



## SMALL AND MEDIUM-SIZED BUSINESS OWNERS: AN OPEN LETTER TO YOU, IF YOU MISSED LEAP! 2017

By: Sandra Baptist, Founder: Antigua Barbuda Association of Small Business Owners (ABASBO). [www.ABASBO.com](http://www.ABASBO.com)

Dear Micro, Small and Medium-sized Business Owner,

I'm sorry that you missed LEAP! 2017: The SME Conference. So, because I know you're so busy, I've decided to write you a letter and let you in on what you missed!

If you haven't heard about the Antigua Barbuda Association of Small Business Owners (ABASBO), it started in February 2015 and was designed to provide tools, training and support for Antiguan and Barbudan entrepreneurs and small business owners to Create, Manage and Grow the business of their dreams. With the combination of online tools with offline support, ABASBO wants you, the business owner, to access information anywhere at any time.

The 2nd annual SME ABASBO Conference was held on May 31st 2017 with the theme for 2017 being "The Sales and Money Experience" and on the afternoon of June 1st Women LEAP! was held.

The Association's Founder, Sandra Baptist, and her team transformed the Ciboney Room at the Halcyon Cove Hotel into an oasis for learning and growth. The room, draped in the colours of the Antiguan and Barbuda flag, represented me, you and all of us, the Micro, Small and Medium-sized Business Owner.

Day 1: The General Conference provided a space whereby entrepreneurs and small business owners obtained knowledge, insights and expertise into sales, money and mindset strategies that will assist them to create profitable businesses. All of our speakers were of Caribbean roots or Caribbean-based entrepreneurs. This is deliberate. No more excuses. If they are doing it, the business owners in Antigua and Barbuda can definitely do it!!

The 1st day of LEAP! commenced with the opening statements by the Founder of the Association who gave an overview of ABASBO and of the LEAP! 2017 conference.

Sandra Baptist stated that the ABASBO team "...look[s] at this conference as more than a two-day event. We are committed to working together with all of you to catalyze new initiatives, raise awareness of Entrepreneurship opportunities and challenges and provide business growth strategies to help us all be successful in Business.

This year our theme is the Sales & Money Experience. To increase Sales, we must learn what the customers want to buy. Many new business owners begin with two primary goals: make a profit and grow a business. However, in reality as business owners, we are scrambling daily to get a handle on what customers want, in order to steer our way back to higher volume and greater profitability. We will also focus on mindset and money because it really doesn't matter how many strategies you learn, if you don't get your mindset right, you're doomed to fail. During this Conference our speakers will discuss different approaches and strategies to learn how to track the money in your business and to increase your sales and revenues!"

Derrick Sutherland of Antigua – the first Speaker, is an award winning sales professional and motivational speaker with a career spanning over 25 years and a wealth of experience in sales, operations, coaching and merchandising.

Derrick's 'performance' on "Master Your Motivation Via Sales" was high-energy, interactive and informative! We learned some effective sales techniques, including one called "the nibble". You should have been there!

The next Speaker was Tanya Smith of Canada - a certified NLP Master Coach, Trainer and CEO of Tanya Smith International, a professional development company that provides business coaching and guidance to leaders and entrepreneurs. She has over 20 years of experience working in the Financial Services Industries including 9 years working in the Latin American and Caribbean markets.

Tanya's presentation was titled "Unlocking Your Blueprint to Increase Your Success in Sales" and she shared some key principles for how people process information to communicate and make decisions to empower you to increase your success in sales. Another very interactive presentative, Tanya taught us how our thoughts and beliefs drive and affect our success with money and sales and how to breakthrough in sales through communicating with prospects on an unconscious level.

The third Speaker was Sandra Baptist of Antigua, a Chartered Accountant with over 25 years' experience in accounting and audits and a Chartered Director. Sandra is an International Business Growth Expert, Accredited World Bank/InfoDev Facilitator and Coach to entrepreneurs and CEO's. She is a Certified Business Coach, Certified CTA Coach, a Certified Guerrilla Marketing Advisor, and a Certified Live Plan Expert Advisor.

Sandra's presentation entitled "4 Key Strategies to High-Performance Cash Management" turned the basic accounting formula "Sales – Expenses = Profit" on its head to enable business owners and entrepreneurs to manage their cash more effectively and build profits fast in their business. Eye-opening and provocative, Sandra challenged the business owners in attendance to use this proven method, which will drive profitability in their businesses.

Just before lunch, the Inland Revenue panel gave an overview of the main taxes in the country and took questions from the audience and clarified tax situations that some business owners had.

During the lunch break, the sponsor booths were open and attendees were encouraged to visit LEAP! 2017 partners, which included PACCS Inc., Scotiabank, CIBC First Caribbean, the Inland Revenue Department and of course ABASBO.

Our final Speaker was Mrs. Monique Caradine-Kitchens, also known as the OverFlow Coach. Monique helps women fix their relationship with money so they can stop worrying about it,

stressing over it, and chasing after it and instead, start manifesting more than enough of it. Since 2012, Monique has mentored hundreds of women entrepreneurs on how to make money doing what they love.

Monique blew minds at LEAP! 2017 as well as at Day 2: Women LEAP! She invited us to live and Overflow Life and define that in our own way and on our own terms (Overflow meaning that the amount of money coming in from our businesses keeps coming in such great amounts that we have more than enough to live on so that we live comfortably on simply what is left over after we invest, tithe and save.) She talked to us about 4 different types of people that have money and encouraged us to think BIG when it comes to our business and companies.

During the final 30 minutes and prior to wrapping up, the Business Panel comprising of all the speakers answered questions from the audience.

Day 1 of the General Conference wrapped up with giveaways and impromptu networking. Everyone gained useful insights, techniques and strategies that they can put to use in their businesses. Some came back for Women LEAP! the following day, including one brave, highly-motivated gentleman who wanted more!

The Association's team worked really hard within a very short time span to pull off LEAP! 2017 and we look forward to welcoming all of you to LEAP! 2018! •



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