

Hi all!

With entrepreneurship at an all time high and women redefining what business is all about- i thought this would be a great opportunity to introduce you to the "Femme Founders"- a group of 6 women founders/CEO's Presidents who are all blazing trails.

The idea of the Femme Founders was created by one of my business partners, Lyn Graft of LG Pictures who is also the producer of my show, On The Road with iV. He came up with the idea as a way to shine a spotlight on the new generation of women CEO's. Why?! I think after hearing the stories that I have experienced in business and life- he wanted to do something about it (it might also be because he is the youngest of 5 siblings and the only boy?!!!)

One of the stories I like to tell is when I was starting out as a young CEO. I needed to raise money to keep my new company alive. I probably had around 15 employees at the time and had never raised "real" money before (of this size- it was over \$1M I was seeking). In any case, after not having any luck and running out of fuel- being 3 days away from payroll being due with no money in the bank- one of my advisors, a guy named Gerald, said "Ingrid, I think I might know whats going on and if you are interested, I am happy to share with you my thoughts.". My response? "Of course! Anything that will help me get this money closed."

Gerald and I went to Starbucks and he said to me "Look. Ingrid. You don't look like, act like or talk like any of the guys the venture capitalists are used to funding. I think THAT is the problem." I don't think I remembered a word more. I was totally depressed but completely determined. Somehow, I was going to make this happen.

I left that meeting, went home, cut off all my hair, got glasses, took off my makeup and bought a dark blue IBM-ish (of the old days) type business suit and went back out again to get my money. Of course I failed miserably. NO ONE wanted to give me a dime.

Then an interesting thing happened. When I finally decided that if I wasn't going to be myself- I would never be successful (who can sell ANYTHING if you don't believe in its own value- especially if its yourself!). Once I decided this, money started coming through.

My mentor at the time came through on a loan which helped me make payroll. he helped guide me to realize that the kind of investor I was looking for was someone who would believe in me, was willing to give me that shot (regardless of how I looked, my background, age, race, sex etc). I went back to doing what I should have done all along. Just be myself. So I busted out the skirts, high heels and makeup. I brushed myself off and reminded myself that from experience (and now learning from other successful entrepreneurs) positive persistence allows anything to happen. It was time to CRUSH IT. And Sure enough- I found those right investors.

Having had a number of stories that like happen in my career to date- supporting other entrepreneurs, but especially women in business has become a passion of mine. The FEMME FOUNDERS are a KILLER example of modern, beautiful, smart, amazing and talented women who have overcome their own adversities to blaze trails in business. Kimberley Key runs Encompass Work and Family ([www.encompasswf.com](http://www.encompasswf.com)) providing coaching and counseling to entrepreneurs. Kim Overton is the amazing inventor of [www.spibelt.com](http://www.spibelt.com) and has been featured on Donny Deutsch's The Big Idea and all over the national media. Kristina Wise is redefining what real estate is all about with her company [www.thegoodlifeteam.com](http://www.thegoodlifeteam.com). Traci Fenton is the powerhouse behind the global movement to bring democracy into the workplace through her company [www.worldblu.com](http://www.worldblu.com). Finally, Heidi Adams is the inspiring cancer survivor who took her experience and turned it into a success story by creating resources and a support network around the globe for other cancer patients and survivors in her [www.planetcancer.org](http://www.planetcancer.org).