

MILES MODELS, LLC

Becoming a Successful Model

1. KNOW YOUR MARKET

One of the most important steps to becoming a model is knowing your market. What does this mean? Well, for starters, depending on the area you live in, certain trends and looks are more popular than others. For instance, runway modeling and fashion show modeling are not as widespread as commercial modeling for print occasions like magazines, newspapers and store sales papers. Also knowing your market will help you know what look the agencies around you are looking for. Living in a suburban area, agencies aren't looking for that sleek, ultra-sexy look with overstated hair or makeup like bigger cities are. In fact, the more natural look is actually preferred in suburban areas, while more trendy, sleek looks are wanted in the city. If your look doesn't fit your market, move to an area that does, or consider traveling back and forth to an area that does. Also know whether you're auditioning for a market that advertises petite sizes, plus sizes, certain clothing trends, or for a targeted market like natural living, city trends, cosmetic companies, etc. Research, research, research!

2. FIND A GOOD AGENCY

The best thing you can do for yourself is to find a good agency to work with. Agencies should not ask for money up front, or be sketchy in terms of signing anyone possible, which could mean that they run off with the models' earnings later. Get online and search The Better Business Bureau's website to find a modeling agency you can trust. A good agency should understand your personal needs as a model, lift you up, and never take money from you. They should also never ask you to put yourself in a dangerous or compromising situation.

3. BE AWARE

One of my top tips for becoming a model is to be aware of what you'll face. Know that girls can be cut-throat, the wrong agencies may ask you to sacrifice your morals, integrity or beliefs just to obtain certain photos, and know that it can be a very tiring job. Also be aware that the idea of modeling is not to give you fame, but instead to create a certain wanted look by photographers and companies. You may be asked to cut or dye your hair, wear an outfit you don't like, or spend endless hours traveling to the right photo shoot location just for one shot. You may also be on set for anywhere from 8-12 hours or even more. Know ahead of time that the point of using a model is to create the right photo. Many photographers, agencies and product campaigns put the photo goal ahead of the model's needs.

4. KEEP YOUR VALUES

Many girls who don't intend on compromising their values end up doing so if they don't know ahead of time just what their values are. Don't ever sacrifice yourself to be a model. The modeling world can be laced with drugs, alcohol, sex-trades, rape, greed and more if you get in with the wrong crowd, which is easy to do when you're looking for a quick route to fame and fortune. Never do anything it takes to get to the top. You'll regret it later. Outside of local modeling gigs, most outlets for modeling lead to sketchy, compromising situations. Know your values and stick to your guns! On the other hand, the right agencies will honor your values and can lead you to a great career.

5. GET SOME PRACTICE

Don't expect to walk into a modeling agency, do a few twirls and expect them to sign you. Anywhere from 10-20 people a day walked through the doors unexpectedly asking to meet with the owners of the agency. Agencies are extremely busy and usually have girls fill out paperwork and submit photos for review. They almost never see girls by just walking in. Know this ahead of time and get some practice behind your belt. If you do get called in for a meet and greet, you need to keep your look casual, yet also have a confident walk and not look fake. Practice, practice, practice!

6. GET A GOOD HEADSHOT

When it comes to the modeling industry, you won't get anywhere without a good headshot to get you started. Has someone you know or a photographer take a natural headshot of you. No photo-touching, hardly any makeup, and simple hair should be the top three key points of your photo. I'm serious, girls! Modeling agencies hate Photoshopped pictures, makeup, fancy hairstyles, or overdone looks. They want to see you in the raw to see if you could transform into a variety of looks. Remember, you're pretty just as you are, so let those agencies see you for you! Most importantly, no Glamour Shot photos!

7. KNOW THE ODDS

The modeling industry is one of the hardest careers to achieve and maintain. Most models who haven't been modeling up to age 22 are almost guaranteed they won't make it in the runway industry unless they seek out commercial modeling options, which I'm actually more fond of anyway. You don't need to be a certain size to model, nor do you need to look a certain way. You just need to know what the odds are in the market you're in. If you don't look like a runway model, that's fine! Know the odds of what you face in terms of the area you live, what your look has to offer, and how hard each specific outlet for modeling is, such as commercial or runway.

The most important thing you can do to become a model is to be yourself! Never change who you are on the inside or outside to make someone else happy. Modeling can be a great way to gain self-confidence and can help you make money on the side of a regular day job. Never sacrifice yourself, your values or your self-esteem to do so! These steps will lead you to being a successful and happy model. Have you ever modeled or wanted to?