PROFITING BY DESIGN

A Jewelry Maker's Guide to Business Success

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LeeAnn Herreid's TIPS FOR EMERGING ARTISTS



LeeAnn Herreid, the Warren, Rhode Island-based creator of a fun, whimsical collection of jewelry, has a wealth of insights to pass along to emerging artists. She started selling jewelry in 1984 and has been self-employed since 1993.

"Simplify," says Herreid. "Bring your design down to the most essential parts. Just like cooking, start with good ingredients." This is the philosophy Herreid has followed with her work. Here are suggestions she shares for anyone starting a jewelry business:

- · Don't expand too fast.
- Be good to the people who work with and for you.
 Thank them.
- Follow your gut. You always pay for it when you don't follow your feelings.
- Everything takes longer than you plan.
- Beware of inventory—it ties up money.
- Never do anything for just one reason. For example, when you make a new model, don't make it for just one situation, use it for a bunch of different things.
- Keep focused.
- Return phone calls and e-mails. This is important.
- You will never have it totally together, so don't put things off because you don't have the right business cards, tools, materials, or boxes. Just jump in. Don't make excuses. It doesn't need to be perfect.
- Invest in professional photographs. They will pay for themselves ten-fold.
- There is always a way to get it done low-tech. You don't have to have the latest, state-of-the-art equipment.
- At first you need to wear all the hats, but eventually you can start sub-contracting jobs to professionals.
- Set attainable goals. Ship dates and application dates are there for a reason. It is important to adhere to these deadlines. If you can't do it and you know it, then just say no from the get-go.
- · Keep working. Keep trying.