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NH BUSINESS REVIEW

Osgood Recognized as "2008 Outstanding Woman in Business"

February 2008 NH BUSINESS REVIEW
by *Cindy Kibbe*

In the mid-1980's, Deborah Osgood took the reins of one of the most prestigious – but financially troubled – high-tech companies of the day after its owner died. As head of Snell Acoustics, Osgood tapped into a myriad of public resources and grants, putting the company on an impressive growth track.

She believed other businesses could benefit from all the research she did. But what a business owner might call a "research grant," a state agency might call "economic development." How do you get the two sides to speak a common language?

The answer came in the form of the Knowledge Institute and BUZGate, the Business Utility Zone Gateway. Launched by Osgood and her husband Bill, BUZGate is a free, Web-based directory that is as easy to use as it is vast in resources.

But Osgood has gone well beyond just developing database directories for business owners. She volunteers her time with many organizations, including the New Hampshire Jobs for America's Graduates, Big Brothers Big Sisters, SCORE and the Women's Business Center. In her latest endeavor, she is working as a mentor for Iraqi women learning how to run a business.

Q. What did you find to be the biggest challenge as a woman on the road to achieving your success?

A. There were some male executives I dealt with around the world that couldn't shake my hand. Another struggle was not just a woman's issue, but trying to convince everyone that the BUZGate model was really a good thing to do. We had to work to get everyone to play well together.

Q. Have you found a difference in how women are accepted as successful in their chosen careers as compared to their male counterparts?

A. I'm afraid so, event today. You really do have to do twice as much to be taken seriously.

A positive development is the growth rate of women entrepreneurs.

It is twice that of other firms. In the traditional corporate environment,

there is still the glass ceiling. Becoming an entrepreneur has fewer barriers to success.

Q. What was your biggest mistake and what did you learn from it?

A. It was in not believing in myself early enough. When you have good ideas and the ability to carry them out, but not the confidence, it really is a tragedy.

Q. Who has been most instrumental in your success and why?

A. Working with Bill early on as colleagues, then as husband and wife, and now co-owners, he has been the most significant asset, support and model.

Q. What advice would you give to young women just starting their careers?

A. Believe in yourself. Be disciplined enough to focus on what you want to achieve, then go for it.



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