

FOCUS & CONFIDENCE AS AN ENTREPRENEUR

ANGELA'S STORY: BLACK DRESS CIRCLE EMERGE MEMBER



Angela Sandler, co-founder of xplor, a company that creates opportunities and experiences that enhance community and strengthen relationships, attended the Midwest Women Business Owners' Conference and was immediately impressed with Erin Joy, Founder & CEO at Black Dress Circle and founder of MWBOC.

"It was perfect timing," she said. "I had just started my business and needed a sounding board and some input." After a meeting with Erin, she joined.

In Search of...

"I was in search of a support system of some kind with a business focus," said Angela. "I wanted a place to be who I was, where I was in business, to help drive ROI, and to help me find balance in this new role as an entrepreneur."

A Journey with Purpose, Walked with Confidence

Angela was navigating business partnerships, vendor partners, and client relationships as her business began to take off. Although she had had a rewarding professional career before launching xplor, she had never been a business owner.

"I was struggling operating from a place of confidence as a business owner, even though I had full professional confidence," she shared. "What I've learned as a member of Black Dress Circle Emerge is that no one has the perfect formula in business or feels confident in their decisions 100% of the time. My fellow members and I bounce ideas off of each other to make our businesses more successful. We root for and support each other along this journey."

The Value

After almost a year in Black Dress Circle Emerge, Angela is still amazed at how different all of the members—and their businesses—are, yet how the challenges members bring to the table are always relatable and applicable to her business.

"It is such a diverse and unique group, and our businesses are all very different from each other, but I learn from everyone's challenges," she said. "The discussion around specific problems helps inform my business decisions—even when we aren't talking about my specific challenge."

She also notes that the supportive atmosphere has fueled her confidence and journey as a business owner.

"No matter how you feel when you walk into that room, you are going to leave feeling energized, positive, and motivated."

The Result

Since Angela joined Black Dress Circle Emerge, the company's bottom line has grown. "Operations are more intentional," she shared. "There are processes for everything."

She also feels like she's obtained some useful prioritization and time-saving tricks that help her in both her professional and personal lives.

"I'm more focused and purposeful," she said. "Our team has been more productive and innovative, and I know that my negotiation skills have improved tremendously. The value that I've gotten—and continue to receive—is almost indescribable."



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