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Career Spotlight: Thatcher Spring Business Owner

Describe your current position and what led you to your job?

I own a start-up apparel business that designs luxury neckwear. While searching the job market toward the end of my senior year at Georgetown I decided that I was more interested to go out on my own. I began researching the apparel industry and building contacts that helped me get pointed in the right direction. While working on Capitol Hill, I continued my learning process by visiting many suppliers and manufacturers of clothing both in the United States and in Italy and eventually developed my first sample line of ties which I sold in the spring of 2006. I have now greatly expanded the line and have many more accounts than when I began. I am looking forward to growing much more in 2007.

What has been the most rewarding moment in your career?

My most rewarding moment so far has been seeing my work pay off in the form of growing brand recognition - people are wearing my ties and promoting them among others. It is very satisfying to hear that customers really enjoy the products I design.

What is the best career advice you have received?

The best career advice I have received came from one of my mentors in life - "make sure you enjoy what you do with your time."

What would you recommend to someone interested in working in your field?

I am a huge proponent of entrepreneurship whether it is in the fashion industry or elsewhere. The excitement surrounding building something new from the bottom up really cannot be matched. It is incredibly rewarding and I would highly recommend that anyone who wishes to devote the time and energy to a new enterprise go forward with it. The best lesson I have learned from my experience so far is that if you really want to accomplish something, you will find a way to do it.

What challenges have you faced and how did you successfully manage one situation?

My biggest challenge was getting into my first 20 accounts. While I had many stores place orders upon first inspection, some stores initially told me they were not interested in picking up a new line of neckwear. I had to walk through



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door after door with the same level of energy even when I had been turned down by several stores in a row. Eventually I earned more believers in the product and the business which helped to get a head start. When the buyers found that customers truly appreciated the luxurious quality and design of the ties, they began ordering more. I have even had quite a few of the stores that originally turned down the product come back to place orders.

What skills are necessary or what prepared you the most for your career?

I never studied fashion in school, however I feel I know what looks good and what doesn't in a classic sense. Beyond the basic ability to put together a product that is attractive and saleable, my strong belief in what I am doing has helped the most to disburse the product in the market and to grow the business.

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