

My BUSINESS

YOUR GUIDE TO DOING BUSINESS ON THE COAST

Women urged to watch role models

High profile celebrities have blazed their own trail to success

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A SURVEY of Australia's award-winning businesswomen may have thrust quotas and gender inequality onto the issues stage once again but Sunshine Coast businesswomen have been urged to ignore any perceived obstacles, learn from certain celebrated role models and blaze their own trail forward.

A survey of state winners and finalists of the 2010 Telstra Business Women's Awards found 72% favoured mentoring programs over quotas to promote greater gender equality.

A total of 83% said mentoring should be an essential component of a positive business culture, while 65% said they have enjoyed the benefits of a mentor during their business careers.

Only 15% favoured gender quotas in the hiring, retaining or development of women as an initiative to aid gender equality.

The second-highest ranked equality-boosting measure was flexible working conditions and locations (60%) while 40% of respondents nominated practices that encourage women to apply for new roles.

Sunshine Coast Business Women's Network President Sue Willis was buoyed by the strong

local representation of women as business owners, corporate managers or members of networks like hers (400 members), chambers of commerce or the UDIA's Women In Development.

"We also know that behind most successful men in management there is a strong, capable woman who is also raising their children and making their lunch. If only women in

management/business could access the same support.

"I don't believe it's any harder as a woman in a regional area than in the cities, but the oppor-

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GENDER BALANCE: A new survey has outlined ways to improve gender equality in the workplace.



FIVE MINUTES
with Ryan Fitzgerald

AGED 34, Co-Director of Piper Digital Marketing, which provides online marketing solutions, websites, internet services, and traditional and digital marketing strategies to businesses of all shapes and sizes. It has offices in three countries and a growing licensee division.

To me, business is...my passion.

My first job was...ski instructor in Banff, Canada.

My biggest failure was...being successful in my early 20s and spending all the proceeds on toys.

My biggest success was...designing a unique aluminium shutter that provides me with great royalty income.

The greatest risk I ever took was...investing my entire fortune in a property development in Brisbane.

The best advice I ever got was...don't do anything unless you can be proud of your actions.

When times are good, I...take more risks.

When times are bad, I...focus on the tasks at hand.

I am reading...Meatball Sundae by Seth Godin.

I really wish...I could devote time to animal welfare.

I could not live without...my dogs.

The thing not many people know about me is...I am a Trekkie.

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