

## *“Manage my energy”*

### Client Profile

Category:	Small Business Coaching
Industry:	Fashion
Age of business:	5 years+
Stage of lifecycle:	Survival →Growth
Assignment length:	3 Years
Enterprise summary:	5 employees, 1 owner, manufacturing in Australia & Asia

The owner of this company approached us as she was ready to give up on her business. She had been working hard for a number of years but felt as though she had made no progress at all. From a financial perspective she felt stuck: she had no assets to her name and was always having to juggle cashflow, feeling like she never had anything to spare. As a result, she tried to keep her wage bill to a minimum and do most things herself. It had all become too much.

This is a common scenario for owners who struggle to grow their business beyond the survival stage: they have a sense of “three steps forwards, two steps back.” When this happens they lose motivation and confidence and can quickly form a negative view of their business. This often leads the performance of the business to falter, which results in a further drop in confidence and so on.

The coaching requirement here was two-fold: to help get the business out of survival mode to give the owner some financial breathing space; and at the same time to help the owner manage her feelings of doubt and anxiety. These two processes went hand in hand.

The first thing we did was help the owner to appreciate what she had and, most importantly, to acknowledge herself for what she had already achieved. She had a good base business with a well respected brand. She had traded through her start-up phase and was making a small profit.

The next stage was to look at the commerce of the enterprise. To move the business beyond survival required more sales, which required full-time resources. This in turn needed the owner to make an investment and back herself to grow the business: the last thing she felt like doing.

We coached her on how to identify and manage her negative feelings. We also helped her to increase awareness of her mood and showed her how to manage it. This awareness enabled her to make the investment and stick with her growth strategy.

Quite quickly the business began to grow. This enabled the owner to take on more staff, which in turn enabled more growth. As revenues increased, the business moved well beyond break-even and profits began to increase. The owner was able to use the additional funds to start her own asset base, buying her first property. From a financial point of view she felt more secure and from a personal point of view she felt more confident. All in all, she was happier.

She still has moments of doubt and anxiety, but now she knows how to manage them.

**Key Learning:** Respond, don't react.

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