

Suresh Kumar is Building Bridges Across Industries & Communities with 'Connecting GTA'

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TORONTO, ONTARIO, CANADA, February 8, 2023 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Tamil Culture team caught up with Canadian-Tamil entrepreneur [Suresh Kumar](#). A strategist and business consultant by trade, he is the founder & CEO of Connecting GTA, a Toronto-based Business Networking Club, and president and CEO of Kashden Consulting Group. Get to know him below!

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I was born in Jaffna, Sri Lanka and immigrated to Canada in 1989 as a kid. I remember being full of questions.

What if it doesn't work out in Canada? What if I can't make friends? What if I can't learn the language?

While my early days in the country exposed me to bullying and acclimation challenges, I quickly overcame them and found my footing. I've spent most of my life in Toronto, where I progressed in my career. I worked at the PC Caucus Office of Ontario Legislature (during the Mike Harris days) managing MPP websites as well as CBC News during the early years of my career. This led me to start my IT consultancy J11 IT Solutions Inc. in 2001,



which kick-started my shift to entrepreneurship. After 12 successful years of running J11 IT Solutions, a great offer was presented to me for purchase of my company. I decided to take a break from entrepreneurship and started a new position at Scarborough Hospital as a HRIS Analyst looking after all of their HR applications.

What are 3 values that help you guide your life?

Trust – it is the bedrock of successful business, friendships and relationships.

Integrity – keeping your word, delivering on your promises and being accountable.

Passion – the drive to succeed, to improve and to be the best.

What is Connecting GTA ? What sparked the idea? What are your goals for it?

While working at Scarborough Hospital, I began supporting a number of entrepreneurs on the side. From helping them develop successful brands for new businesses, to setting up QuickBooks, or even business startup consulting, eventually you realize that when you do something for free, there is often little or no respect for your hard work, or appreciation. I realized I had to conceptualize a business around the work I was already doing.

From having worked at Queen's Park under the Mike Harris government, I was fortunate to know many cabinet ministers and their staff, who then decided to run for politics. The relationships I built over the years allowed me to help so many others who were in need. From this, Connecting GTA was born: an exclusive [membership](#) based networking club where we help each other and the communities we serve. I personally select only those who are eligible to join. Our goal is to help everyone and grow together.

How did you get your idea off the ground?

I sat with five of my former clients and told them I was thinking about opening a new business, and was going to call it Connecting GTA (CGTA). I told them what the concept was and how I planned to personally hand-pick those like-minded individuals who would be eligible to join; its exclusivity was key, and so not everyone would be eligible.

All five of them immediately asked where and how to sign up. This gave me the motivation and passion to proceed. Our very first network meeting was held at one of our members' newly built custom homes. This member asked to promote his business, so I suggested we host our meeting at his newly built house. This allowed CGTA to display his talent and workmanship. From that meeting, we signed up about 10 new members and three of them hired the builder for their new forever custom home, with prices ranging from \$2.5-\$4M.

When you started your company, did you get any push-back/obstacles? How did you handle

that?

November 2017 – I recall this date specifically, not so much because of any push-back, but the pressure I was under by the other regional Chambers & Board of Trades, who thought our new organization was in direct competition with their objectives. I resolved this by eventually brokering a relationship and partnership with these organizations. The Ajax-Pickering Board of Trade named me Business Person of the Year for 2022, as a result of our ability to build solid relationships with our community partners, and growing the local economy, employment opportunities and supporting those in need.

You've been around for 5 years- do you feel proud of yourself and your accomplishments to date?

I've always wanted to put my logo on a building – and I'm still hoping to do that. In the meantime, Connecting GTA has over 12 trucks (three of them are 53 foot trailer trucks) emblazoned with the CGTA logo on all sides, visible in all parts of Ontario and some parts of Quebec. The feeling of the phone calls of current and former cabinet ministers and mayors proudly saying the name "Connecting GTA" fills me with happiness and pride. As a result of this advertising, some of our members successfully closed business transactions over \$2M.

What are a few character traits that you think entrepreneurs need to have or develop that are essential for success?

I believe some of the most important traits include building long-term relationships and earning trust - so many of us miss that. Many entrepreneurs look for shortcuts – they simply want to make money and miss the bigger picture. Most of them don't realize it takes years to build good, long lasting relationships which can take you places one could never dream of.

Read full article at: <https://tamilculture.com/suresh-kumar-is-building-bridges-across-industries-communities-with-connecting-gta?fbclid=IwAR3rVLQDYna0HJzCBXq0ZAINXUPqzYmzJcPjo66NKV8IR3XUstKspM2jRrQ>

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