

Breaking The Glass Ceiling: Courtenay Cooper Hall Is Unleashing Her Potential and Disrupting the Media Industry

The journey to reinventing herself into the woman she was meant to be. A better, improved version of her new role in the media industry.

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Women bring such a unique voice and perspective to everything - and that includes the companies they run and the people they manage. Know your voice is powerful, and never hesitate to use it.”

Courtenay Cooper Hall

has been involved in media and publishing for her entire career. Hall graduated from college in 1997 and began at Grey Advertising soon after. Twenty-five years ago things were different in terms of media, advertising, and the power of print. Initially, Hall was attracted to this career path because she loved to see and work on the creation of multi-million dollar ad campaigns for large national and international brands. It was a very creative environment where she also learned the art of client relationships.

[Liana Zavo](#): Thank you so much for doing this with us! Can you share the most interesting story that happened to you

since you began leading your company?

Courtenay Cooper Hall: I just launched my new company, On Staten Island, which is just a few weeks old, so nothing too interesting has happened so far - but I know there is so much to come, and I am very excited to see where it goes. I will share with you, from my previous role as founder and CEO of BELLA Magazine, that every year became more interesting and fun. We started as a hyperlocal health and beauty magazine with a staff of 3 in 2011, to hosting some of the hottest celebrity cover parties in NY & LA, with offices in Soho, and even an appearance on Late Night with Jimmy Fallon.

LZ: None of us are able to achieve success without some help along the way. Is there a particular person who you are grateful towards who helped get you to where you are?

CCH: Yes, for sure, my husband Daniel. He has been my partner in both companies and without him, none of this would have been possible. We met at our first job, at Grey Advertising, we sat next to each other for a year and the rest is history!

LZ: Ok, thank you for that. In your opinion and experience what is currently holding back women from founding companies?

CCH: I think this is such a multi-layered question. Yes, we have come a long way, and agree that there is much farther to go. I think women in general have more on their plate when it comes to balancing their careers and family life. Raising children while launching a company can definitely be overwhelming but also quite rewarding. There is nothing like showing your young daughters what you can do! I also think fear plays a big part - we are all scared of the what-ifs - but if you never try, you'll never succeed. You need to be your own biggest cheerleader - don't let anyone ever dull your sparkle and drive.



Courtenay Cooper Hall Co-Founder & Executive Producer, On Staten Island-The Staten Island Morning Show Founder BELLA Magazine

LZ: What are the “myths” that you would like to dispel about being a founder?

CCH: Unless you are a genius, you'll never be able to start and grow a company to scale. Untrue. Many company founders out there are not prodigies, they are people who have passion! Passion is the key to it all. Being the founder means you will always have to be 100% involved in everything. Definitely untrue. Yes, at first your role will be very important to the direction and development of the company, but in time, when you have surrounded yourself with a great team who also share your vision, you will be able to step away a bit and see what you have created from nothing - it's a pretty amazing feeling!

LZ: Ok super. Here is the main question of our interview. What are your “5 Things I Wish Someone Told Me Before I Started” and why?

CCH: Don't sweat the small stuff. In the end, it rarely matters. I used to get crazy with minor details, things nobody else would notice. Always be nice. It doesn't take any extra effort to be nice. Well maybe sometimes, but it's always worth it in the end. One magazine cover shoot that comes to mind is the one we did of an unnamed diva. It took everything in my power to smile and be nice because she was everything but - in the end, it was worth it because it was one of our most successful covers and cover parties. Don't take it personally. Just because you get A LOT

of no's at first, that doesn't mean they are saying no to you forever. People forget how many doors need to be knocked on before someone answers. This is where commitment and hard work come in. I remember getting so many "why would you launch a print magazine in 2011 - print is dead" comments when I first started out. If I had let the naysayers influence me I would be just another person who thought they may have had a great idea but never did anything with it. Remain humble, with success comes some wonderful benefits. Remember that you were once that person just starting out and always try to help others where you can. I always prided myself on giving people opportunities that they haven't gotten before. Always think bigger. When I started BELLA, just like with my new company, I always thought of my end goal - no matter how unrealistic it may sound at the time. Well, 64 celebrity covers later, countless events and press coverage from PageSix to Entertainment Tonight, my message here would be DREAM BIG, anything is possible!

LZ: Is there a person in the world with whom you would love to have a private breakfast or lunch with, and why?

CCH: I have always been a fan of pop culture, so I guess right at this moment my inner journalist would have to say, Meghan Markle. She is such a divisive yet interesting figure right now in history. She is someone who has single-handedly disrupted and changed the way we look at the British Monarchy. With questions surrounding race, classism, family loyalties, and so much misinformation, it truly begs the question - what is going on here?

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