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"I cannot speak highly enough of the (WiRE) Program. I feel more confident about success because I have been given the tools to establish a good foundation"

YOU AND YOUR VENTURE

What words would describe you as a person?

Optimistic, determined, hardworking, honest, compassionate.

Describe how you would pitch your venture

You know how small business struggles to prioritise Human Resource Management until there is a problem?

Well what I do is look over the HR practices already in place and show a business how to utilise them to achieve an outcome, suggesting improvements and additions, if necessary. In fact, Evolve HR Solutions is a short term, high impact, support service promoting growth and development for the business as well as its staff. (I am working on a different elevator pitch for NFP that relates to boards and committees being the first line of employees not the first paid employee...)

At what stage is your venture?

Working on the start up but already operating

What is your service or product?

Human Resource Management solutions for NFP and small business:

- HR Administration.
- Recruitment, selection and induction processes.
- Position descriptions – PD health checks, compliance to the award. PD's that reflect the needs of a business as opposed to being attached to an individual.
- Policies and procedure reviews and compliance.
- Conflict resolution – complaint processes, interviews, mediation.
- Change management – preparing, equipping, supporting and educating staff transitioning through organisational change.
- Restructure assistance – establishing naming conventions for growth, reworking position descriptions, upskilling identification to promote from within.
- Staff development – "Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they don't want to." Richard Branson

Since starting the WiRE Hub I have become a qualified hypnotherapist. I am currently working on Employee Wellness – assisting employees to move through organisational change, smoking, stress, returning to work after illness and issues that affect their performance. Using hypnotherapy, meditation and mindfulness techniques, I will also refer to other wellness "partners" to be able to offer a range of services in this area.

What is the structure of your venture?

Solo

What type of venture do you have?

Human Resource Management Advisory Service

Does your venture reach local/national/international markets/audiences?

Local, with some interest in other towns (Emerald), a definitely interest in going national, especially in the NFP sector.

IDENTITY

In one word, characterise your life as an entrepreneur

(why this particular word)?

Evolving. I know it sounds corny, but I called my business what I strive for – growth and development.

What does success mean to you?

Getting up every day with the determination to keep going – success or failure. Get up, dress up and show up.

What is your favourite aspect of being an entrepreneur?

The creativity and excitement at seeing an idea develop into a business that can produce an income.

MOTIVATION / MINDSET

What mindset(s) helps make you successful?

I have a growth mindset, I see obstacles, challenges and failure as an opportunity to learn and grown.

What ignited the spark in you to start a new business venture or to make significant changes in an existing business?

I had was diagnosed with breast cancer in 2017. My priorities changed. I wanted to create a flexible work/life balance that gave me more time with my young family but also allowed me give back by helping other women navigate their way through their cancer journey.

How do you conquer those moments of doubt that so often stifle or trip or stop so many entrepreneurs with great ideas...what pushes you through?

I have a fantastic support network. I talk. I seek help, professionally if needed. I spend time with successful people. I seek out inspiration. I learn – do a course, sign up for a workshop, attend a networking event.

What is your favourite quote?

“I work very hard, and I play very hard. I’m grateful for life. And I live it – I believe life loves the liver of it. I live it.” *Maya Angelou*



VISION

What is your vision for your venture?

Accessible HR services for small business that empowers growth and development while fostering the health and wellbeing of staff for a committed, productive workforce.

SELF-EFFICACY AND SKILLS

To what do you attribute your success in progressing your entrepreneurial journey?

Learning – seeking out information on how to run a business successfully in 2019. Also surrounding myself with, and seeking out, successful entrepreneurs and learning as much as I can from them.

What would you say are the top three skills needed to be a successful entrepreneur?

- The ability to adapt/build resilience
- The ability to learn
- The ability to network and connect

What was your biggest mistake in an entrepreneurial context?

Doubting my abilities and allowing other, “well meaning”, advisors/people, that I sort out for advice, strip my confidence and try to redirect me away from my vision. Those times have set me back mentally and wasted valuable days/weeks while I sorted through the impact and got back on track.

What was your biggest barrier you faced in your entrepreneurial journey and how did you overcome it?

Confidence. Get up, dress up and show up. I still work on it every day.

What sacrifices have you had to make to be a successful entrepreneur?

The only thing I can think of is that I am giving up a wage, super and the “safety” of working as an employee.
Other than that, sometimes I end up working a little longer to do the job and network, which stretches me at times, but I enjoy it so find it hard to see it as a sacrifice.

In your view what factors help individuals make the transition to self-employment?

Non flexible workplaces in businesses.
Lack of acknowledgement/appreciation.
Hours.
Financial reasons.

STRATEGY

What would you say are the top three key elements for starting your business?

- Planning.
- Products and services.
- Marketing.

What has been your most successful form(s) of marketing?

Networking and word of mouth.

What are your thoughts on the value of partnerships?

I haven't had success with partnering with someone, my last attempted ended badly. I love collaboration so I am open to partnering but cautious.

Where did your venture funding/capital come from?

Self-funded

What creative strategies did you use to execute on minimal cash flow?

I have created a business that doesn't have a large outlay, it relies on my advice and knowledge. If I have had to outlay, I have made sure I have gone cost effective – I can always upgrade as the business builds

What habits helped make you successful?

Pushing through, knowing that stretching myself now is going to pay off later. Scheduling, planning and networking.

What are your top two tools that you use in your venture (i.e. online tools)

- A Virtual Assistant to proof and check all my documents.
- HR online support services.

Do you want to grow your business? How will you do this?

Yes I do. Networking, cold calling, word of mouth, website, tools such as LinkedIn

How do you stay motivated when things get busy with family and other things?

Having a passion for what I do, I find it easier to stay on track, however there are times it is difficult. I remind myself I am creating a living for my family while also creating a work/life balance I haven't been able to achieve as an employee.



NETWORKS

To what extent do you agree with the following statement and why?

“The connections and networks that exist between people and enabled cooperation is one of the most important things in entrepreneurship”

I absolutely agree. A large part of my business relies upon networking and the connections I make. Collaboration allows for creative suggestion and avenues that an individual may not see for themselves. What I lack as a skill, someone else may do effortlessly.

What kinds of networks do you access to help your entrepreneurial journey?

Organisations such as Women Connecting Women, Gladstone Engineering Alliance

Do you have a mentor? If so, how have they helped you? If not, was that a conscious choice?

Yes, I consider Tara to be a mentor through the WiRE Hub Program. Her direction, suggestions and advice has been invaluable to the success of my business. I have also relied heavily on the advice of Jacqui in regard to different types of technology – websites, social media etc

IMPACT OF THE WiRE PROGRAM

Why did you decide to participate in the WiRE Program?

I had run businesses before but felt like I hadn't laid good foundations. I also hadn't run a business for over 10 years, technology and the use of social media has developed, in the area of business, since then.

In what aspects of the WiRE Program have you participated in so far?

I have participated in a bootcamp, a couple of webinars and now the hub.

What knowledge/skills have you acquired?

Setting up a business in the digital world. The importance of getting to know your customer/avatar. Research your business idea with your avatar. Understanding the customer. Utilising social media/websites. Design Thinking.



How useful were these skills in developing your venture and/or your future career?

Utilising these skills gave me a direction, a push towards to my goal. By learning about my customer/avatar I was lead to testing my product and gained clients as a result.

What has been the impact of the WiRE Program?
(on both you personally and your venture)

It would have to be confidence. The WiRE Program gives you a direction, a place to start. It has the ability to connect you with others that can support you, provide services and opportunities for collaboration.

What benefits have you derived by participating in the program?

Confidence.

Support and networking of other women in the start up phase.

Mentoring from other successful women.

Combined knowledge from those women.

To what extent has the WiRE Program impacted upon you starting a venture? Have you started a venture as a direct result of your participation in the WiRE Program? If it has impacted on you starting a venture, have you registered an ABN?

The WiRE program has shown me that I can do this. Helped me gain confidence. Given me the support I have needed to move forward. I have started my venture as a direct result of the WiRE program. I do have a registered ABN

If you have started a venture, what do you think are the chances of business/ventures survival?

Excellent as long as I implement the tools I have been given. Plan, allow for growth and change, upskill or delegate in the strengths I am lacking.

How appropriate is the skills to you which are delivered by the WiRE Program?

Very appropriate. Each mentor/presenter has passed on valuable information in their area of expertise helping create a program that encourages thought, direction and skills.

To what extent have you applied the skills/knowledge learnt through the WiRE Program?

I attribute almost everything I have done to the WiRE program. I had my HR skills gained from the workforce, but the WiRE program showed/guided/encouraged/directed me on how to take that skill and create a business.

To what extent has the WiRE Program helped you to develop strong ties between yourself and other women entrepreneurs? Why?

The WiRE program has provided a connection between other women entrepreneurs across other regional areas that I might never have had the chance to meet. Because we are sharing the same training, we get the journey we are all on.

To what extent has the WiRE Program helped with the facilitation of emotional support for your entrepreneurial journey? Why?

The WiRE program has done an excellent job of supporting the emotional journey just as much as the entrepreneurial journey. Regular check ins each week on

To what extent has the WiRE Program helped you to get to know and network with women from different backgrounds, for example different socioeconomic status, age, generation etc?

(see two answers above re the development of strong ties)

To what extent has the WiRE Program enhanced your ability to link with other entrepreneurs and agencies outside the WiRE community that could benefit your entrepreneurial journey?

The knowledge shared amongst the women and the mentors through this project is invaluable, especially in the area of linking/collaborating with other entrepreneurs and agencies.

If your venture has not been online previously, has your venture gone online as a result of the WiRE Program?

I am working on that now. I believe it will have to be online in order to survive and compete.

If relevant, have you influenced someone else through your WiRE experience to start or grow a venture? "Passing it on"

Yes, I have told as many women as possible about my experience through the WiRE program and passed on the details of the website for them to investigate it for themselves.

Name the biggest overall lesson you have learnt in your entrepreneurial journey so far that could be passed on to other women

BELIEVE IN YOURSELF! Seek advice and mentoring but also know what to take onboard and what to put aside. Stay true to your vision and connect to people who can help you achieve it.

Where to find you online

I am in the process of working on this. Developing a website and social media presence.

Please share some final thoughts about the WiRE Program

I cannot speak highly enough of this program. The presenters, the organisers, the mentors are a fantastic example of the result of the WiRE Program. Before the course has even finished my business, still in the start up phase, has attracted clients. I feel more confident about success because I have been given the tools to establish a good foundation.

- Natalie Petersen -