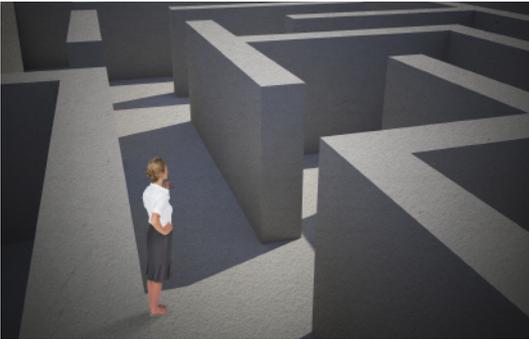


THE
BLOCK
GROUP



*TURNING ROADBLOCKS INTO BUILDING BLOCKS
FOR WOMEN-OWNED BUSINESSES*

THEBLOCKGROUP.NET



WHAT ARE THE OBSTACLES TO YOUR SUCCESS AS A BUSINESS OWNER?

Every day, women business owners in every industry struggle with profit-eating, productivity-draining issues that wear them down, financially and emotionally — but their real problem isn't what they think it is. Owners become so bogged down with management, they lose sight of the crucial ingredient for building a solid company that moves forward.

The Block Group brings a unique perspective to the complex issues that confront women business owners, serving as a trusted advisor with fresh eyes and new ideas — leveraging the power of focus to implement financial, operational and business development strategies that build value and consistency.

From improving cash flow.... To increasing staff productivity.... To scaling for growth, these periods of transition — and so many more — provide both challenges and opportunities. Managed effectively, change can become a productive force for growth. The Block Group harnesses that potential, turning roadblocks into building blocks for women-owned businesses.

WHY FOCUS ON WOMEN BUSINESS OWNERS?

As women, we operate in dynamic environments – often juggling personal and professional issues simultaneously. With our focus on women business owners, we find that many women are still making business and financial decisions based on emotions.

We empower women owners who are seeking balance and prosperity in their lives, shifting the way they think, with a strategy and intentional focus.

Being successful doesn't mean the struggles are over. Owners become so bogged down with management, they lose sight of the crucial ingredients for building a solid company that moves forward.

EVER FEEL LIKE YOUR BUSINESS IS A GIANT PUZZLE, WITH LOTS OF MOVING PIECES?

Solving that puzzle leads to a more profitable, sustainable and impactful business. What are the critical questions that need to be answered to solve the puzzle?

Why am I struggling to make my goals a reality?

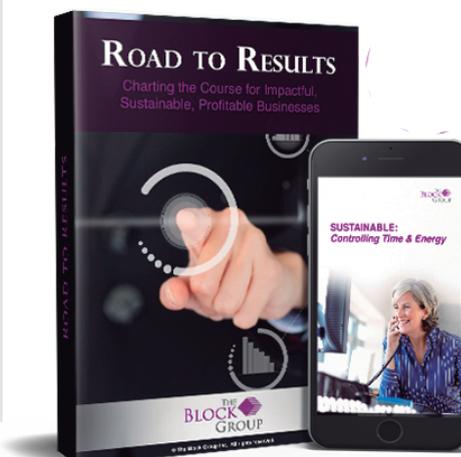
Where is my business headed?

What happens if I don't solve the puzzle?

How do I gain better control of my money?

How do I gain better control of my time and energy?

How do I find ideal clients?



Explore these questions in more detail by downloading our free eBook at TheBlockGroup.Net

Or contact us now to harness the potential of your business: 713.826.0302



BUSINESS ADVISING

“I am so busy with daily business issues that I can’t focus on strategic issues—for my company or for my clients.”

What Are Your Real Priorities?

Working with The Block Group, the process begins with a careful evaluation of needs, a thoughtful analysis and a clear understanding of:

- › the strengths and weaknesses in your business strategy
- › the sources of stress in your business
- › the issues that are impacting your success
- › the key areas on which you need to focus

We then use a proven, systematic approach integrating your goals with defined business practices. With tools that we designed specifically for women-owned small businesses, we customize a unique solution for each client.

We guide you through the steps to building a solid company that moves forward. You are not alone!

STAFF TRAINING & COACHING

“My employees are not as productive as I need them to be — and nowhere near as productive as I know they could be.”

Do You Struggle With Building An Effective Team?

Benefits of Professional Development:

- › Employees feeling empowered and creative
- › Employees’ improved skills and confidence
- › Increased productivity – your employees’ and yours!
- › Employees stay where they feel respected and valued
- › A company culture of continued learning & support
- › Team-building and improved morale
- › Enhanced recruiting – happy, healthy workplaces attract candidates

Our interactive staff Workshops and direct, one-on-one Coaching focus on:

- › Developing your team’s communication and leadership skills
- › Cultivating a common language and learning practical techniques that can be applied quickly
- › Refining interpersonal interactions
- › Increasing productivity
- › Improving customer service and satisfaction

Let us help you develop a more effective team and an office that runs like a well-oiled machine!

OPERATIONS MANUALS

“I’m so exhausted by the pace and burden of my business, I wonder when I will burn out. Sometimes, I think my company is running me!”

How Can You Gain Control Of Your Life While Positioning Your Company For Strategic Growth?

Building a solid company that moves forward requires a strong foundation. When you have an effective system for accountability, it puts your business on solid footing and positions it for strategic growth.

One of our specialties is producing Operations Manuals that do just that. We identify, develop and document business processes, ensuring standardization and replication.

All aspects of your business will benefit from increased efficiency, including onboarding and training employees, work-flow, use of technology, sales, service delivery, and customer service.

Your Operations Manual ties directly to our commitment to building value and consistency.



Patty Block, Founder

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As President and Founder of The Block Group, Patty Block brings a background of demonstrated success across the business spectrum in small business, corporate and non-profit environments.

Patty has approached each step in her career with an entrepreneurial spirit: from successfully operating a business as an independent lobbyist and political consultant; to serving as both the Legislative Coordinator and the Charitable Foundation Director for First Interstate Bank of Texas; to adeptly filling multiple leadership roles at The Awty International School, including Director of Operations, Development and External Affairs.

Patty's nine-year tenure at The Awty International School included concurrent executive responsibilities, pro-actively directing: institutional advancement as Director of Development; major projects involving government and private entities as Director of External Affairs; and daily business operations, supervising and managing major departments and diverse personnel as Director of Operations. The college-preparatory international school is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization with over 1,500 students.

As an independent lobbyist and political consultant, Patty spent many years developing an influential network of clients, consultants and elected officials while lending expertise to a wide variety of political endeavors.

She advocated for organizations seeking to institute or change state and federal legislation, working directly with elected officials, employing grass roots advocacy, and specializing in strategic consulting and public policy issue research. She also orchestrated political fund raising events and served as a political consultant for numerous local and state-wide candidates.

Patty established The Block Group in 2006 to bring together the people, resources and ideas that build results. She holds an advanced degree from the University of Texas at Austin and is an active mom and civic volunteer.

Clients often refer to Patty as their "business therapist" and "secret weapon" because she forms strong relationships, understands and refines their company's internal workings, and serves as a strategic sounding board. Clients find working with Patty enjoyable, inspiring and enlightening, and they experience direct benefits on a daily basis.

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STAFF TRAINING AND COACHING



DO YOU STRUGGLE WITH BUILDING AN EFFECTIVE TEAM?

OUR INTERACTIVE STAFF WORKSHOPS AND DIRECT, ONE-ON-ONE COACHING FOCUS ON:

- › Developing your team's communication and leadership skills.
- › Cultivating a common language and learning practical techniques that can be applied quickly.
- › Refining interpersonal interactions.
- › Increasing productivity.
- › Improving customer service and satisfaction.

Interactive Staff Workshops include planning with the company owner, an online participant survey, Workshop delivery, participant materials and follow-up.

The participant survey will be completed at several points in time to facilitate understanding of the competencies and concerns around the selected activities, and what participants learned and retained.

Managed effectively, change can become a productive force for growth.

The Block Group harnesses that potential, turning roadblocks into building blocks for women-owned businesses.

Contact us now to harness the potential of your business!

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INTERPERSONAL COMMUNICATION SKILLS

This Workshop focuses on understanding interpersonal communication from a new perspective, sharpening your skills and changing your habits. The focus is on active listening, body language and communication styles.

ASSERTIVE COMMUNICATION AND DEALING WITH CONFLICT

This Workshop focuses on understanding effective communication from a new perspective, sharpening your skills and changing your habits. The focus is on direct, assertive communication and dealing with conflict.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

This professional development is designed to define who a leader is and develop what a leader does, using a framework called **Pride-Based Leadership®**. This is accomplished through a series of interactive Workshops and individual coaching.

CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

"For 15 years my company strategy has worked fairly well, but was limited by my own experiences. I didn't have an advisor helping me think beyond my existing resources. My goal was to take my company from being basically healthy to being much more defined and profitable. Patty helps me explore new ideas and new ways of evaluating decisions. Even more importantly, she has inspired me to become much more strategic in my thinking. We have incorporated simple, cost-effective management tools that have had a direct impact on profitability, and we're fine-tuning the company's operations, which is having a positive impact at every level."

Susan Elmore
CEO, Elmore Public Relations



"After working with Patty I can now say it is no longer lonely at the top. Patty has guided me through a year of transition in my company. She has helped me to become more organized and intentional as I make solid decisions that are based on sound business knowledge rather than on emotion. She has uncovered business vulnerabilities that we have addressed in a thoughtful and deliberate way. I am enjoying leadership and running my small business. It is no longer running me!"

Terri Ammerman
CEO & President, The Ammerman Experience



"After my business partner retired and my business manager decided to leave, we were basically like a ship floating out in the ocean without a direction. Patty Block came in and helped me understand how business works, and taught me how to be a day-to-day operations manager. She helped navigate me through a very difficult and critical time in my company, and we came back. We became even more successful. We've gotten new partners and had some of the most profitable years in the company's twenty-five-year history. I really don't think I could have done it without her. When I visit with other women business owners about Patty, I tell them that whether they are in transition or at the height of their success, they need to call Patty and get her on their team. She will be the best secret weapon they will ever have. Patty rocks! You've got to get her on your team!"

Pamela Radford
President, Legal Media, Inc.



I certainly believe that there is tremendous value in working with a woman who focuses on women-owned businesses. Patty is a woman who understands what a woman's message is, what a woman thinks about, and the many different ways that a woman is pulled in a given day. Trustworthiness and dependability are two of the most important things to me, and working with Patty at The Block Group, there is never a doubt in my mind that there is trust and dependability. There were times when Patty helped me through things and provided advice to me that influenced me not only on a business lever, but on a personal level, and I'm extremely appreciative."

Bridget Truxillo
Principal, The Truxillo Firm, PLLC



CLIENT TESTIMONIALS

“Patty Block helped me transform my business. Her focused, detailed and methodical approach to business development is unparalleled. She empowered me to achieve my goal of moving from primarily subcontracting to dealing directly with clients. With her help, I also clarified my strengths and weaknesses. By equipping me to manage client relationships, projects run smoothly. Through Patty’s careful and thorough guidance, I took control of my company’s messaging, products, services, finances and processes, like never before. Patty truly understands women business owners. My company now has greater financial value, a strong foundation for growth and streamlined routines to respond quickly to client needs and changes.”

Alise Isbell
CEO, Write Wise Communications, LLC



“Patty has provided extraordinary guidance and coaching. With her support I have been able to focus on developing a solid strategic plan and approach for growing my business. So many positive changes have occurred as a result of working with her and I consider The Block Group a key partner in the success of People Possibilities.”

Kathi Crawford, SPHR, IAC-CC
CEO, People Possibilities LLC



“I really value having someone who can come from a confidential perspective. I think that business owners think they can talk to people on their senior team and to friends, but they are not necessarily going to have Patty’s level of expertise, her approach, her confidentiality, or her outside-of-the-organization perspective. One of the things that Patty brought to the table was updating processes and developing an Operations Manual. It became one of the keys to helping streamline FrogDog operations and position the company to grow and scale more quickly. Patty is very understanding, very supportive and nurturing, and that’s helpful, too - especially when you are going through very stressful times. It is very nice to have somebody who you can call to talk through an issue and your options.”

Leslie Farnsworth
President & CEO, FrogDog



“The biggest benefit of working with Patty Block is having a partner that can help you strategize and really take the time to analyze where you are and where you want to be, but more importantly – the steps to get there. When I’m referring other business owners to Patty, it becomes very easy for me to suggest, ‘Hey, there’s a company that can really help you identify an obstacle that you might be experiencing, but more importantly, they have solutions for you.’ I have been so thrilled that I always have this partner that is sitting right beside me, cheering me on.”

Amy Mifflin
President, Global Collaborations, Inc.



Proactive Cash Flow Strategies

BY PATTY BLOCK

Henry Ford once famously said: “Vision without execution is just hallucination.” I love this quote because it’s funny and it’s true! While revenue production is the core goal for every business, the real magic is in understanding and managing your cash cycle. You can’t execute without cash.

Many small businesses struggle to appropriately price their services, define their billing and collection terms, and manage the cash flowing through their companies. If you are not developing and implementing cash strategies, you are leaving money on the table.

Early warning signs of cash flow problems:

- You struggle to pay your bills.
- You are afraid to hire staff because your revenue is irregular.
- You may be charging too little and over-delivering on services, so client accounts are not profitable.
- You have trouble collecting what is owed from clients.
- You are embarrassed to admit you are in financial trouble.
- You suffer so much stress around money that you can’t focus on strategic issues for your company or for your clients.

Consequences of ignoring the early warning signs:

- You have unsteady revenue.
- Your relationships with clients and vendors suffer.
- You are unable to attract or retain high-quality staff.
- You have unprofitable accounts.
- Your personal and business credit suffers.
- Your company growth is stunted.

- Your company reputation suffers.
- You suffer emotional stress.

There are many things you can do to speed up your cash cycle, enhance profitability, and gain control of your finances. It can be as simple as establishing a proactive billings and collections process or as complex as changing your pricing and reducing expenses.

Proactive Cash Flow strategies:

1. Launch ‘Collections Monday’. Schedule courtesy calls to clients before the payment is due. Ask if they received the invoice and whether they have any questions. Name it something clever such as ‘Collections Mondays’ and get in the habit of making these calls. Email is for cowards. Pick up the phone!

2. Keep Your Cash for as Long as Possible. Prioritize payments to vendors and maximize the time allowed to pay. Stagger payment dates so you don’t have significant cash flying out of your operating account all at once. Maintain your good relationships with vendors and negotiate terms when possible.

3. Get to Know Your Banker. Ensure that all of your bank accounts are federally insured. Meet with your banker regularly to establish a strong relationship. Think of the banker as your advocate.

4. Stop Using Sales Tax or Payroll Tax Money to Float Your Operations! This is dangerous on so many levels. Your exposure to potential penalties, fees, and interest along with a significant waste of your time and resources should stop you in your tracks. Deposit funds into additional bank

accounts that are separate from your operating account and don’t touch the funds until you pay the required taxes. Obtain short-term operations financing if needed.

5. Obtain a Business Line of Credit. You can only get a line of credit or loan when you don’t need it. Plan ahead and have this safety net in place with the added bonus that it can help you build business credit. Compare terms and rates between banks and with credit unions.

6. Carefully Track Use of Company Credit Cards. Set limits on all cards used by employees. The federal Credit CARD Act protects consumer credit cards but excludes those used for business and debit cards. You may have significant exposure to fraud and theft with company credit and debit cards.

7. Outsource Important Compliance Functions Such as Payroll. Leave the headaches to the experts who will process payroll, collect and pay your payroll taxes, and ensure reporting compliance. It is worth every penny.

As a small company, you have an advantage in spotting trends from real data and real market experience and making decisions that you can implement quickly. This gives you a competitive edge especially against larger companies that often struggle with bureaucracy and chain-of-command. Ensure you have the cash to execute on your vision. **SBT**

Patty Block, President of the Block Group Inc., empowers women business owners to develop a creative business model, navigate transitions, and design smart business solutions. She can be contacted by phone at 713-826-0302, by email at pwbblock@theblockgroup.net, or visit her company website at www.theblockgroup.net.





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