



## **Aronica of The Advance Group shares where she was ten years ago, and where she is headed today**

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Company: The Advance Group

Professionally, where were you ten years ago and where are you now?

Ten years ago I was ending my career in the banking industry and beginning my career in the facilities/real estate world. I am currently the director of business development for The Advance Group, a full service moving, storage and installation company. I have managed many relocation projects during the last ten years including the consolidation of three offices of the Huntington Chamber into one corporate office to the relocation of the esteemed law firm of Meyer, Suozzi, English and Klein. I feel confident that I will continue to grow in industry knowledge and expertise and that I am affiliated with the perfect company that will support and nurture my growth.

What single event, professional or personal, has most significantly impacted your career?

The single most significant event that impacted my career was getting into outside sales. With the changes that occurred due to 9/11, I was forced to seek a new career path and was advised by several friends and colleagues that I should consider becoming an outside sales agent. I considered that advice very seriously and that became the catalyst of my first networking experience. With the assistance of a close friend, Jan Guarino, who made an announcement at one of her networking groups, I obtained six interviews one of which was a moving company-the rest is now history. I later joined that very same networking group served as a board member and became a part of several other established networking groups. Networking for new business became the very niche that would establish my career.

What was the best decision that you made in the last year?

The best decision that I made in the last year was accepting the position here at The Advance Group. I receive total support in all my endeavors, my ideas are well received and my decisions are totally respected. With the broad range of expertise, capabilities and resources, I am able to confidently and proudly represent The Advance Group to my clients, networking associates and organizations.

How do you stay ahead of the curve?

I stay ahead of the curve by reinventing myself everyday. I consider a better way of doing things every day. I don't allow the grass to grow under my feet and I try to be open minded to opportunities that present themselves. I am NOT afraid to change and clean up the mess later.

What impact has social networking had on your success?

I have been to my share of networking groups through the years and I am very discerning as to

where I spend my time. I will certainly graciously accept an invitation, but due to time constraints, I need to seriously consider how my time is apportioned. I recently joined the New York Businesswoman's Network "The Divas" and AREW, the Association of Real Estate Women for which I arranged for The Advance Group to donate its' time and resources to move gently used and new clothing and accessories in their annual "Bottomless Closet" event to a location for distribution to underprivileged women.

Who has been the strongest influence on your career and why?

The strongest influence on my career has been Richard Renner. For nearly five years we worked side by side on all types of moving projects ranging from basic estimates to onsite project management. Renner was able to help me conceptualize the logistics and creative thinking involved with planning an effective move. His expertise, knowledge, leadership and manner have been instrumental in my career. If I find myself on a complicated estimate, I pull from the experience and "know how" of Renner.

How has the need to create a more sustainable environment influenced the way you do business?

Here at The Advance Group, we saw the need for a green/sustainable solution to moving the contents of an office. The need for the use of hundreds sometimes thousands of corrugated cartons that in most cases would not be reused seemed like a waste of natural resources. There had to be a better way. We now own ten thousand plastic, reusable "green" crates. These crates are delivered to the customer the week of the move and collected the week after the move. This serves several purposes; firstly it forces the staff to unpack office contents in a timely manner due to the nature of the fact that the "green crates" are on a rental basis, secondly the client is not burdened by the disposal of corrugated cartons after the move and lastly we save countless trees by cutting down on the supply of stock of corrugated cartons that would otherwise be needed.

What obstacles have you overcome to get where you are today?

At the beginning of my career, I basically learned the business on the "street" and made a lot of mistakes. The good news is once I made a mistake, I learned from it and tried my best not to repeat it. Simultaneously, I was also faced with the fact that I was a woman in a male dominated industry. So I fearlessly and proactively participated in opportunities that would enable me to grow in industry knowledge, aligned myself with a person whom I considered to be a friend and mentor and maintained my position as a professional, respectable businesswoman in all circumstances.

What advice would you give to a woman just starting a career in your field?

My advice to a woman starting in this field would be to align yourself with someone who you trust and respect and is willing to share industry knowledge with you and become a coach or mentor. Accept invitations to attend networking meetings either one on one or in groups. In time, you will discern where your time and effort is most productively spent. You will soon develop a core circle of trusted colleagues that will provide support, business opportunities and sometimes lasting friendship.