



Mum's The Boss!

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5 Tips for an Introverted Business Owner

When you run a business you're expected to be the life and soul of the party. But if you're naturally more reserved you may find this difficult. The thought of being in a large networking event with strangers can feel scary. But the thing is, when you run a business you'll need to get out of your comfort zone to network, network, network, as the marketing gurus keep telling us. Here are five tips on how introverts can handle the networking aspect of their business:



1. If you're attending network events check to see if anyone else you know has also been invited and go along with them.
2. Practice your elevator speech, this is one or two sentences describing who you are and what you do. Prepare this beforehand as well as your USP (unique selling point) then you won't have to 'think on your feet'.
3. Seek out smaller groups with only 2-4 people, rather than larger groups.
4. Make an effort to contribute to the conversation. It's great to be a good listener, but if you don't volunteer any information about yourself or your business, you won't leave any impression, so people will forget you.
5. Prepare yourself in advance. Make sure you have a list of the other attendees beforehand and do some research on them or their business, this can help you break the ice and talk knowledgeably about them. Remember, people love talking to people who show an interest in them.

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Focus on.....Carol Atkinson Bookkeeping

Mum's The Boss member Carol Atkinson provides bookkeeping services to small businesses and sole traders in Bedford and the surrounding area. With a wide range of clients from theatre production companies to childminders, the service Carol provides is flexible and individualised for each client. As a working mum of two, she fully understands the difficulties of trying to run a business from home and is perfectly happy for a client to pass her a bag stuffed full of receipts because they haven't had the time to file them themselves!

Carol's bookkeeping services range from completion of Self Assessment tax forms to VAT Returns to Year End Accounts. She works on Excel spreadsheets for smaller clients (ensuring they can also view the files without expensive software) or SAGE 50 for larger clients or those that request it. She is an Associate Member of the Institute of Certified Bookkeepers and all her work is fully insured and regulated, and complies with current Data Protection legislation, ensuring complete confidentiality at all time.

To discuss your requirements - whether you need a one off self assessment form completed or a bookkeeper for a few hours per week - or to arrange a free, no obligation, initial consultation please contact Carol on **07890 148713** or email her at carolatkinson@live.co.uk



Director of Everything! Essential Tips for Business Mums

By **Claire Burdett** - Founder and Director of Funky Angel, Professional Writer, Editor, and Publisher, and a Home Business Expert

With nearly 2 million unemployed and Britain officially in recession, many skilled and professional parents are looking for alternatives to help keep the food on the table and the wolf from the door. Both parents working is now the norm in Britain, yet the squeeze is further intensified by a recent study from the Children's Society that identified mothers who work outside the home away from their young children as one of the factors that may have a negative impact on our children's childhoods.

Working from home can answer both problems, as you are almost certainly already aware, and the good news is that it has never been easier to be your own boss, with the rise in high speed broadband and nifty gadgets, such as dongles, as well as support groups such as Mums the Boss and advice websites, such as our own Funky Angel, which just weren't around when I started out at the end of the 90s.

In addition, it seems that a recession is good for self starter professional mums who can work around their kids and use their home as a base, as many large firms are increasingly outsourcing work in order to reduce their staffing costs. Only this week, for example, leading recruitment consultants Hays revealed that markets are benefiting from the steady flow of jobs being created by the public sector outsourcing during the recession.

So you need the extra money and want to work, you can't find a 'proper' job and anyway, you really want to be at home for the kids. You have the skills and the contacts. You even have the technical know how to set up a web site and do your own marketing and sales.

But is a working from home really workable? The answer is yes!

Click through to read more...

<http://funkyangel.co.uk/Work/Working+at+Home/Director+of+Everything>



Meeting Report - February

This month saw a welcome thaw in the snow and our first meeting in our new, permanent venue at Cauldwell Community Centre. Our speaker this month was Margaret Duggan, founder of De Montfort Healthy Living, a local company which promotes complementary health practitioners and products.

As a former teacher Margaret described how she was thrown in at the deep end of the business world, being forced to run her husband's business after a serious illness. This led to a short spell in sales before setting up her own business just over a year ago. Margaret has built up her business on recommendation and through networking and was able to offer practical advice and encouragement, highlighting many of the skills we all have as mums which are transferable to the business world.

www.demontforthehealthyliving.co.uk

Online Resources for WAHMs



Here are a couple of great online business resources you can take advantage of when the children are in bed!!

<http://www.funkyangel.co.uk/forum/Forum8-1.aspx>

Consultant's Happy Hour - every Thursday evening from 6 to 10, the business consultants at Funky Angel are online offering free business advice on the forums

<http://www.startaninternetbusinessblog.com/>

Free weekly teleclasses for small business owners. You can listen to the call through your computer so you don't even have to pay for the call. Plus you can listen to the replay of the call whenever it's convenient for you - a Godsend when you have a family! Just register at the web address above and you will be sent the log in details.

Next Meeting

Thursday 12th March - 10.00-12.00

Cauldwell Community Centre, Althorpe St, Bedford, MK42 9HF

Speaker: Sue Wilson - Bedford Hypnotherapy Clinic & Bedford Complementary Health Centre