

# STRATEGIES FOR CAREER SUCCESS



Welcome to **Strategies for Career Success** newsletter published by Pathways Career Success Strategies.

Every other month we offer effective strategies to assist you in your career development or job search.

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## Are Your References in Check?

Are your references coming between you and a good job?

According to Larry Alter, President of LDA Enterprises, Ltd., a Minneapolis based outplacement firm, the following tips can help you cut the risk of having a damaging reference:

1. Ask each of the people on your list if they are comfortable providing a reference and what type of information they would provide.
2. Do not use anyone as a reference if you have not worked directly for them or if they have no first hand knowledge of your capabilities, performance, or business achievements.
3. Don't put references on your resume or put them on an employment application or provide them to any employer by telephone until mutual interest has been established. Indicate on the application and resume that you will provide excellent references once you have developed mutual interest.
4. Do not assume a former employer will not say negative things about you because they fear legal action.
5. Always request a "letter of recommendation" from any of your references that are willing to provide it. The letter is a permanent validation of your performance and past achievements and can be useful if that individual is unwilling or unable to provide a reference in the future.



6. Add your references to your list of networking contacts. These people will be a wonderful resource and can often open doors that lead to excellent opportunities. Give each of your reference contacts several resumes for them to hand out as they see fit.

For more information on the reference checking services offered by LDA Enterprises, Ltd., go to [www.referenceclinic.com](http://www.referenceclinic.com).

*"Far better it is to dare mighty things, to win glorious triumphs, even though checkered by failure, than to take rank with those poor spirits who neither enjoy much nor suffer much, because they live in the gray twilight that knows not victory nor defeat."*

- Teddy Roosevelt

## Entrepreneurship: Popular Career Choice for Women

Startups by women grew by double digits annually from 2000-2003, outnumbering men-owned startups by almost 2-to-1 in 2003.

### Why a Business?

A myriad of reasons exist as to why women pursue entrepreneurship.

Looking for more flexibility to travel with her husband and to visit her children who are scattered around the country, Brenda Carlson has joined the ranks of women entrepreneurs. Besides flexibility, Carlson says, "I wanted to achieve a level of income that I believed would be more commensurate with my credentials." She recently launched a business geared at helping others start their own business. Serving as a self-employment coach with The Entrepreneur's Source ([www.TheEsource.com/BCarlson](http://www.TheEsource.com/BCarlson)), Carlson has an office in Woodbury, Minnesota, but serves people nationwide. She provides the tools, services, and support system for budding entrepreneurs to become educated about their options.

"We assist them in defining and clarifying their career dreams and also in finding the vehicle to achieve them," says Carlson.

### Today's Statistics

As of 2005, there are an estimated 10.1 million majority-owned, privately-held, women-owned firms in the U.S., employing 18.2 million people and generating \$2.32 trillion in sales. (Source: [www.score.org](http://www.score.org))



### Entrepreneur Coaching Circles

WomenVenture, a Twin Cities based non-profit economic development agency, is an official SBA Women's Business Resource Center and since 1991 has helped launch 800+ start-up businesses.

WomenVenture ([www.womenventure.org](http://www.womenventure.org)) is now offering coaching circles for individuals starting or growing a business. According to Anne Rodenberg, Director of Communications and Marketing, "Our coaching circle is a powerful way to accelerate your success. The Entrepreneurs Coaching Circle is a group of women and men sharing the same goal of business ownership. Coaching circles provide a strong network resource, and a wonderful venue for support, reflection, and creative ideation. It happens by brainstorming, setting achievable goals and

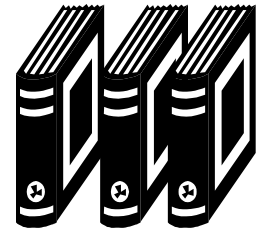
taking action with a strong support and accountability structure. It can help you realize your dreams and have the life you want."

### Resource

If you are a woman contemplating starting your own business or are already in business, consider joining the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO). Since 1975, NAWBO ([www.nawbo.org](http://www.nawbo.org)) has propelled women entrepreneurs into economic, social and political spheres of power worldwide. Thirty years later, NAWBO is still the only organization that solely represents the interest of women entrepreneurs in all industries. The organization's mission is to strengthen the wealth-creating capacity of its members and promote economic development; to create innovative and effective change in the business culture; to build strategic alliances, coalitions and affiliations; and to transform public policy and influence opinion makers.

### Other Resources

[www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov)  
[www.score.org](http://www.score.org)



### Good Read

*The Girl's Guide to Starting Your Own Business: Candid Advice, Frank Talk, and True Stories for the Successful Entrepreneur* by Caitlin Friedman and Kimberly Yorio.

### Top 5 Reasons to Get a Seasonal Job this Holiday Season

1. Earn extra \$\$\$
2. Build your network
3. Learn new skills
4. Try out a new field
5. Have fun

*"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up."*

- Thomas Edison