

Sarah Berkeley

555 Main Street > Virginia Beach, Virginia 23451
757-555-1212 > Sarah@RedBoutique.com

Adornment is never anything
except a reflection of the heart.
- Coco Chanel

Women's Contemporary Buyer

Accomplished retail professional with demonstrated ability to recognize and capitalize on trends in design and in business. Prompted by love of fashion to continually seek, and find, the next Big Thing. Known for strengthening the organization, directly and through leadership, to realize success in competitive markets. Intimately familiar with all aspects of retail.

- > Brand Relationships
 - > Vendor Negotiations
 - > Merchandising
 - > Employee Management
 - > Assortment Plans
 - > Creative Marketing
 - > Co-op Advertising
 - > Revenue Growth
 - > Department Strategies
 - > Pricing Protocol
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Professional Experience

Owner/Founder **Red Boutique** **Virginia Beach, VA** **1997 - Present**
Trailblazer in providing full-scale, high-end women's clothing boutique at fitness club.

- > Incorporated upscale women's fashion boutique into business plan of Belle Workout.
- > Successfully duplicated business model in other upscale fitness locations.
- > Developed brand. Designed store layout, logo and ad campaigns.
- > Kept inventory fresh for captive audience with unique sourcing and creative merchandising.
- > Recognized value of retail division built for organization, and purchased three women's fashion outlets from Abs R Us when they downsized their retail division. Continued to gross \$20,000 - \$40,000 per month at each location.
- > Innovated ahead of competition by regularly shopping their stores.

Retail Consultant **Abs R Us** **DC Metro Area and Virginia Beach** **2003 - Present**
Set up and maintained infrastructure for fitness-related retail kiosks retained by organization when corporate divested itself of the more comprehensive women's fashion stores.

- > Realized savings for organization by negotiating with vendors on bulk orders, replacing the more costly method of each location ordering individually.
- > Acted as vendor liaison. Selected and sourced products. Negotiated contracts.
- > Improved ability of individual locations to replenish stock in convenient and timely manner by setting up intra-organizational e-commerce site where stores placed orders.
- > Stimulated sales by disseminating product information to personnel on floor.

Director of Retail **Abs R Us** **DC Metro Area and Virginia Beach** **2000 - 2003**
Grew retail operations from sale of a few fitness items to offering full line of cutting-edge women's clothing and accessories. Managed set-up, purchasing and individual store performance at 16 locations.

- > Created new revenue stream for organization. As first Director of Retail, introduced concept of ancillary income through sales of contemporary women's fashion.
- > Tested market by setting up trunk shows at fitness locations.
- > Kept stores supplied with innovative lines through established and newly formed vendor relationships.
- > Improved communications and data-gathering efficiency by having store computers networked. Used network to monitor up-to-the-minute sales statistics and communicate with management staff.
- > Ensured goals of retail division were in line with organizational goals by communicating frequently with general manager and other division heads, especially attending and contributing to weekly planning meetings.
- > Fostered healthy functioning of each location by travelling to meet weekly with store managers.
- > Oversaw 15 - 20 employees, designed planograms and wrote training manual and merchandising protocol.
- > Generated \$20,000 - \$40,000 revenue per store, per month at top performing locations. Total working and selling area was only 350 - 500 square feet. Set challenging sales goals which were usually exceeded.
- > Controlled inventory using CamData Retail Star.

Owner/Founder **Belle Workout** **Virginia Beach, VA** **1985 - 1997**
Launched aerobics studio in 800 square foot space. Grew to full-service fitness club of 12,000 square feet with 60 employees grossing approximately \$1.5M per year.

- > Recognized need for full-service, boutique-style fitness provider.
- > Negotiated initial and subsequent leasing deals with owner after real estate agent stated, "He'll never allow an aerobics studio on his property."
- > Catered to needs of regular member traffic by opening women's fashion boutique in club.
- > Continued developing unique club-located fashion boutique concept after selling Belle Workout to Bally's executives.

Willing to Travel