



Meet Susan Conklin, owner of FLX Collaborative...

1. Describe Your Business:

FLX Collaborative is a full-service design team interested in supporting the businesses of the Finger Lakes region. "We do all types of design, from building an entirely new building interior planning, facade and building improvement, renovations and additions," Susan said. "We're doing a project tomorrow to stamp architectural drawings for a local contractor. So, we have all sorts of different levels of services."

2. Tell us your story:

"I have 30-some odd years in the interior design trade," Susan said. "I graduated from design school in Michigan, and from there I worked for furniture manufacturers, dealers, and architectural firms as an Interior Designer." Susan moved to the Watkins Glen

area to be with her husband. "I was just ready to do my own thing. So, I started FLX Collaborative. I researched who I might want to collaborate with and went from there," she explained

3. What has helped you succeed and gain experience?

Susan said the biggest thing that has helped her succeed is being kind to people. "It's very simple. People are generally pretty happy when follow through on something you said you were going to do," she said. and sustaining interest to the users. Having a sense of humor helps too.

4. What inspires you?

"I am inspired by very good design, first of all," Susan said. "There is very little of it in the world, in my opinion. In more rural areas I think it is sometimes not as much of a priority as money or other project issues. Those are challenges that we're going to have to take on by showing that great spaces can happen regardless of budget." She added that color, texture, and pattern inspire her, as well as good food.

5. What keeps you up at night? What are your challenges?

"As a new business owner, everything keeps me up at night," Susan said. "Trying to figure out where to market next and constantly learning new things. It can be challenging to focus. That's a process to learn, especially when you're working at home."

6. What is your favorite local activity?

"We walk a lot downtown," Susan said. "We live up on Jackson Street, and we walk down to the marina, down Decatur, then back up 9th Street. And there are some great restaurants around here that we enjoy. I am also a Lyft driver, so I get to meet a lot of tourists and sort of be a tour guide for them. That's pretty fun."

7. Is there anything else we should know about you?

Susan said she is very excited to get started with her business. "The FLX Collaborative team includes architects, interior designers, and engineers, but we are always looking for other consultants to work with us. Our team members are subcontracted per project, as the project demands," she said. "That way they can go on with their businesses, I can get mine started, and we can find other avenues where we can work together."