

**Challenge:**

In 2020, Lindsey MacNeil endured what millions faced: being out of work due to the pandemic.

"I've got all these skills around human factors and everything," she said. "So I will launch my own company." MacNeil was on her way to becoming a business consultant.

She'd started one in the past, and she'd hoped it would feel like getting back on the horse. Except then, she was on her own, relying on word-of-mouth referrals to grow her business. This time she wanted to start out by partnering with others.

**Solution:**

She met Sean Sarram with Avantage through a Freelancers Union event. She started using the platform to get advice and assistance from other business owners.

"I joined one of the community hours and could really tell that there was a sense of camaraderie," she said. MacNeil discovered Avantage could not only help her launch her business but that it could also be a support structure to grow her fledgling business, [LeanIn Design](#).

"People on the platform have been mentoring me through that," MacNeil said.

They helped her hone in on what her business was and what it could offer potential clients. With this built in team, she put together offers on customer journey mapping and the user experience audit.

She has since branched out to doing custom offers. She has an open conversation with a client, then probes to find their needs and then creates an offer directly or through Avantage.

## **Results:**

With Avontage, she said she's shaved off years in soft launching her business. She likened Avontage to a business incubator, and she said she's seen progress in just the last year and a half.

Through the ebbs and flows of life "I can tell that I'm taking steps forward in a positive direction," she said.

Unlike a business incubator, MacNeil said she's not spending day after day on her own and maybe having an opportunity to help others.

"This is different," she said. "We're all there to support one another. We're all there to help make each other's dreams come true. I've been getting things done faster, because of that support structure, than I would have without."