

Collective Changes Uses Business Mentoring and Training to Get Results

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It's a formula for almost every successful entrepreneur: Take one clever idea. Mix in grit. Add financing and combine hard work. But for women in emerging countries who lack the basics of mentors, money and moxie, that clever idea to start a business falls.

Mentors Guide, Coach and Encourage



Online mentoring offers convenience

Collective Changes knows the way and shows them how with one-on-one mentoring. Our website matches the best-suited business mentors with the right women entrepreneurs to build financially, independent leaders who build strong communities worldwide.

The Result?

Role models share honest stories about business problems that kept them up until 3am and how they crushed those fears. They teach coping skills for handling stressful situations, such as when earnings can't cover payroll. Mentors also give advice on the importance of growing quality networks and building self-confidence. Yet, the mentor is also a friend. One who explains how to visit a doctor or get your child immunized for the first time.

Training and mentoring programs encourage women to take risk. Patience Marime-Ball, Principal Investment Officer and Head of Banking on Women at International Finance Corporation said, "Women usually borrow what they can afford." They generally practice responsible borrowing habits, but hesitate to pledge land and other valuable assets as collateral. So besides business education, women also need help recognizing and acting upon opportunities.

Mentees Learn, Grow and Succeed. Some become mentors

Take Joelle Pfeiffer, one of our seasoned mentors, for instance. She learned from her own circle of mentors: teachers, professors, and coaches. "They generously provided the structure, guidance and support so I could reach my personal and professional goals."

With a successful career in HR, she wanted to take her career to the next level. So, she asked two professors to take her under their wings. They mentored her in the Gestalt OSD approach to coaching and Organization Systems Development. The Gestalt OSD approach taught her to recognize the most effective, strategic level of intervention to enact and support change while balancing strategic organizational and individual priorities.



Joelle Pfeiffer with her mentor, Dr. Carter

It worked. " My mentors' helped me see my blind spots so I could make choices and improve my capabilities," she said. "By improving your self-awareness, there is an impact on everything you do, and everyone you interact with."

The Result?

"I launched a small local consulting firm to help business executives think strategically about growing their businesses," she said. Today, that small, local business has expanded to include international clients.

We also Teach how to Lead, Train and Mentor

Meet Gul Lalai of Pakistan and Zarghoona Aslami of Afghanistan. They are among the few women who hold top government jobs in male-dominated countries. In this part of the world, women often face discrimination in jobs, education and even reproductive rights.

So, they attended our “Women as Political Leaders” workshop, hosted by the World Affairs Council. This event taught them how to create a custom mentoring program that teaches women job skills and self-esteem. During the workshop, Gail Romero and Dee Beaudette, co-founders of Collective Changes, shared personal stories that showed how small, tenacious efforts benefit the larger cause of advancing women. For example, Romero explained that every risk-taker will fail. The key is to fail hard, fail fast, then get back up and don't wallow in the pain. She also warned against being all things to all people, a common mistake among women.



Gul Lalai

The Result?

Gul Lalai, a director of programs for a civil society organization, was moved. She was anxious to return to Pakistan and teach other women what she had learned. Now when Lalai conducts leadership training with her team, she often quotes these stories to make connections and trigger smiles.



Zarghoona Aslami

Zarghoona Aslami, a human resources leader also complimented the training. “With a job fraught with employee issues, this workshop changed my view about management and leadership.” She learned about program management and problem solving techniques.

Compassion, Attitude and Dedication Change the World

Collective Changes can't make all these successes alone. We work closely with our partners to ensure our mentors and mentees have the right tools to get results. Concero Connect provides the affordable Internet service so people worldwide can access the Chronus mentoring software, the SME Toolkit and Franklin Covey training materials.

We also thank the Centre for Gender Economics, the International Telecommunications Union, the United Nations, the Grameen Bank Foundation and World Bank for their generous support. And, the World Affairs Council in Seattle for inviting us to deliver workshops to foreign leaders.

The program needs donations and volunteer businessmen and businesswomen mentors to provide leadership and business skill training. To learn more, please visit <http://www.CollectiveChanges.net>.

Watch a 13-minute TED talk by Gail Romero, CEO of Collective Changes, to learn more about the organization's mission at <http://www.CollectiveChanges.net/womens-leadership-gail-romero/>