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# SMALL BUSINESS CENTRES ONTARIO

Empowering Ontario's Entrepreneurs,  
Supporting Business Growth

SUPPORTING 54 COMMUNITIES ACROSS ONTARIO



# WHO WE ARE

We believe small businesses  
are the backbone of our  
communities

- **A Province-Wide Network:** A non-profit member association representing 54 Small Business Enterprise Centres across Ontario.
- **The Entrepreneurial Backbone:** Acting as the central coordinator since 2020 to provide capacity building, shared services, coordination, and strategic support to local centres.
- **A Legacy of Impact:** Built upon a 25+ year history of collaboration with all levels of government and community partners to fuel local economies.
- **Catalysts for Growth:** Empowering local advisors to deliver the essential tools, expert guidance, and funding programs entrepreneurs need to start and scale.



# WHAT WE DO



## MEMBERSHIP SERVICES

- Advisor training
- Professional development
- Knowledge sharing



## ADVOCACY & PUBLIC AWARENESS

- Government relations
- Community advocacy
- Entrepreneurial ecosystem support



## PARTNERSHIPS FOR GROWTH

- Province-wide services
- Training & education
- Strategic collaborations

# SBC ONTARIO IMPACT



54

Ontario  
Small Business  
Centres

100+

Expert  
Business  
Advisors

3K

Events and  
Workshops  
held Annually

# SBC ONTARIO IMPACT



10K

New Jobs  
Created Annually  
in Ontario

26K

Client  
Meetings  
per Year

5K

New  
Business Start-ups  
per Year

# REAL SUCCESS STORIES

## CEDAR VALLEY

Started with a **\$3,000 Student Ventures grant** → now sold in **2,000+ stores across North America.**

## SONGWOOD CONTRACTING

Grew from **\$250K revenue** in 2018 → projected **\$4M revenue** and 20 employees.

“  
My business has grown so much in a short period of time.

— Jennifer James, Rustic Mama Retreats



# WHY IT MATTERS?

**Small businesses strengthen communities**

**Creates jobs and economic growth**

**Supports innovation and local entrepreneurship**

**Builds resilient local economies**

**Connects entrepreneurs with resources and mentorship**



# WORKSHOPS/EVENTS

[sbcontario.ca/events](https://sbcontario.ca/events)

Relevant and up to date training

Business specific topics

In person and virtual

Just in time learning



# ON DEMAND E-LEARNING

## Basic, Start up & Growth

64 online English/French e-learning sessions

Free for all to access

Access when convenient



## For Example

Basics: *Entrepreneur readiness, market research, business plan*

Start Up: *Marketing, branding, pricing, sales, importing & exporting*

Growth: *Building an investor deck, Expanding to markets*

[sbcontario.ca/e-learning/](https://sbcontario.ca/e-learning/)

# ENTREPRENEUR PROGRAMS

## SUMMER COMPANY

Supports students ages 15–29 in starting and operating their own summer business.

**INCLUDES:** Business Training, One-on-one mentorship, Grant funding support and hands-on entrepreneurial experience



## STARTER COMPANY PLUS

Supports entrepreneurs looking to start, expand, or purchase a business.

**INCLUDES:** Business planning support, training and workshops, advisory services, and grant opportunities



# SUCCESSION ONTARIO

## HELPING ONTARIO BUSINESS OWNERS PLAN FOR SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS TRANSITIONS

- Provincial program and online hub supporting business succession planning
- Backed by a \$2 million provincial investment
- Delivered through a network of 54 Small Business Enterprise Centres (SBECS) across Ontario
- Provides planning tools, training, and one-on-one advisory support
- Helps owners prepare to sell, transfer, or exit their business with confidence

Most small and micro-business owners don't have a formal exit plan, even though their business is often their life's work. In Ontario, only **1 in 10 small businesses** have a succession plan in place, putting jobs and business continuity at risk.



# WHAT DRIVES BUSINESS SUCCESS

## Success Leaves Clues

- Every successful business focuses on solving a real problem
- The market decides as customers pay for value, not ideas
- Consistent action beats perfection every time
- Strong execution always wins over a good idea



# START WITH A CLEAR FOUNDATION

*Clarity Creates Momentum*



Who do you serve? ◀

What problem do you solve? ◀

Why should someone choose you? ◀

# KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER

## The Businesses That Win Stay Close to Their Market

- Talk to customers regularly
- Test ideas before investing heavily
- Listen more than you sell
- Adjust quickly based on feedback



# FOCUS ON REVENUE EARLY

## Cash Flow Keeps You in the Game

- **Prioritize getting paying customers**
- **Price for sustainability—not just to compete**
- **Build simple, repeatable sales systems**
- **Track your numbers (sales, costs, profit)**



# **BUILD RELATIONSHIPS, NOT TRANSACTIONS**

***Business is Built on Trust***



**Referrals come from strong relationships**



**Partnerships open doors faster than cold outreach**



**Showing up consistently builds credibility**



# **KEEP IT SIMPLE**

*Complexity Slows Growth*

**Start with one clear offer** ◀

**Focus on what works—cut what doesn't** ◀

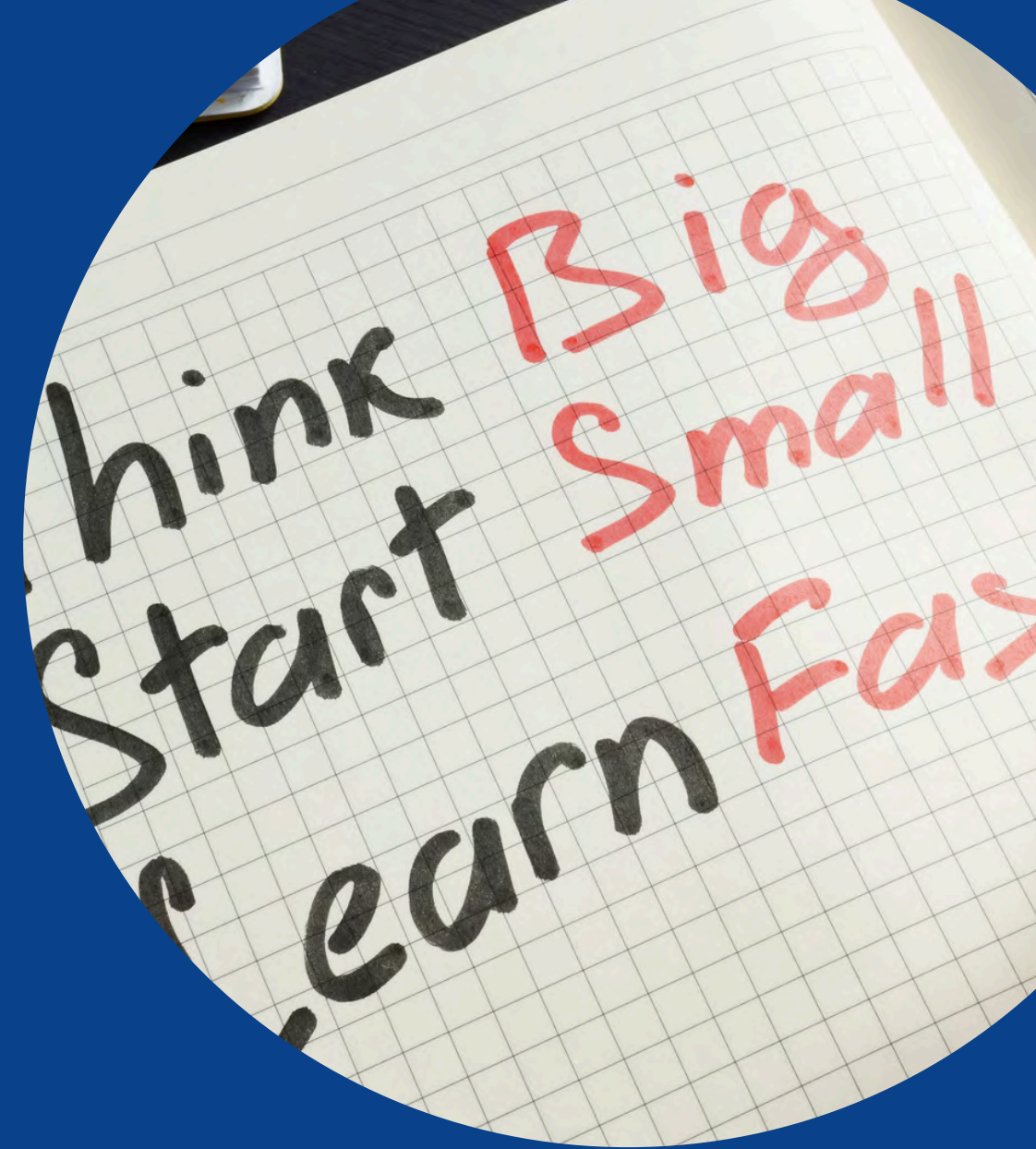
**Don't overbuild before demand is proven** ◀



# LEARN FAST, ADAPT FASTER

## Agility is a Competitive Advantage

- Try → Learn → Adjust → Repeat
- Treat mistakes as data, not failure
- Stay open to change as the business grows



## Build Systems Early

- Systems reduce stress, create freedom and scale
- Document how you deliver your product/service
- Create simple processes for sales, customer service & operations



# **INVEST IN YOURSELF**

*The Business Grows When You Do*

**Build skills in sales, finances, and marketing** ◀

**Surround yourself with advisors and mentors** ◀

**Protect your time and energy** ◀



# PRACTICAL SUPPORT FOR YOU

## That Moves Your Success Forward

- One-on-one advisory tailored to your business
- Hands-on workshops you can apply immediately
- Help with business planning, marketing, and finances
- Connections to partners, programs, and opportunities

***Whether you're early stage or scaling, these principles hold true across industries and communities."***



# REAL LIFE TESTIMONIES

## CALVER AND ASSOCIATES IMMIGRATION SERVICES

Entered the **startup process** without a formal business background → Received **one-on-one guidance** from Business & Entrepreneurship Centre Northumberland advisors → Developed a **strong foundation and business plan** before launching

C & A

CALVER AND ASSOCIATES



“ —  
They play an important role in keeping our  
community strong and united.

– **Eddy Hammoud**, Tabouli by Eddy's et Eddy's  
Mediterranean Bistro

— ”



**NEXT STEPS**

# READY TO GROW?

**Connect with an Expert Business Advisor at your local small business centre.**

**[sbcontario.ca](https://sbcontario.ca)**

**Find your local centre and start your journey today.**

**[connect@sbcontario.ca](mailto:connect@sbcontario.ca) | [sbcontario.ca](https://sbcontario.ca)**



**SMALL  
BUSINESS  
CENTRES  
ONTARIO**



**CENTRES DE  
LA PETITE  
ENTREPRISE  
ONTARIO**

# THANK YOU FOR LISTENING

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## QUESTIONS?

