

# Women IN BUSINESS



**RACHELLE  
MINOZA**

C&R Mercantile, Rachelle M., Soul M.

# HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR LINE OF WORK AND WHAT GOT *you* STARTED?

"I have been in my line of work for eight years. We have owned eight businesses and currently have five and three companies. I started out working in corporate fashion with **Ralph Lauren**. I worked for him for ten years and was part of the team that ran the women's business for the Ralph/Nordstrom act division. I think that's why you see what you see in this store. I was trained by the best visual merchandiser in the country who started visual merchandising and everything I learned, I learned through him.

And I had an amazing female mentor that changed my life. She taught me a lot of things that had I not been invested in I would not be here today because of her. And now she comes and shops in my stores once a year from California. It's really emotional when she comes in, I tear up just thinking about it. She taught me to be the women I am today."

# WHAT WOULD YOU TELL *you* YOUNGER SELF?

"To have confidence. It's not until later in life that most women find the confidence and the ability to be who we are. And I think it's true in fashion. You know how you see old women wearing the bright colors and the stripes? When we were younger, we would never do that. It's because they have confidence. They don't care. I care but I have to have confidence in my ability and my team to do the job and I wish I would have found it a whole lot earlier but through mentors, I was able to gain that confidence a little bit quicker.

I would also say be uniquely you. That's my motto and the motor for Rachele M. it's our tagline for everything and if I can encourage my team to be uniquely you, they bring out the best in themselves for me as well."

# WHAT PIECE OF PROFESSIONAL ADVICE HAS HELPED YOU IN *your* CAREER?

"Don't assume. You hear a lot of things on the street. Find the answers for yourself, ask a lot of questions, dig deep. Nobody is going to fight for your business but you and this is your dream and not someone else's. Hold true and fast to that. I would also say don't overreact. You're going to have so many things thrown at you every single day. Two days ago, my heat went out in one store, a door quit working in another, and two people called in sick. My job is to find a positive solution for everything, and I just have to take a deep breath and be the outlet for my team and be the best solution. And it will come, you just have to take your time and breathe.

The best professional advice I could give is: Believe in your people. Because if you believe in them and you let them, be who they are, they are going to run the finish line for you every single time."

# WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE FUTURE women LEADERS?

"I think that really goes back to COVID. Keep shifting, keep pivoting, don't stay stagnant or stale. When COVID happened, I had a formula, I knew how to work, and everything was fine and easy. We never as a country saw our businesses shut down and it taught me to shift and pivot quickly.

And by that I didn't mean build an online store like everybody else, we already had that, we already had social media. What we learned how to do was bring in different products of different values to go in different directions that we've never gone before. And trust in the process, make mistakes, and learn from them because they are only going to make you better."

# WHO IN SEASIDE THAT IS A WOMAN IN BUSINESS INSPIRES *you?*

"My mentor. Her name is **Kathy Kelly**. She taught me to fight for myself and to believe in myself. You always have a little dream in your pocket and if you don't fight for that nobody else is going to. And she really taught me that I have it within myself to be the best leader possible and I can create, and I have the power to create a really amazing working environment for my team. They are my family, and these women fight for me every single day because I give them the power and the confidence to build their business and their dreams through my business.

She did that for me and I don't think as a business owner if I had that I'd be open to taking a jewelry designer who builds her own business on the side to work in my store to build her business and mine. Have the confidence in each of us."