

Produced by The Small Business Community Network (SBCN)  
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## Founders Message

*By Linda Ockwell-Jenner*

I am very excited to see the second edition of this newsletter come to fruition; our first edition in January was very well received.

The month of February has been very busy for the SBCN. We have welcomed quite a few new members at our SBCN Waterloo Chapter, SBCN Young Networkers and our SBCN UK online chapter.

We enjoyed a very successful 5th Annual Small Business Showcase Event at The Rotunda, Kitchener City Hall.

As the SBCN continues to grow we look forward to offering more special events and seminars, outside of our regular monthly meetings. Look out for the announcements coming soon!



Check out [TELUSTalksBusiness.com](http://TELUSTalksBusiness.com)

## Upcoming Events

<b>Tuesday March 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Monthly Networking Halton Region
<b>Thursday March 15<sup>th</sup></b>	Young Networkers of Waterloo Region
<b>Wednesday March 21<sup>st</sup></b>	Monthly Networking Waterloo Region

visit [www.sbcncanada.org/events](http://www.sbcncanada.org/events) for more details

## Business Education Series

By *Nikos Rentas*

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"Listening is the key to grasping the problems that exist within the market"

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This month's 15 Minute Educational Session focused on Design Think; a developing theme in business but an old theory developed by Charles Sander Peirce. The theory broken down from an eagle view depicts streamlining a business model in accordance to what the client wants or needs. The process involves communicating with your clients to find out what problem exists that requires a solution. It follows that an "idea" is developed to solve that problem. The result of this process creates the innovation that is needed to launch a business ahead of the competition.

In connection with last month's talk on networking, we begin to see the relationship of listening and communicating that allows for development of a business. Listening is the key to grasping the problems that exist within the market and the communicating portion develops the fundamental idea of a solution. With a strong focus on building with B2B and B2C communication channels a business can prosper by problem solving its way to the top. The buzz word "innovator" is just that! Problem solving directly in a niche spawns a company or professional into a market as a specialist allowing for structured growth. Tools such as social media allow small businesses to apply Design Think in a feasible manner. Harnessing the power of such tools allows market research to be inexpensive allowing for agile development in a business to continually be ahead of the competition.

The PowerPoint presentations have been added on the SBCN website as well as my personal website ([nikosrentas.com](http://nikosrentas.com)) available for download and comments. I will also add more articles on points that were brought up during the presentation that had limited detail.



## How To: Start With a Plan

By *Linda Ockwell-Jenner*

This is the first article in my series *How To*, and it's all about starting with a plan.

Normally you would think of a business plan, but you have to have a plan for anything you do, and your plan must include goals otherwise you have no way of seeing how well you are doing.

Whether you are thinking about starting a small business, changing careers, writing a book, or want to explore social media, you need to plan short and long term goals, needs, and wants.

If we take the example of starting a small business some things you would include in your plan are:

- Type of business
- Business name
- Budget
- Target market
- Website, business cards, domain name, printing needs
- Marketing
- Networking

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"I like to call this building strong foundations."

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Remember that well known quote: "People fail to plan, not plan to fail." Once you start writing down your plan you will not only see that there is a lot of work involved in whatever project you are thinking about starting, you will also have a better idea of where to start first. I like to call this building strong foundations. Whether you are writing a book, looking for sponsors for an event, or need to know how to market your business, it all revolves around planning your time, work and budget ahead of time.

Work on your plan, plan ahead and *plan not to fail*.

## Be The Brand

By Brendan Waller • SBCN Ambassador



One of the questions I get a lot about the DSGN network logo is "why don't you show a picture of yourself"? After all, people want to know who they're dealing with right?

One of the core services we provide at the DSGN network is branding. While a logo is a key design element for any business, and will populate across a range of marketing materials, the question you should be asking is how does the design connect with who you are?

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"If your brand is an extension of who you are people will know immediately who they're dealing with - regardless of industry."

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### My advice: Be the brand.

Whether you're starting a business, or considering re-branding your company here are some things to keep in mind:

- What made you start this business?
- What does your business say about you?
- How much of your personality do you want to let through?
- What are your values, and how will you convey them to your customers?

### Again, be the brand!

It is far easier to explain to both customers, and attract employees who share your values, and your ideals. If your brand is an extension of who you are people will know immediately who they're dealing with - regardless of industry.

So how does my brand represent me and my values? My answer: My ideas for the DSGN network were to establish a friendly relationship between both designer and customer. Our collaborative manner of working together allows us to offer the range of services, like an agency, but have the personal feel of working together one on one.

While you look at the DSGN network logo, you may see something very colorful and unique to look at. To me, it represents my ideas of collaboration, creativity and most importantly relationships. Even though my logo isn't my picture, my personality is infused into the core values of the company: I am the brand.

I'd be happy to hear stories about how your brand represents you and your business. Share your stories with me: [bwaller@dsgnnetwork.com](mailto:bwaller@dsgnnetwork.com)

- Brendan Waller, DSGN Network • [www.dsgnnetwork.com](http://www.dsgnnetwork.com)

## Security Corner

By Dave Ockwell-Jenner

So what's this 'Information Security' thing anyway?

Let me start by asking you a question: what is the most valuable information that you have in your business? We're used to placing a value on tangible,

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"I'll also bet you don't have a clue how much your information is worth."

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physical things such as equipment, furnishings, etc. I'll bet most of you have a fairly good idea how much the computer cost that you're reading this on. But I'll also bet you don't have a clue how much your information is worth.

It's true that arriving at a nice round dollar value for your information can be a tricky exercise. As with all difficult tasks, let's start with something simpler. I want you to grab a sheet of paper and something to write with. You're going to brainstorm for a moment and write down all the information you can think exists in your business. I'll give you a few suggestions: customer contact details, web site files, e-mail archives, articles, invoices, contracts, etc.

Now, take a second sheet of paper, and rank those pieces of information in order of importance; highest at the top, lowest at the bottom. It's helpful to ask yourself the question, "if this information were lost, or corrupted, how much of an impact would that have on my business?"

You should now have a list of what you consider to be the information lifeblood of your business, and which you think is the most important to you. Maybe consider the top 3... ask yourself what steps you take to protect that information against loss (such as theft or damage), corruption (say someone altering it without you knowing) or accessibility (say it's stored on the Internet and your ISP cuts you off).

THAT is information security—objectively looking at the value of information in your business and deciding on appropriate measures to safeguard it.

I'm always happy to hear from you—it's quite amazing what a simple conversation can achieve!

- Dave Ockwell-Jenner, *Prime Information Security*  
[www.primeinfosec.com](http://www.primeinfosec.com)

## The Small Business Showcase

On February 23rd, we hosted the 5th Annual Small Business Showcase sponsored by Digitcom. This year's event was held at Kitchener City Hall and was a great success—with all exhibitor spaces selling out!

Being in the heart of downtown Kitchener, exhibitors enjoyed a steady stream of people looking to see what the buzz was all about. But don't take our word for it, listen to what some of our exhibitors had to say...

"Am I the only one with a Showcase hangover? Great day yesterday - Thanks Dave and Linda for putting the showcase together. When's the next one? ;)"

- Carol Glover, FireHorse Consulting

"Linda and Dave - thank you again for organizing the SBS event yesterday. You guys are incredible! Also, I want to say thank you to those that dropped by my Suite XIII booth. It was nice to see all the familiar faces, and of course, meet new ones! :)"

- Ruby Parhar, Suite XIII

### Small Business Showcase

where business and people connect

[www.smallbusinessshowcase.info](http://www.smallbusinessshowcase.info)

"What a great event! Congratulations to Linda and Dave for organizing this fabulous day! It was wonderful meeting everyone, and I look forward to seeing you all again soon."

- Patricia Eales, Healthy Balanced Living

"Thank you everyone for being so nice to myself and my associated Tammy Smith, from our booth Melaleuca, The Wellness Company. We felt so welcomed, what an incredible atmosphere, a great group of people, thanks Linda and David."

- Debra Frigault, Melaleuca The Wellness Company

"It was a pleasure to meet you and take part in the show yesterday. We met a lot of great people, and handed out quite a bit of information. Linda is great and I wish I had that much energy! Once again, thanks to both you and Linda"

- Rosanne Brown, Great Saunas







## Power Questions

By Stewart R. Marsden

### Chapter 2 – The Journey To Business Power Begins

7:55 am, parking lot 'E' – I'm here. Where is everyone? My car is alone in the lot.

As I get out of the car, I again feel that same type of hollowness I felt when my business crashed. Me, standing alone in a garage filled with product to sell – not a customer in sight.

Taking the crinkled, wrinkled, lesson instruction sheet from my pocket, I read it again...

Business Field Trip To Outlook Point Parking Lot 'E' 8 AM  
Sharp!

I'm here. Why am I alone? I begin smoothing out the creases in the paper and I'm shocked. The lesson instructions actually state...

Business Field Trip To Outlook Point Parking Lot 'B' 8 AM  
Sharp!

Lot 'B' is on the other side of the park – I'm going to be late!

I jump in my car and dash over to lot 'B'. Who ever heard of holding a business class in a city park? I see a group of people already twenty feet along the Outlook Point trail. The teacher spots me running from my car and waits for me as the group continues down the trail.

"I'm John your teacher. You're late for your first **Power Questions**© class. Are you aware that being late is a common, and often serious, business mistake?"

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"standing alone in a garage  
filled with product to sell – not a  
customer in sight."

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"When you are not aware of your questions; you are not aware of your focus."

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he says as we walk far behind the group ahead of us.

"Sorry John. I went to parking lot 'E' by mistake. My instruction sheet got creased and I misread where to go. It won't happen again." Even to me, this sounds like a very weak excuse.

My teacher stares intently at me for a long moment and asks, "What question did you ask when you first looked at the lesson instruction sheet?"

"Question? I didn't ask a question?"

"Why did you look at the instruction sheet? What was your mind focusing on when you first read its information?"

"I wanted to know when the first class started and where to go. But, I didn't ask a question."

"Are you sure? It seems to me that you 'questioned' your instruction sheet."

"When you put it that way, I guess you're right. My silent question was probably something like: 'What do I need to know to get to class?'"

"Your questions always show where your focus is. This is the reason you must always know what your question is before you seek the answer. When you write down your question, and truly see it clearly, you can learn something important about where you are focusing your attention. In the business world, the businessperson's focus is critical for survival in the marketplace. When you are not aware of your questions; you are not aware of your focus.

"Did you bring your notebook to write in?" John asked.

"Yes sir. Actually I'm in the habit of taking a notebook with me at all times," I replied.

"That is a great business habit to have acquired. In my **Power Questions**© class you will be writing down every question before you start looking for answers."

"Why is that important John?" I asked.

"When you write down your question you can examine where your focus is. Then you can change a weak focus into a more powerful focus simply by changing your question. Many business people have found that powerful questions are the 'power path' to a powerful business.

"When you first looked at your instruction sheet you were only vaguely aware of your question so you weren't fully aware of your focus. Tell me, have you





ever been to Outlook Point before?" asked John.

"Sure, many times," I said.

"Then you already knew that parking lot 'B' is the closest one to the Point. Tell me how you justified driving to parking lot 'E' – the farthest one from Outlook Point?"

That made me cringe. "I didn't doubt what the sheet said. Or rather, what I thought it said. I just accepted the information as true and drove to lot 'E'." Now I really feel like an idiot.

John took the sting out when he explains, "When a businessperson is fully aware of their focus in each question asked, then, and only then, can they begin to judge which answer is the right answer. You weren't aware of your question or its focus; so it became very easy to simply accept the first answer as the only answer. I think this has been a very fortunate and very valuable business lesson for you."

John and I join up with the rest of the class on the Outlook Point observation deck. While everyone else is looking at the scenery, I sit and write what I have learned in my notebook...

1. *When I am not aware of my questions; I'm not aware of my focus.*
2. *My focus is critically important for survival in business.*
3. *I must write down my question to fully understand my focus before I look for the answer.*
4. *I can change my focus simply by changing my question. Simply altering the question I choose to ask can change a weak focus into a more powerful focus.*
5. *Crafting powerful questions is the 'power path' to a more powerful business.*
6. *A key to ensure I get the right answer is to ask the right power question with the right focus.*

Next newsletter: Chapter 3 – Critical Process Stages to Business Success. Our business warrior learns that there is a practical, simple, process to transform ideas into business success.

- Stewart R. Marsden lives and writes about business topics in Kitchener,  
Ontario, Canada.

## Social Networking

Connect with the SBCN on our social networking channels.



[sbcncanada.org/facebook](http://sbcncanada.org/facebook)



[sbcncanada.org/linkedin](http://sbcncanada.org/linkedin)



[sbcncanada.org/twitter](http://sbcncanada.org/twitter)



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