

# Dulmini Ranasinghe

DERA  
*(hand made baby clothes design)*



*“WiRE” program has helped me make my childhood dream a reality.*

## YOU AND YOUR VENTURE

### **What words would describe you as a person?**

Flexible, passionate at what I do, day dreamer.

### **Describe how you would pitch your venture**

DERA is Hand Made – Baby Clothes Design Brand. I design my own patterns and sew them with quality fabrics.

### **At what stage is your venture?**

Selling.

### **What is your service or product?**

Baby clothes.

### **What is the structure of your venture?**

Solo.

### **What type of venture do you have?**

Dress making and design.

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

Currently local markets.

## IDENTITY

### **In one word, characterise your life as an entrepreneur (why this particular word)?**

Passionate. I love what I am doing.

### **What does success mean to you?**

Spend more time with my family while I have financial freedom. I wish to expand my venture, to build careers for others.

### **What is your favourite aspect of being an entrepreneur?**

Freedom. I make my own designs. If something is going wrong on the production line, I can correct it as a new product.

## **MOTIVATION / MINDSET**

### **What mindset(s) helps make you successful?**

Dress making is my hobby.

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

After the WiRE program, I got a lot of feedback and comments, and I slightly changed my business idea to make specialised baby clothing which will be unique and high in quality. So I am flexible and very free to try new designs.

### **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 saw the real customer thinking pattern from their view.

### **What is your favourite quote?**

Start from whatever you have, and do it now.

## **VISION**

### **What is your vision for your venture?**

The DERA vision is to sell quality handmade baby clothes and expand this opportunity to build employment opportunities for other women, with their sewing passion.

## **SELF-EFFICACY AND SKILLS**

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

Not giving up.

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

- Flexibility
- Be creative
- Don't give up.

**What was your biggest mistake in an entrepreneurial context?**

Procrastination. I was planning this venture four years ago, in 2016. I had everything but I didn't have that motivated mindset. If I had started it at that time, I will have learnt a lot for the past four years.

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

My sleep.

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

Support and guidance.

**STRATEGY**

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

- Passion. I love fabric, colours and design.
- I believe in myself, then others believe in myself and they loved my designs.
- I have clear purpose.

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

Networking.

**What are your thoughts on the value of partnerships?**

Looking at things with a different perspective makes everything better.

**Where did your venture funding/capital come from?**

I own my own tools Earlier, I used savings from materials and part of the profit goes into reinvesting.

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

Facebook Marketplace.

**What habits helped make you successful?**

I love sewing.

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

Partnership.

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

I focus on purpose.



## 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”*

100%.

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

My WiRE Hub group, and my friends.

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

Yes. They saw something I had never seen in my venture.

## IMPACT OF THE WiRE PROGRAM

**Why did you decide to participate in the WiRE Program?**

I was looking for motivation.

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

The WiRE Hub program.

**What knowledge/skills have you acquired?**

Business planning, marketing and advertising.

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

Invaluable.

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

I was a day dreamer, wanting to have my own dress making business, back from my childhood. I saw my first dress when I was in grade 4. When I was young in age, I was not confident enough with my skills, finance, support and motivation. Before the WiRE program, I had everything but motivation and the WiRE program has made a big change in my life and motivated me to be an entrepreneur. Within the program, no matter what ever happens, I have to complete 12 weeks and achieve my goal, so it motivates me to fine tune my business planning.

**What benefits have you derived by participating in the program?**

Realistic ideas and advice. My network.

**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 you starting a venture, have you registered an ABN?**

Yes, but I have not yet registered an ABN.

**If you had a business/venture when you started engaging in the WiRE Program, have you grown your venture or scaled it up as a result of the WiRE Program? If yes, please explain your answer (both in terms of the dollar value of the total enterprise as well as the scale-up value, or/and increase in sales or growth in customer numbers) (whichever applies)**

Yes. I finished several designs.

**If you did have a business/venture when you started engaging in the WiRE Program, what has been the impact of the WiRE Program on the sustainability of business/venture?**

I have got clear future goals.

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

Very appropriate.

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

Nearly everything.

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


Massively. We have a Facebook group, and most Fridays we connect with each other.

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

Massively. The WiRE program helped me believe in myself and I have gained confidence.

**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.?**

I have met amazing women who have different skills and life experiences.



**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?**

Very much.

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

I am focused on this, in the near future.

**If relevant, have you influenced someone else through your WiRE experience to start or grow a venture i.e. passing it on?**

Yes, I have passed this information to four women so far. One is running an art studio, and the other two are involved with a beauty care business, and the fourth has stopped working due to family reasons.

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

Connect with all the WiRE Hub members. They are amazing and they can see something you've not seen in your own venture.

*Dulmini Ranasinghe  
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