



WOMEN IN RURAL, REGIONAL AND REMOTE ENTERPRISES

- WiRE SHOWCASE SERIES -

Dr Sandra Baxendell

Entrepreneur - Goat Veterinary Consultancies - Goatvetoz



"The attributes to my success so far, is demonstrated through hard work and being stubborn."

ABOUT

Sandra left the Queensland public service in 2013 after a long and successful career and set up her sole trader business, Goat Veterinary Consultancies - goatvetoz, a short time later. This was a combination of a 'goats only' veterinary practice where work was done on goat farms in South East Queensland with contracted work for goat industry groups. There was a slow start initially so Sandra used her spare time to skill herself with a combination of formal vocational training and learning via reading and webinars. Now she has a Certificate IV in Small Business Management, in Training and Assessment and in Business (social media skills) to add to her University degrees. Her skills allow her to maintain her own website, www.goatvetoz.com.au, and can tinker and improve it anytime she wants.

She has worked hard on her social media sites and monitors numbers each week on a spreadsheet, noting any actions taken in the previous week that increased numbers. Not having to seek approval from management for social media posts is a major change from government that she relishes. Her Facebook page, www.facebook.com/goatvetoz/, now has over 3100 followers, well above the International Goat Association. This Facebook page has a 4.8 out of 5 star review average and she now asks people that email or private message for free advice to give a review if the advice has been complex or time consuming.

Sandra keeps learning and continuing improving; both about goat diseases and how to use social media for promoting her business. After a webinar on LinkedIn she learnt how important it was to publish articles on her LinkedIn site, www.linkedin.com/in/sandrabaxendell/, she revised some articles that were previously published in goat magazines and posted them on LinkedIn.

MEANING OF SUCCESS

- I want to eradicate goat disease, I know the steps that need to be taken and so far I am monitoring that and working on the support through social media.
- Financial security and eventually working two to three days a week.

FAVOURITE ASPECT OF BEING AN ENTREPRENEUR

- I have no government policies to hold me back, especially in regards to social media.

FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

- Acquire your skills first.
- Concentrate on the social media aspects and where your clients are and focus on that.



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CHALLENGING TIMES

- I make sure I work on my business everyday.
- Make sure you have a strong support system - I have support from my husband.
- I focus on what my strengths are. My husband handles the finances which he is very strong at doing and I handle the social media stuff.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS

- Setting up my own webpage has helped me understand the proper procedure and now I have the ability to change it whenever I like.
- Google Alerts.
- Speed reading and being able to transform content for goat farmers to progress their understanding.
- Building relationships.

FAVOURITE TOOLS

- Facebook - Personal page, a business page and a page dedicated to the eradication of goat disease.
- Website.
- Joining other relevant Facebook groups and talking to people through there.
- Communicate via Twitter.
- Posting videos on YouTube (Interviews).
- I use a program called Hootsuite, which is designed to keep all social media active and up to date, even when I'm away on holiday.

PARTNERSHIPS

- I think partnerships are a fantastic way to expand and grow your reputation.
- Consultancy helps with partners that are after the same sort of goal but they bring different skills and expertise.
- Partners are great to bounce ideas off and discuss certain business elements.

OVERALL LESSONS LEARNT

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- Consultancy helps with partners that are after the same sort of goal but they bring different skills and expertise.
- Partners are great to bounce ideas off and discuss certain business elements.