

TWO FLORIDA WOMEN SHARE ADVICE FOR ENTREPRENEURS

Women are starting more businesses than ever before -- yet many face challenges in a world that is, in many cases, still dominated by men. Despite these challenges, women are bringing innovation, tenacity and business savvy to their companies — and we're all benefitting. Women leaders who have forged the path can attest that success requires grit, determination and the know-how to create strategic partnerships. Below, two Florida women share their stories, along with some advice for others with an entrepreneurial streak.

IF YOU WANT TO START A BUSINESS,
JUST DO IT

Attorney Jennifer Englert says what motivates her each day is “helping my clients, building up our team, solving problems and seeing my efforts come to fruition.” Englert is the founder and a managing partner at the Orlando Law Group, which offers a range of legal services from family and elder law to special education and immigration. She founded the business in 2009 during the Great Recession. It wasn't exactly a time

most people would think to start a business, but Englert was able to find an office at an affordable price point, which allowed her team to establish a physical presence from the start. “We tried to keep costs low,” says Englert. “More importantly, we became visible in the community, meeting as many people as possible and getting involved in a variety of ways. I did my best to always help others and, over time, our name caught on.” For years, Englert tried to convince a colleague to start a firm with her. After finally agreeing, Englert's founding partner left only a few months after helping to get the firm off the ground.

“I should have gone for it when I first thought of it,” says Englert, “because I had everything I needed to do it on my own.” She advises anyone thinking of starting their own business to just do it. Englert continued to push forward and knew things were working when clients began coming to her with additional needs in new areas and sending referrals. Local businesses and community leaders started seeking the firm's guidance. The biggest sign her firm was on the path to success



was when she was finally able to hire employees and not do everything herself. Today, the firm has four offices in the Orlando area providing personal, neighborhood-based services that connect clientele with attorneys who care. The business model has grown to include a title company, real estate company and mediation firm.

BE THE CEO YOUR MOM TOLD YOU TO MARRY

“Women are great business owners,” says Tamara Chase, owner of Fort Lauderdale-based Chase Roofing & Contracting. “They are smart. They are intuitive.” Chase believes leveraging her unique strengths as a woman was key to honing her own style of leadership -- and encourages others to do the same.

Chase has put her own mark on the business she started 18 years ago by being a values-centered company. Anyone walking into the Chase Roofing & Contracting offices will see a sign that says “Kindness Matters” along with a list of their core values. “We take care of our employees so that they are happy and engaged as they take care of our customers, who in turn take care of the business,” says Chase. “We hire based on character first.”

When she and her husband had a bad experience with a roofing job on their own home, Chase knew there had to be a way to give homeowners a better option. The goal was to offer incredible service in all areas of roofing and then give back to the community to help make a difference locally. “I absolutely love what I do,” says Chase. “I get to spend my day connecting with others, building relationships, strategic planning and serving our community. Nothing makes me happier than this journey of being the best version of myself.” The success of the company also gave her the opportunity to follow her passion for helping others by starting a nonprofit called Emerge Movement!, which aims to develop the next generation of women leaders with lifestyle and career coaching workshops. She says, “Our motto is ‘Be the CEO your mom told you to marry.’ Having the opportunity to do this is good for my soul.” For new and would-be entrepreneurs, Chase recommends tapping into the power of strategic relationships, like finding a good career coach and developing a relationship with a banker who can grow with you and your business.