

## Creating a Healthy and Prosperous Business

Almost seven years ago I stepped outside my comfort zone and took early retirement from my PR job with the Social Security Administration to open my own business. I had worked for the Federal government since I was 19 years old so I really didn't have a clue how to start my own business. But, what I did have was a dream, vision and passion to educate and empower women to live financially healthy.

According to Jennifer White, author of *Work Less, Make More* -- "Having a vision will guide you when the going gets tough. It's a mental picture of what you want your life to be. The right vision will stir the passion in your soul. Goals are how you're going to get there."

In the past six years I've created a healthy and prosperous business by stretching outside my comfort zone. One of my favorite quotes is from Eleanor Roosevelt. She said "You gain strength, courage & confidence by every experience in which you really stop to look fear in the face. You must do the thing you think you cannot do." Every time I feel fear rearing its ugly head and hear that Chatty Kathy voice saying "Who the heck do you think you are? You can't do that!" I read Eleanor Roosevelt's quote. And, I talk back to Chatty Kathy -- "Oh, yes I can!" Ask -- you can't get a "No" answer if you don't ask and maybe you'll get a "YES" response. I believe a "NO" just means maybe "YES" later.

Surround yourself with people who support your vision -- women who are genuine and authentic. Get rid of the naysayers. Ditch them! Know that your friends might change. I don't have the same friends today that I had six years ago when I was working for Social Security and its okay. Find people you admire and ask to take them to coffee. Women are relationship builders and love to share and help others grow.

Network, network, network -- when I started my business I attended every local women's organization meeting I could find. I told anyone who would listen about my business, passion and what I was doing. Not only did I meet dozens of women. I met authentic, genuine women -- knowledgeable women who asked questions and told others about Money Wi\$e Women. I cultivate relationships and make referrals to

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women I meet. I love connecting women with other women and best compliment I can get – meet someone who says they've heard about me and my business from someone else.

We're often so busy doing our day to day business that we forget about professional development. Even if you're very, very, very proficient at what you do, you can always kick it up a notch. There are lots of great training resources available and you don't even have to leave your home or office. There are lots of webinars and teleseminars available to enhance your learning.

Stay focused -- if you don't, you'll lose your way. You can't be all things to all people. Be cautious not to deviate because it diminishes your effectiveness and reduces your energy and enthusiasm. If you're not sure what your focus is seek assistance. I have a business/life coach who I meet with annually to determine my goals. My first coach, Tamra Fleming helped me determine "what lights my fire". Its media and speaking. I told her I wanted to have my own radio show. Within two weeks I had my own radio show *Let's Talk About Money* on a local radio station. HOW? I called the radio station looking for media coverage for a Money Wi\$e Women Conference and got my own radio show instead. I've done lots of things in the past six years that strayed from my focus. I call them lessons learned and I then return to my focus.

There are several more steps to create a healthy and prosperous business:

Determine and write a business plan

Determine your rates and don't forget to negotiate

Be generous; support others and build relationships

Set healthy boundaries

Hire professionals to do the things you don't love

Think BIG!

I hope you'll join me at the Professional Business Women's Conference co-hosted by the Women's Resource and Business Directory and Money Wise Women Educational

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Services in Tacoma, Washington on February 28, 2009. If you're ready to take your business to the next level, make connections and learn from the experts how to achieve your goals you don't want to miss this conference. Unable to attend the conference? I'm working with a group of business women who are experts in their field to host a webinar series for self-employed women and women in small business. Send me an email if you're interested in learning more – [mww@wavecable.com](mailto:mww@wavecable.com) .

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