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## BUSINESS WOMEN OF THE DECADE

### Personal and Professional Success: Rewards of Hard Work and Perseverance

By Therese Tucker

Anyone who has ever started a business knows that being an entrepreneur means being able to work and work, and then work some more. For working women, the demands of a new company often have to be carefully balanced against the needs of a family.

I had two school-age children when I started BlackLine. The early years were extremely difficult, with endless work and limited money and no assurance of success. But looking back, I wouldn't trade any of it. Here are a few tips/lessons I've learned along the way that may be helpful for other women getting started in business:

- Always be afraid and aware of new market entrants/potential competitors – no matter how far out front you think you might be.
- But also embrace competitors as helping build the market.
- Take appropriate precautions in the beginning to protect your intellectual

property.

- Always plan for/budget more upfront capital (i.e. twice as much) than you think you will need.
- Keep a close eye on recurring expenses and commitments.
- Listen to your employees. They are your most important asset.
- Know and accept that you can't 'do it all.' Learn to prioritize between family and career.

Building and running a company will never be easy or predictable. One thing

that is certain about being an entrepreneur is that you must be 100 percent comfortable with continuous change, willing to always work hard and hang in there!

*Therese Tucker is the CEO and founder of Calabasas-based financial software provider BlackLine Systems. Previously, she served as CTO at SunGard Treasury Systems. Therese was comfortably retired from SunGard – and had two school-age children at home – when she decided to merge her two talents, technology and*



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*finance, into a successful business endeavor of her own and start BlackLine in 2001. With 75 employees now on staff, BlackLine boasts a client roster that includes AT&T, Boeing, Costco, eBay, Northrop Grumman*