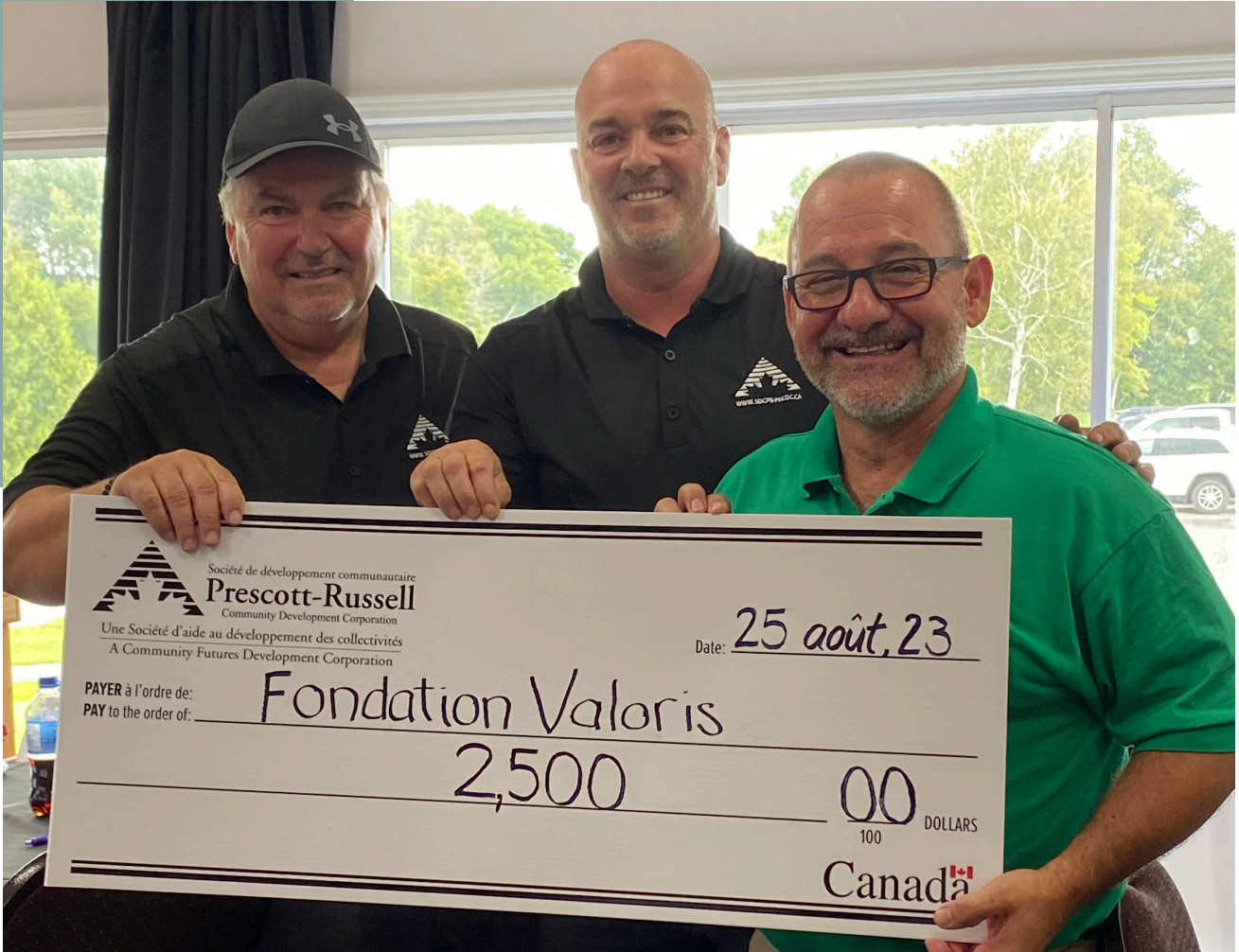


# PRCDC'S ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT



ARTICLE PAGE 6

**INGEO**  
pour femmes entrepreneurs  
for women entrepreneurs  
*Magazine*

**Funded by:**  
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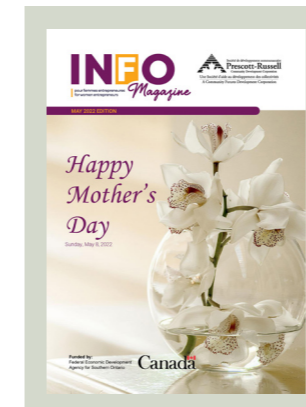
September 2023 Edition

**Canada**

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- Académie Shanthaly



### SEPTEMBER 2022

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- Homemade Soap
- Ferme l'Artisan Farm
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- Le Conciliabule
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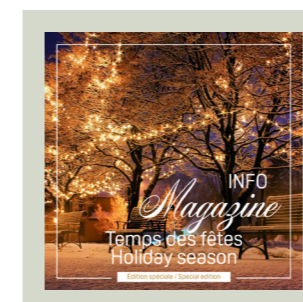
### APRIL 2023

- AHOY Adventures
- Mon Petit Univers



### JUNE 2023

- Bel'Ortie
- Les Petites Gâteries
- Kithcen Punjabi
- Lorie Duff
- Horsemanship Liberty
- Lane Farms



### HOLIDAY SPECIAL

# A WORD FROM THE TEAM

## WELCOME TO THE EIGHTH EDITION OF THE INFO MAGAZINE FOR WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS

A huge thank you to our loyal readers. We would also like to thank [Bel'Ortie](#), [Les Petites Gâteries](#), [Kitchen Punjabi](#) and [Lorie Duff Horsemanship Liberty Lane Farms](#) who generously gave their time in participating in the June 2023 edition and allowing us to showcase their products and services.

Women entrepreneurship in Prescott-Russell is booming, with more and more women starting businesses in various sectors of the economy. Women entrepreneurs make an important contribution to our region's economy by creating jobs and stimulating regional economic growth.

However, they still face unique challenges, such as access to start-up funds and entrepreneurial support networks. Despite these challenges, the number of women embarking on entrepreneurship continues to increase, which is great news for the local economy, and the PRCDC is proud to support women entrepreneurs.

As the only support organization for women's entrepreneurs established in Prescott and Russell, the PRCDC offers a range of services dedicated to women entrepreneurs, such as microcredit financing, venture capital, a networking ecosystem for women entrepreneurs, training workshops to help develop skills with the Growth Wheel platform, and more.

The PRCDC's role, through its mission, is to promote, develop, and support women's entrepreneurship as well as women's entrepreneurial succession as a lever for sustainable economic development for the entire Prescott and Russell region and the OLMCs of southern Ontario. Through its entrepreneurial ecosystem, the PRCDC promotes a current vision of entrepreneurship and business succession among women. Through the regular publication of the INFO Magazine for women entrepreneurs, the PRCDC aims to inform and equip them by emphasizing activities and services that promote the sharing of experiences, the transmission of knowledge, and the development of skills.

So, if you are a woman looking to start a business in Prescott-Russell or in a francophone community in southern Ontario, we encourage you to contact our office for information, assistance, and/or advice.

The path to entrepreneurship can be difficult, but with the right information, the right tools, and the right resources, you can succeed. Do not hesitate to contact our team to start your entrepreneurial journey now!

**HAPPY READING!**

### On behalf of the PRCDC team



John Candie  
Daniel Sigouin  
Kim Denis  
Pauline Chevrier  
Karianne Simard

# DESTINATION FEMPRENEURE

## Did you know?

[DESTINATION FEMPRENEURE](#) is the perfect platform for women entrepreneurs in the Prescott and Russell and southern Ontario regions. This virtual and bilingual platform not only promotes and highlights women-led businesses but also offers many services and programs to help inform, guide and fund women entrepreneurs throughout their entrepreneurial journey and projects and is completely FREE!

1

DESTINATION FEMPRENEURE was officially launched on April 18th 2023, thanks to the [Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation \(PRCDC\)](#), via the Southern Ontario Women Entrepreneur Initiative (SOWEI), and supported by the [Federal Economic Development Agency for Southern Ontario \(FedDev Ontario\)](#). Its mission is to support the start-up, growth, and development of women-led businesses to meet the current needs of the women entrepreneurial ecosystem in our regions.

2

What you will discover in the TOOLBOX. Unlimited access to important information that will answer many questions and improve your entrepreneurial skills and business performance. Offered in digital and PDF versions, subjects such as social media, business plans, digital tools and much more are available to you at no cost. A support portal is also included in this section with various organizations' information. And, of course, all online and PDF versions of all the INFO Magazine editions.

3

The WOMEN ENTREPRENEURSHIP NETWORK is also a valuable aspect of this platform. Join the more than 100 women-led businesses in the Interactive map, Networking Corner and Upcoming Events. Is it easy and FREE to submit your business information and be part of the growing local business directory (see links below). Let's build a complete women-led business directory together.

4

The Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation has been supporting businesses and entrepreneurs for over 37 years. Offering funding to Prescott-Russell and Southern Ontario SMEs is among our many services. The FUNDING AND CONTRIBUTIONS section has useful links to our financial support as well as other organizations.

Destination Fempreneure website: click [HERE](#)

Direct link to register your business: click [HERE](#)

Information and questions: [info@sdcp-prcdc.ca](mailto:info@sdcp-prcdc.ca)

# PRCDC ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

## Daniel Gigault Open



On behalf of the PRCDC's Board of directors and staff, we wish to sincerely thank all who played, attended, participated, and sponsored our annual golf tournament, the Daniel Gigault Open. A special thank you to our official partner, Desjardins. And last, but not least, thank you to the staff at [Casselview Golf & Country Club](#) for the great service, friendly employees and, impeccable golf course.



This year's tournament was another successful day with unique opportunities to gather and reconnect the business and organization communities. Hoping to see you all next year!

### Hole sponsors



### Kiosks and contests sponsors



## OUR SPONSORS

A HUGE thank you to this year's sponsors that have helped immensely to make this day possible. It is always heartwarming to see the continued support from our local entrepreneurs and organizations. All proceeds from this event were donated to:



# PRCDC ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

## *Daniel Gigault Open*



Almost all  
**THE PLAYERS**



# PRCDC ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

## *Daniel Gigault Open*



Almost all  
**THE PLAYERS**



# PRCDC ANNUAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

## *Daniel Gigault Open*



**WONDERFUL DAY!**



*"It's never a dead end.  
It's a detour, not a dead end."*



# Sensory Chewing Neck Gaiter

There are times becoming an entrepreneur is not always a lifelong dream, not even something you have ever contemplated. There are times your passion for your service or product does not stem from the hopes of becoming your own boss, financial stability, or being born creative and innovative. There are times certain life situations can unfold and change your entire outlook, your way of seeing your personal and professional life. And there are times those life situations can give you new direction and perspective. Our next story is about a woman entrepreneur who has discovered her inner strength and devotion to a cause that was otherwise unknown to her. This is how Anne-Marie Chartrand went from a full-time, dedicated career woman and volunteer firefighter to a businesswoman with a specific goal.

Anne-Marie is a proud mom of 2. In 2020, her youngest child developed medical problems. After a somewhat lengthy stay at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario (CHEO), a battery of tests performed on her then 2.5-year-old son revealed the causes of his symptoms. He was then diagnosed with a few conditions, among them was Level 2 autism. This, as you can imagine, turned her world upside down. He was no longer a playful, feisty, bubbly little boy so, Anne-Marie picked herself up and was determined to see that her son had the best quality of life, the best care, and the best tools to help him cope. Her main questions were ... what is this? What do I do now? Where do I go? What services are available? And thus began her ongoing journey into Autism research. Thankfully, the staff at CHEO were able

to get her started by referring a few organizations. Among them are the [Valoris Foundation of Prescott-Russell](#) and [Regroupement Autisme Prescott-Russell](#). Anne-Marie can't thank them enough for their guidance and assistance. It has been and still is priceless to her.

While seeing the different challenges her son has developed with this diagnosis, Anne-Marie noticed that he tended to chew on his shirt or jacket collar, especially when he felt anxious or stressed. Knowing this was unhealthy and potentially dangerous, she began looking into products that might help him alleviate his anxiety. Exploring, researching, and inquiring wherever she could. Astonished, she discovered there was no product for that specific oral sensory fixation. Her drive to help her son led her to more research. She will develop her own product. She began her process by designing and developing her own prototype. With the help of a seamstress neighbor, she created the very first Sensory Chewing Neck Gaiter. An accessory that is worn around the neck with a velcro closure at the back and a silicone chewable element at the front. Needless to say, she was thrilled to see how her product immensely helped her son and is convinced it can help so many others. Adults, teenagers and children with autism, ADHD, ADD, anxiety or other sensory-related conditions can benefit from this discreet oral sensory tool. Even a teething baby may find relief with this product.

[www.sensorychewingneckgaiter.com](http://www.sensorychewingneckgaiter.com)



While still holding 2 jobs and caring for her son's needs, Anne-Marie developed every facet of her product on her own. From extensive research, design, creation, legal aspects, patenting and manufacturing. And now, with the help of her part-time team, her website is active and very informative. The comments from buyers say it all. Her product can be purchased directly on her website or on Amazon.

Always looking for different ways to promote and create awareness for her product but also to inform and educate the communities about autism, the Sensory Chewing Neck Gaiter was presented at local events such as at The River Rock Inn and Potvin Construction and will be showcased at the upcoming the Navan Fair.

Her ultimate goal is to create more products to aid and assist those affected by sensory fixations and offer solutions but also to create awareness. Unfortunately, families with children (or adults) diagnosed with autism have very little supportive assistance or programs in the area and Anne-Marie firmly believes that must change.

Thank you so much Anne-Marie for sharing your story with our readers. Your love for your cause is heartening and your courage is inspirational!



## Sensory Chewing Neck Gaiter features:

- Premium, high-quality, non-toxic, anti-bacterial materials
- No BPA, phthalates or lead
- Durable, non-toxic silicone chewable element
- Available in various sizes and styles
- Easy to care for (machine or hand washable or dishwasher)
- Helps promote comfort, focus, and sensory regulation



ANNE-MARIE (center) AND HER TEAM

Anne-Marie has her very own dream team including her photographer, her I.T. staff, her finance administrator and her assistant. A part-time workforce that she can't thank enough for their devotion, professionalism, dedication and belief in her goal and dream.



HER INSPIRATION

Her bundle of joy is the heart and soul of this entire entrepreneurial journey.





Originally from Venezuela, Vanessa Teran came to Canada in 2012 as part of a post-secondary youth exchange program to study Marketing and Technology with a focus on FinTech. This young woman stayed in the Greater Toronto Area to pursue her career in tourism as a sales marketing manager. But her lifelong passion for boating and saving local biodiversity soon motivated her to research the issues of aquatic invasive species and how watercraft are the main carriers of foreign invaders that change the climate on our Ontario Great Lakes. That is where her entrepreneurial journey began, the potential impact that boats have on the marine ecosystem. But she did not stop there. Being an impactful and socially driven entrepreneur. Her business concept is as unique as it is diverse.

# AQUA Services Group

With the recent boom of boating enthusiasts and the demand for boating maintenance, Vanessa founded AQUA Services Group in 2020. Raising awareness for the aquatic ecosystem was one goal, however, this young entrepreneur also felt the need to address the unemployment issue, especially within the under-represented community and advocate on their behalf. Being a relatively newcomer to Canada, Vanessa created a platform to provide opportunities to minorities within the Greater Toronto Area. Justice, equity, diversity and inclusion are central to her business. Her 6 full-time and 4 part-time employees are all part of minority groups, including her parents whom she brought from Venezuela in 2019. But how did [AQUA Services Group](#) begin? Word of mouth of course. Vanessa created her own

personal network by visiting boaters, one by one, educating them and offering her services. That first summer season was a success! But because this was a seasonal venture, Vanessa did not waste time during the off-season. She wanted to expand, to service other areas, to further her own goals and to ensure her continuing commitment to the employment impact of newcomers. Her next plan was to offer the same high-quality cleaning and maintenance service commercially and residentially. Being a very resourceful person, Vanessa sought new ways to increase her clientele. One way was to become a part-time Uber driver. She believes there is power in telling your story and in describing what makes you unique. And so she shared, and they listened.

Little by little, she obtained more contracts and her business grew. And Vanessa's quest for knowledge and perfection in her field grew as well. Numerous training for her and her staff, partnerships with organizations for Health and Safety, Green Clean-Up, and Supplier trainings. Business accelerator programs, membership in the Women's Chamber of Commerce and participating in a podcast panel for Start-Up Canada, just to name a few.

Vanessa's favorite aspect of being an entrepreneur is being able to write her career and create her own path on her own terms and rules. Her secret to success is focusing on the WHY at all times, especially when making business decisions. She stays motivated by pursuing more businesses and looking into innovative ways to address and solve different problems in the industry. Success equals progress. Knowing the service she provides is enhancing her community's lifestyle is a great motto to keep moving forward.

One tiny regret is if she to do it all over, she would begin with a business plan. *"It doesn't have to be perfect, but it guides you better"*,

Thank you Vanessa! This is an industry that we were not really familiar with and it was great learning the different aspects of your growing business. We wish you all the success!



**AQUA GROUP**  
PROPERTIES • YACHTHUB • PRESERVE



*"The idea is not to live forever but to create something that will."*

**ADVICE**

**There is no substitute for hard work. None. They say it takes 10,000 hours to master something. It's true. Commit. Work hard. No one is going to do this for you although there are many people who will help you along the way. Ask for what you need. Women, on average, earn less than men. We get 80% less start-up funds than men. We accept less. Stop. Know your worth. Demonstrate value. Always be willing to walk away from a deal.**

### Mission Statement

AQUA Services Group true North goals:

1. Empower the health and wellbeing of GTA communities by providing clean and sanitary spaces to live a better life.
2. Serve adventure seekers and boating professionals by providing environmentally conscious aquatic services.
3. Develop a unique surveillance system for invasive species in the aquatic ecosystem to preserve Lake Ontario's biodiversity for future generations.

*“At Sublime, we believe that beauty and wellness go hand in hand. That’s why we stay at the forefront of cutting-edge technologies and innovative treatments in the medical aesthetic field. Our commitment to ongoing education and training allows us to provide you with the latest and most effective solutions for all your skincare needs.”*

Sublime Medical Esthetics

# Sublime Medical Esthetics

She is artistic, she is creative, she is curious and she thrives on perfection. Andr ea Delorme, Founder of and medical esthetician at Sublime Medical Esthetics, has a continuous, relentless and passionate entrepreneurial journey.

Andr ea worked in many fields before and during the beginning stages of her business start-up. She worked at a bank, at an accounting firm, and at various salons. She was a municipal treasurer and a bartender. For an extended period, Andr ea held a full-time job during the day and tended to her esthetic clients during the evenings. Each and every one of those career choices gave her some form of knowledge, experience, skill and insight and she is very grateful for each opportunity. While gradually building her business, her extensive studies range from cinema and television make-up to beauty and fashion photography as well as in-depth expertise training in each service she offers.

From when it all began in 2000, with basic treatments such as manicure/pedicure and waxing, Andr ea offered her services either in different salons or in her basement. She even had a mobile endeavor in 2004. Where her clients couldn’t go to her, she would go to them. Over the years, she has acquired more experience and top-notch medical esthetic equipment, always improving, always rejuvenating.

Her dedication and commitment have earned her a reputation for exceptional skills and a personalized approach to skincare. Always attentive to her client’s needs, she will help guide them, explaining step by step, to enhance their natural beauty. While she caters to both women and men (30% men), Andr ea is a firm believer in all of her treatments and products. She would never recommend a product or provide a treatment that she wouldn’t use on herself. Customer confidence and satisfaction are key!

Also a firm advocate for her community, Andr ea was, until recently, President of the [Clarence-Rockland Chamber of Commerce](#) for 5 years.



m dico esth tique  
**Sublime**  
m dical esthetics

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- Eyelash extensions
- Laser hair removal (women)
- Medical sunscreen products
- Laser hair removal (men)
- Facial
- Peeling
- Waxing



At Sublime Medical Esthetics, situated at 2452 Laurier St., in Rockland ON, Andr ea and her staff of professionals are devoted to creating a warm and welcoming atmosphere. Claudia Roussell (right) is the talented eyelash technician with a keen sense of style. Elizabeth Lavoie (left), a highly skilled Nurse Practitioner with a specialization in cosmetic injections. And of course, Andr ea (center), Founder and esteemed medical esthetician.



In June 2022, Andr ea extended her services with a state-of-the-art tattoo removal machine and in February 2023, she added a radio frequency microneedling system. You can learn more about these and all treatments on her website or by simply contacting her and her team.

Where does Andr ea and Sublime Medical Esthetics hope to be in 5 years? She plans to buy her current location, expand the business, and


expand the treatments, expand the team to care for her current and new clients. Her advice to women entrepreneurs is to **work together**. A competitive mindset is essential but partnerships and working mutually to obtain the same goal is not only fulfilling but also beneficial to the women entrepreneurship ecosystem and local prosperity and growth.

We thank you Andr ea for the privilege meeting you and sharing your story. We wish you ongoing success and prosperity.

[www.sublimemedicoesthetic.com](http://www.sublimemedicoesthetic.com)

# PRCDC FUNDING

The Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation (PRCDC), sponsored by [FedDev Ontario](#), continues to deliver its mandate to encourage the development and diversification of local the economy. We offer various funding options for all your entrepreneurial projects.





### Investment fund loan

The [Investment Fund](#) loan provides a funding source up to a maximum of \$300,000 to new and existing businesses in the Prescott and Russell region. This source of financing is structured with flexible repayment terms and an assessment of your project's viability and assistance in obtaining realistic funding.

### Young entrepreneur loan

The [Young Entrepreneur](#) loan has been created to reduce the outmigration of young people towards urban centers and aims at supporting young entrepreneurs from 18 to 35 years of age in the Prescott and Russell region with available funding ranging from \$5,000 to \$30,000. This program promotes leadership in young people and values their social, cultural and economic engagement in our communities.






### Express loan

The [Express](#) loan is created to support the operational continuity of businesses in the Prescott and Russell region. Funding up to a maximum of \$15,000 for expenses such as leasehold improvements, increase inventory, help with working capital, improve or update equipment and marketing, to name a few. A decision could be transmitted within 72 business hours of receiving the application.

### EDISO loan

The [Economic Development Initiative of Southern Ontario \(EDISO\)](#) loan is dedicated to francophone and bilingual businesses in southern Ontario, including rural and urban areas. This program offers funding up to a maximum of \$30,000 and is designed to strengthen the foundation, sustainability and competitiveness in southern Ontario.



# FALL 2023 TRAINING PROGRAM

The Prescott-Russell Community Development Corporation is offering tremendous opportunities for aspiring entrepreneurs by launching an intensive 8-week training program in the fall of 2023 designed to equip SME business owners with essential skills and knowledge. This comprehensive program is developed to provide a solid foundation for entrepreneurs, covering a wide range of topics essential to building a successful business. From creating an appealing business concept to developing lasting customer relationships while managing profitable operations, this training program aims to equip participants with the competitive business landscape. The upcoming PRCDC's FALL 2023 training program for entrepreneurs promises to be an invaluable opportunity to improve their skills and propel their ventures to new heights.

Stay tuned for more information. Places will be limited

Creating an attractive business concept	Building a strong organization
The first module of the training program will focus on the fundamentals of creating an attractive business concept. With the help of industry experts, entrepreneurs will refine their concepts, ensuring that they are unique, scalable and have a competitive advantage.	The second module of the program will focus on the crucial task of building a strong organization. Participants will gain knowledge of effective leadership and management strategies, learn how to build a talented team, delegate responsibility and foster a positive corporate culture.
Developing lasting customer relationships	Managing profitable operations
The third module recognizes the importance of cultivating lasting customer relationships. Entrepreneurs will learn critical skills in customer engagement, relationship development and delivering exceptional customer experiences. This module will also address the importance of leveraging technology and digital marketing tools to improve customer relationships in the digital era.	The final module of the program will focus on managing profitable operations, a vital aspect of any successful business. Participants will gain knowledge in financial management, budgeting and forecasting, enabling them to make informed decisions and ensure sustainable growth.

## The benefits of the program

Interactive learning	Expert mentors
The training program will take a hands-on approach, combining workshops, case studies and group activities to facilitate active learning and practical application of concepts.	Participants will have access to experienced mentors who will provide advice, insight and industry knowledge throughout the program, helping entrepreneurs overcome challenges and make informed decisions.
Networking opportunities	Personalized support
The program will foster a collaborative environment, encouraging entrepreneurs to connect and collaborate with other participants, thereby expanding their professional network and potentially opening up new partnership opportunities.	Each participant will receive individualized support, enabling them to address specific challenges and capitalize on their unique business goals and opportunities.

# ENTREPRENEUR CORNER

Small and medium-sized businesses are the heart of our communities and the backbone of our economy. They also lead the way in innovation and continue to prosper. This section was created for ALL entrepreneurs and businesses in the Prescott-Russell and Southern Ontario regions.

It is with great pleasure that we dedicate this portion of the INFO Magazine to help promote local SMEs. Promotional advertisements, special events and sales, and business logos are all accepted at no cost. If you would like to include your business, please email your publicity (in png format) to pchevrier@sdcp-prcdc.ca and we will be sure to include it in the following issues. Thank you to the following businesses for participating.

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*"If everyone is moving forward together, then success takes care of itself."*

- Henry Ford



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- Helen Keller



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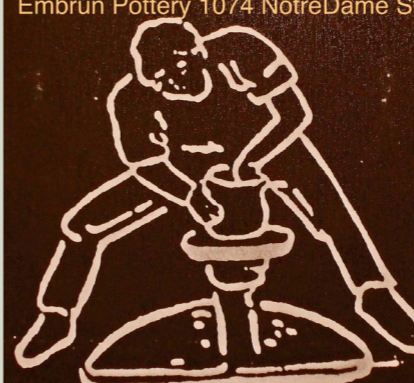
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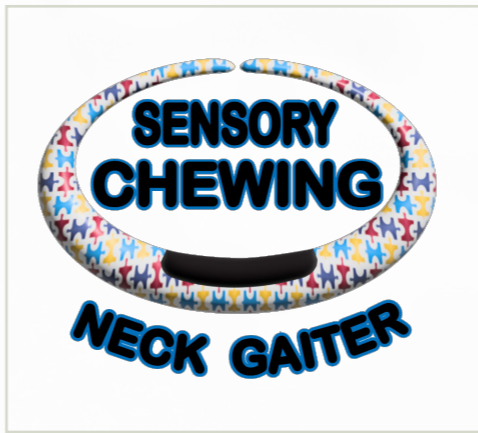
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We would love to hear from you!

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If you would like to include your business in future INFO Magazine editions, we ask that you take a few minutes to fill out a short questionnaire. Please click [HERE](#) to upload, fill out and submit the form. We will contact you shortly after the reception.

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We would love to hear from you!

“In order to be *irreplacable*, one must always be different”

- Coco Chanel



# 12 CHARACTERISTICS OF CRITICAL THINKERS

In essence, critical thinking requires you to use your ability to reason. It is about being an active learner rather than a passive recipient of information. Critical thinkers rigorously question ideas and assumptions rather than accepting them at face value. They will always seek to determine whether the ideas, arguments and findings respect the entire picture and are open to finding that they do not. Critical thinkers will identify, analyze and solve problems systematically rather than by intuition or instinct.

**OBSERVATION** is one of the earliest critical thinking skills we learn as children. It is our ability to perceive and understand the world around us. Careful observation includes our ability to document details and to collect data through our senses. Our observations will eventually lead to insight and a deeper understanding of the world around us.

**CURIOSITY** is a core trait of many successful leaders. Being inherently inquisitive and interested in the world and people around you is a hallmark of leaders who are critical thinkers. Instead of taking everything at face value, a curious person will wonder why something is the way it is. As we get older, it is easier to put aside what may seem like childish curiosity. Curiosity forces you to keep an open mind and propels you to gain deeper knowledge, all of which are also fundamental to being a lifelong learner.

**OBJECTIVITY** Good critical thinkers are able to stay as objective as possible when looking at information or a situation. They focus on facts, and on scientific evaluation of the information at hand. Objective thinkers seek to keep their emotions (and those of others) from affecting their judgment. However, it is impossible for people to remain completely objective because we are all shaped by our points of view, our life experiences and our perspectives. Being aware of our biases is the first step to being objective and looking at an issue dispassionately. Once you are able to remove yourself from the situation, you can more thoroughly analyze it.

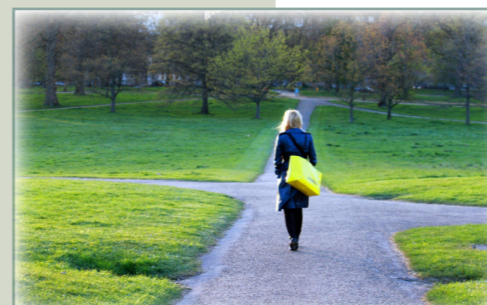
**INTROSPECTION** This is the art of being aware of your thinking, or, to put it another way, thinking about how you think about things. Critical thinkers need introspection so they are aware of their own degree of alertness and attentiveness, as well as their biases. This is your ability to examine your innermost thoughts, feelings and sensations. Introspection is closely related to self-reflection, which gives you insight into your emotional and mental state.

**ANALYTICAL THINKING** The best analytical thinkers are also critical thinkers, and vice versa. The ability to analyze information is key when looking at almost anything, whether it is a contract, report, business model or even a relationship. Analyzing information means breaking information down into its component parts and evaluating how well those parts function together and separately. The analysis relies on observation; on gathering and evaluating evidence so you can come to a meaningful conclusion. Analytical thinking begins with objectivity.

**IDENTIFYING BIASES** Critical thinkers challenge themselves to identify the evidence that forms their beliefs and assess whether or not those sources are credible. Doing this helps you understand your own biases and question your preconceived notions. This is an important step in becoming aware of how biases intrude on your thinking and recognizing when information may be skewed. When looking at information, ask yourself who the information benefits. Does the source of this information have an agenda? Does the source overlook or leave out information that does not support its claims and beliefs?



*Be curious, not judgmental*



*It is in your moments of decision  
that your destiny is shaped*

**DETERMINING RELEVANCE** One of the most difficult parts of critical thinking is figuring out what information is the most relevant, meaningful and important for your consideration. In many scenarios, you will be presented with information that may seem valuable, but it may turn out to be only a minor data point to consider. Consider if a source of information is logically relevant to the issue being discussed. Is it truly useful and unbiased, or it is merely distracting from a more pertinent point?

**INFERENCE** Information does not always come with a summary that spells out exactly what it means. Critical thinkers need to assess the information and draw conclusions based on raw data. Inference is the ability to extrapolate meaning from data and discover potential outcomes when assessing a scenario. It is also important to understand the difference between inferences and assumptions. For example, if you see data that someone weighs 260 pounds, you might assume they are overweight or unhealthy. However, other data points like height and body composition may alter that conclusion.

**COMPASSION AND EMPATHY** Having compassion and empathy may seem like a negative for critical thinkers. After all, being sentimental and emotional can skew our perception of a situation. But the point of having compassion is to have concern for others and to value the welfare of other people. Without compassion, we would view all information and situations from the viewpoint of cold, heartless scientific facts and data. It would be easy to allow our cynicism to become toxic and to be suspicious of everything we look at. But to be a good critical thinker, we must always take into account the human element. Not everything we do is about detached data and information, it is also about people.

**HUMILITY** is the willingness to acknowledge one's shortcomings and see one's positive attributes in an accurate way. When you have humility, you are aware of your flaws, but also your strengths and this is an important element in critical thinking and being willing to stretch and open your mind and are open to other people's viewpoints. You recognize when you are wrong and are willing to challenge your own beliefs when necessary.

**WILLING TO CHALLENGE THE STATUS QUO** Critical thinking means questioning long-established business practices and refusing to adhere to traditional methods simply because that's the way it has always been done. Critical thinkers are looking for smart, thoughtful answers and methods that take into account all the current and relevant information and practices available. Their willingness to challenge the status quo may seem controversial, but it is an essential part of the creative and innovative mind of a critical thinker.

**OPEN-MINDEDNESS** Being able to step back from a situation and not become embroiled helps critical thinkers see the broader view. Critical thinkers avoid launching into a frenzied argument or taking sides, they want to hear all perspectives. Critical thinkers don't jump to conclusions. They approach a question or situation with an open mind and embrace other opinions and views.



**“Do not follow where  
the path might lead. Go  
instead where there is no  
path and leave your trail.”**

Muriel Strode

## CONTACT US

Telephone

613-632-0918

877-632-0918

Email

[info@sdcp-prcdc.ca](mailto:info@sdcp-prcdc.ca)

Website

[www.sdcp-prcdc.ca](http://www.sdcp-prcdc.ca)

Location

519 Main St. E.

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