

# GROWING A COMPANY AND A MINDSET

## KIM'S STORY: BLACK DRESS CIRCLE EVOLVE MEMBER



Kim Sagartz, Chief Operating Officer at Seventh Wave Laboratories, a biotechnology and pharmacology testing organization, worked with Erin Joy, Founder & CEO at Black Dress Circle, as an individual client before joining Black Dress Circle Evolve.

“Through my individual work with Erin, I came to see how a group of female CEOs could be beneficial to me in my evolving role,” she said. “I craved different perspectives and that is exactly what this group provides.”

### In Search of...

An analyst, Kim likes to look at all angles of a challenge before brainstorming solutions.

“I wanted input from multiple sources on challenges and solutions,” she said. “I knew I could learn from what other business owners had experienced.”

### An Evolving Role and Mindset

Although Kim wanted to hear and learn from others, she was hesitant to contribute her thoughts. “Pharmacology and drug development is so very specific, I worried that I wouldn’t be a valuable resource to the other members,” she shared.

However, through her experience as a member, she began to realize how similar business challenges are—even when they originate from very different industries.

“As my role evolved at the company, I could feel my role in the roundtable evolving as well,” she said. “The members were informing the decisions I was making and confidence in my core competencies increased. As that happened, I felt empowered to contribute more to the group.”

In addition, Kim’s confidence around her vision for the company also increased, and helped her drive forward.

### The Value

*“Black Dress Circle Evolve has given me the confidence and perspective necessary to do what needs to be done,” she said. “It has helped me commit to and believe in my decisions, systems, strategies, and processes.”*

Operationally, the group has been helpful as well. In addition to providing invaluable camaraderie among powerful female business minds, Kim said that input from the group has helped reduce email, improve delegation methods, and streamline day-to-day tasks.

“Knowing you are not alone in this is powerful.”

### The Result

Kim notes that business has grown exponentially but, perhaps more importantly, she has grown monumentally.

“I’ve changed how I handle difficult conversations, increasing roles and responsibilities, and an evolving professional trajectory,” she shared. “I approach situations differently, and I’ve become a more adept time manager and delegator.”

According to Kim, Black Dress Circle Evolve is unlike any CEO peer group anywhere.

“Members gain access to new ideas and new perspectives from extraordinarily smart and strategic women,” she said. “You can’t find that anywhere else.”



**BLACK  
DRESS  
CIRCLE**  
Building Smarter Businesses

blackdresscircle.com