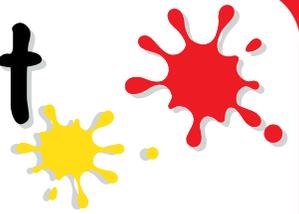


# Paintertainment

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## Apprentices: RISK or REWARD?

by Gretchen Fleener

*This month I'd like to address another hot topic that I see turning up on Facebook over and over: "Should I hire an apprentice, or will they just steal all of my clients?" For what it's worth, here are my two cents on the subject!*

Most solo artists find themselves at some point in need of a fellow artist, whether it's to help them out at a big gig, or take their place when they can't attend one. It is one of those milestone moments in a face painter's business, one that either opens the doors for growth, or sets up boundaries to remain a smaller operation. But is it really worth the risk? Many artists are reluctant to bring on other helpers out of fear that they will stab them in the back, steal their clients and leave them high and dry. While there are plenty, and I mean plenty of horror stories out there of this very thing happening, it is important to remember that the great reward of business growth does not come without some risk. Here are just a few ways to at least reduce that risk, and make room for growth.

### Newbie or Professional?

The first decision you have to make is whether you are going to bring on someone who already has an established career in face painting, or train a total newbie from the ground up. In my experience, hiring professionals who already have an established business has a few pro's. They already know what they're doing, they don't require your time & energy to train, and they understand and appreciate the time and energy YOU put into getting THEM gigs, making them less likely to bite the hand that feeds them. The only con is that they may require higher pay, but then again, you do get what you pay for!

Training someone from the ground up has it's pro's as well. Starting with a blank slate means you can impart all of your preferred methods

and eventually clone yourself. You don't have to pay them as much to start, especially if you are providing materials and training. However, they may be more likely to fly away once their wings spread, if they don't fully appreciate the work you've put into their development.

I personally only hire established, professional artist, and I hire them as independent contractors. They carry their own insurance, they pay their own taxes, and they agree to represent my company while at my gigs. They know and appreciate the work I put into getting them gigs, and they even give me gigs in return! We support each other and help each other grow, and it's a win-win.

More importantly than the experience level though, is that you pre-screen their character and set clear boundaries and expectations. If you're hiring a total newbie, perhaps it is best to start with someone you know and love, your own teenager or a friend. Someone whom you know also has YOUR best interests in mind. Before you give a gig to anybody, make certain you've set clear expectations. For example, *"If you are a loyal friend and artist, you will get work from me for years to come. If you bite the hand that feeds you, our business relationship will end. So we are both clear, here are a few examples of what I mean by 'biting the hand that feeds you:' ...soliciting clients for yourself while at one of my gigs. Handing out your own business cards instead of mine when working at a gig I gave you,"* ...etc. Be clear, be blunt, and include all of this verbiage in every contract regardless! And if they still bite, cut them loose!

### Non-Competes

Some artists make their apprentices sign contracts stating that they are not allowed to start a similar business within a certain radius, or a certain number of years. In my area, non-compete agreements are illegal, and for good reason. If you still want to do this, do your

research and make sure it's legal. Then, don't expect to make many local face painter friends!

Some artists find other good artists in their area to be a threat. I disagree. We have SO many artists in my area, and yes, there are some "bottom feeders" who waaay undercut everyone else. They get those cheap clients who only hire based on price...and they can have those clients as far as I'm concerned. I compete on quality, and am happy to work for the clients who don't bat an eye at my rates, working for half the amount of time but making the same amount of money! There will always be bottom feeders...don't waste your energy concerning yourself with them.

### Create your Competition

Malcolm X once said, *"When 'I' is replaced with 'WE,' even illness becomes wellness."* Instead of fearing your competition, help shape your competition. Whether you train a newbie or hire a pro, the key is to help your fellow artists elevate your industry. Encourage them to charge decent rates and offer the best quality. As my friend, agent, artist & business coach Lori Hurley always says, *"a rising tide lifts all boats!"* Having "competition" who also charges enough and does great work, elevates your community's impression of what face painters do. It raises the public's expectation of artists, which is good for all of us who are able to meet them.

When I see a fellow artist's business grow and thrive, it makes me SO happy. Even moreso if I played a part in it! Share in the joy of other's success...don't live in fear of it. True, you may have a relationship go south. If that happens, let that artist go, but don't let them take your trust in the human race with them. Find someone worthy of your time and keep being a positive light in your industry. What goes around WILL come around! 



# What's News?



## The Glitter Glamper

The Glamper trailer will make her first gig debut on the 4th of July! Follow for updates on our Facebook page @GlitterGlamper!



## Virtual Paint Parties!

Last month's birch tree paint party was a blast! Stay tuned for more virtual parties to come!



## Window Painting

Window painting has been a fun covid pivot! Check out photos and time lapse videos of our latest window paintings on Facebook @paintertainmentdotcom!



# BOMB POP



## June Coupon Code!

# 10% off

All regular priced products!

Use coupon code

**APPRENTICE** at checkout.

May not be combined with any other offers.

**Offer expires 6/30/21**