

1. How did you get started?

I assisted other artists for about 2 years; this was my education as well as a few workshops over the years.

2. What was your greatest challenge in starting your business?

Getting clients. Finding people to trust me and hire me.

3. What is your most persistent challenge in retaining clients?

The competition is fierce, the competition will go down in prices to get clients, I don't do that because so far I haven't needed to but I know I have lost more than a few clients to cheaper artists.

4. What do you find the most effective methods in growing or sustaining your business?

Being reliable, professional and consistently good on the job. I'm not a Prima Donna, I do whatever needs to be done to get the team on track....If its reflector holding that's what I do.

5. Is there any particular method you recommend to obtain clients?

I recommend being better than your competition and more valuable on the job, word spreads more quickly than flyers and cards.

6. What have you found to be most effective for finding new clients?

Word of mouth is how I find most new clients. In the beginning I sent out cards with my work on them. I recommend mailing a card with your work every other month to potential clients; make them know your name even if they have never met you. Do your homework and know who your potential clients are...you don't want to waste postage and expensive cards on people that can't bring you good paying work.

8. How do you determine your pricing?

I remain equal to the top artists in my area. When you cut your prices lower to get clients the great clients will avoid you, they will assume you're not as good and great clients want the best...I am not after budget clients, I want good clients that want a good, reliable, experienced artist. I also am faster and so get more done because I have been doing this a

long time, I think I'm worth more at this time than a newer artist. If I were brand new I would assist another artist until I had the experience to charge like the good artists in my area, and this is what I did, this is smarter than dropping your rates and bringing prices in your field down, one day you will kick yourself for that.

9. What advice do you have for new make up artist desiring to enter the business?

My advice to new artists is to assist for a few years, really understand what you are doing before you go out on your own. Plan on working really hard and making very little while you build your portfolio and hit the pavement. Have money to live on saved up because you won't show a profit for awhile. Don't assume you know the best way to do something, keep an open mind and this following is the most important thing to ponder and understand..... things change very fast and if you have to adapt to change, I think that's true in any career. I suggest reading a book "Who Moved My Cheese" it can be read in one sitting and will give you a good idea of what I am talking about when I say you need to adapt to change.

Good luck in your career. Mary

Mary Erickson
