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Meet the 14 Geniuses Behind Your Favorite Beauty Products

Lauren Levinson | October 12, 2016

Maybe you can't pack a makeup bag without Urban Decay's Primer Potion or imagine the days when you couldn't just pop into Drybar for a blowout. Anastasia Beauty might be your favorite Instagram feed (it has over 10 million followers, after all), and you love watching YouTube celebrities show how to use the latest Tarte, Benefit, and Too Faced launches. Perhaps every time MAC reveals a new collaboration, you set a Google calendar reminder to shop it. And when Jen Atkin created her own hair care line, you were ecstatic because you could finally own the tools to get cool-girl, Kardashian waves at home. These are all cult brands and products, and they achieved that status for a reason: genius strategy mixed with focused, innovative vision. Behind every beauty empire is a talented person with the coveted job of creative director.

Creative directors are very important figures to your beloved brands. At each company, the role means something different. For smaller brands, it could be the founder who also has his or her hand in every project. At larger corporations, it might be the employee who designs the packaging, comes up with the product concepts, or oversees the greater vision of each collection. Some creative directors are industry vets (like Sonia Kashuk), while others are teens with brilliant ideas (Taylor and Ally Frankel of [Nudestix](#)).

Regardless, these are some of the biggest badasses in the biz. They are not afraid to take risks and even fail. To spotlight what they do, we interviewed 14 of them (mostly over email) about everything from their greatest regrets to unusual ways to use top products (bet you never knew dry shampoo can double as deodorant). Many of them had similar advice: use social media to spread your message, and trust your gut! But you should also "be prepared to shed dangerous amounts of blood, sweat, and tears," according to Dineh Mohajer, founder of Hard Candy and Smith & Cult.

Whether you one day dream of being a creative director or just want to learn more from the masterminds who invent the beauty goods you can't live without, we promise everyone can learn something from these boss ladies and gents.

NUDESTIX

Taylor (and her sister Ally) Frankel, Nudestix



Share your career path!

My sister and I were both high school students at the time. Along with our mom, Jenny (founder and president of **Nudestix**), we noticed that the beauty industry talked a lot about perfect and flawless makeup. Our generation is not about that — we want to embrace our uniqueness. Not only that, but today's new generation of beauties would rather sleep in an extra 10 minutes than do their makeup. We took these observations and created Nudestix, which celebrates easy, fast, effortless makeup!

What product have you developed that you are most proud of and why?

Hmm . . . I would probably say our Magnetic Eye Color Pencils. Here's a little insight into our creative process: we want to keep all of our products in pencil form and we focus on multipurpose makeup pencils. Thanks to the precision of a pencil, these eye pencils will be your eye shadow, eye liner, and highlighters. [We ask ourselves], how can we make the application super easy, fast, and effortless without compromising the formula?

Both my sister and I have very different skin types. My sister (Ally) has superoily skin, so whatever eye or face product she wore would rarely last the day. I have very dry and reactive skin. So it was important to create a product that was perfect for all skin types — oily, dry, and mature.

As millennials, we heart our planet. So we made sure that our products are preservative-free, paraben-free, cruelty-free, and preservative-free. To the labs! We set out to create beautiful nude shades in a creamy, long-wearing formula! And the Magnetic eye pencil was born!

NUDESTIX



Taylor (and her sister Ally) Frankel, Nudestix

Which product didn't do as well as you expected? What did you learn from that experience?

Our Skin pencils. We thought this was a supercool concept. Skin care in the form of pencils . . . I mean c'mon! But we think the problem was that it was a little too innovative, and girls were not used to the formula in this application. Our skin pencils are still available, but we thought they would be a bigger hit.

Tell us one unexpected way you use a cult product.

My fave unexpected beauty secret is using our Lip + Cheek Pencils on my eyes! By using the same color on your eyes, cheeks, and lips = monochromatic makeup = the bomb dotcom. You can use it in your eye crease or all over the eyelid. It's dope, trust me!

What is your best advice to someone trying to break into the beauty industry in 2016?

Find your niche. Create a product that is innovative + you feel is missing from the beauty industry! Don't launch a product or brand just to launch something. Be passionate and confident in your vision. Us girls can do anything we put our minds to.

<http://www.popsugar.com/beauty/History-Cult-Makeup-Brands-41661319#photo-41665619>