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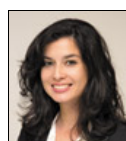
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HCC Hosts Biz Fair

Posted on August 6, 2014 by Christina O'Connor | Email the author | Entrepreneurs Archives

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Cynthia Yamasaki is just one of many speakers at the 2014 Hawaii Small Business Fair Aug. 23.

Here's a situation that will probably sound pretty familiar to a lot of people, entrepreneurs or not: One local businesswoman was working around the clock to make a positive impact within her company, but she was stressed out all the time and ultimately felt like she wasn't gaining any ground on her larger goals.

Through sessions with leadership and life coach Cynthia Yamasaki, owner of CMY Consulting, the woman evaluated how she was using her time. From there, Yamasaki helped her create a tailored action plan to increase efficiency and effectiveness and integrate that plan into her life.

CMY Consulting provides one-on-one professional and personal coaching for executives, professionals who aspire to leadership positions and entrepreneurs. She has helped clients start, grow and lead organizations.

Yamasaki will share her expertise as one of dozens of speakers at the 2014 Hawaii Small Business Fair, which takes place from 8 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. Aug. 23 at Honolulu Community College.

"We hope (attendees) come to gain knowledge on how start and expand their current businesses as well as network with business resources that are out there," explains Christiane Bolosan-Yee, executive director of the Ewa Beach Community Based Development Organization, one of the fair organizers.

Yamasaki will be speaking during session one in room 208 from 9:30 to 10:30 a.m. on "Real Advice for Entrepreneurs." The talk is aimed at aspiring entrepreneurs who are thinking about starting their own businesses. She'll provide an overview of life as an entrepreneur and things you need to know before you launch — including the key elements of a business plan and issues to consider when it comes to funding. If you miss the talk, Yamasaki also will host a vendor booth throughout the day, where she will be available to answer questions.

Before launching CMY Consulting in 2007, Yamasaki worked as a business loan officer at Bank of Hawaii, a financial manager at a startup and at Sprint, where she developed and implemented a career development

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program. She also served as director of Patsy T. Mink Center for Business and Leadership.

Yamasaki recently shared a preview of some the advice she'll be sharing at the fair.

1) Choose a good mentor.

Yamasaki credits much of her career growth to mentors she had along the way.

"The mentors that I have had in my life have inspired me," she says. "Without that kind of encouragement ... I don't think I would be as happy as I am now."

She got her start as a clerk at a savings and loan firm. Her mentor there helped her gain the skills and confidence to eventually be promoted to project manager.

2) "Know your highest purpose and true values."

"Remember those values and live by those values," she explains.

She suggests setting aside time each week to examine how you are allocating your time and how that fits into your overall goal.

3) Try not to do everything. This is one that Yamasaki says is the biggest challenge for entrepreneurs. Rather than trying to run each aspect of your business, delegate tasks to others. If you're not an expert in one area, find someone who is.

"Know what your strengths are," she says. "Many, many entrepreneurs that I coach are trying to do it all. For example, if you are not a marketing expert, if you don't invest in getting some help, then you're taking away time you could be using what your gift is.

"Surround yourself with good advisers," she adds.

4) Effective leaders lead by example. Yamasaki feels that leadership is "not about telling people what to do, it's about inspiring people."

5) Be realistic. A lot of first-time entrepreneurs that Yamasaki meets have great ideas, but business owners also need to recognize the amount of time, money and energy that launching a business will require. For example, plan for a gap period between money going out and money coming in.

However, Yamasaki adds, "Don't give up on your dream."

For more on CMY Consulting, call 239-2828 or visit cynthiayamasaki.com.

Other workshops at the 2014 Hawaii Small Business Fair include "How To Sell Yourself and Your Product," "Profitability and Cash Flow," "Secrets of Marketing," "Social Media Marketing Made Simple" and "Understanding Business Accounting." The event also will feature vendors that have programs and services for small business, including Office of Hawaiian Affairs, Business Action Center, Small Business Development Center and U.S. Small Business Administration.

Registration is free and includes three classes of your choice. To register, sign up at smallbizfair20142.eventbrite.com by Aug. 18.

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