



Tracy Lynn Kowalski

Vice President, Sales & Marketing Director

Bio-Kleen Products

Tracy Lynn Kowalski is the vice president, sales & marketing director, for Bio-Kleen Products, a manufacturer of RV/ marine/ auto high-performance cleaning products. Finding time to speak with the company president is generally not a problem for her.

After all, she is married to him.

Kowalski connected with Tim Kowalski, the founder/ chemist of the Kalamazoo, Mich.-based Bio-Kleen, through Stag-Parkway. He would exhibit at Stag-Parkway's shows and she worked for the distributor.

"I worked for Stag until around 2010. I started as an inside account manager, then was promoted to category manager, which was pretty significant. That's how I know all of the suppliers: I used to do the marketing program – and I was Tim's category manager."

Over time, the couple's relationship evolved from a professional one to personal, ultimately resulting in their marriage in 2017.

Regarding working with her husband, she says, "Some days are good, some days are great when we're on the same page, and then some days you're like rawrrr," she laughs, making a cat sound.

She is particularly proud of the products the company sells.

"Our brand was biodegradable before it was cool...It's a good feeling to know that you work for a company that cares about the environment, about the end-user getting

the best product possible," Kowalski says. She adds that having the company's Kleen Wash recognized by the RVIA's RV Aftermarket Association as Best New Product of the Year was particularly rewarding.

Kowalski says that while she's been successful, it's still been tough.

"You're not always looked at the same as a woman," she says. "I can walk into a dealership somewhere in the country and Tim will come behind me 30 minutes later and he'll get a whole different conversation."

A native of the Texas Gulf Coast, she's also had to fight the Southern stereotype.

"Sometimes people are loving it, sometimes not. Most times after eight no's, then I get a yes! I just push myself and keep showing up. I try to command people's attention by going above and beyond," she says. "I wear cowboy boots and the whole nine yards. That's who I am – I'm a country girl in this corporate world; I'm blessed to have had this opportunity, coming into Bio-Kleen as regional sales manager, and now I'm VP!"

Kowalski credits the management at Stag-Parkway for her evolution in the industry, saying, "I feel like they almost made me who I am today." She is a firm believer in life skills, saying that while she does have a master's degree in business, "You don't learn half of the stuff that you need until you do hands-on and get real life experiences."

Of female mentors she's had, Kowalski gives credit to Donna Martin, Linda Scott and Val Byrd at NTP-STAG, as well as Tracy Anglemeyer with Furrion, Melissa Revlett with RV Designer and Susan Carpenter with B&B Molders, who also is president the RV Women's Alliance.

As for her advice for other women entering RV industry today, Kowalski says, "Hold your head up high and know your purpose. You've got to make your break and grab life's experiences in the most professional way possible, 'cause nobody else is gonna do it for you. Get yourself a strong support system...you don't have to go it alone."

