

Inspired Interiors

Lorraine Greaney

Owner - East Greenbush Window Covering & Home Interiors

Success Magazine: When did you become interested in interior design?

Lorraine Greaney: I found the Interior Design program at Sage Evenings/JCA when I returned there for advanced courses toward my nursing degree. That was my “aha” moment. I knew then that this would be my new direction in life.

SM: You started your company in 1987 as a small custom decorating studio. What were your goals for the business at that time?

LG: My goals at that time were certainly modest. I was venturing not only into a new profession but running my own business, both of which were new to me, along with juggling a husband and two small children. My focus was building my clientele and making sure I had the best resources available to service my clients.

SM: How did you evolve into full interior design and custom window treatments?

LG: I actually started my business as a full service interior decorating company and I loved doing the whole room—carpet, paint, artwork, accessories, and window treatments. As the recession struck, I had to look at how I was doing business and how best to stay profitable. That led me in the direction of specializing in window coverings and expanding into the commercial marketplace. The best decision I made at that time was to become a New York State Certified Woman Owned Business.

SM: What is your sole focus now?

LG: The company has come full circle. I opened a showroom last year offering my residential clients furniture, artwork, accessories, floral arrangements, and consultation services for color and room planning. My staff has grown throughout the years as well, allowing me to continue to focus on the commercial window coverings and estimating aspect of the business while still serving our residential clients in all aspects of home decoration.

SM: You also offer whole room design. What does this entail?

LG: This is when a client calls and is undecided on whether their whole room needs to be re-done or if perhaps some of the existing pieces of furniture, rug, or accessories can be utilized in creating a new look that will refresh the client's entire room.

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SM: Where do you get your inspiration for your designs?

LG: I am inspired every day—by the beauty in nature and, of course, by my clients. Together we join our thoughts and ideas and always come up with wonderful new creative concepts.

SM: What specific challenges have you faced as a woman in business?

LG: Earlier in my career, being a business owner, mother, wife, and trying to do justice to all was probably my biggest challenge. The challenge of trying to identify the real priorities that bring success, happiness, and balance is pretty difficult too.

SM: What makes East Greenbush Window Covering & Home Interiors unique in the industry?

LG: I think we are unique because we are so accessible—our showroom and library are open to the public weekdays 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., Saturdays 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., and other times by appointment. We have everything here from paint swatches to furniture, so we can assist our clients in creating the rooms they are dreaming of.

SM: What are you doing to get through this recession? How has your business been affected by the current economy?

LG: Specific challenges in this economy include even more focus on the bottom line of each project, getting the company name out, spending more time networking, getting the opportunity to bid on commercial projects, and funding for larger projects. On the residential side we stay in touch with our clients, offer added value and service, remain creative and enthusiastic on our clients behalf so they love their project outcome, continue to advertise, be forward thinking, and keep a positive attitude. I am still very optimistic about the future and have recently seen good signs that business is on the rise.

SM: You are involved in many community organizations. Why is this important to you?

LG: Even a small contribution or sponsorship can make a difference and that's why I care and try to participate. Each year we support the Rensselaer Boys & Girls Club, Capital City Rescue Mission, and the Regional Food Bank to name a few. This year we are also sponsoring a team for the East Greenbush Girls Softball League.

SM: What is your hope for the future of your company?

LG: I would like to see the showroom grow and expand to include even more furniture, lamps, and artwork. I think there is a need here (in Rensselaer County) for our home interiors division—it has broad appeal and interest. People love to make their homes beautiful and inviting.

