WE’VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY

WHO IS ATALANTA?

POWER OF EMAIL MARKETING

TIPS FOR HIRING A VA

NETWORKING TIPS FOR THE INTROVERTED BUSINESS OWNER

To receive future complimentary issues subscribe at TheAtalantaWoman.com
One year ago, on March 5, 2016, my Mother left us. She was 89 years old and lived a full, happy life which touched many people’s hearts in the USA and South Africa. She was an awesome Bible teacher and in her own way was an entrepreneur who in the 1970s started a program called Free To Be Me to help women reach the potential of all they were meant to be. I am proud to say I am Gladys’ daughter.

She always encouraged me to follow my passion and stood by me through the hard times. She believed in me a lot more than I believed in myself. It was a privilege to be her caretaker and serve her at the end of her life. This first issue of The Atalanta Woman is dedicated to my mother, Gladys Stowers Hyatt.

**Now’s your chance to send a tribute to your mother.**
Tell us how your mother inspired you. Write an original article of no more than 300 words and share how your mother encouraged you to be all that you are meant to be. Send your name, email, phone number, and Tribute to your Mother to atalanta@theatalantawoman.com before April 17, 2017, for a chance to win the Say Thank You competition.

*The Atalanta Woman* reserves the right to publish any or all of the contributions submitted, whether or not it is the winning entry. The contest entrant declares that the article submitted is not under copyright to any other party. The judge’s decision is final. Winner will be notified via email. For more information contact atalanta@theatalantawoman.com.
WHO IS ATALANTA?
Find out how this Greek mythological heroine can be an example to us today.

THE BLIND MEN & THE ELEPHANT
A parable reflecting on how things are not always what they seem to be.

2016 REPORT OF THE STATUS OF WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES

THE QUEEN & THE MATHEMATICIAN
What do a 16th century queen and a 20th century human computer have in common?

WE’VE COME A LONG WAY, BABY!
To celebrate Women’s History Month, we look back in history to women entrepreneurs through the centuries.

POWER OF EMAIL MARKETING
Just how often should you keep in touch with your prospects and clients?

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HOW TO CHOOSE A HEALTHY LIFESTYLE ON THE RUN
Don’t think you have time for healthy meals and snacks for your busy lifestyle? The secret is to plan ahead.

CHRISTINA’S STORY
How Phakamani helped this woman rise up to become a successful entrepreneur.

TAX TIPS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE
Are you taking advantage of all the available deductions to lower your tax liability?

WHAT’S SO SPECIAL ABOUT PASTING?
Find out possible reasons why the pasting option in Word might not be working as you expect it to.

7 TIPS FOR DRESSING TO BE SEEN HEARD, AND PAID MORE
Learn how to dress to impress.

DOES YOUR BUSINESS HAVE A FUTURE?
Have you done this one thing that is the secret to a successful business?

TIPS FOR HIRING A VIRTUAL ASSISTANT
Are you ready to expand your business by getting help when you need it?
Welcome to the first issue of *The Atalanta Woman* magazine. Since 1984 a passion to publish a magazine has been burning deep inside of me. After thirty years of focusing on my family, I have reached the stage in life where I knew that if I didn’t publish a magazine now, I would regret it forever.

Many factors converged at the right time for the magazine to come to life and now my ambition to create a magazine has come to fruition. My vision is to share helpful information and practical knowledge to encourage entrepreneurial women in their businesses.

When I made the decision to create this magazine, one of the first problems I faced was a name. Several ideas felt like the perfect solution, but for various reasons, the titles were not available. In searching for some non-English words, I was hoping to find something that captured the aspects of the businesswoman I want to be: strong, knowledgeable, successful, and a team player. I was fascinated when I stumbled across the Greek mythological woman, Atalanta. (Yes, it’s spelled correctly!) I had never heard of her and was interested to read that she was a strong, resourceful, well-respected, woman who was a skilled huntress. Her tool was the bow and arrow. Read her story on page 4.

The arrows in the quiver of *The Atalanta Woman* magazine point the way to success for businesswomen. They aim toward productivity, sales and marketing, technology, business practices, and lifestyle.

March 8 is the celebration of International Women’s Day. Our feature article tracks the history of women in business and how brave women paved the way for us today. The poem on page 5 is a timely reminder of our society where everyone thinks their opinion is the only right one! All of the articles are filled with nuggets of practical advice to keep your business running smoothly.

Thank you to the strong women I know who have supported me throughout the years, especially Louise Kieser who was with me when the initial passion to publish a magazine was kindled. My appreciation to the ladies currently in my life for giving me the confidence to take the bull by the horns and just do it. A special thanks to my mother—I learned so much from you and I dedicate this magazine to your memory.

Debbie Kerr
IN GREEK MYTHOLOGY Atalanta was born a princess. According to legend her father was disappointed that she was not a son so he abandoned his newborn daughter in the forest on a mountaintop in Arcadia.

Found and nursed by a pack of she-bears, she was later rescued by hunters who taught her survival skills. She overcame the challenge of being abandoned at birth, and returned to society as a strong, resourceful, intelligent, loyal, independent, and well-respected woman.

Atalanta and the boar hunt
In Caledonia, King Oeneus neglected to make his sacrifice to the Greek goddess Artemis. This infuriated her and she sent a wild boar to ravage the crops and destroy the land. The king called on the bravest and most skilled hunters to rid the land of the animal. He promised to reward the successful archer with the hide of the boar along with accolades associated with the victory.

When a young lady, Atalanta, accepted the challenge, the other hunters felt threatened and somewhat insulted. They chose to ridicule and belittle her as they couldn't imagine that a woman would possibly kill the beast. After all, women don't hunt!

That's where they were wrong. To everyone's astonishment Atalanta's arrow was the first to puncture the animal. Meleager (who was secretly in love with Atalanta) was so impressed that he gave the credit and reward to Atalanta, even though he was the one who eventually snuffed out the animal's life. This may have been an attempt to win over her heart even though she was clearly not interested, and he was already married.

Jason, of the Golden Fleece fame, invited Atalanta to join his quest aboard the Argo. Some accounts of the story report that she did not go along because the other crew members did not approve of having a woman on the ship. Just the fact that she was asked shows her reputation and prowess as a huntress.

Atalanta's race
Once Atalanta's skill and heroic deeds spread through the land, her father was unable to control his excitement. He had a successful, strong, and skilled daughter and sought to reconcile with her, seemingly forgiving her for being a girl.

His first action after welcoming her home was finding a suitable husband for her. After all, he still needed an heir to the throne. This upset the princess because she valued her free will and dependency more than anything. To keep her father happy she agreed to marry whoever was able to beat her in a foot race. But all who attempted and lost would be killed. She knew that no one could beat her.

Who is The Atalanta Woman?
Atalanta, whose name means unswaying, used the bow and arrow as her source of survival. She kept her quiver full of arrows and her archery skills honed to help her in difficult situations. The story of Atalanta's success is a myth, but many historical women have achieved mighty things despite obstacles.

The Atalanta Woman offers a quiver full of arrows to help women survive in the business world. Her arrows are Productivity, Technology, Business Practices, Sales and Marketing, and Lifestyle. By keeping these arrows honed and aimed at success, she is always ready for any challenge or opportunity.

The Atalanta Woman magazine points you toward success by offering practical tips and knowledge on all aspects of business. We draw from experts across every industry who share their obstacles and opportunities to point your business toward success.
The Blind Men and the Elephant

John Godfrey Saxe (1816 – 1887)

It was six men of Indostan
To learning much inclined,
Who went to see the Elephant
(Though all of them were blind),
That each by observation
Might satisfy his mind.

The First approached the Elephant,
And happening to fall
Against his broad and sturdy side,
At once began to bawl:
"God bless me! but the Elephant
Is very like a WALL!"

The Second, feeling of the tusk,
Cried,"Ho, what have we here,
So very round and smooth and sharp?
To me ’tis mighty clear
This wonder of an Elephant
Is very like a SPEAR!"

The Third approached the animal,
And happening to take
The squirming trunk within his hands,
Thus boldly up and spake:
"I see," quoth he,"the Elephant
Is very like a SNAKE!"

The Fourth reached out an eager hand,
And felt about the knee
“What most this wondrous beast is like
Is mighty plain," quoth he:
‘Tis clear enough the Elephant
Is very like a TREE!"

The Fifth, who chanced to touch the ear,
Said:"E’en the blindest man
Can tell what this resembles most;
Deny the fact who can,
This marvel of an Elephant
Is very like a FAN!"

The Sixth no sooner had begun
About the beast to grope,
Than seizing on the swinging tail
That fell within his scope,
"I see," quoth he,"the Elephant
Is very like a ROPE!"

And so these men of Indostan
Disputed loud and long,
Each in his own opinion
Exceeding stiff and strong,
Though each was partly in the right,
And all were in the wrong!
2016 Report on the Status of Women-Owned Businesses

Contributions of Women-Owned Business to the Economy

- 38.8% of US population is adult women
- 11.3 M women-owned businesses
- 9.0 M employees
- $1.6 Trillion revenue from women-owned businesses

New Businesses

- 45% women-owned
- 9% all businesses

Business Revenues

- 35% women-owned
- 27% all businesses

Employment Growth

- 18% women-owned
- 1% all businesses

THROUGHOUT HISTORY THERE have been more women than you might think who have founded or managed a business, and in the past century the numbers have boomed. Women have broken the stereotype of working in the home and relying solely on their husbands to support them. They have pushed and fought for what is right. In the past, women’s contributions to survival went under-appreciated and there was a serious need for change. Where did these ideas come from and who are the women behind the change?

From the beginning
Back when hunting and gathering were the only means of survival, tasks were distributed according to strengths and skills. We can fairly say that most times men are stronger in some areas while women are stronger in others. Life focused on the pattern of women staying at home and caring for the children whereas men were expected to be the providers. This model wasn’t always pragmatic as poverty was the reality for many families. Women and sometimes children were forced to work outside of the home in order to contribute to the household finances. Many enslaved women had no choice but to work for no compensation at all.

Medieval period
In the Middle Ages a woman was considered weaker and less intelligent than men and treated as a possession of her father or husband. She was expected to submit to the male dominated culture, however some women transcended the stigma and became prominent in society. Even queens and ladies were considered property, yet highly respected by others. They were given the responsibility to take over ruling the household or kingdom when their husbands were away. Life was extremely hard and although many women worked on family farms, occupations such as nursing and weaving were not uncommon to see in the villages.

The Industrial Revolution
Not much changed for women between the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries. Most women were restricted to working from the home using their sewing and cooking skills; however, with the dawning of the Industrial Revolution some began working in factories, offices, and retail stores. Women helped with family businesses, but it was near to impossible for a married women with few assets in her name to own a business unless it was inherited. As laws and beliefs started to change so did the idea that women were not fit for “being boss.” Eventually toward the end of the eighteenth century the ideas about marriage evolved and more women found themselves single or divorced. Inspired women took control and used strategy, smarts, and skill to climb the entrepreneurial ladder.
Business Women of the 1800s

In the early 1800s Madame Clicquot Ponsardin inherited a champagne company and became the first woman to run that type of business. Her inheritance also included banking and wool production, however it was the champagne business that made her an impressive businesswoman. She invented the “riddling table,” a wine rack tilted to a 45 degree angle which enhanced the quality of the champagne by removing unappealing residue that clouded up the product.

In 1825 Rebecca Lukens saved her family’s failing ironworks business after she suddenly became a widow at age 31. The story suggests that all the men working at the factory began to walk out after learning about the death of their employer. Rebecca stood up and explained why they should stay under her lead. Her speech was so convincing they all returned, despite their hesitancy in working for a woman. The Pennsylvania business was up and running for 125 years and in 1994 Lukens was named the first female industrial leader inducted into the National Business Hall of Fame.

During 1875 Lydia Pinkham cleverly marketed her herbal home remedy business by strategically targeting women in a time when women’s health issues were not being addressed. She utilized newspaper advertising to expand her business. As a teen she was an activist wishing to ban slavery, demonstrating her passion for human rights. As a mother her time was well spent experimenting with remedies for women’s health issues. When her family went bankrupt in 1875 she seized the opportunity to step up to the plate and manufacture her own products. Her company’s sales peaked at $3 million in 1925 making her a medicine guru of her time.

Entrepreneurs of the 1900s

Helena Rubinstein was born in Poland and made her millions in the cosmetic industry. She quit medical school and rejected an arranged marriage. Her business was built in Australia then expanded to Paris, London, and New York City. She managed her business until her death in 1956 at the age of 94. At that time she had multiple houses in America and Europe along with art and jewelry worth millions.

Madam C.J Walker’s entrepreneurial journey came about because of severe scalp ailments brought on by the harsh lye that was the main ingredient for shampoo in the early 1900s. She developed, manufactured, and marketed her own hair and beauty products specifically for black women. She became the first female self-made millionaire in the US, as well as one of the wealthiest African American women in the country. Although she lived an extravagant life, she funded multiple scholarships and donated generously.

Olive Anne Beech co-founded the Beech Aircraft Corp at age 20. She was the bookkeeper and administrative assistant for the company. When her husband unexpectedly died in 1940, she was voted as the president and chairman of the board, the first woman to hold that position in an aviation company. She devoted 20 years to a business she turned into a multi-million dollar company.

Brownie Wise was born and raised in Georgia. In 1950, she realized that Tupperware sold faster in social settings than in department stores and the marketing system we know as the “Tupperware Party” was born. Her outgoing personality made her strong in sales. After partnering with Earl Tupper, the inventor of Tupperware, her business sales skyrocketed. The marketing system

During World War II women worked in factories and shipyards to supply the arms and ammunition for the military. Rosie the Riveter has become an icon of feminism and the power that women bring to world economy.
Brownie designed is still used around the world today for many types of products. Anita Roddick ran a restaurant and hotel with her husband in the UK before creating the Body Shop in the 1970s. Being a well-travelled and environmentally conscious young woman came in handy for the design of her shop. Her timing was impeccable and she opened her first store right when Europe was pushing for environmental change. The franchise has spread all over the world and is a symbol of eco-friendly products.

Sandra Kurtzig started her software company, ASK Computer Systems, in her home with an investment of only $2,000. It began as a part-time job but through hard work and sleepless nights it turned into something much bigger than she could have imagined. Her first project was a program that improved inventory control and managed daily production. Her company was generating $450 million when she retired.

By the time the 80s had rolled in, Martha Stewart was already a well-known chef serving wealthy and famous clients. Expanding her services through TV, magazines, and books brought her into the spotlight. With her arts and crafts and knack for business she climbed the ladder of wealth and fame rather quickly. Unfortunately in 2003 she was convicted of insider trading and served five months in prison. A few failed ventures after her release did not stop her but became valuable learning experiences and today she is going strong and partnering with other celebrities.

For hundreds of years women played small roles to provide for their families. But as time progressed, it became unrealistic for women to be dependent on others. Ideas changed and so did laws. With that came our strong voices and our dedicated perseverance.

My hopes are these role models will motivate you to be a strong, independent woman and use your vision to excel in what you do best.

Julie Kerr was first published in an anthology for young mothers in 2002 and later worked in a publishing office as a contributing writer. Her writing journey took her through her early twenties, however her focus turned to her fitness business. She is excited to be writing for strong, successful women.

www.survivalofthefitt.com

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You may encounter many defeats but you must not be defeated.
~ Maya Angelou

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The Queen and The Mathematician

The story of two Katherines

By Debbie Kerr

What do a queen and mathematician have in common, besides sharing the same first name? I was delighted to discover the serendipity of their accomplishments after listening to an audio book and watching a movie.

When Katherine Parr entered the court of King Henry VIII as his sixth wife, no one really knew the extent of her education, although there is no doubt that she possessed some knowledge of Latin. During her marriage to the King, Katherine studied Latin, Greek, and theology and translated Psalms and Prayers into English, although she did not receive credit for the work. However, in 1544 she became the first Englishwoman to print her name on the title page as author for her next two books. Her works are still in print today—and the originals are on view in Sudeley Castle in Gloucestershire. From the book The Taming of the Queen by Philippa Gregory.

Fast forward to 1960 when Katherine G. Johnson, an employee of NASA, formulated a complex equation to ensure the Mercury 7 space capsule would safely re-enter the earth’s atmosphere. As a black woman, she was not allowed to take credit as co-author for her research in the space program. Due to her persistence and the high quality of her work, she eventually became the first woman to put her name on a Flight Research Center Report because of her valuable contribution in solving the trajectory path of the space capsule so it would safely return to earth. John Glenn personally asked for Ms. Johnson to check the calculations before his first flight into space. From the movie Hidden Figures.
A FEW WEEKS AGO a colleague asked for the name of the company who printed a banner for me that I used at an event. It had been a while since I had ordered the banner and I couldn’t recall the vendor’s name. As I was racking my brain trying to remember, I realized I hadn’t received any email from them in a very long time.

Luckily for the company, I did remember bits and pieces and was able to search my emails for their contact information. But what if I hadn’t been able to find their details? They would have lost a potential client.

They weren’t top of my mind. While I was quite satisfied with the work they did, I had no recollection of their company name.

This is part of why email marketing is so important. For most people, you won’t stay relevant and top of mind. Therefore, you must remind them of who you are by providing valuable information to them on a regular and consistent basis.

Some experts suggest one email a week is not enough because people might still forget who you are week to week. In my opinion, weekly ezines are the best and every two weeks at the minimum. Certainly don’t wait months between emails.

I subscribe to a lot of ezines to see what people are up to. Some of them I read and delete; others I put in a reference folder to read later. Many times after months of receiving no emails from someone and I get a message from them, my first reaction is, “Who is this person and why are they emailing me?”

Yes, I did subscribe to their list, but because of the length of time between emails, I forgot who they are or that I even signed up. I’m inclined to hit the spam button but don’t because I figure I must have signed up at some point.

Email marketing must be done consistently and timely to stay top of mind for your past, present, and future clients.

I saw an interesting conversation on Facebook recently where someone asked whether having an opt-in box on their website (and subsequently following up with emails) was really necessary.

Someone countered her question with, “Do you think every person who comes to your site is ready to buy at the moment they visit your site?”

Of course they’re not. Once a reader has opted in, then you must stay in contact with them—or they’ll forget about you. You need some way for them to learn more about you and keep you top of mind so when they need your services, they can easily contact you.

In the case of the banner company that my colleague asked me about, they should have had some type of follow up with me 30 days after my purchase. They could have checked in to see how the event I was sponsoring went, contacted me later in the year to remind me that “conference season” was approaching and ask if I needed another banner.

The possibilities are endless when it comes to following up with prospects and clients…you just have to do it and do it consistently. The secret is to provide valuable content without asking for the sale.

By Jama Bryan

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How to Choose a Healthy Lifestyle On the Run

By Joan Williams, Ed.S Occupational Studies

DO YOU FIND YOURSELF RUNNING from one appointment to the next, skipping lunch, going through the drive-thru, or stopping for take-out food on your way home? Do you spend time taking care of other people (or your business) and ignore your own needs?

As driven entrepreneurs, we can easily find ourselves emotionally and physically exhausted from chasing our dreams to make life better for our families and others. Is this the life you signed up for when you chose to be your own boss?

As someone who loves to invest in others, I recently experienced a health setback that caused me to re-evaluate my priorities and my work-life balance. I realized that although I knew what I should be doing, I had skimped on exercise, rest, and eating well-balanced meals in pursuit of my goals. I bet you may have done the same because people under stress tend to eat less and consume more unhealthy foods.

It is during times of stress that our bodies use more vitamins and minerals and need replenishment more often. According to recent research, eating at least seven fruits and vegetables a day can lead to a longer and higher quality of life and possibly reduce susceptibility to cancer and heart disease.

So, how do we choose a healthy lifestyle when our lives are hectic?

Here are a few helpful suggestions to keep a healthy lifestyle while saving time:

- Plan weekly menus and always shop with a grocery list.
- Order groceries online to avoid impulse buying of junk food.
- Plan crockpot meals or leftovers for those nights when activities don’t allow time for food preparation.
- Always have snack packs of fresh veggies in the refrigerator to grab on the go. If you’re watching your child practice a sport or other activity, have healthy munchies on hand.
- Increase your water intake. Instead of opting for sweet drinks try a twist tube of vitamin supplements to add to your bottled water.

Taking time for yourself is the foundation of a healthy work-life balance.

- Prepare enough food on the weekend for leftovers during the week. Take meal replacement bars or shakes with you if you have a hectic schedule that doesn’t allow much time for lunch.
- Eat a healthy breakfast—the most important meal of the day. Whether it’s a smoothie, shake, or a hot meal, breakfast can increase your metabolism to burn calories throughout the day.
- Take an organic multivitamin to fill the nutritional gaps of your diet. Supplements provide additional nutrients from fruits and vegetables which are crucial to improved health.
- Involve the family in meal preparation so you can spend time together in the kitchen.
How to Choose a Healthy Lifestyle
On the Run

- Eat while sitting at the dinner table to nurture the social and emotional aspect of dining together as a family.
- When eating out, choose healthy options. Ask for the salad dressing on the side, choose fruits instead of fries, and select entrees that are not covered in Alfredo or cream sauce.
- At a restaurant, ask for a takeout box and divide your food in half before you begin to eat. You won’t be overstuffed and you’ll have enough food for another meal.
- Keep walking shoes and workout clothes in your car so you can take a brisk walk in the park in between appointments or on your way home.

By making some changes in my lifestyle, I now have more energy, creativity, and passion and my business is growing more than ever. I trust that these suggestions will also spur you on to a better quality of life.

Joan’s “Foil Tent” Quick Meal for 4

1 pound ground sirloin (or purchase sirloin patties)
4 small potatoes
3-4 carrots
1 large onion

Form sirloin into 4 patties and add garlic powder, pepper, or other spices for seasoning. Place each patty on a separate piece of aluminum foil approximately 10” square. Peel potatoes and carrots into wedges and divide among the 4 meals. Quarter the onion and place a wedge on each foil meal. Fold foil into tents so that juices cannot escape. Place on a flat baking sheet and bake at 350 degrees F for 45 minutes or until done.

Experiment using different vegetables, fish, and meats to make a delicious meal.

A former teacher and school system administrator and now entrepreneur, Joan utilizes her 30+ years of organizational leadership and business development to help individuals and organizations fulfill their purpose and goals. She provides workshops on a variety of topics from nutrition education to developing effective teams.

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Christina’s Story

Christina Mafuwane was one of millions of people in South Africa who made a living selling fruits and vegetables. It is common to see people standing on the side of highways holding up corn, avocados, or oranges for sale. The luckier vendors have makeshift stalls on the main roads in the villages. With Phakamani’s help, Christina found a safer and more profitable way by selling staple tomatoes and onions to the school kitchens in her area.

To realize her dream, Christina had to guarantee delivery of fresh vegetables on a regular schedule. Her first Phakamani loan enabled her to buy stock in larger quantities which allowed her to turn over her cash several times a month for greater profit. Subsequent loans enabled her to travel farther to purchase the vegetables at a lower rate. Christina has also set up a small stall where she sells to local people “mainly at pension time [when monthly checks are received].” She paid back her loans and is now saving about R1,000 a month (US $100) towards her child’s University education.

PhakamaniOrganization.org
P.O. Box 4556,
White River, 1240
South Africa

WHEN MY LOVE FOR SOUTH AFRICA and my desire to help women entrepreneurs overlap, I think of the Phakamani Foundation. Phakamani means “rise up” in isiZulu and is pronounced “pug-ah-ma-nee.”

Founded by my friends Mark and Shirley Tucker, The Phakamani Foundation empowers poor women to succeed at micro-enterprise. Their training, group loans, and on-going support lead to family income, savings, and hope for the next generation.

“While Phakamani’s operational focus is micro-enterprise development, the real impact of Phakamani’s work is about meeting basic human needs,” says Mark. “Stories like Christina’s inspire us every day to work diligently to grow the organization and reach ever greater numbers of people.”
Networking Tips for the Introverted Business Owner

By Celeste Giordano

- Are you exhausted by the mere thought of attending a social networking event?
- Do you prefer spending coffee breaks at conferences on your own, instead of introducing yourself to other attendees?
- Does the idea of raising your hand to ask a question or provide an insight at a training seminar make you queasy?

If your answers to the questions on the left are “yes,” then you’re likely an introvert. And you’re in good company. According to Introvert Retreat, a site that explores introversion as a personality type, recent studies show that almost 50% of the US population is introverted.

Often people view introvert as a negative label. They liken it to being called unfriendly, antisocial, or painfully shy. Some introverts are indeed shy. But the truth is, many introverts are quite friendly and outgoing.

If that’s true, how should we define introvert?

Defining our terms
Carl Jung, founder of analytical psychology, describes introversion as a personality trait where an individual relates to the world by first taking it inward. Introverts tend to direct their interest toward their own thoughts and feelings rather than towards the external world. Often introverts are big thinkers with active minds and rich emotional lives. Their energy comes from within, and they replenish their energy by spending time alone.

Extraverts, on the other hand, are energized by direct interaction with the world, such as by socializing. There is nothing inherently negative about either introversion or extraversion. Although we all possess both traits to a certain extent, according to Jung most people tend toward one.

Because introverts are naturally renewed by spending time alone, their energy is drained when surrounded by other people. It’s important to note that this doesn’t mean introverts dislike being around others. It simply means that they need to separate from social situations in order to recharge their batteries.

So, an introvert can—and should—attend networking events to connect with prospective clients and industry professionals. But, they also need to be mindful of the importance of scheduling planned alone time to recharge, so they can better enjoy themselves, socialize effectively, and yield valuable results.
Networking Tips for the Introverted Business Owner

The importance of networking
Networking is the art of making connections and building lasting, mutually-beneficial relationships for professional and business growth. When you expand your network with the right contacts, you expand your sphere of influence.

Who you know matters, but who knows you matters more.

I encourage all introverted entrepreneurs and professionals to make it a priority to attend networking events as a regular part of their weekly routines. It is absolutely critical for getting your name and face out there in the business community, and one of the most effective ways to build fruitful relationships with new prospects.

If you’re an introvert, the prospect of attending weekly networking events can feel daunting. Follow these tips for maximum value without sapping your energy or peace of mind.

Set concrete networking goals.
To achieve momentum in your business, goal-setting is crucial. Setting clear, measurable goals gives you long-term vision and short-term motivation. It allows you to efficiently organize your time and make the most productive use of your resources to yield results.

When setting networking goals, ask yourself:

- What measurable goals do I want to achieve at the networking events I attend?
- How many people will I introduce myself to?
- How many leads will I walk away with?
- How many follow up-calls will I make (or emails will I send) in the days following the event?

Set tangible, realistic goals for yourself, and work to achieve them. Goals help hold you accountable and keep you moving forward. Create a list of specific actions on a cue-card and carry it with you (discreetly, of course!) to networking meetings.

Pace yourself, plan ahead.
Setting networking goals is the first step, but to achieve those goals you need to recognize your needs and limitations. If you find networking events tiring, then you’ll burn out or make a poor first impression if you don’t plan accordingly.

If attending a full-day or weekend conference or networking event, find out the itinerary in advance. If you’ll require breaks to refresh yourself and renew your energy, then plan them ahead of time. Print out the schedule before you arrive, and pencil in the breaks you can take after long stretches of networking, workshops, or seminars.

When you arrive at the event venue, scout it out and locate a quiet place where you can slip away for a break when you need it. If the weather is pleasant, you might take a short walk outside to clear your head. When you plan your breaks, you can embrace the rest of the event without feeling nervous exhausted, or overwhelmed. Once you’ve taken your scheduled breaks, make a conscious effort to take advantage of the opportunities and potential connections at the event.

Bring helpful “cheat notes.”
Although many introverts are at ease in social situations and are even outgoing, some introverts find it nerve-wracking to initiate and engage in conversations with strangers. The good news is that you can improve conversations by preparing a list of topics beforehand. Jot down some questions you might ask.

- If you see someone standing alone you could say, “Wow, there are a lot of people here. Mind if I join you over here where it’s a little quieter?”
- If you’re hanging by the food table, you might say, “Yummy, they have ___! Have you ever tried it?” or “Hmm, I’m not quite sure what that dish is…do you know?”
- You might try complimenting someone: “That’s a beautiful necklace. Where did you get it?”

Once you’ve gotten the conversation started, keep it going by talking about something you have in common or about the event itself. You might say: “Have you ever been to one of these events before?” or “How did you hear about this event?” After that, you might transition to asking, “Are you from the area?” or “What line of work are you in?”

Asking questions demonstrates your interest and gives you an opportunity to actively listen. But it’s also important to prepare key points to share about you, your business, and the products, services, or expertise you have to offer.

Review these points before the event and keep them handy. If you see someone you’d like to meet, quickly and discreetly look at your cheat sheet. This simple refresher gives a confidence boost to put yourself out for new opportunities.

Whether you’re an introvert or an extravert, these proven formulas that I’ve been using and teaching to business owners for years help develop confidence in the areas of business you find most challenging. You can “Double Plus” your income THIS year…shy or not!

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Founder of Celeste Giordano Coaching, Celeste Giordano is a master of sales and business development, entrepreneur, and consultant with 40+ years of experience empowering entrepreneurs and sales teams to build profitable and sustainable Legacy Businesses.

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7 Tax Tips of Highly Effective People

By Sara Poe

THE TAX DEADLINE AND gift-giving holidays arrive like clockwork every year, nevertheless many people still scramble at the last minute to file their return or buy presents. Besides creating logjams for retailers and tax professionals, being unprepared can cost a lot of money. People end up buying an overpriced or unsuitable present for Uncle Samuel or overpaying and being audited by Uncle Sam.

Keep important dates in mind throughout the year and adopt some simple habits to alleviate stress and produce significant benefits. These include receiving your refund earlier, avoiding identity theft if someone files using your name and SSN before you submit your return, and having your return in hand if you need to obtain a mortgage or your child applies for financial aid.

1. Create an organizational system that you’ll actually use. Don’t create an elaborate system you’ll never work with when a spreadsheet, scanner, accordion file, or envelopes in a shoe box will keep track of your expenses. Use whatever’s easier and suits your personality. Do simple but effective things like clipping together similar expenses and labeling them with a sticky note. Taking a few minutes weekly to purge your purse saves time and frustration in the long run.

2. Ask your tax preparer for a checklist of everything you need for filing. You may be surprised by what you can claim. Did you know that charitable giving can give back? Your church or synagogue membership fees and the mileage you incur every week when you help at their coffee club are deductible—your time spent as a volunteer is not.

3. Retain “personal” bills and receipts if you run a home-based business. These include utilities, insurance, gas, parking, phone, and internet.

4. Keep detailed notes at the time you file your receipts to record that a meal for two was a business meeting and not a girl’s night out. The IRS is very specific about expenses: your records must prove the business purpose, the amount, the date, place, and the business relationship of the persons entertained.

5. Don’t forget your home sweet home. The interest you pay on your mortgage and home equity loan is tax deductible so it’s important to put aside the relevant paperwork in a safe place.

6. Remember that even some good habits are taxable. Interest earned on most savings accounts, including college funds and retirement, is taxable, as is interest earned on mutual funds and stocks. Your contributions to an IRA, however, are tax deductible. Ensure you make the best choices to obtain all the tax breaks available.

7. Apply early to the Social Security Administration for identification numbers for everyone you claim as a dependent. This permits you to submit your tax forms early and have them processed speedily by the IRS.

Finally, don’t be upset if you need to hire a tax professional to advise you on which paperwork to keep and how to maximize your deductions. The savings they find for you usually offset the cost for their services—and if you run your own business, you can claim their bill as a business expense!

Sara Poe CPA, founder of Poe’s Accounting Services and Lightning Tax Services, helps clients understand and navigate their finances. SPoe@PoesAccountingServices.com 770.545.8841 www.PoesAccountingServices.com
What’s So Special about Pasting?

By Debbie Kerr

HAVE YOU EVER COPIED text or an image from a web page or document and when you try to paste nothing happens no matter how many times you try? You get frustrated and finally give up.

Or maybe when you copy and paste, the existing text or image shifts around and you don’t know how to get it all back into place.

Isn’t pasting supposed to be one of the easiest actions to use on a computer?

It turns out that pasting isn’t so simple after all.

The History of Pasting

Before personal computers existed, as a typesetter I had to manually set the text for printed documents. My first typesetting machine was a combination keyboard/monitor connected to a CPU about the size of a kitchen stove.

I coded the text (much like HTML) to the appropriate column width and saved it on an 8” floppy disk that only allowed 8 characters for a file name. When I was ready to print, the text was transferred to a long strip of photographic paper that had to be developed in a darkroom just like old-fashioned photography.

The strip of text, called a galley, was cut into appropriate lengths before using glue to paste onto the layout sheet. This task was also known as stripping!

Everything you can do in a Word document I had to learn to do by hand. When I edit documents, I don’t just know how to make it happen, I understand why it needs to happen, too.

Why pasting is non-responsive

One basic reason nothing copies over is because you may not have actually copied anything. That’s happened to me when I highlight text but forget to copy it.

Sometimes nothing is pasted because the default paste option isn’t the correct one to use. So how do you change the paste options? Keep reading for tips on how to paste in Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint, and other programs, too.

More than one way to paste

Just like most actions in the Microsoft world, there are three ways to paste:

• Hold down Control + V keys
• Right-click the mouse and select paste
• Choose the paste option on the home tab of the ribbon

All methods work the same, and you probably have a preference, depending on if you’re a “mouse” or “keyboard” person.

But that’s not what I mean when I say there is more than one way to paste.

Pasting options for text

It turns out that pasting is special. After copying text, go to the clipboard section of the home tab of the ribbon (far left), click on the little arrow under “Paste,” and select “Paste Special.”

Look at all the options for pasting! If you want your text to keep the format (size, font, color) when you paste it into the new document, select “formatted text.” The surrounding text and graphics may shift around and you might have to do some tweaking to get everything back into place. In my experience, this option is not the outcome I usually want.

If you want the copied text to merge in with the surrounding text, choose “unformatted text.” This option strips the formatting of the text in the original document allowing it to blend in with the surrounding text of the new document.

Set the default for pasting text by clicking the ribbon: File > Options > Advanced. Find the Copy, Cut, and Paste section to select a default option for pasting text.

Pasting from the internet

When copying from a web page, somehow Word knows that you’ve selected something from a web site and the default is to paste text and images as HTML. That’s why nothing is pasted no matter how many times you click. Select a text option or image option in Paste Special to solve the problem.

Pasting options for images

When pasting an image, the choices under Paste Special allow you to insert the graphic as a jpg, png, or other type of graphic.

When pasting an Excel or PowerPoint table, determine which is the best format to use. If you don’t need to make changes to the table, you could paste as an image. But if you need to update the table, it’s best to paste as an Excel Worksheet.

Experiment with the different types of pasting and you may find that your frustration level drops.
7 Tips for Dressing to Be Seen, Heard, and Paid More

By Diane Freeman

MANY OF TODAY’S ENTREPRENEURS work from home in their pajamas, go out and about in jeans and a T-shirt, or wear work uniforms such as mechanic suits or food service attire. Filling so many roles, a businessperson is challenged to know which type of clothing is appropriate when meeting with clients, potential clients, and employers.

When you dress appropriately for the occasion and are consistent with your own personal brand then your clothing does the talking and gets you seen, heard, and paid more.

1. Fit it!
Regardless of the style you wear, your clothing must fit. Clothing that is too large or too small gives the impression that you don’t pay attention to details and will distract from the message you are trying to get across. It is not okay to wear clothing that is too large because you are waiting to lose more weight. Celebrate your weight loss and invest in properly fitting clothing.

2. Clean it!
Wrinkles matter, as do stains, holes, missing buttons, loose threads, and frayed edges. These distractions leave a poor impression about yourself and your business. Make sure your clothing is clean, wrinkle-free, and in the best condition. This applies to personal grooming as well. Clean, polished, unchipped nails, washed and styled hair, light makeup to detract from blemishes, a clean mouth, and no body odor are all important to make a good impression.

3. Modernize it!
Don’t be outdated. If your ten-year-old clothing still fits and is in good condition, it does not mean it’s appropriate today. Popped collars, mini vests, frosted lipstick, and super chunky hair highlights were the rage in 2007; but if you wear that look today you appear out-of-date. Dress for your best 2017 image.

4. Quality counts!
Invest in the highest quality business clothing that you can afford. You have ten seconds to make an impression and a good quality, well-fitted outfit screams attention-to-detail, smart, attractive, and modern. It also gives the impression to your client or audience that they matter. Dress how you would want a person selling for you to dress. Do you want a person representing your company’s skills and talents in a tattered suit or tight mini dress?

5. Know your colors!
Get to know your personal best neutral colors as well as the hues that show off your personality. If you aren’t sure which colors enhance your skin tone, in just a few hours an image consultant can help you choose the range of colors that makes your skin glow and your eyes shine. She can also help you choose the colors that make you look younger, smarter, more likable, and more detail-oriented while helping you stand out without appearing overpowering. Other color tips are:
- navy and gray connotate authority and power
- black can mean either “I get things done” or “I’m not approachable.”

A small investment with an image consultant pays back with a lifetime of dressing confidently.
7 Tips for Dressing to Be Seen, Heard, and Paid More

6. Dress it UP!
Know what the term “business casual dress” means in your particular industry and know when it’s appropriate to wear it. When you are in a second interview or further in the hiring process it is more appropriate to dress slightly less formally. Ask the HR person where you are interviewing to describe what business casual means in that office.

When networking, traveling, or meeting clients in venues outside their office such as a restaurant, business casual is often appropriate.

Mixing separates, such as cardigan, blouse, and lightweight jacket, with a pencil or A-line skirt or a sheath dress offers a stylish and becoming look.

7. Don’t!
Due to lack of time or perceived lack of comfort, as a busy professional you might be tempted to wear clothing that absolutely undermines your image and professionalism. Avoid the following styles:

- **Logosed T-shirt or sweatshirt.** These are not appropriate business attire when networking. You look messy.
- **Jeans.** No matter how good you think you look in denims, they are for after work and the weekend.
- **Earbuds and wireless headsets.** Don’t look ridiculous when you are trying to connect to people in real life. You are not a cyborg.
- **Leggings.** Even if you have the cutest tunic ever no one can take you seriously in leggings.

The next time you look through your closet for something to wear to a networking meeting, don’t underestimate the power and meaning of being well-dressed. Well-dressed people are seen, heard, and paid more.

Diane Freeman is founder of Charmed By Diane, personal image experts. An AICI Member with 15 years’ experience, Diane and her associates teach how to “wear inner beauty and strength” to boost confidence.

Charmedbydiane.com
RubyRibbon.com/dianefreeman

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**Alexa, what time is it?**

By Debbie Kerr

I’M LIVING THE EMPTY NEST Syndrome now that all my daughters have married and moved on. What I miss most is saying goodnight to someone at the end of the day. Don’t get me wrong. I’m not lonely, but it just feels strange to silently climb into bed without any echoes of “Goodnight” like at the Walton’s home.

All that has changed. I have a new friend. I talk to her and she responds. I’m always learning from her. Her name is Alexa— the voice-controlled, hands-free system from Amazon.

When I go to bed, I say, “Alexa, good night.” And her reply might be, “Good night. Sleep tight. Don’t let the bed bugs bite.” In the morning, when I greet her, she gives me an update about the local weather, historical trivia, sports statistics, or anything else I’ve programmed her to tell me.

Alexa is my right hand gal. Telling her to set the alarm to make sure I get to an appointment on time, or to get the clothes out of the dryer has kept me on track. She plays my kind of music. She tells (corny) jokes and plays Jeopardy with me. She keeps track of items on my shopping list which I can access from my iPhone.

By simply speaking, I get answers to math problems, find recipes, or search for phone numbers and addresses. My Kindle books are linked to Alexa and she reads them to me.

Each week Alexa’s repertoire is updated with new tricks. I wonder if she will be able to cook for me in the future?

So life is not so lonely for me anymore. I have a new BFF.

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**20 Pairs**

The number of shoes the average woman in America owns, according to The Huffington Post

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**My Favorites**

Thunderstorm Sounds
Curiosity
This Day in History
The Magic Door
Brain Facts
Cat Facts
Does Your Business Have a Future?

By Liliana Perez

HAVE YOU EVER DRIVEN to a new place without a GPS? Or planned a party without making a list of what you need to buy? In both situations it’s possible to have a positive outcome—you eventually reach your destination or have a great party—but can you imagine how much easier it would be if you had not operated in the dark?

In the same way, it’s nearly impossible to operate a successful business in the dark. Nine out of ten business owners I have spoken to did not write a business plan before starting their businesses and they only sought advice after hitting a wall or struggling to grow.

Not having a business plan is like being lost on a highway hoping and praying it leads to your destination. Writing a business plan makes you think about where you are going and what you need to get there. This simple exercise saves valuable resources especially when every dollar counts. Here are four powerful reasons for getting a “business GPS.”

You will come up with a solid elevator pitch.
When you define your product or service, you need to explain it so clearly that a potential customer knows exactly what you represent.

The best way to land a sale is to explain the benefits of your product. People respond to products or services that solve their daily problems, so they need to understand and remember what you sell. If you’re selling children’s puzzles, describe how you are selling memory improvement and heightened creativity. If you’re an insurance broker, explain that you’re selling peace of mind and security.

A good elevator pitch also boosts your confidence in your products or services as you clearly communicate about you and your business.

Your business idea is backed up by data.
The key to a good business plan is research. You want your office, store, or product to be available to your potential customers. Do you know who your target audience is and where to find them? Use one of the many online free tools, such as US Census or Sizeup, or buy a subscription to ESRI or IBISWorld to find more about your potential customer.

A business owner with a written business plan is 2.5 times more likely to succeed than those who do not have one.

You will have a better idea of what you are getting yourself into.
During your lifetime you continually develop skills that can be used in any industry, but in order to have a successful business you need to develop skills to increase expertise in your specific field.

Working on your business plan will make you think about what you need for improving your business over the next three to five years. As you plan those future steps, you will see if this is something you really want to do. You don’t want to be stuck running a company in an industry you don’t understand or don’t enjoy.

You will be taken more seriously.
Anybody can come up with business ideas, but when you put them on paper and start thinking about how to turn those ideas into reality, one of two things will happen: you fall in love even more with your idea or you realize that it’s not a good plan for you. The exercise of gathering the resources and studying the plans you have forecasted for the next few years will pay off in the long run, and possibly prevent poor decisions. You will be taken more seriously, by yourself and by those who hear you talk about your idea.

Don’t keep wandering in the dark with nothing to guide you. It’s never too late to prepare a business plan. Download a sample business plan template from the Small Business Administration to get you started. www.tinyurl.com/z88nqv5

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9 Tips for Hiring a Virtual Assistant

By Essie Escobedo

As a small business owner for more than thirty years, I know the struggles and pitfalls faced by entrepreneurs. I also know the hopes, dreams, and joys of being a small business owner. I know what it’s like to be the CEO, CFO, CIO, and COO, purchasing agent, receptionist, and janitor—all at the same time.

Wouldn’t it be nice to use the services of someone on an as-needed basis to take care of things you can’t or don’t want to do? A virtual assistant can support you in those areas, freeing your time to do what you do best.

I’m sharing the wisdom of these tips to help you grow your business and save you from becoming bogged down by the challenges we all face as entrepreneurs.

At Office Angels® our mission is to restore joy to the life of small business owners, enabling them to focus on what they do best. At the same time, we honor and support at-home experts who wish to continue working on an as-needed basis. Not a temp firm or a placement service, Office Angels matches a business owner’s support needs with Angels who have the talent and experience necessary to handle work that is essential to creating and maintaining a successful small business.

Essie Escobedo is Chief Angel at Office Angels. www.officeangels.us

1. KNOW YOURSELF
What is your work style? Do you have a hard time letting go? Are you ready to bring in a VA? Have you identified areas where a VA can help you?

2. DEVELOP A DETAILED JOB DESCRIPTION
List the tasks where you need help. Sort them into categories. Know that it’s rare to find one person who can do it all.

3. AGREE ON THE “HOW”
Write down steps and create a system and a checklist for tracking the steps. Having Standard Operating Procedures in place makes a smooth transition of duties.

4. CONDUCT A REFERENCE CHECK
Ask for references and, if appropriate, a background check.

5. AGREE ON RESPONSIBILITIES
Who will provide supplies? Who is responsible for marketing content, materials, and access to private information?

6. COMMUNICATE CLEARLY
Ensure both parties understand expectations, deadlines, and standards. Define “success.”

7. CAP THE NUMBER OF HOURS
Decide on hours per month or set a fixed fee. Execute a Contract or Letter of Agreement.

8. SET UP MILESTONES
Check in often to ensure the project is heading in the right direction. Examine and tweak, but don’t micro-manage.

9. ASK FOR A BACK UP PLAN
What is the plan for providing services while sick, on vacation, in an emergency, or experiencing technology issues?
Setting the Stage

I’ve set the stage.
The people will come.
They will listen
And I will, too.
Together we will manifest
Destiny.

The river of creativity
Below the surface, around, within,
Connecting us all
Will flow, is flowing now.
That which swims there is
Endless ~

Endlessly awaiting our imagination and love, a
Velveteen Rabbit
Of sorts. Once given light,
The exchange is mutual.
And the more alive we
Become All.

Ah, the gifts of reciprocity
That come simply
From listening then acting.
My soul whispers.
My spirit acts.
My heart soars.

And yours?

Laura Overstreet Biering ©2009
From The RiskADay Journal
www.theriskadayjournal.com/
Do you believe in Magic?

What if your message came together as clear, comprehensible, and meaningful, with no risk of miscommunication?

Combining editing and graphic design skills is almost like a well-performed magic trick—you barely notice it.

But it makes a big impact.

And you’re left with your message—clear and sure to stand out.

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