



The Road to Business Success Begins With Knowing the Numbers

A business coach for women entrepreneurs and women leaders, Ivy Slater works with clients who value success in business equally with success in all aspects of life. Her mission is to inspire, empower, teach, coach, assist, mentor and support women as they achieve their goals by utilizing their ideas, imagination and abilities. Slater Success Coaching was founded in 2008 to:

- Assist clients in defining their goals.
- Help them create a clear plan to achieve those goals with confidence.
- Provide ongoing support to clients as their worlds expand.

“You should write a book, you know,” said Heather, a friend and one of Ivy’s early clients. “One that helps women business owners learn how to achieve success.”

Ivy was taken aback by what she had just heard. “I broke out laughing,” she recounted. “I told her that I was absolutely—no question about it—not going to write a book. It’s not what I do or who I am. No, no, no!” And then she set about writing *Conquering Your Fear of Money: A Woman’s Guide to Business Success*.

Key Takeaways



Ivy Slater was a successful business owner, popular speaker, and trusted mentor when she first considered writing a book.



After receiving mentorship from other women, Ivy wanted to share what she had learned from them on paper.



Her book, *Conquering Your Fear of Money*, helps readers establish actionable goals and build financial confidence.

Fulfilling a responsibility

Ivy's initial reluctance to becoming an author had nothing to do with a lack of expertise—far from it. She was a successful business owner, popular speaker, and highly credentialed mentor with years of coaching experience and an impressive client list.

“I felt my true communications skill set was speaking, not writing,” Ivy said. “But after I thought about it some more, I realized that I had to do it. Many women had supported me during my career, and I was trained and mentored by some of the most accomplished and renowned business professionals and coaches in the industry. It was my responsibility to put what I had learned on paper.”

The overarching theme of *Conquering Your Fear of Money* is drawn from a problem that is all too common for many of Ivy's women clients. “There's a huge resistance to looking at numbers in general and financials in particular,” she said. “It's much more of a problem with women than men, going back to school days where girls are expected to be good at English and boys at math. And the fear of numbers is especially pronounced for professionals in the creative world, where many women excel.”

Conquering Your Fear of Money takes the issue head on. “To be successful in business—any business—you have to know the numbers,” she said. “There's a story in them that you must be able to read, interpret, and understand. You gain insights from figures and financials that you can't get anywhere else: They tell you which jobs to take on, how much to charge, who you need to hire, what's going on in sales and marketing, and what you're spending too much time and money on or not enough. My book provides a road map for turning resistance and fear into understanding that a firm grasp of the numbers can enable you to achieve not just your business goals but your life's goals.”

Building confidence

“Every owner/entrepreneur needs an action plan, one that incorporates a top-of-the-house strategic plan with sales, finance, and overhead,” she emphasized.



“And since no plan can anticipate every development, it has to be responsive to change and to adapt as needed.”

Ivy was determined to make the book's content simple and straightforward: *Conquering Your Fear of Money* is laid out as an enhanced workbook, and the reader has to complete assignments and activities. “It provides a framework to help you as an owner establish real goals and use them to create action,” Ivy said. “The book is designed to help you gain confidence: The more you believe in yourself, the more you'll understand your value and the more you can grow.”

Ivy's journey

For 20 years, Ivy owned and operated Slater Graphics, a successful seven-figure printing business in New York City. As a woman in the printing industry, it wasn't easy. “Printing was a male-dominated sector then—men often just didn't want to do business with women,” she said. “And they would tell you that to your face.”

Ivy became successful in the business by creating her niche market: women buyers in the publishing industry. “I had an opportunity to meet with the marketing manager at *W Magazine*,” she said. “As I walked through the office, it struck me that the cubicles were all filled with women. That was exhilarating, and it opened my eyes to the potential of what working with other women offered. I asked for an opportunity to bid on a job at *W*, and one thing led to another. Women referred me to other women in the business, and my order book began to fill.”



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Ivy Slater, author, "Conquering Your Fear of Money: A Woman's Guide to Business Success"

A career pivot

It was 2007, and Ivy had already reached major milestones in her career in printing. The year also marked the first anniversary of the passing of her beloved father, a lifelong printer and the man who had helped her get started in the industry.

"That one-year anniversary shook me enough to make me ask some hard questions," she said. "Is this what I'm meant to do with my life? Am I going to die a printer? I knew that the answer was 'no,' but I honestly didn't know what was next."

She started chasing down all sorts of ideas, ruling nothing out in the beginning. Then a friend—someone she had helped with advice—suggested that she consider becoming a coach. "I didn't even know what that was," said Ivy. "But the more I explored it, the more intrigued I became. As I mentioned before, women had given me the opportunity to be a success, and I felt that I needed to give back. I then got my certifications and opened up Slater Success Coaching in January 2008."

Ivy confronted one especially tough obstacle in the early going. "I understood how to sell a physical product like a printing job, but not a service," she said. "I was constantly questioning whether I was good enough to teach this. I had to learn that coaching isn't about the coach—it's about the transformation of the client who's investing in herself and the value you help add to her life."

Ivy realized that she had been undervaluing herself and consequently undercharging. "This is why I help women focus on their value and numbers," she said. "We wonder why we think we're worth so much and why anyone would pay. A woman professional has to overcome the [imposter syndrome](#)— her doubts about her skills and the belief that she's not good enough."

Thinking through a career change

What's the very first thing someone should do when considering a career change? "It all begins with putting together a pros/cons list," Ivy advises. "What do you like and dislike? Do you understand why you like and dislike those things? It's about knowing what you want in life and your own personal 'whys,' then determining how a potential new career fits into all of this."

When an entrepreneur decides to open a business, she'll have two groups of people offering input: cheerleaders and naysayers. "Cheerleaders keep you pumped up," Ivy said. "They help you see the opportunities and possibilities. Naysayers, on the other hand, wonder how you can do this and don't see how you'll be able to pay your bills without a regular paycheck. But keep in mind that naysayers are simply feeding off their own doubts—they don't believe that they can do what you're planning to do. That's where they're coming from."



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Ivy Slater

Making tough decisions

A lot of Ivy's coaching and counseling is on decision-making. So what makes a decision the "right" one?

"We worry so much about making the wrong decision that we put off making one at all," Ivy said. "But there's a cost to avoiding decisions—the longer you wait, the greater the lost opportunity. The more decisions you make, the more actions you can take.

"And the more actions you take, the better the prospects for growing your business. By all means, go through a disciplined process—gather and evaluate the facts—but then decide and act," she said. "You may make the wrong decision sometimes, but you can still work on improving the outcome. And always think of the adage: 'Often wrong, seldom uncertain.'"

To learn more about Ivy and her book, visit slatersuccesscoaching.com.

For more Key4Women® resources to help you reach your goals, visit key.com/women, or email us at key4women@keybank.com.

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