



Helena Tinner

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www.helentinner.com. Est. 1994

INFORMATION ABOUT THE MODELLING INDUSTRY

ABOUT THE INDUSTRY

Modelling is a wonderful hobby to have and can offer great potential. In addition to being fun, it also provides the chance to meet new people, travel to different locations and earn extra money. However the business is extremely competitive, so models must be prepared to work hard and have the strength of character to take any knock backs. Work can also be sporadic, so expect to start off on a part time basis until you build up your portfolio.

Models today are multi skilled, which means they can work within the areas of adverts, fashion, presenting, promotions, corporate videos and stock shots for photographic brochures. As the industry is changing, clients are typically requesting heather looking people or what is known as 'character models'. These are real people standing in to represent a dentist, builder, nurse, receptionist or bride; anyone you would expect to see in an advert. This contrasts with the notion that all models must be tall and slim. With there being such a wide range of work, more and more people (of all ages and looks) are increasingly becoming involved in the business. For example 'The man from Delmonty' started modelling at 65. His C.V. is extensive and he continues to travel the world working on various high profile campaigns.

WHAT ARE THE MAIN TOOLS OF THE TRADE?

1) A PORTFOLIO

A portfolio should include a wide variety of 12" x 8" photographs that portray a series of different 'looks'. 'Looks' refer to different ways a model can be represented for work e.g. sporty, casual, business like or fun. You should aim to have a least five different looks. This is an adequate amount to get you going and you will not need any more photographs taken for at least six to twelve months (unless your look changes for instance if you dye your hair or alter the style). Advertising agencies will match the look of a model up to a particular campaign. The cost of a portfolio will vary according to the number of photographs or 'looks' you want in it.

Never give an agency your original photographs, as you will only have to pay the photographer for extra reprints. The originals go into your portfolio; instead models use index cards to give away. This is explained below.



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2) PHOTOGRAPHIC INDEX CARDS

Index cards are large 8" x 6" size photographic business cards. All professional models use these, to promote themselves either by leaving them with an agency, at a casting or assignment or sending them directly to clients. Modelling agencies will use these cards to promote their models by posting them to clients, who are interested on seeing how their look matches up to a specific assignment.

3) EXPERIENCE IN INTERVIEW SKILLS, CATWALK MODELLING, POSING FOR THE CAMERA AND HAIR AND MAKEUP

All professional models have experience in the above and at some point you will also need these skills. If you immediately appear more professional at your casting you are more likely to the get the job. First impressions count.

4) HEAD SHEETS

Head sheets are marketing tools that are used by the agencies to find models work. Head shots are sent to new and existing clients regionally and nationally. A client usually will have this pinned next to their next and will use these sheets as a quick reference point to see who is on the agencies book. If you join an agency you may be asked to pay to go onto their head sheet.

5) INTERNET SITES

Internet sites are another marketing tool, used by an agency to expose a model to a worldwide market. A model agency may also ask a new model to pay to join their internet site.

6) SELF PROMOTION

There is no need for a model to rely on just one agency. Send your index cards out to as many agencies as possible. Their details can easily be found via an internet search. And there is no need to rely on an agency completely, use your index cards to visit any company you think may require the services of a model. For example radio stations, advertising, PR and marketing agencies. Plus always carry your index cards with you as you never know who you are going to meet along the way. So give out your card as much as possible. It won't happen if they sit in a box.



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7) A PROFESSIONAL ATTITUDE

All agencies work differently; however they all require their models to have both a professional attitude and the relevant tools of the trade. Always be polite as you never know who is around and watching you at work. Expect to work long hours, in the cold too sometimes, but never complain. Always keep a happy sunny manner. If you do, chances are another model of a similar look will get booked instead of you. Small things always get noticed by professionals. And never be late.

8) REGISTERING WITH A MODEL AGENCY

When registering with any model agency, it is wise to do background research in order to find out their reputation. There are many dishonest agencies around that are simply interested in your money rather than finding you work, so do not hand over any money until you are completely sure who you are dealing with.

HOW MAY AN AGENCY CATCH YOU OUT

I. Offering to produce a portfolio for you.

This is fine, as long as you see the standard of the photographers work first and also find out how much it will cost. Some agencies will charge a phenomenal amount and only provide sub standard results. Others will take the cost of the shoot from your first wage packet, but will overcharge you in the process. Some may claim you need more 'looks' in your portfolio when you don't. If you are not sure about their services, have your portfolio already produced by a photographer you trust.

In certain circumstances a model agency may register a model as a 'fresh face' meaning a model may be put forward for 'unpaid' work. If you need extra looks or more confidence in front of the camera, this can provide valuable experience. Ensure you do get a copy of the photographs though by chasing up the company or the photographer.

II. Offering to produce your index cards

Some agencies will offer to produce your index cards and say they will take the cost out of your first assignment. Before you agree, look at the quality of the card they produce and find out how much they will charge. If you are not sure, produce your own.



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III. Go onto their casting books and internet site

Agencies will charge you for appearing on their casting books and internet site. Their fees can range from £50.00 - £500.00 depending on how much you feature in the books / site e.g. one picture, two pictures etc. Again do your research and be sure you know enough about the agency before you hand over your money.

9) HOW TO FIND OUT THE REPUTATION OF AN AGENCY

To find out the reputation off any agency, try contacting local and regional PR, advertising and promotion agencies and also local magazines to find you who they use. In the process you can also offer your services and send them your index card; killing two birds with one stone. Once you are registered with a reputable agency, speak to other models, as they will tell you of the agencies they are registered with. You can then also approach these agencies too.

10) YOUR OWN GOODIE BOX

Professional models will arrive at an assignment with the necessary tools needed to ensure they are completely ready to be photographed. Any delays cost time. These should include spare makeup, hair accessories including a hair brush, mirror, moisturisers and simple strappy tops in different colours. You can build this up over time, but always come prepared and make sure your nails are clean and tidy and you have no false tan marks on your hands or feet.



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ONWARDS AND UPWARDS.

By following the above you should become successful in the modelling industry. Once up and running a model may expect to earn anything from £30.00 per hour upwards depending on the campaign you are working on.

FINAL NOTE

Helen Tinner can advise and provide you with a professional portfolio, index cards and courses in modelling skills. She has spent many years working within the modelling industry having owned her own agency called 'Shocks Models'. This agency launched the careers of various models including Danielle Lloyd. In addition to this, she has worked for fashion labels including French Connection, Hello Magazine and Harpers Baazer.

Prices for services

- Portfolios start from £150.00, this includes a one hour shoot, time spent in post production ensuring your photographs are print ready and three 12" x 8" photographs. Additional prints are £20.00
- Her courses start from £30.00.
- She will also organise the design and printing of your index card. This starts from £175.00 for 500.

For bookings and enquiries:

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