

## Caledon business matters

By Laura Johnston  
Executive Director  
Strategic Initiatives Department  
Town of Caledon

Entrepreneur. Risk-taker. Innovator. Renegade. Mover and shaker. Mom and pop.

Whatever the label, the value of entrepreneurs and small businesses and their importance to the national and local economy cannot be understated.

Often touted as the backbone of the economy, small businesses are essential to the economy. In Caledon, 98 per cent of businesses are considered "small." Those small businesses employ 48 per cent of Caledon's workforce. They are job creators, even during periods when the economy is unsteady.

Small business owners are often the entrepreneurs, the innovators and the risk takers. They think big and often they grow big, and they grow fast. Small businesses and the entrepreneurs who run them are a vibrant and dynamic part of our economy.

Being a business owner and working for yourself has rewards. Otherwise "why bother?" And it certainly has challenges. But take heart: resources, information, support and mentoring are out there "often free or nearly free."

The Town of Caledon's Economic Development Office, for example, offers many services, including:

- " assistance with the planning and development processes,
- " improvement plan grant funding,
- " support and mentorship to tourism businesses,
- " training, education and promotional opportunities,
- " collecting and sharing statistical information,
- " assisting with entrepreneurship and small business development,
- " offering programs to reduce energy costs,
- " assistance with government grant programs,
- " business listings,
- " e-newsletters,
- " networking opportunities.

And this new column, through a partnership with the Caledon Citizen and the Town of Caledon's Strategic Initiatives Department, is designed to offer helpful information to the entrepreneur and small business owner "from leveraging social media, to developing and protecting your brand, planning a stellar public event, and more."

Town staff from economic development, tourism, corporate events, communications, marketing and graphic design will provide helpful hints, valuable information and resources to help entrepreneurs navigate their way to success.

Call us "we are also open for business!"