

local spotlight

TimeSweetTime.net This Local Entrepreneur Can Add A Few Extra Hours to Your Day

By Marichelle Rocha

According to a new study by the American Psychological Association, 48 percent of Americans say they're more stressed now than they were five years ago, and the same percent report regularly lying awake at night because of stress, according to a new study by the American Psychological Association. In fact, one in three American workers are chronically overworked, with job-related stress varying significantly by age, employment situation, and demands at home.

Simplifying people's lives and freeing up their valuable time is the core objective of Teresa Watkins' service business, **Time, Sweet Time.**

After 14 years of corporate sales and marketing experience, Watkins felt prepared and driven to launch Time, Sweet Time in April 2008. Based in Blue Bell, Pa., Time, Sweet Time is a fully insured and bonded, personal and corporate concierge, offering a variety of time-saving services to both individuals and corporate clients throughout Montgomery County, Philadelphia and surrounding counties.

The rates for her services range from \$40-\$50/hour, or \$40/hour if a minimum of four hours is purchased. Teresa schedules complimentary consultations to discuss the individual needs of prospective clients. Doing so enables her to become acquainted with clients and discuss pending projects. "Every client is unique, so providing personalized service is a priority," says Watkins. Among her most popular services are personal shopping, event planning, home and office organization, online research, and executive assistance. Although she and a business associate currently handle the client workload, she plans to hire additional associates to accommodate business growth.

One of the reasons Watkins, a mother of three, made the decision to become an entrepreneur was due to the satisfaction she feels after helping others and seeing the positive effects of her work. With experience in pharmaceutical sales, sales training and product marketing, Watkins developed a solid foundation for listening to client needs and recommending suitable solutions. She possesses a BA degree in Communications from La Salle University, and believes that "communi-

cation is essential to everything most of us do."

Although there is no typical day in the concierge business, Watkins' days are primarily filled with handling new client requests, contacting her public relations firm regarding media contacts and new stories, conducting complimentary consultations to assess prospective clients' needs, and commuting to client sites to work on scheduled projects.

Teresa enjoys the personal interactions and the diversity that her job brings each day. "Helping people simplify their lives and getting time back for the things that matter most (family being the most important for many of my clients) is beyond fulfilling," she says.

Watkins is continually searching for creative ways to secure new clients. Since advertising is not always the most effective vehicle for attracting new clients, uncovering productive avenues to attract new clients is by far her greatest challenge as an entrepreneur. Watkins has conducted in-store promotions at local Curves Fitness Centers and has been interviewed by the "Marketing of Business" radio show broadcasted on WWDB-AM. Time, Sweet Time has also been featured in several local publications, including the Eastern Pennsylvania Business Journal, The County Press and the City Suburban News.

As many entrepreneurs can attest, personal referrals by satisfied clients usually prove to be the most effective business development tool. "My clients are inviting me into their lives to manage their personal affairs, so they need to know who I am first-hand or by a trusted source who has successfully utilized my services," Watkins says.

For individuals who are considering becoming an entrepreneur like herself, Watkins emphasizes the need to conduct plenty of research on: the market, the competition and current demand. In addition, she suggests finding a mentor with whom to work and continually seeking opportunities to network.

Watkins' professional networking includes the Philadelphia Chapter of the eWomen Network, an international



resource for providing women with access needed to resources and creating conducive business relationships. She is also a member of the private Pyramid Club located in Philadelphia, Pa.

Watkins explains that Time, Sweet Time offers a diverse and high quality of services.

For example, she provides extensive online research, project management, and virtual assistant services. Due to the virtual aspect of such services, clients do not have to reside locally in the Montgomery County, Pa., area. In fact, Watkins has several out-of-state clients

who are pleased with her services. Some of Watkins' satisfied customers were those who were initially given Time, Sweet Time gift certificates as gifts from their employers, friends, or family members.

Almost any time-saving service can be accommodated. Examples of Time, Sweet Time's past business services include: online research, include product marketing; corporate event planning; real estate property research; travel arrangement planning; and executive assistance. Her personal services have included: residential organization; vacation planning; personal shopping; waiting for repairman/product delivery; and party planning.

Even though this is her first year in business, Watkins is preparing for a hectic holiday season and the start of a new year. Services can be provided rather quickly, but it is best to contact her at least three days prior to the scheduled event or project deadline. Time, Sweet Time is offering \$20 off the first hour of any service through January 31, 2009 (two-hour minimum purchase). For more information, visit www.timesweettime.net.

Marichelle Rocha is a freelance writer from Harleysville, Pa.

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