



## Success Story

**Claudia Schabel, President**  
**Schabel Solutions**  
<http://www.schabelsolutions.com/>



### **What is your business all about? What is your mission?**

My consulting firm, Schabel Solutions, helps organizations continue to build a more inclusive workplace and workforce so that all employees from all backgrounds can thrive. We come in and help businesses and organizations understand what type of programming and strategies can be implemented to increase inclusivity among their current and future employees.

I'm very passionate about the work I do and simply want to help employers and communities understand that when we overlook people and the talent that exists in the marketplace, we're contributing to a very large problem. That problem is the labor shortage of millions of people that are not in the job market today – that employers need! When we begin to change the organizational cultures and mindsets, we can not only improve our workplaces, but also provide people in our communities with opportunities. With our current labor shortage, it is extremely hard for small businesses to attract and retain employees and it will be even worse by 2025. So how do you compete for talent? How do you get people to see your business differently as a place that they want to be a part of? It is by making your organizational culture more inclusive, by shifting your mindset on how you define talent, and by making your workplace inclusive of people of all backgrounds.

### **How did The Iowa Women's Business Center (and SBA) play a role in the development of your business?**

The Iowa Women's Business Center played a tremendous role in my advancement. They were not only an educational resource to me, but also helped to create a great sense of community for me – and that is what I needed at that critical juncture more than anything. It is such a huge change going from a large corporate environment to entrepreneurship. You go from being surrounded by others to feeling very alone. I

underestimated how the support of The Iowa WBC would so greatly impact my world. Engaging with them helped build my community, confidence, and my ability to think bigger. With every road block faced, I now had a place to go. The team there is not only knowledgeable, but so kind and caring.



### **What is your favorite part about owning your own business?**

There are many things I enjoy. First, for the first time in my life, I feel I have no boundaries in growing as an individual and as a professional. There is no one limiting my ability to do anything, and I feel that every day. I feel empowered to explore new pathways and new approaches. Secondly, I love the challenge of learning how to run and grow a business. It keeps me on my toes! I feel my mind expanding every day. Lastly, I love the ability to go out and talk to a client, understand their needs, and then create a strategy to help them solve their problems. It's so gratifying to me – not to just solve the problem, but the entire creative process to get there. And if something doesn't work, I get to try it again!

### **What are some obstacles you've had to overcome?**

The two major adjustments that I had to make are: 1) the feeling of isolation that I felt as solopreneur and 2) having to learn to be patient with the process of growing a business.

To overcome the feeling of isolation, I've learned that time has helped me adjust. As I build a network of fellow business owners and have more clients, I feel less isolated.

As for being patient, that is a work in progress. The second anniversary of Schabel Solutions is November 8, 2018. This is exciting, but I find myself needing to find more patience as I want so much to happen in such a short period of time. I'm working to better recognize that you can't necessarily achieve all the goals on your to-do list in a short period of time. It takes time to build your brand, gain awareness and then to see results of the work you're doing. I've learned to pace myself and thus letting some things take on a life of their own and taking time

What I've done to help counter these obstacles is to implement a strategy that keeps me focused on the next 90 days. 90-days at a time. This has been immensely helpful for me. I am a builder, which is a strength, but as projects go on, they then can become less exciting for me. So, this helps me to have the discipline to pay attention to the details and stick with what I've started.

**What would you consider some of your strengths that have helped you overcome those obstacles?**

When you become a business owner you are showing to others who you are. In other words, your qualities as well as what some might see as flaws are in display for all to see. I am a builder – I love starting new projects, but now with a focus on finishing – I can finish strong as well. Before becoming a solopreneur, I had some blind spots about my strengths. In the past, I've always worked with teams, and others were doing things that I did not need to do. Now, I face it all! I have to pay attention to all details. I have a reputation and certain level of credibility that I want to adhere to. I want people to see me as someone who starts – and finishes – what she sets out to do. I want to exceed my own expectations and the expectations of those who I serve.





## Background and Community Involvement

**Education:** Claudia is a native of Brazil and speaks Portuguese, Spanish, English and some Japanese. She graduated from Drake University with a bachelor's degree in International Relations.

**Professional Experience:** Claudia combines over a decade of experience as a Diversity and Inclusion practitioner with Fortune 100 and 500 companies and her multicultural background to offer coaching and consulting services in the areas of Diversity and Inclusion to businesses, educational and not-for-profit organizations. She hails from corporations in excess of 65,000 employees and stationed around the globe.

**Volunteer Experience:** Claudia is a commissioner on the City of Des Moines Civil and Human Rights Commission, and serves on the SHRM State Council as the Director of Diversity. In addition, Claudia is on the board of the Iowa chapter of the National Association of Women Business Owners (NAWBO) as Advocacy Chair, sits on the board of the Brazilian Cultural Center and is a "Cuddler" at Blank Children's Hospital in Des Moines, Iowa.