

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O3.- Study and analysis of the professional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - 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

O3.- Study and analysis of the professional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - Cyprus

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. The 5 enterprising women are coming from two communities situated in the mountains namely Agros and Gouri. They were chosen because they have successful SME. The communities were chosen because they have traditions in SME, using local products as a basic material, preserving the local culture, promote the economy of a small community. They are chosen also because there are at the communities promising housewives who may try for a SME. Finally, opportunities for new housewives to join the work force are given in small remote communities such as the two we have chosen, where most housewives are unemployed.
2. All 5 women are active in their communities, they love to preserve the traditional culture and products of their communities.
3. All 5 women belongs in women associations in the communities and participated in European Union projects.
4. All 5 women have children and pass from household work for several years, to the business work. Now they have many duties related to the household besides the business work.
5. All women are middle age (from 40-55 years old) and have in front of them many years of their life, to develop further their businesses.
6. All 5 women established the business having the approval and cooperation of the husband.
7. The women will, to preserve what their parents and grandparents were doing for living, was one of the main motivation to work for the business. Beside this of course was an income to contribute to the family income.
8. All women participated in Grundtvig projects, before or during the establishment of the business.

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O3.- Study and analysis of the professional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - Cyprus**

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

Author: Klitos Symeonides

9. All women have the support of the community for their company.
10. The level of Education of all 5 women was at middle level, mainly graduated from secondary education.
11. The interviewer was Klitos Symeonides, a professional Adult Educator who visited all women at their homes. Each interview lasted for about 2 hours. All women were open to answer all questions.

THE BEGINNING OF THE BUSINESS

The decision for the establishment of the company was collective one, mainly with the husband. Without approval of the husband and a commitment to be active in the business, was difficult for a woman to decide for a company. It seems that women self-confidence and self-esteem need reinforcement.

In four out of five cases women brought in their children after training at higher levels, in areas related to the company. This, secure continuation of the company and expansion.

Men in the company undertake some roles mainly the delivery and distribution of the products.

The establishment of a company in a small remote community is an event affecting the whole community. Thus the council of the community was giving moral and sometimes financial support.

In most cases the business women were facing the same problems. The traditional company of the parents or grandparents with primitive technology, needed a lot of investment in man power, funds, equipments and machinery. This was the main problem. Here the contribution of the government services was important and significant in giving loans, technical support and training. Another main problem was the improvement of the space condition of the company, the quality of products, the hygiene, the market and the necessary marketing etc.

All women gave a lot of importance to the household work and the skills and knowledge acquired in order to decide for the company. The experiences at the household was a significant factor to decide for a company. Household work, gave them the necessary psychological support and strength to decide.

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O3.- Study and analysis of the profesional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - Cyprus**

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

Author: Klitos Symeonides

THE CONSOLIDATION OF THE BUSINESS

There is a number of factors contributed for the consolidation of the businesses. The business women listed the main reasons:

- Support from the communities
- Experiences gained working for the business.
- New markets
- Improvement of services to the clients
- Improvement of the quality of products
- Marketing and advertisement advancement
- Gradual expansion
- New products and renewal of old.
- Training and self education of personnel.
- Prediction of possible errors.
- Better cooperation and coordination of efforts.
- Use of internet and mass media
- Collective decision making
- Loans given and allowances by public and other funds.
- Consistency at high levels
- Modernizing equipment and materials
- Delivery of products on time
- Maximum use of all available resources
- Improving public relations

THE FUTURE OF THE BUSINESS

All women who have been under interviews were very careful in expressing their plans for future development. They mentioned some reasons which will be decisive for the future of the companies:

- The further involvement in the company of the children of the family
- To limit the cost of products in order to face the increasing competition
- To produce new products
- To be able to have loans for expansion

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O3.- Study and analysis of the profesional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - Cyprus**

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

Author: Klitos Symeonides

- To have the necessary trained personnel
- Motivation and encouragement
- The existence of preconditions for expansion(space, funds etc)
- The level of expertise needed for the future
- The level of mechanisms to collect the debts.
- To be able to organized advertised campaigns.
- The levels of consultancy.
- To be able to study the market

ENTERPRISING WOMEN

Women feel very proud and very confident to run a business especially a small one, related to preservation of food, of fruits, of arts and crafts, of wine products of local products. The women, besides the income they have, they feel proud that they do a mission and this is to preserve the traditions and the culture of their communities.

The women accept that training is needed, is very crucial for running a business. They try for self education as there are little opportunities for training.

The work at the household is giving a lot of qualities necessary for running a company but the women believe that organize training in needed, for an effective running of the household. This training at household will have significant positive effects on the business as the skills, competences and knowledge acquired at household could be much more structured, better organized and women could be ready to implement those at the business with much better results.

QUALITIES OF A SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS WOMAN

The 5 women expressed their views and ideas about the successful business woman:

- To have the necessary love and commitment to her work.
- Management and administrative skills.
- Be able to take decisions
- Be able to schedule plans

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O3.- Study and analysis of the professional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - Cyprus**

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

Author: Klitos Symeonides

- To have budgetary skills
- Be able to manage time
- To have marketing skills
- To be friendly and trust people
- Be able to limit conflicts
- To have skills and competences on personnel management
- To be ready to cooperate with others
- Be ready to accept training for her and for the personnel
- To present leadership skills
- To have strong personality
- To believe to herself as a strong person with many qualities and capabilities.
- To have consistency at highest levels.
- To have a dynamism
- To be able to accept mistakes and limitations.
- To have the necessary knowledge to run a business

Women believe that their role in the household, creates a person multitasks oriented and capable to faction in many levels and in many areas. This cannot happen to men. In this area women feels the differentiation and their superiority.

Women understand the importance of the household task for their personality development and want to “modernize “the household experience. They need help on this. This can be achieved by training in various fields of household. With this training women will make their work more productive, safe, with less expenses. The quality of life will be increased significantly.

SKILLS-COMPETENCES-KNOWLEDGE-ABILITIES LEARNED AT HOUSEHOLD AND CONTRIBUTE TO THE RUNNING OF THE BUSINESS

The women who have been interviewed, recognize many qualities, skills etc that are experiencing at the business, that were acquired from the household. This recognition is very important. We can list the areas that women believe they are benefit a lot from household tasks which correspond to the business work. A woman everyday is executive:

- Decision making (has the confidence to take decisions)
- Taking risks (take decisions with a risk following her intuition)

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O3.- Study and analysis of the professional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - Cyprus**

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

Author: Klitos Symeonides

- The use logistics and accounts(acquired many skills on this making home budget, paying bills, planning expenses, etc)
- On management on many kinds (being a good manager of house and work activities)
- Coordination at various levels(She cooperates with many bodies and coordinate activities
- Executive role (she is taking many decisions every day)
- Marketing and advertising
- Leadership
- Conflict resolution and minimize disputes
- Motivation (She inspired others at home , in society, at work)
- Time management (managed to share the time with many duties)
- Best use of resources (planning , organizing, executing of many activities)
- Environment(Maintain, safe and secure environment)
- Mobility (Mobility of people , of resources ,)
- Multitasking (Very important at SME work)
- Secure quality of life (Quality products)
- Choose priorities (Ability to choose priorities at home , at work, at social life)

SUGGESTIONS

1. Mr Mallis, a well-known economist and sociologist, supports that the work of a woman at the household can be compared with a government tasks (of course in a micrography). Planning , implementing, regulating, putting timetables, working on expenses and income(budget), training, managing resources, coordinating, decision making, making short and long term plans, working at microeconomic and macroeconomic levels , developing resources, executing. Mallis says that a woman housewife is like the Ministers of the government.

2. We have to recognise that a woman has a crucial, important role at home and the NEED for TRAINING all housewives is an investment of every country and society. This could prove as a significant step towards the establishment of business by women.

3. Women’s self-esteem and confidence are at lower levels than men. Society imposed some roles for men and women and women has the role to raise children and be at the household. In many societies this believe is still strong. The necessity to change this believe, starting from Primary Education will lead women to take

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O3.- Study and analysis of the professional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - Cyprus**

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

Author: Klitos Symeonides

4. A large part of the population which is inactive mainly women, can have a productive work if we manage to empowering them to try to establish a SME. For small, remote communities or for refugee settlements or in poor rural areas, this initiative could be very effective and benefit a community and a country.

5. Women need to be strengthened in many aspects. A training curriculum should be developed in order to give women all necessary skills, abilities, competences, knowledge to manage the household and the business. Women should, at first step, be empowered to increase their self-confidence. Programmes should target to insufflate women the necessary power to limit their fears and hesitations.

Organizational and management skills and competences are very necessary to be given to business women and the housewives. They have to learn how to formulate aims and objectives. They have to learn to present a plan of action.

Women at business and at household have to learn the important of programming and the importance to keep documents in every aspect of their work. To learn how to cooperate with other people at home or at work and the practice the principles of communication.

Women have to understand the importance of lifelong learning for them, for their families, for their employees.

Household women usually have lower or medium level education. There are many aspects at household and the small business which needed basic information such as on protecting the environment, hygiene issues, and the use of healthy materials for the household and for the products at the business. They have to be trained to use the safety regulations and to use in a safe way the equipment and materials.

Income and expenses skills and knowledge at both household and business are necessary to be acquired at the training.

One important aspect that should be examined is the “modernize” of the household experiences where the necessary training could open horizons for housewives and for business women.

There are many other aspects that can strengthen the household economy which should be identify and could be part of the training programme.

ERASMUS+ Programme 2015 – KA2 Adult Education

Project n°: 2015-1-ES01-KA204-015937

Document name: **O3.- Study and analysis of the professional skills of business women, applicable to housewives - Cyprus**

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

Author: Klitos Symeonides

6. Government policies should encourage continuous training of directors and key personnel of SME and undertake the training. There are social funds and European Union funds for this.

7. Subsidies should be given by governments for the establishment and maintenance of SME.

8. Local authorities should have the capacity to offer incentives for establishment of SME in their communities.

9. WOMEN suggest in general. the following to be included in a training programme for them.

- Knowledge and strategies on marketing.
- Was to increase the self-determination.
- Attractive techniques for creating friendly atmosphere.
- Conflict resolution techniques
- Communication
- Training of personnel on-
 - o Logistics
 - o Administration
 - o Languages
 - o Use of new materials –equipment
 - o Risk management
 - o ICT
- Cooperation with others
- Time management
- Taking initiatives techniques
- Problem solving
- Public relation