

10 Business Success Tips From Accomplished Women Business Leaders

In April 2017, Smart Business held its annual Smart Women's Breakfast and Awards program, honoring successful Northeast Ohio women business leaders. **Planned Financial Services** was honored to be a sponsor of this event and to have the opportunity to absorb insights shared by speakers, honorees, and fellow guests regarding what makes a true leader in business. We're happy to share our top take-aways below from this engaging and informative program.

KEY TAKE-AWAYS FROM THE 2017 SMART WOMEN'S BREAKFAST AND AWARDS

- 1. Be authentic.** Learn all you can from mentors, bosses and the business leaders you admire, but don't try to be someone you're not. Remain open to constructive advice, but be genuine and true to your values and beliefs. Job titles come and go, but character, integrity and reputation follow you for life.
- 2. Be confident.** Strong leaders are self-aware and don't hide their mistakes or shortcomings for fear of looking weak. Confidence comes from recognizing your own strengths and limitations and surrounding yourself with those who complement your skills and talents.
- 3. Respect others.** Building strong, collaborative relationships requires mutual respect. By treating others with respect and dignity, you encourage them to model the same behavior.
- 4. Demonstrate empathy.** Successful leaders lead with their hearts and their minds. Don't be afraid to show emotions and vulnerability or to connect with employees and coworkers.
- 5. Innovate.** Be open to new ideas and ways of doing things. Adopt a "can do" vs. a "can't be done" attitude and welcome new challenges that lead to personal or business growth.
- 6. Remain curious.** Be a knowledge-seeker and never be afraid to ask questions, especially the hard ones. Gather all relevant facts and figures before making important decisions.
- 7. Be persistent.** Rome wasn't built in a day. If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. (You get the idea.) Exercise patience but never give up on your dream or vision.
- 8. Share success.** Always share credit for teamwork and collaborative efforts (even if you did most of the work). This encourages others to consistently bring their best ideas, skills and talents to the table for the good of the team, end-goal and/or client.
- 9. Lead with purpose.** Try to find meaning and purpose from each opportunity and challenge you face. View failures as growth opportunities and successes as catalysts to further challenge yourself. Take the time to develop written plans and goals and continually re-evaluate and refine your vision over time as needs and circumstances change and interim goals are met.
- 10. Lead by example.** Be the leader you would want to follow. Routinely examine your own actions, responses and decisions, asking "Would I follow/respect/admire me?"

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