

THE GLOBAL//TITANS

GLOBAL STORIES, LASTING LEGACIES

Most *Empowering*

Mental Health Leader

Making a Difference – 2026

Colleen Ocello

Clinical Mental Health Counselor
RISSE Counseling Services, LLC

Leading with Compassion, Resilience, and a Deep
Commitment to **Mental Health Healing**



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EMBRACING DIVERSITY





FROM EDITOR'S DESK

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At *The Global Titans*, we believe the most empowering leaders in mental health are those who transform personal experiences into compassion, understanding, and meaningful service. That is why we are proud to feature **Colleen Ocello**, *Most Empowering Mental Health Leader Making a Difference – 2026*. As a Clinical Mental Health Counselor at RISSE Counseling Services, LLC, Colleen brings together professional expertise and lived experience to create spaces where individuals feel heard, understood, and supported.

What makes Colleen's approach especially meaningful is the authenticity behind her work. Her own experiences with counseling, family mental health struggles, and the loss of her mother shaped her understanding of healing and resilience. Rather than allowing difficult experiences to define her, she transformed them into empathy and purpose. Her belief that everyone needs someone who will truly listen reflects the foundation of her counseling philosophy: meeting people where they are and creating an environment where healing can begin.

For readers of *The Global Titans*, Colleen Ocello's journey represents the human side of mental health leadershipone rooted in compassion, resilience, and genuine connection. Her work reminds us that healing often begins with something simple but profoundly important: being heard without judgment. In recognizing Colleen, we celebrate a leader whose personal journey has become a source of strength and whose commitment to helping others continues to make a meaningful difference.

Jake Miller | Editor-in-Chief | The Global Titans

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3 E's That Define Us

Excellence



3 E's

Empowerment



Evolution



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Colleen Ocello

Leading with Compassion, Resilience, and a Deep Commitment to Mental Health Healing

Clinical Mental Health Counselor
| RISSE Counseling Services, LLC

For Colleen Ocello, mental health counseling is not something she simply studied. It is something she has lived. As a Clinical Mental Health Counselor at RISSE Counseling Services, LLC, her work is shaped not only by professional training, but by personal experience, resilience, loss, and a lifelong desire to understand the human mind. That combination gives her counseling approach a quality that clients immediately recognize: authenticity. She does not approach people from a distance. She meets them where they are, listens without judgment, and creates a space where healing feels possible.

Her story is deeply personal. Years of counseling beginning in childhood, family experiences with mental health struggles, and the loss of her mother in 2008 all shaped the counselor she became. Instead of allowing those experiences to harden her, she transformed them into empathy and purpose. Through that journey, she came to believe something simple but powerful: everyone needs that one person who will truly listen to them.

Cover Story





Colleen Ocello



Clinical Mental Health Counselor



RISSE Counseling Services, LLC



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Early experiences that shaped her understanding of people

Colleen has been in and out of counseling since she was around five years old. Mental health struggles run in her family, and from an early age she was trying to understand herself and the world around her. She describes herself as the shy and awkward kid who often wondered why she felt different. At the same time, the brain fascinated her. She wanted to understand how people think, why emotions work the way they do, and what shapes behavior.

Those early experiences became the foundation of her empathy. Rather than distancing herself from mental health conversations, she leaned into them. Her own struggles helped her develop compassion for others who feel misunderstood, isolated, or emotionally overwhelmed. They also helped her understand that healing is rarely linear.

Kindness became another foundational value in her life. She was raised to treat people with compassion and respect, something that continues to guide both her counseling philosophy and her daily interactions.

The belief that drives her work

At the center of Colleen's work is a belief that everyone needs at least one person who will truly listen to them. That idea continues to shape how she supports clients through difficult moments. When clients are emotionally overwhelmed or not yet ready to confront deeper issues, she does not force the process. Instead, she meets them where they are. She lets them know she will be there whenever they are ready. That patience creates trust and allows healing to happen naturally rather than through pressure.

She approaches clients with kindness and love, believing that simply being heard can change someone's emotional trajectory. For many people, especially those who feel isolated or judged, having one person who listens without criticism can become the beginning of recovery.



THE FOUNDATION OF COLLEEN'S COUNSELING PHILOSOPHY



Turning personal loss into purpose

The defining turning point in Colleen's professional journey came after the passing of her mother in 2008. That loss forced her to reflect deeply on life, purpose, and happiness. She realized she needed a career that would genuinely fulfill her because life is short.

As she reflected and prayed, one realization kept returning to her: people naturally came to her for advice, and many told her that her guidance genuinely helped them. Over time, she recognized counseling was not simply an interest. It was her calling.

The path was not perfectly smooth. There were challenges and setbacks along the way, but she stayed determined. Her fascination with the mind, combined with a lifelong desire to help people, kept pushing her forward.

She also credits her mother's example for shaping the kind of counselor she became. Her mother treated people with kindness, and Colleen continues trying to live with that same spirit today. Turning grief into something positive became a way to honor her mother's memory while helping others navigate their own pain.

Learning resilience through difficult realities

Counseling requires emotional resilience as much as professional skill, and Colleen developed that resilience by working with individuals navigating extremely difficult situations. Many of her clients are either entering the federal system for the first time or have already been through it multiple times.

Through these experiences, she learned how to separate her own emotions from the emotions of her clients while still remaining compassionate. She believes in being honest and real with people. If a client shares something terrible, she acknowledges how painful it must have been for them rather than minimizing it.

At the same time, she understands that counselors cannot effectively help others if they neglect themselves. Self-care plays an important role in maintaining emotional balance. Reading, visiting antique malls, watching television, relaxing, and spending time with loved ones help her recharge and remain emotionally available for her clients. She believes counselors must lead by example when it comes to maintaining mental wellness.

Building trust through honesty and unconditional support

Colleen describes her counseling philosophy as strongly person-centered. She works with unconditional positive regard, helping clients understand that they are cared for regardless of their past mistakes, struggles, or trauma.

For her, trust begins with honesty. Clients need to know they are speaking to someone who genuinely cares about their well-being. That level of sincerity creates emotional safety, especially for people who may have spent years feeling judged or dismissed.

She also believes helping one person creates a ripple effect far beyond the counseling room. When clients learn healthier coping strategies, communication skills, and emotional regulation, they often begin making better choices and improving their relationships with others. In many cases, these life skills help reduce the likelihood of reoffending and support long-term personal growth.

What Healing Looks Like in Practice

Healing is a journey. These are the steps forward.



LISTENING

You feel heard without judgment. Your story matters, and being heard is the first step toward healing.



TRUST

A safe, supportive space helps you open up. Trust builds the foundation for real change.



EMOTIONAL AWARENESS

You gain clarity about your emotions, patterns, and needs. Awareness brings understanding and empowerment.



BETTER CHOICES

With insight comes intention. You make healthier choices aligned with your values and well-being.



LONG-TERM GROWTH

Healing creates lasting change. You build resilience, strengthen relationships, and live with purpose.

The moments that remind her why the work matters

Some of the most meaningful moments in Colleen's career are surprisingly simple. Clients have told her they stop themselves before reacting impulsively and ask, "What would Miss Colleen say?"

For her, that represents real impact. It means clients are beginning to pause, reflect, and make healthier choices in difficult moments. That shift may seem small from the outside, but emotionally it represents growth, accountability, and developing self-awareness.

The challenges her clients face are often significant. Many struggle with drug addiction, poor communication skills, poverty, abuse, lack of basic needs growing up, undiagnosed mental health issues, and absence of guidance or support systems. These issues rarely exist in isolation. They overlap and reinforce one another, making compassionate counseling even more important.

Helping clients build coping strategies that work

One of Colleen's biggest priorities is helping clients develop coping mechanisms that genuinely work in daily life. She teaches people to think before reacting and reminds them that their emotions are valid.

Rather than using a one-size-fits-all approach, she works collaboratively with clients to find coping strategies that fit their personalities and emotional needs. One technique that has been especially meaningful involves having clients write letters to people who hurt them. The letters allow clients to release painful emotions in a healthy way, whether or not the letters are ever sent. Many clients have told her that the exercise helped them begin healing from unresolved trauma.

Her office environment also reflects her therapeutic approach. Positive sayings on the walls and a comfortable atmosphere help create emotional safety. She continuously refines her methods by reading, researching, and studying new techniques that improve how she supports clients dealing with stress, anxiety, and behavioral challenges.

Breaking the stigma around mental health

One issue Colleen feels strongly about is the misunderstanding surrounding counseling and therapy. Many people, especially men, are taught from a young age to suppress emotions and avoid vulnerability. They are told that asking for help is weakness. She believes this stigma prevents countless people from receiving support they genuinely need. Another misconception comes from television portrayals of therapy, which often fail to reflect how counseling works in real life. Many assume therapy is only for people with severe mental illness, when in reality most people could benefit from having someone listen without judgment at some point in their lives.

As society moves toward 2026, Colleen believes mental health awareness must continue expanding. She wants to see mental health normalized rather than treated as taboo. She also believes addiction should be understood as a mental health disorder rather than simply something people should be punished for. Education, especially for younger generations, will play a major role in changing how society understands emotional health and substance abuse.



The support systems behind her own wellbeing

Supporting others emotionally can be demanding, which is why Colleen values the people and routines that help maintain her own mental health.

Her husband has been one of her strongest sources of support. On difficult days, he reminds her not to get in her own way and encourages her to keep pursuing success. Her children also give her motivation and perspective.

Rest, vacations, reading, relaxation, and spending time doing simple activities she enjoys all help her maintain emotional balance. She understands that sustainable counseling requires emotional recovery, not just emotional endurance.

Advice for those afraid to ask for help

Colleen's advice to people struggling with mental health challenges is direct and compassionate: asking for help does not make someone weak or lesser than.

She encourages people to reach out because silence and isolation can become dangerous. In her words, it is better to ask for help than for loved ones to lose someone they care about.

That message reflects the heart of her work. More than anything else, Colleen Ocello wants people to know they are not alone, that healing is possible, and that sometimes the first step toward recovery begins with having one person who is willing to truly listen.

— THE FUTURE OF — MENTAL HEALTH AWARENESS —

2



REDUCE STIGMA

Open conversations create understanding. Understanding creates change.



3



TREAT ADDICTION AS MENTAL HEALTH

Addiction is not a choice
it's a condition.
Compassion and treatment
lead to recovery.



4



ENCOURAGE EARLY SUPPORT & EMOTIONAL EDUCATION

The earlier we learn about emotions, the stronger we build resilience for life.



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Good Carbs



They are among the three vital macronutrients just like proteins and fats on which our body functions. Not all carbs are the same; some provide essential nutrients and energy, whereas others could lead to weight gain and create health problems. Knowing the good carbs from bad carbs can ensure healthier choices in diet and ensure a balanced intake. What choices you make ultimately about carbohydrate will determine your lifestyle. Good carbs are represented by whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and fiber-rich foods, which support the supply of sustained energy, essential nutrients, and long-term health improvement. By making healthy nutritional choices, you are best positioned to influence your entire health. Replace the processed foods with nutrient-dense ones and experience the body working at an optimal level while offering better digestion, more efficient energy levels, and long-term health.

Bad Carbs

Safe Eating for Better Health



What are Carbohydrates?

The first and foremost energy source of the body is carbohydrates. Intake of carbohydrates is utilized by the body for the production of glucose that provides fuel to our brain, muscles, and all other vital organs. The main categories through which carbohydrates are classified are as follows: simple carbohydrates and complex carbohydrates.

Simple Carbs: They are rapidly digested, which causes a quick increase in blood glucose levels. Generally, they appear in processed foods, sugary snacks, and most grains.

Complex Carbs: They contain fibers, vitamins, and minerals. As they are slowly digested, they provide energy and therefore do not cause spiky blood sugars.

What Are Good Carbs?

Good carbs are also referred to as complex carbohydrates. They provide sustained energy, fiber, and essential nutrients. These carbs promote the digestion process and allow for heart health and well-being to be sustained.

Examples of Good Carbs

Whole Grains

- Brown rice
- Quinoa
- Oats
- Whole wheat bread and pasta



Fruits

- Apples
- Berries
- Bananas
- Oranges



Vegetables

- Leafy greens (spinach, kale, lettuce)
- Carrots
- Broccoli
- Sweet potatoes



Legumes and Beans

- Lentils
- Chickpeas
- Black beans
- Kidney beans



Nuts and Seeds

- Almonds
- Chia seeds
- Flaxseeds
- Walnuts



Health Benefits of Good Carbs

Energy lasts for a long time: Good carbs take much longer to be digested so energy will stay longer.

Easy digestion: Dietary fibers in good carbs help one prevent constipation and have a healthy gut

Weight management: You feel fuller for a more extended period by having high-fiber food

Reduced risks of diseases: Whole grains, fruits, and vegetables reduce the level of cholesterol. It minimizes the chance of heart diseases and diabetes

What Are Bad Carbs?

Bad carbs, also called simple or refined carbohydrates, are nutrient-less, leading to weight gain, spiking of blood sugar, and other health problems. Most of them are processed and fiberless; therefore, not as good as the good carbs.

Health Risks of Bad Carbs

Examples of Bad Carbs



Weight gain: Processed carbs are mostly high in calories and low in fiber, which in turn triggers overconsumption.

Increased Risk of Developing Diabetes Intake of more refined carbs increases the risk of developing insulin resistance and type 2 diabetes.

Their blood sugar levels increase more quickly. This causes energy crashes and has higher levels of hunger.

Poor Heart Health: Overindulgence in bad carbs raises cholesterol levels and raises the risk of heart diseases.

How to Make Smart Carb Choices

To keep your diet well-rounded, follow these easy tips when deciding on carbohydrates:



1. Choose Whole Over Refined

Choose whole grains like brown rice, quinoa, and whole wheat products over white bread, pasta, and rice.



2. Read Labels Carefully

Check the food labels for added sugars and refined grains. Select products with whole grains and minimal added sugars.



3. High Fiber Foods

Fiber helps digest and keeps one full for a longer time. Look for whole grains, vegetables, and legumes in good fiber content.



4. Limit Processed and Sugary Foods

Reduce intake of sodas, candy, and other processed snacks. Use natural sugars from fruits and healthy snacks such as nuts and yogurt.



5. Balancing Your Meals

Pair your complex carbs with protein and healthy fats to level out blood sugar balances and keep you full for a long time.



Conclusion

Carbohydrates form an important constituent of a healthy diet, but the quality of the carbs is what makes all the difference regarding health. Good carbs are represented by whole grains, vegetables, fruits, and fiber-rich foods, which support the supply of sustained energy, essential nutrients, and long-term health improvement. These foods aid in good digestion, regulate blood sugar levels, and prevent chronic diseases. Conversely, excessive amounts of refined carbohydrates and sugar contribute to obesity and insulin resistance as well as other metabolic disorders.

By making healthy nutritional choices, you are best positioned to influence your entire health. Replace the processed foods with nutrient-dense ones and experience the body working at an optimal level while offering better digestion, more efficient energy levels, and long-term health. On the other hand, refined and sugary foods have far fewer fiber, vitamins, and minerals and therefore fail to properly nourish your body.

When grocery shopping or planning a meal, stick to whole natural foods that keep energy levels elevated and promote a state of overall wellness. Such foods include all complex carbohydrates-like brown rice, quinoa, oats, legumes, or anything that releases its energy for hours, feeling full and energetic all day. Fresh fruits and vegetables should top processed snack foods for a proper balanced diet leading to the optimal health.

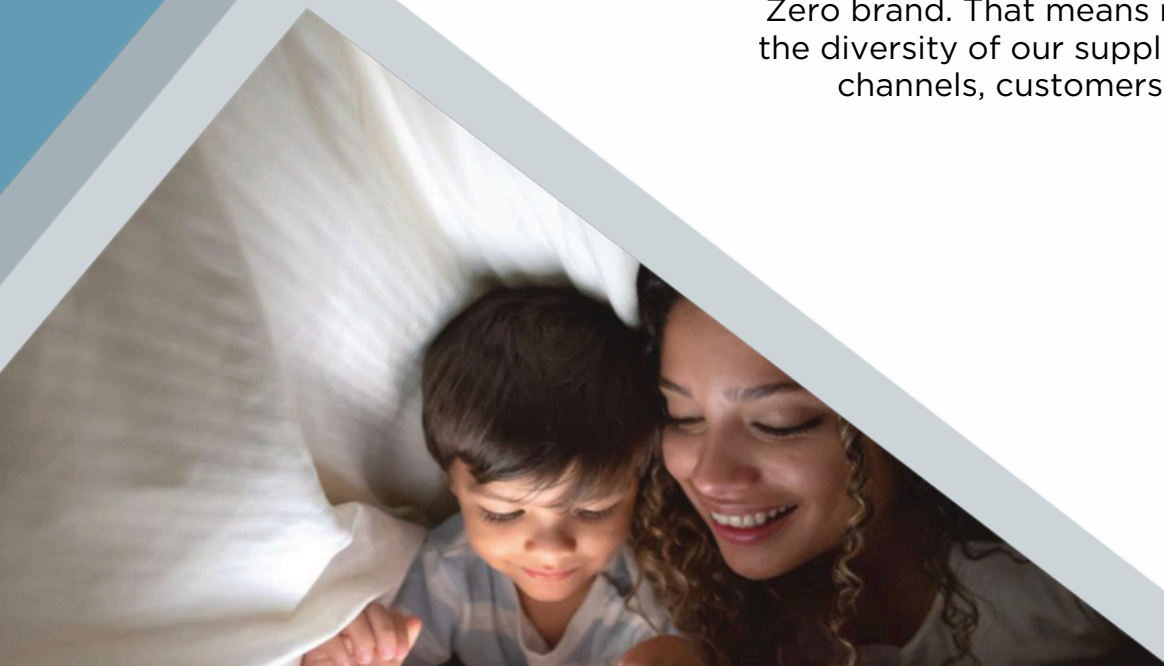
What choices you make ultimately about carbohydrate will determine your lifestyle. By giving preference to nutrient-rich, high fiber over refined or processed foods, you can help take control over your health to enjoy a nutrient-dense and sustaining diet for your body that will thrive to give you improved energy, smooth digestion, and long-term vital health. Carb smart is one of the simplest yet highly effective steps to a more wholesome and rewarding life.



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THE WORLD'S STRONGEST



S

CURRENCIES:

An In-Depth Analysis



Nationwide economic stability, together with financial power, finds expression through currency strength. Strong currencies boost economic purchasing abilities and fulfill two vital functions in international trade while attracting investments from abroad. This research investigates how the currencies ranked as strongest worldwide, along with their bases for strength and their past and projected market behaviors.

1. Kuwaiti Dinar (KWD)

Kuwaiti citizens can maintain purchasing power through the KWD currency because it holds the position of highest currency value in the globe at \$3.24 per KWD in early 2025.

Why Is the Kuwaiti Dinar So Strong?

- Kuwait maintains enormous oil deposits while its crude petroleum production sector generates more than 90% of national governmental revenue.
- The country maintains economic stability through its administration's practice of using conservative financial policies.
- KWD exists mainly within Kuwait's borders; thus, it shows less sensitivity to international market movements.
- The Kuwait Investment Authority (KIA) operates one of the biggest sovereign wealth funds worldwide while maintaining long-term financial stability.
- As a nation, Kuwait demonstrates one of the highest available GDPs per head of population, which enables the country to remain economically sustainable.



Historical Trends and Future Outlook

- Since its issuance in 1961, the KWD currency has demonstrated the strongest performance against the U.S. dollar.
- The evolutionary development of the economy and digital banking reforms, together with investments in non-oil sectors, will preserve the Kuwaiti dinar's strength.
- The country invests public funds into building alternative energy infrastructure and development projects, establishing economic stability independently of oil revenue streams.



2. Bahraini Dinar (BHD)

Bahrain's currency currently holds the position of number two worldwide with a foreign exchange rate of \$2.65 for each Bahraini dinar (BHD). As an island nation, Bahrain promotes its economic base through finance, tourism, and oil exports.

Factors Behind the Bahraini Dinar's Strength

- Bahrain's currency maintains stability through its fixed exchange rate relationship with the United States Dollar.
- The financial sector's main institutions located in Bahrain strengthen the nation's economic power.
- Foreign reserves kept by the country remain robust to fortify its currency.
- Bahrain continues operations in various economic areas beyond petroleum resources to decrease its dependence on hydrocarbons.
- Through its policy implementation strategy, the Central Bank of Bahrain achieves monetary stability.



Challenges and Future Prospects

- The national debt of Bahrain exceeds its GDP value to a notable extent.
- The government plans to raise non-oil tax revenues through value-added tax modernizations, digital business ventures, and new trading alliances.
- Currency stability is expected to continue through government reserves and economic diversification activities.

3. Omani Rial (OMR)

The Omani Rial holds a position among the most powerful currencies as it exchanges for \$2.59 per unit.



Future Outlook

- The Omani government executes Vision 2040, representing an extensive economic directive for market expansion, private sector empowerment, and digital transformation advancements.
- The country plans to lower its fiscal deficits through a combination of modern taxation systems and international funding for infrastructure development.
- Key Reasons for Its Strength
International trading of the OMR remains low, preventing drastic value changes.
- The Omani government invests in tourism, logistics, and fisheries to decrease national dependence on oil revenues.
- The USD: OMR exchange rate peg ensures stability, similar to Bahrain and Kuwait.
- Strict governmental monetary policies target low inflation rates throughout the country.

4. Jordanian Dinar (JOD)

JOD operates with a currency value equivalent to \$1.41 based on the current foreign exchange rate linked to USD. The economy of Jordan remains steady despite lacking natural resource reserves.

Why Does the JOD Remain Strong?

- Jordan obtains massive financial support through Gulf nations and the United States, besides receiving remittances from abroad.
- Every business seeking access to Middle Eastern markets should use Jordan as its gateway.
- Strong currency prospects result from government-implemented monetary controls that fight inflation and currency devaluation.
- GDP growth in Jordan is directly influenced by tourism activities, including Petra and the Dead Sea tourist destinations.
- The robustness of the banking system in Jordan relies on controlled liquidity and currency reserve management by the Central Bank of Jordan.



Challenges and Future Prospects

- The country faces two key problems: a lack of abundant resources and high dependence on imported goods.
- Foreign investment in technology and renewable energy sectors has the potential to increase currency stability in the future.

5. British Pound Sterling (GBP)

The British Pound Sterling (GBP) maintains its status as a globally valuable currency, with each GBP worth \$1.23 at present.

Recent Performance and Challenges

- The GBP achieved the title of top-performing currency among fully developed economies during 2024.
- The British economy contends with problems arising from Brexit consequences and global economic market movements.

Factors Driving the Pound's Strength

- London continues to function as a prominent international financial center, drawing business investors from around the world.
- A diverse array of economic sectors in the UK maintains financial stability.
- The GBP went into circulation in 775 AD, preserving its position as an elite international currency.
- The UK established post-Brexit trade agreements that help increase export numbers and attract foreign investments.
- The British government receives substantial bond investment from international investors due to its robust credit rating standard.



The U.S. Dollar (USD): A Unique Case

The United States dollar ranks second in global currency values but leads as the principal financial instrument used in international trade transactions, totaling 80% of global trade. Central banks worldwide maintain the U.S. dollar as their principal foreign exchange holding currency.

Why Is the U.S. Dollar So Influential?

- **Safe Haven Status:** Investors turn to the USD during economic uncertainties.
- The Federal Reserve controls world markets through interest rate regulations and monetary policy methods.
- Almost all worldwide trade operations, including oil sales, occur through USD payments.
- The United States economy maintains its dollar strength through a robust consumer-driven market and innovative industries.

Emerging Currencies and Global Shifts

- The Chinese Yuan (CNY) demonstrates rising global dominance in monetary markets.
- The Yuan (CNY) has become increasingly popular for replacing USD transactions in Asia and Africa.
- In mid-2023, Russia conducted 53% of its external trade payments through Yuan, compared to 40% in 2021.
- The Belt & Road Initiative advances global infrastructure development, enabling more countries to use the Yuan for transactions.

BRICS Currency Proposal

- A new trade currency involving BRICS nations (Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa) is under active development.
- The realization of this initiative might start a competition to replace the USD's position as the primary currency for international trade.



Conclusion

The purchasing power of currencies depends on economic stability, commercial regulations, monetary reserves, and market sentiment towards investments. Emerging economies are transforming global financial trends alongside established strong currencies such as the Kuwaiti Dinar, British Pound, and U.S. Dollar. Analyzing these dynamics is essential for investors, policymakers, and businesses operating worldwide to navigate complex international monetary systems.



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Pitching a business to anyone, anywhere

Refining the focus and flow are essential

BY MELISSA LOWERY

Entrepreneurs who have started or want to start businesses are faced with the prospect of pitching their products or services to potential clients. On-the-fly promotions can be intimidating, but it is possible to prepare successful pitches — if you understand strategies and the clients' needs.

We spoke with three women entrepreneurs — who have delivered elevator pitches to prospective customers and to judges during pitch competitions — about what works and what doesn't work for them.

TELL A STORY

Jessica Gore, founder/nurturer of Tasty Clean Inc., took an embarrassing incident and turned it into a unique business that is rapidly growing. One day while at the courthouse to take care of a traffic ticket, her 2-year-old son dropped the lollipop she'd given him to keep him occupied. The ensuing tantrum prompted her to wish she had a portable cleaning solution that was safe for human consumption. When she was unable to find a suitable existing product, she decided to create it herself.

After years of research and testing, she developed Tasty Clean™, an all-natural, vinegar-based portable spray for removable oral appliances such as retainers, dentures, pacifiers — and even lollipops — that requires no rinsing. This story is relatable to most people and an effective way to start her pitch.

"Open with something snappy," Gore said. "Tell your story and what fuels your

fire. What made you start this venture, and why are you so passionate about it? Not only are you pitching your idea, you are pitching yourself as well!"

Jessica A. Findley, co-founder and CEO of Neowaste LLC, agreed. Neowaste offers chemical recycling that reduces waste disposal costs, diverts waste from landfills and generates fuel from alternative sources. Statistics and data drive her business, but not her pitches.

"Don't start with numbers, she said. "Start with a short, impactful statement that sets the tone for the pitch's storyline."

Dr. Christine Izuakor, founder and CEO of Cyber Pop-up, provides a trusted freelance platform for on-demand cybersecurity projects and services. In her line of work, she has a wealth of stories she can tap into to make an impression during her pitch.

"I like to open with a very quick and impactful story that anyone can relate to," she said. "Find a way to make the problem relatable to the audience you are pitching to, then explain the unique insight and skills you have to solve the problem."

When drafting your story, follow a simple structure: problem to solution to benefits. Once you have those three elements, build on the storyline and craft a pitch that flows together naturally.

"Focus more on the storyline/flow/transitions of the pitch than on the content," Findley said. "You have more content than you could ever use in a time-restricted pitch.

Figure out how best to transition from problem to solution to competitive advantages, so that it sounds natural."

BE AUTHENTIC

Authenticity applies to both the style and substance of your pitch. Sometimes entrepreneurs get carried away and overpromise when pitching their products and services, causing serious problems down the road.

"Be transparent and honest about where you are as a company or where your product/service is in its stage of development," Findley cautioned. "If it needs more tweaking before going to market, say that and then explain your action plan for getting it there."

Izuakor offered a reminder to acknowledge other ways of solving a specific problem while explaining how your way is superior.

"If you are building in a new lane, avoid saying you have no competition," she said. "If you are building something that doesn't exist yet, talk about indirect competition and how users are solving the problem currently. In your back pocket, be able to explain why the concept you're pitching hasn't been attempted or successfully executed in the past, and what unique insight and skills you have to make it happen."

The style of your pitch should match your own personality. Don't fall into the reality TV trap!

"Don't mimic Shark Tank-style pitches; they seem too choreographed," Findley said. Instead, she recommended leaning into your





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