



Jodie McGregor handles the creative side of the floristry business; husband Stuart White is the finance and marketing guy.

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Help for your business

MENTORING/COACHING: If you’re overwhelmed on the work front, a mentor or business coach may be the answer to sorting out your business systems. An organisation such as the Victorian Employers’ Chamber of Commerce and Industry (VECCI) offers mentoring/coaching services (www.vecci.org.au), or you could try a private consultant such as Shirlaws business coaches (www.shirlaws.com.au). You could also look for a mentor in your own business network. Be upfront about what you need, respect the mentor’s time, and make the effort to act on their advice.

OUTSOURCING: When you’re working hard every day, it can be difficult to find time to focus either on your business strategy or your relationship. Outsourcing those parts of your business which you don’t enjoy doing or which aren’t part of your core skills set is one way to free up time so you can focus on other important things. There are many micro businesses specialising in bookkeeping, marketing, design and more. Your business network should be your first port of call for finding people who can help.

CASE STUDY

JODIE MCGREGOR FLOWERS

INTERVIEW BY STUART RIDLEY

For Jodie McGregor and Stuart White, 1999 was a big year. In January the couple opened a flower shop in Sydney’s Annandale, hired their first employees, won several corporate contracts and married in November (they’d started dating at the end of school, a decade before).

During her twenties, McGregor worked for florists in Australia, the UK and USA before starting her own business. White was busy in finance, having risen through the corporate ranks for big firms in Australia, New Zealand and the UK.

He kept on with his corporate gig, helping McGregor by phone, at night and through the busy retail weekends. But as their family grew, he left the suits behind and joined Jodie McGregor Flowers full time.

“It was a really uplifting, positive experience because we were very

confident in each other,” McGregor says. “We knew it was going to succeed, but originally we thought I’d do it full time and Stu would do it outside his other work. It’s ended up that we now work very closely together.”

From the start, the couple had distinct roles: Jodie dealt with the creative side, sales and client and team satisfaction; Stuart handled buying, finance and marketing. They shared growth planning.

Now Jodie McGregor Flowers is a flourishing bricks-and-clicks business, with two stores in Annandale and Castlecrag in Sydney, a website, eight employees and close to 30 awards to its name.

“I love that we have absolute control to make any decision. The other wonderful thing is the close relationships you build with clients, growers and our own team. Many of my loveliest friendships began in the shop – I think it’s because flowers are so personal and help to create wonderful relationships,” says McGregor.

“Jodie has a very generous spirit and this rubs off on others, creating a wonderful culture,” her husband adds, and McGregor replies: “Stu is

extremely, sometimes annoyingly positive! He is full of energy, he wants to fit as much into his day as possible. It’s a good thing he’s brought his experience from the corporate world, as this has meant I don’t have to worry about budgets, profit and loss, sales targets and all that type of thing that I’m not interested in.”

This couple doesn’t always have clear ‘work’ and ‘family’ time: “You will talk about the business around the dinner table, though working together makes it easier to manage our schedules,” says White. “We get time in the middle of the day, we can get to events at our kids’ school and because we’re our own bosses we can book holidays for the whole family. When we do get away, it’s strictly family time – just us, enjoying our time together.”



WATCH OUR VIDEO INTERVIEW

Find out what happened when Jodie had a baby and left Stuart in charge: smarterbusinessideas.com.au/married