

Diane Walker

Based on her early experiences, Diane, a 12 year veteran, refuses to 'put all her eggs in one basket', so she's with two networking companies: Cognigen Networks and SendOutCards. She's at the top level with each. Not bad for a woman who was once so shy she could only do the business if she "didn't have to talk to people".

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Diane of the 'laws' of network marketing is thou shalt not serve two masters, and you're in two different companies. Tell me about that.

Well, my first five years in network marketing were horrible, with many ups and downs, and I had to learn on my own. I realized early on that I was not comfortable putting all my eggs in one basket. I decided I was willing to break out of the norm and do things differently. So, my first company was built. I didn't build them together; I simply added another one that fit... that way if something happened to one I'd still have an income.

And had something happened to you?

Oh yes! I had companies go out of business on me, and I had companies that didn't live up to the message, but I was much too stubborn to give up. I knew I could find some honest companies that would last and I wanted to create multiple income streams.

Has that presented any unique challenges or difficulties for you?

No... because I'm always upfront with my current company before I start working with another company. I let them know I'm not likely ever to have just one company. I've never represented a company that had those kinds of rules. I don't cross line recruit; I keep them pretty much separate. It really all comes down to relationships and getting to know people.

***When I'm talking with prospects
it's pretty easy to tell which might
be the best fit for them.***

You know, some people may not want to be in a phone business and some people may not want to be in a card business, so I can help them explore what they want.

So how did you first become aware of network marketing?

What got your attention about it?

It was odd. I received a letter in the mail about a guy that was hurt and couldn't work anymore. He was really thankful for the income he was receiving through network marketing. At the time the company I was with was having challenges and downsizing and I thought, "Gosh, I want to find something else that I can do where I'm not tied into a job." And so the business caught my attention.

What was your job at the time, Diane?

I was with a defense contractor and of course they were downsizing. They went from about 2,800 to 700. I didn't get laid off, but I kept thinking it could be right around the corner and it was really a depressing environment that I wanted to get out of.

So you saw this letter about somebody who was replacing their income?

Yes, and it was a really intriguing letter and it insinuated that all you had to do was mail these letters and they'd take care of the rest. Of course, I was really shy and I didn't want to talk to anybody, so this sounded interesting and easy. So I mailed LOTS of letters!

And how did that work out?

It didn't! I later found out they were taking the letters we were mailing and putting people into another company.

So what was next!? Tell me all your gory stories!

Well I realized, okay... *that* didn't work, but I was introduced to network marketing and I had to think that sometimes it does work. For awhile I looked at everything that came along and I'd think, "Oh, that looks good!" so I'd do that for a while and then realize it wasn't very honest or whatever, so I'd have to leave it.

I went through a couple of companies before I even found out how to research companies. What looks good isn't always good... it pays to look for who is behind the curtain.

So when and how did you finally find a home?

Actually, I have to say Cognigen was really the first real company I found and I've been with them for seven years. I met the founder on the Internet and he was somebody I had admired, because he always took a stand for integrity and if something was dishonest he told people it was dishonest. So, when I found out he was going to put his company into network marketing I said, "Sign me up! I don't know anything about it, but I know this man had integrity!" So, I joined and started building the phone business.

Tell me how it went. What did you discover? What did you learn?

Wow, I learned a lot about networking in general and about networking on the Internet— and the Internet is a whole different world. I like Internet marketing. You can build relationships with other people and if you help enough other people get where they want to go you don't have to worry about you.

So how did you start out? What kinds of things did you begin to do?

I learned how to talk to people on the phone and on the Internet. I learned how to market a product and how to help people save money. Some people don't want to do network marketing and I had to learn that you want customers too! I learned how to do a lot from other people and I learned how to learn. Actually, I learned a lot from your first magazine, Upline. In fact, without Upline I would probably have given up. Then I would read the stories and think, "If these people can do this I can too."

So can you share a couple of things that you learned from that?

Sure, I learned a lot about personal growth and development and how to think outside of the box.

I was really shy at the time and I would read about how to share a business with others and I'd think I could do that if I didn't have to talk to people, but of course you have to talk to other people.

I learned how to take the time with people. One thing that bothers me that I sometimes see in our industry is the idea of going out to sponsor a bunch of people and see who sticks. I don't agree with that at all. I like to help people develop themselves and their business.

People join for a reason and they have dreams and if you can help them go in and find what they want and get it then your business takes care of itself.

Diane, what were some of the things that helped you not to be so shy?

I guess just throwing myself into situations where I simply had to do it. I knew that if I didn't step outside of the box and outside of my comfort zone I would never succeed in building a business, because how could I teach someone else to do something I couldn't do? I've always worked

my business on the Internet, which has made it a bit easier, but in the last three or four months I've joined my local Chamber of Commerce and gone out and met some people, because with the new product I have I figured if I don't build in my local market someone else will. I figured I needed to learn how to do that and the last three months have been really a lot of fun.

Tell me some of the things that you've discovered and learned how to do.

I've learned how to go to a meeting and quickly and easily tell people what my product is, where before I wouldn't even open my mouth.

I learned it by doing it, by pushing past my fear and being willing to sound silly and do it anyway. Now, I've discovered that the more you do it the easier and more comfortable it gets, so you just do it more.

Were there any particular tools and instruction that helped you?

Reading and listening to a lot of personal development and industry tapes, books and articles and following instruction and advice from various people in the industry. Certainly there is you, John, and Jerry Clark is wonderful, I just absolutely love him. I listen to Michael Oliver and his Natural Selling as well as Kim Klaver. A lot of the people that actually teach you by giving examples and you try it out and discover that it's not so hard. It's really just trying and doing it. Does that make sense?

Yes, of course! Were there any things that stand out to you... specific things that were most valuable for you?

Yes, Jerry Clark was speaking on a cruise I was on several years ago, and one thing that stands out in my mind was that we had signed up on the cruise to get some of his books and tapes and they didn't come. I sent an email trying to follow up on these things I had paid for and nobody

answered. So, I called the phone number to see where my books were. Again, nobody answered, I got a recording, but nobody called me back.

About a month later I received an email promoting something that Jerry was involved with encouraging me to come to this event. I wrote him back and said, "Take me off your mailing list. I don't go to any events when people take my money and don't deliver." Well, I got a phone call from him and he said, "What do you mean?" and I explained about my order on the cruise. He simply said, "Oh, well let me look that up."

He never made an excuse and I was so impressed with that. I shared with him that I had sent an email and called on the phone and he looked it up and he said, "I'm going to send you some books, personally." I even asked him and said, "Can you tell me what happened to my order?" and he said, "No, I don't make excuses." And I pushed it because I was truly curious about what happened and he finally shared that they had had someone in the office that was simply deleting emails and not returning phone calls.

What really stuck in my mind was that you can always have someone that works for you that may not be doing the job and there may be more to the story. By the way, he sent me this huge box of books and I really was impressed and appreciated that he took responsibility and did this for me and he didn't know me from Adam.

Kim Klaver is also a really cool lady who always has a way to make things simple. She's really helped me focus on the power of gathering customers.

***Too many people leave that
money on the table and neglect
building a customer base.***

**So tell me how you operate today and the things you focus on.
You said you had begun to make a shift and do things locally?**

I've begun to do things locally, because I have a product that lends itself easily to any business. I've realized that my local businesses were an untapped market, so I had to get out and figure out how to reach local business. That's what prompted me to join the local Chamber of

Commerce and attend some of their lunches and functions, show my product to people and I'm discovering it has massive appeal for business people who seem to quickly see the value.

And how do you approach them?

One new thing I've been doing is that when someone new joins the Chamber, I send them a greeting card to welcome them and introduce myself as the greeting card lady. I let them know on the card itself that I have sent it from the Internet and I've had more people get in touch with me just because I sent that card than I would ever have imagined. They contact me to thank me as well as to ask about how I sent it.

So you've been doing this business for a dozen years, what keeps you at it... what keeps you in it?

I'd have to say the relationships, the people involved and I want to help other people. It bothers me when I see people give up just before they would have achieved some success. Sometimes they give up because they've made a bad choice or a bad decision like I did in the beginning but they then just decide this doesn't work.

It does work if you just stick with it and find the right company for you and I just want to help other people realize that and reach their dreams.

Share with me some of the dreams you've reached, Diane.

I was just thinking the other day that I'm not a millionaire, like some people have millions and millions of dollars, but I don't have to worry about where the next check is coming from.

I have the car I want to have, I have the freedom to come and go when I want and I don't have to think about it. If I want to go on a cruise or fly up north to see my daughter I can do that without having to worry about how I'm going to pay for it.

I don't have any bills and I have the ability to do what I want to do when I want to do it.

I don't have to get up in the morning if I don't want to get up in the morning and I get to help other people to be able to do that too!

So what's the *best* thing about network marketing for you Diane?

Freedom! Not having to report to a job is wonderful!

When I was working in corporate America I had a great job, but never any time off. With the downsizing that was occurring we all had to work 60-80 hours a week and never had time to go anyplace and I always had to report to the job. I just wanted to be free... and I am!

What are the things you enjoy most?

I enjoy traveling. I *love* to see different places I've never been to before. Before network marketing— and this is a laugh— I had only been on a plane one time in my life. Before, I had the money to travel, but never the time to travel and I like to be able to hop on a plane and go anyplace I want. We liked Alaska and will go back there. My daughter and her family are in Minnesota and I like that I can go to them whenever I want. I went to Ireland and that was really nice. I still want to go to Australia and we want to take a cruise on the Panama Canal. I'm going on a cruise to Mexico next month. And I really like the western states here in America.

I love traveling! I never knew that I would love it but network marketing has taught me that I do. And with network marketing I can travel and work at the same time if I choose and I like that too.

So what do you see for the future in these endeavors of yours?

I'd really like to raise up a *lot* of people. I'd love to see a lot of people get to the top of the company and realize their dreams whatever they are. I may someday retire but I can't imagine really retiring because this is just such fun.

Diane Walker, aka MLMBlonde, travels around, frequently dropping in on her five grandchildren, from her home base in Tampa, Florida where she lives with her husband Donald.

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