



# Top Female Investors' Top Tips For Business Success

Barbara Stewart

## What Advice Do Some Top Female Investors Have For The Rest Of Us?

Last year, I interviewed 50 accomplished people from around the world for my research paper, What's in your investment portfolio?, to be released on *International Women's Day*, 8 March 2024. Some of the women I spoke with are professional investors, and each has had a very different career and life journey. I'll share the top tips for business success from five female investors:

### Tip #1: Just do it: solve the problem

"In my 10 years as a private banker, I met so many entrepreneurs and I thought if they can do it...then I can do it! I put all my money and all my passion into Lucy Global Fund: a global equity fund with a main focus on companies in lifestyle, health and beauty as well as companies with well-known and attractive brands.

I am very proud that Lucy Global Fund is now on nine different platforms in Sweden. So many people told me not to start a fund but when people say no it triggers me. I'm really stubborn and I want to show them. I don't listen, I just do it: I solve the problem."

*Therese Nyren, Founder,  
Lucy Global Fund, Stockholm, Sweden*

### Tip #2: When people say "no" it isn't always about you

"After my time serving in the Israeli army as a Welfare Officer, I did my Bachelor of Arts in economics and statistics at The Hebrew University of Jerusalem. I spent the majority of my career at Bank Hapoalim: I started as a clerk and ended up on the Board of Management. From my start in 1972, I held several positions with responsibility for securities research and advice including

foreign securities trading, derivatives activity, and research/investment advice.

What is my secret to success? Over time I have learned that when people say "no" it isn't always about me. There are many reasons that could have nothing to do with me. I invented what I call "The Bat System." Did you know that bats can make up to 160 acoustic pings per second as they close in on their prey? If I want something I might come to you ten different times and sometimes I'll end up getting what I want. Also, I know that if I smile and I'm in a good mood you'll be more inclined to give me what I want."

*Hanna Pri-Zan, Chairperson of Israel Experience  
(Formerly Chairperson of the Board at Peilim Portfolio Management, a member of the Bank Hapoalim Group),  
Tel Aviv, Israel*

### Tip #3: Speak strategically: wait for the pause

"My father built his own real estate brokerage from the ground up and my main lessons in business came from overhearing him talking to his clients on our landline phone in the kitchen. Every evening we had to keep quiet while he had his calls and during this time I learned (through osmosis) about money and deal-making. Because of this dad likes to take credit for my success!

In retrospect, I feel grateful for having grown up in a loud Italian family. My dad was a big talker! I learned how to be strategic and say things that would pierce through the noise and get everyone's attention. This served me well starting out in the business as a junior—I learned to 'wait for the pause' and speak strategically. My skills learned at the dining room table have translated well into business."

*Lisa Melchior, Founder and Managing Partner,  
VERTU Capital, Toronto, Canada*

## Tip #4: Always think of both sides in a negotiation

“My grandfather had a great influence on me: he came from a simple family but was super ambitious. He rose through the leadership ranks in the nuclear industry and eventually became CEO in a government job. Early on I was recognized as a gifted kid and my grandfather strongly suggested that I invest in two things: education and health.

I have a long list of accomplishments but none of them would have ever happened without my grandfather's support and guidance. I thought of him for inspiration every time I embarked on a new educational challenge, and with gratitude every time I completed a program. “Always think of both sides in a negotiation,” he would say. “What will the other side get out of the partnership? This is how you will both be successful.”

*Jenny Alfandary, Corporate Director, President and CEO,  
Toronto, Canada*

## Tip #5: Stay invested

“I studied finance in university because it seemed to me that finance is the bloodstream of the economy: it is massive and affects and connects every single person and every single industry. After completing my MA in international business at HAN University of Applied Sciences in the Netherlands, I went on to do my master's in finance at London Business School where I took a specific interest in private wealth management. I spent the majority of my career working with UHNW (ultra-high-net-worth) clients.

Based on my years of working with UHNW investors through several different crises I am definitely an advocate for well-diversified portfolios. I advise people to stay invested no matter what is happening. You need to be in the market!”

*Anna Chalov, Co-Founder, Bemuse Ltd (Formerly  
Director of Tamsel (UK) Limited – a family office),  
London, England*

## Bonus Tip: Be mindful of your body language

As a female professional investor with 33 years in the industry, I'll weigh in with my own best advice for business success. Cultivate “I am trustworthy” body language.

While working as a portfolio manager, I had one of my worst-ever meetings with a potential client in 2010. The meeting was in an over-air-conditioned office, I was very cold, and tens of millions of dollars in assets were up for grabs. Though I put in a lot of effort, this particular meeting went so poorly that I felt compelled to figure out where I had gone so wrong. As a former Xerox sales rep, I know how to sell, and as a CFA charter holder, I know about finance, but some other factor derailed this meeting.

A friend suggested that it might be body language, so I booked some time with global body language expert Mark Bowden. He had good insights that I started using to great effect.

What does “I am trustworthy” body language look like?

Openness. Maximize your body. A prospective client wants to see that their advisor is confident and in control. They are coming to you for help. Our brains equate “bigger” with “more powerful,” so set up an environment where you can display more of your body.

Take up space. For example, during the meeting take the cup of coffee that is on your right and place it a full arms-length away from you. This way they can see your entire arm.

I can tell you that my business success improved immeasurably once I became more “open” and I started to “maximize.” And critically: don't sit in an over-air-conditioned boardroom looking small and frozen!

*Barbara Stewart is a Chartered Financial Analyst (CFA) with 30 years of investment industry experience; five years as a foreign currency trader, more than two decades as a portfolio manager for high-net-worth entrepreneurs, and for the past six years doing interview-driven research for multiple global financial institutions. Barbara is a keynote speaker for CFA Societies, banks, stock exchanges and industry conferences globally, and she is a columnist for CFA Institute and Canadian Money Saver magazine. She is on the Advisory Board of Kensington Capital Partners and also is the Ambassador for the Kensington Women's Forum. Fourteen years ago, Barbara saw a need to challenge outdated financial industry stereotypes and share positive messages about women and money. Today, Barbara is recognized worldwide as one of the leading researchers in women and finance. Rich Thinking® global research papers quote smart women and men of all ages, professions and countries and are released annually on International Women's Day, March 8. To find out more about Barbara's research, visit [www.barbarastewart.ca](http://www.barbarastewart.ca).*