



WOMEN

& INDUSTRY

**New
Business
Venture
Tips**

**Put a
Tablet
In Your
Toolkit**

**The Biggest
Job Hunting
Mistakes**

**Top 50
Companies For
Female
Executives**

**Metropolitan West's
Kelly Taylor**

Managing Elements—With Style

Women-Owned Businesses Lead Job Creation

WOMEN



IN BUSINESS & INDUSTRY



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EqualityMagazines.com

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WOMEN IN BUSINESS &
INDUSTRY is a publication of
EqualityMagazines.com

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On The Cover: Corner Office: Kelly Taylor, Metropolitan West Founder



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A leading provider and installer of decorative glass films, interior graphics, and solar control window film, Southern California native, Kelly Taylor has carved out a design niche for herself in the construction market, building one of the largest woman-owned companies in the Los Angeles area.

Features:

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– Clear Writing: It's All About the Reader

Many professionals feel there's little economic value in honing a basic skill like writing. However, American Society for Engineering Education researchers recently ranked technical writing number two in a list of 38 necessary skills for engineers. Whether you're requesting funds for a research project, a loan for a business venture, or writing a cover letter, resume, or abstract, you'll want to write with confidence and conviction.

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New Business Venture Tips

Entrepreneurship can be a rewarding career path – you set your own hours, do something you love and answer only to yourself – but it also comes with many challenges. Deciding what kind of business to begin is the first obstacle. Here's how to overcome it.

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The 12 Biggest Job Hunting Mistakes

If you've been consistently employed for a while and circumstances have you suddenly looking for a new job, you're going to find you're entering a difficult and overcrowded job market. This means you will need every edge you can get. Here are 12 common mistakes many job hunters make that can really stall a job search.

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Editor's Letter



Imagination And Communication: Key Components To Success

Where do ideas come from, and when you have them, how do you help other people see how valuable they are? It's been said everyone has at least one billion-dollar idea at some point in our lives. The trick is selling that idea. Successful entrepreneurs know the key is communication. You can have the best idea in the world but if you can't express it, it's just an idea.

This issue of *Women In Business & Industry* will show you how to come up with new ideas for businesses; develop written communications to express those ideas; and introduce you to Metropolitan West's CEO,

Kelly Taylor, seen above, who has an altogether grasp on both of those concepts.

More people than ever are looking for new jobs; whether from a layoff, the desire to start a new career path, or simply to make more money. Because of this, the job market is more saturated than ever before. It truly is an employer's market. Therefore, it is key to arm yourself with as many advantages as possible. There are 12 key mistakes nearly every job hunter makes. We'll show you what they are, and how to avoid them.

American Express Open recently conducted a survey based on the U.S. Census to determine the status of women-owned businesses in the United States. It found—among other things—women-owned businesses are among the leaders in new job creation in this country. The overall findings are very encouraging, both for women considering starting new businesses as well as those looking for employment.

On a similar topic, the National Association of Female Executives (NAFE) recently published its list of the top 50 companies for executive women. We'll tell you what companies those are, and give you a brief overview of how they were selected. One thing they all have in common; specific programs designed to help women executives succeed.

This is exactly what we do in every issue of *Women In Business & Industry*. We strongly believe if you can imagine it, you can do it. And, the better you get at telling people about what you can do—the more rapidly you will succeed.

Imagination is where it all begins; communication is how you get it there.

Lyndon Conrad Bell
Editor

A portrait of Kelly Taylor, a woman with short blonde hair, wearing black-rimmed glasses and a white button-down shirt. She is smiling and looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Metropolitan West's

Kelly Taylor

Controlling Elements—With Style

WRITTEN BY CHERI CREIGHTON

Southern California native Kelly Taylor has carved out a design niche for herself in the construction market, building one of the largest women-owned companies in the Los Angeles area. Taylor is founder and CEO of Metropolitan West, a leading provider and installer of decorative glass films, interior graphics and solar control window film. Working closely with her staff of 12, she oversees all projects from conception to installation, bringing to life the architectural visions of her clients on a grand scale. She takes time out of her busy schedule to discuss her beginnings, what she loves most about her days and the wisdom she's gained after more than 20 years as a contractor.



How did you get started?

Coming from a family with many members in construction, my first instinct was to branch out into something different, so I became an event planner at Universal Studios. After a few years I began to burn out. You need to have a lot of passion for a job requiring long hours, and I felt that element was missing for me in event planning. I wasn't sure what direction to take next, so I took a job at my mother's construction firm, doing anything that needed to be done. I knew the job was only temporary until I figured out what I wanted to do, but after a while I felt my construction roots kicking in. I realized I had a knack for project management and the day-to-day activities needed to run a company. I also became aware of the ample opportunities for women in construction, as new laws were requiring general contractors to hire more firms owned by women and other minorities.

Working in Los Angeles, I saw a great need for anti-graffiti products for businesses – especially in the downtown area – so I decided to break out on my own and offer anti-graffiti coatings for these buildings. I realized quickly windows were more vulnerable than walls. With glass, you get vandalism in the form of etching and smashing. So, I began to provide safety and anti-graffiti films for windows instead. The Los Angeles riots surrounding the Rodney King trial in early 1992 brought my first big break. We got a call from Thrifty,

a large chain of drug stores, requesting safety films for 71 of their Los Angeles retail locations. Shortly after, another request came for an additional 132 locations, which propelled Metropolitan West into becoming a large-scale contractor. We now work with well-known architects on projects nationwide.

What do you enjoy most about what you do?

Over the years we've also added decorative glass films and wall graphics. I really enjoy interior design and these films are really fun to produce. I love beginning with an idea and turning it into a large adhesive that covers a room full of walls or glass. The designs really become the focal point of these spaces and you can't help but stop and catch your breath when you see them installed for the first time. I also get a great deal of gratification from helping businesses become more environmentally friendly through our solar window film installations. Did you know buildings are responsible for 39 percent of the total CO2 emissions in the atmosphere? By installing solar window films, a structure can reduce its energy usage by up to 30 percent just by decreasing the amount of heat passing through windows. That's a big savings, with a dramatic impact on the environment. I feel good knowing we play a role in this impact.

You can question yourself to get more clarity from time to time, but don't second-guess what your gut is telling you.

What does a typical day look like for you?

If I'm in the office, you'll find me working with the production department, matching colors, overseeing patterns emerging from our printers, and carefully reviewing the films to make sure they are perfect before they go out to our installers. We have four plotters and large-scale printers. I affectionately named them Stinky, Zippy, Goldie and Rolanda. We spend a lot of time together and each has its own personality befitting its name. When I'm not in the office, I'm out in the field with architects and clients, helping them find the right film products. A huge part of my job is really listening to the client and finding the right solutions to bring their vision to life.

What advice would you give to other women business owners?

First and foremost, always follow your instincts! You can question yourself to get more clarity from time to time, but don't second-guess what your gut is telling you. Women have powerful intuition, which can be a huge asset when

running a company—or at any level where you need to make decisions. When I've gone against my instincts for whatever reason, I've always regretted it. Now it serves as my compass.

Secondly, I would say take good care of the people working for you. There was a time in my life when I couldn't afford to feed myself and I remember how hard it was to focus on anything else. You have to make sure people are compensated enough to take care of all their needs before you can expect them to put in the focus necessary to produce outstanding work. When we first started out, I worked as a cocktail waitress in the evenings and didn't take a salary for myself so I could take care of payroll first. I'm really glad I did, because my employees played a huge role in developing the reputation of Metropolitan West. You can't grow or run a large company all by yourself. The people I work with are just as important to the success of this company as I am.

What do you do in your spare time?

I live on the water and I love doing all things ocean related, like sailing and scuba diving. I also love hanging out with my Australian Shepherd, Sage, and tending to my roof top garden. Right now we have tomatoes, lettuce, cucumbers, chives, herbs and blueberries. Sage actually has one tomato plant of her own that she can eat from. Gardening is relaxing and refreshing, and it's rewarding to see how plants grow into something we can put on the table. I also create baskets with what I harvest and photograph them. Nature creates some of the most beautiful designs! [WIBI](#)

