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TECH TOOLS

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Getting down to business

by
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THE NEILL CORPORATION INSPIRED OWNERS AT THE ANNUAL SERIOUS BUSINESS CONFERENCE IN NEW ORLEANS.



Debra Neill and Edwin Neill III open the 10th annual Serious Business conference.

Sharing Secrets

This year's theme, "Law of Attraction," focused on the idea that people can deliberately create the life they desire by directing their emotions, feelings and thoughts to the kind of life they want to live. The conference featured leading professionals from across the country, including **John Assaraf** and **James Ray**, who are best known for their work with *The Secret*, their best-selling book and film.

Debra Neill, CEO of Neill Corporation, and **Carol Augusto**, vice president of Serious Business and Neill Quality College, who both organized the event, invited Assaraf and Ray to be a part of the conference after they saw the film, *The Secret*. "I got *The Secret* video a few weeks after last year's Serious Business," said Neill. "When I watched the video I recognized a couple of the teachers as people I knew. I called one of my associates and got connected."

Assaraf and Ray introduced the practices and theories of *The Secret*, and also discussed ways to help individuals develop their own personal and entrepreneurial growth.

Leading from Within

Other guest speakers included chief learning officer of Beauty Basics **Jeanine O'Neill-Blackwell** and hair industry legend **Robert Lobetta**, who gave attendees valuable insight on creative inspiration and how they achieved their own success, and leadership coach for Yahoo!,

Earlier this summer, top salon and spa professionals gathered in New Orleans for both business and pleasure. More than 1,000 industry professionals met at the Neill Corporation's 10th annual Serious Business conference, held June 10-11, to learn more about developing their most powerful tool for success—themselves. That's not all that happened at Serious Business 2007. This year, the conference produced by Neill Corporation included a benefit that raised thousands of dollars to aid Hurricane Katrina victims.

continued



(1) Debra Neill (middle) of Neill Corporation with Terry Blackwell and Jeanine O'Neill Blackwell of Beauty Basics, which co-owns and operates the Aveda Institutes with Neill. (2) Rebecca Carr of Origina SalonSpa accepts the award for Highest Earth Month Contribution 2006 from Donna Dixon and Sandra Cashe of Neill Corporation. (3) The audience at the Serious Business conference. (4) John Assaraf, teacher of *The Secret*.



Tim Sanders, also the author of *The Likeability Factor*, Sanders discussed the L-factor as a means of improving the chances of one's success, health and happiness, and provided exercises for attendees to help them assess their own likeability. Sanders also gave tips on e-mail etiquette to help others increase their own likeability in the workplace.

From the Field

The conference also included breakout sessions that introduced beauty professionals who are successful in client research, customer service and marketing. This year's breakout sessions included **Dr. Teena Cahill**, **Eric Manuel** of *Strategies*, **Jamie Carroll** of Jamie Carroll Hair and Beauty, **Inez Gray** of Seattle's *Habitude Salon and Spa*, and **Allen Ruiz** and **Evelyn Jackson** of the *Jackson Ruiz Salon Spa* in Austin,

Texas. The sessions emphasized the importance of community connections, social responsibility and resilience and balance as major factors in one's achievements.

Attendees were able to put social responsibility into practice at the event. A benefit for Hairdressers Unlocking Hope, an effort by **Vidal Sassoon** and behindthechair.com to help build homes in the Gulf Coast, was also part of the agenda. The event raised more than \$20,000 for Habitat for Humanity with its dance and silent auction.

"I want Serious Business attendees to be both inspired and motivated," said Debra Neill of the event. "I want them to remember why they chose this career path and be motivated to do something. We provide a balance of inspiration and how to implement what they've learned when they get back to the salon." ■