

# 10 Lessons Experienced Shopkeepers Will Re-Learn at Conference

I'd like to remind more-experienced resalers all that they will gain from taking a few days' break from their shops and attending the NARTS Conference.

**1 It's time to re-learn the importance of knowing people.** It really is all about who you know. Sure, you could spend precious time researching a product or a sales strategy or a fresh approach to publicity. But what's more valuable than NARTS buddies who have experience to share? Conference is where you make, and refresh, those friendships.

**2 You'll remember to widen your friendship ring:** Build your circle of acquaintances. Find someone new to introduce yourself to. Then, introduce each new person you meet to at least one other person. Everyone wins!

**3 Expand and widen your field of knowledge:** Ask each new contact what they'd advise or what they think or what they've tried about a topic in a workshop, at a meal, or in casual chats. It's amazing how much you'll learn, even from (*especially* from?) those whose business is younger than yours. Explore the topic together and you both learn.

**4 Focus on optimizing your goals:** Sure, we all want to be "successful." But are you allowing others to define success for you? Learning what you value might open up new vistas. Craft your personal intent to make work a lot more rewarding.

**5 Prepare and participate in giving back:** Before you pack your bags for Conference, prepare what you can offer others. Bring that contact information. Take some photos of that snazzy new department you're so proud of. Tuck those extra postcards, the ones that were such a hit with customers, in your jacket pocket to share.

**6 Learn to find a balance.** Guess this is a silly point, since here you are at your industry Conference rather than spelunking or scuba-diving. But it really is refreshing to find a resale shopkeeper who has a hobby or pastime that might reinvigorate you, too.

**7 Avoid unproductive detours.** Many experienced shopkeepers have traveled down paths that didn't work. Ask others what did and what didn't work. Shopkeepers as experienced as you can tell you why something didn't work, as well as what was an unexpected hit. You may be surprised!

**8 Tap the brains** of those who know precisely where you're coming from. Sure, you can ask the florist down the street or your best friend the artist. But the truly valuable answers come from those who have been down the same road. Ask a single burning question of dozens of resalers and take notes! You've just run your own poll with qualified participants.



—Kate Holmes  
*Too Good to be Threw*

**9 Imitate the right shops:** Zero in on the shops that are successful in the way you want to be. Dissect what they are doing right. Ask about stumbling blocks. If you share goals, demographics and philosophies, such advice is priceless.

**10 Referrals:** From the best advertising specialty to which e-marketing misstep to avoid, heading you towards success is something only another resaler can do. Sure, your husband loves you and your Mom wants to see you succeed (or vice versa) but it takes another hard-working secondhanders to be able to narrow down your choices for you, and tell you why. Meet hundreds of like-minded industry participants at the NARTS Conference.

**I hope you will attend Conference ... where you will enjoy the camaraderie of new friends, new ideas, and friends of long standing and ideas with great traditions behind them.**

**Kate Holmes, author of [Too Good to be Threw, The Complete Operations Manual for Resale & Consignment Shops](#)**, publishes three web sites as well as Facebook and Twitter feeds daily. She estimates that over 20,000 resale shopkeepers have used the Manual to make their businesses stronger and more satisfying. Kate is a two-award NARTS winner, winning the Renee River Award for outstanding service and contributions to the Association and the very first Educational Service Award for significant commitment to enhance and enrich educational opportunities for the membership. She is an honorary Life Member of NARTS.

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