



Small Business Victoria

workshops and seminars

Colac Otway Shire

Colac to Coast Real Estate **A new lease of life in business**



Challenges I faced

Ironically, negotiating with existing real estate agencies to find suitable office premises was the main hurdle Lynne faced when starting her business.

She kept in touch with a Small Business workshop presenter via email, who was happy to offer ideas, opinions and support.

"The willingness of the workshop presenter to stay interested in what I was doing was really important. I never expected that ongoing support when I did the workshops, but it was fantastic to have."

Lynne Cole says the Victorian Government's Small Business Victoria workshops gave her more than she expected.

How I started

Lynne Cole was considering leaving the real estate business when an industry convention changed her life.

"I met a lot of agency owners at the convention and left inspired to start my own business. Not many women working in real estate get to own the business so it was a big goal, but I decided I wanted to know that at least I tried."

Lynne knew she faced well established local competitors, but with a burning ambition to succeed she opened Colac to Coast Real Estate in 2006.

"We started when people were looking for an alternative. People were waiting to come and see me before I opened the business, which made me confident I could make a success of it."

Assistance I sought

Lynne has completed various Small Business Victoria workshops from the time she began planning the business.

"I knew a lot about my industry, but I was a little intimidated about the financial and other sides of operating a business. The Going into Business and Strategic Business Planning workshops were really useful and I came away from them with valuable information."

"I've continued doing the Small Business workshops since I opened the agency. Looking back, I know I wouldn't have been as successful and things wouldn't have gone as smoothly without them."

What I learned

The Small Business Victoria workshops helped Lynne build her financial skills and general confidence. She still draws on what she learned today.

"Some of the most valuable insights came from just speaking to other business owners in the workshops. You discover you have a lot in common."

My business today

Lynne's business is thriving and she loves the close relationships she's developed with staff and clients.

"It's been a really interesting journey to get here and I've got a lot of satisfaction from proving I could do it, probably more to myself than anyone else."

"I started a new rental department a year ago and set a target of managing 25 properties by the end of the year – and we've more than doubled this."

Where to from here

There's nothing stopping Lynne now. She has plans to keep expanding the business and improving her service.

"It's hard work running a business and you have your difficult times, but I wouldn't swap it for anything. This is my future here."