

## PUBLIC DISPLAY OF DETERMINATION

## KATHERINE ROTHMAN

**When Katherine Rothman was working with bands as a booking agent in her late teens, she never imagined that one day her company, KMR Communications would be voted one of the fifty top public relations firms in the country. Kathy has managed to find a niche market where her PR skills stand out amongst her competitors. In business for just five years, Kathy is one of the brightest names in public relations having been named to the National Registers Who's Who list of executives for 2002-2004.**



### Can you give the readers a quick snapshot of your company?

KMR formed about five years ago specializing in public relations for beauty, health, fitness, plastic surgeons, dermatologists, hair salons, day spas, make-up and beauty or health clinics and anything that falls into that realm.

### What was scariest thing about branching out on your own?

What was so scary for me was that I was working for someone else and making a good living. I was basically running someone else's business. It was extremely scary, I was making this money at a young age, and I was worried that I would never recoup that amount of money. Also, starting your own business at 28, being a female blonde didn't command authority like a 65-year-old man. That was tough, the median age of my clientele initially was a 50-year-old man, and here was a 28-year-old woman learning and trying to command respect from clients.

### How did you go about commanding respect?

Basically, if you don't feel it, fake it. Keep telling yourself, I am confident, I know what I am doing, I know what I am saying is correct and I deserve to be in the position that I am in.

### Being your own boss sounds pretty rosy, what's the worst thing about it?

I look at my business as a baby. I nurture it and watch it grow. It is really rewarding five years later to see what has evolved. It is tremendously rewarding. People think that being your own boss is going to be a free ride, but it's not easy.

### What is the most stressful thing about being the boss?

You're not just responsible for your livelihood, but the livelihood of everyone who works for you. I am proud to say that I have never had to let anyone go because I could not pay his or her salary.

### In your estimation, what is your company's greatest success?

We've had a lot of success, but one example is Dr. Bruce Nadler, who is a plastic surgeon. He's been

a client for five years and he is now one of the most quoted names in plastic surgery in the country. He has been on the cover of the *New York Times Style* magazine, on *MTV: True Life, I'm a Plastic Surgeon*, on *The View*, and in *Vogue* magazine. He's been everywhere, and has said to me many times that the PR campaign pays for itself.

### You're very active with different charities. Tell us about one of your favorites?

I pick one or two causes every year, a charity to do pro-bono work for or do PR for at a reduced rate. Most recently KMR did an event for the Little Baby Face Foundation, which is an organization that helps children with birth defects get reconstructive surgery. I did PR for an event and raised \$100,000 in one night. Because of that event, a little boy is getting a new ear and his hearing restored so he can hear for the first time in his life.

### If you had to tell someone what the most important thing to remember when starting his or her own business, what would it be?

Be nice to everyone, everywhere you go. People think to network you have to go to one of these networking parties. You can network anywhere, talk to people in your elevator, at cocktail parties. You have to tell everyone everywhere you go that you are starting your own business. Let people know you are out there.

### In more practical terms, what can people do on their own if they have an idea for a business?

Make a press kit and a biography of yourself. Take the press kit and send it out to editors at appropriate magazines. Throw a cocktail party and invite those editors who may be interested in your product. Purchase media lists from a place like Burrells – call these people and let them know you are out there. There are many ways and means even if you can't afford to spend a lot of money. Try bartering services, look at your network of friends and what talents they may have.

A lot of people don't think creatively. They just go out there on a wing and prayer without having fully researched the market or where there is a niche. They don't do their homework and invest money without seeking any advice.

### Does owning your own company take a huge toll on your personal life?

In life you have to have balance. I have tons of friends, a boyfriend, a dog; I go to functions at night, play tennis. I don't feel like my life is compromised in any way. My father gave me a good piece of advice once: "When you come home from work, leave your problems at the office, you don't bring them home with you." You have to do your best to try and put them aside.