

No better sense of achievement than female entrepreneurship success!

 By Leigh Andrews

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Janna Strang, director and founder of PPromote Communication, shares why 'wanting it all' is a good thing, what it means to be a successful female entrepreneur and why there's no better sense of achievement than getting it right.

It's a familiar story to some. After graduating from UCT with a BA double major in 'Media and Writing' and English, Strang started out in advertising as a copywriter, convinced that it was her calling. That's because she loved the creativity and actual writing involved. Unfortunately, she felt she wasn't drawing on her strengths as a people's person, so after working in agencies in Cape Town and Dublin, Ireland for six years, she did a year as a copywriter for Modern Museum and other agencies on returning to Durban before exploring PR as a possible career path.

Creativity and interaction as a personal passion



Strang

Strang went on to work in a public relations agency for over two years, thoroughly enjoying the interaction with media and clients, but now felt she was missing the creative aspect she had so loved while working in the advertising industry.

Strang realised she wanted the best of both worlds, but there didn't seem to be an agency or position that offered this. She had also realised that there was a gap in the market for companies wanting to deal with a single person or agency that handled all their communication needs.

And so, following a "brainwave followed by an excessive amount of smoke", in 2012 Strang's PPromote Communication was open for business. It's a "colourful and dynamic public relations and communications agency that offers intriguing and effective communication solutions to profile and promote brands and product offerings or services to the public"; a one-stop communications agency that offers everything from a wide variety of internal and external communication service offerings, depending on clients' needs.

Those clients range from Transnet Port Terminals to Kriya Gangiah, Illovo Sugar SA and Bidvest Insurance, and Strang's current role as director and founder includes being part-time tea lady, business admin and accounts manager, account director for clients, as well as copywriter, media liaison, marketing and brand strategist, HR, events coordinator and office clown, to name a few.

Sacrifice and support systems

That's what entrepreneurship's all about, and Strang says with the alarming numbers for unemployment in South Africa, it is more crucial than ever to encourage entrepreneurship as a means of job creation.

But that's [easier said than done](#). Strang says you'll need the following qualities for your entrepreneurial drive to succeed:

- Self-starter
- Unwavering self-belief
- Awareness of your strengths and weaknesses
- Willingness to learn and adapt

- Passionate about what you are doing
- Disciplined and good work ethic

That doesn't mean you have to do it all yourself though. The lesson entrepreneurial Strang has learned, and the one she finds most helpful for budding entrepreneurs, is that you shouldn't expect yourself to be great at all aspects of business. "Recognise your strengths and weaknesses and, when the time comes, surround yourself with the right people to compliment the areas you are weak in."

Elaborating on the double-edged sword of starting a business as a female in SA, Strang says: "Starting a business in SA is tough – period. I was fortunate enough to not need a lot of capital start-up and my family was very supportive along the way, because there are a lot of highs and lows to navigate through, especially in the first two to three years."



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It's particularly tough being compared to men when starting a business, as we also feel the pressure of society's high expectations to be equally as dedicated in our roles as wife, mother and more. "Trying to balance the long hours that go into starting a business is already tough but add to that trying to be a devoted mom and fulfilling all your duties as a wife on the domestic front is nearly impossible," she explains. But the good news is that with the right support system in place and enough dogged determination and belief, it can be done. There are many inspiring women who are living proof of that. Strang ends with a word of warning that you'll need to make sacrifices along the way and be prepared to live with those choices. But if you love what you do and always try to give of your best, there's no better sense of achievement.

Follow more of Strang's entrepreneurial success on [LinkedIn](#) and draw inspiration from her motivational [Pinterest pins](#).

ABOUT LEIGH ANDREWS

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