STORIES | INFORM INVOLVE INSPIRE!

Jan Wakeland

Did you know that the 'scrapbook' business is a $3 billion (yes, with a 'b') a year business? Or that rubber stamps is $1 billion? Jan knows. She's a former trauma/ER RN, now a top national team leader with 18 year-old, party plan leader Stampin Up®. Her mission: 'To make a difference in others by helping them preserve memories, discover creativity and explore opportunities while honoring God.'

plus AUDIO and ATTACHMENT

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Jan, what *is* Stampin Up?

Stampin Up is a home party plan. The company is 18 years old and specializes in rubber stamping and scrapbooking. We teach people how to use them in a variety of ways. We'll show them how to use them in home décor in place of stenciling. You can use the stamps in crafts. You could create a handmade card for your customers that would stand out in lieu of the engraved, store bought ones that all look alike from the

promotional companies. We teach how to create very simple, but elegant business cards.

In terms of network marketing we could easily teach you how to scrapbook your network marketing career. That would be a great presentation tool for you to use when you're out there sharing. It's a very visual way to show you on incentive trips, at award ceremonies, and highlighting the places and things you're now able to have with the lifestyle you've achieved through network marketing.

And, of course, on a personal level, scrapbooking is a great way to preserve family memories.

How big is the company? How successful is this?

The company is approaching 50,000 consultants in the United States and to be honest, I'm not sure how many we have in Canada right now. We've been in Canada for three years. The company is phenomenally successful; it's still privately owned and continues to grow at 15-20 percent every year.

Congratulations! How did you first get involved with them?

I heard about them at a Christian mom's group. I was new to the area, I was originally a west coast gal, out of Seattle, and I had moved here with my husband and was trying to meet people and get out so I went to this group.

Someone there had a catalog. At that time the company was 81/2 years old, but it was still a small company. I had no knowledge of home based businesses, other than one Tupperware party where we played a game and I thought they were the stupidest things in the world!

But with Stampin Up I instantly loved the product and saw a business opportunity. Seeing the business opportunity actually came from an attitude.

Watching the person who actually did the presentation for me, I

> ***remember thinking, "I could do that. And I could do that better!"***

It's funny that later, my mentor would teach me to say that, but that was truly the attitude I had in my brain at the time. Not knowing a thing about marketing and not realizing that *I* would have to *be* one of those people doing home parties that I thought were the stupidest thing in the world.

I just saw the business opportunity and had the attitude that I could do it better. Also, the other impetus was that I had been working night shift for 17 years and wanted to be at home and awake with my children during what I thought were going to be very important years of their lives, the school years.

I wanted to be the mom that went to their concerts and events and helped in the classroom, and I wanted to be there when they came home from school so I could hear the great stories, or be able to comfort them through the trials and tribulations of the day on those kinds of days. When you work night shift you're always sleeping or tired. So Stampin Up just kind of fell into my lap.

How did your family receive this new involvement of yours?

My husband has always been very supportive. I am blessed that I was able to, from the very beginning, say,

> ***"Honey, I don't exactly know what I'm getting into here but give us two years."***

We weren't exactly in a position, based on lifestyle choices, for me to just up and quit nursing, so I took this alongside, as many people do in network marketing, and asked him to give me two years to see what comes of it.

I also went into this with a business mindset. I didn't go into this with the mindset of dabbling or simply getting my products at a discount. I went into it full force with the intention of making something of it and instantly

began internet searching multi-level marketing, network marketing, anything I could get my hands on to learn.

So, my family was always supportive, because I was always upfront about what I thought it would take to succeed and what I hoped we would get out of it. It actually took me three years to get to the point where I could then start to back off of nursing.

> ***Now, thanks to a six-figure income, I am no longer working as a nurse and I get to enjoy everything I've ever wanted to in life!***

Congratulations, again! So how did you start out?
I bought the kit and I got a booth at a business fair. I was new in the area and had a few female relatives on my husband's side, but I didn't want to tap into them. I thought I'd keep them for an emergency, so I got a booth at the business fair, got a few leads and the rest is history.

Ah… so tell us some of that history, Jan. How did you present yourself at the business fair?
Well, we just put our product out on display and as people stopped by we would explain who we are and what we were looking to do, in terms of coming into your home to teach you how to use our product.

Wow!

> ***I look back on those days in those booths and think, oh my gosh for lack of a better term, just how 'red-necked' it was compared to how professional it has become;***

... both in terms of my growth and in how the company has grown and presented us with different and better material.

It's very interesting to me that so many people *were* interested when it was still so 'Mom and Pop" compared to where it is now, 91/2 years later. A lot of our company materials were still black and white back then, we didn't have the technology to support us, and there weren't websites or toll free phone numbers.

Was the product kind of 'funky' back then?

Yeah! I mean it was a good product, obviously I fell in love with what was available then, but the whole industry— scrapbooking itself is a 3 billion dollar industry in the United States— has come so far over the years.

Creative Memories was the forerunner, as a home party plan, and then we followed suit and there are a bunch of other, smaller, direct sales companies specializing in rubber stamping and scrapbooking. But Creative Memories and Stampin Up are the two industry leaders in the whole party plan. Rubber stamping alone is probably a billion dollar industry. And all of that has transpired literally in the last couple of years. It has just mushroomed!

So, you got a couple of people interested in having parties? Or having a business? Or both?

Both— mostly having parties at that time because I was just a few weeks into it when I did the booth. I didn't really have the knowledge, at that moment, that recruiting was what I needed to do to grow the business. So, I actually just went after getting shows.

That was in April and in July was our first national convention. There are so many things that confirm to me that God had a hand in this. First of all, I didn't know anything about home-based business and then, four months after I joined the information arrives about a national convention. Something told me that this was a place I needed to be, but there was really no upline or anybody encouraging me.

The company was so new and the gal that sponsored me was also

new and stumbling around herself, so I was on my own in deciding to go to that convention.

At the convention I got a taste of growing the business. I had read four months of newsletters, knew the names of all the people who were being constantly recognized and I had written their names down. I made a point of seeking them out. Amazingly, only two of them would give me the time of day! But one of them gave me advice that is probably why I am where I am today.

I asked her how she got to where she was in the company. She said she made it a point to recruit or sponsor ten a year.

She got to where she was in nine years by sponsoring 10 a year, so of course, I think to myself, "I'm going to do 20!"

And, sure enough, in three to four years I got to where she was at after nine years. It was that whole 'I can do it better' mentality again.

But from that first show, I had done the bookings I got from the booth and now was able to go home and start sponsoring the contacts I received.

What were the challenges you faced in the beginning?

In the beginning we faced the challenge of name brand recognition, because the company was small and people didn't know us. So not only did I have to sell an unknown product, but I was unknown too!

I had to sell myself, as somebody they would want to do business with and I had to sell a product that didn't have household name brand recognition.

But nothing else did at that time, did it?

Well, Creative Memories was quite huge at that time. And of course, companies like Tupperware, Mary Kay, and Longenberger, were home party plan companies that had name brand recognition. But Stampin Up was a new one on the market, so people were leery about buying the product and even more so about sponsoring.

Once I got them past who I was in the company, because the company itself was actually nine years old that gave me an edge, a foot in the door. It was fresh and different and once people experienced how fresh and different it was, and that it was likely to stick around since it obviously had some success to have lasted nine years, then they opened up to getting excited.

Do you think the whole party plan structure is unique to women?

Very much so, very much so. We're much more social creatures seeking out that comfort, that feedback, that reassurance, whatever it is, from each other. We get that in the party plan where we have another opportunity to gather around something we enjoy.

> ***The party plan system reinforces our feelings of being 'normal', because we're around others who are doing what we do and buying the things we like to buy, so that lends credit to what we're buying.***

Sometimes it also justifies what we're buying. We do have a mentality in the United States about 'keeping up with the Jones's'. I think more so with women, we like the comfort of being around each other rather than having the competitiveness of men. And our lives are so busy that the home party plan literally gives women the excuse to stop or slow down and take a few minutes for themselves, but not necessarily feel guilty about it.

How big is the 'social event' aspect of it?

I don't know that I can quantify that, but I would have to say it's huge! The longer we are in business, the more we get to know our customers.

Especially with rubber stamping and scrapbooking. Our business is unique in that not only do we do home party presentations where we go into your home, but we also have a craft, if you want to call it that, that allows us to teach classes at the community colleges, libraries or local recreation departments. I even hold classes in my home, so that once a person buys a product they are also willing to come back and learn more about what to do with it.

So, I am seeing many of my customers two, three, even four times a month and they become like family.

And given the nature of your product, there's always something new to show?

Yes, it's the nature of our product and Stampin Up is very smart that way; our company has done a phenomenal job of providing us with a new catalog every year, every quarter a new product and special and, even more so, the nature of my product is that I tap into all the seasonal celebrations.

Right now I tap into Christmas, so it's about making your Christmas cards, making Christmas wrapping, making ornaments for your tree. Then we will be heading into Valentine's Day and Mother's Day will follow, so there's a lot to keep a steady flow. Then of course there's the scrapbooking side of it.

We also teach how to make jewelry. It can just go on for years, because there are also techniques to teach within each area. When I'm teaching someone to create I'm teaching them things like water coloring and how to do something called embossing, so it's limitless with no end in sight, as to the reasons why I could be in contact with you.

Jan, one of the things I'm fascinated about is the socio-economic strata. It seems to me— in my limited thinking— 'party plan' is a kind of middle-class or lower middle-class approach to network marketing. What do you think?

To be very honest, do you know what's nice about party plan? It's that there *IS* no socio-economic stratification! Those boundaries are totally gone.

For example, I have a huge reward event this Saturday, I call them 'Diva Days', so anyone who has sold a thousand dollars during the month is invited to my home and I serve them lunch, with treats, and I have projects planned for them. It works twofold; one, they are reinforced and refueled with ideas to go out and teach their customers, so they can continue to be my great sellers; and two, I'm able to thank and appreciate them at the same time.

Anyway, in the population that will be coming this weekend,

> ***I'm having women who basically graduated high school and that's it, sitting next to a neo-natologist. And women who live in a trailer parks next to women who live in million dollar homes.***

So, you've got pickup trucks and Mercedes sitting in your driveway?

Exactly! One of the girls coming, she and her husband run a tattoo parlor and she has piercings and tattoos in places— well, I guess I can only talk about the ones I can see— and she will sit right next to everybody else. And you know what? Nobody judges, the differences just melt away and it is the most phenomenal thing you've ever seen. It is really cool! There *is* no socio-economic status within the party plan!

In your experience with other companies with party plans, would you say this is true across the line?

Well, I can't say that for all of them. A lot depends on the mentality of the company and it also depends on the product. Our product is very unique in that it's a hobby product. In other words, somebody who is selling Mary Kay isn't going to buy a ton of Mary Kay just to play around with it all day long.

You know, she puts her makeup on in the morning and she's done. She has a limited need for personal use. My product lends itself to a personal hobby. Somebody could be very content just making their own

scrapbooks and people of all levels and all walks of life have hobby's, so I think that's one of the reasons we, maybe more than anyone else, break down the socio-economic status.

Our company also is primarily a sales company and they have been very slow to teach us recruiting, so our mentality has not been, 'let me work this as a business'. I think the companies that teach recruiting, sponsoring and working it more as a business tend to teach you to go after more business minded women, more entrepreneurial women, and that might tend to start stratifying things.

A good example would be the direct sales company that is doing everything right, from a corporate standpoint, but has a kit that is very expensive to purchase. This is going to eliminate a certain segment of the general population from ever getting involved at the business level.

It would seem to me, given your product line, that there would be a lot of mothers with their kids interested. Is there a possibility that you would do this with schools, too?

There is the possibility to do this with schools, yes, that's true. To work with the PTO's for teacher appreciation, to go in and help teachers in the classroom. I've helped kids create book report covers, I've helped them create gifts and helped with science projects or history projects. So yes, there are lots of opportunities to work with schools.

There are also opportunities to work with scouts and scouting. There are opportunities for us to teach adults at community colleges and recreation centers, and the big one for us right now and for me personally, is that we are really tapping into the faith market.

Many people are wanting to preserve their faith via scrapbooking. I, myself, do a bible study, once a month, built around scrapbooking. There are a lot of opportunities to work with the faith community and churches have always had women's groups, be they faith-oriented or simple social groups, where women often do crafts together.

How are you working with your group now?

A LOT! I love my team and I'm a firm believer that if I take care of them they do well and if they do well I do well, so I work very closely with them. I have a team of 3300 and I do what I call TBT. It used to stand for Touch

Base Tuesday, because I connected with everyone on my team every other Tuesday using an e-mailed newsletter or e-zine. Now, it stands for Touch Base Today, because it's usually once a month on a day that I pick that will fit my current lifestyle. But I have more leaders now that have stepped up to the plate, so I don't have to be as frequently consistent with it.

How many are in the leadership group you work with?

My leadership group is done a bit differently. I don't define it as a leader's group; I work with what I call a focus group. Because the achievement levels designated in Stampin Up don't equate to pay and I think people are driven by pay and recognition,

> ***I work instead with people that are driven to build their business, so my leadership group is more of a business builder group.***

I may have new girls coming in alongside women that have been in the business three or four years, but all of them have a common interest in working this as a business, so I have a focus group instead of a leadership group.

So, that group, that I'm working with tightly, numbers about 110 women and then I work very closely with those on my first line and I have 72 there.

And what kinds of things do you do with these people?

We do big team events. Every other month I have a meeting of about 200-250 where people can come here locally. I do travel the country when possible to see team members and sometimes to help fellow demonstrators. One of the other things I do with my team is I try to make sure that any incentive trips, national conventions or leadership events will include time to get together with them. I try to set aside time when I can either meet with leaders or my directs who live out of state especially.

I do teleconference training every other Monday. Actually, I do it every Monday, but I have two different groups that I focus on so for the team members it's every other Monday. Twice a month I do a teleconference training that is open to everybody in my organization and that covers a variety of topics, prospecting, getting bookings, organization, I had Vicki Collins in to speak about taxes recently, how to increase sales. Then the other two weeks I will work again with my business builder group and my directs. Today's topic is 'how to stay motivated, how to get encouraged and stay through the rough spots' and so we'll have a call about it.

That is probably one of the *best* things that I have started in the last year.

How does your family feel about all of this?
They love it! But they've also seen the benefits.

> ***My children are 16 and 14 and they are about to go on their fifth cruise. Two years ago my daughter spent April in Hawaii, the summer in Europe, Christmas in Disney and October in Jamaica and how many 14 year olds have lives like that?***

So they appreciate that.

We also have quality time and I'm able now to pick them up after school. My kids play instruments that are huge! My daughter plays the French horn and the upright bass and my son plays the trombone and these don't carry well on a bus— and the schools have decided that three senior high school students can fit in one seat! My being able to pick them up means they are able to play the instruments they love.

I also think that my kids have learned from my business. When my son applied for a People to People trip that he took two years ago they asked him why he wanted to do this as part of his interview. He said, "to get out

of my comfort zone". How many twelve year olds are going to make comments like that? They've learned from listening to tapes in the car with mom. When we're shopping they often ask me which things are tax deductible, so they're very aware of things that young people often don't consider.

The other thing is that I've always worked my business in such a way that I've tried to keep my priorities straight.

> ***My faith is very, very important to me and, so that comes first, then my family and then my business.***

I also am a big believer that you have to give a little bit. I say to my kids, "Okay, give me your calendar. Now, mom's going to miss this concert but as a result of what I'll be doing this will be happening." But I do so with their permission and understanding of what's in it for them if I have to miss a game or a concert.

What's the very *best* thing about network marketing/direct sales for you?

Freedom. Time freedom and financial freedom, both. Freedom in general; I, literally, now have the freedom to become myself. I had struggled my whole life with self esteem and I still do.

> ***The moment anything goes wrong I think it's my fault and I have to work through that, but network marketing has given me the skills and the ability to become something more than I ever would have become as an RN.***

I was very good as an RN, I loved it and I was doing really well, but it wasn't the same kind of feedback in terms of personal growth. I had a lot of knowledge in one area, but in network marketing I am growing personal skills, communication skills, conflict resolution skills, broader managerial skills.

I'm a Sunday school teacher and I see these things in the applications that I use in the way I teach the kids. I'm getting ready to start working with a personal coach and one of the things I've learned from the DSWA [Direct Selling Woman's Alliance] was this thing called heart-centered listening and principle-centered coaching and the skills that I've learned there I'm able to use in so many other avenues.

I really appreciate the freedom to learn more than I've ever dreamed possible. My dreams as a nurse weren't the same. Although I loved what I did and I even miss it, the dreams weren't the same, there is a ceiling on how much you can earn. So now, there's a freedom to dream.

> ***Network marketing gives a freedom to be so much more than you ever thought possible.***

Even if you had parents or spouses that encouraged you to go for it that doesn't touch the reality that the deeper you get involved in network marketing the more freedom to *BE* you receive. So freedom, to me, is what sums up the *very best* thing!

Something I'd like to share, that I think is important, and one of the 'why's' of my being here today and where I sit, and that is that you have to love your product and the company you represent, but they are *not* the end all. The one thing I've come across time and time again in the party plan aspect of direct sales and network marketing is that people solely rely on their company to provide them with the training and the information they need. That's not going to get you as far as you need to go. There is so much more out there. The reason I am where I am today is, because I stumbled on Jan Ruhe's *Multi-Level Marketing Nuts and Bolts* book and then I progressed to others.

I was constantly hungry and I was constantly driven to look for more than just what my company was providing.

So, I had product specific company knowledge but also industry tips and trainings and ideas. It amazes me when I come across people who, if their company doesn't say it or endorse it, they're not going to do it and to me that's just a tether holding them back.

They need to tap into things like your magazine, the people who have written the books, they need to talk to other direct sellers, they have the DSWA. There is just so much out there and it's not being disloyal to your company, at all, because actually, the better you do the better your company does! You need to think of yourself, first. You are a business within a business and you need to do what you need to do while keeping within your company's policies.

Jan Wakeland and her husband of 181/2 years, Doug, daughter, Kristin, 16 and son, Gregory, 14 live in Spring Grove, PA

AUDIO

COACHING | MARKETING | RECRUITING | SALES | SKILLS

Teach them to fish

From the Global Connections Tele-Class Archives of The Direct Selling Women's Alliance: Understanding what you really have to offer others; making a benefits checklist; the difference between needs and wants, and why and how to focus on needs; increasing your sales, recruiting, enthusiasm and confidence, and more....

by **Janet Wakeland**

approximately 39 minute audio in downloadable MP3

Jan's DSWA tele-class covers:

- Training for Growth
- Training by example— Walk your talk
- Training from an incredible list that is unique to you and your team.
- Do you know all the benefits of knowing THE benefits?
- Do you know which benefits attract new recruits?
- Did you know certain benefits help retain team members?
- Do you know the benefits that help people to grow into leadership?
- Do you have standards of excellence that excite and keep your team connected to you and the company?
- Do you know at least 31 benefits of direct selling?
- Fall in love all over again by knowing all of the benefits of your business, the product and being part of your team.

Janet shares keys to teaching others that you can use starting today to help your team rise to the next level in your organization. She presents a core technique she teaches all her team members when they are just starting out. You'll want to be ready for this call with paper and pen primed to write! Make certain to download the ATTACHMENT, **Teach Them To Fish: A Lesson in Benefits**.

During the tele-class she will ask you to write down at least 30 benefits of direct selling for your particular company. This list will be a resource you'll

want to carry with you always to help you stay focused and to share with new recruits and prospects.

Janet will also be sharing her keys to setting standards of excellence for you and for your team members and Janet has some great tips for how to teach your trainees to develop their belief in abundance.

ATTACHMENT

COACHING | MARKETING | RECRUITING | SALES | SKILLS

Teach them to fish

"Give a man a fish and he'll eat for a day, but teach him to fish and he'll eat for a lifetime. Never was this principle more aptly applied than in direct selling. If you want to build a strong organization, train your team members to be powerful recruiters*. The best way to do this is by example. Show, then tell. Become passionate about recruiting and you'll soon find it's contagious.*

by **Janet Wakeland**

a two-page excerpt from *Build It Big!* in downloadable PDF

"While it's important to provide your trainees with the basic skills of booking, selling, and recruiting, it's even more important to help them set standards of excellence for themselves. Encourage them to see the possibilities all around them, to come from a belief in abundance. Get them past the idea of 'trying it for a few months.'"