



NAWBO *time*

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NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF
WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS

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SAVE THE DATE!

February 4-6, 2008

NAWBO Public Policy Days
Washington, D.C.

June 12-14, 2008

NAWBO Women's Business Conference
Phoenix, Ariz.

For more information on these events,
visit www.nawbo.org/events.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: INTENTIONAL SUCCESS

Have you ever noticed that the things you do with intent usually result in success? I believe each of us is capable of achieving exactly what we intend with our lives, with our businesses, and with our leadership in NAWBO. Whether we ourselves think so or not, many of our fellow women entrepreneurs look to us as women who lead the world due to our success socially, economically, and politically. Yet, leaders do not rest. We must aspire to intentionally create paths to success for fellow entrepreneurs by continuing to lead with excellence in every way we can.

Many of you are familiar with the phrase "What's in it for me?" Perhaps you'll reflect on my preferred version "What's in it from me?" Consider whether others know what you stand for, and whether they can count on you to do what you say. You may believe yourself to be a strong decision-maker. But do you act on those decisions with intent, or do you simply decide to act? Think about the Star Wars character Yoda, who wisely counseled, "Do, or do not; there is no try."

My own tools for intentional success are grouped around character and competence. Character is derived from why you do things (values including integrity, dependability, kindness, and respect as well as having a clear sense of purpose). Competence comes from how you do them (with excellence, applying resourcefulness and an ambitious work ethic, leveraging competitiveness, focusing with

clarity). If you're a book lover like I am, you may enjoy reading more about intentional success in Stephen Covey's *Everyday Greatness*.

I am looking forward to contributing my personal talents in service to NAWBO. I urge each of you to bring your time and talents to bear on success for yourselves, your chapters, and our organization as a whole. As we interact along the way, I hope you'll remember that each of us has a significant role in our collective success. Whether we agree or disagree, I hope each of you will join me in pledging to always engage with transparency and the intent to achieve good will, better decisions, and great leadership. These are the marks of a 21st century organization and the kind of leadership I will intentionally deliver. I ask each of you to do the same.



Lisa Hickey, 2007-2008 NAWBO
President

WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS ARE READY TO RUN FOR OFFICE



With an interest in politics and holding elected office, eight women business owners participated in three days of intense training in the NAWBO/Wal-Mart Foundation Candidate Training Program. These policy-savvy women entrepreneurs from across the country gathered in Washington, DC, April 26-28, to attend the inaugural candidate training program held at American University's Women in Politics Institute.

speakers highlighted why the presence of women in elected positions is so important. The participants also met with women members of Congress.

Cheryl Mobley runs a Philadelphia-based business and had always planned to campaign for office. "When I came here, I was considering running for City Council," noted Mobley, president of Cheryl Mobley & Associates based in Philadelphia, "but after this training, I am ready for Congress or the Presidency."



With women starting businesses at nearly twice the rate of all businesses, but women holding less than 20 percent of Congressional seats, and less than 25 percent of state-wide offices, NAWBO organized the program in response to a vital need to train women business owners to run for office. Program participants took part in education sessions on creating a campaign plan, hiring staff, fundraising, building a strategy, public speaking, and more. Panel presentations oriented participants on interacting with the media and

Dr. Mary Jean Koontz founder of San Francisco-based Pacific Creations International and Diversity4Children.com appreciated the insider knowledge she gained during the training. "One long-term dream of mine is to become an ambassador, so this training is helping me get a better feel for the system," said Koontz.

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Women Mean Business®

NAWBO MEMBER MAKES CHANGE AS CHAIR OF SBA NATIONAL ADVISORY COUNCIL

"These things can happen to anybody," says Joan Schlueter of her recent appointment to serve as chair of the Small Business Administration's National Advisory Council, a body that advises SBA Administrator Steven C. Preston and agency officials about vital issues affecting small business. As a successful entrepreneur who admits she hadn't even heard of a business plan when she moved from Chicago to Albuquerque, New Mexico in 1994 to start her own company, Schlueter believes in the strong leadership capabilities of small business owners.

As she worked to launch and grow her firm, On Site Hiring Consultants, Schlueter quickly became involved in her local NAWBO chapter and soon took on a leadership role. "It all started with NAWBO," Schlueter remembers. "I believe when you join NAWBO, or any organization, you have to get very active." She served as President of NAWBO Northern New Mexico in 1997-1998 and served on NAWBO's National Board of Directors from 1998-2001.

Along the way, Schlueter became highly interested in public policy and the effects it could have on women business owners. After serving as chair of the NAWBO Political Action Committee in 2001, Schlueter helped found Women Impacting Public Policy (WIPP), a national bipartisan public policy organization that advocates for and on behalf of women and minorities in business.

New Mexico Congresswoman Heather Wilson originally nominated Schlueter to serve on the SBA National Advisory Council in 2003. On April 5, 2007, Schlueter was appointed to the position of chair and she's excited about the special role the National Advisory Council plays in promoting the success of America's small businesses. "It's the only group in Washington that seeks out small business advice," she says.

Her goal is to raise awareness about SBA's many resources and to increase SBA's visibility in the entrepreneurial community. She also wants to educate the directors of SBA's regional offices on the knowledge and expertise that small business owners themselves can offer. "I want them to see small businesses and small business owners as a resource for them," Schlueter says.

She encourages more NAWBO chapters to nominate their members for SBA's annual small business awards. While recognizing individual entrepreneurs for their leadership and dedication, the awards also bring public awareness to the success of small businesses in general. Women business owners looking to advance their place as leaders will take note of opportunities like these, in addition to volunteer openings in their NAWBO chapters. Now an acknowledged expert on small business issues, Schlueter sees that her early involvement in NAWBO set

her up for achievement. "NAWBO really changed my life," she says.

NAWBO Members Who Received 2007 SBA Awards

- Linda Moorehead, BLACKHAWK Management Corporation, Regional Subcontractor of the Year
- Leeana Roman, Providence Pediatric Medical DayCare, Inc., New Jersey Small Business Award
- Debbie Jo "DJ" Heckes, EXHIB-IT! Tradeshow Marketing Experts, New Mexico Small Business Award

To learn more about SBA and the annual awards program, visit www.sba.gov.

— by Brynn Grumstrup Slate



Joan Schlueter

THE 7 SECRETS TO REACHING THE MAGIC \$MILLION MARK

Fewer than 5 percent of businesses owned by women ever realize annual revenues over a million dollars. Why is it so hard, and how can you build a business that surpasses the million dollar mark?

Taken from my upcoming book *The ParentPreneur Edge*, which includes my own personal experiences and those of other companies who have surpassed the Magic \$Million Mark, I have identified seven secrets successful million-dollar-plus companies have in common that seem to be missing in those that can't quite hit the mark:

1. Know your customer. If your business targets "all women" or "any business," you do not know your customer. Not all women have the same needs, wants, and desires. All businesses don't operate the same way or value the same things. In order to catapult your business, you need to know intimately what your customer wants. Why do they buy? Why don't they buy? Get inside the head of your customer and when you know how they spend their day, you'll be well on your way to locking them in on a sale.
2. Proactively manage your cash flow. Once you have revenues coming in, it is crucial that you continue to maximize use of your cash. Keep your money as long as you can and get money from those that owe it to you as soon as possible. This means negotiating good (quick) payment terms from customers, good (long) payment terms with vendors, and never paying a bill before it is due.
3. Hire the best people, even if you have to pay them more than you are making. Research shows that the success of a company is largely centered on the

execution. The execution of your business idea centers not only on the plan but also on the people you bring on board to execute it. Hire people that are smarter than you are, and don't hesitate to pay them more.

4. Exceed your customers' expectations. The first step in incredible customer support is to set and communicate expectations. Many a relationship (and customer!) has been lost over this one issue alone. Once expectations are set and understood by all parties, you must over-deliver. Exceed the customers' expectations and you'll have them coming back again and again.
5. Build on your success. The least expensive customer to sell to is one that you have already sold to. You must build within your customer base repeatable success.
6. Practice "Focused Flexibility." Although it sounds like a contradiction, Focused Flexibility is really about keeping your peripheral vision intact. It is focusing ahead on your goals while not ignoring what is happening on the sides. Know where you are going, but don't discount the changes in your markets, the economy, or your competition or you risk being blindsided.
7. Use outside advisors. Successful, growing businesses engage with an outside board of advisors. It is not hard to find people that are willing to help you grow your business—often without payment—by just asking. Make sure you recruit people to your board who are willing to tell you what you need to hear, not what you want to hear, and have the expertise and experience that you do not.

Note that nowhere in the above list did I say that you had to have the best product or service in the market. While having a good product or service is necessary, it is not sufficient. If the customer does not perceive your goods to be of value, or if they have never heard of you, it doesn't matter how incredible what you do is. If not enough people are buying or you don't have enough cash to pay bills, your company will never be able to reach that Magic \$Million Mark.



Julie Lenzer Kirk is an award-winning entrepreneur and mother of two. She is the founder of Path Forward International, which offers workshops, consulting, and keynotes to give entrepreneurial companies and individuals a "Boot in the Butt™" to launch new ideas, grow existing ventures, find their work/life balance, and fine-tune their entrepreneurial leadership skills. Her book, *The ParentPreneur*

Edge: What Parenting Teaches About Building a Successful Business (John Wiley & Sons) will be in bookstores June 22, 2007. You can subscribe to her monthly "Boot in the Butt™" newsletter through her website at www.JulieLenzerKirk.com.

In a region full of hard-luck stories, Bui Thi Nhi's is harder than most. Hobbled by a congenital leg deformity, she was married off young to a man who had been blind since childhood. For more than 22 years, Nhi has supported her family single-handedly, scratching out a living by raising rice on her 700 square-meter (1/6 acre) field, here in this remote part of Vietnam's Hoa Binh province.



There is never quite enough to eat. For three to six months of each year, the family of five suffers through a rice shortage. Some years they have to borrow money for food. With jobs few and far between in Hoa Binh, raising the cash to pay their debts is a struggle.

A decade ago, the family incurred more debt for the medical bills of a 9-year-old daughter, who was suffering from a stomach ailment. Even after the girl died, they had to keep paying the loan at 5 percent interest.

But now Nhi's luck is starting to turn. Recently, her family moved from their tiny thatched hut on stilts into a sturdy one-room concrete dwelling next door. She welcomes a group of visitors to the month-old house, sitting on a floor mat to drink strong Vietnamese tea. Half the cost for building materials, about \$400, came from a government anti-poverty program. They've had to borrow to pay the rest, but this time there is no worry that they'll go hungry.



This year, with the help of CARE, Nhi has learned how to replace her rice crop with a new, hybrid variety that nearly doubles her yield, to 500 kg a season. She plans to continue improving her agricultural skills, trying new methods of cultivating fruit and corn, and enrolling in

a CARE program that helps women learn to breed and sell pigs. Above all, she vows that her youngest child, 9-year-old boy Quach Van Diem, will have the education she never had.

Just then, Diem comes in from outside, draping his arms affectionately around his mother. "Even if I have to ask one of his older sisters to support him, I want him to have a better future," says Nhi, who only finished second grade.

How can you help women like Bui Thi Nhi?

NAWBO is a program partner of the One Shared WorldSM campaign, which works to raise awareness and generate dialogue about global poverty. You can get involved by visiting www.onesharedworld.org where you'll find simple ways to learn more, connect more, and do more about this important issue.

You can read stories about women who improved their own lives after receiving assistance to start their own

Nhi is sharing her newfound agricultural skills with her neighbors. After participating in the CARE course, she has qualified as a Farmer Trainer, responsible for educating 16 other women in her village, Xua Ha. They're not just learning farming techniques, but about legal options and their rights in cases of property disputes, divorces, or other family disagreements. That's no small matter in this country, where rural women traditionally move in with their husbands' families upon marriage, and until now rarely have had property of their own or the ability to take part in community decision-making.



"Things are different for women now than in my mother's day," says Nhi. "Our chances of participating in society, getting an education, and having contact with outsiders — all are better." All the same, women from poor families like Nhi's have a long way to go before they can realize their potential. Her daughters, who have quit school to go to work, face challenges of their own.

It's harvest time, and Nhi's daughter Quach Thi Hue, 18, has returned home to help her mother take in the crop. With no work near home, she had to move to a faraway province where she found a job washing dishes. Hue finished five years of school before dropping out. That's more than her 16-year-old sister. A year ago, the younger girl moved to the port city of Haiphong, from where she is sending home money — about \$130 so far, a big help to her mother.

But Nhi isn't sure how the young woman is earning the money; she tells her family she is a hairdresser. "I will always regret that I had to send her away to be brought up by relatives, and that she never got an education," says Nhi, gazing at a cheap studio portrait of her daughter, in profile with a cascade of shiny hair. "It makes me very sad that she's illiterate. She's pretty."

Rick Perera is Press Officer for CARE, a leading humanitarian organization fighting global poverty. CARE places special focus on working alongside poor women because, equipped with the proper resources, women have the power to help whole families and entire communities escape poverty. Women are at the heart of CARE's community-based efforts to improve basic education, prevent the spread of HIV, increase access to clean water and sanitation, expand economic opportunity, and protect natural resources. CARE also delivers emergency aid to survivors of war and natural disasters, and helps people rebuild their lives. Learn more at www.care.org.

microbusinesses. You can access Program in a Box materials to help organize a discussion about ways to fight global poverty with your NAWBO chapter. You can also download the NAWBO-One Shared World Web sticker to post on your own Web site to show your support of the campaign's efforts. Visit www.nawbo.org/osw.



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Are you the kind of business owner who believes computer hackers have no interest in your company because they're busy trying to crack security at large financial institutions? Are you confident that the system security measures you've taken are protecting your data effectively?

You may want to reconsider. Criminals love infiltrating small businesses because they can access useful, private information, often with minimal effort. They know many small business owners have a false sense of security regarding technology and, as a result, don't take the actions necessary to protect their data.

What follows are five common myths regarding network security. If you've ever expressed any of these thoughts, you might want to re-evaluate your system security.

"I have a firewall. Nobody can get into my system." Firewalls are vital for controlling system access, but they have their limitations. For example, most firewalls offer little or no antivirus protection. That shortfall can be remedied by installing antivirus programs. Of greater concern is the configuration of your firewall. When you purchase a firewall, all the "locks" and "doors" are set to "open" and must be configured appropriately. Network administrators must have a solid grasp of network protocols and computer security because even small installation or maintenance oversights can leave a firewall useless against attacks.

"My system can't be infected. I have antivirus software." Most antivirus programs do an excellent job of preventing invasions from known threats. The problem is that, depending on who you ask, somewhere between 200 and 1,200 new viruses are detected every month. So, it's important that employees refrain from downloading applications from unknown sites; opening suspicious e-mail attachments; or using peer-to-peer file sharing sites. It helps to have a "layered" approach to protection by installing antivirus software on your network, your e-mail system, and individual computers. Downloading antivirus updates and scanning systems regularly also are musts.

"My wireless network is secure." Wireless networks out of the box are just slightly more secure than walkie talkies. Seriously, many wireless systems can be accessed by hackers stationed in buildings across the street. Proper installation of a wireless network is an important first step. This includes changing the generic administrator password and turning off the router's broadcasting of the network's name (known as the Service Set Identifier, or SSID). The addition of Wi-Fi Protected Access (WPA) encryption software also will make a wireless network tougher to penetrate.

"Our system is password protected." Passwords are to computers as keys are to cars. The lack of easy access might slow a thief, but it won't necessarily stop him. After all, effective password-cracking programs are readily available at no cost via the Internet. How do you fight back? First,

enforce a policy that requires lengthy passwords that include numbers, special characters, and both upper- and lower-case letters. Second, ensure that employees aren't leaving password reminders in obvious places, such as under the keyboard. And third, adopt extra system security—including forced delays—that prevents hackers from testing multiple passwords during short periods of time.

"I trust my employees with access to confidential data." If so, here are a couple of statistics that may startle you. In one recent study, almost a third of the business people surveyed admitted taking proprietary information when they left their companies. A quarter of the thefts involved MP3 players or memory cards; 18 percent used the company's e-mail system. Another study of more than 1,000 cases discovered up to 70 percent of identity theft incidents originated internally.

It's wise to follow President Ronald Reagan's motto, "trust, but verify." Installing software to limit data access and track data usage can help keep private information inside the company.

Don't wait for an incident to occur before taking network security to the next level. It is also a good idea to talk with your insurance agent or broker about IT risks, as well as insurance products that protect against them. The high cost of repairing crashed systems, replacing stolen data, or defending customer lawsuits makes investments in system upgrades, expert advice, and insurance seem like money well spent.



Kathy Drenkler is a National Underwriting Director for the Technology Underwriting Group at CNA Insurance. In this capacity, she has operational responsibility for the introduction of CNA's new product, NetProtect EssentialSM, a cyber liability product that addresses exposures faced by businesses arising out of network

damage and the resulting privacy injury and identity theft, for the small to medium-size business.

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In March, friend of NAWBO **Arline Woutersz** died of complications to her sustained illness for which she had been hospitalized since October in London, England. Arline was a past national president of British Association of Women Entrepreneurs (BAWE) and vice-president of The World Association of Women Entrepreneurs (FCEM) and most recently a vice president of Network of Entrepreneurial Women Worldwide (NEWW).

She had attended several NAWBO events including the Women's Conference in Dallas in 2005 and Orlando in 2006. Arline was an enthusiastic and diligent worker to bring women business owners into the spotlight around the world. Her gentle spirit and incredible ability to befriend anyone will be sorely missed.

NAWBO member **Pat Tull**, owner of Professional Document Examiners and one of the leading forensic document examiners in the nation, died in her home in April at the age of 72, after bringing joy to so many of her colleagues.

Pat was a fixture in the Central Oklahoma business community. She was active in many organizations that promoted opportunities for women, including NAWBO Central Oklahoma, where she served in various leadership capacities since the 1980s and served as president in 1994-1995.

DOING BUSINESS WITH THE GOVERNMENT: HURRICANE KATRINA RECOVERY CONTRACTS

To date, the federal government has awarded more than \$15.6 billion worth of contracts to assist in rescue, relief and recovery efforts related to Hurricane Katrina.

Nearly 29 percent of those government contracts were awarded to small businesses, according to preliminary data. This exceeds the federal government's 23 percent prime contracting goal by almost 6 percent. Of the 29 percent:

- 7.9 percent has gone to Small Disadvantaged Businesses
- 4.3 percent has gone to women-owned businesses
- 1.3 percent has gone to HUBZone firms

Nearly 22 percent of contracts, or \$3.4 billion, went to local businesses of all sizes in Alabama, Louisiana, and Mississippi. Of that amount, approximately 57 percent went to local small businesses.

In New Orleans, 58 percent of SBA's district office portfolio of 8(a) firms received government contracts.

SBA has made it a priority to facilitate and identify small business contracting opportunities. Soon after Katrina struck, five procurement center representatives, under the leadership of a senior official with significant procurement experience, were assigned to work with federal agencies to find relief and reconstruction contracts and subcontracting opportunities for Gulf Coast businesses.

SBA was a partner with the Department of Commerce and other agencies in establishing and operating the Hurricane Contracting Information Center (HCIC), a portal for small businesses to access contract assistance and information. SBA has now taken over responsibility for operations going forward. To date, the HCIC has fielded tens of thousands of calls from interested businesses and the website has had nearly 57,000 hits.

This is a story about how two women developed an original approach to starting a business by including positive cultural components that helped overcome the problem of limited funding. One of these components is the magic of elevating simple trust to the level of real friendship. The second is generous sharing of time, assets, and talents. The third? Daring to bring an enterprise to life by choosing communicating from the heart as an operating principle.

Handcrafted greeting cards and exquisite art works for personal gifts and interior decoration manifest the individual and common vision of Sarah Takahashi and Viktoria Vidali. These women are venturing into a new dimension that deepens the art of greeting and gift giving by providing a distinctive alternative to cookie cutter card and gift clichés. Years ago, handwritten letters required not only time and fine penmanship, but thoughtful content and words of sincere affection; the same held true for gifts, which were mostly fashioned at home. Today, refining greetings and gift giving to an art requires no less. The act of giving should come from the heart and emanate — with memorable visual power and eloquence — recognition and honor of the loved one's human value.

The New Woman

Hope for a bright future lies in the power and creative endeavors of the New Woman. What defines the New Woman? Her awareness of the need for more love and beauty in our world. New Women are rising with ever-greater influence to transform this dark age of fear and insecurity into an era of peace, environmental renewal, and social justice. Therefore, it is not surprising that their businesses often have higher goals than commercial success alone. The New Woman is determined to dispel the illusion that "might makes right" because she knows, and history verifies, that every empire fell when deceit and greed replaced truth and charity.

Sarah, a young New Woman, has shared her passion for design and crafts by giving handmade cards to friends and relatives since childhood, and spontaneously decided: Why not widen the circle?

One of the reasons I love 'Greetings With Heart' is that it combines the beauty and sweetness of creation with the intensity and good sense of enterprise. This combo comes through in our website as well as in our meetings and how we treat each other. We often have breakfast at Viktoria's lovely mountain home. We gather around a big round table, gab about what's going on in our lives, and when the dishes are cleared, exchange ideas and brainstorm. It is a comforting approach because we truly act as a team.

The process of starting 'Greetings With Heart' was as relaxed and fun as I imagine starting a business can be. As partners, we have fostered a strong bond with one another by maintaining open lines of communication. Success for us is more than having a profitable business; it's having fun.

Viktoria, a New Woman with a camera, gives us her picture:

In my reading I came upon an intriguing and bold statement, which at first glance seemed too good to be true: 'Do something you love and it will bear fruit.'

Now, there are two essential ingredients to this recipe. The first is to find something you REALLY love to do, and the second is the active verb 'do,' which requires a commitment to keep moving forward.

We spent several months designing and refining our collections, securing the best and most reliable suppliers, discussing quality, size, pricing, packaging, shipping, deciding which nonprofits we wanted to support, and in



Sarah Takahashi and Viktoria Vidali.

the process grew to appreciate just how many details have to be fine-tuned before a product can be placed on the market and how important it is to project a cohesive business philosophy.

I saw symbolism in all this, even in our amusing mistakes or my silly episode, which was at the time not so funny. One afternoon I crawled in ice plant on a plateau overlooking the beach to take a close-up picture of a wildflower. Within hours, I broke out with a terrible rash. The culprit? Poison oak, lying hidden beneath the ground cover. That went down in GWH history as Viktoria's Secret Photo-op!

Now that we all have the first ingredient, we look forward to testing the recipe to see what kind of delightful fruit we will bear!

In summary, the essence of what this team of entrepreneurial New Women has learned is that "getting your feet wet" is all it takes before stepping fully into the water and swimming. Or, as the ancients have said: The journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. One thing is certain: courage and team spirit go a long way in making life the grand adventure it was meant to be.

By Viktoria Vidali with Sarah Takahashi. When you visit www.greetingswithheart.com, elegantly designed by Santa Cruz webmaster Orlando Vidali, we hope you'll see the ingredient we are adding to standard business fare: the personal touch and a desire to communicate life's beauty with others. Greetings With Heart plans to include international artists in its online guild. Look for a new collection from Mauritius Island this summer!

TRADE MISSION PROPELS NAWBO MEMBER INTO INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS



In February, NAWBO Memphis member Sharon Watkins participated in NAWBO's Women in Business Trade Mission to Belgium and the Netherlands. After only a few months, Watkins has announced the evolution of her company, TSG Enterprises, into RadiusPoint, a technology-based, problem-solving organization with expansion offices now opening in Rotterdam, The Netherlands and Istanbul, Turkey. *NAWBOtime* spoke with Watkins about her perceptions of the mission and the advancement of her business into international markets.

NAWBOtime: *How did you become interested in participating in NAWBO's first woman-only trade mission?*

Watkins: The plan for international expansion was for 2008; however, at the NAWBO national conference my

plans changed drastically. At the breakfast on Thursday morning at the conference my group of Memphis attendees discussed which breakout session to attend. I decided to attend the International session, which is where I met Nyamusu Igambi of the Commercial Services in Houston. Nya spoke about the upcoming trade mission trip to the Netherlands and Belgium. I was so intrigued that I left the session to talk to Nya further about the trip.

Initially, I did not plan to have a physical office in Europe; however, the market is in great need of our services and it made sense to take this step. We have plans to staff the Rotterdam office with a team of our current staff that is willing and excited about working in Europe for short periods of time. We will work through the process of hiring staff in the Rotterdam area.

NAWBOtime: *What knowledge and resources did you gather during the mission that helped you expand overseas?*

Watkins: The specialist in the Netherlands and Belgium ensured that we had quality meetings with possible partners or sales representatives. We also attended meetings with local attorneys that shared information about doing business in their country. I had six different meetings with

possible partners that could represent my company's services and software. One of those meetings has developed into a relationship/partnership with a company in Rotterdam. The relationship has created more opportunity than I could have imagined and my company is opening our first international office in Rotterdam in June. We also have a partnership with a company that has a local presence in Istanbul, Turkey.

NAWBOtime: *How has the trade mission helped you meet your business goals?*

Watkins: Participating in the Netherlands and Belgium Trade Mission trip has been one of the best experiences in my business career. I knew that my company needed to expand to international countries to remain competitive. When this opportunity became available through NAWBO, I couldn't say no.

The initial thought process was that I can't do this because I am too small or it is too hard to work in another country. However, I have found that other than cultural differences, working in Europe is really not that different than working in the United States. My plan is to take on each European country to create a presence through satellite sales offices with our main office located in Rotterdam.

ARE YOU A HUMAN HELICOPTER?

Remember the helicopter on the stage of the play *Miss Saigon*? What does a helicopter do? It hovers, hovers, hovers.

Has your career or your business been hovering at the same height? The good news is that you have not crashed to the ground. But how long can you hover before you run out of gas? The bad news is that you are not soaring.

Are you ready to go to your next level? Are you ready to soar? Before you answer the human helicopter question, let's first look from a chronological perspective.

Let's look at the last decade...the Internet has certainly become the information highway; dotcom's have come and gone and come again. Now look at the last couple of years. Martha went from PR queen to prison to prime time.

And what have you done? Sure you work hard. That's not the point. The question is, do you work smart? Are you doing the things you need to be doing to move from hover to soar?

Ten tips to stop hovering:

- 1. Think, talk, and act with clarity.** Answer or instruct in the time it takes to walk across a room. Each call, conversation, and communication needs to have a clear call for action. That means no excuses and no second guessing. The marketplace does not have time to clarify confusion, and neither do you.
- 2. Identify your true value.** This isn't something you can do for yourself. Ask those around you: "What value do I provide to my customers?" You'll be surprised to find that it often isn't what you think it is. Your value is not in how

many years you have been in business. Your value is in how you can use those years to make a difference in your customers' personal or professional life.

3. Adapt a 21st century mindset. You have to think, talk, and act differently than you did just five years ago if you want to soar. You need to talk in terms of the results you provide rather than the process. Your value is in how your client will be different after working with you: the results that you bring to your clients.

4. Identify your defining moments and don't talk through them. A defining moment is a moment that can change the future. When you're lucky, you recognize those moments at the time they happen. Less lucky, at least you recognize them in retrospect. When you most want to talk... that's when you want to ask questions. Try asking just one more question today than you did yesterday.

5. Have a game plan. Agree up front with the client on the objectives and expectations of the project. Agree on how you will measure success and the value success will have to your client.

6. "Heat-seek" the decision maker. There are many people who can say no, but only one person that can say yes. At the end of the day, who will sign off on this project? That is the person with whom you need to develop a relationship. You can only soar if you have the actual pilot in the seat.

7. You've got to know all that you've got to know. Do you know what you don't know and are you willing to learn? Do you know why someone should choose you, your product, or service? Can you grow your business while you

are learning about sales, marketing, sports, technology, and the world? Everything you learn will help you in one important defining moment.

8. Embrace the twist. How can you twist what you know to stand out from others in your field or in the marketplace? You already know everything you know to stop hovering and start soaring. What you need to do is present it in a way that attracts business. You want to be the light not the moth.

9. 80/20 rule. You've heard about this rule before. Now here's the twist. Your job is to keep moving forward. You can't afford to wait for 100% perfection. Get to 80% and then GO. Each conversation, each encounter, and each day your criterion for soaring is to keep moving forward.

10. Be a peer...not a vendor. If you or your company see themselves as a commodity, you are tethered to Earth. If you see yourself as a vendor, and if others see you as a vendor, you are doomed to hover. See yourself as a peer to the decision-maker, develop relationships, and you will soar above your competition.

Now you have the steps you need to stop hovering. It's up to you to implement these steps one-by-one. You will stop being a human helicopter using your energy to only go side-by-side and front-to-back. Using the same energy you can now take your career or your business to the next level.



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NAWBOgear

This year marked the launch of the NAWBOgear Branded Merchandise Program. NAWBO members showed their style by submitting design ideas for a variety of new products sporting the NAWBO logo. Judges selected seven winning items based on usability, shelf appeal, production factors, and cost value. All of the NAWBOgear products can be purchased through NAWBO's online store at www.nawbo.org. The winning items and their designers are:

- NAWBO Business/Computer Tote, Ellen Hart, Careerbags.com
- NAWBO Beaded Bracelet and Beaded Lanyard, Sara Gustafson, The Celestial Center, Inc., on behalf of NAWBO Orlando
- NAWBO Diversity Greeting Cards, Anna Kania, Up240
- NAWBO Business Accessory Set (bag, card folio, jotter, and business card case), Amy Mallet, Amsley Promotions
- NAWBO Silk Scarf, Suzanne Pease, Ampersand Graphics
- NAWBO Lapel Pin, Alan Sklut, Diamond Empress
- NAWBO Chocolates, Carol Webster, Cassel International

NAWBOtime spoke with the NAWBOgear winners to get the back-story on each product.



NAWBO Business/Computer Tote
Ellen Hart, Careerbags.com

NAWBOtime: What was the inspiration for your product?

Hart: I have been designing business cases for women for over 16 years and I wanted to

incorporate great design, quality, function, and style at a price point that was affordable. Taking key elements from some of the best products that we have created over the years, I sourced materials that would allow this product to look and feel expensive and send a message that says, "This woman looks professional and successful."

NAWBOtime: What role has NAWBO played in your life and business?

Hart: I have stayed in my little office in a factory for the past 16 years. It has forced me to get out and meet other like-minded businesswomen.

NAWBO Beaded Bracelet and Beaded Lanyard
Sara Gustafson, The Celestial Center, Inc., on behalf of NAWBO Orlando



NAWBO Diversity Greeting Cards, Anna Kania, Up240

NAWBOtime: How does your product represent the spirit of NAWBO?

Kania: The greeting card collection, with drawings representing cultures from around the world,

celebrates the diversity of NAWBO members and all businesswomen. NAWBO creates a supportive environment that helps us grow, succeed, and contribute. We in turn, nurture our business relationships with the gesture of sending personal notes to clients, vendors, partners, colleagues, and employees.

NAWBOtime: What role has NAWBO played in your life and business?

Kania: NAWBO keeps me connected to the top professionals in the country. It is a resource for learning from the best but also a place where I can contribute with my expertise and be helpful to others.



NAWBO Business Accessory Set (bag, card folio, jotter, and business card case)
Amy Mallet, Amsley Promotions

NAWBOtime: What will NAWBO members enjoy about your product?

Mallet: The tote bag is comfortable and stylish, while the jotter and card cases are easy to access. I also like the idea of coordinating all the components. They complement each other in terms of practicality and style.

NAWBOtime: What role has NAWBO played in your life and business?

Mallet: I have developed relationships with so many smart and creative women. I know that we can count on each other's expertise whether it be a question relating to business, personal or anything in which we are involved. I have so much respect for our members, and have learned so much from everyone.



NAWBO Silk Scarf
Suzanne Pease, Ampersand Graphics

NAWBOtime: What will NAWBO members enjoy about your product?

Pease: The scarf is printed on 100% pure silk that has a soft, lovely drape and a quality feel. The design uses the logo as a design element and really dresses up that basic black or grey suit.

NAWBOtime: What are your business and leadership goals?

Pease: Ampersand Graphics is doing just fine, and I will continue to find interesting projects that challenge my mind and pay the bills. But my new business, & designs by Suzanne, designing wearable art, demands a whole new target audience and has energized my imagination. My goal is to establish a name as a designer of unique, one-of-a-kind statement accessories that are recognized in the fashion industry. Using my design skills for wearable art allows me more flexibility without concern for client deadlines and budgets.



NAWBO Lapel Pin
Alan Sklut, Diamond Empress

NAWBOtime: What was the inspiration for your product?

Sklut: Upon being introduced to NAWBO in November 2006, I was impressed by the membership and the warm greeting. Being in jewelry, which is almost entirely a feminine product, I thought this was a natural for a man of my talents to participate in. Upon investigating more about NAWBO I saw a logo that could easily be translated into a beautiful, yet powerful symbol of success in the business world.

After being accepted as a member in December, I soon heard the news that the NAWBOgear competition was being held. To create a signature logo jewelry piece that captured the essence of "Beauty, Grace, and Power" for all women striving to become an integral force in the business world became a driving goal.

NAWBOtime: What are your business and leadership goals?

Sklut: To become the ultimate resource for all those who love the gem and jewelry arts with quality and truthful information in an industry that is its own world economy through private enterprise. I wish to set a standard of ethics and trust for an industry that often is plagued, rightly or wrongly, with bad press and misgivings on many levels. This is so important for a product that is universally adored, yet far too often mistrusted.



NAWBO Chocolates
Carol Webster, Cassel International

NAWBOtime: What will NAWBO members enjoy about your product?

Webster: Obviously, it's chocolate! But it's also a unique way to remind women that they are not alone; they are part of a powerful 10 million+ strong group of women entrepreneurs, all of whom are facing the same challenges and issues.

NAWBOtime: What role has NAWBO played in your life and business?

Webster: When I first joined, I was not sure that it would offer me anything. My original purpose in joining was to increase my business through membership. Since then, I have found that membership in NAWBO brings me something much more valuable — a sense of community with other women business owners in the area, and a sense of "sisterhood" which allows me the security of knowing that any one member in my NAWBO chapter stands ready and willing to help me and other members at the drop of a hat.

To purchase NAWBOgear products, visit www.nawbo.org.



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