

(submitted by K.K. (Paramedic) - Pennsylvania)

To Whom It May Concern:

My wife and I started our Amway Business in October of 1996. Being a one-income family, I was looking for a way to improve our lifestyle. My sponsor showed us an opportunity to become financially free in 3 - 5 years. We could be making \$2 - 3,000 a month in 6 - 12 months. I wasn't sure what it was all about, but after seeing the Profiles of Success, I know I wanted to become free. I was told that if we just followed the Plan, and put 12 - 15 hours a week into our business, we could become free. The Plan, which was stressed over and over, again was Tapes, Books, Functions and showing the plan to others. The SA-4400 also showed how we could build a very profitable business. I was told that I could not succeed unless I helped people in my organization (down line) succeed. Being a Paramedic, I always enjoy helping people. I was also told that my upline would always be looking out for my best interest, because the success depended upon me being successful.

We started out quickly, having a couple of meetings and attending several "Open Meeting", we had an organization growing right from the start. To increase our success, we were told to start purchasing tapes and books that would give us more knowledge to build the business. We would purchase tapes each week, and as new books came out, we would buy them also, and just like our up line did for us, we promoted to our organization how great these tools were and how they could also grow quickly if they had these tools in their hands also. Another way to get the "Big Picture" was to attend "all of the Functions" that we qualified for. We started out by going to Saturday meetings, which would start around 1:00pm and end sometimes after midnight. As true business leaders in training, we attended these meetings faithfully. Even if it meant missing out on a social activity with friends and family. We were told over and over again, when others criticize what we were doing, we would need to remember that they were part of the 95% group, or the losers. They didn't pay our bills, or they would not be walking the beaches of the world with us. Then came January - Dream Weekend. This a must function, if we were going to become free. I am not sure why, but we purchased our way there with a credit card, in fact, we went to all of the major functions on credit cards. We were told we needed to be there because we were leaders, and leaders attended all of the functions. We wanted to set a good example for our group. At these major functions we were told again and again how normal every day people made hundreds of thousands of dollars in the Amway Business. We were told we were selling hope, not soap. And if we just stayed plugged in and followed the Yeager/Harteis plan, we too could be walking the beaches with the Diamonds. Our upline kept track of who in our group was going and who wasn't, and if we didn't have tickets, someone would call us and convince us how much we needed to be there (I called it "getting the squeeze").

Then there was purchasing our own products "from our business." My wife would buy items from Amway, even though it would cost us more because she was taught to be loyal to her business. "99% loyalty is 100% disloyalty." If this wasn't enough, on several occasions we would buy a major item, so we could reach the next pin level. When we reached 4,000PV, we purchased over 1,500, just to get to the next level. This was called "stretching." Even after being out of the business for almost 2 years, we still have some products.

After being in the business for 2 years and traveling multiple thousands of miles, we found ourselves about \$8 - \$10,000 in debt. As instructed, the little money we did make we would roll over into the business. We got to the point where we realized that we were losing more money than we would ever make, and then our sponsor sat me down, and breaking Rule #1, told me that the money in Amway was not in selling the products or getting people in to sell, but in selling the tools. He may as well have stuck a knife in my back. All of our hopes and dreams of becoming free were gone. For this, I thank him dearly. He was and still is one of the greatest men I have ever met.

I hope by writing this experience, I will have helped others to keep from making the same mistake we did.

Thanks.
KK