



Ron Fowler

Born in Pensacola, Florida, the oldest of four children, I always felt the responsibility to be an example for my younger siblings. Most of the time, I met this challenge but I am sure there were times when I failed. Realizing the importance of education, and to set a good example, I graduated from the University of West Florida in 1971 with a degree in accounting.

I immediately began my career as a buyer for a major department store chain in Florida and rose quickly to the position of Merchandise Manager. I left that job in 1976 to become a salesman for the Arrow Shirt Company. During my ten year career with Arrow, I rose to the level of Vice President and National Sales Manager over youth wear.

Having the entrepreneurial bug, I left Arrow in 1988 and started my own apparel company based in Woodstock, GA. The Company grew and at one time employed 220 employees in four sewing plants we operated in South Georgia. In 1991, for competitive reasons, the plants were closed in Georgia and we began importing our products from Central America. During the 1990's, we expanded our importing to include goods from Pakistan, India and the Gulf Region. To expand our capabilities, the Company purchased a screen printing shop in 2000. We expanded and we very successful until the devastation that hit America on September 11, 2001. The 18 months following that event were very difficult days for the business (and me personally). At one point in 2002 I considered closing the doors. Needless to say sleepless nights and worry were a part of my regular routine as I contemplated the options at hand.

Determined not to fail, I took an aggressive approach to the business. Looking at everything in our operation from A to Z, we went from almost closing our doors in 2002, to a record breaking year in 2003 of 14 million in sales. Our client list included almost every major department store, young men's specialty store, and discount chain in the United States (including the largest retailer in the world). In 2006, an unsolicited offer came to purchase my Company. The deal was too good to refuse, so I sold the Company and went into semi-retirement.

Operating my own business gave me tremendous experience in the daily challenges of managing and running a business; in both good times and bad! The principles of maximizing profit, managing cash and managing people, have been firmly developed in me. Some would say that makes me a jack of all trades but a master of none. I would say I am person who pays attention to the details and therein lies the devil. He is always in the details.

I have been happily married to my wife for 37 years and we have one daughter who is a senior in college. We reside in Woodstock, Georgia.