

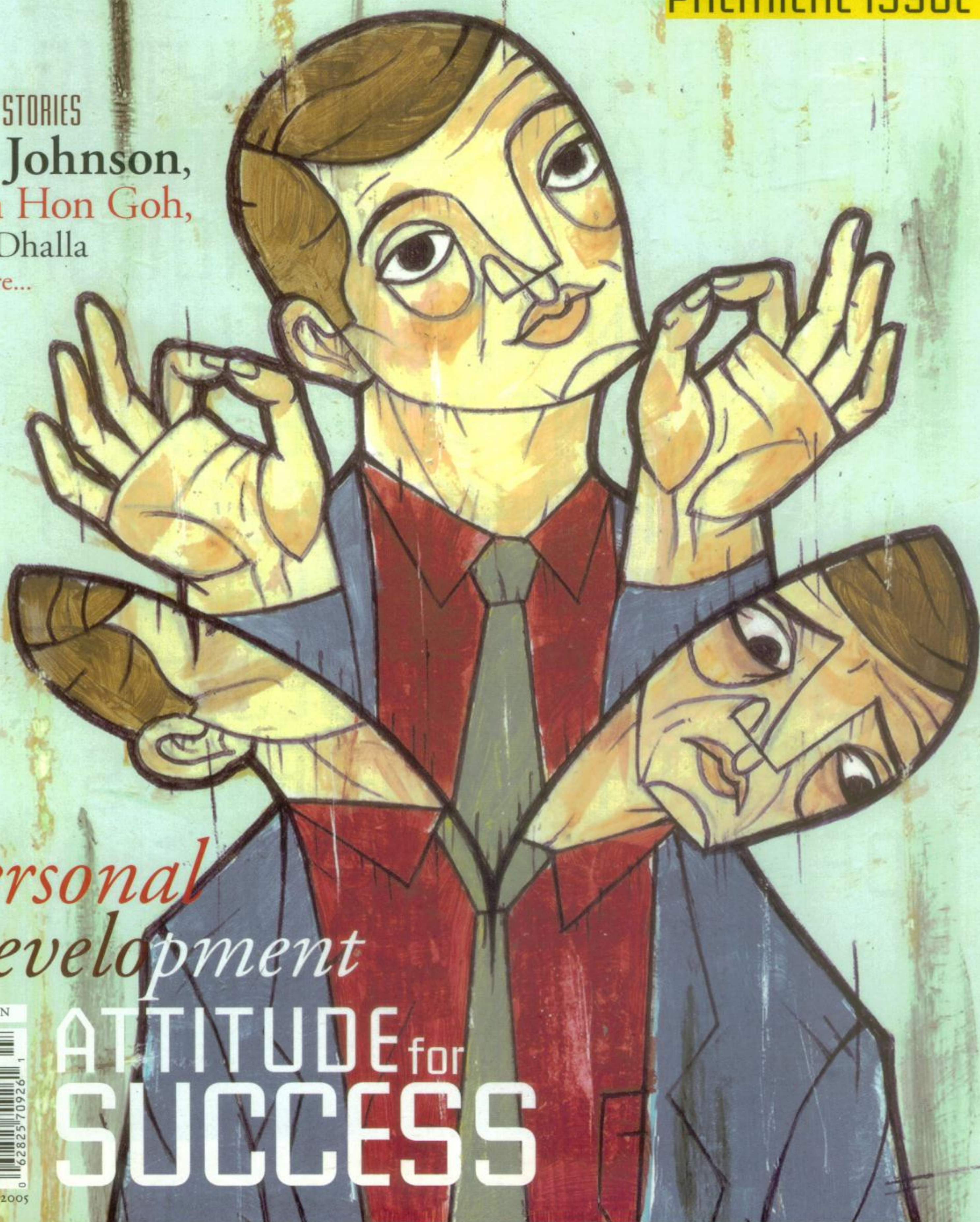
esteem

EMBRACING SUCCESS

PREMIERE ISSUE

SUCCESS STORIES

Ben Johnson,
Chan Hon Goh,
Ruby Dhalla
and more...



*Personal
Development*

ATTITUDE for
SUCCESS

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JUNE & JULY 2005

by Sheila Reesor

FROM GUTS

“EVERY <NO> IS JUST ONE STEP CLOSER TO A <YES>.”

This is what Pamela Greiner, Owner and President of *The Business Exchange* and *The Real Estate Exchange* magazines, has been assuring her sales people regularly for the past six years. Since their inception in 1998 and 2001 respectively, these two free monthly publications have increasingly become an invaluable resource to anyone looking to buy or sell a home or business in Southern Ontario.

Certainly, other periodicals have offered similar content, but at a cost, and never with such breadth and reach. Every nuance of these pages reflects Greiner's character and style: colourful, attractive, energetic, accessible, user friendly, clear and concise.

Greiner has come a long way since it all started, gaining a lifetime's worth of wisdom in the process. At the age of 26, when most of us were still pondering what to do with our freshly earned University degrees, she took a leap of faith and established a business in a world she had never previously explored.

She had already earned a BA in Economics at Western University and subsequently tested the waters as a stockbroker. After hitting a few dead ends, however, she came to realize that she would never be happy unless she became more self-directed. Promptly, she pulled back the reins and did an about-face. In what turned out to be a major turning point in her life, Greiner decided to return to her first real love, the world of business.

Being an entrepreneur came naturally to Greiner. Her maternal grandfather had owned a taxi company, sold kosher chicken and later owned a convenience store, as had her father. Later, her mother also got into the game. As an only child, she spent many hours in her father's store, absorbing the ins and outs of operating a successful trade. By sheer osmosis, she learned how to be smart in business.

Before long, Greiner was off and running on her own. In elementary school, other kids were buying and collecting stickers. She was selling them. Later, in her teens, she would stay up late to watch infomercials on business opportunities, loving every minute and absorbing every detail. By the time she was 19, and with her parents' support, she opened and operated her own toy store.

By the time Greiner reached her mid-twenties, she had effectively turned away from her chosen path in finance to return to who she really was - an entrepreneur. As she searched for her dream business, however, she quickly became frustrated with the lack of information available to her. None of the regular outlets provided enough detail to assist her in making an informed choice. It was this combination of need and frustration that sparked her idea to start a magazine that would serve as an outlet for business or franchise opportunities for anyone in Southern Ontario.

Today, on *The Business Exchange* website at thebusinessexchange.ca, it states:
From apartment buildings to restaurants – and everything in between – you can find your dream business at The Business Exchange within an affordable price range.

GLORY



What Greiner was really doing, and continues to do today, was to provide a quality resource to help people find their dream, just as she did. "Newcomers account for some 60% of Toronto's population and most want to start their own business when they come here," she says. The outcome of what readers find in her magazines helps them to change their lives for the better. In fact, many realtors have built their businesses around this fertile source of information.

One of the secrets to Greiner's success is that she was true to herself. She tuned into the passion she had always felt for business, then found a niche into which she could enthusiastically funnel it. Now she is a true advocate for passion. It is something that readily comes up when she talks about her work. "You need to be passionate about what you do," she says, because without that energy and drive behind you, there will be nothing to get you through the rough patches.

Rough patches are unquestionably something this business owner knows all too well. Reflecting on how far she has come, she readily admits to being quite naïve at the start. She jumped in knowing nothing about printing, publishing, distribution or acquiring locations. All she possessed was passion and a very strong drive to succeed. The rest of it she learned the hard way, hands on, from the ground up. She found every location herself, and even delivered all the magazines personally.

"It was anything but easy," she says. Working 20 hours per day, operating on very little sleep, she had to say good-bye to any social life and had no boyfriend for four years. She also gained as much as 25 pounds because she stopped working out and ate increasing amounts of fast food to compensate for the lack of sleep. Stress was a factor, yet there was no time to dwell on it. Instead, she stayed focussed on the horizon.

Early in the game, Greiner discovered that being a woman in the business world held both advantages and challenges. On the plus side, she feels she was perceived as more personable and approachable than her male counterparts. On the down side, she found some of her competitors intimidating and ran into a few suppliers from the old school, who seemed to lack confidence in her abilities.

For the most part, however, she has chosen to view her gender as more of an asset than a handicap

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MAKING A DREAM A REALITY

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process of establishing a foundation that will provide assistance to aspiring dancers nationally, through bursaries, scholarships and dance supplies.

Finally, Chan Hon Goh offers these tips to those aspiring to succeed: "Be realistic with your goals, but dare to dream. Have confidence and trust in yourself and what you are trying to achieve. Be open to new ideas and criticism. Finally, always be ready to work hard and persevere."

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FROM GUTS TO GLORY

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and continually endeavours to make the most of it. "You've got to use what you've got", she says with a smile, "Focus on your advantages, not your disadvantages".

This advice has certainly worked for her. She now leads a close-knit, hard-working, yet fun loving team of 10 out of their frugally furnished headquarters near Woodbine and Highway 7 in Markham. The beware of dog sign in the window should not deter approaching visitors, unless they are worried about being licked to death, that is. Greiner's fluffy white six-year-old Samoyed, "Ty," is actually more marshmallow than dog. He welcomes each visitor with a wagging tail and a stuffed toy in his mouth and is ever willing to go home with them when they leave.

As for her staff, Greiner describes them as more cohesive than most. Each summer, they travel together to her cottage for a weekend of rest and relaxation. The office itself has a calm, relaxed feel, although everyone is busily engaged in their work. With their employer, they are respectful yet clearly at ease. Attitude is paramount here; Greiner genuinely wants them to share her passion and enthusiasm.

Although the early years were a tough, vertical climb for Greiner, she now claims she would have it no other way. She is grounded in the sentiment that she is doing precisely what she was cut out to do, and that she will never be a slave to a "job". Instead, she's engrossed in a labour of love. She fully enjoys every step in the process, particularly the anticipation she

feels each month to see the final product. Continually striving to make the next one better than the last, pushing the limits, growing, improving - that's what it's all about for her. "I couldn't imagine doing anything else," she says.

Although she chooses this particular business whole-heartedly, she realizes how transferable her skills are. Whether she elects to work in publishing or any other industry, she is confident that she has what it takes. With a goal in mind, a willingness to learn, hard work and a large dose of passion and dedication, she knows now she can do anything she sets her mind to.

She has already proven this with the success of her second magazine, *The Real Estate Exchange*. A natural extension of *The Business Exchange*, this extensive guide to homes and condos all over the GTA has quickly gained credibility in its four years of existence.

Before our eyes, this seasoned entrepreneur has transformed herself from callow visionary to prosperous businesswoman - and she is still young. Her experiences have made her stronger, tougher, and notably less wide open to trusting everyone. Still as self-possessed as ever, moreover a tad shy, when necessary she can and will stand up for herself. Rather than luck having anything to do with her success, she earnestly credits her own focussed dedication, hard work, a strong team and, most of all, the support of her parents. Had it not been for their encouragement and support early on, both fiscally and morally, she is certain she would not have made it.

Today, this dedicated worker has found a way to balance hard work with her other loves; her boyfriend, travel, the cottage in summer, indoor Beach Volleyball in winter. She now has time for it all, yet her business continues to thrive and grow. Those initial challenges she faced have now morphed into growth issues that every business wants to have.

Greiner also now has time to plan ahead. Her goals for the immediate future include expanding the website to sell advertising online. She also wants *The Business Exchange* to go National, as she currently has subscribers from all over North America and from as far away as Saudi Arabia.

Now in the position to pass on her hard-

earned wisdom to others, Greiner points to three key ingredients she feels are critical to success. First and foremost you need passion and drive. Both are fundamental to survival. Second, harness all of the personal and financial assistance available to you. "The people close to you must be supportive and you need capital behind you," she says, "whether that means borrowing from family or creating a really detailed business plan to get financing or a line of credit from the bank". Finally, she concludes, "Never forget about your customers, and surround yourself with hard-working people who want to share your dream."

www.busessexchange.ca

HIGH IMPACT PERFORMANCE

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spent her entire day working diligently to complete tasks, at the end of the day, she was frustrated at the number of things left undone. Consequently, she often left work feeling like she had failed to achieve anything significant. Over time, this contributed to a general feeling of dissatisfaction about her professional life. But a bit of probing revealed that Melissa actually accomplished a great deal at work—she had just forgotten or overlooked her achievements in the haze of activity.

To jog her memory and get her focused on the positive, I encouraged her to keep a record of her daily accomplishments in a journal and highlight those she felt were of particular significance. Reviewing her accomplishments in this manner was a good cure for her work-induced amnesia. It made her realize how much she actually achieved on a daily basis and filled her with a confident attitude about what she could get done.

If you're feeling like you are getting little done in your professional or personal life, buy a journal or open a computer file and record your actual accomplishments. Start with a few recent highlights from the last few weeks and then continue by recording your daily accomplishments. Highlight the ones that are particularly significant. By recording and reviewing your accomplishments this way you will build positive energy and gain the momentum to