



The AFFINGEM Financing Scheme/-i has launched!

Designed for women entrepreneurs, the AFFINGEM Financing Scheme/-i offers collateral-free financing of up to RM1 million for working capital and capital expenditure. The scheme provides affordable financing with low profit rates and covers ancillary costs such as guarantee fees, legal fees, and stamp duty. For more information, contact your respective Relationship Managers (RMs) or leave your contact details by downloading the SME Colony app today.

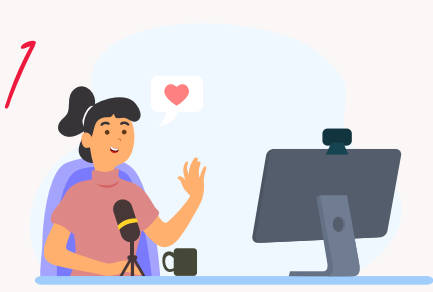
Themed "Empowering Women in Business", the event featured insightful discussions with industry innovators and experts aimed at empowering women entrepreneurs.



GROW YOUR BUSINESS WITH FIVE PR STRATEGIES

In today's dynamic business landscape, paid digital marketing can quickly drain your budget with minimal return on investment. What worked six months ago might not be effective now. However, public relations (PR) offers a cost-effective strategy that you can implement yourself, potentially skyrocketing your business overnight.

Here are five proven PR strategies to help build your dream business:



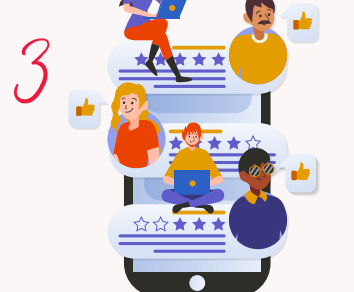
1 Share Your Story

People connect with people, not brands. Share your personal journey and make yourself the face of your business. Icons like Richard Branson and Steve Jobs built their brands by sharing their stories. Start small: pitch to podcasts, write a blog post, or contact local media. Your story could become viral, generating immense publicity.



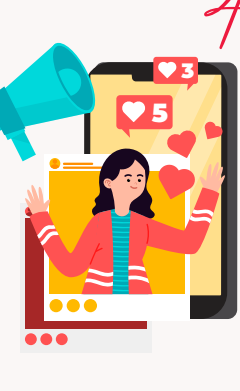
2 Collaborate with Impact

Partner with like-minded businesses. Create joint offerings that benefit both your audiences and leverage each other's brand equity. High-profile collaborations like Nike and Tiffany & Co. show the power of partnership. Identify potential partners and tailor your proposal for mutual success.



3 Build Media Relations

Position yourself as an industry expert with regular media appearances. Compile a media wish list, research contacts, and pitch your story ideas. Quick responses and proactive outreach will keep you on journalists' radars, ensuring you are their go-to source for industry insights.



4 Engage Influencers

Influencer marketing is not just for big brands. Identify relevant influencers in your industry and offer product or service exchanges for posts. Document agreements clearly. Their endorsement boosts your credibility, and you can amplify their content across your social media.



5 Host an Event

Post-pandemic, events are a fantastic way to reconnect with customers and generate buzz. Host a themed event, collaborate with venues, and seek sponsors. An engaging event can attract media attention, new customers, and even additional revenue.

These PR strategies can significantly enhance your business's visibility and growth. Consistency is key—do not be discouraged if success does not come immediately. Keep at it, and watch your business thrive.

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbesagencycouncil/2024/04/01/grow-your-business-with-these-five-pr-strategies/?sh=24e400b15622>



Empowering Underrepresented Workers in Tech

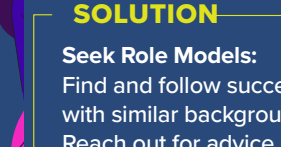
OVERCOMING CAREER CHALLENGES

The tech industry is booming with opportunities, but for underrepresented workers, breaking in can be challenging. From résumé screenings to career advancement, minorities face unique obstacles.

Here are five common pitfalls and solutions to help you thrive in tech.

1 LACK OF REPRESENTATION

Underrepresentation is a significant barrier. Women make up only 26.9% of the computer and mathematical occupations workforce, and Black people only 8% of the tech workforce.



SOLUTION

Seek Role Models:

Find and follow successful professionals with similar backgrounds on LinkedIn. Reach out for advice and mentorship.

SOLUTION

Network:

Attend tech events and conferences to connect with peers who share your experiences, providing support and insights.

2 UNCONSCIOUS BIAS

Bias can influence hiring, promotions, and job responsibilities, often without managers even realising it.

SOLUTION

Boost Self-Awareness:

Understand your strengths and articulate your value confidently during interviews and evaluations.

SOLUTION

Prepare for Interviews:

Research common biases and practice responses that highlight your qualifications and achievements.

3 STEREOTYPING

Stereotypes can limit career growth by preventing you from showcasing your true abilities.

SOLUTION

Showcase Your Skills:

Take on leading roles in projects and engage in side projects to demonstrate your capabilities.

SOLUTION

Engage in Continuous Learning:

Stay updated with industry trends and technologies through online courses and certifications.

4 LACK OF ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITIES

Bias and stereotyping can lead to being overlooked for growth opportunities and impactful projects.

SOLUTION

Take Initiative:

Express your interest in challenging projects and communicate your career goals during evaluations.

SOLUTION

Develop New Skills:

Invest in learning new skills relevant to your career goals and seek opportunities to apply them.

5 PAY DISPARITIES

Underrepresented workers often face pay disparities throughout their careers.

SOLUTION

Hone Negotiation Skills:

Be prepared to negotiate salaries during job offers and promotions. Practice with a trusted person if necessary.

SOLUTION

Conduct Research:

Regularly research salary benchmarks to understand your market value and approach pay discussions confidently.

Navigating a tech career as an underrepresented worker can be daunting, but these strategies can help you overcome challenges and succeed. Embrace these solutions to break barriers and thrive in the tech world.

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2024/04/08/empowering-underrepresented-workers-in-tech-solutions-to-career-pitfalls/?sh=39240e8f78d8>



3 WAYS AI CAN HELP YOU ATTRACT GEN-Z TALENT

1 ATTRACT WITH VALUE-FOCUSED JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Create targeted job postings: Use AI to emphasise your company's ethos and personal development opportunities.

Optimise job ads: Ensure your listings are clear, precise, and targeted, especially for hard-to-fill sectors like retail and hospitality.

2 FOCUS ON SKILLS AND POTENTIAL WITH AI

Skills-based evaluations: Use AI algorithms to assess candidates based on skills rather than experience, leveling the playing field.

Identify transferable skills: AI can recognise relevant skills in candidates looking to pivot into new fields, filling talent gaps and addressing shortages.

3 AUTOMATE TO ENHANCE HUMAN INTERACTION

Streamline processes: Use AI to handle resumes and résumé scans, freeing up time for personal interactions.

Assess soft skills: More time for conversation helps evaluate crucial traits like emotional intelligence and empathy, which remain vital despite AI advancements.

As talent becomes more crucial for business success, embracing Gen-Z and leveraging AI can create stronger hiring processes. However, it is important to combine AI with human oversight to mitigate biases. Let us use this moment to welcome the next generation and build better hiring practices for today and tomorrow.

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbeshumanresourcescouncil/2024/04/26/3-ways-ai-can-help-you-reach-the-growing-gen-z-candidate-pool/?sh=573d5b9953d1>



How Effective Coaching Can Overcome ESG Challenges in Digital Leadership

Addressing environmental, social, and governance (ESG) challenges in digital leadership requires innovative solutions. Coaching can help leaders align their strategies with ESG goals, empowering them to make informed decisions, promote sustainability, and foster a culture of responsibility and innovation. Here are five ways coaching can transform ESG challenges into opportunities for growth.

1.

Cultivates a Strategic Mindset

Coaching encourages leaders to integrate ESG values into core business operations. This strategic, holistic approach helps leaders understand the interconnectedness of ESG issues and digital transformation, fostering innovation and sustainability.

2.

Clarifies ESG Goals and Metrics

Coaching helps leaders define clear ESG goals and integrate them into business strategies. By understanding and implementing complex ESG metrics, leaders can drive positive social and environmental impacts and avoid unethical pitfalls.

3.

Enhances Resilience and Innovation

Coaching develops crucial mindsets for leading digital transformation with a focus on sustainability. It fosters behaviours like empathy, collaboration, and active listening, which enhances stakeholder engagement and resilience, enabling leaders to maintain long-term commitment to ESG goals despite disruptions.

4.

Promotes Effective ESG Communication

Clear and accurate ESG communication is essential in the digital age. Coaching provides leaders with strategies to combat misinformation and greenwashing, ensuring transparency and building trust with stakeholders about the company's commitment to sustainability.

5.

Embeds ESG Principles in Digital Initiatives

Coaching equips leaders with the skills to navigate the complexities of integrating ESG principles into digital transformation initiatives. This approach ensures that sustainability is a core consideration in leveraging technology, fostering innovation, and addressing ESG concerns effectively.

By embedding coaching into their approach, leaders can transform ESG challenges into opportunities for growth, building a sustainable and responsible future for their organisations.

Source: <https://www.forbes.com/sites/forbescoachescouncil/2024/04/16/how-coaching-helps-overcome-esg-challenges-in-digital-leadership/?sh=d64116e67b00>

This newsletter is brought to you by AFFINGEM, an initiative tailored for women entrepreneurs to GROW, EMPOWER and MANAGE your businesses with special offerings and perks.

Share your best practices with us! Reach out to us at smecare@affingroup.com with the subject line [AFFINGEM TIPS].

Find out more about how AFFINGEM can support your business growth and milestones by downloading our award-winning SME Colony app.

