

CASE STUDY >

Elaine Wylie

Coaching for Life &
Business



Elaine Wylie Coaching was established in 2001 providing soft skills training and coaching working mainly with female entrepreneurs and women who are about to set up their own business. The business offers a range of products and services including personal and professional development including accredited programmes and are delivered at all levels within the private, voluntary and community sectors within both Northern Ireland and Republic of Ireland.

Originally from Bangor I left Northern Ireland in 1977 where I moved around the mainland for over 20 years. Coming back was a decision I took very quickly in 2004 as a result of my husband working in Fermanagh. Before starting my business I was employed as a senior manager in the private sector and outside of work my main role was caring for my family. Being made redundant I took the opportunity to take some coaching accreditation training. Having qualified with a BA, CIPD Licentiate, Corporate Coach ECI I was determined to get out of the sector I had worked in for over 20 years and start doing something for myself.

I have found over the past 6 years of self employment the main benefits of running my own business to be the freedom to make my own choices and set my own goals. Although often working long hours I have the freedom of working from home, carefully creating my customer base and knowing that my service really makes a difference to my customers. Above all being able to look forward to a Monday morning.

I believe the success of my business has been down to firstly believing in myself and having the ongoing support of my Husband, knowing what I am talented at and having a keen interest in other people. Your business and marketing plan are very important but you must also know when to be flexible and understand that your relationships with your customers are key to your business success.

Starting and growing a business you face many challenges. Challenges faced by myself included not having a regular income for 12 months, not having the corporate support system I was used to and as a sole trader the feeling of loneliness, not to mention moving address 4 times during my first 4 years in business. I overcame these challenges, in the early days by doing some part-time work to supplement my income, by joining good networks for both support and sharing business ideas, becoming customer lead and not product driven, building up a team of associates and quickly realising that all business sectors have similar challenges. Over the next few years I aim to offer more accredited programmes to larger organisations, develop more training programmes for women, to build up the B&B business and to achieve a work life balance through running my business 4 days a week.

I totally believe that being a member of Network for Enterprising Women has been a critical factor in my business success through participating in events, sourcing contacts and referrals, meeting some great associates, being able to ask for help, all within a supportive environment that encourages women who are in or thinking of going into business for themselves.

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