

## Creativity + Practicality Helps Calla Gold Jewelry Shine



Just looking at her name, it seems that Calla Gold was destined to be a jeweler. But with a background in sales, tremendous creativity and an entrepreneurial spirit, it's clear that her success as owner of Calla Gold Jewelry is attributed to much more than her name.

Based in Santa Barbara, California, Calla Gold Jewelry offers custom jewelry design, redesign and repair. While the company doesn't have a brick-and-mortar headquarters, it instead offers one-on-one house and office calls by Calla as a personal jeweler.

After selling a series of successful entrepreneurial ventures, Calla began Calla Gold Jewelry in 1983 while searching for her next venture. However, after two years of successful growth and a newfound passion for jewelry design, she decided to make a long-term commitment to the business—and has worked to further its success ever since.

That success has come with many challenges along the way, including the economic recession. However, Calla finds the silver lining in hurdles like that, noting that there are always tremendous opportunities for improvement. "The recession in the late 2000s actually did me a huge favor," she says. "My business dipped about 30 percent and I realized that it had been a while since I'd taken a look at what I was doing. So I revisited old business resolutions, like start blogging, re-do my website and re-brand myself." While nerve-racking at the time, that investment in her company really paid off—for example, when her blog was just one month old, it garnered a new client, leading to a \$10,000 sale!

"We saw that we had a new pipeline for business," Calla says. "It was affluent, intelligent, thoughtful people who had design ideas already—and they were coming to *me* and I didn't have to go out and find them. I wish I would have known about this before—I would have done it years ago."

The influx of new clients also helped Calla to expand her self-perception as a business owner—from "that cute jewelry gal" to an experienced, respected jeweler and designer. "It's almost like you have to do a self-inventory every couple of years and ask, 'Who are you?' 'How do your favorite clients see you?' 'Does that perception match?' Usually your self-perception of your skills is behind what your customers see," she says.

That relationship-based learning is something Calla values as a member of the NAWBO-Santa Barbara chapter as well. A member for about five years, she appreciates the opportunity to network with high-level experts across many different industries. "When you go to NAWBO, you have a financial advisor, a stock broker, someone who does retirement planning and people who do life insurance," she notes. "I like the caliber of women at NAWBO."

As an expert herself, Calla enjoys offering guidance as an informal mentor to many young entrepreneurs. She encourages new business owners to take a practical approach. "One of my biggest messages to people is that passion is all very nice, but find something that will pay the bills," she says. "Then find your passion while you continue to pay the bills. Then learn more about your passion and segue to that. Don't stop your day job until your passionate practice has taken off."

When she's not mentoring or working, Calla enjoys spending time with her husband, hiking, reading and being outdoors. She also gives back to many organizations in her community by donating select jewelry for silent auctions.

As she continues to grow her business, Calla is thrilled to be a woman business owner right now who controls her own success. "My good work benefits me. Being more organized benefits me. When I was an employee, I got a pat on the back, but if I were working for myself, I would have more money in the bank," she says. "It's my expertise that controls my income and I love that so much."

For more information on Calla Gold Jewelry, please visit [www.callagold.com](http://www.callagold.com).