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**Why I Harass People I Like...And Why It Is Good For Business**

**By Alvin Apple**

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Running a successful business is all about detail and execution. You have to pay attention to the small things. If you are messing up orders and slow on customer service, people start to notice. Sales dwindle. Do it all right and word gets around. Your sales grow fast.

People pay for quality, even if your price is higher than your competitors.

That is why I like to work with good people AND harass them. I'm the guy who makes sure the details aren't forgotten. That makes for a very good product or service that flows smoothly and leaves customers wanting more.

By harassment I don't mean getting on your case in a bad way. We've all worked for people like that (and probably didn't enjoy it.) I try to make my harassing fun and interesting.

Step one. Make sure the people around you—your employees, your downline, your affiliates—really trust you. They have to know that deep down you value them, like them, and want to help them succeed.

You can do this by personalizing what you tell them. Don't send a one-size-fits-all "to whom it may concern" memo. Send an email with the specific person's name at the top. Talk directly to their strengths, their weaknesses, and their particular situation.

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Even better, pick up the phone or drop by for an in-person visit. It's always nice when you can put your business on auto pilot and go fishing, but your key people will get discouraged if they don't get a personal visit from you from time to time.

Step two. Let people know when they have done a good job. That has far more influence on them than just complaining about what they did wrong.

I learned that from a famous psychologist. If you did something he liked, the psychologist would tell you what a smart person you are. If you did something he didn't like, he would

simply sit quietly. After a while you only did the things he liked, the things you got complimented for.

If the person does almost all the job right, but misses a few things, let him know about it nicely. Use the Oreo cookie method. First tell him what he did right, then mention the few things that need to be corrected, then leave by again telling him how he is doing a good job.

Step three. Group things together for people. Before my kids leave for school I say "Don't forget to make your bed, take your lunch with you, and mow the grass when you get home." Batch together a few changes or tasks when you see people that work for you. It works better than shooting isolated orders to them one at a time. It is easier for people to stay organized.

Step four. Finally, make your harassing fun. Nobody likes to do a job that is boring or, worse, makes them feel bad. Keep a smile on your face and a light tone in your voice. When something goes really wrong, change your tone so people understand this is more serious.

Try to keep those two tones separate so people don't get confused.

Work on being the woman or man who keeps things fun while all the important details are getting taken care of. At the end of the day, that is what separates the so-so managers from those who can turn out a fine product or service and keep loads of happy customers coming back.

Alvin Apple helps everyday people start businesses they will enjoy. Then he teaches them how to

succeed. Read all his helpful strategies, including his latest article, "How your store can compete with the big boy chains." at <http://AlvinApple.com>. Reach Alvin at 801-328-9006 or <mailto:alvin@drnunley.com>.

## **Keys To Starting Your Own Clothing Company**

**By Bradley Johnson**

Ever wanted to start your own clothing company? Its not as difficult as you think. What do you absolutely need?

1. A decent logo 2. Creative concepts and graphics – Design Talent 3. A unique, blank apparel supplier 4. A decent screen printer 5. A Line Sheet to show potential buyers 6. Sales and promotional talent.

Which do you think is most important? Its obviously design talent you say? Are you Joking? You must be joking. Have you stepped out of the house recently? Have you seen Von Dutch clothing? Crayon weilding Chimpanzes produce better designs. Furthermore, I imagine the monkeys are more sanitary, but I digress.

#6 is clearly the most important element. You can create an entire line of fashion forward, beautiful clothing but if you can't pitch it – no one will ever see it (excluding your mom of course). So, unless you want a closet full of your fantastic designs, ask yourself the following two questions:

Can I sell?

In other words.....can I hit the pavement with my line sheet and walk into every boutique clothing store I can find? Then will I harass the hell out of retail clothing store buyers so that they'll try to squeeze 5 minutes of time in for me at Magic 06' (Clothing Convention) ?

Will I be able to make a professional presentation to a Nordstroms buyer?

Can I promote?

Do I have and creative viral or gureilla marketing ideas to get this label kickstarted?

If the answer to both of these questions is No – you better get some help. Namely, find someone passionate for fashion who also happens to be ridiculously outgoing, great on the phone and aggressive as hell. Lastly, (and superficially) it would help if your sales rep is hot.

I know, how horrible.....so sorry, buy I didn't say anything about this being an equal opportunity business.

That being said, let me welcome you the shallow end of the pool..... i.e. the fashion world.

Good luck with your label!

Bradley J,

Fashionable Wholesale Clothing



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