

WE

magazine for women

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Website
Makeover?

A Market as
Big as the
World

Inside: Meet
Irimi Varda-Capsis,
Accor Group - Greece

Does Your
Business Card
Suck?

Twinkle Toes: Tips
for Pretty Feet

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Dr. Tina Dupree -
"The Chicken Lady" is
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.US	\$8.77	\$8.75	\$8.55	\$7.95
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Part of the

Taking Life by the Mouse!

"I can honestly say that I was never affected by the question of the success of an undertaking. If I felt it was the right thing to do, I was for it regardless of the possible outcome."

— Golda Meir

With computers turned on, headsets and microphones ready and their mouse(s) in hand, on Thursday, March 15th, dozens of women made history when The WECAI Network™ hosted the first (annual) **Virtual Woman's Day™** day-long celebration of women online. Planned in celebration of Women's History Month, it was an opportune time to celebrate woman on the web by networking, promoting our products and services and making new contacts around the globe. And we did this all from the comfort of our office or home-office.

Women promoted their products and services; gave us tours of their websites and won dozens of valuable prizes via our Web Conference Platform.

The event was promoted via the **WECAI NETWORK™**, on hundreds of social networking sites, blogs, forums and websites as well as on the internet via articles and media releases. Events leading up to **Virtual Woman's Day™**, included a song-writing contest extolling the virtues of Women Online and a virtual tour of several blogs owned and/or run by women. In addition women were able to submit a link to their website on the **Virtual Woman's Day™** blog.

During Virtual Woman's Day there were business showcases and prize drawings for many valuable prizes; and we heard from experts who spoke on key topics of interest to women. **Mindy Gibbins-Klein**, The Book Midwife® shared *"Your Message, Your Magic"*, **Elizabeth Gordon**, The Flourishing Business talked about *Creating Strategic Alliances to Grow Your Circle and Your Business*, **Linda Hollander**, the Wealthy Bag Lady gave us *"5 Ways to Attract Corporate Sponsors - Do What You Love and Have Someone Else Foot the Bill"*, and **Janice Taylor**, Author of *"Our Lady of Weight Loss: Miraculous and Motivational Musings from the Patron Saint of Permanent Fat Removal"*, delighted us with her humor. Visit the **Virtual Woman's Day™** blog to hear their sessions.

Here's what some of the women had to say about Virtual Woman's Day:

*"Heidi, I have to tell you... The **Virtual Woman's Day™** was SOOOO incredible. It was a great way to meet and chat with other amazing women in business. I enjoyed the day so much. I wasn't planning on staying the whole day but I couldn't help myself because the speakers and virtual showcases were all so great and interesting, I couldn't stop listening... it was fantastic! I hope that you are planning on having it again next year!!"*

Teresa Morrow, Morr Services



"Hi Heidi: Great day yesterday! You scored another winner!

Again, many thanks for a wonderful event. Applause, applause to you!"

Rosalind Sedacca CCT,
Business Communication Strategist

"Hi Heidi, Thanks for giving me the opportunity to participate. Please give me the URL for the website that you want the webscan for as I am happy to do so for you."

Regards, Nipa Shah, Jenesys Group

We have had some great conversations with women around the world in honor of **Virtual Woman's Day™**. These women and the many others who participated before, during and after made **Virtual Woman's Day™** a **HUGE SUCCESS!** We are eternally grateful to all those who shared in this history-making event. We are looking forward to next year with great anticipation.

By the Way, the WECAI Network™ made a contribution to the Women's Edge Coalition for their Global Opportunity for Women initiative in recognition of **Virtual Woman's Day™** ! (Visit page 52 to learn more about this initiative)

If you have not participated in a virtual event before, what's holding you back? If price was an issue, it is no more. The Web Conference Room is free to download and there are no long-distance charges.

Check out the Women's Online Calendar
(<http://www.womenonlinecalendar.com>)
for a listing of women's happenings around the world. And we hope to see you next year!

Warmest regards,

Heidi Richards Mooney, Editor-in-Chief

Meet the Editors

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WE magazine for women

Tell us about yourself!

In the Summer of 2007 we will be launching the Women's Global Registry! If you would like to be informed about it, send a message with **"Women's Global Registry"** in the subject line to

Info@WeChamber.org

and we will add your name to our list! When it is launched, you will receive an invitation to submit your company information to our new online directory – it's **FREE!**



UPCOMING EVENTS

eWednesday Chats

"Where Women Connect Online"

Join us every Wednesday at www.eWednesdaychat.exe

Coming Summer 2007

Women's Writing & Publishing Summit

Date TBA

September 2007

International Womens eCommerce Day™

www.VirtualWomensDay.com

*The opinions expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of WeChamber.org or its subsidiaries

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I just read WE Magazine, heard about it from Dina Giolitto. The first issue is excellent. I especially like the variety of perspectives – it was an interesting read.

Cynthia McKenna LPC, NCC, Counseling and Life Coaching

.....
Congratulations, Heidi.

This is very impressive and Maria Bell did a great job.
Phyllis May, Past President Florida Speakers Association

*The **BUZZ** about WE....*

WOW! Your new magazine is PHENOMENAL, Absolutely beautiful and chock full of great information. Love the light blue background and simple layout. It's easy on the eyes and easy to read. So many sites have so much stuff all over, you don't where to look first. You've done it right. **Lynn Meyer, Public Relations Director - Small Business Trends**

"The **WE** magazine for women is one of the best resources I have read in a long time. The topics covered are timely, well written and on target for any woman who is seeking valuable information on how to succeed in today's competitive market. The article on building wealth is one that any woman can benefit from. I would highly recommend this publication. Kudos to founder and publisher, Heidi Richards." **Kathleen Gage, Turning Point Presents**

"Heidi,
you put the WE in WECAI,
for all women.
Congratulations on the
launch of this latest
We-Can-Learn-Together
tool."

**Mary Hunt, Author "In
Women We Trust"**

Whoo-hoo Heidi,
Impressive publication.
You have delivered a rich
resource that stands out
above many online publica-
tions. Bravo to you and
your team for creating an
impressive e-magazine!
**Lorraine Cohen, Business
Coach & Life Strategist**
<http://www.powerfull-living.biz/index2.shtml>

Dear sisters at WE, Con-
gratulations on the new
mag!! We need all the
feminine energy we can
get in this world!!

**Anique Duc - Herwill
Creations, AUSTRALIA**
www.invokingthegoddess.com

Heidi, The first issue of WE is SO GREAT!!!!!! There is so much great information stuffed into this magazine. I am so excited for you and for us who get to read it. GREAT JOB!! The articles are full of terrific information and I have to go because I have to continue to read more. **I can't wait to get the next one!** Please let me know when the affiliate program will be set up...I have about 15 women I am going to tell about The WECAI Network™ and WE magazine! Keep up the great work! **Teresa Morrow, Morr Services**

WE Magazine - WOW!!!!!! What a phenomenal publication! I really liked your article "Name that Wine!" That was a really great read! I also loved Laurel Delaney's article about why women are so natural at going global. I skimmed some of the other stuff... honestly, I think I'm going to run a nice hot bubble bath tonight, grab a glass of wine,

WE Magazine and have my "me time" :) This is the perfect read for women entrepreneurs - even when we're off the clock LOL!

"Wow. This is excellent - talk about over-delivering. When you said you were producing the maga-
zine

for some reason I thought it would be just a few pages long. This is such a fantastic resource with a really nice balance of articles. Just a great read. I'm so pleased you asked me to get involved!"

Louise Bird, Marketing 2 Women

The **BUZZ** continues.....



“Thank you for creating WE – an online magazine that helps women connect...find their true passion and fulfill their potential.”

**Nicole Wild, CMP - Executive Director,
The Women's Alliance**

“Aloha Heidi, Congrats on a FABULOUS job putting together the WE magazine.”

**Coach Deborah Micek
RPM Success Group Inc.**

Hi Heidi – I just had a chance to read through WE, and it's great. It's very easy to read, and the content is extremely informative.

Congratulations!!!!!! **Camie Dunbar, Lift me up Cards**

I read WE online and thought it was wonderful!!! Congratulations on your 'baby'. **Kristin Andrews**

“This looks great and congratulations on what is going to be a fantastic magazine!”

Catherine Seton, WomensMentoring.com.au

“The mag looks great! Lots of info to absorb. You and your team have done a wonderful job.”

Daisy Wright, Wright Career Solutions

Congratulations on your wonderful women's magazine. Please let me know if ever you would like for me to contribute an article for women on topics such as networking, relationship marketing, communication skills, assertive communication and personal branding.

Donna Fisher, CSP, Author, Corporate Trainer

Hi Heidi- Congratulations on your new WE magazine, lots of fun to read.

Lisa R. Robbins – Au Courant Home Interior Designs

“I just took a look at the magazine and I have to tell you I really liked the look of it. I especially liked the article on networking.”

Wendy Okkema, Yak's Healthy Lifestyles

“Wow! I'm impressed. You did a great job with the premier issue of WE. Congratulations!”

Roz Sedacca, Author

Heidi, Just sent you an e-mail - was just checking out your magazine - it's awesome! Great job!

Viveca Stone, Founder, Get Ready for Love!

Congratulations on the birth of WE magazine! I've just been through it and it's just great.

You must feel so proud and happy :-)

Manoj Vijayan

Heidi, This is a BOOK!.

Browsed it and saved it for later reading... very good, and a lot of work... I wish you the best!
Martha E. Galindo, Galindo Publicidad, Inc.

Heidi... this is great! I'm already receiving inquiries, thank you so much for including me.

Dina Giolotti, Wordfeeder.com

Heidi: I was of course impressed as usual with the publication. But I have to say I was

OVER THE TOP IMPRESSED with the article by Susan Miller, “8 Ways To Be Heard For The First Time.” So often we rely on email and e-publications or even e-conferencing, that once the opportunity comes for personal appearances, we find we are not truly ready to speak. To be heard.

Speech and

in-person presentation are the “icing on the cake.” Without a good in-person presentation you may have all the tools to make the cake look good, but not the right tools to close the deal.

Thanks for a great publication and I for one would LOVE to see more articles like this!!

Marie Feazzel

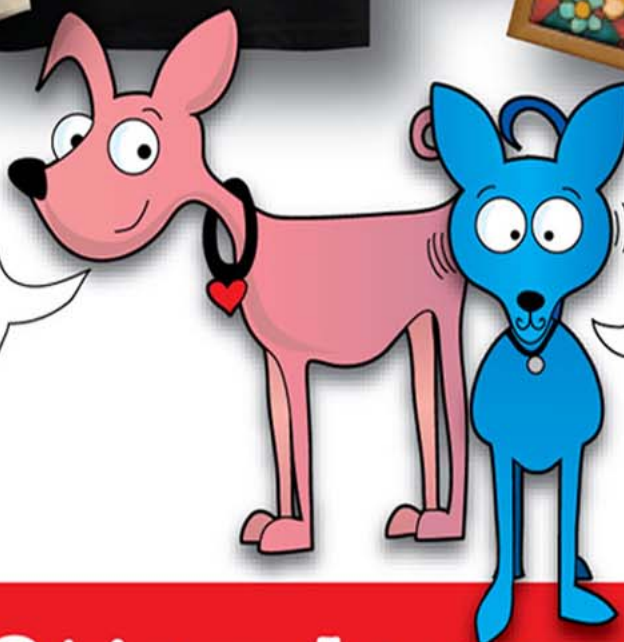
Congratulations Heidi! How exciting! I wish you all the best and great success. - **Maria Gale**

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KEYNOTE SPEAKERS



Debbie Ford
NY Times #1 best selling author, creator of the Shadow Process, founder of The Ford Institute for Integrative Coaching



Mona Lisa Schulz, MD, PhD
Clinical Assistant Professor of Psychiatry, Neuropsychiatrist, Medical Intuitive and best-selling author



Susan Wilson Solovic
CEO of SBTV.com, television news anchor, columnist and author



Rikki Klieman
TV Anchor, legal analyst for CBS's Early Show, top trial attorney, author and actor



Kristi Kruger, Emcee
News Co-Anchor
WPLG Channel 10



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Panel Moderator
Business writer for The Miami Herald, The Balancing Act

PANEL MEMBERS:
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Belinda Keiser, *Keiser College*
Laura Raybin Miller, *Commissioner - SBHD*
Beverly Raphael, *RCC Associates*
Sue Romanos, *CareerXchange*
Susan Towler, *Blue Cross Blue Shield of Florida*

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Top Ten Reasons Why Women Need to PLAN Their Retirement

by Kim Kirmmse Toth

Ladies, please do not take these reasons lightly. They are not for the faint of heart. However, they are extremely important. There are a great many articles on this subject, but here are 10 reasons in a nutshell for you to pay attention to NOW!

1. Take control of your future. You will most likely be the surviving spouse. Or you may be divorced and single. Or you have always been single. Which ever is your reason, you are on your own. Do not wait for Prince Charming to come whisk you away on his white horse. What if he never shows up? If you are the surviving spouse, were you part of the financial planning? You should be. This is YOUR life and you need to take control of it. None of you know where your futures lie, but wishing, hoping and praying that it will all work out is naïve and will land you in big trouble.

2. Don't scoff at working women. Women tend to spend less time in the workforce. The average woman spends 15 years away, (raising children, caring for elderly parents) while the average man will be away for 1.6 years. This means women have lower benefits from company pensions, 401(k) plans as well as Social Security benefits. It appears women are "punished" for raising children and caring for elders. Remember, no wages equals no credits equals no Social Security. Our system is not kind to women.

3. Keep a keen eye on your income, savings and spending habits. Of all the elderly persons with income levels below the poverty line, more than 70 % are women. If married, more than ½ were much better off financially before their husband died.

4. Make health benefits a priority. Many women need to pay out of pocket for health insurance benefits. This may be due to spending less time in the workforce. Whatever the reason, it can be devastating to be without health insurance coverage.

5. Defer your Social Security benefits as long as possible. Women need to wait as long as possible to collect Social Security benefits. At this time 60 % of women choose to apply for Social Security at the earliest age possible, 62 years old. Keep in mind, your Social Security retirement benefits are based on your 35 years of highest earnings. (If you don't have 35 years employment, they use a zero for each year without earnings. Working an extra year or 2 allows you to replace years lost, which increases your benefits.

If you go to www.socialsecurity.gov/planners you can calculate different retirement scenarios.

According to AARP 62 % of women in the country do not have long term retirement plans. Don't let this be you! Policy makers have ignored the needs of Baby Boomer women and largely ignored the plight they are in when approaching retirement. This is true primarily for those without enough

6. Hire a Financial Advisor. As much as you love to do things on your own and make important decisions by yourselves, this is a time to hand it over to an expert. Unless you have many extra hours to spend learning the in's and out's of the market, you will be only hurting yourself and your future. It's a good time to ask for help. Ask your family and friends for someone they trust that has done well by them. For most of you, this is a task you need to let go of.

7. Working longer than you anticipated may be the key. Women may need to work longer to achieve a stable, livable retirement. One half of working women do not have access to pensions or company retirement plans. Many women don't earn enough to save in order to fund their retirement. The truth continues to be that women working full time still only earn 76 % of what men earn.

8. Baby Boomer women are the most educated in history but.... Baby Boomer women are more likely to be divorced or never married than women in other generations. That in itself requires women to work more years. Although Baby Boomer women have more education and stronger workforce participation than earlier generation, being divorced or never married may create a deficit in retirement income.

9. Don't count on your home equity. Planning on converting the equity in your home into retirement income could back fire on you. Housing values are not always stable and tend to either level off or decline. Although equity in your home may provide additional monies to your nest egg, don't make it your primary funding source.

10. Be healthy minded NOW. Keep on top of your health now, not later. Exercise, eat well and get all the necessary annual medical check ups you need. How you take care of yourself now may be the crystal ball of your future.

Kim Kirmmse Toth lcsw, acc –
Transitions and Retirement expert,
founder of

www.myretirementbydesign.com coaches,
speaks and writes for Baby Boomers on
the joys and challenges of creating a 3rd
Age that fits your desires and dreams.

You may contact her a
kim@myretirementbydesign.com

or all at: 720-922-1201



Keys to Retirement Questionnaire

Name: _____ Date: _____

Address: _____ Medicare Number: _____

Phone: _____ Primary Physician: _____

Marital Status: _____ Primary Insurance: _____

Spouse Contact Information: _____

LIFESTYLES

Key Issues	Key Questions	Comments
Preferred style of living	Where do you plan to live after retirement?	
Preferred style of living	Do you plan to live independently or in assisted living?	

HEALTH

Key Consideration	Question	Answer	Comments
Heath Insurance	What amount of benefits will you need in a worst-case scenario?		
Medical	Have you compiled a list of your medical history, physicians, and current medication prescriptions?		
Long-Term care	Does your family have a history of life threatening illness and/or long life expectancy?		

FINANCES

Key Consideration	Question	Answer	Comments
Asset listing	Have you compiled a list of all the assets you or your spouse (if applicable) own? Is this list updated monthly or bi-monthly?		
Asset Protection	Will the returns on your investments be enough to support your desired style of living?		
Tax Minimization	At what tax rate will you be taxed during your retirement/leisure years?		
Life Insurance	How do you plan to protect your beneficiaries?		
Estate Planning	How do you want to pass your assets on to the next generation?		

LEGAL

Key Consideration	Question	Answer	Comments
Friends and Family	Have you compiled a list of contact information for your closest family and trusted friends?		
Wills	Do you have an updated will and living will prepared?		
Power of Attorney (POA)	Who will handle your will or living will?		

(Source: Microsoft Retirement Checklist)



Woman's Wealth Summit Audio Program

Did you miss the Woman's Wealth Summit on January 29th?
If so, now is your chance to find out what everyone
else on the call found out.

Do you want to become Wealthy? Get Rich? Become a Millionaire?

Building wealth is not difficult. Anyone can do it. You can do it quickly or build wealth slowly – it's up to you. But first you have to understand the steps it takes. What are your financial goals? How quickly do you want to achieve them? With rewards come a certain amount of risk. If you want to build wealth quickly, then the risks may be greater. However, if you are planning for retirement and you have 5, 10 or even 20 years to reach that stage, then you can create a long-term strategy to build wealth.

"It's not what you learn about building wealth, it's what you do with the knowledge that matters!"

The Woman's Wealth Summit Audio Program is the result of that Summit – and while it is not a "get rich quick" scheme, some of the women we interviewed achieved their financial goals in as short as a year's time. In fact, building wealth is something all of us can aim for. Even if we don't all get "rich" we will certainly be better off than before we heard the experts from the Woman's Wealth Summit Audio Program – as long as we apply what we have learned. There are many characteristics wealthy people have in common. Although many of us don't take time to learn what they are, these characteristics certainly are no secret. It really begins with a mindset – it's about managing your money wisely, learning how to save, how to invest and how to spend wisely.

Here's the lineup of experts we interviewed for the Woman's Wealth Summit :

- Christine Gage, Co-Founder of Millionaire Woman shared her "Million Dollar Secrets of Success – Inside Secrets You Can Use to Skyrocket Your Own Wealth Today"
- Stacy Francis, Founder of Savvy Ladies shared her tried and true techniques for "Controlling Your Money"
- Liz Crawford, Founder of Women's Wealth talked about "Financial Strategies That WILL Change Your Life"
- Loral Langemeir, Founder of Live out Loud gave us "The 8 Fundamentals of Building and Sustaining Wealth"
- Charlotte Stallings, President of Getting Smart About Money talked about "How everyone needs to Get Smart about Money (or else...)"
- Regina Forte of Life Steps for Women spoke about "The Keys to Investment Club Success"
- Kim Kirmmse Toth, President of My Retirement by Design shared her insights into "Planning Your Retirement"
- Debra Maples, President of Your Cash Flow Connection discussed "Cash Flow, Growth Money, Business Funding Beyond the Banks (Where to go when the Bank says NO!)"

PLUS! When you purchase the Woman's Wealth Summit Audio Program you also receive TWO additional unadvertised bonus sessions with our compliments:

- How Not to go Broke at 102: Achieving Everlasting Wealth with special guest Adriane G. Berg, Founder of the Wealthbuilder Longevity Club
- Wealth Building Tips: Manage Your Money with Global Productivity Expert and Author Neen James

"Heidi, your event was beyond magnificent. I was overwhelmed by the quality and quantity of information and ideas. Each and every woman presented from their life's experiences and shared things that you normally don't hear in everyday seminars. Your own personal testimony in addition added to the afternoon. You certainly do have an amazing gift for interviewing and sharing professional and personal information. Definitely pursue that."
Laura Parke, Private Scuba Lessons – <http://www.PrivateScubaLessons.com>

The ten women Heidi interviewed shared their personal stories and the strategies they have used to become financially secure, to build their own personal wealth and how they plan to keep it for the future. And you can too!

Buy the CD's today and learn how you too can be closer to attaining your financial goals. You can buy the complete Woman's Wealth Summit Audio Program for \$57 USD.

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Blogs: A Business Woman's New Best Friend

By Toby Bloomberg, Bloomberg Marketing/Diva Marketing Blog

www.bloombergmarketing.com

Feminine strengths were considered a weakness in the 'good old boy' world of business. However, in an environment where developing partnerships are critical to success, the talent to build trusted relationships with people outside of your established network ranks high on the attribute list of what makes a good business leader - male or female.

In the new internet marketing order women now have the edge. The *Three Cs of Business Success: Collaboration, Communication and Cordiality* leverages how women instinctively view the world. *Connecting skills* are critical to creating and maintaining relationships in an online world where an investment of time is as important as technology.

When you are on opposite sides of an ocean, or even across town, meeting for lunch or an after work drink can be difficult if not impossible. How do you continue the on-going discussion flow? A funny little website, called a *Blog*, just might turn out to be a business woman's new best friend.

Blogs turn a static internet presence into an *exchange* of thoughts, information and experiences. Blogs create real-time conversations by allowing your readers the opportunity to comment, or talk to you, right on your site. Blog dialoging is a powerful strategy that supports *collaboration, communication and cordiality*.

With access to the internet it's easy to ensure your blog content is current. You can blog from a mobile phone, from an internet café or your personal computer. Now you don't have meet at a café to keep in touch.

Blogs Pull Away The Wizard of Oz Curtain

The heart of blogs is people talking, listening and interacting with each other. Since blogs are not carefully crafted traditional marketing communications but are written by one person, a unique voice and tonality occurs. The best bloggers have developed an engaging style that is authentic and candid providing a familiarity that does not exist in a corporate website.

Something interesting occurs when bloggers are encouraged to let their personalities emerge. The Wizard of Oz curtain is pulled away from your organization. With a more transparent view of your company customers, prospects and stakeholders begin to know the people who make up the organization. Sometimes

www.divamarketingblog.com

the thought of unfiltered talk gives an organization some concern.

However, like the Wizard in Oz who hid because he didn't want the people to see that he was "*just a man*," once Dorothy and her pals met and got to know the real Wizard they were no longer frightened. In fact, they liked him very much. The Wizard found when he dropped his guard he began to really understand their problems and could offer innovative solutions.

When visitors read your blog they come to know the people who are your company. That leads to emotional engagement with your brand and your organization ... through the blogger's point of view. However, just like with the Wizard and Dorothy, the impact of business blogs helps both sides... company and customer know each other better. People want to do business with the people they know and like. Blogs help recreate old fashion 'grocery store' relationships where customers were also friends.



Without A Strategy Blogs Are A Me Too Play Toy

As in any marketing initiative, to be successful, your blog strategy must also begin with establishing goals, objectives and success factors. Without these important elements there is no accountability. Your blog becomes a "*me too play toy*" ... which is fine if all you want is something cool to talk about at your next Girls Night Out. But a waste of resources if you are running a business.

Blogs are unlike any marketing strategy I know. Blogs, in fact all social media (podcasts and videologs/vlogs) have their roots in a culture where established guidelines form the foundation of norms and ethical behavior. Yes, you can break some of those rules; but like playing jazz, you must first know the notes to deviate from traditional melodies and create new tunes.

In an online world where credibility is hard won, it is critical that the *Blog Mantra* - Honestly. Transparency. Authenticity - be incorporated into all of your blog strategies. Keep in mind that once you hit the "publish key" your post becomes public for the world to read and the search engines have long memories called "cached." Keep in mind that a link from a blog is easy to paste into another blog, a website or an email. Keep in mind that the goodwill of your brand/your company is at state if you deviate from these important cultural norms.

Throw in a little Passion too. Without the element of passion chances your blogger will get bored and not continue the

Begin Blogging With A Whisper Strategy

If you are not familiar with blogs begin with a three-step Whisper Strategy.

1. Subscribe to a news aggregator/reader
2. Read/subscribe to blogs
3. Join the conversation - comment on blogs

After reading blogs for a couple of weeks you'll begin to see the rhythms of different bloggers. You'll discover styles that you like and those that you do not. Before long you'll be ready to develop a blogging strategy that will help you connect with your customers, prospects and stakeholders through online *collaboration, communication and cordiality.*

Blogging Tools & Resources

There are many blog platforms. Some are free while others or have a minimum cost making blogs a low-risk entry to having a web presence.

Blog software:

<http://www.blogger.com> - free
<http://www.squarespace.com> - fee-based
www.typepad.com - fee-based
<http://home.blogware.com/> - fee-based
<http://wordpress.org/> - free
<http://www.sixapart.com/movabletype/> - free
<http://www.sixapart.com/livejournal> - free
<http://www.pmachine.com/> - free and fee-based
<http://360.yahoo.com/> - free
<http://reger.com/about/index.log> free and fee-based

http://www.ojr.org/ojr/imagesblog_software_comparison.cfm

Comparison chart

Aggregators/News Readers

<http://www.bloglines.com/>
<http://www.newsgator.com/Home.aspx>
<http://www.sharpreader.net/>
www.myyahoo.com
www.mygoogle.com

Blog Search Engines

www.technorati.com
www.feedster.com
www.icerocket.com
<http://blogsearch.google.com>



"A real live blogger." "Business blog evangelist" that's what people have called Toby Bloomberg. Toby is president of a strategic and social media consultancy based in Atlanta. As one of the most recognized consultants in this space, now Toby's passion is helping organizations navigate the blogosphere and developing social media/blog strategies that support their business goals. To help get you started subscribe to Toby's blog Diva Marketing www.divamarketingblog.com and then drop Toby an email tobyb1@gmail.com for Diva Marketing's 20 Quick Tips To A Successful Biz Blog Strategy.

Through and From the Lens: Photography as Access to Transformation

[Sheila Finkelstein](#), Artist/Writer/Coach uses Photography as a tool for transformation, opening people up to seeing their worlds in new ways, with:



**Some of the Flowers
One Per Page**

1. The Book - [Pictures to Ponder: Inspired Journaling](#) – a **book** of beautiful flower photos and self-reflecting questions, with spaces for writing. Ideal Gift for Writer or Office Waiting Room - Available in Print or eBook –

2. Free Twice-Weekly Ezine - [Picture to Ponder](#)

3. Teleclasses – [Expand Your Focus – Change Your World](#)

Did you know....

Over 60 million people have iPods and MP3 players (not even including PDA's!)

Almost 1 Billion People will purchase cell phones in the US alone in 2006

70+% of 2007 Model Cars will have built-in iPod compatible Stereo Systems

6 Major Airlines have just announced that they are making their planes iPod Compatible (You can charge the iPod and watch videos from it on the screen in front of you)

75% of anyone with a portable media player will download a podcast.

1 in 8 Baby Boomers have downloaded a podcast.

Why YOU Should be Podcasting

by Penny Haynes

What does this have to do with you?

It means that **Podcasting has become the least expensive and yet most efficient means of online AND offline communications**, marketing, education and entertainment - and it's still on the cutting edge. If you move quickly, you can stake your claim on the internet, and be the forerunner in podcasting in your area of expertise.

I. What is Podcasting

A. Definition - Internet Radio or Television Program that can be downloaded.

B. Explanation - People create an audio or video file, upload it to the internet, and then post it on a special web page (RSS page). These RSS Feeds (as they are called) allow people with a special Browser (an RSS Reader) to "subscribe" to your show. Specific RSS Readers are called Podcatchers, or Enclosure Extractors, and these allow people to also download all of your episodes at once (instead of one at a time) whenever they want, without ever having to go back to your website.

I was once asked, "Isn't our goal to GET people to GO TO our website?" Yes, that is the END goal. However, think of a Podcast as a weekly ezine. Would you make your intended audience come to your website every week to get your weekly newsletter? No. You send it to them via email as a courtesy. You use your ezine to stay in front of your audience, and continually offer them a reason to visit your website. You use the same technique with a Podcast. You offer your listening/viewing audience a way to receive your

shows without *coming to your website, and then provide a reason for them to visit your website in the Podcast.*

C. Differences - 1. Different than Streaming Media - Streaming audio and video allows you to listen to or view shows WITHOUT downloading and saving the entire file to your computer. Instead, it downloads the file A LITTLE AT A TIME to a TEMPORARY folder on your computer. When you are finished viewing or listening to the file, the file is removed from your computer automatically. This is very good for people with dial-up connections. With Podcasting, the file is downloaded in its entirety to your computer or portable player.

2. Different than Putting A Link To A Media File On Your Webpage - If you place a media file on your website and place a link to it for people to download, people must always come to your website to access the file. With an RSS Feed, people subscribe with their RSS Reader and your latest episodes come to them every time they open their RSS Reader.

II. Who is Podcasting?

A. Everyday People Like You And Me - You don't have to be a professional audio/video engineer to produce captivating content on the internet. Tools and software are inexpensive and available for any level of production. Children, hobbyists, non-profits, sports lovers, and collectors podcast just as much as business people.

B. Entrepreneurs Who Want to Increase their Search Engine Rankings and Internet Visibility - Why do people post videos on YouTube? Because they know that many people will go to the site and see what videos are available. The only thing is that you can't take YouTube with you - you can only visit it on the web. Alternatively, Podcasts are on the web AND you can take them with you. They can be syndicated (in more than one place at one time), and can be crawled by search engine robots. They can be delivered to your intended audience, instead of making them fetch it online. So Entrepreneurs who Podcast increase their online AND offline visibility.

C. Corporations Who Want to Communicate Internally and Externally - Corporations are using podcasting as an internal method of communication with their staff. They conduct sales training via podcasts, share staff meetings - anything they want the rest of the company to know. They also use Podcasting as a way to communicate with their clients. IBM was one of the first companies to Podcast, and they used it to communicate with their investors. Broadcasting companies are using it to re-broadcast their shows, and show behind-the-scenes features.

III. Why Podcast

A. Search Engine Optimization - thanks to the RSS feeds that house them, Podcasts can easily be syndicated. Just like a newspaper columnist who writes their article once, but it is published in hundreds of newspapers, you can publish one Podcast, and have it show up on hundreds of websites. This can be done many ways, including submitting your Podcast to Podcast Directories. This results in increased search engine ranking without paying for Google Ads and Advertising.

B. Display Your Expertise - Podcasting is like having your own radio show (or writing a book). It conveys the idea that you are an expert in your area, and that people listen to you. It also truly gives you an opportunity to impress potential clients with the knowledge that you do have. It's a win-win situation.

C. Give People an Opportunity to Get To Know You (Virtually) - There is no way for you to meet with every potential client one-on-one. There isn't enough time in the world. But if you record your expertise, and your basic explanation of your services, products, USP, etc., then people can listen to you any time they want. If they like what they hear, they can then contact you. That's how I became the Podcasting Consultant for Lifetime Television for Women. Someone from their company listens to my Brain Storm! Business Podcast and recommended me for the job.

D. Create a Collection of Audio/Video Content For Eventual Sale on CD or DVD - Don't let any of your content go to waste. Make it available for a limited amount of time, and then archive the information on CD or DVD for later sale.

E. Podcasting Allows People to Take You With Them On the Road - Podcasting is a medium intended to be enjoyed "on the go". People do not have to be glued to a computer screen to find out what you have to say. Audio and Video are playable on mp3 players, cell phones, iPods, PDAs, etc., and 75% of people who own these will download a podcast at one time. Wouldn't you like it to be YOUR podcast?

IV. How to Podcast

A. **Most people record audio podcasts on their own computers**, but others record it with digital recorders, telephone (not recommended - the quality is NOT very good), and other various methods. Video podcasts are recorded, as you would think, with different levels of video cameras.

B. **Next, for a professional quality podcast, you need to edit it.** Take out distractions, background noises, stutterings, stumblings, ums, ahs, etc. You want your audience to be focused on your content, not your delivery. A good podcast allows its audience to forget they are listening to or viewing a recording, and lets them soak up the information you are sharing. There are some technical parts of editing you can learn, such as adding more information to your audio or video file after it is saved, but we won't go into that here.

C. **Then you need to upload your show to a hosting service that provides you with sufficient bandwidth and storage.** There are services that provide one-stop shops: they host your show, and will also "post" your show, or provide you with an RSS feed. It is not as customizable (or secure) as having it on your own website, but some people just want convenience, and these sites provide it. Alternatively, you can host it on your own website. Make sure you find out how much bandwidth and storage you have on your site first - overages can kill you, just like cell phone overages.

D. **Lastly, you need to "post" your audio file and information about your show onto an RSS feed.** You can host one on your own website, or use a service. There are pros and cons to both options. Once you have done this, you can start submitting your podcasts to online Podcast Directories.

Whether you are a do-it-yourselfer, or a "show me how to do it" type of person, you can be podcasting within a week. We offer small group, hands-on online conferences where you see my screen and I see yours, and I walk you through every step of the process. Or do it yourself with our multi-media ebook called the Podcasting Handbook.

For more information about how you can shoot past your competition by podcasting AND increase your search engine rankings, all for less than \$7/month, contact Penny Haynes at penny@1stpod.com.

Penny Haynes, Podcasting Expert, of 1st Podcast Publishing (1stPod.com) is using Podcasting as an inexpensive and effective method for increasing your search engine rankings. Her Consulting clients have included Lifetime Television for Women. She teaches small group, hands-on online Podcasting classes (PodcastingConferences.com), organizes the Online International Podcasting Expos (InternationalPodcastingExpo.com), and developed the Niche Market Podcast Directories (PodcastDirectories4Sale.com)



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WEBSITE MAKEOVERS – Is it Time to Redesign Yours?

By Heidi Richards



Did you know that there are more than 80 million websites out there? 2X's the number of sites just a short 3 years ago. If yours is more than 3 years old that means about 40 million sites are newer than yours. Yours could be "old school" using outdated technologies and even "old content." In the last 3 years alone, Video and Audio have been perfected online, pop-ups are considered outdated and the way sites are scored by search engines has changed considerably. And that's just the tip of the WEBSITE iceberg!

I started my first website in 1997 – it was only four pages of an online brochure – not a particularly impressive sales tool either. But it was a presence and at the time, my main goal was to have an online presence. In 2000 we moved to a more expansive online brochure (some 40 pages of product offerings) and yet we didn't go all the way. No eCommerce platform. People still had to call us to place an order. In 2003 we started adding content to our website. Things like testimonials, articles, tips, contests and a shopping cart system. In 2005 we added a media room and wedding area. Today we are working on adding video, audio and really looking at a whole new redesign. It's time.

My second site was one I used to promote my professional speaking, training and coaching company – Speaking with Spirit. It is being redesigned because my customer base is mostly small businesses so we have changed the name to **Success...and Then Some** and have created a whole new look – www.successandthensome.com. We are still toying with the idea of keeping the other site live for a while to compare traffic results. Remember, TEST, TEST, and TEST again.

My third site is a publishing company which will be redesigned sometime in 2007, my fourth site, Women's eCommerce Association, also has a new name – WeChamber and although we started out with a redesign. When we found it was taking far too long and with the number of changes we were making (to the look, the content and the functionality) we opted to create a whole new site – www.wechamber.org. We changed designers twice with this project, because the first one did not finish the project - left it after only creating a template – (which was not what we wanted) and did not follow our agreed upon timeline for completion of certain aspects of the site.

There is definitely a cost involved when you create or re-create one site however we have found it was worth graduating to a more sophisticated program when we started looking at the needs of each of our sites. Knowing that eventually each site would need to be redesigned, we wanted something that didn't have a home-made look. We wanted them to be designed by a professional and yet still retain the ability to make most changes and additions ourselves.

How about you? What are your plans? If you have a brick and mortar presence, chances are you have given your business a facelift – maybe new furniture, new carpet, new phones, at the very least new technology. Think of your website like your brick and mortar – without the high rent.

Ask yourself if your site is keeping up with the changing times. Are you adding new features that enhance your site? Is your content fresh? How does your site look? Is it visually appealing? Do you think you are getting the most out of your site? Are you happy with the number of visitors/sales – or could you use more? Does your site have live chat, a forum or another way for clients to connect with you (or with one another)? How is your checkout process? Compare yours with that of the competitions'. This will give you some idea of how up-to-date yours is, or not.

If you answered "yes" to a number of those questions, it **may** be time for a redesign. I'm not talking about just adding a few features, although that may be sufficient for now. However, you will face the same questions a year from now and then what?

Here are some other things to consider when thinking of redesigning your site.

- a. Your business has changed and your site has not.
- b. The competition has a much better, faster, more esthetically appealing site.
- c. You know what your customers want and you want to give it to them.
- d. Your website looks out of date or worse homemade.
- e. Content is old or limited.
- f. You have terrible page ranks with all the major search engines (which could be partly due to a poorly designed or outdated site.
- g. Your site no longer reflects your brand.
- h. You are just not happy with it anymore.
- i. Your client base or audience has changed.
- j. Your site is difficult to navigate.
- k. You are getting feedback from users (visitors/guests/clients) about errors when they try to access certain pages (assuming these are supposed accessible to them).
- l. Conversion rates (from browsers to buyers) are low.
- m. The look of the site does not work with your other marketing materials.

Some Webdesign Resources:

MASTER.com - Not sure if your website is working properly? Master.com has a free search program to check your links and more. www.master.com

Hitslink - Gives detailed real-time statistics like what keywords people use to get to my site, where all the traffic is coming from, what pages they leave from, and how many people are at your website at the precise moment you are reading the stats. <http://os.hitslink.com/>

Link Popularity - Find out who is linking to your site. <http://www.theinternetdigest.net/link-popularity-tool.html>

iStock photo - Great inexpensive site for graphics - www.istockphoto.com

216 Color Safe Palette - Helps you pick colors that will work with all browsers. Shows the Hex Code for each color. <http://www.theinternetdigest.net/216-color-safe-palette.html>



© Heidi Richards is the author of The PMS Principles, Powerful Marketing Strategies to Grow Your Business and 7 other books. She is also the Founder & CEO of the **WECAI Network™** - a Global Network of Organizations and Resources that "Helps Women Do Business on and off the WEB." You can list your company for free at www.WECAI.org . Ms. Richards can be reached at Heidi@successandthensomee.com or heidi@wecai.org.

Here are some tips to keep in mind when planning and implementing your redesign:

Identify key people in your organization to be involved with the redesign. It's seldom (if ever) a one person job. Brainstorm with your redesign team. Look at your goals and the needs of your audience.

Your site is your image; it can build on (or detract from) your organization's good reputation. Make your website show your "best you."

Create a plan. Know what your goals are for the new site. Put them in writing.

Always test. Ask your current customer base how well your site works. Ask visitors for feedback. Ask friends, other web experts too. Test your site on different computers. In different browsers, etc.

Never pick the designer based on price alone. You can get a great, professional site for a reasonable cost if you do your homework. Ask for references (look at sites built by the designers you are interviewing). Talk to the owners. Find out how long it will take then double it. As if the designer has worked with sites in your category before? Some of the things to include in your request for proposal could include: the purpose of the site, design requirements (the "look and feel," navigation needs, etc.), project background, target audiences, budget, and of course the timeline. Ask for a timeline of when certain aspects will be completed and what concessions he or she will make if they don't meet the deadlines.

Creating or redesigning a web site is no small task. It takes time, money and human effort. Your website will only continue to work if you continually review it for relevancy. Once you have re-created the site, establish a schedule to review the site every six months to ensure consistency and accuracy. Continue to gather feedback. Analyze stats to make sure your projections are on target. Fine tune and make changes as needed - its part of the ongoing maintenance of any website.

Alexa Toolbar - Tool to show Pagerank, traffic, load speed and related links. Alexa also compares similar sites - www.alexa.com

Find broken links - This free tool from Microsoft's bcentral detects the broken links on your site so you can fix them. <http://www.microsoft.com/smallbusiness/online/services/hub.mspx>

Overture Keyword Tool - This free keyword suggestion tool gives you an idea of how popular a keyword or keyphrase is. Use it before you optimize and submit your pages to the search engines. <http://inventory.overture.com/d/searchinventory/suggestion/>

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How to contact ASK WE:
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Or mail them to: Ask WE c/o WeChamber
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Suzannah Richards, CFO & Tech Goddess
www.WECAL.org

Why You Need A Plan....

I hear it all the time. Entrepreneurs are not convinced that they need a business plan. Did you know that writing down clear, focused goals will increase your chance of reaching them by 70 percent?

I have to admit, when I started my handmade toiletries business back in 1999, I didn't think I needed a plan. I just figured I wanted a successful business and that was enough to move me forward.

When I became frustrated with not seeing results in my business, I started working with a business coach who gave me quite a few reasons to write a plan. I broke down and wrote the plan. And you know what? It helped my business take leaps toward my goals.

Before I had a plan, I was just out here floundering around. I couldn't even really articulate what success looked like for me. I had a business, and I was gaining customers, but I was doing it very slowly and painfully!

Once I had a plan in place, it gave me focus. I knew exactly where I was headed, and I had a good idea about how I was going to get there. My business started growing – without the pain!

It doesn't matter what kind of business you have – your own, or a direct sales business – you will benefit from having a plan. A good business plan includes your long-term goals for your business, as well as a short-term plan to get you there.

Here are three great reasons to create a plan.

1. It's not so much the plan document itself that is important, but it's the process of creating a plan that can teach you a lot about your business. When you create a plan, you really get a chance to pull apart your idea and look at each facet of it. You have the opportunity to decide if this is something you are truly passionate about. And, you get to clearly define your business. When you have a clear picture of what your business looks like (on paper, and off) you can articulate what you do for your customers. If you can't tell people what you do and what your business is about, you'll lose them.

Jenn Givler is a Business Empowerment Coach who empowers women to express their authentic self and create a powerful business. Jenn can help if you have a vision for your business but just can't seem to get there, hate the idea of "selling" yourself, or have trouble articulating what you do for potential clients. Receive a free marketing e-course when you sign up for her e-zine:

<http://www.jgivlercoaching.com/newsletter.htm>

2. Do you know for sure that you have a viable business idea? Creating a business plan will allow you to see how feasible your ideas are. If you do an in-depth plan that includes financial and market research data, you can see in cold hard numbers how your plan will work. You'll know exactly how big your market is, and you'll know exactly how much money you need. You will also be able to see if there are places that you need to make adjustments.

3. Your business plan is your road map to success. Without having a clear picture of the end result you're seeking, how will you know when you get there? Your business plan will allow you to set longer term goals, and it will give you a plan that you can follow to achieve them.

You can include any information in your plan that you like. You can create an in-depth plan, or a short and simple plan.

Typically, an in-depth business plan includes these sections: Introduction, Company Information, Marketing, Financials, and Appendices. Within each of these sections are sub-sections. For example, under Company Information, you would include your Mission Statement, your Business Overview, Product Descriptions, etc.

You can also create and follow a very simple plan. In fact, if you're not seeking financial backing, your plan doesn't have to be longer than one page. A good plan can include your vision, mission, your goals, and the strategies you will use to reach your goals.

Once you've set up your plan, take action. It's not enough to just write everything down. Follow your plan and update it often. Before you know it, you'll have a powerful business!



CONNECTING WITH YOUR CUSTOMERS

by Erin Ferree

Your logo and marketing materials have many jobs, but one of the things that they can do really well for you is to introduce you to new clients and to help those potential customers feel a connection with you and your business. Alas, many small business owners overlook this valuable role for their materials when designing them, and so any connection often happens by accident alone.



Considering that the connections that most small businesses are making with their logos marketing materials, and websites are happening by accident, these businesses are actually doing rather well. But what could their business growth and sales cycle look like if they could improve the way that they connect with their ideal clients?

The top 3 ways to ensure that *your* designs will appeal to *your* target audience and begin to form this connection with them are:

1. Design your materials with your customer's preferences in mind. The most common mistake that small business owners make when designing their brand identities is to create the design to reflect their *own* tastes. I met a financial planning consultant at a networking event a few months back, and she wanted to “pick my brain” about her thoughts for a logo. She mentioned that she wanted her logo to be an aqua-blue seahorse, because those were her favorite image and color. But when I questioned her further about her business, I found that she worked largely with male heads of households on their families' financial planning needs. While an aqua seahorse might represent *her* preferences, I suggested that it might not catch the eye and the imagination of her projected client, and that she think more about the types of images and color palettes that would appeal men who were hiring her to manage their money. I believe that I convinced her that this approach will result in a better connection with her potential customer base, and will help her to close more business with her prospects.

This approach to establishing connections extends beyond your company's logo: picking appropriate layouts, fonts, and photos for any marketing piece can make that piece connect with your target audience much more quickly. Something as simple as choosing stock photos that feature people of the same ethnicity or gender as your target audience can greatly increase your sales and decrease often subtle, hidden resistance to your business image.

2. Test your materials with your target audience. This means asking not just whoever's hanging around, but with real potential clients. I can't tell you how many times I have completed the first round of logo designs for a client, just for them to come back and say, “My mom HATES them!” I certainly sympathize with this impulse to check your ideas with a respected friend or family member; I tend to run my own designs by my mom, against my better judgment. But if your mom—or whoever you're running your design focus group with—isn't part of your target audience, then it really doesn't matter if she likes it or not. In fact, if you're trying to sell your products or services to college-age men, for example, it's probably a good thing if your mom *doesn't* like it!

So, where do you find potential clients to test your materials on? Ask your past clients what they think about your new designs, or poll friends in your target demographic. I even had one client who would ask potential customers that she stood in line with at the coffee place and post office about their thoughts on her logo.

3. Make your materials magnetic. Don't misunderstand: not *everyone* should love, or even necessarily understand, your logo and marketing materials. A small business's logo should make the prospect react emotionally to your company, pulling the right people toward working with you and pushing the wrong people away. Unless you're a big company selling a mass-market product, designing a logo that everyone loves is not necessary, nor even in your best interests.

If you're creating a logo and marketing materials and you want everyone that you meet to like them, then you're in for a very long design process. And your logo won't be able to perform one of its most important jobs: making sure that you're spending your time talking to the most qualified clients. As a small-business owner, you probably run the business, do the sales, and have a bunch of other tasks as well. If people in your target audience like your logo and marketing materials, but people outside of that demographic don't connect with them, then it's less likely that the people you don't want to work with will become engaged in the sales cycle with you. And it's *always* better to sell to interested and qualified prospects rather than people who are just “kicking the tires” or getting competitive quotes.

Keeping your *customer's* perspective in mind when designing your materials makes those materials relevant to your customers, creating a valuable tool for your business. A client wants to feel understood and well-cared-for throughout the sales cycle. If your designs truly take your clients' tastes into account, are tested and approved by your ideal clients, and make people react in an emotionally positive way to your company, then those designs will be more than just a pretty pieces: they will help you to talk to the right customers, to connect with them, and, ultimately, to grow your business.

Erin Ferree of elf design is a brand designer who creates big visibility for small businesses with designs that are not just “pretty”, but are also effective in creating bottom-line results. Effective designs help small businesses stand out from their competition, connect with their target audience, and grow with ease.





YOUR BUSINESS CARD SUCKS

By Will Perego

Before you get mad at me for what I just said, please look now at one of your business cards and check the following:

- Do you use the backside to generate more sales through a shocking offer or guarantee, loyalty or referral program, or any of the 11 best marketing strategies to attract new customers and retain your current customers?
- Do you add a call-to-action on the backside to clearly tell your prospects what you want them to do so you can generate more leads and, therefore, close more sales?
- Do you use a full-color artwork to add impact and differentiate from other business cards in your prospect's Rolodex?
- Do you show your photo to remind your prospects who you are?
- Do you have your slogan on the front, close to your business name or logo, to communicate what your business and positioning are?
- Do you have a slogan at all?

If your answer to two or more of my questions is NO,

then sorry but... ***your business card sucks.***

Don't get mad at yourself now. It's not your fault. Business cards have been used for the last 100 hundred years not as a sales tool but, on the contrary, just as a formality and a way to give out your phone and e-mail.

Still, a well-thought out business card is one of the most powerful – yet inexpensive – sales tools you could use to boost your sales and profits almost overnight.

To transform your business cards into a sales tool all you need to know is: *How to Create* and *How to Use* business cards *that sell*. Powerful, don't you think? Especially for those people who are desperately looking for a way to save their business or increase sales.

This is what I call a Shocking Offer: ***A shocking offer is so outrageously beneficial for your prospect that it's almost impossible to say NO.***

Can you see the difference between a traditional business card and one that *sells*? My business cards bring prospects directly to my website where they can get everything for free while some of them – a lot, actually – become customers!

HOW TO CREATE BIZ CARDS THAT SELL

As an example, the following is the message on the backside of my business cards:

Worried your sales may sink?

Already sunk? 50% of new businesses don't survive the first year. Another 45% are gone by year five. I don't want you to become a victim of these statistics! That's why I'll give you my "From Survival to Success" Kit for FREE:

- 100 FREE Full-color BizCardsThatSell.
- Two celebrated e-Books: "How to Boost YOUR Sales with Biz Cards that Sell" and "The 10 Marketing Commandments for Small Businesses."

If you've got 10 minutes, I guarantee to work a sales miracle in your business.

Go now to www.BizCardsThatSell.com/offer.

Hurry!

This exceptional combined offer will not last long.

Will Perego - Founder & CEO

BizCardsThatSell.com

The following are the 11 best marketing strategies you can use for your *biz cards that sell*:

1. Free e-book or report (the one I use)
2. Free subscription to e-newsletter
3. Invitation to free seminar
4. Free consultation
5. Free trial
6. Trade-in offer
7. Shocking guarantee
8. Membership Club
9. Referral Program
10. Loyalty Program
11. Reminder for Appointment

The first seven are the best marketing strategies to attract new customers. Almost everything is free because your goal is to make their first step toward becoming your customer extremely smooth and easy to take. You make your profit from their recurring business. Now...

HOW TO USE BIZ CARDS THAT SELL

The way you use biz cards that sell is exactly the opposite of how you've been using business cards for your whole life!

You put your biz cards that sell to work for you bringing new and recurring customers while you are doing something else. Even while you are sleeping!

It's all about leverage. Once you have a powerful marketing message on the back side, your business cards work as a flyer or a postcard. Even better. Because business cards are saved for future reference while considered a personal communication, instead of just another piece of advertising.

Isn't it amazing? You will not need to be on one side of the business card, handing it to someone on the other side, in order to get their business.

The following are the *Most Powerful Ways to Use Biz Cards that Sell to Boost Your Sales*:

1. Create joint ventures with other business owners who share your customers while not competing with you. Hand out and mail each other's business cards to your contact database along with a personal letter and an endorsement.
2. Give a prize to your employees when they bring a new customer because of handing out their biz cards that sell.
3. Add four or five cards to all follow-up collaterals and outgoing mail.
4. Create a Referral program on the back side with prizes for the referrer and the referral and mail some among with a personal letter to your contact base.
5. Create a Loyalty program – buy X number of my products and get ONE free. Print X circles on the back side and hand out these cards to every customer with the first circle already perforated.
6. Display them in your store/office along with a sign promoting your marketing strategy.
7. Use them profusely while networking and every time you meet anyone.



Who else wants to Learn the Hidden Secrets of Quickly Turning ANY Business Card into a \$21,357.64/Month Automatic Sales Generator? Get your FREE “*From Survival to Success*” Kit and transform your business cards into a sales tool. Click here => www.BizCardsthatSell.com/FreeOffer





Tips for Making it Work

When my husband found he needed someone to handle the administrative aspects of our business (because he doesn't like it and he doesn't have time to do it) we decided to work together. I wanted to work with him because of the kind of work he was doing and because I would be able to take a more active role in a job. This is something I hadn't experienced before. In my previous jobs, I was looked at as of secondary importance: just the "means to the end" so to speak. Not the person who got things done but who helped get them done. Because of our mutual trust and respect, we knew that it would be a great combination to work together. We also knew that we had to have similar goals in order to make it work.

Here are **five** tips we've followed to make our work/life partnership successful and meaningful.

1) Do Tasks Separate but Together - In our concrete/flooring restoration business, Eddie handles all the physical work because he has the knowledge & expertise on how to do it and he likes to do it. However, he does not like nor does he have the knowledge to do accounting, marketing or internet processes. That is my forte and what I like, so that is what I am in charge of. He lets me do what I do best and I let him do what he does best. We do communicate with each other in our respective roles.

2) Have Passion for the Business - We have found that in order to get our customers to want the services or products we want them to buy, we had to be in a business that we loved and enjoy being involved in. We had to know that we fully believed in the products and services of the industry. You have to believe in it in principle, process and result. It makes the sale process easy and effortless because you don't have to "fluff" anything. Believe me, if you are passionate in what you are doing, it will show and you won't have to fake anything.

3) Draw on each other strengths and ask for help with the weaknesses - Know each other's strengths and weaknesses and do what needs to be done to elevate the strengths and minimize the weaknesses. Allow the strengths to shine and be able to find ways to better resolve the weaknesses. Before I came to work with my husband, I always worked for other people, so I needed to ask him about how business taxes and tax deadlines. On the other hand, he had to allow me to handle the website design and internet banking because that is something he didn't know anything about, so I developed our business in that direction.

4) Be okay with the unexpected - When the unexpected happens (having to do something you haven't done before), such as an estimate or picking up materials, create a learning experience out of it. Take a few moments and put together a question list to ask your spouse and go on to make the experience better the next time.

5) Agree on a good accountant and business lawyer - A good accountant and lawyer are critical in business. If you can't agree on the person(s) to handle these tasks for you, it will only cause increased stress, which is the last thing a growing business needs. Do your homework on accountants and lawyers together, not separately. Interview these professionals to make sure that you both feel comfortable with your decision.

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Morr Services, Inc evolved from a previous, successful business owned by Eddie Morrow in 1978. Morr Services is a full service flooring & concrete restoration business in St. Petersburg, Florida. Teresa Morrow joined the business in 2005 and has become a key partner, as the business and marketing manager, in the growth and expansion of this successful concrete & flooring restoration business. Previously, she worked in corporate administration. For more information, visit: www.morrservices.com





Mental vs. Physical Activity in Marketing

This article addresses the issue about whether one can attract or magnetize circumstances without taken "action". Its intention is to create better understanding in your minds about the use of mental and spiritual laws for success and the relationship between mental and physical action and work.

Let's Get Mental

Yes, indeed, marketing your business is an activity. But that does not mean that the activity is necessarily "physical".

Mental activity is thousands and thousands times more potent than physical activity. In fact, mental activity is a precursor to the right physical activity that gets results. However, physical activity is not necessarily required if you understand and apply mental activity. It is not magic. It is law. As I like to say, once you understand how the laws work, the "supernatural" becomes quite natural. You realize that the Universe is indeed magnetic and thought and feeling has more vibratory pull than any magnet you could imagine.

So I think it behooves anyone who wants to be successful to become aware of the relationship of mental and physical activity and know when either is indicated. There is the right mental activity, which can in and of itself attract without the need for physical activity AND there is the right mental activity that inspires a corresponding right physical action/activity that produces results. If the right mental activity is not included, then one will end up like the majority of the population - doing and doing, acting and acting but not succeeding.

You are using these laws all of the time whether you realize it or not. Only you are most likely not using them for the purpose and intention that you desire consciously. How many things have you attracted into your life that you feel you did nothing to deserve and asked, "Why did this happen?" You didn't "work" for those things. Yet they happened. Why? These results were the outcropping of the thoughts and impressions that were established in your mind subconsciously.

Now, the laws I am presenting to you do not indicate that you are to spend all of your time sitting around doing nothing. I won't even address that because it is just plain ridiculous. I believe I am articulate enough in my writing to get my meaning across - if you will read carefully.

However, the absolute truth is that yes, we can attract circumstances to us without physical action. I have lived my life accomplishing that way. When you understand fully that thoughts are things and all physical things are in motion and vibrating at the molecular level, you will understand that it is indeed a magnetic Universe and we can vibrate to our good and it can vibrate to us. I know without knowledge in this area, it may appear fantastic, but that is why I attempt to speak in simple terms to create understanding and acceptance in your minds.

How Do I Know?

What is my experience? In 20 years I have never looked for a client (and my clients are the largest corporations in the world). I never advertised, never actively promoted. And yet I became renowned in my field and received all the exposure and publicity I could want - not as a result of anything I did physically, but as a result of the mental activity I learned to do. The physical part comes AFTER I receive the clients and the opportunities - that's when I fulfill the creative vision of the client's projects. I attract all of the ideas and elements necessary to do the perfect job. It's easy. It flows. I don't have to struggle or push or try or waste energy. The right answers truly "come out of the blue" for the most part. You can find some pretty amazing stories on my website with details of my results from using these laws over the years. But the actual marketing of my business - always receptive, never active, except to walk through the doors that opened as a result of the mental activity.

Cruise Control

You will see several cover newspaper stories on my website (those were only a few of several hundred articles worldwide). The articles began within six weeks of starting my business and continued for years. There were numerous television and radio segments also. You will have to believe me when I tell you that I had no publicist and did no work to get any of that publicity. Physical work, that is. The work was done on a mental level.

So when you apply these laws, whether from a purely mental standpoint, or spiritual basis, you are guided to the actions that are necessary because the law has to produce what you have mentally accepted. You are no longer spinning your wheels - you are now on an automatic path to your results and to your success.

You establish, impregnate the thought and feeling of what you want in your deeper mind. You are intuitively guided to DO all of the things necessary for the result. You follow the leads. You do the outer work as you are guided to do. You also ATTRACT all of the things necessary for the result. The result may indeed come without physical outer action on your part or it may require action, but the action will be shown to you. You're in the flow.

There is a sense of connection to a source of wisdom that knows all the answers and you can tap into that source anytime you want. You will know when to be still and do the mental work and wait and when to take outer action and do the work that results in your success.

The alternative? You work and work and struggle and struggle and you don't get there. And wonder why you don't succeed.

So...to pooh pooh the idea of attracting and magnetizing your good, even "out of the blue", whether in your personal life or your business, just reveals a lack of awareness and a mind that is not open to the infinite possibilities that surround us. It indicates a mentality that is not up with the times or open and receptive to the great discoveries of our times that can further our success.

My point...you can close your mind and limit your ability to succeed. Or you can open your mind, expand your vision to include both the physical/active world and the mental/magnetic world and....be really successful!

Marilyn Jenett, an accomplished business owner in the corporate arena (www.MarilynJenettLocations.com) founded the **Feel Free to Prosper** program to mentor and teach others to become aligned with Universal laws and accept their right to prosper. Her students, from around the globe and from all walks of life, are enjoying remarkable success applying her lessons and participating in her private and group telephone sessions and audio programs. For more information, check out her website at www.FeelFreetoProsper.com.



Seven Steps to Marketing Utopia

by Louisa Bird

Step 7. Avoid being a one-hit won-

Step 6. Use low-cost marketing techniques

Step 5. Have a plan

Step 4. Know your marketing message

Step 3. Competitive advantage

Step 2. Know your customers

Step 1. Know where you want to go

You're starting a business...and you know you that getting the word out about your business through effective marketing is the only thing that's going to bring in the customers and sales. But where to start, and how to prevent marketing costs from getting out of control?

The good news is that the most important parts of marketing are completely free, and the even better news is that there's a strong likelihood that - surprisingly - many of your competitors won't have exploited these critical keys to successful marketing. Investing the time to focus on these seven areas will pay huge dividends when it comes to implementing ongoing marketing activities for your fledgling business.

Step 1. Know where you want to go

It's easy to fall into the trap of having a business idea and going ahead with it without really thinking about exactly where you want to take it (I know because I've done it myself in the past!). You can very quickly get carried away with the idea of running a business and not concentrating on planning the business on a higher, strategic level. Before you know it, you're too busy working on the details of your business to see the bigger picture and take stock of where you are.

So whatever stage of business you're at, take the time to work out exactly where you want the business to go. As the saying goes, if you don't know where you're going, any road will take you there...and you may just find that the place you end up just isn't where you really want to be. Having goals and objectives for the future of your business is one of the most important factors for creating a business that will help you realize your own personal concept of success.

Step 2. Know your customers

You simply can't market your business effectively unless you first know exactly who you want to talk to.

Understand that "everyone" is never a viable target market, so make sure you have a very clear picture of your ideal client before you start any marketing at all.

For example, a virtual assistant (VA) working from home might want to target SMEs in the business-to-business sector, with between 5 and 20 employees, within a 20-mile radius of her base. Or, as VAs aren't necessarily bound by a specific geographic area, she might decide to focus on a specific niche (such as professional speakers or business coaches, for example) and offer a targeted range of services tailored to the needs of that specific group.

Your decision as to which target market to focus on will likely be based on your own preferences, experience and skillset. Whichever target group you choose, they'll need to have four things in common to be viable prospects for you: a specific need, access to your product or service, enough money to buy it and the authority to make the buying decision.

Once you've established those four things in your ideal target market, create a clear profile of your ideal customers. This profile could include things such as their likes, dislikes, location, age, family

where they can be found online, problems that keep them awake at night, etc.

Step 3. Competitive advantage

You need to know exactly why people should want to do business with you instead of the many other options your target market is presented with. The harsh reality is that if you're not 100% sure why somebody should buy from you, your customers won't be either.

So create at least one clear differentiating factor in your business that will make you the more appealing choice in relation to your competitors. (Note that I've called this your competitive advantage, not your USP or Unique Selling Proposition; these days it's pretty tricky to be completely unique, so simply focus on establishing something that makes it easy for your customers to choose you over anyone else.)

Here are some questions to get your ideas flowing as to what your competitive advantage could be:

- Do you or your business have any special expertise, credentials or awards?
- Do you have any specific abilities in the areas of production, delivery, your product lines, quality, your guarantee or pricing?
- Do you make it easier for your customers to do business with you thanks to free/reduced-cost introductory consultations, more information, bonuses and incentives, better terms, longer hours, better customer service and follow-up?
- Is your customer service better than the competition? (E.g. more value added service, volume discount pricing, special systems for resolving customer complaints, more information and longer-term relationships with customers)

Once you have narrowed down a couple of key ideas, prioritise them in order of importance and relevance to your customers, then write out a short paragraph clarifying and describing

you'll be able to refer to this in any marketing that you undertake.

Step 4. Know your marketing message

Whenever you do anything to promote your business, always consider things from the customer's perspective. For example, you need to be able to clearly describe the benefits you offer customers, who only care about "what's in it for me". Make a list of the features of your products and services, then convert those features into benefits to the customer by asking yourself 'which means that...' until you reach the ultimate benefit that your customers receive. Also consider the pressing problems that your customers experience and which are resolved by using your product or service. Remember that even for business purchases, people tend to buy for emotional reasons, then justify their decision with logic. When working on your 'benefits list' for your business, bear in mind that the top ten motivators are: saving time, saving money, making money, avoiding effort, increasing happiness, finding success, being pain free, having fun, feeling safe and secure, and feeling liked or loved.

All the answers you come up with here will be hugely valuable when it comes to getting a compelling marketing message across to your best potential customers. So it's worth investing the time on this to create a powerful list of reasons for your ideal customers to buy from you.

Step 5. Have a plan

Marketing is most definitely not about taking action when you can fit it in between other business activities. To get the best results, you need to move beyond 'hit or miss' actions and develop a deliberate, systematic approach, ideally setting aside specific times each week to work on marketing.

Your marketing plan doesn't have to be a 50-page epic, though. Use whatever format works best for you. I recommend creating a practical, short document that you can easily refer to and use.

Things to include on your plan could be:

Specific, measurable goals, your marketing message (benefits to the customer), a description of your target market and ideal customer, your competitive advantage, action steps to follow with

target dates for completion, financial objectives/budget, and last but not least, tracking mechanisms: Without measuring your progress, it's easy to waste time and money and get discouraged. Your plan must include ways of measuring how you are progressing towards your stated goal(s).

Step 6. Use low-cost marketing techniques

There are literally dozens of free and low-cost marketing tools that you can use to get the word out about your business.

Here is a choice selection of just five top low-cost marketing techniques:

Online article and press release

distribution services - Build credibility, create valuable inbound links to your website, and potentially spread the word far and wide, by writing and submitting useful articles relating to your business and/or target market. Two great places to start submitting your articles are ezinearticles.com and prweb.com, but search on the web and you'll find plenty more.

Referrals - This technique alone has the potential to double your customer base in a relatively short space of time.

Recommendations from people we know and trust are hugely powerful, and leads generated from referrals have very high conversion rates. If you're starting out and you've only just got your first customer, do everything you can to make them a happy customer and ask for five referrals (you might not actually get the full five, but you'll probably get more than the usual one referral). Use an 'ethical bribe' if appropriate, and above all; don't stop asking!

Fusion marketing - Create marketing alliances with non-competing businesses serving the same target market as you. Send endorsements of one another's services to each other's lists, hand out flyers or discount cards to one another's customers....the options are many and varied, so get creative and start making proposals to likely partners.

Networking - Remember to be targeted in the events that you go to, and bear in mind that it's not about handing out as many business cards as you possibly can, but rather about creating and nurturing relationships.

Testimonials / case studies - Nothing beats genuine endorsements from third parties in building trust and credibility in what you're offering to the marketplace. We might not like to admit it, but we tend to have a 'herd' mentality and we want to know that others have benefited from a product or service already. So don't be afraid to ask your customers for feedback and comments, and always ask for permission to use favourable customer comments. And if you haven't yet started trading, look to people who can comment on you or your services from a previous job, business or voluntary position.

Step 7. Avoid being a one-hit wonder

Research shows that your customers and prospects need to hear from you seven to ten times before they really hear what your message is and respond. The bad news is that most companies I encounter do not have a follow up strategy at all. Most people follow up two or three times at best, and then stop. Remember to focus on this 'seven to ten rule' and create a strategy for following up with your potential customers multiple times, with messages that are useful and relevant to them.

Most of all, remember to keep in touch with your best customers on a regular basis...you've no doubt already invested considerable time and money in acquiring that customer, so don't let that go to waste. Set up a system for keeping in touch with existing clients by whatever means are appropriate.

Follow these seven basic principles in your business always...and you'll be well on your way to marketing utopia in no time.

Louisa Bird is a small-business marketing coach and certified Master Practitioner in Guerrilla Marketing – which is based on a low-cost or non-financial approach to marketing. One of a rare breed who always knew from an early age that she wanted to work for herself, she shares her own passion for self-employment and her entrepreneurial spirit by helping other women business-owners attain business success – on their own terms. For more information,

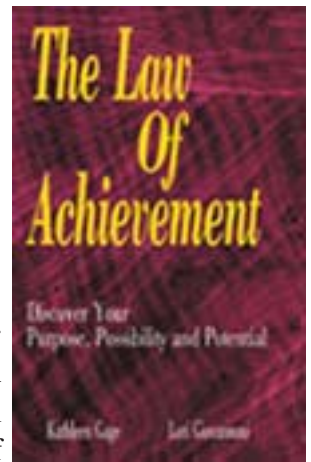
visit <http://www.WomensMarketingForum.com>



WORTH READING:

The Law of Achievement, Discover Your Purpose, Possibility and Potential by Kathleen Gage and Lori Giovannoni

http://www.amazon.com/Achievement-Discover-Purpose-Possibility-Potential/dp/096581596X/sr=1-1/qid=1164810826/ref=sr_1_1/104-5733461-8746309?ie=UTF8&s=books



The Law of Achievement offers a rare look into what it really means to discover your purpose, possibility and potential. Gage and Giovannoni dare to reveal uncommon and rarely explored philosophies in this unique book. Having been driven by the traditional measurements of success, Kathleen and Lori have discovered the counter-intuitive laws of achievement that had been brewing in their consciousness for years. The catalyst for writing this book was a life changing experience for both authors that forever shifted their perception of success. **The Law of Achievement** offers the burned out and over-burdened reader the opportunity to be lit up and ready to engage in life once again.

The Women's Book of Empowerment: 323 Affirmations That Change Everyday Problems Into Moments of Potential by Charlene M. Proctor, Ph.D.

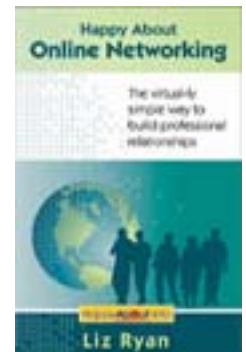


What if you viewed every challenge in your life as an opportunity for personal and spiritual growth? Now more than ever, as the world becomes increasingly complex, you need to find meaning in chaos, disappointment, difficult family relationships, and work stress. Changing your perspective on everyday problems is a matter of self-discipline and awareness of the divine spirit within you. Feel empowered by these affirmations that help train your mind to consciously create the life you desire! Seven power lessons and 323 affirmations make it easy for you to hone your self-image into a beautiful, triumphant gem. Purchase at www.thegoddessnetwork.net, www.amazon.com and in bookstores everywhere!

Happy About Online Networking with Liz Ryan

http://www.amazon.com/Happy-About-Online-Networking-relationships/dp/1600050158/sr=8-1/qid=1164918128/ref=pd_bbs_sr_1/104-5733461-8746309?ie=UTF8&s=books

Job-seekers, business-developers, and all sorts of professionals are exploring the fast-growing world of online networking. But how do you plunge into the online networking sphere, and how do you gain value from it? **HAPPY ABOUT ONLINE NETWORKING** outlines the tools, methods, and protocols of creating and cultivating an online network for global reach, business and personal support, and professional success. From how to introduce yourself to how to disengage from an unproductive networking relationship, **HAPPY ABOUT ONLINE NETWORKING** covers all the bases.



Cellular Wisdom: Decoding the Body's Secret Language by Joan C. King



After more than 20 years of working in a research lab, neuroscientist Joan C. King began to see her surroundings as much more than a temple of science—she discovered that they are a temple of the human spirit as well. She realized that the physiological processes of the body—the interactions within and between individual cells, organs, and systems—had significance beyond human physiology. Fundamental human truths are written in our cells, outlined in the interactions between our body's organs and organ systems. Just as a single human cell is orchestrated from a nucleus at its center, each of us has a blueprint at the heart of our being; when we make decisions that are in line with this purpose, we feel vital and fulfilled. **CELLULAR WISDOM** shows us how to interpret the truths that our bodies teach and how to use them as lessons to live a more exuberant and harmonious life.



by Linda Pereira

**MORE THAN A
COUNTRY IT IS
FOOD FOR THE
SOUL.**

Being in the Meeting Industry my life is stressful to say the least. There are no certainties and no week-end plans or even the knowledge that there will be Christmas dinner with the family. So whenever I realize that I

am about to face another week of unbelievable pressure I close my office door and steal five minutes for myself. There in the silence I close my eyes and in my mind's eye I return to Greece, to white houses, endless sun-drenched days, smiling waving passers-by, the aroma of fresh rosemary wafting through the air and the sound of bells telling all that it is midday. For me this is the equivalent of an hour at the massage parlor.

Why do I love Greece so much when I have traveled all over the world and constantly get the opportunity to visit any city of my choice? Because Greece is authentic. Arriving in Greece is like coming home to a warm welcoming hug from your mother after a long absence. It envelops you and makes you feel at home and complete no matter who you are, invites you to the table shares whatever is there and then exhibits extreme sadness when it is time to leave. It is somewhere everyone should visit once in a lifetime.

The world knows Greece mainly from its History its monuments such as the Acropolis and the Parthenon, its Philosophers like Socrates and Plato, its great leaders like Pericles, its dramaturgists like Sophocles and Aristophanes and its great sculptures like Phidias and Praksiteles, but of all the world knows Greece for its greatest gift to humanity, Democracy and the freedom of thought and expression.



In Greece, you are standing at a crossroads of cultures, colors and civilizations, you feel the strength of history and the warmth of being in the southernmost part of Europe, you discover an evolutionary process of thought, influence and experience. Greece is a country of beautiful contradictions, a constant journey in time, from the present to the past and back again. Here the fusion of images becomes more than imagery and turns into reality.

Athens is the capital city and like all European capitals, it is crowded, has immense traffic and can be extremely claustrophobic in summer with its sultry heat. I prefer Athens in the Spring or in the Fall. The only way to really feel the city is to don a hat, comfortable shoes and a map and walk. Walk everywhere.

Visit everything you possibly can – a week is nowhere near enough time for all this vibrant city has to offer. Stop and eat in *tavernas* where you will eat and drink authentic Greek food which is pure emotion in solid form. Sit in the esplanades of the many outdoor cafés and strike up conversations with the local population and there will always be someone to share an interesting story or anecdote on the city and its way of life. The Greeks are very hospitable people accustomed to visitors of all walks of life and they truly are proud of their heritage and willing to share it with anyone who shows interest. You cannot help but be enchanted by the beauty of Athens, a huge city, stretching as far as the eye can see in all directions. It's relatively flat with a few large hills. Most impressive is the Acropolis (which means city on high land), topped by the Parthenon. Because of the recent Olympics, Athens has been modernized boasting a new subway system and a far more organized image. But one thing that never changes is the rock and ancient buildings, some 2500 year old, which often sit next door to a modern shop or restaurant.

Greek Restaurant



In Athens, the cultural area is known as the *Plaka* (Old City), which is just east of the Acropolis mount. A one minute stroll takes you into the heart of fifteenth to eighteenth century streets, crowded with cafes, restaurants, and shops. Unlike Venice, Athens is a night city. Restaurants generally don't get crowded until 10 or 11 pm. The people are very friendly, outgoing, and speak English as their second language. Be prepared to be pushed into trying every single specialty in the house as the locals are very proud of their heritage and that includes the gastronomy. Even when you enter shops such as jewelry stores you will most likely be offered a local drink while you decide. Redolent with history and mythology, Athens is an affable city bustling with activity and charismatic outdoor cafes, pedestrian streets that wind through the city's ancient sites and its fair share of urban eccentrics. But to truly understand it you must adapt to its mindset and leave all your cultural presuppositions at home. Only then can you really truly enjoy one of the most laid-back, atmospheric and undeniably charming European cities.

Of course if you want to visit the fabulous Greek islands there is no shortage to choose from. However I chose two that I particularly love, because to try and mention them all here would mean that the magazine could not carry any other articles.

Anchored in the sea, at the crossroads of three continents - Europe to the North, Asia to the east, and Africa to the south, Crete seems to stretch out like a barrier across the southern Aegean. Legend claims that here was the birthplace of Zeus, father of the gods and of the Minoan civilization.

Escape into a world where time stands still; into the archaeological Minoan sites, the Venetian fortresses, the Byzantine monasteries and churches, and the traditional villages and festivals. But I believe that the real wealth of Crete is its people, their cuisine and their uniquely original hand-made crafts, stemming from a 4,000-year-old art tradition. This is the destination that

pleases even the most demanding visitor and never fails to please; an island that provides hospitality and relaxation for those who need some time off from the real world, an amazing place for party-lovers with its cosmopolitan night-life, and an attractive choice for adventurers and sports enthusiasts. Crete is a destination that astonishes nature-lovers with areas untouched by the human hand. Steeped in Homeric history and culture, scented by wild herbs, Crete spoils visitors with its wealth of myths, legends and history, a blessed and dramatic landscape and an abundance of choices and experiences.

Its stunning mountain ranges are dotted with caves and dramatic gorges, and its rugged interior is

covered in olive groves, wild flowers and aromatic herbs. Breathtaking drives along the rugged south coast lead to a sun-drenched paradise of long sandy beaches and isolated coves.

However if you are truly a sun lover or a daughter of the Sun God there is nowhere like Rhodes. This is the famous "Island of the Sun". When the gods divided the world among themselves, so an ancient legend goes, "Helios" the Sun God noticed an island emerging from the sea; an island that glided, and still glides, like a dolphin, over the waves in the transparent seas of the Aegean, where west meets east. It is an island of culture and its strategic location, at the crossroads of three continents, has

endowed it with the traditions and heritage of many diverse civilizations who all left the deep mark of their presence. It became the capital of the Byzantine island territories and the settling point of the Order of St. John's Knights after they

were expelled from the Holy Land. St. John's Knights were responsible for building the Medieval City of Rhodes, which has become one of Rhodes' major tourist attractions. The hospitality of its people, its climate, its natural beauty, its historical monuments, its traditional villages, its cosmopolitan, modern, way of life make it an extremely romantic destination with unlimited walking opportunities.

Whatever you chose to see in Greece or wherever you chose to go make sure you go with an open mind and ready to accept the emotion of arriving at a very spiritual place that sways to its own rhythm and for you just as for me – prepare yourself...the hardest part will be bidding it farewell.



Island of Mykonos

MUST Do's in Greece

- Walk Everywhere
- See as much as humanly possible
- Take a sailing trip to at least one of the islands
- Attend a Greek beach party
- Drink Greek coffee
- Visit the **Monastiraki** (Monasteràki) flea market. It is one of the best loved and popular areas of Athens. It is located only 5 minutes away on foot from *Syntagma* (Syndagma) square, and even less from *P* *l* *a* *k* *a* .
- Eat in the *Tavernas* as often as possible
- Eat and drink what the locals eat. Greeks take their time over food. The native cuisine is delightfully uncomplicated. Much of the cooking relies on simple seasonings and fresh meat and vegetables. For **breakfast**, Greeks rarely eat more than bakery-fresh **tiropitas** (flaky cheese-filled pastries) Greeks eat lunch in late afternoon, generally between 2 and 4 pm, and dinner around 10 or 11 pm. Between meals, they enjoy snacking on **souvlaki** (garlic-marinated lamb kabobs or tiropitas It's common for Greeks to make a lunch of mezedes, or hors d'oeuvres.

- Try lamb *keftico* its a sort of lamb stew cooked in a clay pot with cheese and tastes amazing. Also the stuffed vine leaves, the stuffed peppers and tomatoes (with rice and mincemeat).

- For a special night out, take the cable car up to the peak of *Lykavittos* and watch the sun set over Athens while dining at *Orizontes*. The menu at this upscale restaurant is Mediterranean/international and the food and service are excellent, as is the wine list.

INTERESTING FACT YOU SHOULD KNOW

Crete is a major producer of olive oil, with an estimated 34 million olive trees - which works out to 62 olive trees for every man, woman and child. Crete also claims to have the oldest living olive tree, though two trees - each over 2000 years old - on either side of the island vie for the title. Branches from both trees were collected to make the wreaths awarded to winning athletes in the Athens 2004 Olympics.





Vacation home rentals add value, luxury and personality to your vacation travels.

by Rosalind Sedacca, CCT

Why stay at a hotel, when you can vacation in style at a luxury villa, home or condominium for substantially less money? Today there are many websites that answer that question every day for travelers who discover more than just savings when looking for a vacation home rental.

Sophisticated websites, such as Villa4vacation.com, make searching for the ideal vacation residence convenient, fast and easy. You can search by location, number of bedrooms and baths, amenities and price. Photographs, descriptions and a host of other details are all spelled out for you, simplifying the process of making comparisons. Once you find a home or condominium that fits your specific needs, you are invited to contact the owner directly to answer your additional questions. To further simplify the reservation process, several of the top websites offer a Credit Card Acceptance Program

which enables many vacation rental owners to easily accept credit card payments.

Most people are surprised at the bargains that await them at these websites. Whether you desire one bedroom or several, a big-city condominium, country cottage or sprawling estate, through search-engine technology you can easily hone in on the vacation home of your dreams.

The options are world-wide. Traveling to Hawaii with a large family or group of friends? How about a beautiful home that sleeps 12, just steps from the beach in Maui, with ocean views, two kitchens and living rooms, for just \$500 a day? Visiting the San Francisco Bay area? Imagine staying at a magnificent 3-bedroom ocean-front home, with 20 foot cathedral ceiling and a living room fireplace for only \$800 a week. These, as examples, were both available at the Villa4vacation site. Wherever your destination of choice, even mansions are available, fully furnished, with all the amenities you could ask for, at rental prices far lower than hotel fees.

Providing one-stop shopping for travelers wanting to connect with vacation-rental home owners is the key to the success of vacation rental websites. They use today's most advanced internet technology to make it easy to learn about the latest rentals available. Some of the newest features, such as Villa4vacation's Really Simple Syndication (RSS), delivers summaries of the website's newest listings to your favorite search engine portals — including MyYahoo, MyGoogle, MyAOL and MYMSN — with regular updates. This eliminates the need to visit multiple sites to get the content you want.

In addition to vacation rental listings, several of the top websites also provide other features like Disney ticket savings, airline and car rental discounts, travel insurance and convenient restaurant listings — with easy-click access. Visitors can plan an entire vacation trip, compare prices and amenities, purchase travel tickets and other discounts, all at one website.

If you're tired of the sterility of hotel accommodations and are intrigued by the appeal of greater selection, luxury amenities, more space and personal attentiveness — at considerable savings — try a vacation rental villa, condominium or home on your next vacation. For many travelers, it's the only way to go!





TRAVEL PLANNING - SHOE AND FOOT CARE DURING TRAVEL

By



ThereArePlaces®

Worldwide Vacation Travel

General Advice

While on vacation, you will walk and wander continuously. Our recommendation is to favor shoe comfort over style. Do not take new shoes on a trip. Instead, take shoes that you have “broken-in”. Make sure that the shoes that you take on vacation are designed for walking: give special consideration to the types of activities that you have planned for your vacation.

Shoes - how many pairs to take?

Shoes are a packing problem, especially for men, since the size of most men’s shoes seems to require half of the space in a suitcase (of course I’m not bragging).

- We recommend taking two pairs of comfortable walking shoes on any vacation.
- In general, it takes 24 hours of natural drying for the air to wick the moisture out of a shoe that has been worn during a normal tourist’s day of wandering and walking. Consequently, your feet will be more comfortable if you have at least two pairs of shoes to rotate between wearing.
- If you do not care about comfortable feet and do not mind the aroma of “toe jam”, take only one pair of shoes.

However, be prepared to have your traveling companion demand a separate room for your shoes (or, perhaps, for you).

Shoe Care

Comfortable shoes are shoes that are cared for. Try the following to make sure your shoes remain comfortable during your trip:

- If your shoes get wet, dry them at least twenty-four hours before wearing them.
- Never dry shoes near heat sources (radiators, heat vents, etc.), as it can damage the shoe.
- Stuffing newspaper in drying shoes can decrease drying time and help retain shoe shape.

Clean shoes breathe more freely and keep your feet more comfortable) than dirty ones. While on the road, use a paper

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Foot care

Those “feeties” need consideration while you travel. Follow these tips:

- During Vacations, wear shoes designed for the activities that will be the core of your vacation. If you are going to do a lot of walking, take along a sturdy shoe designed for comfort during walking. If you wear orthotics in you shoes, make sure that the shoes that you take on vacation are ones that work well with your orthotics.
- Make sure the shoes fit comfortably (i.e. they do not pinch your toes or any part of your foot and provide good support and cushioning).
 - Cushioning problems can sometimes be solved by adding a pad to the inside of the shoe (some pads are treated with odor resistant materials, if this would benefit you or your companions).
 - The thickness or fit of the pad may influence the fit of the shoe and should be “tested” before heading out on vacation.
- Do not wear socks more than one day without washing and thoroughly drying them before the next wearing.
- Socks that wick moisture away from the feet are your best bet. Socks with high cotton content meet this requirement.
- Make sure to examine your feet when washing. Dry feet thoroughly and take any other appropriate action.
- Take care of blisters and other foot irritations the same way you would at home.
 - Do not ignore foot problems on the road, as the amount of walking during your vacation will surely complicate the problem. Band-aids and foot care products are available at stores worldwide.

*Finally, to toughen you up a little,
we recommend that you exercise your walking skills
before you leave on your vacation.*

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Dr. Marthenia 'Tina' Dupree **The Determined Diva**

Tell us a little bit about yourself.

I was born in South Carolina and my parents moved to Miami in 1947 when I was 6 month old. I grew up in Coconut Grove, FL where I also attended school. My work experience started as a maid due to segregation in the 1960's. It was not my choice. My mother was a maid and my grandmother was a maid and to follow in this line of work was not my idea of success. But as it turned out. For me, it was the path that led to who I am today.

How you got started in business for Yourself?

It was always my desire to do more with my life but because of limited opportunities and also not being able to go to college until I was in my 30's, delayed even the thought of being successful. Through a series of events, good and bad, work experience in low earning jobs, I finally found something that I really wanted to do with my life.

I had the chance, finally, to go to college in 1979. It was at Miami Dade Community College (Now Miami Dade College) where I took a public speaking class. My teacher, Candy, spoke to me after class and told me that I was good, really good. This inspired me because I always had low self-esteem until I was nearly 40 years old.. Someone finally told me that I was good at something. Anyway, I started speaking at local churches including my own church. I found my gift and my purpose. Now I had to find opportunities to reach my potential. I write about this in my book, Room to Grow: The Doorway to Achieving your True Potential!



Finding what you really want in life it the first major path to achieving success. After leaving Miami Dade, I found employment at a few other companies. This gave me opportunities to speak to on a business level to customers, employees as a supervisor, and many other church groups would invite me to speak at their events. Finally, one day while reading the newspaper which was one of my duties as a

then Public Relations Manager at a large national company, I noticed an ad in the Miami Herald Business Monday requesting for management trainees for a major chicken restaurant chain. For some strange reason, I was led spiritually to call and apply. Well, using my great public speaking skills, I sold myself over the phone and was hired! Yes, I was hired over the phone. Twelve years later, after much success as their corporate trainer and community spokesperson, as their

"Chicken Lady", I resigned from my position. The company realize my value and offered me a three year contract to continue as their spokesperson. Because I had acquired other clients and have a three-year contract, the Motivational Training Center was established. The Chicken Lady had become so well-known, the company did not want to break the relationship with me. So they made me an offer I couldn't refuse.

Wait, let me back up just a little. During my 12 years there with the chicken restaurant chain, a major part of my job as the company's community spokesperson was to speak in high schools, community programs and for other organizations that needed a speaker for their events (luncheons, dinners, high school programs).

Tell why you chose the businesses you are in, a little about your business model and anything else that will help our readers get to know you.

I started a business because I did not want to be known only as a motivational speaker but a business owner. I gained so much experience working in the fast food industry. Training was (at least at that time) taken very seriously. Twelve years experience as a speaker and trainer gave me the knowledge to operate a business, and the experience as a corporate executive gave me the advantage to compete.

My business provides speaking and training services in Leadership and Diversity (I combine the two because it much more accepted to teach diversity when it is combined with another program.) We also offer Customer Service, Public Speaking, Train the Trainer, Motivational speaking training and a few other customized programs. We provide keynotes, corporate training, conference break out sessions, and one on one coaching and consulting. We also have multiple income streams by offering our books, videos, DVDs, CDs, and other products.

Tell us what you mean by "It's time to invest in yourself."

Investing in yourself helps you become better at who you are in order to become better at what you do. Most people feel guilty, especially women, when they take time for themselves. Taking time for yourself does not take away from anything else, it adds to everything else in your life including

your health, wellbeing, success, and wealth. In my book It's Time to Invest in Yourself, I give people nine ways to accomplish this. There was a time in my life when I spent most of my time chasing after business. I was so burned out until I was just spinning my wheels. My life was like a circle, starting and stopping projects never completing anything. Then when I became very ill and was not sure that I was going to live, I realized that life was passing me by and what had I really accomplished. To my friends and colleagues, I seemed very successful. But I was one of those people that I write about, you know they are successful but not satisfied. I wanted success but I wanted to enjoy it, feel comfortable with it, and live my life.

What experience in business taught you the most?

Working for the fast food chicken restaurant chain. Because I was the only certified trainer outside of their Corporate headquarters in Texas, I gained a lot of experience writing and presenting training material (manuals, workbooks, etc.). I developed all nine of their training programs. I learned a great deal about putting training programs together. In those days, our training programs extended for nine days, all day. I became very good at training, writing and developing the manuals. I have always said, the best way to learn anything is to teach it.

What were/are some of the obstacles you have encountered (overcome) along the road to success?

Because I was so serious about my work, many people did not associate with me at work. I was mostly a loner at work. People had a perception of me that I was too dedicated. Also, at the highest point of my career, I was the only African American and the only woman. I was left out of everything. When events were planned as a "reward" for a profitable year, they took the men fishing. Not only was I left out, not one even mentioned to me that they were all invited. I

would find out later when someone would slip in conversation.

Something else that bothered me in the past was that people of other races would see me as less qualified. Their perception was that because I was Black, I must not be qualified. But I was/am very qualified and I have proven this over and over again.

What is the most unique aspect of your business?

Being known as "The Chicken Lady. I



love it. I did not give myself this name, school children did. They would see me in the grocery store or schools would call my office when I worked in the fast food industry and recognize me but could not remember my name, so they would call me

The Chicken Lady. I loved it. I am not sure who started this as my brand, but I truly thank them. Smile

What would you say is your "Claim to Fame"? Several things. First being known as The Chicken Lady is definitely one, but another is National Chicken Lady Day as recognized in Chases Calendar of Events (5 years now)

Celebrate November 4th National Chicken Lady Day

From where do you draw inspiration?

Most definitely from my faith in Jesus Christ. My Church (where I have been a member since I was a small child) is a small church in Coconut Grove. When I walk through the doors every Sunday, the members are so warm and receive me with such excitement. I truly love them and have the wonderful opportunity to serve them as their pastor for 17 years in February. There is nothing more fulfilling than my belief. It inspires me everyday through any situation.

What is it about your job that might keep you awake at night?

Excitement! I love what I do.

What's the best business advice you have ever received?

When my friend Randy Gage told me to not just quit my job and start a business, but to first go out and get enough business to double my salary.

What significant partnerships have played a role in your success?

Most definitely by business associate of 14 years, W. Steven Green. He has helped me tremendously, traveled with me across the nation, helped me so much and I really appreciate him. My Father Bishop Irvin Dingle, Jr. and step mother Arlena Dingle, daughter, Louise, sister Stella, and my Church members. Their support in all my traveling keeps me humble.

What do you enjoy most about what you do?

I love everything about what I do. Even the times that are challenging. It's all good.

I absolutely love being on the stage and performing. It is so much fun and makes me feel like I am helping those who are enjoy doing most outside of work.



What ways have you found to be most effective for promoting your business?

I don't market much but I believe I am going to start. I work from repeat and referral business. I firmly believe that the key to stay in business is to keep the phone ringing. If the phone is not ringing, you are not busy. I don't hunt, I attract. In other words, I find ways to get people to call me. I have never made

cold calls. For those who do, it works for them. But since I have never cold called, I don't plan to start.

I have recently thought about hiring a marketing person. Someone who would follow-up on prospects, send out the postcards, etc.

Tell us about a typical workday for Tina?

My typical work day is not the usual one. I travel a lot and love every minute of it. Even being stuck at the airport (that is on the way back from a speech, smile). I always take work with me so I stay busy.

Because I am single, I spend most of my working day and night committed to bringing the best to my clients and audiences. I start early in the morning before daybreak. I start in prayer and reading my Bible. Then I make a delicious breakfast, home cooked. No cereal, or just a bagel for me. I cook. Next, I check email. Then, I go to the post office and pick up my mail. I schedule appointments later in the morning to avoid traffic. In the afternoon, I do paperwork. Then I cook dinner. Smile. Later in the evening I may watch a TV program and then start again either writing, responding to mail, send out postcards, or plan and organize my next speaking engagement.

What one sentence would you like people to use in describing the way you do? business?

With excellence and dependability. I want to always be known as the person who does it right!

If you could wave a magic wand, and get any wish you want, what would that be?

Wisdom, knowledge, and understanding. And why? Because with these three, I can get anything else I want or need.

Where do you see yourself in five years?

To be free to do whatever I want. Freedom is sweet. I don't want to work more than five years from now. I have traveled so much and I have loved every bit of it. In five years, I would love to travel with my granddaughter, Tiffany Ross Williams who is #2 in the world in the 400M hurdles sponsored by Reebok. She travels alone to run worldwide (Russia, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Spain, Monaco, Greece and other places).

Is there anything else you would like to share with our readers?

Yes, learn to invest in yourself. It is the best investment you could ever make and the returns are priceless.

***Celebrate November 4th
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Dr. M. Tina Dupree, The Chicken Lady***

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A Market Big as All the WORLD

by Rebecca Herwick



There was a time that I believed that global expansion — a natural for my business, which is licensed to sell Harley-Davidson, Ford, and Divine Threads novelties as well as giftware and other specialty products — would be a natural evolution. Back in the early 1990s, when I was in a predecessor partnership in the same line of business, I was visiting customers in Europe and noticed that counterfeit merchandise was flooding the market. That surely meant robust demand for our decals, emblems, ball caps, bandanas, and the like — and a substantial opportunity.

In 1995, my former partner and I explored the opportunity, but nothing came of it. Then, in 1999, when the partnership was dissolved, and RKS Novelties was reorganized and renamed Global Products, I put global expansion on the top of my agenda.

GLOBAL CHALLENGES.

Expansion of any sort — indeed, diversification — is critical if entrepreneurial companies are to dodge inevitable business downturns and thrive. In 2004, for example, Harley-Davidson did not renew our license to sell Harley-Davidson apparel through no fault of our own. A larger company had acquired our major competitor, essentially putting us out of the market. The difficulty was that the apparel division constituted 30% of our gross sales.

We were devastated, but not defeated. In the previous five years, we had diversified, with global diversification taking center stage. In 2000, Global Products opened a distribution center in Germany for European expansion. A year later, we opened another in Canada. On the drawing board are plans for distribution outlets in Asia and, possibly, Latin America. Within six years, global revenue has come to account for 10% of our annual revenue of \$15 million — with 6.5% from Europe, 1% from Asia, and 2.5% from Canada.

All of that said, however, I also have learned that global expansion is far from the “natural evolution” I had envisioned. Counterfeiting notwithstanding, breaking into and maintaining a presence in our foreign markets has been a formidable challenge. My message to entrepreneurs aiming to do the same, therefore, is simply that global expansion must be managed — carefully, intelligently, and against the backdrop of Murphy’s Law.

GLOBAL OBSTACLES. In our case, we launched our efforts from strength, and that proved to be a buttress against the many obstacles we would face, among them language barriers, a vast amount of paperwork related to the value-added tax (VAT — or GST in Canada), and our strength, on the other hand, was our distribution system. In fact, when thinking about how I could serve the demand that was being met by the counterfeiters back in the 1990s, I knew that I would first need a

distribution center on site. Here are the economics: our specialty items wholesale for, say, \$3, and retail for \$6. However, if I had to ship them from a U.S. center, the shipping charges, duties and customs brokerage could add \$2.50, virtually negating profit.

On site, by contrast, the economics work. What also had been working for Global Products was our own domestic distribution center, which is currently headquartered where the company is based, in St. Peters, Mo. Since 1995, we had refined the process of getting product from the receiving gates in the West and to the shipping outlet here. It involved a lot of hard work and attention to detail, but the flow has been our company’s forte.

GLOBAL SOLUTIONS. If anything, we needed as much strength as we could muster when tackling foreign markets. Without the historic backdrop that we have in the U.S. about likely buying patterns, and with those patterns being so different in each of the countries we serve, we have been at our wits’ ends trying to manage inventory.

Language barriers add to the complications, as does the flood of paperwork required by the foreign sales taxes. When an item is received, I must file a monthly report and pay a tax, only to have to file again and receive a credit when the item is sold.

Solutions? At Global Products, we have adapted a fundamental strategy that might work well for

other entrepreneurs. It is this: When growing globally, manage that growth by limiting it to the extent that you can deliver. It never pays to over-promise and under-deliver — and lose customers.

In the matter of dealing with buyers overseas, the same principle applies, although there are complications. While it is necessary to put all buyers on credit card payments rather than extending credit to them — for fear that we won't be able to track them down if they don't pay — our credit-card terms do limit our growth. Balancing our need for growth with our need to collect has become a persistent challenge.

GLOBAL TACTICS. Our experience in foreign markets — Europe, Canada, and Asia (with Asia being somewhat different because we are selling in larger volume to distributors who are more likely to pay) — has given us a platform from which we can advise other entrepreneurs. What follows are tactics for managing what is a difficult process.



- Do your homework. Once you've targeted your foreign market, don't jump in until you analyzed the customer base and projected sales and potential growth. You must understand strategically how that market will serve your company's goal for growth.

- Allocate your time. And I stress, your own time, as CEO. Getting into a global market isn't a job to be delegated. In my case, I spend a quarter of my time on this effort and have even created a top-level position for an executive to handle some of the domestic duties I had been overseeing.

- Go Slowly. Although the potential for substantial growth exists abroad, it would be a mistake to rush it. You must be premeditated about determining the number of customers you can reasonably serve and the amount of product you can sell. If you outsell, or oversell — and can't fill orders — you will disappoint.

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- Don't expect an immediate return on your investment. Going global is a process that takes time. Each market is different; each year customers will react differently. While the returns will come, they won't come as quickly as you might have hoped — and there will be land mines along the way.

For Global Products, diversifying globally has been an effective strategy for growth. It has both opened new markets and allowed us to dovetail into new products. (A new line of pet accessories, for example, has been a hit in pet-loving European countries.)

However, it hasn't come without a price, one that every entrepreneur eyeing foreign expansion must be prepared to pay. That price is the need for constant vigilance and astute management

when navigating choppy waters.









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Women's Ways of Mentoring - Part Two - by Catherine Seton

In our fall issue of WE, Catherine shared many examples of how women mentor one another. In part two Catherine shares the roles and responsibilities of each person involved in making it a success.

Mentee Roles and Responsibilities

Generally, the roles and responsibilities of mentees may include the following:

- **Commitment** to learning and personal development by acting on useful advice or solutions provided by the mentor, being willing to learn new skills and making the most of new opportunities your mentor may create for you.
- **Open communication.** Listen carefully to your mentor and communicate freely with ideas and solutions. If your mentor suggests something you know won't work for you, explain why. Don't say you'll do it when you have no intention of doing so. Brainstorm until an effective solution arises, then act on it.
- **Provide feedback.** Provide your mentor with honest feedback on how you are going with their suggestions, and ask for their opinion on some of your ideas.
- **Value your mentor.** Your mentor is sharing valuable time and knowledge with you for free. Always be on time for your meetings, and make the most of it once you're together. Make sure you come away from each meeting with things to do that you can report back on next time you meet. If you are the first person your mentor has mentored, be patient and let your mentor know the best ways in which they can be of assistance to you. Mentoring is a two-way learning process.

Mentor Roles and Responsibilities

The roles and responsibilities of mentors vary depending on what you and your mentee would like to achieve and how formal you want to make your mentoring relationship. Generally, the following guidelines will apply in most cases:

- **Manage the mentoring process.** Once you've been contacted by a mentee who you think you are suited to, establish the mentoring relationship by:
 - phoning them to find out more about them and arrange a time to meet
 - at the first meeting talk about establishing a Mentoring Agreement with your mentee and mutually decide how your mentoring partnership is going to work
 - set goals and agendas (if necessary) with your mentee and follow up on things from previous meetings.
 - evaluate how the mentoring is going at the end of the evaluation period. Find out what is going well and what could be done better. Decide whether you both want to continue and set an end date.
- **Be generous** with sharing information, expertise and knowledge that your mentee will find useful, but don't go beyond your boundaries or compromise personal or employer confidentiality. Be frank with your mentee if you can't or don't want to divulge certain information.
- **Promote your mentee** by introducing them to new networks and people, and look out for opportunities on their behalf.
- **Encourage your mentee** by being a guide and help them clarify their direction. Encourage them to develop skills, and help them maintain their motivation levels and think of solutions to the issues they face.
- **Ask your mentee** what they want most from you, and how you can help them achieve their goal.
- **Be a role model** for your mentee. After all, they chose you because of your career, personal background, and status, and because they believe you are the best person to help them achieve their goals.
- **Find an alternative mentor** for mentees who you are unable to mentor.

Catherine Seton - Director, Australian Women's Mentoring Network - Catherine founded and manages the Australian Women's Mentoring Network and was the founder of the Australian Personal Development Centre.

For more information visit <http://www.WomensMentoring.com.au/>



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Photo: Joel Dousset



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The Global Opportunity for Women Campaign is a project of the Women's Edge Coalition, the country's leading non-partisan organization shaping U.S. Policy to benefit the world's poorest women.



Women's Edge
COALITION

The Feminine Tool Kit for Success

Tools are essential for success. No big revelation in that statement. Body ‘tools’ such as tread mills, spas, veggies, and make-up keep this physical machine living, loving and laughing. Mind ‘tools’ such as reading, researching and ‘rithmetic keep the hypothalamus churning out phrases, numbers and ideas. Those are the tools we use daily and most often chalk up to our strategy for success.

However, there is a third tool that is paramount to all-encompassing success—and those are spiritual ‘tools’, the keys to a blossoming soul, an expanding humanity and enormous success. And I’m not necessarily referring to church. As women, we are the nurturers of a planet now in great distress and our basic fearless nature must step forward to prepare and provoke a new paradigm of female leadership.

From ancient times onward, female tribal leaders have wedded physical, mental and spiritual tools to survive and thrive. They meditated, they prayed, they chanted, they healed, they danced, they drummed, they wore Talismans, they believed in the majesty and magic of Mother Nature and the universe. Back to the Future is a tantalizing idea for a resurgence in feminine valor.

If you are not now employing spiritual tools you might want to try one of these that are guaranteed to enhance your body and mind tools: meditation, hiking, drumming, Talismans, or chanting. You can use any or all of these in tandem with prayer to great effect. At a women’s Intention Circle I facilitate we have discovered that even 10 minutes* a day in quiet contemplation—no cell phones, no computers, no interruptions—has boosted our creativity, eased our stress and made a remarkable difference in our efficiency, self confidence and coping strategy. Our problem solving skills are better, our prosperity is increasing and our blessings have unfolded, almost effortlessly. Without that quiet time, tension and stress continue to escalate fogging every physical and mental tool we attempt to engage. It’s crucial, personally and globally, to remember, everyday, that we are not alone and we are more than our body/mind.

It’s a proven scientific and spiritual fact that we become what we think about and we speak our reality into existence. Perhaps the next shift in the female success story will be a commitment to a toolkit encompassing all tools—physical and *metaphysical*. And when that happens, what a great day that will be for all the daughters of Eve.



Elaine Maginn Sonne, PhD is an empowerment coach,
author and motivational jewelry designer.
Visit her website at www.AncientDesign.com



Buying Solo

by Betty Dobson

When you're a single woman over 40, buying your first house seems like a good idea.

What else are you going to do? Wait for some man to come along and whisk you off to suburban marital bliss?

You might as well ask for the moon by noon.

Consider the facts. You made it this far on your own, earning a living and paying the bills all by yourself. You even managed to invest enough money to slap down the minimum five per cent and start calling yourself a homeowner. After all, you're faced with another 40 plus years—knock on wood—so it's time to put down some roots.

But what happens after you move into your new dream house?

O suddenly, you're dealing with a new set of monthly expenses. You have a new budget, and you're like the budget that carried you through the last few years: it's time to build a new one from scratch. Cash for things for which no budget can truly prepare you, such as repairs, renovations, and interior design—repairs, home first, because you need to fix whatever is broken. Did you get a great deal on a handyman's dream? Did you stop to consider whether or not you're handy? Also, don't forget that appliances, heaters, furnaces, and oil tanks have a habit of breaking down at the least convenient times, schedules and finances notwithstanding.



Before you even think about decorating your new house, take a hard look at the layout. Is there something you want to change? Maybe you want to knock out the wall between your kitchen and dining room. Maybe the master bedroom needs a bigger closet.

Put down that sledgehammer. Common wisdom says you should live in your house for at least a year before making any major changes. Use the time wisely and coordinate your renovation and design plans.

When it comes to interior design, your plans could be as simple as a fresh coat of paint or as complex as choosing decorative wall sconces that complement your new living room furniture. Either way, you need to make the right choices so you don't have to do it all over again in two years when you're tired of looking at peach curtains and throw pillows.

I Scared yet? Don't let that stop you. A little fear keeps you on your toes, but that doesn't mean you can't enjoy living in your house.

If you ever have doubts about the money you're throwing into mortgage payments, just ask yourself one question. **Would you rather go back to paying that much to rent an apartment?**

Betty Dobson is an award-winning, published writer and the owner of InkSpotter Publishing. She publishes two monthly newsletters, hosts an annual flash fiction contest, and recently released her first book, the poetry collection *Paper Wings*. As a longtime volunteer, she donates her time and her talents to causes close to her heart, including adult literacy, AIDS awareness, and the prevention of violence against women. She shares her first home with an overgrown kitty who believes (rightly or wrongly) that he's the one in charge.

www.inkspotter.com





Twinkle Toes: Tips for Pretty Feet

by Marilee Tolen,
RN

Summertime is a time when we are more conscious of our feet because we are either barefoot or wearing open-toed shoes.

Tips for improving the appearance of our feet go way beyond the painted toenail. Paying attention to the skin on the top and bottom of our feet is important for looks and health. Even exercising the feet can have an affect on their appearance. If a foot is strong and has muscles that contract and relax easily, it actually looks much better in a sexy sandal than a tight or swollen foot.

Feet also reflect the body. Some people say that points on the feet correlate with all of the organs and structures throughout the body. Thus, one can access the entire body through the feet. Foot reflexology is an example of a therapeutic modality based on this theory. Caring for the feet is also a way to care for the entire body.

This soak will leave your skin refreshed and fragrant.

After this wash your feet with a mild soap. Follow this foot care regimen for a few weeks and the skin on your feet will be silky and smooth.

Here are some tips to have healthy, happy feet:

—Give Your Feet a Facial (would that be a Footcial?)

The skin on top of the feet can be exfoliated and moisturized just like the skin on your face. A glow and good feeling can result. See recipes below for rubs and scrubs for your feet.

—Soak Your Feet for Softness and Invigoration

1 cup lemon juice
Cinnamon or other essential oil or spice
2 tablespoons of olive oil
¼ cup of milk
Water (amount does not matter)

Mix all the ingredients in a tub and soak your feet in it for a while. Cinnamon can be replaced with any spice, lemon juice with apple juice. Peppermint is another popular favorite. Feet love peppermint!

–Exercise Your Feet

Ankle Stretch: Sit with your legs stretched out in front of you. Point your toes down as if depressing a pedal (plantar flexion) and then stretch your toes toward your face (dorsiflexion) as far as is comfortable. Hold each stretch for a few seconds, then relax and repeat 10 times.

Foot Rollers are great to keep in an area where you spend a lot of time sitting - on the floor underneath your office chair or favorite spot on the couch. Foot Rollers work by vigorously rubbing the roller with the feet over the soles of the feet.

Foot Rollers can:

–Massage pressure points on the bottom of each foot and stimulate circulation

–Revive sore arches, relieve joint and muscle fatigue

Purchase at: <http://tinyurl.com/m43z6>

–Treat Yourself to a Foot Reflexology Session

To find a reflexologist in your area go to <http://www.reflexology-usa.org/>

–Paint Your Toenails a Vibrant Color

Color can wake up dull feet and can bring more vibrancy to your body and life. Summer is full of even zany colors and there are polishes that can match most outfits (even greens and blues!).

Have fun with the color in your feet!

Marilee Tolen RN, a.k.a. Home Spa Lady, teaches you how to use simple, natural techniques and therapies at home for your health and beauty so you can look and feel better every day. She publishes “Home Spa Lady’s Tips of the Week”, a free ezine on how to turn your kitchen, bedroom and bath into a spa.

Subscribe at <http://www.HomeSpaLady.com>.



The Importance of Impeccable Behavior

There is no accomplishment so easy to acquire as politeness, and none more profitable. –George Bernard Shaw



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*Page size is approximately 8 inches by 11 inches

Help, I'm Drowning in Email! 8 Tips to Get Your Email under Control

If you're like most people these days, you probably get between 50 and 250 email messages a day, many of which are unwanted. And some which are important. Multiply that by the number of email accounts you have, and you could find yourself spending the better part of most days just deleting and/or responding to these electronic communications. The problem is how to clear out your inbox and better manage your time.

Here are 8 tips to get your email under control.

- Keep your inbox empty. This is the key to managing you e-mail.
- Put important email messages in a folder or folders and title the folders appropriately.
- Answer important emails in a timely fashion at specified times of the day (you decide when it is appropriate to respond and schedule that as your email writing time.
- Set your inbox to check for new messages only a few times a day. Turn down the "you've got mail" announcer so you can better focus on the job at hand.
- Get a spam filter. You may risk losing some email messages, however, you have greater control over what you allow into your inbox.
- Put important email addresses in your address book so you won't have to go searching for them when you need to send a message in a hurry.
- Subscribe to mailing lists, listservs and the like at a new e-mail address. This will help with email overload and you can check these in your spare time instead of having to peruse them with your more urgent communications. Gmail may be a good choice for this.
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UNLOCKING YOUR VOCAL POWER

By Susan Miller, Ph.D. - Voicetrainer, LLC

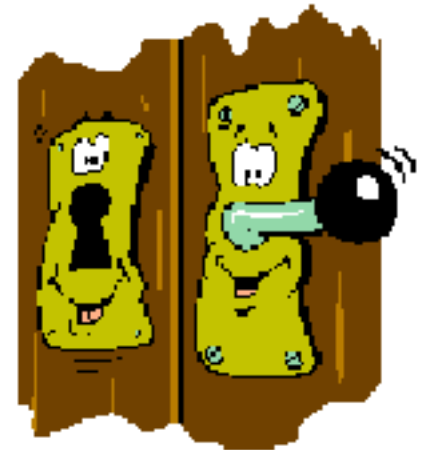
Does your voice quiver during the opening lines of a presentation?

Does your mouth get dry before you introduce yourself to a group?

Does your pitch rise when you speak louder?

Does your voice become hoarse by the end of the day?

Do you like the sound of your voice?



Before you read this article, call your voice mail and leave yourself a message. Then play it back, and critically analyze how it sounds. Were you shocked to hear a higher pitched voice than you were expecting, or perhaps slurred words or an overall monotone message? Unfortunately, the voice that you heard is how others hear you everyday.

Although most people believe they are born with a given voice that can't be changed, with the proper techniques vocal quality can be improved. It is true that our physical size dictates the length and mass of our vocal folds thus defining the boundaries of our pitch. However, the resonance or overall tone of our voice depends on the openness of the pharynx or back of the throat and the clarity of the sounds we produce. Learning to play your vocal instrument correctly will enable you to vary your tone appropriately for any situation.

First you must understand the components of your vocal instrument:

Breath: A speaker's ability to control breathing during moments of silence and when talking is paramount to remaining calm under pressure, projecting to a large group, or debating a controversial issue. When not speaking, a small volume of air should enter and exit your lower rib cage. As you breathe through your nose with your jaw relaxed and your face long, air will automatically enter and enter your lower rib cage. Prior to a speech or an introduction, use this relaxed breathing technique and vocal quivers will disappear.

It is important not to inhale a large gasp of air prior to speaking. Take a small inhalation and speak until you feel the need to replenish breath. We are like a rubber bath toy that self-inflates when we press it in and let go. We

speak on exhaled air and then refill our lower rib cage with the air that we have used. Learning to use replenishing breaths successfully will enable you to maintain a consistent vocal tone.

Vocal Fold Vibration: A lower pitched, consistent tone is the result of adequately hydrated vocal folds driven by air from the lungs. Vocal fold vibration is similar to performing a lip flutter. If the lips are placed loosely together and air is generated from the lungs, tone is produced. Learning to relax your hydrated vocal folds and breathing properly are the keys to generating a consistent, vocal tone. It is critical that you drink a glass of water before and after caffeinated and alcoholic beverages so that the vocal folds can vibrate easily.

Resonant Tone: The pleasant voices of James Earl Jones and Mya Angelou result from their vocal tones resonating within an open pharynx or back of throat. Yawn and feel how open your throat is. Many speakers tend to clench their teeth while speaking. The ability to project your voice and the resonance of your tone are dependent on a relaxed jaw, open throat and clearly pronounced sounds.

Articulation: Speaking requires precise, crisp movements of the lips and tongue against the teeth and palate or roof of our mouth. Many speakers talk too fast resulting in an unclear, distorted message. When speaking, it is important to say the ends of words which will slow you down. Being certain to pronounce the last word of a sentence will prevent your volume from trailing off at the end of an utterance.

Susan Miller, Ph.D. is a voice and communication coach and founder of Voicetrainer, LLC. She specializes in refinement of the speaking voice and empowering women to optimize their communication potential.

You will gain vocal power as you learn to use your vocal instrument properly. Be certain to warm-up your vocal instrument every morning. It takes only seconds:

Drink a glass of water

Perform lip flutters or hum in the shower.

Make a siren noise (oo) from your lowest note to your highest note and then from your highest note to your lowest note.

Say tongue twisters (*red leather, yellow leather, light blue leather*)

If you need more structure, purchase *Vocal Vitality*: a fast, easy vocal warm-up program for home, car or work. (www.voicetrainer.com)



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The advertisement features a woman's face on the left side, smiling. The background is dark with green and blue wavy patterns at the bottom. Text is arranged in a clean, professional layout with various fonts and colors (white, yellow, blue) to highlight key information.

FEAR OF INTERVIEWING

By Carole Martin - www.interviewcoach.com

Your heart is beating faster than usual, your hands feel clammy, your mouth is so dry it feels like you have cotton inside – and your supposed to feel confident. Are you going to an interview or a torture session? The answer is – “it’s all in your perspective.”

Ideally you would sit poised thumbing through a magazine, feeling relaxed as you wait your turn to have a conversation with the interviewer for the company. Think about it - what do you have to lose here? What’s the worst thing that can happen? What if you don’t get this job - is the world going to stop turning? I realize of course, that bills must be paid, but you are taking the wrong approach if you are going to come across as desperate – “Please, please, hire me.” Interviewers smell fear.

A change in thinking

The first, and most important step is to change the way that you view the interview. This is not an appointment with the dentist who may inflict pain. It is a conversation with another person. What is the worst thing that can happen as a result of the interview? You won’t get the job, which may not have been the right job for you anyway.

Secondly, this is a conversation - a two-way process. You will be interviewing them as much as they are interviewing you. Is there a good fit here – both ways? What looks good on paper may not be what it appears – for either party. It will be part of your job during the interview to investigate whether this a good place for you, and whether you want to invest a significant part of your life here. When you are not checking them out and what they have to offer you are missing an opportunity that you may regret later.

Calming techniques

One of the best techniques to handle stress is through breathing. Take deliberate, shallow breaths. Take air in through the nostrils and exhale quietly through your mouth. This is a technique that should be practiced as a relaxation technique before the interview so that your body gets used to slowing down the breathing process and relaxing.

Relaxation techniques such as yoga, and meditation classes, are recommended for anyone who has an extreme case of “interview fright.” The interview can cause panic attacks if the fear is strong enough. Pre-conditioning will do wonders for this type of anxiety.

Preparation before the interview

These are competitive times and you should steel yourself to expect some rejection. Think about it this way, “Did you get a marriage proposal after every date?” Well, you probably aren’t going to get a job offer after every interview.



For every job you apply for there are more than likely three to four equally qualified candidates in line for the same job. Whether you stand out from “the crowd” will depend on your preparation and ability to show confidence in yourself – believing that you are the “best candidate for this job.” How can you possibly sell anyone anything if you don’t believe in it yourself?

Preparation will make you feel more confident and less anxious. Can you imagine giving a performance without some practice and preparation? “Winging” the interview in today’s market is a big mistake.

Fear of Rejection

You may have had a number of interviews with no offer. You may be feeling defeated, and it’s beginning to affect your-self esteem.

This would be true of anyone. But it is a mistake to take it personally. There are so many factors that could be affecting the offer that it is impossible to say what is happening. There may be internal candidates, relatives promised jobs, a competitor who is a perfect match for the job, a lack of chemistry between you and the new boss, a mismatch in salary needs, etc., etc.

Let it go

Give yourself credit for getting an interview – only a small percentage of people get this far in the process. Give yourself credit for going out there and putting yourself on the line, even though it is painful for you. Give yourself permission to not get job offers. Believe that an offer will come through when it is the right offer – the right fit for the company and for you. Take the control back and reject the feeling of fear.

When you have done everything to prepare for the interview, and you are satisfied that you can present yourself in the best light possible, the next step is for you to let it go. You can learn something from each interview. Learn to enjoy meeting new people and having new experiences. Who knows you may even grow to like interviewing.

How much is it costing you to blow the interview? Carole Martin - MONSTER.com’s interview expert - has a workbook full of exercises and tips. “INTERVIEW FITNESS TRAINING” <http://www.interviewcoach.com> Preparation + Practice = Successful Interviews = Job Offers! Subscribe to her free email interview fitness training course.

Build Meaningful Relationships Steps for Getting Noticed, Known, and Connected

by Stefanie Zizzo

Are you often uncomfortable in situations when surrounded by people you don't know? Do you often wish you could walk up to a stranger and begin a conversation? Are you longing to cultivate new relationships in your professional life? Whether you want to boost your career, need to market your services, or just want to make new friends, you will have to reach out to people and cultivate relationships.

Relationships, whether personal or professional, develop over time and are based on trust. But first impressions are critical, as they determine whether you will have the opportunity to develop a stronger relationship in the future. So how do you do it? How do you connect with a total stranger, make a great first impression, and have them want to talk to you again?

Steps for Success

Here are some ideas and some important questions to answer to get you prepared to develop new relationships:

Define who you are: What are your purpose, passion, gifts, strengths, qualities, and accomplishments? Who are you really?

Identify whom you would like to meet: What type of people—including their qualities, traits, values, needs, and interests—would you like to develop a relationship with?

Clarify what you want: What is your intention in getting noticed, known, and connected? Why is it important to you? What do you hope to gain? What do you want to offer others?

Create your own mission statement: Include how you lead your own life, what you want for your life, and how you want to treat others.

Develop your message: Define who you are, what you are all about, and how you want to come across. When complete, the words will feel right and your passion will ignite when you are saying them—even if you are shy!

Develop outstanding communication skills: Conversation skills project your personality, show your sincerity, and make people feel comfortable with you—and you with them.

Create and define your image: You must not only make your exterior appealing to yourself but also make it a genuine reflection of your inner self. If you feel confident, you will be more confident.

Stefanie Zizzo is a Career and Life Coach who helps people take their lives in a new direction, beyond their comfort zone toward new possibilities, through focusing on what they want, thinking and growing beyond their current beliefs and fears, and taking purposeful action to make things happen. www.stefaniezizzo.com

Now, Take Action!

The following steps will help you take action in building relationships.

Focus on others: If you are shy, the best way to approach a stranger is to keep the focus on them, not you. Ask questions, focusing on how you can make them “feel special.”

Begin to meet new people: Challenge yourself to meet at least one new person each week. It could be a referral from someone you already know or someone you meet in line at the grocery store. The more you try approaching new people, the easier it becomes.

Strengthen existing relationships: Contact people you know and ask them out for coffee or lunch. Ask them what is going on in their life and tell them what you are up to. Also tell them the type of people you are interested in meeting. Ask them if they would be willing to introduce you to anyone they know.

USE E-MAIL AS YOUR FIRST INTRODUCTION: **THIS ALLOWS YOU TO TAKE YOUR TIME TO CRAFT YOUR MESSAGE. BE BRIEF AND TO THE POINT—including how you heard about them and why you are interested in talking with them or meeting them. IF THEY RESPOND, THE LINES OF COMMUNICATION ARE NOW OPEN.**

Attend events and seminars: There are many events that are coordinated within your community, such as the local chapter of the professional association that relates to your field, as well as the continuing education arm of your local college or university, book clubs, and others. Attending a meeting gives you an agenda, a reason to be there. It allows plenty of time to observe who is in attendance and decide whom you would like to meet. It also gets you noticed even if you don't say anything.

Look for guides, teachers, and promoters: Friends, family, colleagues, and coaches who can support, motivate, and help you create an atmosphere that respects who you are while challenging you to do more than you think you can.

Hometown Gals

Are you hosting an event? Are “new” faces a part of the guest list? If you want your guests to get to know one another better during your event; then try Hometown Gals, an great activity for finding out more about everyone using general interview questions. The object of this activity is to encourage guests to talk to one another and “guess” where they are FROM. This works best when your guests don’t know one another very well (if at all) and it is a fun way to connect and start the relationship-building process. The interesting thing is that many people will be from a certain geographic location and find it rewarding to discover others who are also from that same area. The “hometown” can be defined as the city, state, or even country of origin.

You will need a list of *interview questions* to be handed out to participants during the social (networking) part of your event. The only *rule* is that participants should ask a series of questions to uncover the “hometown” before either guessing the answer or asking the final question, “*Where are you originally from?*”

As the hostess, you may also want to include “prizes” for the person who guesses the most hometowns. Once the activity is over, you can also ask how many people are from a certain area, and if anyone wishes to share a story allow time for sharing.

Variation: Instead of using the topic “*where are you from*” you can change it to be “*what was your previous career (job)*” and create a list of questions that would help the audience to guess the answer.

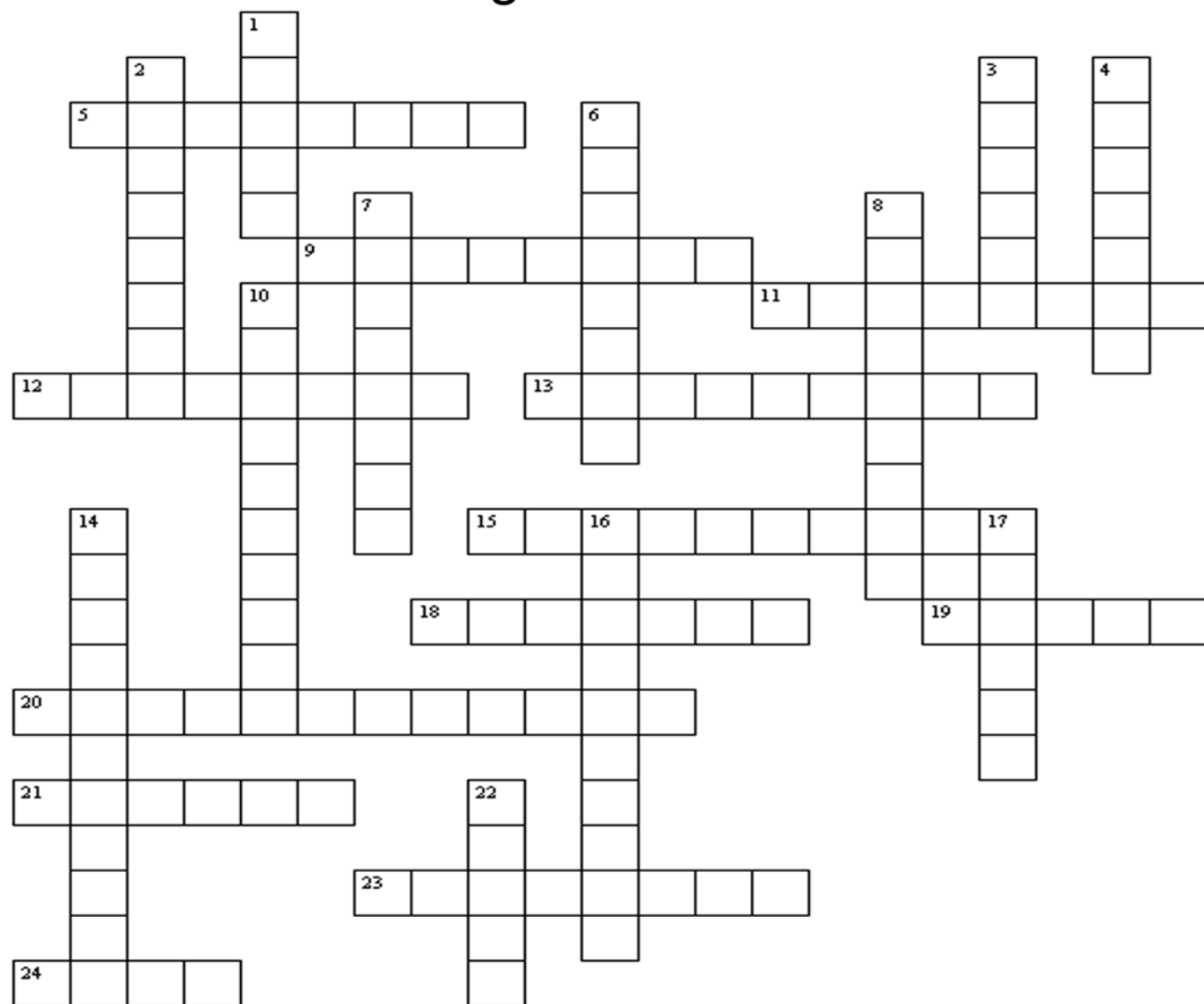
It is also a good idea to ask questions that may be more specific to your guests. Although it is really more fun to just pop the question, you may also consider sending this to your guests prior to the event, so they can be prepared. I also suggest you keep the questions to around 8 to 10 so that your guests will have time to meet a few people. To help you get started here is a list of suggested questions:

1. What type of food is your hometown known for?
2. Do you have a state motto – if so, what is it?
3. What flower is associated with your hometown?
4. What is the weather like?
5. What is the geographic landscape (mountainous, desert, flat, surrounded by water, etc.)?
6. Is it a small town or large city?
7. Is there a certain type of music that is preferred by the people from your hometown?
8. Are there any famous people/celebrities from your hometown? If so, who?
9. Do you say tomato or toe-maaaaahhhh-toe?
10. What is your hometown best known for (attraction, activity, etc.)

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Networking Crossword Puzzle



ACROSS

- 5 Bring plenty of _____ cards
 9 Ask _____ questions
 11 _____ your Circle of Influence
 12 _____ after the event
 13 Be a source of _____
 15 Be _____
 18 Act like a _____
 19 Arrive _____
 20 Focus on your _____ skills
 21 _____ more than you talk
 23 Be patient, _____ and disciplined
 24 _____ your network

DOWN

- 1 _____ quality versus quantity
 2 Be aware of _____ differences
 3 Learn to _____
 4 Small talk with a _____
 6 Get _____
 7 Be a powerful _____
 8 Women's eChamber of Commerce, International (acronym)
 10 Develop _____ win/win relationships
 14 Become a good _____
 16 Join a _____ group
 17 Remember to say _____
 22 _____ long-term relationships

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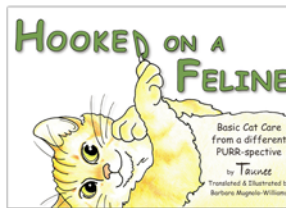


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Interview with Irini Varda-Capsis

Commercial Director

Capsis Convention Centres & Resort Hotels/SOFITEL (Accor Group)



TELL US A LITTLE BIT ABOUT YOURSELF

I was born in 1973 in Athens, Greece and raised there. I acquired my BS in Business Administration and Hotel Management (double major in Marketing and Hotel Planning/Design) from Cornell University (Ithaca, NY, USA) in 1995. I was raised in a hotel environment since my family has been involved in this business for more than 4 generations and feel the hotel industry as my second home. I have two parents, two step-parents, two sisters, one step-brother, two nieces, a nephews and a Basset Hound dog. I get bored very easily and always seek for new challenges and adventures, especially in my professional life, and feel that the Tourism Industry was the best choice for me as it is changing every day and I always need to find new ways in order to follow its trends and adjust to them. I love being part of new and innovative projects, setting difficult tasks in order to achieve them and especially like working with young people. I strongly believe that one should be thankful for anything one was offered in life, one should leave behind something important not only in ones working environment but also in the community and the world they live in and try to help people.

HOW DID YOU BECOME INTERESTED IN HOTEL MANAGEMENT?

As I said earlier, I was raised in a hotel environment and have worked in my family's hotels since I was 12. From a very young age, I always felt I wanted to work in the Tourism Industry and everything came naturally. Therefore, I gladly joined the Industry as it has always fascinated me, motivated me and inspired me, since I can remember myself. During college I did my internships at the Statler Hotel of Cornell University, the Athens Intercontinental Hotel, my family's hotels in Crete and Rhodes, Greece, the Forte Village Hotel in Sardegna, Italy, and the Spot Thompson Advertising Company (J. Walter Thompson Group) in Athens. My first full-time job was at Comitours S.P.A. (an Italian Tour Operator based in Torino, Italy, very strong at the time in the Greek Market) as the assistant to the Managing Director, where I toured all the departments of the company and got involved in the contracting research and planning for hotels in Corfu and the Canary Islands. This tour operating experience was really interesting and necessary for me at the time, as until then I had a good knowledge of the hotel side of the industry and this job gave me the chance to also see the other side of the industry in more depth.

WHAT WAS YOUR FIRST YEAR IN THAT BUSINESS LIKE? WHAT WERE/ARE SOME OF THE OBSTACLES YOU HAVE ENCOUNTERED (OVERCOME)?

The first years in the business were quite tough. I was a young woman, looking even younger than my real age at the time, constantly having to prove that even if one is young, they can still be responsible, hard-working and professional in their work. Later on, my biggest challenge was that my boss was also my mother and despite her being a very fair and dynamic business woman, she was also a very strict and demanding employer, tougher with my sister and me, than with the rest of the staff. I can now admit that she was the toughest employer I ever had, but I now realize that she did right to be so hard on us and challenging us all the time. More than two years later I felt that I had to leave the family company and work on my own again, in order to prove myself not only to me but also to my family and stand on my own two feet, and thus, I joined TUI Greece in order to set-up from scratch the Sales & Marketing Department of their Corporate & Leisure Office in Athens. That was a very rewarding experience at the time, grew more mature and diplomatic, acquired a lot of knowledge for the market and became strong, confident and sure about myself and my capabilities. At that point my mother was planning to construct the largest convention centre in Greece next to our existing Sofitel Capsis Hotel in Rhodes and asked me to join again the company in order to help with this project, which I did. I joined the Sales team, created a Marketing & Creative department in-house and stayed close to her through all the important company decisions she took. From then on, our cooperation has been fantastic, really inspiring, a learning experience all the way, and still today she often surprises me with her vision, intuition, modern insight, innovative spirit and determination. Nowadays, more than ever, my mother, my sister and I form a great team, with my mother being the driving force of the business, my sister being deeply involved in operations and I focusing more on sales and marketing.

At this point, I would also like to add that the Greek society is mainly patriarchic and that the Greek Business environment is particularly run by men and this was also one of the challenges I had to face in my first years in the industry. However, overcoming this came very quickly and naturally to me, as I was brought up in a family where women always played a very important role and in a family business which was always run by strong, visionary, dynamic and entrepreneurial women.

WHAT IS THE MOST UNIQUE ASPECT OF YOUR CURRENT ROLE? AND WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST?

Being the Commercial Director of our company and highly involved in Sales & Marketing, I highly enjoy the chance to further develop the business, create new products for our company, open up in new markets, face new challenges everyday, and come up with totally new ideas and ways to promote our venues even further to the international market.

TELL US ABOUT SOME OF THE ROLE MODELS/MENTORS YOU HAVE HAD IN YOUR CAREER.

My role models have been my grandmother, my mother and my father: the first (the founder of our company), because she was a highly dynamic and driven woman, very entrepreneurial and full of vision, who dared to take risks, during a period in Greece when women were not often seen into the business place; my mother, because she managed to balance and succeed in her two roles, by being innovative and successful in the tourism industry and a great mother at the same time; and finally, my father because he has always managed to balance my life with his strength and honesty, realism for life, conservative and serious spirit, and practical mind; both my parents always made sure to stress the importance of values in our lives, honesty, simplicity and being fair and right as people.

My mentor has been Nino Fiorentino, one of the founding members of the ICCA (International Congress & Convention Association), who literally took me by the hand ten years ago and pointed out the path to success in the Meetings Industry.

Professionally, I would also like to say that I really look up to and admire Mr. Stelios Hatzioannou, the creator of Easy Jet, for his entrepreneurial mind, his innovative ideas and his endless drive and determination.

WHAT ARE SOME OF THE TRENDS YOU ARE NOTICING IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY?

There are several trends to be considered for the future and some of them are:

- Terrorism is not a local or regional phenomenon, but an international problem, and its psychological impact affects the entire world. Although we have seen that this is a global issue, it is important for a country to make its guests feel secure. Security is thus, very important after 9/11 and has changed people's behaviors when traveling. Of course the world nowadays, is not as safe as it was some years ago, but we see that people continue now and will continue in the future to travel for both pleasure and business. Thus, Risk Management is also becoming more important nowadays and Crisis Management Plans are needed for all types of companies.
- Social & Environmental Responsibility is very important in all types of business and thus the hospitality industry. Building business whilst acting ethically is important also to our clients. Environmental issue will affect our industry even more in the future and companies will have to find ways to become more environmentally-friendly.
- Immigration and the impact on the availability of staff in the industry.
- The changing market trends and developments: The movement of tourists is no longer confined in the dominant patterns of travel from north to south. Rather, an "inter-market" flow of tourists emerges as not only do "western" travelers engage in travel, but people throughout the world are increasingly mobile, thus, generating a far greater complexity to contemporary travel in terms of the people traveling and the destinations they travel to. It is envisaged that new targeted strategies of promotion and presentation would be vital if destinations are to optimize the benefits of tourism.
- The changing geographical frontiers: there are changing travel motivations as well as changing destinations.
- Survival of the fittest is also true in the Hotel and Tourism Industry. Advanced technology will help a company remain strong and competitive in the marketplace. Developments in Technology and e-Tourism: the Internet and technological advancement lies at the heart of the success of the tourism industry and industry therefore, requires technological solutions to existing problems.
- Time: It is becoming clear that the greatest luxury for many customers is time, and service can help them make the most of that. The hotels and businesses which will be best equipped to survive will be the 24-hour hotels and businesses, offering services and amenities tailored to the continually evolving needs of the most discerning business and leisure travellers. Also those hotels and businesses which will offer "everything" on the plate, will facilitate clients and have a competitive advantage compared to others.
- Space: every day life in big cities offers less and less space - therefore both in-room space and external environment / space is becoming an important factor for both clients who decide on a destination/hotel, or personnel who wish to work in a spacious and bright environment.
- Competition is really rising in the Tourism Industry and companies should find ways to differentiate themselves. In such a competitive market customer loyalty is important and companies should find ways to sustain it.
- Clients are not fulfilled anymore only by the traditional types of tourism, such as leisure tourism and business tourism, but are requesting and are attracted by new types of tourism, such as eco-tourism, agricultural tourism, other specialized types of tourism (i.e. golf tourism, spa tourism, medical tourism, adventurous sports tourism...) and many more, that are quickly evolving and should seriously be taken into consideration.
- The "low-cost" phenomenon: A means of increasing independent travel and increasing access to destinations, low-cost travel is felt to be replete with impacts on future tourism trends and practice.
- Some points for further reflection are: the role of the government in the arena of changing consumer protection, changing future technologies of travel and the future travel demands of today's teenagers/tomorrow's 30-somethings. The future of technology and virtual travel experiences, and the emergence and impacts of space tourism.

WHERE DO YOU SEE YOURSELF IN 5 YEARS?

In 5 years from now I expect to be married, have children and another dog!! I will certainly continue to work and travel and hope to have evolved our existing companies and venues. Hopefully by then I will have explored new aspects of the business relating to tourism and have created new companies relating to the tourism industry.

HOW DO YOU SUPPORT THE COMMUNITY IN WHICH YOU LIVE? WHAT ARE SOME OF THE ORGANIZATIONS YOU ARE INVOLVED IN?

There are several ways through which we, as a company, assist our community. We offer a large number of grants to causes and associations that approach us every month; we give students the opportunity to work in our companies for experience and internships; we are highly involved in energy conservation and very cautious of environmental issues inside and around our properties. More specifically, the **Capsis Beach Hotel & Sofitel Palace Hotel & Convention Centre** in Crete has private botanic gardens, greenhouses where we grow organic products which we use in our hotels, and we have the largest private zoo in Greece. Our hotel in Crete has been awarded with the Hermes Award in 2002 for "**Best Innovation in Terms of Environmental Protection**" and has strongly contributed in the protection and conservation of the sea fauna and flora of our area; we always try to find ways to raise funds for non-profit associations and organizations (i.e. cancer associations, "**Elpida**" Association based in Rhodes aiming to assist children, etc.) through our corporate events and marketing actions; finally, I am volunteering as the Chair of the Advisory Board & Executive Committee of the Alpine Centre's New Events & Convention Management Program in Athens, Greece.

HOW HAS YOUR INVOLVEMENT AND SUPPORT IN THE COMMUNITY HELPED YOUR CAREER? PERSONALLY?

Being involved and supporting the community is not something I do in order to further boost my career. I feel whatever I do as a person or as the representative of a company is the least I can do to give something back to the community. For example, we are now putting together a program in order to offer complimentary meeting rooms in our Athens Cultural & Exhibition Centre to young artists (photographers, sculptors, painters, etc.) in order to support them in their first steps into the professional world. Not all young artists can afford to pay a venue for their first exhibition of their work and by offering it to them for free and helping them promote it to the community we feel we become the means for them to show their work and creative expressions. Moreover, starting this coming January, I will be teaching a course on Convention Sales & Marketing at Alpine Centre in Athens, Greece, in order to pass over my knowledge, know-how and experience to younger people interested in the Events Industry. These are only a few examples, and most of what we do we prefer not to publicize.

WHAT BOOK(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY READING?

I usually read one to three books at the same period, depending on my mood; I read mostly in the summer, during the period of which I can read between five to seven books in a period of two months; the rest of the year I only read during flights. At the moment I am reading the following books:

- "The Interpretation of Dreams", by Sigmund Freud
- "The Schopenhauer Cure", by Irvin D. Yalom
- "Middlesex", by Jeffrey Eugenides

Currently I am also reading books relating to teaching and the meetings industry for the course I will teach in January at the Alpine Centre:

- "Marketing Destinations & Venues for Conferences, Conventions & Business Events"
- "Convention Sales & Services"
- "Teach!"

Last but not least, there are two books that I have read and I always keep next to my bed:

- "Le scaphandre et le papillon", in French, by Jean-Dominique Bauby
- "Manual do Guerreiro da Luz", in Greek, by Paulo Coelho

WHAT DO YOU ENJOY DOING WHEN YOU ARE NOT WORKING (FOR FUN, RECREATION)?

I strongly enjoy traveling, meeting people, extreme sports, architecture and interior design, opera, theater, modern art, photography, writing, reading, cooking, gardening and spending time in nature. As I travel so much, I also enjoy spending time at home, when I am in Athens. I love hanging out with my nieces, my nephew, my family and friends. I like to dance and working out in nature.

IS THERE ANYTHING ELSE YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE WITH OUR READERS?

I would like to share my belief in terms of the role of women, nowadays. I am certain and convinced our roles have changed. We are flexible, multi-tasking beings and that is very intriguing. We can be a mother, a spouse and a professional and manage to succeed in all three equally. I want to say something to the younger women coming into the professional world at the moment: be real, think freely, be simple, practice patience, stay down-to-earth, take care of yourselves and take time for yourselves, be motivated, be enthusiastic with anything and everything you do, be fair, feel deeply, forgive, hope, dream, observe, give, work hard, take time for people, smile often, love, believe in yourselves and your capabilities, cry when you need to, live life to the fullest, have faith, take chances and don't be afraid to explore the unknown and take risks, learn, and remember that everything can be done in life and that you can do anything you set your mind to, as long as you really believe in it!



**Irini Varda-Capsis - Commercial Director
Capsis Convention Centres & Resort Hotels/SOFITEL (Accor Group)**

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Woodie Lesesne Advisor - South Florida Division

One of the region's most accomplished visionaries, Woodie Lesesne is co-publisher of IN FOCUS Magazine with partner and husband, Tony Lesesne. As the guiding force and President of the award-winning IN FOCUS magazine based in South Florida, Woodie has earned a reputation as an active civic leader who aggressively supports women in business, youth and educational initiatives, and small business development. Woodie oversees the publishing division of the Lesesne Media Group and manages many of the company's various events, including the popular "Women's Power Caucus". In the spring of 2005, she produced the first-ever Women's Power Caucus in Atlanta, Georgia, making the event a two-city tour that has attracted sponsors like ADT, Chrysler, Turner Broadcasting System, Office Depot, Washington Mutual, Burger King, and Citrix Systems to name a few.

A savvy, yet compassionate leader and entrepreneur, Woodie has received numerous awards including The Millennium Movers women of the Year Award in 2005 National Association of Negro Women in Business Women's Achiever during Women's History Month in 2004. The Black Business Assoc. Outstanding Dedication and Commitment Award 2001, and the prestigious National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) Recognition Award 1997. She was also presented with the Miami-Dade Chamber of Commerce Small Business of the Year 1997 award, and selected as the Small Business Administration Media Advocate of the Year for the South Florida District and the State of Florida in 1998. During Women's History Month 2004 Woodie received two awards. One from the National Association of Negro Business and Professional Women-Dade County Club with the "Champions of Media" award on March 27th and the other from the South Florida Hispanic Chamber of Commerce with the "Women in Leadership Award" on March 31st. It is a testament to her impact in a diverse community, and we are grateful. On May 6th Woodie received the South Florida Business Women award from the City of Hope. Woodie's motto is "Enjoy the Journey".

Woodie is also a member of the South Florida Board of Advisors of the WECAI Network™.

For more information on Woodie and In Focus – visit : www.infocus-mag.com



Angela Sheen Liaison-United Kingdom

Angela Sheen is a highly experienced Human Resources and Management Advisor and Training Specialist. She gained in-depth banking experience in the UK with the National Westminster Bank before moving into Human Resources when she became Group Recruitment Manager and Training Manager for the UK Retail arm. During the past nine years, she has specialized in Human Resources Interim Management and Consultancy advising on strategies and systems, conducting Training Needs Analysis and preparing training plans. Her work has taken her to Central and Eastern Europe, the Middle East as well as Central and southern Asia giving her a broad understanding of the social and ethical issues that emanate from different cultures around the world. Angela has also developed and delivered an extensive range of business focused training and Management Development programmes.

Angela is a Fellow of the Chartered Institute of Bankers; Member of the Chartered Institute of Management, Associate Member of the Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development and Associate Member of the Institute of Management Consultants.

Since 1994 Angela has specialized in Human Resources and Change Management consultancy, advising on current best practice strategies and procedures including the development of Competency Frameworks and Performance Management policies.

In 2003 **ASA** Performance Management was formed to compliment the services offered by **ASA** Organization Consultancy & Training Services which was established in 1994 and now concentrates on the provision of Interim Management Services. That same year Angela joined the International Board of Advisors for the WECAI Network™.

Qualified to British Psychological Society levels A and B Intermediate Plus in the use of Occupational and Psychometric Tests, Angela has also developed and delivered an extensive range of Business Focused training and Management Development programmes.

Through a network of qualified Associates, **ASA** Performance Management provides first class Management Consultancy and Advisory Services including the development of business driven strategies, policies and procedures and supporting training.

For more information on Angela and the work she does, visit **ASA Performance Management**
at <http://asaperformance.com/careeradvice.shtml>

Global Network Profile:



The purpose of the EAWC is to “bridge nations and cultures, set trends, exercise influence, innovate change and make a difference in our world”

Founded in 1996, The European-American Women’s Council (EAWC) mission is to strengthen the status of women in the global marketplace by building strategic alliances between women in business and prominent leaders across the United States, Europe, Mexico, Latin America and other places of the world. Through EAWC, women of diverse backgrounds and accomplishments work together to advance women’s access to positions of leadership and to pave the way for the next generations of women business leaders.

Loula Loi Alafoyiannis is the Founder, Global President and CEO of the Euro-American Women’s Council (EAWC). Prior to EAWC, Loula served as the Vice President of the United Hellenic American National Council, which she co-founded with Mr. John Alafoyiannis. The Council’s goal was to build bridges between Greek and American entrepreneurial communities and to advance the cause of women’s rights in the arenas of business and education. The Council has sponsored numerous White House luncheons for prominent and influential businesswomen throughout the United States and Greece . To learn more about Ms. **Alafoyiannis**, visit: <http://www.eawc.org/index.php?dpage=loula.htm>

Phyllis Hill Slater, Co-Founder & Executive Global Chair a second generation business owner, is a business advocate and leader, whose wide ranging efforts have been recognized at home and abroad by four U.S. Presidents, countless state and local government Officials, professional groups, major corporations, and nonprofit and civic organizations. Recognizing the increasing need for companies to find solutions to their IT staffing challenges, in January 1997 she confounded with her daughter, Gina Slater Parker, the Hill Slater Group, specializing in information technology staffing. It is one of the families of companies of Hill Slater Inc. (HSV, established in 1984 by Ms. Slater as an engineering and architectural support system for the engineering, architectural, and construction management communities, private enterprise, and government. To learn more about Ms. Hill Slater, visit: <http://www.eawc.org/index.php?dpage=phyllis.htm>

Core to the EAWC mission are:

- Fostering bilateral cultural relations that lead to social and economic growth and development
- Promoting environmental protection through enhanced technology
- Celebrating women’s diversity and accomplishments, and promoting equality in the business arena
- Creating a platform of mutual respect, cooperation and shared goals between women of the United States and Europe
- Mentoring and educating the youth to successfully lead in a rapidly changing, technology-driven global society with respect to the universal values.

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