

Introduction

Remember the early days of your business? How invigorated you felt—in charge of your life, your time, and your future? You couldn't wait to talk about your new venture with friends, family and your gastroenterologist. Every day held exciting adventures. You were exhilarated, full of creative energy, and innovative ideas.

Fast forward to today. Do you say, “What happened to my life?” “Who am I?” or “What's a vacation?” You now know that running a business is demanding, often draining and peppered with unknowns. Your days are filled fending off disasters, watching former clients turn to new, hipper vendors, and wondering what social media trend has passed you by.

To top it off, this morning you caught your assistant ordering a sleeveless dress online instead of invoicing clients. You missed your best friend's birthday lunch, haven't gone to the gym in weeks (months?), and “downtime” is riding in the elevator on the way to your next appointment.

Girlfriend, you are in trouble. Take a deep breath.

Feeling overwhelmed is now your way of life. You need real solutions—more than just a lavender foot soak with rose petals floating on top.



Fear not. With *Success Without Stress, Simple Steps to Finding Calm for Women Business Owners*, you're on your way to becoming an SBO—Savvy Business Owner. You now have a chance. Soon you'll have simple, quick techniques under your belt.

Perhaps you're thinking, "You don't know my clients," or "My industry is different." The techniques in *Success Without Stress* apply to all businesses. Immigration attorneys, biscotti manufacturers, interior designers, and financial advisors will all benefit. As a business coach for over fifteen years, I've used these strategies with hundreds of clients in numerous industries. The tips in this book work.

If you're saying, "Being driven is just my nature," or "It's the only way I know,"—this is how you've felt up to now. You can change. You are not successful because you're able to go in five directions at once. You're successful in spite of it. The calmer and more grounded you become, the more success you'll experience. You'll have the presence of mind to make decisions thoughtfully, communicate clearly, and build your business purposefully. Just picture yourself operating from your inner guru.

The chapters are short. You'll have time to read them. Learn a new technique at lunch and try it out in the afternoon. Find a chapter that resonates while waiting in



your client's reception area. Then give it a whirl in the meeting. Read a chapter in the bathroom. When you leave, wearing your power lipstick, test-run a new idea with your staff.

Feel free to read the chapters sequentially or jump around. Perhaps a title will scream out to you, even call your name. Hearing voices is a sure sign that you need help. Good thing relief is here.

The exercises at the end of each chapter offer an immediate fix. I recommend completing them when you finish a chapter. It will take you less than six minutes. Your answers don't have to be perfect. Just write whatever comes to mind after you read the page. Don't wait!

Some of the ideas you may already use. (Well done.) These techniques will serve as reminders of what works. Some strategies will be new to you. Others you might know—but not yet use. What's up with that? You may be ready to try them now.

I understand feeling stressed. I spent a good part of my life that way. Prior to business coaching, I owned a communications design firm in New York City. (How many tight deadlines and budgets can there be in one day?) I developed



many of these techniques for myself in order to survive. Other strategies I developed or refined for my coaching clients. To protect their privacy, I've changed their names in the book.

The chapters and exercises are designed to develop new habits. For example, how do you fire an abusive client with grace? How can you organize your schedule so you feel accomplished at the end of the day? Or how about learning to keep a professional distance between you and your employees?

Feel free to write in the book. It's fine. If you can't bring yourself to write in a book, buy two copies (thank you for that). Put one on the shelf and write all over the other. Remember how freeing it was to scribble when you were young—going out of the lines and using any color? Have fun. No one is looking.

You deserve a life. A good one. Having a business doesn't mean you need to give that up. Isn't it time to reduce feeling overwhelmed? Even stop it cold?

I can't wait for you to get started. Once you master the techniques in *Success Without Stress*, you'll achieve more success and make more money. Oh, and be happier.