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POWERING WHAT'S NEXT

BY CATHERINE RICE

Are you ready to start or grow your business? Innovate Niagara is here to support you!

We'll get your innovative business growing with all the tools and resources you need at any stage of development. Becoming a client is free and gives you access to our knowledgeable and experienced team of business analysts and executives-in-residence; networking and entrepreneurial training opportunities at little or no cost to you; a network of trusted service providers; special programming opportunities; and our network of industry-specific business incubators.

Our mission is clear. We exist to support innovative entrepreneurs and companies from a variety of industries to start, grow and thrive. Are you an entrepreneur? Here's how we can help you:

Business Advice & Mentorship – Meet with business advisors and executives-in-residence to develop a strategic plan for success. Receive support identifying and accessing funding sources to boost your new or existing business.

Workshops – Enhance your entrepreneurial skills with specialized training workshops, courses and events.

Market Intelligence – Access industry-leading reports on your target market; industry and tech trends. Market size and forecasts to make informed decisions.

Connect & Collaborate – Expand your network and discover collaboration opportunities with other companies, and educational and industry partners.

Service Provider Network – Access our trusted network of service providers to develop your business – legal, accounting, marketing, financial services, etc.

Network of Incubators – Access industry-specific business incubators with state-of-the-art equipment, workspaces, and collaborative opportunities.

The impact these resources and experiences make on our clients excites us. Sharon Reeds, co-founder of Intuitive Shipping, and Tony Walsh, principal founder of TENKO, share how they have driven their businesses forward taking advantage of various resources Innovate Niagara offers:

"The entrepreneurial journey is new to us, and Innovate Niagara has provided us with the mentorship, courses, and access to funding that has proven to be beneficial to our growth. Through Innovate Niagara, we've had free access to seminars and workshops which lucky for us, seemed to be timed perfectly for our milestones. Because the education was in direct reflection of our knowledge gaps, I was able to ask extremely specific questions to the facilitators, which directly impacted the decisions we made to propel Intuitive Shipping forward." – Sharon Reeds, co-founder, Intuitive Shipping

"Innovate Niagara has been a consistent collaborator, helping TENKO's principals to refine and focus the TENKO value proposition as well as its products and services. TENKO has benefited immensely from Innovate Niagara's hands-on consultation and market research, and from exposure to both local and international contacts." – Tony Walsh, principal founder, TENKO

Our diverse and passionate team understands what it takes to grow a successful business, and we have the expertise and connections to guide you there. Meet with us to find out how we can help your business succeed.

Interested in meeting with us or registering for upcoming workshops to support your entrepreneurial journey? Visit InnovateNiagara.com. **BL**

Catherine Rice is the Outreach & Communications Coordinator at Innovate Niagara. Contact us at www.innovateniagara.com or email info@innovateniagara.com. Follow us on Twitter and Instagram @InnovateNiagara

I'M SORRY, DON'T SUE ME.

Apologies and Liability in Canadian Contract and Tort Law.

BY JONATHAN MARCHAND

People are strange and complex beings. However, despite this complexity, we tend to prefer simplicity and order, and have developed an amazing skill at pattern-matching. This skill has been a boon to humans during our development, leading us to develop art, writing, mathematics, science, and all the benefits of modern society.

However, when applied to people, that same thinking can lead to certain unfortunate stereotypes and assumptions where all members of a group get judged together. Every nation seems to have one or two widely known "facts" about its people which circulate continuously, and which seem to defy any attempt at suppression. Canada is no exception.

We've all heard the international stereotypes about Canadians – we're too polite, we apologize for everything, we're among the kindest people you'd meet. As far as stereotypes go, it's not a bad one to have, but it's obviously not true universally.

As far as apologizing goes, however, there is some evidence that we are in fact uniquely susceptible – the near-universal prevalence of so-called "Apology Laws" in Canada.

These laws make apologies inadmissible in court to prove liability for civil claims. This kind of law has popped up in sporadic locations worldwide, especially in places with high levels of litigiousness, but in Canada it is incredibly widespread. All provinces except Quebec have their own apology laws, and so do the territories of Nunavut and Yukon.

In 2009, the Ontario legislature voted into law the Apology Act. This Act specifically makes an apology by or on behalf of a person inadmissible to prove liability in tort or contract.

This means that if your neighbor's land is flooded, and he thinks you may be responsible and sues you, he cannot use the fact that you said "I'm sorry for your loss" as an admission by you that you were responsible for the damage. While this may seem a bit silly, it's actually very important.

In tort law, proving liability is most of the work in a case. Damages only come into play after you have established liability. This would also be very important in contractual breach cases, where an admission could be used to prove a breach occurred.

Whether it's a landlord who is responsible for building upkeep apologizing for the water damage from a roof leaking, or a doctor

apologizing for a case that led to an insurance claim, or a salesmen expressing sympathy for a faulty item sold, these admissions would previously (and would still in the majority of the world) be considered to be admissions of fault or guilt.

This can lead to some dehumanizing outcomes, such as the doctor who wants to express his sympathy at the loss of a patient to their family, but who cannot because if he does so it may be considered an admission of liability for malpractice or some other negligence action.

Apology legislation prevents this issue, and there is a growing movement in Canada among doctors and medical associations to be more empathetic and provide more sympathetic apologies to patients as a result.

What the Act does not do is make an apology inadmissible as evidence in a criminal proceeding or a proceeding under the Provincial Offences Act. If you apologize to the police for speeding, that apology will be evidence that you were speeding!

The Act goes further than just eliminating a baseline apology or expression of sympathy as admission, however.

There are two general types of apology legislation. One only applies to expressions of sympathy or empathy, the simple "I'm sorry this happened." The other, applies to apologies which also directly admit liability – "I'm sorry, this is all my fault." There is a significant legal difference between the two apologies.

The Ontario Apology Act is of the second type. It disallows evidence of an apology made by a party to be admitted into evidence at trial, administrative proceedings or arbitrations, unless that apology is made while testifying in that case. This applies even to express admissions of guilt if they are part of an apology.

The Apology Act is just one example of interesting legislation which can affect how a litigation case will resolve. Litigation is complex. There are many moving parts in any civil litigation case, and a case can turn on the smallest or most apparently insignificant things – like an apology. To properly navigate these troubled waters, it's always best to have an experienced litigation attorney who can help guide you through the best path to your desired outcome. **BL**

Jonathan Marchand is an Associate within Lancaster Brooks & Welch LLP's litigation department. It is important to get assistance in navigating your legal rights. For an appointment with Jonathan, call 905.641.1551.



JONATHAN MARCHAND is an Associate within the Lancaster Brooks & Welch LLP Civil Litigation Department.

When you need support on a commercial or civil litigation matter, it is good to have someone who can navigate the law and represent your needs.



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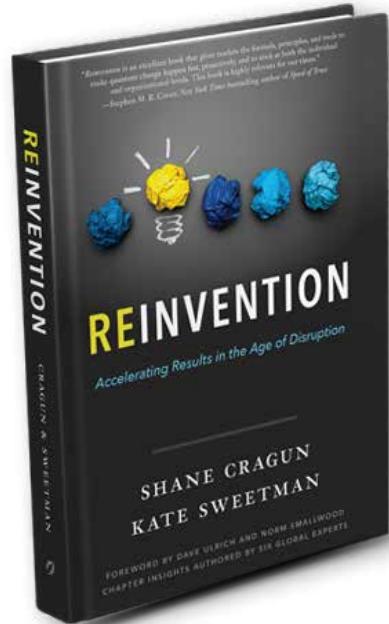


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Reinvention Accelerating Results in the Age of Disruption

Experts believe that worldwide economic turmoil is likely to increase in the future. Is it possible for your businesses to survive, let alone thrive, in this turbulence? Authors Shane Cragun and Kate Sweetman say "yes" – if you're prepared to look more inquisitively, even positively, at the global shockwaves that might impact you. It's time to prepare your organization and the people in them to remove self-imposed blindfolds and seize the opportunity to improve performance in these revolutionary times.

In Cragun and Sweetman's book, Reinvention: Accelerating Results in the Age of Disruption, the authors propose a simple formula, common principles, and a set of tools for individuals and organizations facing disruptive and radical change. Reinvention is supported by the authors' combined 50 years of experience working with a host of global executives, organizations and teams. Cragun and Sweetman are also the leading experts on the new competency of Reinvention – namely the ability to create quantum individual and organizational change and accelerate it.

Reinvention uses compelling and eclectic case studies from around the world over the past 100 years to reinforce key learnings – from polar explorations, village microcredit innovations and defiance in the war on terror, all the way to global politics and big business. Each chapter concludes with practical insights from an assortment of worldwide experts. **BL**

Ask me a question

Type something

The Better Mousetrap

BY DENNIS O'NEILL

Buckminster Fuller asked architects how much does the building weigh? They said, what does it matter? He said, "A lot – and can you build it just as strong with half the weight?"

When an earthquake destroyed a community of Japanese buildings, one remained. Frank Lloyd Wright said, "I couldn't have built it until Fuller's question. I never thought of it."

Is it time for different questions in your business? **BL**

Dennis O'Neill, The Business Growth Coach is located in Niagara-on-the-Lake. For more information on how to grow your business, please call 905.641.8777, email dennis@dennisonellcoach.com or visit www.dennisonellcoach.com.

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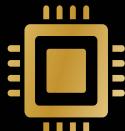
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UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS:

MORE THAN JUST VOICE

BY RICH DAVIDSON

What does your business phone bill look like? If you are a subscriber of traditional business phone lines or a Primary Rate Interface (PRI), the total monthly cost can be overwhelming. If you could drastically reduce those costs and modernize your communications platform, would you? If so, it might be the right time to cut the cord (and your bill).

VoIP (Voice over IP) technology has been around for a long time. It's the idea of running telephony over your office LAN as opposed to traditional analog phone lines. The VoIP wave introduced new IT efficiencies such as amalgamating voice and data networks which had previously always been separated. Modern day unified communications allows organizations to extend the benefits of VoIP beyond the office LAN.

OPTION 1 – SIP TRUNKING - Many businesses still choose to maintain a physical phone system on premises called a PBX. These devices handle call routing and auto-attendant features and have evolved over time to provide VoIP functionality. The modern IP PBX allows organizations to connect to a service provider via something called a SIP Trunk as opposed to a traditional PRI.

The cost savings are dramatic, roughly half the cost a PRI for the equivalent service. Even without an IP PBX, analog-to-digital conversion boxes are available to bridge the technology gap on legacy devices. All that is required is a high-speed internet connection. Given

the sensitivity of voice traffic, a dedicated fibre-optic connection will provide the best quality of service. Private point-to-point SIP Trunks to the service provider are also available and can provide an additional layer of privacy and security.

OPTION 2 – HOSTED PBX - All of the functionality of an on-premises PBX is virtualized and farmed out to the service provider's cloud. Hosted PBX users are billed individually and typically receive a phone line, a physical phone, and all the standard call features of a traditional PBX user such as call waiting, call forwarding, voicemail, simultaneous ring, etc. Optional unified communications packages provide modern collaboration features like messaging and presence, softphone client, screen sharing, and virtual meeting space.

What sets Hosted PBX apart is its lower total cost of ownership when compared to traditional models. Instead of paying out a large capital cost for a physical PBX as well as ongoing expenses for maintenance, businesses pay a single monthly subscription fee for each user. Best of all that subscription includes everything you need.

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Rich Davidson is network architect at Niagara Regional Broadband Network on 5580 Swayze Drive in Niagara Falls. To contact Rich, please call 289.668.8864, email rich.davidson@nrbn.ca or go to nrbn.ca.



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EMPLOYEE POLICIES: STAY AHEAD OF THE CHANGES

BY LAURA TOLHOEK

Only a few short months into 2019 and many aspects of the employer-employee relationship are already having to be reviewed. As an employer and manager, understanding these changes are key to providing employees with fair and equitable treatment, as well as not being caught off guard!

EMERGENCY LEAVE

On January 1, 2018, under Bill 148, changes to the employment standards act allowed each individual 10 emergency days each year – two of those days being paid at full wages. On January 1, 2019, Bill 47 brought into play a whole new set of rules when it comes to emergency leave. It redefined the 10 emergency leave days as three personal emergency days, three family emergency days, and two bereavement days. None of these days, according to the new legislation, are required to be paid and all of these days work on a calendar year.

Look at your old policies in comparison to what you need to do now. Align your poli-

cies with the new legislation wording, even if you provide greater benefit than the provincially required minimums. This will reduce confusion and bring clarity as to what leave is to be used under which circumstance. This may take some creative thinking and possibly combining the descriptions of the days.

You will also need to consider if you institute the two emergency days that were to be paid as per the 2018 legislation into your policies going forward. If you are going to integrate those two days, define under what circumstances they are eligible.

HR Tip: Whether you choose to move forward with paid or unpaid emergency days, ensure you make your policy clear and you communicate it effectively with each individual on your team. This could mean sending out an email, having a discussion with the all staff, or having each employee meet one-on-one with their manager to be notified of the revision of the policy.

PARENTAL LEAVE

While you still have your red pen out, don't forget to look at your parental leave policies. There is a new "use-it-or-lose-it" aspect to parental leave!

The parents of any child born or coming into adoption after March 17, 2019 will be eligible for an extended parental leave. But there's a catch! This additional five weeks of leave (if on a 12-month pregnancy/parental leave) or additional eight weeks (if on an 18-month pregnancy/parental leave) is only eligible if the alternate party shares in at

least five weeks of the leave.

The intention is to encourage the 85% of male partners who don't traditionally take parental leave to more equally share in the joy and responsibilities of child care in the early years of the baby's life.

What considerations have to be made on the employer side? Though support for this legislation is strong, it leaves businesses, especially small businesses, to figure out short-term solutions to possible staffing issues. Only two weeks of notification is required when an individual wishes to take this leave. This can pose a difficulty for some employers. Whether anticipating a team member to take the leave or not, it is difficult to transfer the depth of knowledge by training or hiring an individual to take on leave that could be as little as five weeks.

HR Tip: As an employer, first ensure you have established open communication practices within your organization. Second, start looking at job redesign, cross-training and employee development as a long-term solution for not only the engagement of your staff, but the security of your business and systems. **BL**

Laura Tolhoek is the proprietor of Essential HR. She offers hands-on HR services to businesses in Niagara. Her passion is being able to help owners and managers in a way that lets them focus on their strengths and the core of their business. For more information, go to www.essentialhr.ca.

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Cancer affects everyone. A cancer diagnosis can turn your world upside down in an instant, but fortunately you are never truly alone on the cancer journey.

Hamilton Health Sciences is home to the Adult Regional Cancer Program which includes a partnership in Niagara and community-based oncology clinics at hospitals in Brantford and Burlington. The combined volume of chemotherapy visits overseen by Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre is one of the largest in Ontario.

As part of Hamilton Health Sciences, Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre is home to a combination of specialized inpatient and outpatient cancer programs, and is the only site in southcentral Ontario treating all cancers. It is one of the province's most comprehensive cancer centres and is home to southcentral Ontario's only stem cell transplant, acute leukemia and blood cancer programs. It is also home to a comprehensive cancer clinical trials program, where teams are researching and testing the latest in cancer treatments.

Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre provides care to patients from Niagara Falls and Brantford to Kitchener-Waterloo and Burlington. This includes cancer patients like Lisa Allain from Welland, who was 26-years-old when a tumour was discovered in her brain.

Lisa received coordinated care across Hamilton Health Sciences. She underwent a biopsy at Hamilton General Hospital and additional testing and treatment at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre. Her cancer team determined that surgery was too dangerous, so she began an intensive program of radiation therapy and medication.

Lisa continues to receive outpatient care at Juravinski Hospital and Cancer Centre. Her ongoing journey with cancer has helped her gain perspective on the important things in life.

"Thanks to the amazing care I receive at Hamilton Health Sciences, I can watch my beautiful children grow and flourish," she says.

Hamilton Health Sciences also provides specialized care for pediatric cancer patients at McMaster Children's Hospital which cares for more than 900 children with cancer each year. Patients like Olive from St. Davids are amongst the 65 to 75 children who are newly diagnosed each year.

When Olive began to feel lethargic and vomit regularly, her mother took her to McMaster Children's Hospital. Scans revealed that a cancerous tumour the size of a baseball was growing in the five-year-old's brain.

"We were in complete shock," says Olive's mother Amanda. "The situation was extremely dangerous and Olive needed brain surgery. Luckily they managed to remove most of the tumour."

Olive underwent chemotherapy during the summer, followed by a second brain surgery, when surgeons were able to remove the rest of the tumour during the three-hour operation. This was followed by six weeks of radiation therapy.

"Olive is cancer-free, but we still visit McMaster Children's Hospital for regular follow-up appointments," says Amanda. "She is alive today because of the amazing care she received."

Hamilton Health Sciences Foundation is committed to supporting these highly specialized cancer services for patients of all ages throughout southcentral Ontario. For patients like Lisa and Olive, it can mean the difference between life and death. **BL**



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SMALL BUSINESS OWNER?

There Are Things You Must Know At Tax Time

PROVIDED BY NEWSCANADA

Owning a small business can be a challenging but rewarding experience. One of those challenges is learning how to file your taxes properly.

If you own a restaurant, bar, hair salon or other business where your employees receive tips from customers, it's important to know that you have certain responsibilities with respect to how to treat that tip income. How you handle tips earned by your staff determines whether they are considered "direct" or "controlled" and what your obligations are as a business owner.

Controlled tips are tracked and paid by you, the employer. You collect them from customers and control how to pay them out to your employees. For example, you may choose to add an automatic gratuity to a bill, or you may decide to share tips equally among your staff. Controlled tips should also be included as part of your employees' wages, which means that CPP contributions and EI premiums must be deducted at source if the employee is employed in pensionable or

insurable employment or both.

In contrast, direct tips are amounts that need to be tracked by the employee, who then declares the income on their tax return. Direct tips go from the customer straight to the employee; for example, cash tips that are handed to the employee by the customer. If your business follows a direct model and a customer includes an amount for a tip when paying their bill by credit or debit card, the tip would be considered to be a direct tip as long as you pay it out promptly and in full to the employee. If you hold those funds, they could be considered controlled and you could become responsible for CPP contributions and EI premiums.

Get more information on how to follow the tipping model of your choice at canada.ca/tips-gratuities-employer. **BL**

Article courtesy of www.newscanada.com.

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The Employment Ontario service is funded by the Government of Canada.



8 Operating Cost Rent Issues For Commercial Tenants

By JEFF GRANDFIELD AND DALE WILLERTON -
THE LEASE COACH

Commercial tenants are rarely happy with their operating costs; at best, they're ambivalent to them and at worst, they're upset with them. The two issues that most upset commercial tenants are ever-increasing operating costs and the landlord's lack of attention to fully maintaining the commercial property.

Commercial tenants can, of course, request a limit on the amount that operating costs can be annually increased. But landlords resist this because these are supposedly true costs passed onto the tenant and not normally a profit centre for the landlord. Commercial tenants should also watch out for other issues buried within operating cost clauses that can cost them dearly. We have detailed these in our book, *Negotiating Commercial Leases & Renewals FOR DUMMIES*, and summarized them below:

Administration Fees – If commercial tenants are paying the property manager's salary through operating costs, but the landlord adds a 15% administration fee to CAM costs, this can be considered double-dipping (or double billing for – essentially – the same service).

Landlord operating cost reports to tenants – Many landlords provide only superficial operating cost information to tenants.

Sometimes these reports are not only insufficient for the tenant but aren't sent out in a timely manner.

Occupancy levels and occupancy costs –

A lease agreement may state that operating costs are charged back to tenants assuming that the property is 95 to 100% leased and occupied. This means that if the property is only 70% occupied, those tenants carry 100% of the operating costs.

Proportionate share misallocations – Is your business located on the main floor of a property? If so, your customers will never need the building's elevator / escalator. In this case, should you have to pay a proportionate share of elevator / escalator maintenance? Just because a tenant occupies a certain percentage of the building doesn't mean that they're equally responsible for all operating costs as well.

Reconciliation billing – The industry norm is for landlords to budget future operating costs and then reconcile once per year. Commercial tenants can get walloped with unexpected reconciliation statements from landlords with only 15 days to pay or be found in default. Negotiate so that you are allowed to repay these overages over time (perhaps six months).

Tenant audit rights – The landlord has a fiduciary responsibility for accountability to the tenants for the money collected from and spent on behalf of tenants. The lease should

include tenant audit rights – allowing you to examine the landlord's books.

Underestimated budgets on new properties – If you're leasing commercial space in a new building, don't be surprised if the operating costs jump 25 to 50% more after the first or second year. Landlords have been known to under budget operating costs on new properties to help their pre-leasing program.

Utilities – Electricity, natural gas, and water may be provided by the landlord or separately metered for each tenant. In some cases, the landlord may have one meter on the property and a check meter on each tenant's unit to measure consumption. If you're paying your own utilities to the utility company, you'll have your own meter. In many cases, the landlord bills back utilities to tenants in operating costs. Make sure that you know – in advance – what the lease agreement calls for so that you don't have to pay twice. **BL**

Dale Willerton and Jeff Grandfield - *The Lease Coach* are Commercial Lease Consultants who work exclusively for tenants. Dale and Jeff are professional speakers and co-authors of *Negotiating Commercial Leases & Renewals FOR DUMMIES* (Wiley, 2013). Got a leasing question? Need help with your new lease or renewal? Call 1.800.738.9202, email dalewillerton@theleasecoach.com / jeffgrandfield@theleasecoach.com or visit www.theleasecoach.com.



Getting Personal

BY KRISTAL RIDDELL

Funeral homes often market personalized ceremonies to their clients, and so they should. We gather together in times of death to reflect, remember and celebrate a person's life. So why would anyone want anything cookie cutter? DVD tributes, photo collages, personalized stationery and music are just a few of the options available.

When you're looking for the right funeral home, it's a good idea to find one that can take that sense of personalization even further. For instance, do they hold off-site ceremonies that can best reflect a life lived? In the case of Essentials Cremation and Burial Services, we've developed strong relationships with a wide range of halls, churches, golf clubs and wineries, not to mention many unique locations like coffee shops and outdoor settings. It's also important for a funeral home to use celebrants who will take ceremony personalization to another level, spending hours to prepare a ceremony that's perfectly tailored to the person's life and the belief systems of their friends and family. At Essentials Cremation and Burial Services, we're here to create meaningful final memories and provide you with the ideal personalized ceremony to honour your loved one, exactly as they would've wanted. **BL**

Krystal Riddell is a funeral director and the owner of Essentials Cremation and Burial Services located on 102A-4300 Drummond Road in Niagara Falls. For more information, please call 905.354.2133, email krystal@essentialsCBS.com or go to www.essentialscbs.com.

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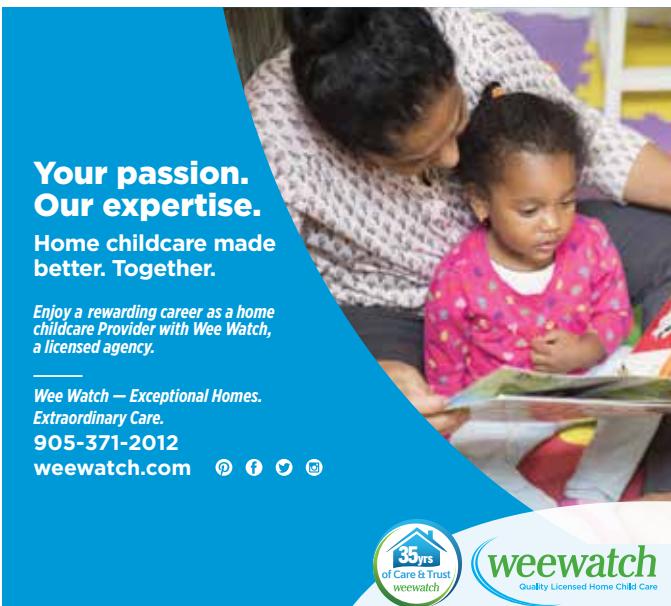
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Mark Basciano, president of Mountainview Group



40
YEARS



MOUNTAINVIEW

Successful Niagara builder celebrates 40 years of growth, award-winning designs and a firm commitment to its customers.

BY SCOTT LESLIE

Mark Basciano has seen a lot of changes in the construction industry over the past 40 years. But there's been one constant in his life.

He's seen the Mountainview Group – the family-owned building company – grow from a modest homebuilder into a multi-faceted firm producing everything from condominiums and low-rise family homes to commercial spaces, retirement and nursing homes to tenant improvements, and hospitality projects and renovations.

"We're proud to be celebrating our fourth decade in business," says the president of the Mountainview Group. "But we're still guided by the same philosophies we always have. We strive to make a difference in our community and deliver superior customer service."

The Mountainview success story began in earnest four decades ago. Nick Basciano and brothers-in-law Lou and Frank Memme were looking to start up their own homebuilding firm. The result was "Mountainview Homes" which officially opened its doors in the fall of 1979.

Not surprisingly, Mountainview Homes started from humble beginnings, operating out of a small unit at the back of Richmond Street Plaza in Thorold. The firm would go on to build its first few homes in Niagara Falls, Thorold and St. Catharines.

Mark was just a young boy when he first began helping out around the family business.

"My cousin Michael and I used to work on the weekends and during the summer holidays," he recalls fondly. "We had to sweep all the curbs and roads in front of the model homes by hand. We'd be out

there with a broom, shovel and wheel barrel to make sure they were clean for open houses. We would joke and call it the Italian Backhoe!"

Throughout the 1980s, Mountainview would continue to grow, building hundreds of homes and becoming one of the largest home-builders in the Niagara area.

According to Mark, he and the Mountainview team have continued to practice the same values his family started with 40 years ago. The results have been award-winning designs, quality workmanship and customer service you can rely on.

New Avenues

Today, Mountainview has over 70 full and part-time employees and stretched its development all the way from Niagara into other communities throughout southern Ontario.

Here in Niagara, Mountainview currently operates several low-rise communities including developments in Niagara Falls (Lyon's Creek, Thundering Waters, Woodside), Ridgeway (Dominion Woods), Fonthill (Saffron Estates), Thorold (Confederation Heights West Community, Timberwood), and Welland (Harvest Estates, Sparrow Meadows).

Over the past 24 months, Mountainview has been addressing a new emerging market – high-rise condo developments. Mountainview is in the final stages of completing a 45-unit, mid-rise condo development on Lakeport Road in St. Catharines called Elements. This project will see people move in starting in May. Mountainview has also launched an exciting new condo development known as One Twenty – a four storey, 50-unit condo project in Fonthill's newest community.

Mountainview is equally excited about its non-residential ventures as well as its full-service construction and property management company.



Mountainview is currently involved in several multi-million-dollar commercial initiatives. They include the construction and project management of The Beaches – an exclusive 13-suite condo project in Port Dalhousie on the shores of Lake Ontario. Mountainview is also developing and constructing a new project for Great Wolf Lodge in Niagara Falls.

A Leader In Philanthropy

Over the years, the Mountainview family has been firmly committed to their community. Their generosity and leadership in this area has helped them build a solid reputation as a leader in philanthropy in Niagara.

"We're more than just a construction company," Mark says. "We use our success as a vehicle to make positive changes in our community with our time, money and resources."

Last fall for instance, Mountainview stepped up to be the lead donor for the Pathstone Foundation's Natural Playground and Healing Garden – a 10,000 square foot outdoor space which will serve Pathstone's clients and their families. Just two years ago, Mountainview made a major gift to the Hotel Dieu Shaver Health and Rehabilitation Centre – the largest private gift in the hospital's history.

"At the end of the day, we want to build a better Niagara and make a real difference in people's lives," Mark says. "That means having a strong commitment to giving back to the communities we serve."

Through the years, Mountainview has also been recognized countless times for its commitment to excellence in the homebuilding industry.

In 2018, Mountainview received the Outstanding Corporation Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals – for demonstrating an exceptional level of leadership, financial support and community involvement. For the past three years running, Mountainview has also been a finalist of Tarion's Homeowners' Choice Awards in the Large Volume Category for its commitment to outstanding customer service.

"Our talented people are all the very best in their fields," Mark says. "I can't say enough about them and their dedication to our customers. They're the reason we've been leaders in the industry for many years."

Marks says the Mountainview team takes great pride in reaching such an impressive milestone. At the end of the day, however, he says their 40-year success comes right down to their people, partners and of course, their customers.

"We will continue to be driven to excellence in our industry, projects and communities," Mark says. "But we would not have any success and not be where we are today without the support of our most valued customers." **BL**

Mountainview Group is located on 3350 Merritville Highway, Unit #9 in Thorold. For more information, call 905.688.3100, email homes@mountainview.com or go to www.mountainview.com.





WORKPLACE ENGAGEMENT – PART ONE

WHAT DO YOUR PASTIMES AND PET PEEVES REVEAL ABOUT YOUR MOTIVATIONS?

BY JESSICA POTTS

Did you get to go to work today? Or did you have to go to work today? It's a subtle distinction that makes a huge impact.

Gallup research has found that up to 87% of employees worldwide are not engaged at work. They "had" to go to work. They would prefer to stay home or do something else entirely. And there's a big business case for fostering engaged workplaces – places where people feel that they get to go. Companies with highly engaged workforces outperform their peers by 147% in earnings per share.

Engagement starts with a psychological commitment and positive regard for how you can provide and exchange value. Engagement is the seed that must be nurtured to grow great company culture. And it starts with you. We can own an important element of engagement by making simple choices every day that contribute to positive outcomes.

Positive energy is a powerful thing. It attracts opportunity like a magnet and makes you feel alive. It's also a sign that you're on the right path - that you're tapping into your natural sources of talent and potential.

Think of a time when you felt productive, successful, and of value. Think of a time when you felt positive and confident. It doesn't have to be grand. It could be a simple activity where you just felt like you were running on all cylinders. Maybe it was a task around the house, an interaction at work or school, or working towards a fitness goal. Maybe it's a small moment in your day, a part of your routine.

An example in my life is cooking dinner. Simple, right? While it may not seem like much, it's really quite impressive with a bit more context...

- First, I'm probably the pickiest eater you've ever met. I'm working on it. I now, for example, eat salad "with" dressing – and a host of other "grown up" enhancements.

- Second, in what my mom calls a "cosmic feat of karmic retribution," one of my kids inherited the picky gene from me and at the tender age of eight has claimed vegetarian status – though his definition in practice is light on actual vegetables.

- Finally, I'm not a particularly good cook, nor am I creative with healthy ideas. Nor do I maintain a Pinterest board or recipe books that will suit the diverse palates at my table - so the struggle is real when it comes to dinner prep.

Luckily, it's not the act of cooking, or the mastering the flavour fusion, or even the artistic presentation that gives me the deep sense of satisfaction. It's the challenge of managing and synchronizing the different aspects of dinner into a triumphant culminating moment that I find fulfilling. Having each component of the meal prepped, plated, and on the table at the right time – that brings me joy. That's the critical factor that keeps me challenged and engaged.

Now back to your own example of a time you felt productive, successful and of value. Think of how good that felt. The quiet satisfaction as you take a deep breath, admire your effort, and appreciate the result.

It's important to pay close attention to those times as they can be very revealing about your deep motivations and your greatest potential for replicating that feeling of productivity, success, and providing value. Some refer to that feeling as being "in your element." It's inspiring, insightful, and down right energizing. It lights you up and you feel like you can conquer anything.

Now imagine you could bottle it. Imagine you had tools to be able to feel that satisfaction on a daily basis. Putting your unique talents to use consistently and intentionally is the key to channelling that power into positive energy. It means feeling better about what you do and how you do it daily. It means less time spent doubting yourself and more time putting your natural talents to use. And when we feel great about what we're doing, it's fundamentally easy to get and stay engaged. **BL**

Jessica Potts is the president of Inspired Strategy Group (ISG) Inc. and a Gallup Certified Strengths Coach, working with clients to build high-performing teams, and sustain stakeholder and employee engagement. Her approach is rooted in a strengths-based philosophy that maximizing potential happens when we encourage people to become great at what they're naturally good at. For more information, visit www.inspiredstrategy.ca, email hello@inspiredstrategy.ca or search "Inspired Strategy" on your favourite social media platform.

#balanceforbetter

Women BUILDING BUSINESS



International
Women's Day

On March 8th, International Women's Day will be celebrated around the globe - a tradition that represents over ninety years of development and success for women worldwide. In this feature, we showcase local women in the business community who have made an impact. These successful women come from many walks of life - and all of

them have demonstrated a clear sense of purpose, a desire to be different, and a drive to be the best. This feature is our way of saying "congratulations!" to all the hardworking women who help make the Niagara community such a rewarding place to work and live. **BL**



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Pat Simpson

Wee Watch Licensed Home Child Care
Supervisor



Wee Watch was conceived by a mother who had experience in day-care – from having to find quality child care to providing private home child care herself. Due to an overwhelming response to her sign on a drugstore bulletin board, this mother realized there was demand for quality home child care services.

After carefully examining what the options were for child care, she was determined that something different was needed. In the summer of 1984, the Wee Watch System was developed, ready to launch. Now Wee Watch has over 30 years of home child care experience and earned the reputation of a trustworthy, quality, licensed child care agency. Today, there are approximately 1,000 female professional home care providers throughout Ontario contracted with Wee Watch!

These ladies are running their own business while meeting the standards and regulations of the Ministry of Education – and those of Wee Watch - as part of the licensed home child care system. They control their earning potential, benefiting from tax benefits of operating their own business. They earn an income working from home, being with their own children. Best of all, they reap the rewards of offering a valuable service to families in their community!

Wee Watch supports providers by managing many of the tasks they find cumbersome or challenging. Their Registered Early Childhood Educators make regular visits with providers. Here, they provide them with many valuable resources including program planning guidance, menus, and other educational supplies so that children can be successful in meeting important milestones.

With a small number of children, each child receives the attention and guidance they need ensuring healthy emotional growth. Interacting with other children helps their social development while learning through play.

We will celebrate women's achievements! **#balanceforbetter**

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Left to Right: Julia Zhu, Sandy Howe, Cara Krezek, Stephanie Harper (with Adeline Harper), Jillian Nero, Heather Azar, Marisa Brown, Pauline Dawson

BROCK TEAM IS HELPING TODAY'S STUDENTS BECOME TOMORROW'S LEADERS

TO CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY at Brock University we're proud to showcase the leadership team of our dynamic Co-op, Career & Experiential Education (CCEE) department.

CCEE is led by a team of professionals who manage, plan and execute a vision of excellence in everything we strive to do. We work with employers, community members, Brock faculty members and students in order to connect talent with opportunity, link learning to practice, and fuel Brock's commitment to community engagement with the student talent who will soon drive and lead our workforce.

We ensure that students have opportunities to refine knowledge through hands-on experience, explore their passions and build the skills they will need for their careers. Brock's CCEE team has a strong network of partnerships across Niagara, Canada and the world, which helps our students successfully transition from school to career, and helps our partners reap the talent they need to run successful organizations.

Through an approach of support, recognition, innovation and empowerment, we teach these future leaders how to succeed while

balancing the demands of 21st Century life. Our strength as a team comes from the experiential richness of our own varied backgrounds, expertise and life circumstances. We celebrate the women who have helped shape our careers, and we strive to do the same for the future workforce ahead of us.

We want to meet you. On March 20 from 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m., please join us for a morning coffee or tea at Mahtay Café in downtown St. Catharines for Rise & Shine! This event, in support of 2019 Co-op and Work Integrated Learning Week, will help us know how we can support your organization, and for you to learn about opportunities including recruitment support, co-op possibilities or collaborations on projects that students can complete as part of their courses. We hope to see you there!



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Katie Appleyard

*Meridian
Small Business Advisor*

What is the hardest thing in your life that you have had to overcome?

Overcoming the negativity. It is easy to give up and run at the first sign that things are not going well or when things aren't exactly going your way. To get where I am today, I've realized I can't give up just because things are tough. Life is not supposed to be easy. I can embrace what challenges me because it will help me grow professionally and personally. I'm a role model for my daughters. I use this drive and determination in my role as a small business advisor at Meridian. I always have my Members' back and am an integral part of their team!



Sandy Kovacs

*EnCompass Home Care Solutions
Owner*

I am a perpetual helper, my name means "helper of mankind." As a teen and young adult, my days were devoted to volunteering at nursing homes or with disabled and medically fragile children; my whole life has been spent helping others. I chose my career in nursing from my desire to help and comfort. Throughout my nursing career, I became aware of the gaps, limitations and shortcomings of an overburdened healthcare system - stretched beyond capacity to meet the needs of an increasingly needing population. EnCompass Home Care Solutions arose from my desire to help meet that. It is my intent that via EnCompass, we will provide the personal touch so that individuals and their loved ones can be assured to live safely and independently within their homes and communities. #balanceforbetter

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Krystal Riddell

*Essentials Cremation and Burial Services Inc.
Funeral Director and Owner*

Through the guidance and leadership of an incredible mentor in the funeral service profession, I was able to bring my life's dream to fruition. Being a community leader for a new generation is something I feel I was born to do. This position has given me the opportunity to encourage, support and engage with women in our community. It is so exciting to be a part of positive change at a time where we celebrate one another other and lift each other up. I am Krystal Riddell and I support #balanceforbetter.



Getting Back to “Basics”

PROVIDED BY PORT CARES

When Charlotte dropped out of high school more than 30 years ago, she never thought she'd see the day that she'd return to a classroom to learn the fundamentals of reading, writing and mathematics.

“It was a different time then and you could still get a decent paying job without a high school diploma,” Charlotte says. “If I could do it all over again, there's no question I would have stayed in school and learned to love reading and writing.”

All is not lost for the Port Colborne resident, who is kick-starting her employment prospects by improving her writing skills through enrolling in Port Cares' Literacy and Basic Skills program funded by the provincial Employment Ontario program.

The Ontario Literacy and Basic Skills (LBS) program helps adults in Ontario to develop and apply communication, numeracy, interpersonal and digital skills to achieve their goals. The LBS program serves learners who have goals to successfully transition to employment, post-secondary, apprenticeship, secondary school, and increased independence. The program includes learners who may have a range of barriers to learning.

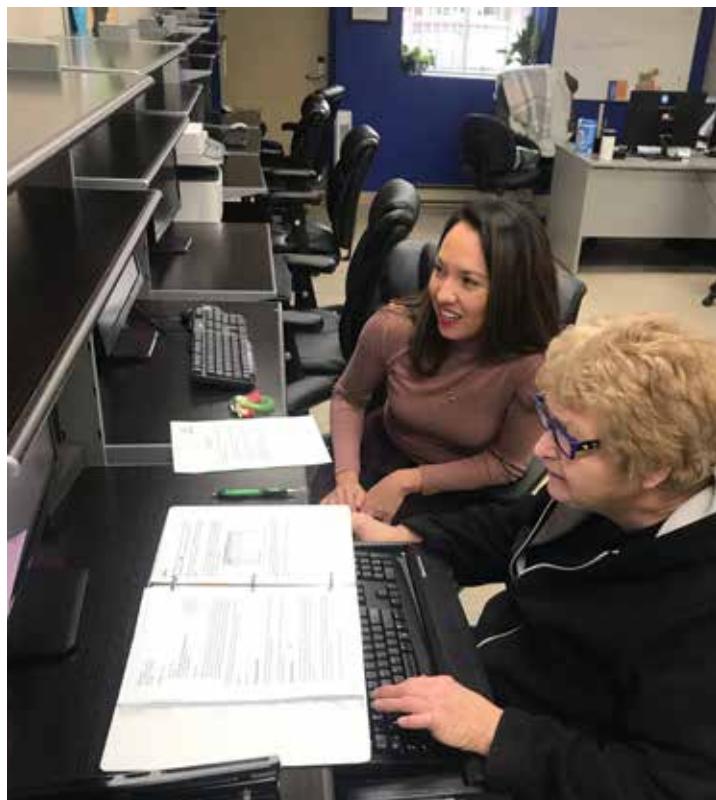
Through the LBS Program, individuals access five services that contribute to the successful completion of a learner plan. Every learner is provided with:

- information and referral
- assessment
- learner plan development
- training
- follow-up

Tanya Bouchard, manager of Employment Ontario programs at Port Cares says that the LBS program is available to Ontario residents who are out of school and communicate in English or French. Special emphasis is placed on serving individuals who are receiving social assistance through Ontario Works. Services are free, and Port Cares is one of approximately 340 locations across the province providing the LBS program for adult learners.

“This is one of the most important steps I've taken to improve my quality of life,” Charlotte says I would encourage everyone who needs this type of help to take advantage of LBS.” **BL**

For more information on Port Cares' Literacy and Basic Skills program, call 905.834.3629, email portcares@portcares.ca or go to www.portcares.ca.



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"When it's time to go home, do one more."

BY BRETT MEADOWS

These nine words should be taped to every salesperson's phone or steering wheel. I can remember the days when I was dragging my butt because I'd had it handed to me by prospects that I just couldn't close. Or it was too hot or too cold. Or it was raining or snowing. Or I was tired or worn out or burnt out. Or excited to go home early on a Friday afternoon. Or I was coming up with other really good reasons to knock off early for the day.

These nine words kept me going, "when it's time to go home, do one more!" It kept me going for one more call. It kept me focused on paying for my success, in advance, with hard work.

The impact of those extra calls was mind blowing. So many of my "one more philosophy" sales calls turned into sales. It was as if the sales gods were rewarding me for sticking at it. That final push paid off and kept paying off in my performance and my paycheque.

Think about it this way. Five more calls each week results in an additional 20 calls a month – or an additional 250 calls a year (50 working weeks). With the average closing rate of 30% that should produce an addition-

al 75 deals a year. (You do the math on what that means for your commission) These sales will never happen if you don't develop the discipline to make one more call.

The "one more" sales philosophy happens every day across the globe by the sales pros that are determined to be successful and insist about making one more call before they go home.

Of course, there are those who will tell you this is crap. They'll argue that working harder is stupid. "Why work harder when you can work smarter?" they say with a straight face. Here is a brutal truth: "Working smarter" is the chant of the average salesperson. Like all poor performing salespeople, they use "working smarter" as an excuse for their lack of success. Trust me on this. Poor performing salespeople love company so they're happy to drag you into their "working smarter" camp with the theme song of less effort equals more results. Don't buy into this nonsense.

Top sales professionals have the self-discipline to do the hard things in sales. Do top performers get tired, cold, hungry, burned out, feel their energy levels draining and want to

give up and go home? Of course, they do. Do these top performers love prospecting or the other difficult activities required for success in sales? Of course not! They don't enjoy these activities any more than the salespeople who are struggling.

What top performing salespeople understand is to succeed at the highest level, they've got to pay for their success up front with hard work that makes sales easy. They'll do the things they hate and make one last final push over the finish line.

The salespeople on the bottom know this too. But instead of making one more call at the end of the day when it's time to go home, they make excuses. **BL**

Brett trains, coaches, and speaks to salespeople all over the country. For more information on seminars and training, please visit www.brettmeadows.com or contact the friendly folks at Meadows Performance Sales and Strategy via email at info@brettmeadows.com or by calling 289.696.3605. When you do "one more call," just email me with the subject line "Did It" and you'll be entered in a draw for a free coaching session.



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PROVIDED BY KFCACN

What if I told you that by volunteering with the Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara (CACN), you'd be helping to improve your health while changing a child's future?

The ultimate purpose of all volunteer and staff work at the Kristen French CACN is to provide a safe place to help, heal and end child abuse for Niagara's children and youth who find themselves, through no fault of their own, needing the support of the professionals at the Centre.

But why would you or your employees specifically consider volunteering with the Centre? Besides lots of volunteering opportunities, giving back has been proven to be good for your health! Volunteering counteracts the negative effects of the fast-paced life we lead. The act of giving back can provide well-being, not only for those you're supporting with your time and effort – but for you as well. It reduces stress, increases a sense of inclusion and drives your life's purpose as you contribute to making the community a safer one for our children and youth.

And the business win? You gain a healthier, happier, positive work force engaged in the community and your business. As a corporate supporter of the Kristen French CACN, the Niagara community in turn takes note and feels good about coming to you for your business. Giving back is a win for everyone! **BL**

For more information about volunteering at Kristen French Child Advocacy Centre Niagara, visit kristenfrenchcacn.org/volunteer/.

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Why Either/Or Thinking Is Sabotaging Your Leadership

BY TIM ARNOLD

I blame my parents! Don't get me wrong. They had my best interests in mind. Little did they know, however, that their nurturing, guidance and teaching would sabotage me as a leader.

It started before I was even one year old when I was taught what was "safe" and "unsafe." It continued when I started school where I was taught what was "correct" and "incorrect." It progressed into my teenage years when I was learning values and ethics, and what made a "good" and "bad" person.

All of this teaching, direction and guidance developed what is referred to as Either/Or thinking. This means that for every problem, there is Either a right Or wrong solution. And by the time I was a young adult, I was 100% clear that picking the right answer meant I was safe, correct and good.

And then life started to get complicated. I began realizing there was wisdom in the anonymous quote that says, "For every complex problem there is a simple solution. And it's wrong." That this Either/Or mindset was great and necessary when I was dealing with facts, formulas, policies, and procedures. However, it was working against me when I was dealing with complex situations that could be seen from more than one point of view.

What became ultra-clear were the limitations of this Either/Or approach in the workplace and as a leader. All of the sudden, I was wrestling with complex issues and conflicting values. Things like:

- Being task focused "And" relationship oriented
- Providing critical analysis "And" providing encouragement
- Giving freedom "And" expecting accountability
- Being truthful and candid "And" being tactful and diplomatic
- Preserving stability, tradition "And" stimulating innovation, and change
- Thriving at work "and" thriving at home

These weren't situations of right and wrong, but instead situations of right and right. My trusted Either/Or approach that I'd clung to in order to be safe, correct and good was not helping my leadership. In fact, it was hurting it. It was sabotaging my leadership. There had to be another way!

If I was going to thrive as a leader, teammate, father, husband and friend, I had to also embrace a Both/And mindset. This meant I had to start getting comfortable with healthy tension. That I had to use the word "And" more than the word "But." Instead of aligning and spending time with people who always affirmed my point of view, I needed to seek out people with diverse perspectives and approaches.

The great news is that Both/And leadership can be learned, and every step you take in this direction is a step toward leadership development, team effectiveness, and organizational success.

How about you? Is your leadership stuck? Are you using the Either/Or mindset that you gained as a child to deal with complex leadership issues that require more than a simple right or wrong approach? Are you known for saying the word "but" more than the word "and"? Do you make healthy conflict and diverse points of view safe and celebrated in your team? Are you a Both/And leader? **BL**

*Tim Arnold is passionate about helping leaders get unstuck so they can unite their team, spark change and make a difference. He is the author of the book *The Power of Healthy Tension*, and speaks to organizations around the globe on how they can overcome chronic issues and conflicting values. For more information, go to leadersforleaders.ca.*

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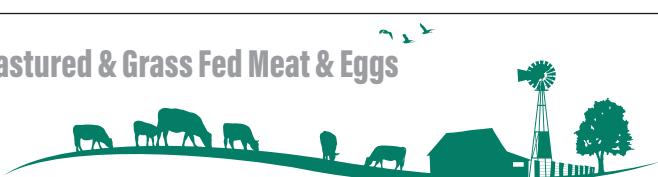


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BUSINESS PROFILE



Dan Willis

Owner - Publicita

Twenty years ago, Dan Willis was getting his post-graduate education in interactive multimedia, and the worldwide web was a much simpler place. When Web 2.0 was introduced in 2005, he was already an author, producer and director. An early adopter of the social platforms we all take for granted, Dan went on to make a mark for himself as a content creator and webmaster. In 2012, he opened his online marketing company – Publicita.

Dan will be the first to tell you no one reads your website and Google only shows what you tell it. But having a strong, succinct online message is critical to your success. Dan's honest and generous attitude has made him many friends, and his clients are fiercely loyal. Some of the most successful start-ups in Niagara have also signed exclusive contracts with Publicita, and continue to listen to Dan's advice. **BL**

Dan is currently accepting a limited number of clients. For more information, please call him at 905.341.7368, email daniel.willis@publicita.ca or go to www.publicita.ca.

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THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOARDROOM

Best Western Plus Rose City Suites' unique meeting venue can help jumpstart your productivity.

BY SCOTT LESLIE

Everyone loves a change of scenery – particularly when it's 20 below out, and your staff is suffering from a severe case of "the winter blahs."

Luckily, Best Western Plus Rose City Suites in Welland has just the thing for managers and business owners looking to add a little spark to their company meetings and training sessions.

As Welland's only all-suite hotel accommodation provider, Best Western Plus Rose City Suites has three state-of-the-art meeting spaces to choose from – the Rose Room, the Canal View Room and the Prince Charles Room. The 900 square foot Rose Room for instance can accommodate up to 75 people (theatre setting) or 40 people (classroom setting) while the 480 square foot Canal View and 325 square foot Prince Charles Rooms are ideal for corporate meetings and smaller functions of 10 to 20 participants.

Each meeting space is fully customizable and comes with a complete range of business amenities including podiums, overhead screens, LCD projectors, flip charts, dry erase boards, and writing pads. Best Western Plus' catering staff is also available to create the perfect meeting for you and your team, offering a range of morning snacks, mid-day refreshments or sumptuous breakfast, lunch and dinner buffets.

But there's more to Best Western Plus than just business. With over 1,700 square feet of space available, this award-winning hotel can accommodate nearly any kind of special event – from baby and bridal showers to retirement parties and staff get-togethers.

The Best Western Plus team has always committed itself to going beyond its clients' expectations. In order to celebrate its 30th anniversary coming up in 2020, however, Best Western Plus has taken things to a whole new level, completely renovating its meeting rooms, and adding new vinyl accents, luxurious carpeting and state-of-the-art furnishings. The same goes for its 68 well-appointed guestrooms that are currently being remodelled and will be completed in April, just in time for the warm spring weather.

If you're planning to include attendees from out-of-town, Best Western Plus offers convenient and attractive accommodations that are close to home. Located just minutes from Toronto, Hamilton and the international border, Best Western Plus' 500 square foot suites boast many alluring features, whether it's dual flat screen TVs, ergonomic chairs, fully stocked kitchens, en-suite bathrooms or complimentary Wi-Fi.

There isn't a company alive today that doesn't want to inspire its employees and get a jump on the competition. So if your team's "get up and go" has "got up and went," get up and go – to Best Western Plus Rose City Suites in Welland. This friendly, convenient and affordable venue has everything you'll need to make your next meeting or corporate event an unparalleled success. **BL**

Best Western Plus Rose City Suites is located at 300 Prince Charles Drive South in Welland. To book space for your next special event, please call 905.732.0922 or go to www.bestwesternniagara.com.



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