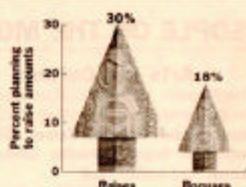


# BizEdge

GROW YOUR BUSINESS

## RAISES AND BONUSES

Chief financial officers nationwide were asked if their companies will be giving higher raises and bonuses in 2005:



Source: Robert Half International Inc.

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THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

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## Boot camp helps women fight business obstacles

BY RUBEN HERNANDEZ  
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Three hundred women seeking an arsenal of ideas and high-caliber ammunition to battle business obstacles are being recruited for the Women Entrepreneurs' Small Business Boot Camp.

Susan Ratliff, president of Exhibit Experts, initiated the Jan. 8 event to rally the growing number of women who are starting their own micro-enterprises. The all-day workshops and panels will take place at the Hilton Scottsdale Resort.

Attendees will be educated and motivated

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Exhibit Experts: 602-437-3634

with the will to survive.

"I've attended other events for years, but have never come away with any real ammunition," she said.

"I don't have time for fluff. I want meat and potatoes."

Goldman said the conference lineup looks like it can toughen up any businesswoman.

The boot camp targets micro-business owners with less than 10 employees as well as home-based businesses, Ratliff said.

Marketing consultant Debbie Allen is one of the keynote speakers. Allen wrote the book, "Attracting Customers Like Crazy."

Panel leaders include Donna Davis, director of the Phoenix Chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners; Annette Alvarez, Alvarez Inc.; Trish Bear, Iology; Denise Haney, Newport Furnishings; and Cathy Bua, Cathy's Rum Cake.

Workshop topics include Twenty Marketing Ideas to Increase Your Business 20 Percent, and Doing Business with the Big Boys.

Ratliff also has teamed with Janet Drez, founder and chairman of the Arizona Home-based Business Council, to present the 2005 Home Business Crown Jewel Award.

Drez, owner of home-based firm A Perfect Solution, created the national award. The award recognizes the contributions home-based businesses make to the U.S. economy. This is the second year the award has been given.

Ann Videan, owner of Videan Unlimited Marketing Connections LLC in Mesa, a PR agency, will receive the award at the entrepreneurs boot camp.

Ratliff said she wanted to create an event that welcomes all micro businesses and celebrates the micro-business owner.

"We don't want to be a company with 100 employees," she said.



JIM POLLIN/ THE BUSINESS JOURNAL

Susan Ratliff, forefront, organizer of the Women Entrepreneurs' Small Business Boot Camp, wants to provide micro-entrepreneurs such as Helen Goldman of Primo Promos hard-nosed information to succeed in business.

Ratliff said she plans an informal "officers' club" happy hour after the conference. This will provide participants a chance to decompress and share tips and cam-

raderie, she said.

A binder with instructor and speaker handouts will be included in the boot camp supplies, Ratliff said.



### EVENT FACTS

**What:** Women Entrepreneurs' Small Business Boot Camp  
**When:** Jan. 8, 7 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.  
**Where:** Hilton Scottsdale Resort in Scottsdale  
**Registration:** [www.exhibitexperts.az.com](http://www.exhibitexperts.az.com)  
**Cost:** \$79, including lunch for participants; \$275 for exhibitors

by two keynote speakers, nine workshop leaders, a panel of five award-winning women business owners and about 40 exhibitors.

Ratliff said she deliberately chose the non-sense, military "boot camp" theme to show this conference is serious.

January's event is the first of what she plans to make an annual affair.

"This is my dream. It's time to give the mighty micro-entrepreneur information they can relate to and immediately implement to build their business."

Businesswomen can learn about marketing, sales, and finance at the camp, she said.

Self employment rates for females have risen sharply since 1979, according to a December report by the National Association for the Self Employed.

Rates for blacks and Latinos also have increased. Micro-business ownership provides the main source of income for more than 12 million Americans, according to NASE.

Helen Goldman, owner of Primo Promos, which sells promotional products, will be among those attending the boot camp. She is familiar with the speakers, and knows they have been in the business trenches

## Self-employment up for women, blacks, Latinos

BY RUBEN HERNANDEZ  
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Self-employment rates for women, blacks and Latinos have risen sharply since 1979.

Rates increased 33 percent for women, 37 percent for blacks, and 15 percent for Latinos, according to a study by the Office of Advocacy of the U.S. Small Business Administration.

"Self-employment is a critical part of our economy," said Thomas Sullivan, chief counsel for advocacy.

"The increase in self-employment rates

for women, blacks, and Latinos show that small-business ownership can move minorities and women further into our economic mainstream."

The study is titled, "Self-Employed Business Ownership Rates in the United States: 1979-2003." It was released at the Washington offices of the National Association for the Self-Employed, or NASE.

"This study provides definitive evidence for the growth trend we've seen in entrepreneurship over the years," said Robert Hughes, president of the National Association for the Self-Employed.

"Particularly strong among women, blacks and Latinos, these numbers help to better quantify the appeal of self-employment and the impact this segment of the small business population has on the economy."

The white rate increased 10 percent while the male rate increased 2.5 percent. Overall the increase was 5 percent.

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