

# The Entrepreneur

## Professional business different from any other

Starting a professional practice or a para-professional service business, is not like starting any other kind of business.

Retailers and manufacturers generally consider location a key factor in starting their business, but most professionals do not need to place as much emphasis on the element.

A professional architect, Roderick Young, says the location of a professional practice must be easily accessible to the public but need not be on a main street or shopping mall.

Aside from doctors, lawyers and dentists, who may need specific office space, many professionals and para-professionals can start their practice or service from their own home.

"The key is in keeping your overhead down," Young explains.

Because many professional services are discretionary or "soft" services for consumers, the professional must first determine whether there is a market for his services.

This is a market which is growing, especially at the para-professional end. People with specific marketable skills are finding they have the alternative of setting a service business of their own instead of being employees of someone else.

Although there is no hard and fast methodology to doing this, Young suggests that strong consideration be given to the general level of income in the area as the services of many professionals tend to be better utilized by people with higher disposable incomes.

Once a market has been determined, the professional must tailor his service to meet the needs of that market.

"You may have to offer a lower cost service, or be a generalist who can provide a whole package of services," says Young.

In areas with smaller populations, it may be necessary to offer a range of related services from one location instead of being too specialized.

"You've still got to meet the requirements of your profession," Young explains. "Cost is no excuse for not doing a professional job. You have to determine before accepting the commission whether you want to do the business."

He also advises professionals starting out to be conservative in terms of their expectations.

"Being a professional is a long-term commitment," he says. "You have to be prepared to take your lumps initially in terms of income expectations."

Having a well-thought out business plan is also important for the professional starting up in his or her own business. The services to be offered must be designed to satisfy the needs of the community being served over the long run.

Most professionals rely on long-term relationships with their customers to grow a viable business and maintain it at a successful level of operation.

If it is allowed to grow beyond the provider's ability to perform the service to the required standards of the market, the reputation for service and reliability on which it is based, may suffer damage which is difficult to repair.

When your customer base is small in numbers, you must take greater care to service the needs of your clients well.

For more information about the Superior North Business Development Centre and the services it provides, contact Bob MacIver at the SNBDC office at Simcoe Plaza, Terrace Bay, Ont., P0T 2W0 or telephone 825-9688.



Youngsters from Terrace Bay (above) and Schreiber travelled to Nakina recently to take part in the North Shore Recreation Directors Annual Jamboree. About 100 kids ages nine to 11 from Terrace Bay, Schreiber, Red Rock, Nakina, Longlac, Geraldton and Beardmore took part in the weekend used to promote fun and friendship. They played hockey, broomball, snowshoe baseball, volleyball and curling and took in some movies as well. Bill McDougall, Rosaire Dutil and Dean Maine supervised the youths who were all billeted in Nakina. Photo by Dave Chmara

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### RAINBOW TROUT INTRODUCTION INTO SUCKER LAKE TERRACE BAY DISTRICT

The Ministry of Natural Resources is proposing to establish a put-and-take fishery of Rainbow Trout (*Salmo gairdneri*) into Sucker Lake as part of our Fisheries Management Program. This project will create a desirable sport fishery and provide additional angling opportunities for local, resident and non-resident users.

Certified disease-free rainbow trout fingerlings donated by Kimberly-Clark of Canada Limited, Terrace Bay, Ontario, will be used for the proposed introduction into Sucker Lake, in accordance with the approved Ministry of Natural Resources Class Environmental Assessment for Fish Stocking In New Waters. Such an assessment is intended to give interested and affected parties the opportunity to provide input into the planning process of such projects.

You are invited to direct any comments, concerns or inquiries regarding this proposal to the District Manager, Ministry of Natural Resources, Terrace Bay District, P.O. Box 280, Terrace Bay, Ontario P0T 2W0 by January 1, 1990.

