



#EWIFempowers Empowerment: Ladies, we've got your back

*As women, we feel most **empowered** when we encourage and support each other.*

Being enterprising doesn't mean you have to take down the competition, it means you can use a network of women who are available to you and capitalise on your best possible opportunities. It has long been proven how women shine brightest when they use each other's knowledge, instead of being in constant conflict with each other.

According to the UN Women Headquarters, "When more women work, economies grow. An increase in female labour force participation—or a reduction in the gap between women's and men's labour force participation—results in faster economic growth."

Within organisations like **EWIF (Encouraging Women Into Franchising)**, women find a network of like-minded people who will enable them to feel empowered and strengthened.

Dr. Randy Kamen, writing for The Huffington Post says, "When life becomes challenging, women seek out friendships with other women as a means of regulating stress levels. A common female stress response is to 'tend and befriend.' That is, when women become stressed, their inclination is to nurture those around them and reach out to others."

Female friendships have recently been celebrated on social media, a part of female empowerment initiatives designed to unite women against political and social oppression. Movements such as #MeToo and #TimesUp share female experiences and have created a community of support. Women in business need a supportive network around them who will inspire and cheer them on. This doesn't necessarily need to come from a CEO at the top of the business, but from their peers, from their direct network.

For such a long time, women have been pitted against each other, whether through media representation, or through society's expectations in general. However, in recent times, and especially within the business sphere, women are rebelling against this idea. With social media being such an integral part of our day-to-day lives, women use these platforms to show their support and encouragement for other women in business.

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This idea of rebellion has been the source of great ideas, great unity and great encouragement. Podcasts such as *The Small and Mighty Podcast*, created by Sam Burgess from *Social Mouth*, helps small businesses build their social media following and increase their online presence, resulting in profit for their businesses.

Texts have also been a phenomenal turning point, in recent times. Books such as *Little Black Book: A Toolkit for Working Women* by Otegha Uwagba, gives women the resources to realise their belief in themselves, through the voice of another woman. Uwagba is also the founder of *Women Who* and runs talks built to empower and encourage women in business to visualise their goals and ultimately achieve them.

EWIF helps to advise and encourage women into taking the plunge into running their own franchise businesses, creating a support network of other women who will give them confidence to believe in their business and to believe in themselves.

Franchising allows women to have a business model which works and so, empowering women to take the chance with the support of other women in the same position, who 'have their back'.

The moral of the story?
Never underestimate the power of female solidarity!

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How to make the most out of your network

1

With a lack of women involved in top level franchising, it's great to have a network of female franchisors around you, supporting you, breaking down the stereotypes and recognising each other's capabilities.

2

The support within the franchise industry, which cover a vast-array of sectors, means most women in franchising see the benefit of encouraging each other, rather than being in competition. An example of this might be sharing each other's content on social media.

3

The franchise world is filled with a lot of knowledgeable people who are happy to share ideas, and discuss best practice. Learn from other women as you build trust with other franchisors, and watch each other out-do some of the guys!