


How women entrepreneurs can influence the future

 By [Ronelle Bester](#)

1 Mar 2018

Red Ribbon is celebrating 15 years in business today. Looking back, I realise entrepreneurship is a practical path of self-empowerment. Especially for women.



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It is something I recognised in my mid-twenties, as I went through four retrenchments with one company over a period of two months. I realised I had no power over my career and it was terrifying. It became clear to me that the only way to take control of my career and life was to start my own company. So, at twenty-nine I did exactly that.

It's been a rollercoaster ride, but I do believe entrepreneurship is something any woman can accomplish. It won't be easy, and it certainly won't be without hard work, but with a lot of grit, you will succeed. And it is worth it for the financial freedom, feeling of self-worth and fulfilment.

To be a female entrepreneur creates a unique opportunity to influence the future of many other women and this is how I believe we can make an impact:

It creates safe workspaces

Women-founded businesses give us the chance to create a women-friendly business environment. We can prioritise women in recruitment and structure benefits around their needs. We can build a system which encourages women to participate in the workplace, rather than drive them away. Without the boys' clubs and anti-women attitudes, women can excel in their careers because they have a safe workspace, understanding and camaraderie.

It creates economic independence

Hiring bias is very much real, especially the fear of employing women and then they start a family. Women-founded businesses can provide opportunities for ambitious women to have both a family and a career, without the feeling of guilt. We can create economic independence and security for women by earning their own income and with that enhancing their confidence sense of accomplishment. Earning your own money will give women a better quality of life, stability and an identity of her own. You can also give your kids a better future and provide for your old age.

It creates a new generation of leaders

As a female entrepreneur, by prioritising the hiring of women, you create the unique opportunity to mentor, advance and promote a future generation of entrepreneurs. The women you employ will either stay or move on to create their own businesses, enter leadership positions and serve as a role model to their kids.

Coco Chanel said:

“ *“The most courageous act is still to think for yourself. Aloud.”* ”

So, let's hold hands and support each other to overcome the obstacles of women entrepreneurship and contribute to society and the economy in a positive way. Every example of female leadership is going to inspire and transform a potential female entrepreneur.

ABOUT RONELLE BESTER

Ronelle Bester, MD of Red Ribbon Communications, started her career in technology at Dimension Data as marketing manager of the Western Cape. She has a BTech degree in public relations from Nelson Mandela Metropolitan University and has lectured in public relations at both the University of South Africa and Varsity College. Email Ronelle at ronelle@redribboncommunications.co.za, read her blog and follow her on Twitter at [@ronelle](https://twitter.com/ronelle).

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