

FROM INSPIRATION TO IMPLEMENTATION

SUZANNE'S STORY: BLACK DRESS CIRCLE EMERGE MEMBER



Suzanne Woodard, Owner of The Refind Room, a unique furniture shop with high-quality, eclectic pieces in styles ranging from vintage to modern, joined Black Dress Circle Emerge after attending The Midwest Women Business Owners' Conference.

"That conference was so valuable that I wanted more," she said. "Erin [Founder & CEO at Black Dress Circle, and MWBOC Founder] mentioned the roundtables during the conference and I decided to look into it. The more I learned, the more I wanted to be a part of it."

In Search of...

Suzanne takes seriously her role as a business owner. While her skills as a former attorney are often useful as an entrepreneur, she realizes her penchant for research and analysis can sometimes stall decisions.

"I wanted to focus on business growth, but I also wanted to be inspired," she said. "The energy from all of the women in the group—and their varying perspectives—has helped me make some key decisions for the store."

From Analysis to Action

"I always leave the roundtable inspired," said Suzanne. "All of these business owners have a strong desire to succeed, and I've never been around a group like that. These women make me want to improve my business a little each day."

For Suzanne, that meant acting on some marketing initiatives and customer relationship management tools she was considering.

"When you sit with a dynamic group of women, your mindset changes," she said. "You remember why you went into business in the first place; you can refocus on your goals—and the plans to move them forward."

The Value

Suzanne credits Erin's group assembly and facilitation with the roundtable's impact on The Refind Room.

"Erin does a masterful job of putting these groups together," Suzanne said. "The mix of personalities and industries serves to motivate and inspire."

She also notes that Erin ensures equal contribution from members.

"It is truly a group endeavor. No one dominates and that creates a comfortable space in which everyone feels empowered to contribute."

The Result

Suzanne has invested in a social media marketing campaign and a customer relationship management program (CRM) that integrates point-of-sale communications since joining the group.

"Discussions about options with which I have been struggling have been especially meaningful to me," she said. "This group has helped me to fast-track decisions. I act quicker, but I also feel more informed and have more confidence once I decide."

Additionally, since joining BDC Emerge, Suzanne has increased collaboration initiatives, introduced video to her overall strategy, and "connected with like-minded business owners who continually root for The Refind Room's success."



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