

## A healthy workplace from the inside out

By: **Stuart Harrison, President & CEO, Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce**

A fellow employee once said, "we spend so much time together at work; we need to take care of each other". Wise words...

Whether it's physical health, mental health, having a safe workplace, or just getting along with each other, it's increasingly important for employers to be proactive when it comes to the health of their employees.

You can support physical health in a number ways:

- Simply create an atmosphere of encouragement for employees who want to take care of themselves.
- Allow for flex hours for employees to attend a fitness facility before or after work or during an extended lunch break.
- Subsidize a fitness membership, or provide change facilities so that your employees can simply go for a run at noon.
- Remember to include yourself. When I started at The Chamber 14 years ago I was a Cyclefit instructor and weighed 30 pounds less than I do today. How did I let this happen?

Fortunately, mental health has become much easier to talk about and do something about.

Thanks to initiatives such as Bell Let's Talk Day, much of the stigma



around mental health has been erased and there is much more support from employers. Full confession - I just wrote the word "tolerance", then changed it to "support", proving that there is still work to be done...

81% of businesses believe that it is important to support their employees' mental wellness in the workplace however only 35% of small business, 65% of medium sized business and 76% of large business have mental health strategies.

In response to the gap, the Ontario Chamber of Commerce has developed a toolkit based on three principles:

**Setting Expectations** – Creating a mentally healthy workplace is a journey and employers do not need to have all the answers. A good way to start is assessing their businesses by looking for barriers, support and opportunities for change, as well as identifying potential stress points in their workplace.

**Creating a Supportive Environment** – Leadership, from not only management but employees themselves, is needed to create a supportive environment where everyone can feel comfortable with and empowered by the focus on mental wellness.

**Maintaining the Conversation** – Businesses are encouraged to regularly assess if they are sticking with their mission on mental wellness. Several ways to do this are through feedback and using data to measure progress.

Bell Let's Talk day is a remarkable initiative that to date has injected exactly \$86,504,429.05 into the conversation on mental health. The campaign is focused on four pillars:

- 1. Anti-stigma:** One of the biggest hurdles for anyone suffering from mental illness is overcoming the stigma attached to it. The annual Bell Let's Talk awareness campaign and Day is driving the national conversation to help reduce this stigma and promote awareness and understanding, and talking is an important first step towards lasting change.
- 2. Care & Access:** Bell supports a variety of organizations including grassroots agencies, local hospitals, and universities to help provide Canadians with support services when and where they need it.
- 3. Research:** Research holds the greatest promise to better understand treatments and cures. Bell is investing in best-in-class research programs with the potential to have a transformative impact on the mental health and well-being of Canadians.
- 4. Workplace Health:** Mental health is the leading cause of workplace disability in Canada and represents 15% of Canada's burden of disease. Bell is committed to leading by example in their own workplace by adopting the voluntary Standard for Psychological Health and Safety in the Workplace, and is encouraging greater corporate engagement across Canada.

Letstalk.bell.ca is a rich resource of stories, testimonials, toolkits and more. This year Bell Let's Talk Day is January 31.

It seems like every day there is another high profile example of sexual harassment in the workplace. However, social media campaigns such as #MeToo and #TimesUp reveal that sexual harassment in the workplace is far more common than most people would like to admit. There is only one bottom line – employers need to have training programs in place so that everyone understands the issues, and rock-solid policies and procedures so that incidents are reduced and victims can be safely empowered.

The Chamber will be working closely with the Kawartha Sexual Assault Centre in the coming months to develop strong programming for local employers. Meanwhile, I'd encourage all employers to be proactive. There is lots of helpful information online to get you started. Just google it. Furthermore, a workplace can be the scene of bullying, stress, physical danger, violence, discrimination and more. The same rules apply – training, policies and procedures.

As employers, we lead by example. Are you eating a fast food lunch in front of your computer, telling off-colour jokes in the lunch room, criticizing your employees in front of their co-workers? Or are you taking care of yourself and your employees, supporting the vulnerable, providing training and opportunities, and generally making sure that your place of work is a good place to work?

More: [peterboroughchamber.ca/blog](http://peterboroughchamber.ca/blog)

## Event Calendar

 **WEDNESDAY**  
January 17<sup>th</sup>, 2018  
(Chamber & WBN Members only)

**Creating your Digital Marketing Roadmap**   
**Chamber Boardroom**  
175 George Street North  
**12:00pm - 1:00pm**  
**Speaker:** Toby McLeod, Strategy.ca

**What you'll learn:**  
Website Roadmap: Learn how to turn your website into a business asset that makes you money, instead of costing you money and opportunities  
5 costly website mistakes and how to avoid them.  
The anatomy of a web page that generates leads & sales.  
How to track and measure the success of your website.  
**Cost:** Free (Bring your lunch)  
**Note:** Pre-registration required

 **TUESDAY,**  
February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**Peterborough Axe Club**  
**Unit 1**  
280 Perry Street,  
Peterborough 

**4:00pm – 6:00pm**  
**Details:** Here's your chance to be the champion of the Chamber Axe Throwing PBX! (trophy to be determined).  
PBX is a great opportunity for the business community, employers, consumers, and community agencies to make valuable connections.  
Bring your business cards and get ready to get connected to the Peterborough business community.  
**Cost:** Free, courtesy of Shorelines Slots at Kawartha Downs  
**Note:** Space is limited; pre-registration is required

 **TUESDAY**  
February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018

**The Carousel**  
116 Lansdowne Street East  
**Coffee's on at 7:00am**  
**Speakers from 7:30-8:30am**  
**Cost:** Pay for your breakfast  
**What you'll learn:** Be ready with your 30-second elevator pitch to tell others what's going on in your business.

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Greater Peterborough Chamber of Commerce

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 **FOR FIRMS WITH 1-50 EMPLOYEES**

Insurance for small business that's anything but small

**contact: Brian Bulger at 741-1400**

 **PTBO CHAMBER MEMBER**  
STRENGTHENING BUSINESS

**New location for Mark's set to open**

Congratulations to the team at Mark's Peterborough. They're new space at 1230 Lansowne Street West will be opening tomorrow (Friday, January 12, 2018)!

The new space features 4000 square feet of retail space to offer an improved shopping experience.

There will be two entrances, one off Lansdowne Street and the other off Clonsilla.



And to cap it off the store will be home to a larger commercial area.

**Featured Member Discount Program: Coffee Break Learning with Sofie Andreou**

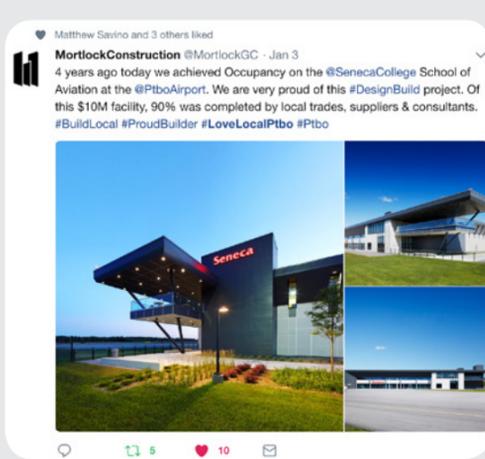
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Chamber members, send your Member Milestones to [reception@peterboroughchamber.ca](mailto:reception@peterboroughchamber.ca) or call 705-748-9771 x0.

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 **MortlockConstruction @MortlockGC** - Jan 3  
4 years ago today we achieved Occupancy on the @SenecaCollege School of Aviation at the @PtboAirport. We are very proud of this #DesignBuild project. Of this \$10M facility, 90% was completed by local trades, suppliers & consultants. #BuildLocal #ProudBuilder #LoveLocalPtbo #Ptbo

[www.peterboroughchamber.ca](http://www.peterboroughchamber.ca)

 **POWER HOUR**  
STRENGTHENING BUSINESS

**An Evening with Our Elected Officials**

**Wednesday, February 21, 2018**  
**5:30pm**  
**The Venue Peterborough**

**Get your tickets: [peterboroughchamber.ca](http://peterboroughchamber.ca)**

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