

POWER PLAYERS

SPOTLIGHT



- **NAME:** Suzanne Meyer
- **TITLE:** President and founder
- **FIRM NAME:** The Welcome Committee Inc.
- **YEARS IN BUSINESS:** Almost 10
- **AGE:** 47
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Introducing Lake Norman businesses to newcomers

Spotlight on Suzanne Meyer, president and founder, The Welcome Committee Inc.

Question: Give us a brief synopsis of your business.

Answer: Welcome Committee is a personal-greeting service that welcomes newcomers and new homebuyers to the community and a grass-roots marketing service for local businesses and professionals. Newcomers have no shopping loyalties when they relocate. Our "word-of-mouth" introductions pair them up with products and services they need at a critical time in their decision-making process. We help businesses and newcomers get acquainted with one another to initiate ties that create long-term relationships.

Q: What is your business philosophy?

A: To acquaint new homeowners with Lake Norman through a personal introduction with civic, medical and retail merchants in the community, and to influence their buying decisions by encouraging them to shop local with the coupons and gift offers provided during our in-home visit.

Q: What is your definition of success?

A: Getting paid to do what I enjoy while promoting my community.

Q: What are you most proud of?

A: Starting the Welcome Committee from scratch and growing it from one market into seven, which enables us to help more business owners increase their customer base throughout the four-county Lake Norman region.

A: Having to terminate one of my employees, and informing an advertising sponsor that we will discontinue representing them.

Q: What do you think was most important in preparing to run a business?

A: Knowledge, experience and good organizational skills are a must. Thoroughly researching the industry and speaking with other business owners and entrepreneurs helped in learning what to expect, the highs and the lows of business ownership.

Q: What advice would you give other entrepreneurs and business owners?

A: To run a successful business, you have to have successful people on your team. Make sure everyone has a clear understanding of the company mission, business philosophy and stick to your game plan to avoid drifting off course. Having a business plan in place will help everyone stay focused on their goals. Be enthusiastic, supportive, accessible and create a fun work environment for your employees. The business owner is the leader, and should be polished and professional. You are setting the precedent not only for your staff, but for your industry as well. If you set the bar high, your employees will perform to your expectations.

Q: What is your favorite book?

A: *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie. It's an oldie but goodie and still relevant.

region.

Q: What is the best thing about your job/company?

A: I'm a people person and I thrive when I am around people. My job affords me that privilege. Every day, I get to meet new and established business owners in the community and learn about the challenges they face and help them strategize an effective marketing plan.

Q: What is the toughest decision you have had to make?

Q: If you weren't doing what you are doing, what else would you want to do?

A: I want Condoleezza Rice's job ... U.S. Secretary of State.

Q: What do you want others to know about entrepreneurs and small-business owners?

A: Successful business owners and entrepreneurs make their job look easy and glamorous, but it takes a lot of planning, long hours, discipline, dedication, focus and determination to get to that point.

Power Players are profiles of successful entrepreneurs and business owners running companies that fuel the local economy. To make recommendations for the column, contact Research Coordinator Cynthia Holland at 704-377-6221 ext. 206 or e-mail her at cynthia.holland@mecktimes.com