

Reinvention at any age

Funding your next chapter

As women business owners, we know reinvention is not a one-time event—it is part of growth. Maybe you are considering expanding into a new market, launching a complementary product, or transitioning your business to the next generation. You could also be considering scaling down, building a more flexible model, or exploring a new initiative that reflects your values.

The challenge isn't coming up with the idea – it's ensuring your finances can support the vision. Let's look at strategies that can help you plan your next chapter without sacrificing your financial security.

Understanding the trade-offs

Wanting to make a change and being able to afford it are two different things. It's a challenge most entrepreneurs know well. In fact, a recent survey found that more than half of business owners believe that reinvesting in new opportunities is worth short-term financial strain, but that doesn't mean it is easy.

The good news? As entrepreneurs, we already think in terms of cost-benefit tradeoffs, cash flow, and contingencies in our businesses every day. The same principles that keep your company stable can also guide your next chapter.

Understanding your financial reality

One of the most common mistakes is making spending decisions based on income expected but not yet received. Before launching a new division, buying out a partner, or scaling your operations, start by assessing your "runway" – how long your business and household could sustain themselves if revenue fluctuates during the transition.

An easy way to think about it is:
current liquid savings ÷ monthly business and personal expenses = months of runway.

Ask yourself these questions:

- What reserves do I have for unexpected expenses or slow periods?
- How will this change affect my cash flow in the short term (6-12 months)?
- Can I fund growth internally, or do I need outside funding?
- What is my plan B if the transition takes longer than expected?

Being clear on your numbers helps you make confident, strategic decisions—not reactive ones.

Investing in growth, leadership and learning

Reinvention does not always mean starting over. Sometimes a fresh start means investing in yourself or your team through education or new skills. Whether it's an executive education program, a leadership retreat, or a certification that helps you expand your services, treat these as growth investments, not expenses.

Consider these funding strategies:

1. **529 College Savings Plans:** These accounts offer tax-deferred growth and tax-free withdrawals for qualified education expenses. A common misconception is that 529 accounts are only for traditional four-year colleges. They can also be used for vocational programs, trade schools, and certificate programs.
2. **Grants and fellowships for entrepreneurs:** Many organizations and universities now offer funding or scholarships for women-owned businesses seeking leadership training or innovation initiatives.
3. **Alternative educational formats:**



Reinvention does not always mean starting over. Sometimes a fresh start means investing in yourself or your team through education or new skills.

Don't overlook online programs and community colleges. They are usually more affordable and flexible, which means you can keep working (and earning) while you learn.

From passion to profit

Thinking about a passion project? Before you start, ask yourself: Is this for fun, or could it become a source of income? If you're hoping to turn your passion into a business, be strategic about it:

- **Maintain your current income** – at least initially. Most people keep their day jobs while building something on the side. This takes the pressure off and lets your project grow sustainably.

Whether your goal is growth, succession, or greater work-life balance, reinvention works best when it is planned, not impulsive.

■ **Budget for real costs** like materials, equipment, software, marketing, contractors, and business licenses. These expenses add up faster than you might expect.

Whether you're starting a blog, launching a podcast, opening an online store, or building a consulting practice, treat it like a business from day one. Proper planning and realistic budgeting increase your chances of success.

Making your move with confidence

Whether your goal is growth, succession, or greater work-life balance, reinvention works best when it is planned, not impulsive.

Here are a few practical steps:

1. **Know your numbers:** Calculate how long your savings will last based on your essential expenses during a transition.
2. **Build a cushion:** Aim to have several months of expenses saved before making a major move. The duration depends on your situation and comfort level.
3. **Test before you leap:** Try your new direction while keeping your current income. This lets you assess whether it's viable before fully committing.
4. **Treat education like any investment:** Apply the same analysis to skill-building that you would to other major financial decisions.
You can do this! Strategic planning and calculated decisions are skills you use

in your business every day—now apply them to your own next chapter. Amelia Earhart put it perfectly: “The most difficult thing is the decision to act, the rest is merely tenacity.” Make the decision, do your homework, then follow through. The rest is execution – and as entrepreneurs, that’s what we do best. ☺



SUSAN MICHEL is the founder and CEO of Glen Eagle Advisors, LLC, an SEC-registered investment advisor located in New Jersey. Offering retirement planning to business owners and wealth

management, the Glen Eagle team takes an educational, holistic approach to meeting their clients' long-term goals. Susan is a member of the Enterprising Women Advisory Board and a past recipient of the Enterprising Women of the Year Award. She was named an Enterprising Women “Top 20 in 2020” Award Winner. Learn more and connect at www.gleneagleadv.com.





GRACE
*Federal Solutions, LLC**

Transforming lives with
healthcare and technology

Workforce Solutions Provider

- Clinical & Non-Clinical Support, Operations & Administrative Support, Research Support, Call Center and other healthcare support.

Project Management

- People and Change Management, Call Center, Contact Center Management

Research Services

- Study design, Data collection and analysis, and project management.

Revenue Cycle Management

- Streamline billing, coding, claims management, and payment processing, ensuring maximum reimbursement for the exceptional care you provide.

Training Design and Delivery

- Instructional Design and Development, Facilitation and Training Delivery

☎ 919-977-0841 ✉ info@gracefederalolutions.com
www.gracefederalolutions.com

Iris Phillips President & CEO