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### Black Fashion World Foundation Career

The 2022 Black Fashion World Foundation Career Day Expo video was hosted by Carla Nelson. During her session, she spoke about how fashion works. Two women entrepreneurs were invited to the screen, Ms. Mikelle Drew, and Ms. Shon Simon. Ms. Drew introduced herself as a Digital Fashion Designer, who has also previously worked as Active Wear Designer. She is currently teaching fashion and technology at her studio, called 3D Design. In addition, Ms. Drew is currently an Adjunct Teacher at the Fashion Institute of Technology and this semester at Jefferson University. Ms. Shon Simon stated that she works as a Wholesale Manufacturer Distributor in California and is soon to move to Dallas Texas. Her company's name will soon be changing to Z Factory. She goes on to state that they are a full vertical Manufacturer Distributor and a Wholesale Distributor.

Ms. Mikelle begins to talk about the role of a designer, who is the interrupter. The host Ms. Nelson said that she believes the designer is the amazing focus and driver of all of this and she then welcomes Ms. Mikelle to offer her viewpoints about the role of concept to design. Ms. Mikelle states what most understudies think and a great many people outsiders, believes that the designer is only a creator. She makes sense that designers are the innovative vehicle, yet they should likewise comprehend and understand what their clients truly care about. Additionally, realize the client well, so she isn't simply designing cool stuff, additionally making things that are appropriate for the client. Remember, to decide whether your client will purchase this, where might your client wear this, and what is your client purchasing this for. Furthermore, try to make sure to be client-focused (concentration) or remember them if their designs are available to be purchased. Simultaneously, remember that each new design you make doesn't mean the client will like the changes. So, you might need to connect with an alternative set of customers, or it may be not associated with the designer's current clients.

Ms. Nelson also asked Ms. Mikelle, is there a distinction for a designer if they are working for a brand? Ms. Mikelle said not actually because the main distinction is that, assuming you are working for a brand, they as of now have established customers. She had designed for Target before, and she understood that the mass market was a different sort since you need to engage a more extensive audience. Ms. Nelson asked with regards to the various classifications in mass showcasing ready-to-wear, or high-end lines, are there various jobs of the designer. Ms. Mikelle said that generally speaking the designers would be during the same thing anyway, you have somewhat more opportunity since you have a greater spending budget. The cost of the materials might be less, yet the fundamental idea is as yet unchanged.

The host, Ms. Nelson reiterates that the designers are the main thrust, in getting the raw materials, the manufacturing, and advertising. Michelle agreed, that designers are, but this is a collaboration, with the fabric sourcing team, and trimming team, working behind the designers who initiate and bring the clothing to life. Mikelle proceeded to say, that it may be equally significant for an independent designer to rely on manufacture. Although she didn't have much

involvement with local manufacturers, when she worked with Target, she had the option to examine inexpensive ways how to manufacture the garment less complicated while making a better profit.

The Host then proceeded to interview a second person, Ms. Shon Simon who is an African American Manufacture who previously worked as a celebrity makeup artist for about fifteen years. Ms. Simon said that she cherished that kind of work, but she also wanted other streams of income, so she had the option to use her creative skill as a designer. So, she then moved to LA to face challenges and by investing fifty thousand dollars in her fashion line. Ms. Simon said that initially she did not understand how everything works but she had twenty styles and patterns, and she was excited to go into production, however the person she was working with was only interested in making money, not the fit of the garment. So, when she put the garments on, they didn't fit properly. She didn't know and she wanted to have a fast start, eventually losing her fifty thousand dollars in unusable garments.

Ms. Simon said that she transformed her disappointments into obsession by looking for a manufacturing tutor who can show her how she veered off track. Through persistence, she advanced in learning about textiles from her tutor. She found out about many types of textiles materials, so well that different textiles specialists came to her for direction. It was at that point she chose to compose a book and open her own manufacturing business. She opened 200 square feet business. She confesses to committing a few errors and successes; however, it was challenging. The host then asks her what is the essential role of the manufacturer and what are the steps involved? Ms. Simon explains that the job of the manufacturer is to produce what the designer makes. There are various types of manufacturers, some just sew, some cut, sew, vertical makers, pattern makers, etc. In addition, new designers need to use vertical manufacturing because it can teach them from the beginning of the process to the end. However, the designer must have a clear vision of what they want to make, whether it is for a new designer or not.

Ms. Simon states that her second book called *The Art of Manufacturing* will be released soon. The book is for new designers, and it includes definitions, and it will walk you through the development process and the ideation process. The book is designed to help people to get through the manufacturing process. Ms. Nelson also then invited Ms. Mikelle, to discuss the marketing of a product. Ms. Mikelle said that a person can have a great product but if no one knows about it then it is nothing. Therefore, a marketing team is important so that the design can reach the customers.

Ms. Andrea Kinch Reynolds spoke to the host about marketing. Ms. Reynolds explains that Marketing is key for getting the word out about a product, whether it be with a model or commercial it is important for a successful purchase. A model should feel comfortable and confident while wearing a garment for a designer. The model's nails should be a nude color, and hair should show off the design, during their photos are being taken, possibly for a magazine. Magazines are nowadays often digital, such as *Essence*, etc. Some designers prefer the models to wear less jewelry, it depends on what the designer wants. Some brands have good PR teams for best representation. Without the designers, there can be no fashion show, no makeup artist, or a hairstylist, because the designer employs these people in this industry. Unless a designer can execute all of these things, it would be hard to market their product because it takes a team effort.

