

PrimeTime Member Spotlight

October 2007

Each month *Connections* talks to a PrimeTime member to find out more about who they are, what they do, and their association with PrimeTime.



This month we spotlight
Louise Tagliante
Executive Coach, Corporate
Trainer and Founder of
Differentiate

Personal talk ...

Connections: Where are you originally from, Louise, and how long have you been in Singapore?

Louise: I'm from Sydney, Australia and have had two stints in Singapore, the first in 1993 and the second in 2000, totalling 14 years.

Connections: What are your interests and hobbies?

Louise: I'm very interested in assisting women to become financially independent so they can support their families. To this end I am delighted to have become involved in the PrimeTime-TIAW Village Bank Programme as Committee Chair for our February 2008 fundraising event. In terms of hobbies, I love to read, race cars through the outback, watch foreign films and cook Thai food for friends.

Connections: Which are your favourite restaurants in Singapore?

Louise: Crystal Jade Palace at Ngee Ann City for dim sum, Café Beviamo for the only real Italian coffee in Singapore, La Forketta for the best Italian pizzas and Kazu Sumi-Yaki at Cuppage Plaza for the freshest yakitori in town.

Connections: What do you enjoy most about living here?

Louise: Low taxes, no red-tape for small businesses, Asian antiques and the never-ending variety of food.

Professional talk ...

Connections: What brought you to Singapore?

Louise: A promotion with Visa International and an on-going search for a husband. I eventually found him in the Maldives in 1996.

Connections: What was your professional role when you arrived in Singapore?

Louise: I held regional roles in training and development in the financial services sector at both Visa International and, afterwards at ABN AMRO Bank.

Connections: We understand that you run your own business now. Can you tell us about it?

Louise: The company is called Differentiate and we help organizations and individuals to 'differentiate' their behaviours and attitudes to reach even greater success through a combination of experiential learning and coaching.

Connections: How long has Differentiate been operational?

Louise: Differentiate has been up and running successfully for the past 4 years.

Connections: How did you get started?

Louise: After I was retrenched in 2003, friends started asking if I could design bespoke training programs for their companies. I soon discovered that I had a real passion for working in my own business and, before I knew it, I had lots of great clients and a thriving, sustainable business.

Connections: What were the toughest challenges you've faced as an entrepreneur with your own business?

Louise: First, getting comfortable selling and promoting myself and second, doing everything related to the business i.e. finances, marketing and selling amongst other things. I now outsource the things I'm not good at or don't have time to do well.

Connections: What do you enjoy most about having your own business and doing the work you do?

Louise: The total freedom to wear pyjamas to the office (I work from home), the flexibility to work when I want to, and to choose the kind of work that interests me the most.

Connections: Any advice for those thinking of starting their own businesses?

Louise: Do something you are really passionate about, understand what your core business is and stick to it. Have a clear idea of your no-go areas of business and learn when to say no and when to walk away from a job that's unsuitable.

PrimeTime talk ...

Connections: When did you join PrimeTime and how did you find out about it?

Louise: I heard about PrimeTime when it first started in 1996 and went to a few of the first meetings. Due to a very hectic travel schedule, I didn't join until 2003 when I launched my business and started spending more time in Singapore.

Connections: Which PrimeTime subgroups do you belong to?

Louise: I am co-Chair of the Human Resources Group and also belong to the Small Business, DineTime and Marketing subgroups.

Connections: What do you personally feel are the benefits of being a PrimeTime member?

Louise: The organisation offers really great networking which has led to new friendships and business connections and, more importantly, the opportunity to become involved in helping women through the PrimeTime-TIAW Village Bank program.

Connections: Which was the most interesting or inspiring PrimeTime event you've attended?

Louise: June 2007's 2nd Thursday meeting when guest speaker May Lee came to talk to us about the struggles she overcame to launch her own TV show in Asia. She was so inspirational because she was living her lifelong dream and surrounded herself with a like-minded team who did everything it took to get the show on the air.

Thank you Louise!