

I started working online in the fall of 2002. At the time I was focused on building my coaching business, and had the opportunity to do some part time work for CoachVille... which was the largest online coach membership and training organization in the world. We were building a house at the time and needed some extra cash, so I thought 'hey, I'll do this on the side while building my coaching business".

Well, it turned out that I enjoyed the work I was doing for CoachVille much more than my own coaching practice... and so I decided to shut down my coaching business and focus full-time on helping support the 'business of coaching' vs. doing the coaching itself. The founder of CoachVille passed away suddenly in February 2003, and after the new management came on board I decided to move on and officially started OnlineBusinessManager.com in the fall of 2003. Together with my biz partner Andrea Lee, we help small businesses grow from 6 to 7 figures by harnessing the 'power of the internet'.

***How do kids fit into the picture? Samantha is beautiful by the way.***

(thanks!!)For me there is no separation between 'work and life'... I really love the work that I do, it's a part of who I am and therefore a part of my bigger life as well. It seems that alot of people try to draw a line between 'work' and 'life'... ie: I leave my work at the door when I get home. It took me a while to do so but I did finally find work that I really enjoy and that I'm good at... work that 'fits' me to a T so to speak.

I decided quite a while ago that I really wanted to be able to work from home, so that I could have the 'best of both worlds' when we started a family. I've been working from home for over 4 years now, and have purposely focused on keeping relatively part-time hours even before Samantha was born.. to get out of that work-aholic habit that can be so easy for business owners to fall into! Now with Sam I find that my work habits have changed a bit - ie: I tend to do more work in the evenings when my husband Dan is home - however I've still been able to continue working and am loving it.

Sam is already in training to be a 'Future OnlineBusinessManager.com', as it says on the onesie that a co-worker got for her.

***What have been some of your major successes and some of your challenges?***

My business partnership with Andrea Lee. I'm not one to work well on my own, and so I was always looking to find a good business partner. Andrea and I worked together at CoachVille (she was the GM and the one who originally hired me) and it became clear quickly that we were kindred spirits. Once we both left CoachVille, we stayed connected on various work projects and officially became business partners in the fall of 2004. We like to joke that its a 'match made in heaven'... we have similiar work styles and goals for the business, and yet we are different enough that our strengths/talents really compliment one another. I honestly don't think I would do the work that I do without having such a great partner... no great thing is accomplished alone.

My most recent success is the publication of my first book *Money, Meaning and Beyond: 27 Unexpected Ways to Create What Really Matters for Business Owners* [www.moneymeaningandbeyond.com](http://www.moneymeaningandbeyond.com). I was working on this book just before and right after Samantha was born, so it was a labor of love in many ways. The book is getting a great response from readers to date and it is such a treat to see my own name in print!

Another success for my life is that I've been able to make a good living while working part-time hours from home. If you had asked me 10 years ago (heck, even 5 years ago!) I wouldn't have thought it possible. So I do feel very blessed to have found work I love and to be able to build it into a life I love as well.

I would say the biggest challenge we face is having potential clients 'beating down our doors' wanting to hire an Online Business Manager (OBM) and we are already full and not able to help them. The role of an OBM is quite new in the business world, and we are not aware of many people who do this kind of work... so it is a challenge to help these clients out. We are seriously considering starting an OBM Training Program in the new year, as we know there is lots of business out there for properly trained people. What I really

want to do is focus on moms who have chosen to stay at home with their children, and yet would still love to work... this is an ideal occupation for us at home mom types. :)

Otherwise, my only other challenge right now is balancing work and being with Samantha during the day. She is still young at 5 months (maybe 6 or more by the time this is published) so it's not too hard yet... she stays put and isn't roaming the house yet. And we are getting into a good nap schedule during the day so I have some free time to work (she's napping right now!). That was also part of our decision to move to Lethbridge, I grew up here and my family is still here... so I can have some babysitting help to be able to do things like lead classes, etc.

***Do you have any tips you can recommend to our readers?***

Tip #1: Get a like-minded business community in place for yourself... a place where you can bounce ideas for your business, get support when you are unmotivated, ask questions and just plain ole whine and complain when need be. :) This could be a business coach, business partner or other working moms who understand the joys and pitfalls of business. (maybe The Mompreneur readership!)

Tip #2: Draw a solid line around work and home/family time (especially if you work from home). It is so easy to fall into the trap of 'working all day long' if you aren't careful, so pick the times when you work and the times when you don't... and try to stick to them as much as possible (always exceptions of course). ie: Make a commitment to not work weekends, or if you need to work on the weekends while you have the support of hubby to babysit, say you will work 'Saturday morning from 8-12'.

Tip#3: Hire help for the administrative stuff. Your time is at a premium, so keep yourself focused on the money-making tasks that "only you can do" and hire help for the rest. Most new business owners think that they need to do it all - especially in the beginning - when really your business needs your focus where it should be (marketing, delivery of products/services) and not on administrative stuff. Ask yourself throughout the day "Is this something that someone else could do for me?" and make a list... then hire someone to take care of those things. Budget can be a concern in the early days, however consider that hiring someone can actually make you money in that it frees you up for money making activities.

Tip#4: Stay in touch with the joy and passion for your business. Especially important for us moms, as it can be so easy to just let business slide in light of other priorities if we aren't enjoying ourselves... why are you doing what you do? And if you aren't enjoying yourself, what can you change to make it more enjoyable?

Tip#5: Kiss and hug your kids everyday! After all, they are why we do what we do.

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