

# Red Dress STUDIOS

I asked some of my favorite female entrepreneurs to respond to this question:

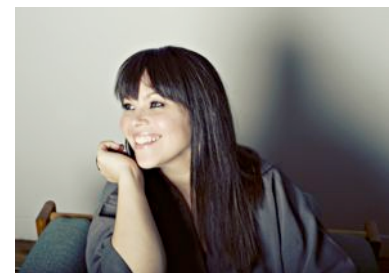
{ What advice would you give to women business owners that want to build their confidence muscles (and generally rock at what they do)? }

Here are their responses...



Christine Mason Miller with Swirly Girl (<http://swirlygirl.com/>) I will give the advice that I am now following as I begin my own new venture - talk about your project, your dreams, and your visions. You won't believe how things will start to come together as you start letting people know what you are passionate about, what you want to create, what you are going to build.

Danielle LaPorte with White Hot Truth (<http://whitehottruth.com/>) Tummy trembles. Brain fuzz. That discombobulating feeling that you're not quite sure what you should be doing but you should be something to keep your act together. Think of it this way, beneath the butterflies in your stomach, behind the clouds in your mind ... is your greater truth, and it's trying to break on through. Whatever you want to call it, positive thinking, re-framing, self-encouragement, ra-ra-rah, this is where you need to step up to the plate, look at your fear head on and confront it with your truth. The truth being, that you manage to get through everyday whether with grace or grit; that fear will not kill you; that your God, or your friends, or your grandma in heaven will have your back; that you have risen above before, and that you will rise above again; that, it's only life after all.



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Denise Andrade with Boho Photography (<http://www.bohophoto.com/>) Within my own personal evolution as a professional photographer, what helped build my confidence muscles was discovering, nurturing and claiming my own voice in this industry. This was a process for me and I allowed myself to be patient as it all unfolded in time. I wanted to be unique and set myself apart from the millions of fine art photographers. I found my niche, which was photographing artists, and I claimed that is what I was: a Photographer of Artists. It was then that I realized what I was doing was hearing and being guided by my own voice...and not the voice of the masses. So, my advice would be to spend time figuring out what your own voice is and how yours is unique and what that could bring to setting you apart as a business owner. If you are deeply connected to your work and believe in yourself, confidence happens organically.

Jennifer Hofmann with Inspired Home Office (<http://www.inspiredhomeoffice.com/>) Deeply explore who you are and who you are becoming. Find ways to express your essence in your work. Instead of trying to do and be what everyone thinks you should, practice being yourself - authenticity is the most compelling marketing of all.



Jennifer Lee with Artizen Coaching (<http://www.artizencoaching.com/>) While it may seem scary at first, you'll actually build more confidence the more you try new things and put yourself out there. You'll learn about what works and what doesn't. Plus, you'll experience what lights you and your perfect customers up. Knowing that you're resonating with the right people in a way that is authentic and fun for you is a fabulous confidence booster.



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Jess Gonacha Swift with Jess Gonacha Swift Designs (<http://www.jessgonachaswift.com/>) I would encourage women business owners to not resist what they are afraid of but instead embrace the fear, let the fear be OK, and move forward anyway. It's the resisting that keeps us in procrastination, but if we can say, "OK, so I'm afraid, and that's OK. Even though I'm afraid, I'm going to act anyway," it's much more empowering, and we can move forward through the fear instead of being stifled by it. Also, it takes practice! I would also advise women entrepreneurs to understand that building confidence is a learning process and to not expect to be perfect right from the start. That's a lot of pressure! Mistakes are ok, and that's how we learn.

Jezzika Lee Perez with Intelligent Accounting (<http://jezzikaleeperez.com/>) Introduce yourself to and give your business card to 10 new people a day for 2 weeks! You will be amazed at what you learn about yourself.



Kelly Parkinson with Copylicious (<http://www.copylicious.com/>) I used to think "confidence" was just a feeling. It didn't change the truth about whether I was good enough. Before I quit my job, I'd look for reasons my writing was terrible and none of this would ever work. I wanted to be "realistic." For me, joining a success team helped SO much. It was having this group of people who believed in me. And then believing in them right back. I borrowed their confidence in me until I had enough of it myself.





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Kelly Watson with One Woman Marketing (<http://www.onewomanmarketing.com/>) I think the best way to build your confidence is to surround yourself with lots of supportive friends and colleagues. When I first started my business, I was a homebody who rarely ventured away from my computer. But in the past year I've been attending a lot more networking meetings, Tweet-ups and Meetup groups. I've not only met a bunch of cool creative types, but I've found new customers too. The most important part for me, though, has been getting other people's insights into my own situation and being reminded that I'm not the only small business owner who runs into challenges -- far from it!



Kimberly Wilson with Tranquil Space (<http://kimberlywilson.com/>) Read everything you can about the industry. Do informational interviews. Get involved in the community. Engage in social media. Dip your toes in slowly and explore what feels right to you. Push your edges, but hold your boundaries. Surround yourself with like-minded people.

Leah Piken Kolidas with Blue Tree Studios (<http://www.bluetreeartgallery.com/>) To build your confidence muscles, I recommend taking baby steps forward. Forward progress always helps me feel more confident. And making the steps small and manageable helps make it less scary. I also highly recommend having a support team. Having a small group of fellow women entrepreneurs to check-in with can be enormously helpful in building confidence. A group of like-minded women can help support you through the tough times, celebrate your successes, and hold you accountable through those baby steps.



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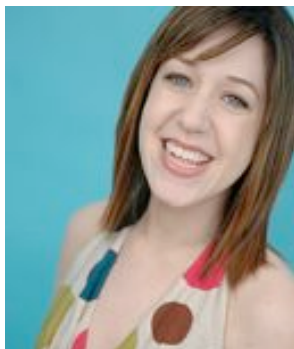


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Michelle Ward with *When I Grow Up Coach* (<http://whenigrowupcoach.com/>) Keep a Warm Fuzzies book - y'know, one that holds all the thank you notes that you've received, both online & off. Any time you get a compliment - & I mean *any time* - put it in your Warm Fuzzies book. When you're feeling less than confident (hint: you find yourself berating yourself with, "What the frig was I thinking?" & "I stink up this place!") get out your Warm Fuzzies book & read it with an open mind & heart. If there aren't enough Warm Fuzzies (yet!) to float your boat, then write down what you offer your clients. What value do you add to their lives? Make a list, put *that* into your book & smoke it.

Pace and Kyeli with *Freak Revolution* (<http://freakrevolution.com/>) Do something stupid. (No, don't go away, we're serious here!) Completely switch businesses a few months after a big launch that you made a big hullabaloo over. Create and launch a product and have it completely flop, with zero buyers. Promise something in two weeks and deliver it in eight months. Forget to claim \$8,000 of income on your taxes. Do the exact opposite of what every business or marketing expert tells you to do. We've done EVERY SINGLE ONE of these things, and you know what? Nothing bad happened. Our business didn't fail. Our people didn't rise up against us with torches and pitchforks. But we'll tell you what did happen: we became a lot less afraid of making mistakes. So do something stupid, and confidence will be your reward.



Sarah Bray with *S. Joy Studios* (<http://www.sjoystudios.com/>)

Teach what you know. Even if you don't think you know much, you have a different set of knowledge and experience than anyone else. The more you teach and help others, the more you'll discover how vast that knowledge is. And your confidence-biceps will grow so big, your arms will be bulging out of your t-shirts.



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Ronna Detrick with Renegade Conversations (<http://www.ronnadetrick.com/>) Be brave and bold! All the doubts, the internal editing, the censor that sits on your shoulder need to be pushed to the side (or totally destroyed) so that you can hear the truest, deepest, most amazing voice inside of you. That voice will tell you what you most want, what you most desire, who you most profoundly are! When you hear that voice - and then act - you'll be stunned at your own strength, your own creativity, your most powerful, renegade-self! Be her! You can't go wrong!

Tara Joyce with Elastic Mind (<http://www.elasticmind.ca/>)

Don't take it all so seriously. It doesn't have to happen today. Never take things personal. Don't assume. Ask questions. Take time to do nothing.



Wendy McAllister with CRAVE DC (<http://thecravecompany.com/dc/>) 'The mind is a powerful thing.' My advice is to do some mental boot camp and train your mind to build your confidence muscles by doing affirmations, visualizations and positive self-talk consistently every day. It's so important to believe in yourself and be confident in who you are. Think about a time or situation when you were at your most confident and recall that feeling when you need a boost in self-confidence. Think of it like personal training for your mind (not your body). Just work at it and over time you'll make strides every day. Be mindful of your thoughts and words about *and* to yourself. Instead of beating yourself up, build yourself up with confidence boosters every day.

For more confidence boosters, visit the Red Dress Studios website: <http://reddresstudios.com/>



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