

Lois Sonstegard



An extremely successful woman of many skills, Lois Sonstegard has aspired to greatness in an array of entrepreneurial business categories. Through a series of serendipitous events, Sonstegard magically launched a unique new business enterprise that she really never dreamed of in her early career. Today, she is respected as 'THE Upstyle Hair Design Resource'.

Lois Sonstegard was born in the USA, yet she ventured to Japan with her parents at the young age of three —experiencing her third birthday while aboard a ship. Her parents were missionaries in Japan after World War Two, for thirty years. Japan became home as she lived and studied until the end of her first year of university, becoming fluent in Japanese. She returned to the United States at the age of nineteen where she completed her undergraduate education. Sonstegard's early career dreams led her to a very specialized PhD in Hospital Management and Finance as well as marketing and finance MBA's. At first she was a noted specialist in women's healthcare and high risk obstetrics, having written three books and published numerous articles. With a never-ending drive to succeed, ongoing education and pure enthusiasm in hand, Sonstegard ran services for women and children. Sonstegard eventually moved out of the hospital arena and started her own home textile business manufacturing bed and bath items. Devin Lane Collections became a nationally respected fine home furnishings company, based in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

The textile business was very demanding, while working with some of the top retailers and department stores across the USA. When working with the textile fabrics, Sonstegard noticed the amount of assorted scraps that started to collect. Instead of tossing these fabric scraps into the trash, she saved them in hopes to use them for another future project. One day, Sonstegard was carrying too many bundles, boxes and fabric from a meeting with a department store client. With the help of a business associate and at the spur of that moment, she used a scrap piece of plastic as a makeshift handle to help control what she was carrying. At that exact moment, a beautiful woman with long hair strolled by her. Sonstegard instantly knew that her scrap fabric and materials could be used for fashionable hair ties.

Although there was never any use of the original fabric scrap concepts for Whirl-a-Style, Lois Sonstegard still relies on that same creative resourcefulness and entrepreneurial spirit to create other exciting hairstyling tools, ornaments, jewelry and hair accessory products. Today, Whirl-a-Style is successfully positioned to give young girls and women of all ages across the globe the ability to create fun and fashionable hairstyles in minutes, with their complete line of hair design products. She then took her new hairstyling tool to the next level, by creating a series of hair design and style accessories!

Sonstegard describes her personal career success in ownership and management of Whirl-a-Style by emphasizing respect and trust. Sonstegard notes, "I believe in my people. I believe that you must create the opportunity for success with the key people in any company. Give them the right tools and the freedom to creatively do their jobs. You must personally educate them, guide their progress and watch them succeed. Give them room for their own entrepreneurial spirit to develop. We all tend to grow into our jobs and our career skills that need to be achieved, while mastering success for ourselves. Our motivating source is to work hard, yet have fun together!"

To keep herself motivated, educated and up on all the latest hair fashion design trends, Sonstegard attends many national and international trade shows. "I travel across the globe every year. I know that it is vitally important to see how people in other cultures and places are doing things. We work with top hair designers and fashion photographers at professional photography sessions here in the United States. The beauty, fashion and salon markets are different than other markets. We are catering to help young girls and women establish positive images with a confident level of self esteem. I spend much of my time flipping through magazines, media kits and other information to see how other fashion forward companies around the world are advertising and communicating their messages," notes Sonstegard.

Through Sonstegard's many successful business and life encounters, she continues to think about the values that special role models have bestowed in her. While attending college, Sonstegard met a wonderful dreamer or creative 'imagineur' -- named Barbara Bishop. Bishop was able to show Sonstegard how to visualize something and then create it! She believes that if you can dream it, you can do it! This lifestyle and business strategy has proven to be successful in her international Whirl-a-Style business. Sonstegard is also extremely persnickety about the many fine details required to succeed with her business strategies. While working in the women and children's hospital, Sonstegard came to know Dr. Schneider who had no room for error as he worked with many high risk pregnancies. "Dr. Schneider taught me how to assess a situation and to organize my priorities. This has been one of the most valuable lessons in my life," notes Sonstegard.

Today, Lois Sonstegard is both a dreamer and a realist, always creating and capturing creative new ideas. Whether or not Sonstegard's ultimate business success is the result of a very fortunate accident or her distinctively different entrepreneurial spirit, she has accomplished quite the success story. By hard work, micro-management, investing in key players, teamwork, use of expert external resources and a lot of creativity, Sonstegard has turned a small fabric project into a fashionable upstyle dream come true. Sonstegard's future plan with Whirl-a-Style is to continue mastering many diverse and creative upstyle looks for women across the globe. Her mission is to teach others how to work with the Whirl-a-Style tools. Sonstegard plans to help keep Whirl-a-Style as the ultimate 'Upstyle Hair Design Resource!'

