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Compere: MIKE WELSH
Item: INTERVIEW WITH SONIA WILLIAMS, AUTHOR, SHOW MUMMY THE MONEY, ABOUT WAYS PEOPLE ARE BEATING THE RECESSION. WILLIAMS SAYS MANY EVERYDAY AUSTRALIANS ARE TURNING TO DIRECT SELLING FOR THE OPPORTUNITIES IT OFFERS.
INTERVIEWEES: SONIA WILLIAMS, AUTHOR

MIKE WELSH: Some people have a good attitude about everything, don't they? Bugger the recession, I'm not going to let it beat me, there are ways to get involved, and it appears there is a trend emerging in Australia, of Australians, defiantly rejecting the threat of the recession, by seeking out ways to earn extra money, new ways.

Sonia Williams is author of Give It A Go, and Show Mummy The Money, and my guest. Sonia, good afternoon.

MIKE WELSH: Hi, Mike, how are you?

MIKE WELSH: Is that two books?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Yes, that's two, I've actually got a third book, but yes, that's three books all up.

MIKE WELSH: Have you? Now, direct selling is one of the ways these people are looking the recession in the face, and saying nick off?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Dead right, dead right, there's many every-day Australians out there turning to the direct selling industry, because it offers a certain opportunity that other sort of money-making ventures can't offer.

MIKE WELSH: Now tell me, generally direct selling is a pretty tough row to hoe?

SONIA WILLIAMS: To be honest, Mike, I think it's any type of - if you're looking to start any type of business, whether it be selling stuff on e-bay, or whether it be selling stuff at a flea market, it's still all the same, you're still in the business of selling, and that's - you know, it doesn't matter what you do, if you want to make money in this life, everything's tough, and...

MIKE WELSH: Yes, but you've got to refine it, I can understand you putting your stall up at the flea markets and that sort of thing, but direct selling often conjures up an idea of ringing people and trying to badger them into buying something at an inappropriate time, or letter-boxing people...

SONIA WILLIAMS: Yes, I think that's more your telemarketing sales, and it's so removed from that. I mean the people that I interviewed for direct selling, they were having a ball, hosting parties, and really enjoying the social aspects of getting out there, particularly the mums, who are at home and...

MIKE WELSH: So is that the party plan aspect of it?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Yes, as well as the network marketing side of it, which is the more one-on-one interviews, so there's very little getting on the phone and badgering people, cold calling and those sorts of things, that's definitely not the industry.

MIKE WELSH: Are these the type of people who would make it anyway, or are they forcing themselves into territories that they're unfamiliar with, and uncomfortable with, but they do it anyway?

SONIA WILLIAMS: No, I think with all the people that I interviewed for the book, the one common denominator between the ones that were successful and the ones that sort of failed, was the fact they knew why they went in, they understood very clearly why they'd entered the industry.

For some, it was paying for the private education, others, paying off the credit card, and for others it was just simply the annual holiday. So they understood very, very clearly why they had started their business.

MIKE WELSH: Now you're obviously successful with the books, what else have you had success at?

SONIA WILLIAMS: In terms of...

MIKE WELSH: Making a buck? Turning a buck?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Yes, basically book-keeping, so I have my own book-keeping business, yes.

MIKE WELSH: So give me a range of the things that people have gone into, because they've literally been forced to do it, haven't they?

SONIA WILLIAMS: No, I don't think anyone's hand is forced, you have an option...

MIKE WELSH: Well you know what I mean, when times are a little bit tough, you have to begin to think...

SONIA WILLIAMS: Oh, I see what you mean, Mike.

MIKE WELSH: ...in a more broader sense, rather than going - when things are good, you can pick and choose your jobs, can't you?

SONIA WILLIAMS: True, true, yes indeed, indeed. Yes, well I mean the choice I think that they do have is there's a wide range of direct selling companies out there to choose from, who sell a host of products, from nutritional supplements to bed linen and things like that.

MIKE WELSH: All right, so - but where do they start? They're listening now, thinking, well I'm prepared to give it a go, but I need a platform, or a base...

SONIA WILLIAMS: Give it a go, yes, that's dead right. Look, the first thing I would suggest, and you know, I wouldn't be a sales person if I didn't say get the book, but do your research, don't just go and sign up with the first direct selling company that you see.

There's a couple of ingredients to success, and one of those is, firstly you've got to feel passionate about wanting to do this, and you also have to be 100 per cent passionate about the product. If you're not passionate about the product you represent, you're not going to do any good anyway, so you've truly got to believe in what you're doing.

So those are the first two keys, where I say research, and then find a company that you're truly happy and comfortable with, and work out their remuneration plan, work out how they remunerate their distributors, and what do you do in order to climb the ladder, and to make the most of that opportunity?

MIKE WELSH: So give it a go?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Exactly.

MIKE WELSH: Give it a go. Thanks, Sonia.

SONIA WILLIAMS: No worries, Mike.

MIKE WELSH: Sonia Williams, you've probably heard of Sonia, she does a fair bit on TV occasionally, but a couple of books, Give It A Go, and Show Mummy The Money, and suggesting in these times when you can't have a choice of jobs, that wasn't too long ago, was it, where you might need to pick something and go hard, and hang onto it.