



Sarah Gordon is not just a smiling face and a welcoming handshake.

Sarah Gordon is a fierce and passionate entrepreneur. Her company, SGI, provides security-guard services throughout the Midwest.

A native of Eau Claire, Wisconsin, Sarah grew up with a father who was a former Wisconsin State Patrol Trooper and a U.S. Marine Sergeant. For as long as she can remember, she had an interest in law enforcement and government operations (she was fanatically devoted to the Law & Order TV show).

In middle school Sarah was president of the student council. During her senior year at North High School, Sarah spoke at a city council meeting in support of a proposed smoking ban in restaurants. After graduating from high school, Sarah went on to earn a bachelor's degree in business administration. She is now working toward a second bachelor's degree, this one in

psychology from the University of Minnesota.

After moving to the Twin Cities metro area, Sarah went to work for a national security-services firm. Its client roster included the likes of the Minnesota Vikings, the Minnesota Gophers, Cargill Corp., the Minneapolis Convention Center, Minnesota United, NBC, ABC, CBS, and Fox.

Sarah continued to work at the security company after launching her first entrepreneurial business, a firm that provided home staging and professional organizing services. That industry eventually became flooded by do-it-yourselfers, inspired by an exploding number of home-decorating TV shows. Sarah began to consider other opportunities. She recognized that the security field was evolving, with the traditional emphasis on physical security giving way to a focus on cyber and IT security. Here, she decided, was a profession that would continue to grow, especially in light of the increasing terror threats the

country faced, both internally and internationally.

Sarah sought to build a business that would support people and their families. She had a passion for solving problems and felt bothered by the scarcity of women in the security industry.

"Women everywhere, no matter what age, what race, or what background, should be breaking the 'glass ceiling' wherever they can," she says. "Women should be empowered, confident, and challenged in their working lives. All of us, women and men alike, need to foster the talents and skills that women possess."

While serving on the board of MPowered Women, an organization that teaches, educates, networks, and builds female relationships, Sarah learned the importance of how relationships can either hold women back in their careers or push them forward. That understanding left her more determined to make her 100% women-owned

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security business something special.

Sarah saw a great need in the industry to provide a different class of security. Using training programs from Ritz-Carlton and Franklin Covey, as well as classes from the Crises Prevention Institute, she set out to mold her SGI employees into the most knowledgeable, most capable, and most compassionate security professionals in the business.

SGI is now GSA certified and licensed in the states of Wisconsin, Michigan, Iowa, Ohio, Indiana, and Alabama. Sarah says the goal is to expand SGI on a national scale while still main-

taining the same level of quality and professionalism.

Sarah attributes her success in the security industry to her faith and to all of the strong women in her life who have helped shape her. Her mother, her 94-year-old grandmother, her aunt, her stepmother- the combination of all of them in addition to those she has met along the way. From these relationships Sarah acquired her ability to take risks and succeed, to take risks and fail, and to turn struggle into opportunity.

In her business life, Sarah takes a no-nonsense approach. Safety is a major concern, in part because she once experienced a very serious threat

to her life.

"Personal safety doesn't just boil down to locking your doors nowadays," she says. In her view, being smart about safety entails a number of different measures and security practices.

"First of all," she continues, "ask yourself these questions: How much is my life worth and how much is my family worth? If you say, 'priceless,' then you at least should know the basics of safety for yourself, safety for your home, and safety in public."



## Here are five of Sarah Gordon's tips for personal protection.

- 1) Take a gun-safety class to become competent with a handgun. Take away the stigma and learn to be a safe handler so that if you're ever in a situation where you need to protect yourself or your family, you are confident in your abilities.
- 2) Take a self-defense class. Learn about pressure points and how to behave in best-case and worst-case scenarios. Most importantly, how to get away alive.
- 3) Hire a security professional to assess your home for weaknesses and penetrable exterior points. A professional can advise on proper lighting, security cameras, locking mechanisms, and window vulnerabilities to ensure that you and your property are well protected.
- 4) Purchase a Personal Family Protection K-9. Many companies offer custom trained safety and security German Shepherds as well as other breeds that can insure your family's protection of you and your home.
- 5) Get involved with your community and neighborhood. Join your community crime watch and cultivate positive relationships with law enforcement. The more you know about your neighborhood and community, the easier it is to spot someone who may be up to no good. If you see something, say something!

Those are just a few ideas to start a conversation about personal protection and family safety.

"It's important to know that resources and tools are out there to keep us safer, not only as individuals but as communities, too," says Sarah.

"Global threats are rightly concerning," she continues, "but what's happening in our own backyards is just as important if we want to maintain healthy, happy, and safe communities to live, work, and play."

For more information about Sarah Gordon and her company, SGI, visit

[www.sginc.com](http://www.sginc.com).