

## Steve Fleissner



- President of Model Graphics & Media
- Hobbies: Two horses that are more pets than beasts of burden
- Personal Hero: Joseph, an Old Testament mentor and great leader
- Management Style: Hands off until you earn hands on

### **How did you get into the converting business?**

My former “stepfather-in-law,” Jim Brown, hired me as a press helper at National Label of Ohio in 1973. I was a teenager and didn't respect fundamental rules, such as promptness. Looking back, if I were my manager, I would have fired myself.

### **What is your key to retaining good employees?**

Pay well, offer better benefits, and allow your top players to play where they like to play.

### **How do you handle a difficult customer?**

The same way we would if it was a family member: Face the fact that you want to stay related, and work together to the end goal. We have proven tough customers are our best resource for referrals.

### **What is the biggest mistake you made, and how did you fix it?**

I bought a small offset print shop without doing enough due diligence. We actually made money one year after continuing to invest in it for four years. We sold it and decided to stick to what we knew.

### **What is the key to growing a business in a bad economy?**

Sell hard in a good economy. A simple key in a bad economy is to be flexible.

### **What advice would you give to someone just starting out?**

Have lots of capital or someone with a good credit rating to enable loans.

### **Are there any management books that have influenced you?**

The Toyota Way by Jeffrey K. Liker. I read the book, took several people from the plant and office to hear the author speak, bought stock in Toyota, and have seen it increase to over 60%. They do it right.

**At a Glance**

Model Graphics & Media

2614 Crescentville Rd.

West Chester, OH 45069

[www.modelgraphicsinc.com](http://www.modelgraphicsinc.com)

1 plant/40 employees

Specialties: High quality flexo and digital labels and narrow web flexible packaging

Copied from [PFFC](#) October 2006 "[Experience Speaks](#)" Article on p.160.