



OF LAUNCHING A BUSINESS IN COLLINGWOOD
& SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY
...AND HOW TO OVERCOME THEM

SOUTH GEORGIAN BAY:

A photograph of a modern office space. On the left, a hallway with colorful framed artwork on the wall leads to a glass-walled pod. Inside the pod, a man with glasses is sitting at a desk, working on a laptop. The pod has a green living wall on the back wall. The text "A BUSTLING PLACE FOR BUSINESS." is overlaid in white on an orange semi-transparent background.

A BUSTLING
PLACE FOR
BUSINESS.

From advanced manufacturing to craft beverages, there is no shortage of entrepreneurial action in south Georgian Bay. Why? Well, we think it might have something to do with being Ontario's premiere four-season playground. Business owners are high achievers...and that's the kind of people who live here and want to move here!

Collingwood and surrounding areas are great places to start a business. We have many, many small companies here in sectors from personal care and fitness to finance and technology. Our business community is a strong one, with two thriving co-working spaces; a robust Business Development Centre; and the Georgian Bay Business Accelerator, which helps businesses scale quickly.

TOP 3 CHALLENGES OF STARTING A BUSINESS

You might think that the top thing people need when starting a business is a business plan. And that may very well be the case, but it's not what most identify as their #1 priority. The value of a business plan depends on really good planning, which starts with research and ends with a series of steps that you can put into action and be confident about the outcomes.



The South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre serves an area encompassing Collingwood, Wasaga Beach, Town of the Blue Mountains, and Clearview. When people first contact the Enterprise Centre, they are typically not looking for a business plan, but for something else. We complete several hundred business consultations per year and can point to dozens of successful businesses that we helped get off the ground in the south Georgian Bay area. Here are the most common things that they are looking for.



1

WHAT DON'T I KNOW?

You've got an idea, maybe even a plan. A bit of research has shown you best practices and the possibility of getting a grant to help launch your business. What are you missing?

A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE

Shandelle came to us with an idea for an art and mural business. In fact, she already was an accomplished artist, muralist and creative facilitator, but her business needed some structure and a sales & marketing plan. We encouraged her to research similar businesses that were successful, to see what they did and how they achieved success. That led to developing a business plan —

including a selling strategy, pricing model and financial forecasting, as well as a much better idea of how to find local clients. Shandelle needed marketing materials and some supplies in bulk, so we guided her towards appropriate funding, a Grow Grant, which she applied for and received. After half a dozen consults, she was off and running. Now she's painting up a storm! Check out some of Shandelle's work [{here}](#).

The South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre typically saves businesses a lot of time over going it alone. Consulting with us is a shortcut to viable, well-considered business decisions. It's not a one-and-done process: over a series of consultations we help you move in the right direction, pause, do more research, and plan a business that's going to succeed.



2

WHERE DO I FIND GRANTS AND FINANCING?

Few businesses can get off the ground without money. There are lots of questions: how much do you need and where do you get it? Can you land a grant, or will you have to pay back a loan?

A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE

Bruce was planning to open a shop in Collingwood offering coffee and bike repair. He had a fully-developed idea and a well-researched business plan. He also had money to help get it off the ground, but not quite enough. Once we had presented several options, Bruce ended up accessing \$5000 in financing through a Starter Company Plus program Start Grant. He used those funds to procure outdoor patio furniture and café accessories. Now {Summit Social House} is spinning along nicely!

Grants and financing are a moving target. Unless you know what's available at the moment and what's coming down the pipe, it's hard to know the best option. Either way, your two options are grants or loans. Loans are easier to come by, through one of several government-backed programs like Futurpreneur Canada, Community Futures Ontario and the Business Development Bank of Canada; a traditional bank or credit union loan; or by tapping into the local angel-investor network. The Enterprise Centre helps businesses to save time on desk research and access financing via different avenues, depending on their situation and needs.



You have a great idea...but will it work in south Georgian Bay? Visitors spend money differently from locals and the population ebbs and flows with the seasons. How viable is my business from January right through to December?

A REAL-LIFE EXAMPLE

Victoria is a trained kinesiologist who was ready to start an aquatherapy business. Since kinesiologists optimize the body's potential by treating movement issues, aquatherapy is a powerful tool. But she had two potential issues: she didn't have a pool and she wasn't sure if her business would float through the winter months. We encouraged Victoria to do some statistical as well as primary research with people other than friends & family. She quickly developed a tight idea of her target market and came up with realistic pricing that would keep her business in the black. In the end, Victoria was successful: she found a willing clientele and is as busy as she can be at a local pool. At time of writing, she's hatching plans for her very own aquatherapy pool!

OTHER TOP QUESTIONS WE ANSWER

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| 3. Do I really need a business plan? | product/service? |
| 4. How do I register my business? | 8. I'm so busy and stressed...how do I manage all the hats I need to wear? |
| 5. I'm open, but struggling. How do I make enough money to survive? | 9. I've heard about programs to help me build my business. Where are they and who do I need to speak with? |
| 6. What's the best way to market? | 10. Do I really need cash flow? |
| 7. How do I figure out what to charge for my | |



OUR BEST ADVICE

At the South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre we dispense advice of all kinds. Talk to us and you'll learn tips and tricks on what to do, but the best advice we can give is to stop thinking about the idea you have all by itself. Start thinking about it in the context of what a customer will pay for.

IT'S NOT ABOUT HOW
GREAT YOUR IDEA IS.

IT'S ABOUT HOW YOU CONNECT
THAT IDEA TO THE CUSTOMER.

Decide who you think your target customer is, try to confirm that hunch, then look at your business through the eyes of that customer. If your ideal customers are mothers of small children, what kind of price will they gladly pay for what you offer? What flavour of marketing will draw them in? It's not about how great your idea is. It's about how you connect that idea to the customer.

WE ARE CONNECTORS

Because of what we do, the Enterprise Centre is entrenched in the local business community. Sometimes the greatest value we bring lies in connecting new business owners with area businesspeople who can help.



LET'S TALK

Starting a business can be bewildering, which is why we help new business owners to unscramble and organize their approach. The advice we give is based on years of experience helping other businesses, but specific to your situation.



Your idea is unique and your business will be, too. When you consult with the South Georgian Bay Small Business Enterprise Centre, we'll uncover the specific actionable items that will help you move the needle, whether that's in operations, finance, marketing, communications, general business planning, or human resources.

OUR PROCESS

Working with the Enterprise Centre is simple:

1. Get in touch and we'll meet online or in person to get an idea of where you are and where you want to go.
2. We'll set some objectives and follow up with a custom email packed with planning and launch resources.
3. We may need follow-up meetings, or it may simply be a matter of connecting you with financing or local business owners who can help.

If you're looking to launch a small business or grow your business to the next level, contact the Small Business Enterprise Centre to get moving in the right direction.

{Click here} to book a free consultation.



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small business
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