

"My Girls" – Exceptional Role Models Making It in the World of Sports

By: Dani Apted Schlottman
President
St. Louis Aces

The St. Louis Aces 2010 season is full of chances to see strong, smart, exceptional female role models like Lindsay Davenport, Venus Williams, Anna Kournikova and Martina Hingis. All have won major championships, all have created businesses off the court and all of them give back to their communities. It would be easy for me to tell you to look no further than these four great women as inspiration at our matches, but I have more than that to offer. I have five young women working for me at the Aces office that I affectionately refer to as "My Girls." They are a real life source of inspiration—because honestly how many of us are going to go out and win Grand Slams and land on the cover of the Sports Illustrated Swimsuit Edition? It would be easy to assume that they are bitchy, competitive, "I just want to marry a pro athlete" jersey chasers, but they're not. They are a group of brilliant, motivated and extremely marketable young women, who I think are great examples of what it takes to not

only make it in the sports industry, but in any business. So if you're looking for ways to empower women in your workforce, your friends or just yourself, here's what it takes.

Know your stuff and more.

"My Girls" watch ESPN Sports Center like most women their age watch E! News. They know their stats on more than just tennis, which gives them immediate leverage when they're out pitching sales. No one can quite believe that they're in the sports business. They quote Caddyshack, Major League and A League of Their Own like it's their job...because it kind of is. Trust me, when you're out trying to get a deal done in a crowded sports bar full of men, knowing a little Caddyshack can really set you apart from the competition. So in your business—be it sports, copy ink or interior design, knowing a little bit about everything in your genre might be what sets you apart from the pack.

Take pride in how you present yourself.

No one feels confident in a boxy,

unisex polo shirt. I tell "My Girls," "if you have to walk across Stadium Court in the middle of a point, you might as well feel confident in your little black (but still appropriate) dress and killer heels." So next time you have a scary client meeting or interview, wear something (appropriate) that makes you feel good about yourself. An unflattering pantsuit is not the way to get every job, even though it might be the safe choice. At a recent tennis event, a very famous athlete's agent commented on the efficiency of "My Girls" saying, "then all of a sudden, there are all of these women in these black dresses, getting it done." I don't know if he was more impressed with the quality of our work or the fact that we did it all looking good and in heels. Either way, it set us apart from any group that he'd ever worked with, in a good way.

Own it.

Each one of "My Girls" knows that this is a family business and that every phone call, e-mail and conversation that they have, at the

end of the day, reflects upon my family. They take ownership of their work, not because I tell them to, but because they want to and they take pride in all the little details. I've seen each one of them stop and pick up a piece of trash, fix a banner and some of them have even jumped in a dumpster to search for a player's missing mouth guard. None of these were listed in their job description or were ever assigned tasks to them those nights, but they knew the job had to get done and that the positive end result would be worth it.

My time with "My Girls" is often short as they're constantly recruited by other companies, so I must be doing something right. I hope that if you come to any of the Aces matches this July 6-22 at Dwight Davis Tennis Center in Forest Park, you not only see world-class tennis but you also take notice of "My Girls" in their little black dresses kicking butt and taking names. I'm just as proud of them as I am of Lindsay, Venus, Anna and Martina.



**ST. LOUIS
ACES**

6300 Clayton Road
St. Louis, MO 63117
(314)647-ACES (2237)
www.stlouisaces.com

