



NAME: Sharon Louca	NAME: Pam Neaves	NAME: Esther Woolley	NAME: Clare Whalley
BUSINESS: Owner of Your Local PA	BUSINESS: Owner of Mint Creative Solutions	BUSINESS: EstherMarie Makeup & Beauty	BUSINESS: Meta4's business & personal coach
LOCATION: Tamworth	LOCATION: Sutton Coldfield	LOCATION: Sutton Coldfield	LOCATION: Sutton Coldfield

THE BUSINESS ANGELS

Four West Midlands businesswomen are joining forces to offer budding female entrepreneurs advice and guidance as they begin their journeys on the road to riches.

Entrepreneurs Pam Neaves, Clare Whalley, Esther Woolley and Sharon Louca want to share their experiences and encourage other women to follow in their footsteps as they launch their businesses.

Pam, owner of Mint Creative Solutions, said: "Inspired and motivated in part perhaps by the high profile successes of entrepreneurs and TV business shows such as Dragons' Den, more women than ever are considering establishing a business.

"Statistics show that one in three start-up businesses fail, so what is it that drives these women, makes them so career obsessed and keeps them driven to achieve their goals more so than ever before? We want to share our experiences to give other women a great start on the road to success."

Meta4's Clare Whalley, a business and personal coach, said: "Having clearly defined goals and not letting anyone talk you out of them is vital. Keep yourself surrounded with positive people and ditch anyone who doesn't believe you can do it, or restrict the amount of time you spend with them! Focusing on your end goal and putting the steps in place to achieve this will ensure your success. Along with keeping an open mind, be adaptable and open to any opportunity that comes your way - as they don't all come with a big neon sign."

Clare works with a variety of clients whose goals vary from growing their business and improving their presentation skills, to changing their career to one they can love. "I've always known what I want to achieve, and being totally focused towards achieving it has helped me get there, and stay there," she added.

areas for six years, since setting up Mint Creative Solutions 7 years ago. She said: "It really is all about building up your contacts and ensuring you have an even spread of clients from small to medium enterprises to large corporations.

"It's all too easy to rely on that one client, who promises you the earth and then they disappear. The more people who know and who value the work you produce, the more they will refer you on and keep you in constant supply of trusted business contacts that will support and recommend your services."

Sharon Louca, owner of Your Local PA, said: "Having a passion for helping other businesses is the secret of my success. I set up Your Local Pa - a virtual secretarial support company - during the recession having recognised a need to support small businesses with all aspects of their paperwork, admin and organization during this very difficult period.

"By outsourcing their paperwork my clients are now able to focus on looking after their clients and customers and concentrate on what they are good at. Due to the flexibility of the service I offer they are able to use my services as and when their business demands."

Esther Woolley, of Esther Marie Make Up and Beauty, believes attitude plays a major role in determining success or failure. Since establishing her business in 2006 she has learnt a lot of valuable lessons.

"It's not easy going into business by yourself, it requires a lot of ambition and dedication, it's a steep learning curve, but one which is very rewarding. I decided to go it alone when I reflected on the cosmetics industry and felt that clients were being sold products that really did not offer them value. It's a fantastic feeling when you can give someone confidence in themselves and inspire them. I have a passion for running workshops and events and following my make-up workshops."