



**Nick DeMarco**  
CEO, President  
Halston, LLC

Nick has been a prominent leader in the fashion business for over 30 years. He has held senior management positions at a number of industry giants and has been instrumental in the dramatic growth of Pierre Cardin and Halston. His keen sense of market trends and strategy to capitalize on these changes has enabled Nick to consistently lead his organizations to new heights. His experience and expertise is in high demand for speaking engagements. Nick and his wife Anni are very involved with civic and church programs in New York. He has two children, Dawn and Nick Jr. and enjoys golf and working out.

professional

personal

**How do you prioritize your time/values? What are your priorities?**

I think the first thing you have to do is, like anything else, build your house and build it on a very firm foundation. Set your priorities. And don't just verbalize them, set them: God, family, work. If you do that, God will take care of the success you're going to have in work. Don't think that because one day comes about or one pressure comes about or one situation or one job that it's going to change your priorities. Stick to your priorities. What's going to happen eventually is the minute you take your eyes off the Lord, the minute you go your own way, the minute the priority becomes work, family, and then God, you might gain momentary success, but this road that's very narrow, that we travel on - on God's path - you'd be diverted from it. And He's going to have to bring you back to that road and it's a painful detour that you really don't want to make. So if anything, ground yourself with the basics. Get to know who God is through the Bible. There are favorite passages that the Lord will speak into your heart and your mind. Get a hold of those passages. With me it's Proverbs 3:5,6; "Trust in the Lord with all your heart. Lean not on your own understanding. In all your ways, trust in Him and He will make your path straight." If you keep to principles like that, that the Lord has taught you, personally, you won't go wrong. But it's going to be your fortitude and your discipline to do that and not to be distracted by the world. And if you are, pick yourself up, dust yourself off, ask for forgiveness and He'll be there all the time to take you to the next step.

spiritual

**How has God changed your life? How has your choice of faith in God changed your life?**

The paradox of Christianity is you must die to yourself. Today, the truism is you must live for yourself. It's false. When I was riding the crest of the wave and people were looking at me and admiring me because I was here...this Director of Pierre Cardin in those days ... I'm going back to the days of Studio 54 where they used to part the crowds and I would walk in on my own and be one of those privileged individuals ... or so I thought ... to walk into an establishment like that where I can have any woman that I wanted, basically, and had two cars and three homes and nothing can touch me in the eyes of most people. I didn't feel that way. In 1986, when I became a Christian, I asked the Lord to come into my life. I started to just live my life all over again, with the proper perspectives. It wasn't easy because I know there was a road out there that I had to walk through. Four things happened to me ... in a very short period of time ... that brought me to a place where I really knew that the only way I can survive was through a relationship with our Lord. I lost my daughter to the Lord at the age of 18 and that was the most traumatic thing in my life. It's the most traumatic thing that anybody can go through ... that any parent can go through. That was one of the first things. The second thing was that I had an IRS case pending and after 14 years of battling it, I lost. And 14 years worth of penalties were assessed. So everything that I had earned was wiped out. My job ended at Pierre Cardin. It was



almost self-imposed, but it was at the height of the most successful year we ever had. Didn't make any business sense, but didn't have to make business sense. It wasn't the business sense God had me for. So that ended. And basically you had to downsize. I had to sell my possessions, move into a smaller apartment and start all over again. It was a start based on Christ and the principles that He wanted me to pursue, as opposed to the principles that I thought I had already achieved.

### **Can you follow Christ and still have a successful career, family and such?**

People think that if you believe in God and you put your faith in God, that you are abandoning your own goals. It's the reverse. Probably the greatest business book I've read is the Bible. It gives you the wherewithal to be successful and the traits of being successful, besides being ambitious and being ambitious for the right reason. And the qualities that make a successor ... somebody successful; honesty, perseverance, fortitude, intelligence. All of those traits, when they're channeled in the right direction, spell success. When they're channeled in the wrong direction, you wind up at a place where you think you're successful and you're totally empty.

### **How has God /faith changed your perspective on fulfillment, significance and success**

Before I had a personal knowledge of the Lord, I had my fast run at business and then basically was working for a company that was a licensee of a fairly well known brand called Pierre Cardin back in 1975. And it was the introduction of all the designers, worldwide. Then I got a chance to be on a plane with Pierre, a star actually. He was the star of this television show in California by a little known man called Regis Philbin, who did L.A. Live at that time. He invited Cardin on the show to talk about men's fashion. Cardin invited me on the show. After the show was over, he came over to me ... and I was 31-years-old ... and he said, "How would you like to be my Director in America . . . equivalent to a President in America?" I said, "Mr. Cardin, I'm too young." He said, "No, no, no. I like young people. You will be my Director." I could have flown home myself without taking a plane from California to New York. My whole life changed. I thought for the better. But again, God had other plans. He gave me everything that I wanted. The prestige, the materialistic things, even the women ... and I was married at the time ... and the hard thing was I divorced my wife. I had two wonderful kids at the time, which was very difficult. But I thought, because of this quest to gain this in order to get self-recognition and love, that it was worth the sacrifice. Big mistake. Very big mistake. I was there 12 years at Cardin. I got everything I wanted out of the world and I wound up asking for the one thing I always wanted, which was fulfillment and love. And that didn't happen. And so Christ came in my life and I asked Him.