

# BUSINESS CONNECTIONS



## *If It's How You Wear It, Stephanie Saunders Wears It Well*

Stephanie Saunders, owner and operator of It's How You Wear It! hair salon, is a force to be reckoned with. Recently awarded the Leeds and Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre's first ever Entrepreneur of the Year by Wendy Onstein, Stephanie has a story that might sound familiar to many local entrepreneurs.

A talented hairstylist, Stephanie had a hard time finding and keeping work in her chosen profession. She worked two jobs to make ends meet and found herself doing everything from selling cars to landscaping.

Fired from her last two jobs for being, as she puts it, too independent and difficult to manage, Stephanie found herself with no prospects and no money. She knew she either had to find a way to start her own business or leave town. In desperation she searched the phone book and came across the Leeds and Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre. It was through Wendy Onstein at the Centre that Stephanie heard about the Self-Employment Benefit program, which she credits with putting her on the road to success. "I thought I knew everything, but I didn't." Stephanie shares candidly. "And is that ever a hard thing to admit!"

Stephanie completed the SEB program and opened up her own salon. For the next year and a half she did everything she could to build the business and networked everywhere

she went. Unfortunately for Stephanie, her location was more of a hindrance than an asset to growing the business. After two break-ins and an issue with a customer being assaulted as she left the salon, Stephanie knew she had to make a change.

In the adventurous spirit that seems to characterize all good entrepreneurs and allows them to embrace change, Stephanie teamed up with a fellow hairstylist who was looking to open his own salon. With the help of Downtown Brockville they searched for and found the perfect location for them. Today they operate separate businesses but share space in a beautiful historic building in downtown Brockville. "It's kind of like a co-op," laughs Stephanie.

It's How You Wear It! might be the name of Stephanie's business, but it is also her personal philosophy. "You can have the greatest hairstyle in the world, but if you're walking around with no self-confidence, it won't look good," she says. "It's the same with anything. It's how you wear your circumstances. If your plans didn't go your way, then maybe you didn't plan properly and you need to do something else. You can wallow in your self-pity or you can do something about it that makes you feel good when you go to bed. It's how you wear it."

Visit Stephanie at It's How You Wear It at 165 King Street West or call (613) 498-9898 to book an appointment.

**Guiding entrepreneurs towards business excellence!**

# *Building a Business is a Process as Unique as You Are*

Every business has the same things in common. You need somewhere to work out of, you need something to sell, and you need clients. After that, each business is as unique as the person or people who own it. Whereas one person might sell products out of a store front, another might sell services from a computer tucked in a corner of their basement.

Just as no two businesses are the same, there isn't just one correct way to go about building your business either. What works for one company might not work for another. In order to figure out what's right for you and your business you need to understand three key things:

1. What do you have to offer?  
What makes your product/service unique?  
How will people benefit from it?
2. Who would benefit from what you're offering?  
Who might need your product/services?
3. Where are your clients?  
Where can you go to get in front of those potential clients?  
Who might be able to help you get in front of them?

Based on these three things you can put together a plan to build your business that works for you. Whether your plan is formal or informal, make sure to tailor it to your personality and your business. Whatever path you choose, remember to do what is right for you and your business. Keep in mind that building a business is not a one-size-fits-all process it is a process that is as unique as you are.

For more information on preparing a business plan, financing, or managing your business, contact the Leeds and Grenville Small Business Enterprise Centre 613-342-8772 X 470 or 471. For a full list of services and upcoming seminars, visit [www.lgsbec.com](http://www.lgsbec.com).



## *Small Business by the Numbers*

In 2007, 2.6 million Canadians were self-employed. This represents 15% of all employed workers.

In the past 10 years the number of self-employed workers has increased by 11%.

Women represent 35% of all self-employed workers.

Source: Statistics Canada,  
Key Small Business Statistics, July 2008

## *Business Tip People Buy Benefits...*

Try focusing your sales presentation on how your product/service will meet the needs of your prospect. People buy benefits... If you can solve a problem they are experiencing you are nine tenths of the way to a sale. Go one step further by stating how ownership of your product/service will make them feel. Focus less on the features of your product and more on helping meet the needs of your prospect and you will notice your business begin to grow.



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Towards Business Excellence!*