

UP&RUNNING A weekly look into lessons learned from new entrepreneurs

Entrepreneurs must be self-aware

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Understand your strengths and weaknesses going into a small biz, trainer advises

TO BE a success, an entrepreneur must first understand who they are.

"Everyone possesses unique passions, strengths, talents and capabilities," entrepreneur Ileana Rontea says. "The more you understand about yourself going into a small business, the more effective you'll be."

Rontea's company, Mind Ignition Associates (www.

mindignition.ca) helps "solopreneurs" zero in on their best attributes.

"I always knew I had a talent for understanding people," Rontea says. Mind Ignition helps entrepreneurs by taking them on a journey of self-

discovery through its profound "3D Process."

"Through a series of consultations, I'll work with a person to discover their true business passion, distill their essence and then help them to develop dynamic market-

ing materials," Rontea explains. "So many one-person small businesses don't communicate what they do effectively because the owner doesn't play up his or her best strengths."

Delegate

Rontea confesses one of her own weaknesses is accounting. "I'm pretty good at recording my receipts and expenses, but I hate filing the returns and reports," she admits. "I know that about myself, so I delegate those responsibilities to my accountant."

There's just so much to do when running a small business. A one-person show must make sales calls, keep accounting records, negotiate with suppliers and still produce a product or deliver a service. "No entrepreneur should try to do everything themselves," Rontea advises. "When you truly understand yourself, you'll be able to focus on what you do best and pass off the rest."

Rontea's clients include



■ FIGURING OUT who you are will make you a better small business owner, Ileana Rontea says. Her company helps entrepreneurs look within.

many women, so she's delivering a new small business training program exclusively for female entrepreneurs starting April 19 at Toronto City Hall.

"There are many issues that are gender-specific to women

in business, such as how to juggle family life with professional responsibilities," she says. "The program will help women to address those issues, develop coping strategies and provide support."