

Women's Business Partners Protégés

Women's Business Partners (WBP) is a collaborative organization coordinated by Mission Community Services Corporation (MCSC) to ensure all resources are available, leveraged and optimized to support entrepreneurial women throughout the northern Central Coast and Valley regions of California.

A WBP PROTÉGÉS GROUP is a business network group consisting of 5 businesswomen who act as a peer accountability group. The purpose of each group is to network and brain-storm ideas concerning business situations that affect the member's individual businesses. The groups meet once a week for an hour to encourage, set goals, measure progress and tackle business problems that are encountered by the business owner.

Each WBP PROTÉGÉS GROUP also has a local, successful and accomplished WBP business MENTOR who brings experience and resources to the group once a month or as agreed upon by each group. WBP MENTORS are coaches, not consultants. They offer expertise in all areas of business management to help the new business owner (Protégés) to refocus and /or can help them with specific advice. Entrepreneur Protégés and Mentors are matched according to the skills needed.

Women's Business Partners Protégés are people who:

- ✦ Are business people with primary responsibility for the health and growth of their business.
- ✦ Wish to improve and achieve higher levels of success with their business.
- ✦ Are willing to clearly define their goals and objectives and commit to achieving them.
- ✦ Are willing to make a commitment of at least one year.
- ✦ Are effective listeners and communicators.
- ✦ **Are available to:**
 - (a) **Attend two WBP Roundtable luncheons - one in Spring and one in Fall.**
 - (b) **Meet weekly with protégé accountability group in a private, mutually agreeable location.**
 - (c) **Together with protégé group, meet monthly or bi-monthly with appointed Core Mentor.**

Suggested Protégé Accountability Group Groundrules:

- ✦ Each protégé will have five minutes to share individual goals, triumphs, challenges, needs & progress. In consideration of peers, this will take 25 minutes of each weekly meeting, no more.
- ✦ Each week, one protégé may be the primary focus and may share in more detail with a goal of receiving practical and useful feedback from the group.
- ✦ Maintain a protégé group notebook compiled of weekly progress notes, goals and needs. (Format will be provided by WBP).
- ✦ When specific & similar topics of concern arise across various protégé groups, MCSC will arrange for outside guests to provide information and/or resources at a meeting of multiple protégé groups relevant to their identified needs. (Anticipated to occur once per quarter)
- ✦ Before meeting with the WBP Mentor, each protégé's goals and needs are clearly defined.
- ✦ One protégé serves as point of contact for submitting group progress reports and making appointments with the WBP Mentor.

Benefits of being a Women's Business Partners Protégé:

- ☑ Participating in and enjoying a personally and professionally rewarding experience.
- ☑ The satisfaction of starting and/or growing their business, thereby contributing positively to the Central Coast economy. (And maybe become WBP Mentors one day!)
- ☑ Encouragement of peer group and an empathetic mentor willing to listen to the Protégé's challenges and difficulties
- ☑ Identify strategies and opportunities for growth
- ☑ Gain confidence in their ability to plan and manage a venture, meet new challenges, and learn how to obtain the skills necessary for achieving results.
- ☑ Widening one's network of business contacts through peer protégés, and interaction with other Mentors in the program.