



# Make More Money by Working From Home

## Direct Sales Can Increase Your At-Home Business Income

By TORY JOHNSON

Sept. 20, 2007 —

Not long ago we featured a segment on starting a direct-sales business to make money from home. The response on the "Good Morning America" message boards and through e-mail proved that many of you were eager to tap into this opportunity, while others were already doing it and looking for ways to grow their businesses.

According to the Direct Selling Association, last year there were more than 15 million direct-sales representatives in this country, which is an increase of more than a million people over the previous year. Many of those people are content earning the median income of \$2,500 a year, while others want to generate that figure per month.

One woman I met, Jeanne Wildman, a Longaberger direct seller, says she went from making about \$200 a month to generating 10 times that much: a whopping \$2,000 a month. Almost 20 percent of all direct sellers are now making more than \$20,000 a year, so we know it is indeed possible to reach any financial goal that you set for yourself assuming you're ready to put in the work.

**Do something daily.** I received e-mails from more than 100 women who are in the \$20,000-a-year bracket and each of them say they've reached that milestone because they contribute to their business daily.

They don't just dream about making money, they take action every single day to make that money. It could be contacting customers about re-orders. It may be networking and socializing outside of their homes where they always talk about their business. For some it's as simple as meeting someone new at the hair salon and passing out their business cards. Just about everyone says they're constantly focused on planning future parties because the primary sales forum is getting friends to host parties, where people are invited to socialize and shop. Bottom line: Work isn't just on their minds, it's also in their actions.

This follows the direction once offered by Mary Kay Ash who would motivate her sales force to maintain written lists of the six most important things to do each day. The focus then was on achieving daily accomplishments, just as it is today.

**Form a team.** Many women who are making in excess of \$2,000 a month have found that they're so passionate about direct sales, they want to form teams of other direct-sales representatives. These women become team leaders and they recruit friends to become independent sales reps who report in under them. This means they've now taken on two roles: They continue to sell, and they also motivate and lead their team. By managing a team,

you make commission on the sales of your recruits.

Yet, it's not a walk in the park: As a leader, you're now doing your own sales, worrying about your own customers and you're also motivating your team to achieve their sales goals.

In many ways, this mirrors the traditional work force: Every manager knows that his or her direct reports have different motivators. Some people work hard to get a promotion. Some perform just to keep their jobs. Others work hard to make more money. In direct sales, people get into it for different reasons: to save for the holidays, to earn a vacation, to pay for home repairs or to socialize. A great team leader recognizes that she'll have to know what motivates her team and she has to work to meet their needs. It's not just about signing people up to make more commission.

**Bridging the gap.** For some people, a desire to work at home may just be a temporary need, especially if they are taking care of children or an older parent, but they plan to return to the office one day.

Direct sales can be an ideal way to bridge the gap in employment. Starting a direct-selling business and forming a team not only means good money, but it builds invaluable leadership skills that many people can leverage into corporate careers. This is a way for anyone who wants to be at home to keep their hand in making money and building professional skills. This can make it easier to re-enter the work force later if desired.

It's all about how you spin it. Building a customer base by selling cosmetics or gourmet food where you consistently raise the bar on your financial goals is something that any employer can relate to. Direct sales is also a smart way to maintain contact with a personal and professional network.

**Outgoing personality, drive, motivation.** Of course direct sales isn't for everyone. For somebody who is shy and introverted and prefers to work alone as opposed to having to get out there and hustle, direct sales is not the right opportunity. If you're not comfortable getting out there and pushing your business, it's very difficult to be successful. You must really want to have the drive, personality and motivation to make it work.

Select the company that's ideal for you. Consider the type of product sold, compensation model and whether or not you want a long-established name (Longaberger, Tastefully Simple, Avon or Mary Kay, for example) or a new entrant to the market (Luxe Jewels, Private Quarters or Baby Crazy, for example).

Tory Johnson is the workplace contributor on "GMA" and the CEO of Women for Hire. Connect with her at [www.womenforhire.com](http://www.womenforhire.com).

Copyright © 2009 ABC News Internet Ventures