

October 23, 2016 - IDEAS START WHEN YOU DO!

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Some of my work over the years has been teaching and illustrating the principles of VMP Display as it applies to point of purchase. But more often than not, the smaller, independent retailer has to come up with practical ideas and "How to..." for their seasonal window and feature displays. This week's feature article

http://www.todaysdisplays.ca/assets/One_Display_Three_Themes1986.pdf

shows a very simple idea, that's going to take you from Fall into Christmas.

People who have worked with me used to ask me, "Where do you get all your ideas from?" I couldn't answer that question for years and people assumed it was just because I was "born" with an imagination. Part of that was true because I was raised in India where we had to be very resourceful and creative with what we had.

But I discovered the answer to that question in my studio working on a project, which I had never done before. I put ideas and possibilities on a sketch pad first for this custom POP unit. I purchased the materials and began. About a quarter of the way into the first attempt, I suddenly realized there was a much easier and better way to do it. I almost didn't put aside the first attempt because of the time I had already invested and because it felt like I would be 'wasting' materials.

However, I allowed those materials to be part of my 'learning curve' and began over and then it hit me. **IDEAS START WHEN YOU DO!** I remember saying to myself, "I have to let my audiences know that it's OK to

give yourself permission to start over when a good idea comes along."

This was played out as I was doing some in-house corporate training for a group of reps and we had given them an assignment in the wholesale showroom. We divided them into pairs and gave each of them an empty shelf, a store to role play they were merchandising, and a time or year, or theme. They had a limited time to do their display.

I watched along with my client and sure enough they ran quick to gather all the items from the showroom and based on my principles just taught, they began to build their displays. We watched as they would go away, and then stop and make changes, and go a little more and go back and make some changes.

When the call was made for them to STOP, some of them had their displays completed, but some had made so many changes that in the end they didn't have the shelf merchandised and some items hadn't found a 'home'.

I was given the task to evaluate each display and comment on how many of the methods and rules had been followed, and get feed back on each one from the others. When I came to the ones that weren't complete, I simply asked, "What happened?" And they said, "Well, we started to build this display and when we added this mug, we realized we could have a totally different theme if we just did this. And then when we began to do that we also thought you could do this with the Teddy Bear and you called time when we were half way through."

It was a good lesson and I then gave them one of my secrets! Because **IDEAS START WHEN YOU DO**, you may experience a sudden rush of so many ideas you will feel overwhelmed and confused. Stop. Go get a scratch pad and jot down all the ideas for future when you feel uninspired with limited time. But stick to your first idea and follow through.

The difference is that what I was doing in my studio was designing a prototype for a permanent fixture. What they were doing was creating a display that would be shopped and ready for change within a couple of days. When something is more temporary give it your best shot. Step back and keep going. Don't obsess and don't waste time. But keep the energy you got from coming up with so many ideas and feel the abundance of them for the future.

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