



Rarely does a day go by without someone asking me what it takes to be successful with a small business. Many believe you have to be born an entrepreneur and they quickly dismiss the possibilities without serious thought. Then again, I see individuals, mostly women, with passion burning and excited eyes sharing their entrepreneurial vision and looking to me to point the way towards the door of possibilities.

The truth is, anyone can learn to start up and manage their own business, yet not everyone succeeds. Successful entrepreneurs share similar traits (all of which can be learned!). Here are the top ten traits I consistently see in successful businesswomen:

- Adaptable:** Be tolerant, flexible and able to adjust to changes with **grace**.
- Confident:** **Believe** in yourself and your judgment. Seek out people who believe in and encourage you.
- Determination:** If at first you do not succeed, try, try, try again. Be **persistent** in achieving your business goals.
- Decisive:** **Make decisions** based on facts and good research. Understand your market and how desirable your product or service is to the market.
- Intuitive:** **Listen** to your gut, trust your instincts. No one does this better than women!
- Leader:** Be able to articulate your direction and **motivate others** to support your vision and efforts.
- Visionary:** Have a clear **vision** of your business, see the possibilities and maintain **focus**.
- Passion:** Fuel the **burning drive** in your belly and maintain a healthy competitive attitude.
- Positive:** Always approach problems with a **"can do" attitude**.

**Resourceful:** Know how to **do more with less.**

If you have these traits or believe you can develop them with a little help then you can pursue economic improvement through self-employment.

Many are doing just that – everyday more than 1,600 women become business owners. According to the Center for Women’s Business Research, nearly half of all U.S. small businesses are 50% or more women-owned. Between 1997 and 2004, the estimated growth rate in the number of women-owned firms was nearly **twice** that of all other firms while their employment expanded at **twice** the rate of all firms. The number of firms owned by women of color has increased 32%, **four times** faster than all U.S. firms. And, even more impressive, our Latina sisters are opening business at **six** times the rate of all others. HURRAY SISTERS!!

Did you know that 44% of all female-headed families with children under 18 years of age live in poverty in the State of California? I’ll bet most of them have not seriously considered starting up a small business. With a little guidance and support, self-employment is truly a viable option for all women.

Women’s Business Partners (WBP), a locally coordinated non-profit organization, ensures all community resources are leveraged and optimized to support entrepreneurial women. WBP serves everyone interested in establishing self-sufficiency through small business ownership while primarily focusing assistance towards socially and economically disadvantaged women. We can take you step by step towards success and we can also help those who speak only Spanish. Visit [www.MCSCorp.org](http://www.MCSCorp.org) or call 595-1357 to find out more.