

Lou Rada Husband of Sales Director Lisa Rada

I'm the first to admit that I wasn't a very supportive husband when Lisa joined Mary Kay in 1996. I'm not quite sure how it even happened to be perfectly honest. Lisa had an undergraduate degree from the University of Wisconsin and a graduate degree from Loyola University. When she told me that she had become an Independent Mary Kay Beauty Consultant I remember saying to her, "What? You want to sell lipstick!?" I had a degree from Northern Illinois University and we both had good jobs and plans for a well-organized future – two good salaries, a house in the suburbs, a couple of kids, etc.

Looking back, I think I understand why I didn't get behind my wife for the first four years that she was in the business. I was intimidated and maybe even a little jealous. She was making more money than I was; she owned her own business; she was getting lots of recognition and making lots of new friends; she had the freedom to work her business where and when she pleased. The lowlight for me was the night Lisa had a recognition dinner at our home and I refused to come out of my room except to get some food.

What caused me to change? That's easy to answer. There were two things that happened. For my birthday in 2000, Lisa planned a surprise party for me in Atlanta, GA, which included a Richard Petty Driving Experience. It was an incredible experience! On the plane ride back to Madison, she asked, "Lou, do you know how I paid for this trip?"

I said, "No."

"It was my Mary Kay money that paid for everything."

That was the first time I had seen Mary Kay earnings pay for something outside of her business.

Later that year I went to Dallas with Lisa to attend Seminar and it was there that I finally got to see the big picture. I was blown away when I saw my wife being recognized on stage for her accomplishments. I met a bunch of great guys and we had a blast together. I began to see Lisa's business as OUR business. It was no different than the bakery that my family brought with them from the Czech Republic. People that know me now have a hard time believing that I wasn't real supportive early in Lisa's career. I'd like to think that I'm the most supportive husband in the company!

If I could offer advice to other men I would suggest three things:

1. Establish an office for your wife and keep the business in that part of the house.
2. Establish office hours, especially if you are a new Sales Director.
3. Dream big! I'd like to retire by age 40 and do some things that I've always dreamed about like racing vintage sports cars and going to culinary school.