regular grass seed and top soil with weed seed properties in it.

There's no way that this business model would risk this kind of setup—a solid money maker and an endless cycle that you'll pay for year after year to protect your curb appeal—but whether by education or government decree, people's minds are changing. They're looking for alternatives- green, eco-friendly alternatives that will help the environment, save them time, save them money and offer up a great looking lawn.

Great ideas can only be kept underground so long.

Craig McPherson of *Durham Lawn Jockey* wants to see a healthier lawn and healthier environment for everyone and their family. He believes we owe it to the planet to be responsible.



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ecognizing Stress

By Pamela Jackson

Stress can affect us in so many ways. You're invited to a party, you check your closet and yikes—nothing to wear! Off to the shops it is and it's amazing how much energy you have to find the perfect outfit. That wonderful stress energized you and carried you through the day and night!



You wake the next morning day and realize that you completely forgot a report due the next morning at work. It's the report that could give you a promotion or a raise or a transfer to that dream job that you have been waiting for! Stress kicks in but this time, instead of kicking you into overdrive, it rivets you to the spot.

That's the funny thing about stress: we think it comes from external sources but the reality is that stress comes from how we internalize everything around us—like noise, children, your spouse, boss, co-worker, even the family dog.

Medical associates agree that over 80% of diseases are caused by stress—diseases like cancer, hypertension, diabetes, high blood pressure. How does that disease happen?

We have unmanaged stress that accumulates over time—we stuff it down, ignore it or think it is good for us in some way.

Then we add in coffee, fast food, alcohol, soda, food additives, chemical and electrical pollution, irradiated foods and cigarettes, to name only a few. How many of us eat a clean diet? Even when we breathe, we're breathing in stress-making components that can cause so many ailments as well as premature ageing, sleepless nights and anxiety attacks.

We can only handle so much. Everyone's stress barometer is



unique but we all have our tipping point—the point where we dissolve into a puddle when one more problem is added.

How do we balance these self-inflicted stressors and our internalizing of stress around us? We need to

unearth underlying stressors before they have a devastating impact on the body and we need to urge the mental, spiritual and physical body to work in balance. Healing comes from the inside out—we can heal ourselves!

Pamela Jackson of *Your Quantum Connection* is an award winning speaker and trainer, coaching through Buddhist-based psychologies. She is also president of Oshawa Toastmasters.

o going green with Consignment Shopping By Kim Dobie



New kinds of retail establishments are taking consignment shopping to an exciting new level. It's no longer about walking into an old dirty warehouse to dig through mountains of rumpled items. The new consignment shops are quaint,

boutique settings that feature beautiful designer items, half of which have never been worn. All items are carefully cleaned and pressed prior to being put on the sales floor and are easily accessed on hanging racks.

Consignment is a great way to make extra cash, while helping the environment as well. When we buy and sell resale items, we save resources that would otherwise be used for new materials. When you're clearing your warm weather wear out of your crowded closets, why not go green (and make some green!) by donating the clothes you no longer need?

There are some great consignment stores and boutiques in Durham Region. Catering to children, we have Wee Ones Wear in Brooklin. It is a trendy shop in the restored old mill in town with beautiful shining hardwood floors. The store carries a great selection of new and gently worn children's clothes, toys and accessories. Kids grow so fast, they don't even get a chance to wear out their clothes so save some money and buy next to new while you can. You can also take your child's clothes in to sell and use the money you earn to purchase the next size up.

To take care of the bigger child in your life, we have Peak Menswear in Bowmanville. It is about 25% consignment mixed with new designer men's wear from designers such as Harry Rosen, Valentino, Zegna, Tommy Hilfiger and American Eagle. The bonus here is that Neal the owner is also an image consultant and can dress you from head to toe.

In Ajax, you will find two higher-end consignment stores. Consignorita is a fabulous looking store and everyone can find something. You might fall in love with a \$200 item, but you can take something home for \$20. They sell and accept upscale new and resale women's fashion. A quaint



The second women's consignment boutique is a rare find for all of you curvy ladies out there. Curvaceous Consignments accepts and sells only women's size 14 and up clothing, along with shoes, purses and jewelry. Because there is not a great selection of plus-size clothing in Canada, a lot of the merchandise is from different parts of the world as the consignors shop when they travel. They often change their minds when they get home, so a lot of the merchandise that you will find in this store is also new. Besides the great selection of high-end merchandise at prices 50 to 70% below their original retail price, you also get one-on-one friendly customer service second to none. To properly shop consignment, you need to allow yourself an hour or two to

go through the racks as they are one-of-akind pieces.

For anyone who's had a preconceived idea of consignment shopping, any of the above stores will challenge people to guess whether the clothes are new or slightly worn. Why



spend more if you don't have to? Consignment shopping offers not only great bargains but a wonderful opportunity to recoup some money on clothing you've already purchased. It's a win-win opportunity for consumers

Finally, many consignment shops also accept donations for charities, for items that may not sell well through consignment. They're a great way to go green, save green and make some green!

Kim Dobie of *Curvaceous Consignments* enjoys being in a business that allows her day to day interactions with so many people. She always loved playing dress-up since she was a little girl.

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Our publication supports business and the entrepreneur spirit. In this space we will list different helpful resources for all of you out there who considering starting your own business.

In this issue: Resources you will need as you are starting your business:

Start-up help: The Business Advisory Centre (www.bacd.ca) offers a wide range of services and a helpful knowledgeable staff.

The BACD has subscriptions to online directories utilizing Canadian Business Directory, Associations Canada, and Scott's Directories. This is a must for market research and creating a business plan.

Business registration: conduct a name search and register your business online at www.cbs.gov.on.ca/obc

Vendor's permit/Retail Sales Tax: Businesses that sell taxable goods or services require you to collect and pay provincial sales tax. www.trd.fin.gov.on.ca.

If you need any advice or you have a question please give us a call at our offices here and we will try to help. **905.231.9722**







Yes, you have a fabulous business or service and everybody really should know all about it. But is it newsworthy? Unlike advertising that you purchase, press or media coverage relies on having something specific the media can report on—perhaps a grand opening, an anniversary, an event, giving to charity, a new product.

What is a press release? It is basically a news story already written, with the newsworthy angle at the very top. It is written in the third person, in a simple style free of hype. It contains all the information necessary, including your contact information, all dates and addresses. It is professional and free of mistakes. Send it in the body of an email and not as a word attachment. Any photos must be relevant and current and formatted as a 300 dpi jpeg.

Who do I send it to? Any media outlet that makes sensenewspapers, magazines, TV talk shows, specialty shows, radio and TV news departments, as well as their online equivalents and bloggers. Search online for contact information and call outlets. Tell the receptionists that you have a press release and want to send it to the right people. Be polite.

Is that it? No way. There is no guarantee they will do anything with your release or even read it. Followup is the most important. Call and/or email them up to three to four times. They may still not do anything but don't be annoying or rude.



How do I measure results? I like to

do that in threes, like having an article in the local paper the day before the event, being interviewed on the radio station and again on the local TV news. That's three hits. Multiple messages are more effective and six hits is amazing!

What if I don't have time for this? Hire a professional. Publicists can write your release and make sure it gets to all the right people in a timely fashion. They know how to meet journalist's deadlines and have experience in presenting the information in a way that will get them interested.

Sue McCallum of *The Next Level PR & Events* is a sought-after publicist with over 20 years working with some of the world's biggest musicians. Her passion is spreading the word and creating buzz. Her joy is watching her son laugh his head off.

Protect your DUSINGSS by protecting your <u>headth</u>

You're self-employed. You love being your own boss. Maybe you love being a boss. You make a good living and you love what you do. You are able to schedule your time for important things, like your child's soccer games, yet you've never missed at day at the office. You can't afford to, especially if you are an expert in your field.

Even through colds and flus, you work away, hoping that your customer is understanding when you turn away to sneeze mid-sentence so you don't splutter all over them. You hope that your reduced productivity won't make a long-term dent in the business. You desperately hope that you don't become so ill that you need to take time off.

But it can happen, and will if you don't take your wellness as seriously as you do your business.

Look at it this way: you give your car regular oil changes to keep it running well and you check the air pressure on the tires to save on fuel and uneven wear and tear. A tune-up and fluid check completes the preventative maintenance.

You know that if you don't do those things, your vehicle will still run but it will cost more in gas and parts will need replacing more rapidly. Eventually, the engine won't be able operate any longer without oil and it will seize up.

Your wellness is the same thing. You need to take care of yourself with diet, exercise and preventative health measures or your body will give up. Your body cannot run on empty and operate to full capacity for long without failing you.

But taking care of yourself is really quite easy. It just means carving some time out of your day for yourself. Time, you say, is your most precious commodity! Of course it is, but a little bit of preventative time now can save you days of future time for your business.

Four simple steps are all it takes to take control of your wellness.

By Whitney Collins

The first stop is what fuel you give your body. Did you know that a five percent drop in water levels in the body cause a 25-30 percent loss in energy? Make sure to take in lots of water, preferably from a non-leeching container such as a glass, ceramic mug or stainless steel water bottle. Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet, and supplement your diet with a good multi-vitamin and essential fatty acid. If you need help with your diet or supplements, make sure to ask a qualified health professional such as a nutritionist.

The second step is exercise. You've heard it before and tried every gym in town. It's not about how competitive

you are, it's just about getting out and doing something. Start by taking the stairs instead of an elevator and by taking a walk around the block after dinner (what a great family activity!) and build from there. Try a new sport or get on a bike. We are blessed here in Durham Region to have an abundance of great bike trails along the lake. Always check with your doctor before beginning any exercise program and if you don't know what you are doing, check with a trainer or coach and learn how to do the activity without injuring yourself.

The third step is taking time for yourself. Learn to let go of your day's worth of stress and do something you enjoy. This can certainly be the activities above or maybe something gentler, such as reading a good novel, doing your favorite craft or finding a yoga or meditation class that you enjoy.

The fourth step is finding yourself a team of wellness professionals to help you take control of your health. Each person's needs are unique, so it is always wise to consult with each professional to ask them exactly how they can assist you. Such a team may include a homeopathic doctor, a registered massage therapist, a chiropractor or any others you may find.

These four daily steps will help you take care of your wellness today so that you have the time for your business tomorrow.



Whitney Collins of *Your Quantum Connection* is a homeopathic doctor and mother of two young children who has a passion for assisting people of all ages on their journey to health and wellness.



Life Coach - Dennis Brown "Life is Like a Garden"

A number of years ago, we moved into a brand new house. For every one of us in the family, it represented new beginnings and great expectations. All the kids had their own room with a bathroom for every one. We painted and decorated to create a comfortable space for us and our guests.



Dennis Brown

I had always wanted a bigger backyard. I had visions of being an award-winning gardener. Over in one corner would be amazing roses. In another corner would stand the tall, strong maple tree. Beautiful perennials surrounded by annuals would cover the backyard.

There was however one small problem: the plans never left my head. Every year, I would admire my neighbours' gardens, wishing I had one like them. I would see trees growing taller and taller and know that, if I had planted my tree, it would be this tall by now. Busy summers were followed by lazy winters and this crazy cycle went on for far more years than I wish to mention. Every summer, I would regret not planting my garden again last year.

Well finally this year, I got mad and decided it was time. As soon as I started, my neighbor volunteered to help me. Within one day, rock edges were in place, flowers were being planted and my garden began to take shape. I just had to start.

Are our lives not like this? We are given new beginnings to pursue our life purpose all the time but we keep on delaying. We envy what others have. We worry whether or not we have the skills or equipment. We worry about what others will think.

The lesson we can learn from our gardens is just get started. People will show up to offer help. Nurture, be persistent, care for your life and as you do your part, your plans will start to take root and grow.

Stop procrastinating! Start planting the seeds towards your best life now, whatever those plans are. Your fruitful, wonderful fulfilling life awaits you and it's a lot easier than you think.

Business Coach - Peter Miller "Feeding Your Business"

Running a successful business will never be a simple formula. There are so many variables yet also some business basics which have near-universal application. In my experience of working with over 600 'solopreneurs,' I've seen how little tips that seem self-evident can make a big difference for our clients and ourselves.



Peter Miller

Eat a live frog!

So let's start with an old question: "What is the best way to start your day?" The answer is, "Eat a live frog." While this sounds inane, it simply means starting your day tackling the worst or hardest thing you need to do. I find my least productive days are those in which I put off that one major challenge. By the end of that day, I often do not have the energy or the stomach to take that difficult task on, leaving many worthwhile initiatives stuck on my to-do list. I know from speaking with many people that I am not alone in this. "Eating the live frog" not only moves forward projects but is often easier than first feared. This provides great psychological relief and a greater enjoyment to the rest of the day. What "live frogs" do you have in your to-do list?

Feed your referral network!

Continuing a gastronomic theme, my second business hint is "Feeding your referral network." There is little doubt that a strong referral network is essential for most forms of business. We first cultivate good referral sources by networking constantly and then, most importantly, providing the best service or product for your potential client. But what can you do to ensure future referrals from that original source? Some form of timely thank you is a bare minimum. This is so simple, it hardly needs to be addressed, yet it is frequently overlooked. In my own business, I have tried to treat all potential suppliers equally but I must say that those who acknowledged the opportunities sent their way come to mind first.

So my hints this issue are simple: at the start of the day, tackle your hardest project and, at the end of the day, pay a little attention to those who helped you. Your business will flourish!

Dennis of *Dennis Brown & Associates* applies his passion in helping others unlock their full potential, enabling them to live the abundant lives they were created to have.

Peter Miller of *Essential Communications* is the program coordinator, facilitator and coach for the OSEB program.

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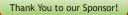


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