

**Station:** SKY BUSINESS NEWS      **Date:** 18/06/2009  
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**Item:** INTERVIEW WITH SONIA WILLIAMS ABOUT THE WAYS WOMEN IN PARTICULAR ARE SUPPLEMENTING INCOME THROUGH DIRECT SELLING.  
INTERVIEWEES: SONIA WILLIAMS, AUTHOR

COMPERE 1: Well tonight we are also looking at the direct selling industry, which is on the up and up as women in particular look to supplement the family income and find a flexible way to make money.

COMPERE 2: Sonia Williams is the author of Give It A Go, which looks at how to successfully build a direct selling business from home. And business channel reporter Emily [indistinct] spoke with her earlier.

SONIA WILLIAMS: How I came across the direct selling industry was through research in terms of, it's the only industry that actually provides someone the opportunity to start their own business, selling quality products, with very little start-up capital.

Generally, to start a business yourself, takes an enormous amount of capital. And there's a lot of other pressures to worry about - marketing and so forth - and so, the direct selling industry came to the forefront of my research as being an opportunity where people can actually work from home. Or, if mums are struggling to get back into the workforce, then this is an ideal opportunity to be able to make money.

REPORTER: There are many direct selling offers out there; a lot of them appear too good to be true, which I guess has caused people to become quite suspicious of the industry. What would you say to that?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Well what I would say is that their suspicions can be allayed by the fact that we actually have regulatory bodies here in place now. Back in the seventies these bodies did not exist. But nowadays we have things like the ACCC. We also have the Fair Trading Commission. And the Direct Selling Association here in Australia, which has 77 members affiliated with it that run by a code of ethics; is actually headed up by John Holloway, a former consumer commissioner who set up the New South Wales Consumer Commission.

So, it's well regulated. That's not to say it doesn't happen. But the industry is much more well regulated now.

REPORTER: And how do you actually separate the too good to be true deals from the ones where you can actually build a good business?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Well, basically what I would say is, if it sounds too good to be true it generally is.

So, what I would be saying is, do your research into the company, work out first of all how you're remunerated, because that's the main thing here, you want to know how you're going to make the money and how you're going to grow your business.

More reputable businesses perhaps are affiliated with the Direct Selling Association, so that's another giveaway sign.

But, like I said, if it sounds too good to be true, then generally it is. But there are a lot of very good quality companies out there - like **USANA** and say Lorraine Lea Linen - who sell quality products.

So that's another thing - do they sell a quality product that you can actually resell yourself?

REPORTER: And what skills do you think are necessary to direct sell successfully?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Attitude. Absolutely Emily. Attitude would have to be the foremost thing. In my research for the women who were very successful in direct selling, it was their attitude - they wanted to succeed.

Now, whether it was because they couldn't return to work, and this was the only means to actually make money, or whether it was that they couldn't find a job with our current economic climate the way it is, the lack of employment, or, perhaps they wanted to put their children into private education, or perhaps they wanted the annual holiday.

But there was a real reason for them wanting to succeed in the industry.

REPORTER: And what kind of hurdles do you have to overcome?

SONIA WILLIAMS: I think the fear of rejection. I think people take the rejection personally.

So when someone says, would you like to host a party, and the friend says no, they take that personally. When in actual fact you've got to go a little deeper and perhaps that friend is saying no because you haven't communicated the offer thoroughly, or, they just don't have the time.

And so you've got to sort of put the rejection in a box; understand it; but not take it personally on the chin.

REPORTER: Now I guess this is a bit of a general question - but what kind of money can you expect to be making via direct selling?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Well that is entirely up to you and your effort. And that's one of the beauties of this industry; is the remuneration is reciprocal to your effort. So if one day you wake up and you don't feel like working too hard that month, then you'll be remunerated accordingly. But if you wake up with a real bee in your bonnet, you want to make a lot of money, you will put in that effort that you're rewarded.

So you can make anything from, you know, 20,000 to replacing a full-time career's salary. So, it is entirely on that person; dependent on their attitude.

REPORTER: And what are some of the more reputable companies that allow you to direct sell their products?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Yeah, well, for starters there would be - the ones that come to my forefront in my research, would be **USANA** - they sell nutritional supplements. And that's great, because people regenerate with, that's a product that you use over and over again. And, so people would reorder. So, that one is an easy way of making sales.

Then there is Lorraine Lea Linen. They're another great company that sell quality manchester and linen and furnishings and things like that. Now they do it in a party plan arrangement, which means there's a social aspect to it. So if you're actually like a mum at home and you're stuck and you don't have that social network of people, that's a great avenue, with party plan, to actually get out there and talk to other fellow mums. And, the social side of it, you're being paid for it at the same time.

REPORTER: Do you have any words of caution for someone looking to get into the industry?

SONIA WILLIAMS: Besides the fact that, be passionate about the product. Don't; don't enter into this because you simply want to make a lot of money. That's not to say you won't, but what I am trying to convey to people is you must be passionate about selling the product. So pick a direct selling company where you really believe in the product. Because there's no point in trying to sell something that you truly don't believe in, or don't genuinely like. People see right through that.

So that would be my main pitfall - people seem to think it's a licence to print money, but it's not. You certainly can make a lot of money, but, it's generally because people are passionate about the product, know why they want to get into the business, know why they want to make the extra money.

REPORTER: And in terms of direct selling offers, what are some of the key things to look out for?

SONIA WILLIAMS: The remuneration structure would be one of the top things. You want to find out how you're actually remunerated, and what are the key triggers in the plan that will create you extra money?

So, for example, with some of the network marketing companies, you can sell products that are replenished, so you go onto an auto-ship program, so you don't even have to call the customer again, it just continually sells itself through an auto-ship program. But you receive a commission for that. So, every time someone replenishes, commission is received.

So, you want to look for products that continually replenish themselves, so you can make that, what's called passive income.