



31 OCTOBER 2008

Suzanne Ravenall's tips for women on how to get ahead in business today

Set your goals — to begin the process of achieving your goals, you must first map out where you want to go.

You can achieve this by setting your goals. Your business goals should be specific, have time frames and be realistically attainable.

Actively pursue your goals — take some time to think about every specific action you need to take. Utilise your skills and resources to their fullest. Brainstorm all the possible avenues you can take to achieve your goals. Be proactive rather than passive.

Create goal-achieving plans — you need to create a step-by-step plan for each one of your business goals. The more specific and detailed you are in your planning, the better your chances for success.

Make a daily to-do list — at the beginning of each business day, examine what you need to accomplish. Focus and direct your energies towards your goals.

Regularly evaluate your progress — if your business goals are your destination points, you need to regularly evaluate how far you have moved towards them. Did you meet your expectations? What are you doing right? What are you doing wrong? Apply the 80/20 rule to spend your time wisely.

Networking — building a business network is an important part of achieving your goals. Every time you make a contact you open another doorway of opportunity. Your contacts become possible customers, employers, employees and avenues to exciting places with higher earnings. The wider and better maintained your network, the better.

Focus on what works for you — play towards your natural inclinations. This means you need to focus on what you do well and work on the rest of your skills that are pertinent to your business. Make an effort to delegate tasks you don't know how to do to others with expertise and aptitude.

Be prepared for the unexpected — successful businesswomen prepare and practice for every eventuality. Like a fire drill, you need to have a plan for particular situations. By adapting to each situation, you make it an opportunity rather than a problem.

Evolve your goals — you are a dynamic woman who is continually changing as the world around you changes. As such, you need to evolve your goals to match the changes in yourself and your environment. As a businesswoman, staying ahead of trends can give you an advantage. When you achieve your goals, you need to celebrate your success. This gives you the momentum to take the next steps necessary to achieve your next business goal.

BUSINESS Times

Source: Business news and analysis supplement with a popular, people-orientated approach. Visit our web-site at: <http://www.thetimes.co.za/business/businessstimes/Default.aspx>.