

8 Things Women Entrepreneurs Need to Excel

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(A selfie with some new friends!)

What's the single thing holding women back from being wildly successful entrepreneurs?

Themselves, says [Mary Cantando](#), a business consultant, author and speaker who works with women who want to build multimillion-dollar businesses. Cantando recently led a Quantum Progressions Live Mastermind for the [Women's Center for Entrepreneurship in New Jersey](#). I attended the networking program, which was held at CBS in New York City.

Certainly, the attendee buzz included words such as “empowering,” “passion” and “nurturing.” Still, one of the touching moments for me was during the Q&A when a woman introduced her 13-year-old daughter and spoke of her business venture. The audience—which included a handful of men—applauded with humility. There was a true sense that our work—and struggles—as women business owners were paving the way for the next generation. Several people whispered about a future on “Shark Tank.” The 70-year-old Cantando did a wonderful job encouraging women of all ages.

Here are 8 essentials that Cantando says women need to thrive as business owners:

1. **Think big.** “Every day wake up and think: ‘What’s the biggest thing I could do today?’ It takes big thinking to make a difference in the world. You can’t be afraid to get a line of credit, hire employees or develop a new offering. Start today; whatever you put out there, say something big about yourself, and then you have to live into it. [Start thinking and acting big every day.](#)”

2. **Take a risk.** “Success is on the other side of that mountain. You’ve got to cross the mountain and get out of your comfort zone. It’s so easy when you have something nailed down, and you can do it in your sleep, and you’re so in control, and you can get an A-plus every day. There could be a huge upside to getting uncomfortable. I could make a difference in society. I could create jobs. I could impact my industry. I could [make a difference](#) in the way my daughters and granddaughters see me.”

3. **Change your perspective on sales.** “So many women think sales is a dirty word. If you believe the product or service you’re offering is going to make a difference in someone’s life, and you can

save someone money or enhance their life. If you truly believe that, how dare you not give someone a chance to buy it. Sales isn't about pitching something people don't need or can't use. If you're trying to educate me about something that will improve my life and you believe in your product or service, how *dare* you not give me the opportunity to consider buying it?"

4. Be tenacious, even when you're tired. "I believe there are women all over the world who need me to do my job even when I don't particularly feel like it. You must think of your customer base and [your potential customers](#). You may be tired one day, but when you think about your current and future customers, you have the tenacity to continue working hard because someone out there needs your expertise. I need to do my part and live big and share my information so someone else can live big and share her information."

5. Revamp your elevator pitch. "Look at things a little differently. Instead of doing your elevator speech from the perspective of your business, consider what your customers struggle with and how you resolve that struggle. Explain your business from [a customer's perspective](#). It takes some tweaking, but it can make a monumental difference."

6. Make smart hiring decisions. "Women often create a job for themselves rather than create a business. If I can bill \$500 an hour and I could pay someone \$30 an hour to do a task, I'm losing \$470 an hour to make that decision. That's a bad business decision. The ones who do hire usually try to find the cheapest person and not the best person. Identify people who are better than you in certain areas. Hire them, be sure they have the tools they need to do the job and get the heck out of their way. You want to get good people who can help you build the business. The cheapest person on the street isn't going to help you build your business; they are going to need to be micromanaged because that's how they work. You may have to pay twice as much, but the idea is that someone can take over tasks so you can do higher level things."

7. Learn how to negotiate. "Women are our own worst enemies. [Negotiation](#) is a business skill that you must understand. It isn't just giving things up or getting things. Every negotiation is a trade. You just don't bring the price down; you ask for something in return for everything you give. Start to negotiate minor things like an upgrade to a hotel room. Feel comfortable asking for things and trading things with people."

8. Reframe negativity. "Whenever something that may seem negative happens, I immediately state three good things about it. For instance, if I get a flat tire on the way to work, I say out loud: 'It's not raining, I have a spare tire and I'm glad I didn't wear that white suit today.' It's important to do this when someone else perceives a negative event that's happened to you. Pull in positivity."

Above all, Cantando says start now. You're exactly where you're supposed to be.

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