

## Planning - *The Business Skill for Women and the Key to Preventing Stress*

By Ute Wiczorek-King, copyright August 2009

Last week, I had to attend an event in the back of beyond, and was pleased to be able to catch a lift from a couple I know. With two satnavs in their car, we felt confident that we would find the place quite easily.

However, the in-car satnav was switched off (too complicated apparently) and the replacement portable one seemed a bit temperamental. Thirty minutes of in-car arguments later, with the couple both shouting at the satnav's female voice and at each other, we were totally lost. We did get there eventually but boy, was it a stressful journey.



**There are always different ways to get from A to B**, whether you choose the quickest or the most scenic route and whether you use a map or a satnav to help you.

When using a map, the difference is that *you* become the navigator who plans the journey and makes all the decisions, a responsibility that I quite enjoy.

It always concerns me that **in business, so many women only have a rough destination and no adequate map to travel successfully from A to B**. As women with a family and a business tend to be under immense pressure when juggling their different commitments, they often rush from A to B, to get on with things rather than sitting down with a cup of tea and pondering what they should be doing next. Indeed don't we often complain they we don't have the time to even sit down? However, following a never-ending to-do list in order to get all the jobs done, may be no more effective than travelling with a faulty satnav!

### **Not having a plan in business can lead to two problems:**

The first is that without any defined path and goals, the long term destination will be unclear. **This can cause important milestones and targets to be missed and increases the chances that the business will ultimately not succeed**. The owner may well be extremely busy but not necessarily working in a focused and energy efficient way and this can lead to the second problem.



Women who work without a plan frequently let necessary 'check-in' stops fall by the wayside, because of their 'busyness'. The potential outcome of this is all too common: **feeling overwhelmed and running out of energy and motivation**.

Like a satnav that doesn't work - which can cause stress for the driver *and* any passengers - **inefficient 'busyness' without a defined path and goals leads to increasing stress levels, potentially causing all sorts of other health problems**.

The businesses that have a plan are much more likely to succeed and even a simple one will enable you to keep your business heading in the right direction. And if that isn't convincing enough, having a plan as part of a defined structure to your working life will almost certainly reduce your stress levels too, giving you the opportunity to not only be successful but enjoy it too!