

Fogler Rubinoff, a full-service law firm with offices in Toronto and Ottawa, knows its 115 lawyers' experience, sound judgement and expertise in more than 20 practice areas drive the legal strategies their clients' businesses depend on. As Fogler Rubinoff's collaborative, customized approach earns the trust of owner-operated entrepreneurial and multinational companies, this law firm delivers tangible results as it helps its clients navigate a rapidly evolving business environment.



Members Appreciate Fogler Rubinoff's Entrepreneurial Mindset

Law Firm Supports Start-Ups & Established Entrepreneurs Alike To Success

Curtis Priest liked working with the lawyers at Fogler Rubinoff so much he wanted to give entrepreneurs much like himself the opportunity to fully appreciate a truly positive legal experience.

"Fogler Rubinoff is the ideal EO Toronto partner because their lawyers specialize in emerging and established businesses and really know and understand entrepreneurs," says Curtis.

"They're approachable, creative problem-solvers who understand the nuance of business – they know business, and life, are not black and white."

Curtis brought EO TO to the attention of Fogler Rubinoff partners back in 2013 and the timing was perfect. The firm's lawyers had just been discussing the traits they shared with the entrepreneurs they knew and worked with as well as their interest in developing new business relationships with entrepreneurs.

Fogler Rubinoff's Challenges

- Demonstrate its passion and commitment to entrepreneurs
- Share Fogler Rubinoff's legal expertise with entrepreneurs
- Expand its entrepreneurial client base

The Solution

- EO Partnership

The Results

- Consistently contributed to EO's entrepreneurial community
- Informed and educated EO members
- Grew its client base with EO members and their referrals

"We see our law firm as entrepreneurial and our lawyers as entrepreneurs," says Matthew Norris, partner, who focuses on business law, such as domestic and cross-border mergers and acquisitions, private equity investments and financing transactions. "We're innovative, flexible and open to new ideas just like the entrepreneurs we advise."

Open-minded and approachable, Fogler Rubinoff lawyers display an agility that's not typically associated with firms of this size. Fogler Rubinoff and its 115 lawyers have the reputation, the clout and the resources that support clients while getting the attention and demanding the respect of anyone that might challenge them. Business law, for example, reorganizing or restructuring a firm to better manage taxes or prepare for a sale or an acquisition, is in high demand. Contracts designed to address complex employee, customer and supplier transactions are also regularly requested by EO members as are ownership agreements and employment equity plans.

"When you have a concern, Fogler Rubinoff is always happy to have a conversation and, as a client, you know they'll handle it, whatever it might be, to keep you on the right side of the law," says Curtis.



Alternative Fee Structures Respect Clients' Budgets

Because Fogler Rubinoff tends to grow with its clients from the start-up phase to major success, the close relationships that develop and deepen over time ensure the lawyers and EO members get comfortable with each other. The lawyers check in to update entrepreneurs when changes to federal, provincial and local laws might affect their companies while entrepreneurs know Fogler Rubinoff's legal team is immediately available whether they have a quick question or they're facing a crisis.

"Everything is a conversation and the information flows both ways," says Andrea Marsland, a partner who practices employment law with Fogler Rubinoff. "Our clients often comment on our accessibility, approachability as well as the reasonableness of our fees and our ability to recognize the importance of, and respect, agreed-upon budgets."

Because the billable hourly rate is still king in the legal community, working with lawyers is often seen as an almost unmanageable expense. However, Fogler Rubinoff's commitment to growing with its clients means discussing fees upfront and considering alternative fee structures, where appropriate, which might include things like flat rates, volume-based discounts, and monthly retainers.

"I've worked with almost a dozen Fogler Rubinoff lawyers for EO and my own companies and they don't nickel and dime you, but still go out of their way because they're totally committed to helping clients," says Curtis.

"They're completely focused on solving the issue at hand rather than getting caught up in the protocol."

Legal Insights Target Updates & Vulnerabilities

As EO TO's legal partner, Fogler Rubinoff regularly hosts a wide range of member events and also maintains a significant presence at its Forums. These member-led, confidential peer-sharing Forums bring groups of seven to 10 fellow business owners together every month. Each Forum group focuses on what matters to its members, who also appreciate the opportunity to exchange their ideas and concerns, the personal and professional, in a safe, non-judgmental environment. The Forums, their peers' shared experiences and the insights offered by invited experts such as Fogler Rubinoff are EO's most highly rated benefit.

"EO members really have a thirst for knowledge and that's reflected in the shockingly high attendance and engagement at the EO events and Forums I've attended and hosted," says Andrea, who invariably wins business from EO members and referrals to non-EO members after her participation in Forums.

"EO members are incredibly invested in learning from their peers as well as from experts such as Fogler Rubinoff lawyers."

When EO member Brent Wardrop's Forum group needed a meeting room, Fogler Rubinoff offered their boardroom. Employment lawyer Sara Hickey discussed the reasons every employment contract should include specific clauses pertaining to termination and Brent hired her to update his company Elemental's contracts the next day.

"The moment I was made aware of that vulnerability, I took action to ensure employees couldn't pursue the agency for more than what the Employment Act articulates," says Brent, partner and creative director, Elemental. "In addition to producing a complete agreement which clearly stipulates the value and benefits for each employee, Sara made sure our new employment contracts align with the recently updated Employment Act with the necessary clauses limiting compensation in the event of employee termination."

As Fogler Rubinoff's lawyers have always known, people do business with those they know and trust and that means developing relationships through face-to-face, real-life contact.

"At EO events, including the Forums, our lawyers explain complex issues in layman's terms and avoid the legalese to show members and other partners what we're really like to deal with," says Matthew. "Our EO partnership is far more effective than a virtual introduction or a banner ad could ever be."

