

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **Interviewing entrepreneurial women - Cyprus**

Partner: Cyprus Adult Education Association – Syndesmos Ekpedevsis Enilikon Kyprou (CAEA)

Author: Klitos Symeonides

Employment and Women on the 21st century in Europe: From Household economy to SME economy (Small and Medium enterprises) – MUPYME Project

INTERVIEWING ENTREPRENEURIAL WOMEN

GEORGIA ALLANTIKA (AGROS)



Klitos, our partner in Cyprus, with Georgia and her smoke products of Agros community, a place of small family

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1. The identification

Georgia lives in Agros community. Small businesses related to the household is the characteristic of this town and many, mainly women and families have a work and an income. Is 60 kilometres far from the capital Nicosia and 45 from Limassol the second large city. Attitude 1200 metres. Wine yards, rose flowers, many kind of fruits etc. are the main products and smoke meat at various types is produced. Light manufacture using the local products.

There are some wine industries, many companies mainly home related, produce smoke meat (sausages, hiromeri, bacon, tsamarella (goat meat), pastourma (beef sausages) etc.

There is a hospital, all services, a regional agricultural Centre, a huge sport centre with Olympic size swimming pool etc. Very good roads lead to the town from the capital and from the second large city in Cyprus. The town is very touristic and many tourists coming to Cyprus are visiting the town.

There is a women organization in the town and women for the last 15 years are working for the development of the town and for the development of their status.

Georgia has 3 children aged 7, 10, 13 years old. Her husband is the person who deliver the products, which are traditional cold cuts–cured meat-salty meat products (pork leg, bacon, sausages, posirti, pastourmas, tsamarella, hiromeri, etc.)

This is a family business with 8 persons working in full time. Three persons are family members. Georgia is specialized on marketing and her sister is food technologists.

The products are distributed in supermarkets all over Cyprus, in the community and the tourists visiting the community are good clients for the business products.

2. The beginning

2.1+2 The business was established in 1978 by the uncle of the family. He was insisting the tradition should be continued He persuaded the mother and father of Georgia to continue the small business.

2.3+4 The uncle was the first tutor, the first trainer, the first initiator. He and his wife inspired the family and the strong commitment of all had positive results.

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At the beginning the business was at primitive condition. There were no machineries, equipment, tools. Space was very small. Budget was not exist.

The market was just local, income very small, there were no loans.

2.5 Uncle gave the family valuable information about the product especially on the smoke products, about the proportion of salt, wine etc. in the products. Experience at that time was very valuable.

In 2000 Georgia and her sister joint at full time the business. This gave a great push for developments and changes. Georgia and her sister came back from Universities studying in the area that the company was dealing.

2.6 The hard work, persistence, skills acquired from household and from studies, were the main reasons that the obstacles were moved and the company started its development

2.7 At 2000 the plans were implemented to expand the spaces –this kind of business requires special space for the smoked products - Equipment and machineries were purchased and the clients started to be more and more.

3. The consolidation

3.1 Services were much better and the marketing gave a rapid development. The business is accommodated in much better conditions with 2-3 special rooms for the smoke products, technology concerning equipment and machinery was introduced. In addition training was introduced for the personnel and the standards of hygiene and quality were very high.

3.2 The clients trusted the company and 2-3 products were considered of exceptional quality. Georgia and her sister with professional skills and knowledge, combine with the expansion in space an in marketing gave company the necessary development and stabilization. At that time a loan was given and a lot of efforts for self-training was succeeded.

3.3 The harmonization process with European Union which promises funds to businesses did not succeeded. The problem was overcome with loans and government contribution.

3.4 The business is steadily increasing and the number of employees is increasing. The company targets on the good quality of products, on new markets, on good services to clients. The company needs a lot of red wine for the products. It is important that they grow their own

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red wine growing wine fields. Products safety is a priority and hygiene standards is at very high levels.

4. The future

4.1 The competition is high as recently many companies produce the same products. The efforts is to have the best possible quality. They believe that marketing is important activity to maintain the company and to develop it further.

4.2 A new modern building was on the plans, but the hygiene services did not approve it. This blocked the development, but the expansion of the existing premises limit the problem.

4.3 The will for expansion is always there as 4-5 families have their earning from the business. There is always thinking for more products, better quality, but the last 3 years there is an economic crisis in Cyprus and all plans for development have to wait. Of course plans are in the mind of the leadership for new products.

4.4 New equipment and machinery require a training programme for the personnel and this happens by course offered on job training or at other training centres. The company is trusted by the population on Cyprus and the tourists and this is promising for further development.

4.5 The company tries to consolidate the so far development and design a plan for further changes in relation to many factors (economic crisis, new marker destination, new products etc)

5. Enterprising women

5.1 Georgia is a young housewife and business woman. She is growing up 3 children 7, 10, 13 years old. She is always learning and getting experiences from both jobs. Housewife job is giving her a lot of skills and knowledge to be a successful business woman.

Georgia find so many conditions related to her as business woman. She is taking decisions and she is sure that is the right one due to the confidence she has to herself. She expresses her leadership skills with great success in both the household and in business. She feels so may self-qualities working at home, which is transferring to the business such as taking risks, feeling strong, planning, having very good relations with employees, being active in the community, having things in order etc.

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She is managing many tasks in the business including the plans for future development. She feels that her personality is now stronger, feel self-secure and self-confidence, have a clear mind in running the business.

5.2+3 Many tasks related to household can be corresponded to the business. Georgia mentioned some:

- Decision making
- Coordination
- management
- time management
- public relation
- human resource management
- Financial management
- planning
- marketing

There are much more, in general household work make the person more stable, responsible, and caring of others, cooperating with other in the best way.

5.4 There are many things at household life which if “modernise” can give a significant development in a business. These areas of development can be achieved if there is the necessary training of the housewives. Education is needed, skills development is needed. These can be categorised:

- minimize expenses
- preserving the environment
- planning the various household tasks
- keeping records of the various tasks
- collective decisions.
- coordination of efforts
- training in various tasks
- Use of various equipment with the proper safe way.

5.5 Georgia believes that a woman housewife, has the personality characteristics needed to run a business. There are so many tasks and each one and all together differentiate women from men, in relation to skills and competences to run a business. Women can decide, can coordinate, can do many tasks the same time (multitasks oriented), can organise things in

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order, can market products in a very good way, can plan, can have a good time management, etc.

Georgia believes that women have all the skills needed to run a business. Business is not the work of men or women, gender is not the problem. Is the acquisition of the necessary skills, knowledge, values.

5.6 Being a business woman is not easy work. Need many skills and competences, commitment, will, determination. Need knowledge for many things related to the business. Need values such as will for cooperation with others, will for collective decision making, respect of others, trust of colleagues and clients, competences on public relations.

5.7 Women are ready to get the necessary training and help to strengthen aspect that needed improvement. This is a personal matter and each woman has different aspects needed development. In general woman need to strengthen their self-esteem and self-confidence. Need to believe that they are not less capable than men. To believe that they acquire so many competences which unfortunately are hidden and need to come to surface.