

How Did You Get to Success?

I don't claim to know it all, so when I started this project I consulted my Mastermind Team which includes other successful promotional products professionals.

I asked them **three questions about their experiences in growing their promotional products businesses** and I'm sharing their wisdom and answers with you here. Here are the questions:

- **If you could give one piece of advice to someone who wanted to enter this industry, what would it be?**
- **What was most helpful to you when you were learning the ropes?**
- **What has contributed most to your success?**

Remember to always look to connect with others in our industry. Together we can be a valuable resource for one another.

I am grateful to everyone who helped with this project. You are the best and most creative group of sales professionals - and a pleasure to know!

Reena Underkofler
All About Promotions
www.allaboutpromotions.net

- ◇ Spend some time educating yourself about this industry and how to run a business in general. **To sum it up - Education!**
- ◇ **Having a mentor in the industry** who answered my questions.
- ◇ **Networking** - building relationships!

Kris Wittenberg
SayNoMore! Promotions
www.saynomorepromotions.com

- ◇ My advice to someone wanting to enter this industry would be start as a salesperson with a good distributorship to see if it interests you and if you can do a good job. It seems like it would be an easy-entry industry, but due to the huge amount of competition you really **have to be exceptional to stand out and be successful**. It requires a huge degree of organization, **constant learning**, lots of follow-up and the ability to hear "no thank you" a lot. It can be rewarding, but you have to be willing to give it **110% to stand out**.

- ◇ When I was just starting out I had no people within the industry to learn from. In the four plus years that I've had the company, I would say the most helpful thing would be **joining a distributor group, going to the shows and reading ALL of the industry publications.**
- ◇ **Perseverance!**

Ed Garcia

VivaIdea Promotions

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- ◇ **Be smart and learn as quickly as possible** where to concentrate your efforts in this “Universe of Information”. FOCUS -- that's the key -- and finding a Niche Market.
- ◇ **Networking with suppliers and distributors** at the most important trade shows and attending educational seminars.
- ◇ **Discipline, persistence and learning** from coaches like Rosalie, who inspires us to make a difference.

Janet Barens

Levy Advertising, Inc.

www.Levyad.com

- ◇ **Join an ad specialty company as an independent salesperson.** Look for a company with great support, a good profit split for the reps and a good group of salespeople. This is tremendously helpful if you don't have a background in ad specialty sales. A strong team can make the difference by providing valuable information and resources for the beginner. **Attending industry trade shows and participating in a few workshops at each show.** The information they shared was extremely valuable.
- ◇ **Learning to listen to my clients.** Finding out as much as possible about their likes and dislikes. I also treat my clients, as I would want to be treated. I have found that my clients appreciate that and enjoy doing business with me. They know I am interested in finding the right product at the right price for them. I want them to be my client for a long time. I also make follow-up an important part of my service.
- ◇ **I enjoy helping new sales people in our company.** I feel that by sharing what I have been fortunate to learn, I am giving back something worthwhile.

Judy Peacock

JHT Associates

www.jhtassociates.com

- ◇ **Follow-up - don't ever trust that everything will go smoothly - great if it does - but don't count on it.**
- ◇ **And here's what has contributed to my success...the fact that I care about each and every order** that a client places with me. I take each order personally - I follow up continuously until it is actually delivered. I am always in contact with the client to let them know what is happening. They know that they can trust me with the order.

Marlene G. Sandler

Lighting and Golf Promotions

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- ◇ **Patience, persistence and learning as much as you can.** Be patient with yourself and your customers. If you are persistent, and do everything you are supposed to do, the business will come. Always ask questions and learn from the suppliers and other distributors in the industry.
- ◇ Going to as many shows as possible.
- ◇ **Allying myself with people who know the business, and keeping up with the industry, as well as listening, really listening, to my customers.**