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# **How to Become a Commercial Model**

**by Bob Pardue**

## Introduction: Why Commercial Modeling?

Youngsters try to emulate their idols in everything possible. In the glamour world of modeling, enticement is intense and motivates even the most pessimistic individual into doing daring things much beyond the scope of what is experienced in daily life.

Aspiring models often ask the question why commercial modeling? The most beautiful, fashionable, and knowledgeable people seem to appear before the camera. Ads succeed in presenting the exact message to be conveyed to a vast audience simply through acting skills or persona of a model.

### **Not for Everyone**

Some areas of modeling present personalities ideally suited for the platform. Unfortunately, not everyone has the perfect figure to get into fashion modeling or walk the ramp. The solution lies in finding other ways of modeling. What is a commercial model? A real person of any height, size, age, or race can become a commercial model and establish a strong link between the brand, product, and potential customers.

Getting started is not very difficult, and modeling types for commercial work include petite, teen, plus size, mature, and other categories. For example, youngsters would love to know how to become a teenage commercial model and find work in fashion, clothes, friends, relationships and dating, hobbies, and other opportunities of interest to the younger generation.

Similarly, a plus-size model wearing high-fashion garments is likely to inspire other plus-size normal people to adapt a similar style.

### **But why commercial modeling?**

Clients look for the perfect fit to model their products. First impressions do make a considerable difference in impressing a client or trying to register into an agency. How to act during your first model agency interview is a vital skill to be learned as part of preparations before looking for work.

Most newcomers find some areas of work overwhelming and make mistakes. The learning phase allows errors, but it is an advantage to know more about the 5 biggest mistakes beginner commercial models make.

Aspiring candidates need to answer several practical questions before venturing into the competitive world of modeling.

- How to prepare for a model photo session?
- Or What to pack in your model bag?

These are pertinent questions requiring up-to-date answers, which cannot be found everywhere. Experienced agents know exactly what modeling agencies are looking for. New models usually have a tight budget and would definitely like to know how to get photos taken free or more about technicalities like TFP (Time for Prints), TFCD (Time for CD), photographer test shoots, etc.

They look for freelance commercial modeling start up information helping in promoting themselves free of cost. Lastly, models need assurance their career is going to take off.

Learning How to get “in demand” as a model is a vital bit of information likely to help models throughout their modeling careers.

So why commercial modeling? Beginning a career in the vast field ensures candidates with different positives have scope for work and can fulfill their aims and aspirations. Venturing into a competitive opportunity can never get any easier. It is time aspiring candidates prepared well and made the initial move to fit into the industry. Commercial modeling gives them more than an equal opportunity.

## **What Is A Commercial Model?**

What is a commercial model? This is an obvious question, but answers can be varied and often ambiguous in terms of covering minute details of a highly lucrative career option. Aspiring candidates do not have to get into fashion modeling, editorial modeling, appear on the front page of Elle, or catwalk in the fashion capitals of the world.

Commercial models usually start by working for local businesses presenting an audience with a face representing the brand. Some appear in catalogs and strive to model for high-end products catering to a wide audience.

For example, an ideal opportunity for a model living in Washington could be modeling for winter shoes. Photo shoots may be organized in Aspen or other cold areas irrespective of whether a model has ever visited it earlier.

### **What To Expect In The Lucrative Career?**

Work becomes a matter of routine once a candidate is established in commercial modeling. However, like any other business opportunity, models have to fit into a particular category, create a brand for themselves, and then excel in the opportunity presented. Ambition is important and often regulates quantum of work and increases monetary benefits as well.

### **What is a commercial model expected to earn?**

For instance, an established model can demand \$150 per hour and easily make around \$1,000 a day modeling just for local businesses and catalogs.

Scope of work increases when a model is able to travel from one place to another, virtually living out of a suitcase. A fresh face or experience helps in the long run, but learning and excelling in areas where competition is less intense goes a long way in presenting more work and getting paid more.

A plus-size model presenting wedding rings in a catalog can safely model for plus-size projects and appear before a camera as well. These are two different types of assignments, one requiring beautiful, well-shaped fingers while the other requiring a beautiful face.

### **Planning For More Work Works In The Long Run**

Here is an inside tip definite to motivate you and create opportunities for more work. The commercial modeling industry is well aware of limitations existing when newcomers try to find work.

Scouts or agents are constantly on the lookout for a new face or models for weight categories such as body parts modeling. It is obvious aspiring models are not in a position to know such agents personally.

### **So what is a commercial model expected to do?**

The ideal way to make an approach is to identify successful models appearing in interested assignments and then ask them for advice. It helps to approach them through an acquaintance. Being seen in the right places helps agents find you without having to publicize or distribute photographs and other details in areas where they will not be noticed. Making a move at the right time invariably helps get work faster.

A successful ramp show may not seem like the ideal platform to increase visibility, but agents and model managers are constantly looking for models beyond those capable of cat-walking. A commercial model may actually have more opportunities.

## **What Model Type For Commercial Work?**

Models have opportunities to work in different niches depending on their personality and capabilities. It is vital they start by understanding model types for commercial work. For example, a plus-size model will not be appropriate to promote a get-slim product.

Every model selected for a particular niche has a specific role to play catering to a definite audience. Before starting a career in commercial modeling, aspiring models would do well to know how each category functions.

### **How To Approach Plus-Size Commercial Modeling**

Going through magazines and online publications helps understand how plus size models actually function in the industry. If stringent physical requirements applied to traditional fashion modeling were the only criteria, plus-size models would never be approached for work. However, the reality is something totally different.

Plus-size buyers want to understand how fashion clothing actually looks on them. A model of similar size presents them the best opportunity to understand if it would look good on them as well. Aspiring models must therefore understand their strong points and look for work accordingly.

### **Petite Commercial Models Get Quite A Few Opportunities**

If a pedestrian on the street appreciates a beautiful face on a small figure and suggests entry into the modeling world, aspiring petite models can seriously think of finding opportunities. It must be remembered these are realistic views from total strangers.

A similar reaction can therefore be expected from people reading magazines or coming across a beautiful face on a website. Petite models therefore qualify for face and other body part close-up shots. The technique easily hides size and figure of a model enabling creative people to publish ads catering to a much wider audience.

### **Successful Teen Commercial Models Start Early**

Teen commercial modeling is all about taking maximum advantage of tender, flawless skin and slender body to gain easy access into the modeling world. Completely new candidates with minimum knowledge of how the industry functions can get some of the best breaks with the right look and confidence.

Sending photographs and other details to local agencies is the best way to start without a guardian objecting. Once contact is made, legitimate agencies will get in touch and make the right approach to convince adults about the great career opportunity. Some expenditure may have to be incurred such as for photos or composite cards (no upfront fees to the agent – watch these), which is why adults stand guarantee for their wards.

## **Mature Models For Specific Age Groups**

One of the biggest handicaps of a mature commercial model is skin quality. They invariably develop wrinkles and the skin begins to sag over a period of time. However, there is no reason to be discouraged, as the mature age group presents ample opportunities for aspiring models.

Many people in this age group are well settled into permanent jobs and rarely think of diverting into a modeling opportunity. It is an advantage to be exploited by aspiring candidates. The logic remains the same.

People are particular about what they wear or use and venture into the latest fashion wear, if they can experience a good feeling through an ad.

Time and effort taken in understanding model types of commercial work is definitely going to help in the long run. The ideal choice can be considered when the right knowledge is gained.

## **How To Become A Teenage Commercial Model**

Teenagers have the maximum attraction towards what the fashion world has to offer in terms of glamour and excitement. They make up a segment showing maximum interest in the latest fashion magazines.

It is no wonder the prospect of becoming a teenage model is most intense and overwhelming. How to become a teenage commercial model effortlessly is a question lingering at the back of the mind.

If an answer exists teaching youngsters how to find an endless stream of modeling assignments, rub shoulders with some of the most prominent modeling names, and pose for the best fashion photographers, teenagers would definitely not have to think twice before venturing into the competitive modeling world.

### **Teenage Commercial Models Work Just As Hard**

Behind all the glamour, there is some amount of work involved. Teenage commercial models have to spend the same number of hours in a studio giving off their best. There is a difference though. They naturally have more energy and enjoy taking part in new and exciting assignments. Areas where newcomers have to work upon are maintaining regular schedules and discipline.

For instance, teenagers (and some adults) find it difficult to face rejection. Not being selected for a prestigious event requires some amount of discipline and tenacity. Teens do not have the experience to back them, which is why learning how to become a teenage commercial model from experienced models, agents, and talent managers go a long way in simplifying the task ahead of them.

### **Using New Technology While Reaching Out To Prospective Clients**

The Internet has provided a simple way to present one's credentials across to potential clients, irrespective of distance. Teenagers are naturally inclined to learn about recent technology much faster, as they are continuously exposed to it in school. They find it much easier to click head and body shots using computers and then send them across to agencies and potential clients across the Internet.

The faster rate at which the needed information can be accessed has made learning much easier and fun to accomplish. Networking sites like Facebook and Twitter allow people to meet and share common interests. Search features allow teenagers to find the role model they seek to follow. Getting opinions, advice, and real-time answers to difficult questions has become simpler.

### **Healthy Body Brings In More Income**

Unlike any other profession, a career in modeling depends on how well youngsters take care of their bodies. A healthy body can be sustained by avoiding fast food, smoking, drinking, and other lifestyle habits.

Peer groups indulging in these bad habits *must be avoided*. Regular exercise and balanced diet ensure health benefits for a long period. Teenagers can easily find work in the modeling industry as long as skin tonal quality and elasticity does not deteriorate.

Keeping oneself motivated also requires some effort. It becomes easier for newcomers after mingling and learning from successful models. Teenagers have to be accompanied by parents or guardians to photo shoots, agency meetings and other assignments wherever applicable.

Listening to advice is another aspect that needs working on. Learning how to become a teen commercial model is really not that difficult after all. Getting work is sometimes a challenge but rewards come only to those who persist.

## What Should I Do At A Model Agency Interview?

Models are often asked to do assignments they have never been exposed to earlier. It doesn't mean they will not be able to complete it. A natural inclination towards acting definitely helps. Aspiring candidates must be aware getting through the initial selection process qualifies them for modeling assignments.

The very first exercise while enrolling is to learn how to act during your model agency interview. The task may appear simple for talented individuals used to being exposed to vast audiences. Nevertheless, it does not disqualify newcomers without acting experience.

### Prepare Well For The Interview

A good actor rehearses for a scene in different ways. Similarly, aspiring models must make every effort to prepare well before an interview. Preparations include ..

- speaking before a mirror
- trying out different trendy clothes
- exercising to develop a perfect body
- and being aware of the latest fashion trends flashed around online and in magazines.

Perhaps the most important exercise is to be able to put it all together and communicate to a total stranger at the meeting or open call.

Modeling agencies are looking for a definite personality type in a candidate. Questions are oriented towards finding answers that complement required personality traits. Candidates have no idea about the range of questions to be asked.

The ideal way to prepare is to know more about oneself and develop required qualities in a model. For example, an outfit worn at the interview determines fashion consciousness and sense of taste. The first impression is always a lasting impression. The character of model is partly exposed through the outfit.

A vital lesson to learn about how to act during your model agency interview is to act naturally but with a script in mind. A well-rehearsed script includes personal details, physical attributes and measurements, likes, and generally demonstrates a positive, go-getter attitude ideally suited to work in a highly competitive field.

The basic idea of successfully completing an interview is to look like a professional model and convey the same image to the panel. Casual dresses or tight jeans and form-fitting tops work just fine – don't over dress!

Make an effort to complete the outfit with appropriate accessories. For instance, a stylish purse or handbag, matching earrings, and trendy shoes help enhance a model's sense of fashion – a unique personality is what agencies look for.

### **Focus On Your Strong Physical Attributes**

Nearly everyone wants to get into fashion modeling; however, some models may have limited options either due to plus or petite size. It must not deter them from trying out the many different options available.

A face demonstrating moods without much effort is an asset. Candidates must be able to act their way through the different moods at interviews. Instant appeal is registered, if a face is photogenic and can bring out the different moods required in a photo shoot.

### **Hands – Feet – Legs**

You may want to try out assignments in body-parts modeling, if you have flawless, long, slender, and well-shaped fingers and toes, for example. Making the panel notice these strong physical attributes requires a small bit of acting. It is natural to express oneself using hand gestures.

An aspiring model needs to perform the same hand gestures elegantly and discreetly, enough to be noticed and appreciated. How to act during your model agent interview is not difficult when you are prepared to demonstrate you have what it takes to succeed in commercial modeling.

## How Can I Get Amazing Photos?

You have all the credentials to succeed in the world of modeling and go on to bag the first assignment. Your debut as a model is incomplete without knowing how to prepare for a model photo session.

The very first photo shoot may be a bit overwhelming and difficult to handle unless you are aware of some basic but necessary steps to be taken in preparation. These vital tips will help you face the camera with confidence and enthusiasm.

A collection of some of your best head and body shots are usually presented to the client before selection. Even without fully understanding intricacies of photography, you must know initial photographs built up within a portfolio are appreciated by a potential client.

You must now understand what to pack in your model bag. For example, maintaining the same look is possible only if you arrive fresh for the assignment. A professional photographer can build the same look, but maintaining inherent freshness and zest remains the responsibility of a model. The only way to accomplish optimum results is to maintain a healthy and active lifestyle with sufficient sleep to prevent dark circles or other blemishes on the skin.

Photo sessions are meant to cover specific areas of modeling. You may take up assignments dealing with high fashion, glamour, commercial, or as a brand ambassador. It is important to understand the role you play while catering to a definite audience.

For instance, modeling for buyers between 35 to 40 years old would require a certain look appealing to them. Presenting the required look needs preparation. The photographer has a certain look in mind, and you would do well to get in touch and prepare a common platform for completing the assignment.

Know the type of photographs to be clicked and then prepare accordingly. More time may be needed for preparations, so establishing early contact with the photographer is an advantage.

### **Photo Shoot Tools for Models**

Professional tools are needed to regenerate the magic of each look at different occasions. Moving from one assignment to another requires models to change their look. Different hairdos, make up, and even hair color may need alterations.

Most photo shoots are completed with the required wardrobe and make-up equipment at the location. However, models must present themselves to make-up artists with optimum base preparations in place.

Some changes like making over eyebrows may need initial makeover, which can be completed either at home or in a parlor. If a definite hairstyle is approved before a photo shoot, hairspray can be used to maintain the look while traveling to a photo shoot.

It pays to have an extended wardrobe covering different successful styles. You may be recommended for repeat assignments based on success of a particular look. Having a wardrobe covering different aspects of the look will make things easier for the following photo shoot.

Photographers appreciate the effort made by models and will go to great lengths trying to establish the perfect look in return.

Now that you know how to prepare for a model photo session, it is time to impress the photographer with your professional attitude and preparation. Be motivated knowing it takes just one particular look to create a lasting impression on an audience.

## 5 Biggest Mistakes Beginner Commercial Models Make

Modeling is a lucrative career option, but there are many pitfalls to be avoided in order to have a successful entry into the field of modeling. Here are the 5 biggest mistakes beginner commercial models make while trying to gain a foothold.

**One:** Working for popular brands has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, a model appearing in a Coke ad has very little hope of getting an assignment for another soft-drink company like Pepsi as well. Models have to consider this vital aspect of modeling while looking for the first assignment.

A billboard offers maximum exposure outdoors, which should provide models bonuses in the form of incentives. The extra income should make up for lost brand value and less number of lucrative assignments. It is understood the same criteria for selection would be used for both Coke as well as Pepsi, so the initial move for such ads should always be to check out longevity of a contract.

**Two:** Commercial photography is all about creating a particular look for an assignment. A photographer is not qualified to understand exact needs of clients. The model, however, understands exactly what the client needs by gathering reference material from other assignments.

A successful portfolio carries specific commercial photographs, which should be discussed with the photographer before the assignment is completed. The look, poses, make up, lighting and other aspects must be considered as well.

**Three:** Earnings vary as per capability and demand of a model, but there are other important aspects affecting overall earnings. For example, hourly rate in New York City may be more than \$ 250, while a model may earn between \$125 one \$ 150 per hour in Washington City. Total earnings will naturally vary.

Models will find it overwhelming to calculate and program themselves to accept assignments at a particularly rate when they begin their careers. The ideal way to get over this problem is to consult an agent or model manager capable of helping models understand financial intricacies of a highly competitive career field.

**Four:** It is important to get a lucrative assignment, irrespective of whether the agent or agency is based locally or internationally. For instance, a local agency may not get into a contract with a model but may still offer lucrative assignments, while an international agency may insist on a long-term contract to sustain loyalty.

Building up a portfolio for future clients is an important aspect of building brand value. Initial contracts help commercial models make a name for themselves. A lucrative local assignment may act as a stepping stone to international assignments of repute.

**Five:** Fashion models found by scouts have every chance of getting their comp card and photographs completed and paid for in a professional manner. Commercial models, however, many times must be able to complete their own comp card with professional photographs before approaching an agency or client for jobs.

Some agencies are ready to entertain newcomers, but unless there is scope for further assignments, beginner models must make every attempt to seek out as many lucrative assignments as possible.

So these are the 5 biggest mistakes beginner commercial models make when trying to make an impression the very first time they seek an assignment. It is easy to avoid these mistakes with just a little bit of precaution and preparation.

## **Is There Any Such Thing As Free Model Photos?**

Trying to find the right path through initial stages of a modeling career is not the easiest of tasks. There are several requirements to be fulfilled including gathering photographs to submit online, for the portfolio, and composite.

A newcomer may find it difficult to find ways to get photos taken for free by a professional photographer. However, there are avenues such as test shoots, which allow models to get high-quality photographs clicked by professional photographers.

An added incentive is the exposure gained from posing in front of the camera. Several terms are used to define offers made by professional photographers to models including TFCD, TFP, and other forms of photographer test shoots.

### **TFCD Is Commonly Offered To Save Money**

TFCD or Time For CD is commonly used by photographers to compensate a model in exchange for posing before a camera. In return, they offer models professionally-clicked photographs that can be used to build up a portfolio or send across to different agencies.

Photographs are saved onto a CD to avoid costs. A reasonable way of mutually helping each other, it is also a much cheaper process than developing and releasing prints in large quantities.

A photographer gets the required model to pose for specific assignments and gains expertise in a particular niche.

The model, in return, gets a CD full of the latest photographs in sufficient number to help build up a comprehensive portfolio.

### **TFP Offers A Fair Exchange of Time**

TFP or Time For Prints is quite similar to TFCD, except photographs are clicked and converted into prints instead of being saved onto a CD. The photographer and model agree to a fair exchange of time without monetary compensation being considered.

A TFP arrangement is established wherein typically a model builds up a portfolio without paying for it. Photographers hone their skills, build up their portfolios, and learn to work with different models. Similarly, models can try out for billboards, magazines, or body-parts modeling without paying for it. A firm decision is then made on the ideal platform to pursue a career in modeling.

### **Working Under A Model Release**

A model release is often signed by both parties defining terms and conditions under which both the model and photographer work with each other. For instance, the model may ask for a definite number of photographs to complete a comp card or portfolio, while the photographer may ask for specific periods of shooting time to be allotted by the model. A comprehensive

model release form has several components attached to it, so commercial models must be familiar with the legalities involved.

Nevertheless, compensation in the form of free photographs is worth making the effort in learning about how the industry functions. Some knowledge is needed in terms of knowing the size of photographs needed by agencies.

Photographers may offer free options only for self-promotion. Any attempt to make commercial use of them may attract liabilities, with photographers making a claim of profits models make from selling them to potential clients. There are many types of arrangements and no right or wrong way. The biggest point to consider is to make sure both model and photographer understands all the terms clearly before shooting day.

These are some ways to get photos taken for free while learning one of the most practical aspects of modeling.

## What About Freelance Commercial Modeling?

Commercial models have limited budgets when it comes to getting their first few assignments. They build up a portfolio of photographs and present them to different agents and agencies without wasting too much time.

Using freelance commercial modeling start up methods for self-promotion can be a costly proposition without the resources and expertise to communicate with professional entities.

However, commercial models adapt well to self-promotion activities when brand value has to be built in order to promote themselves. These methods are not as difficult as they seem. It just needs some effort and practice before the world knows more about a model.

### Get A Modeling Website Online

A modeling website is ideally suited to draw the attention of a large audience. Teenagers and aspiring models have a natural inclination towards the Internet and networking. It is quite a simple task for them to release a website and publish photos and other information.

There are several free blog platforms allowing people to publish content although these will sometimes be riddled by ads for other products or services. Agencies can be presented with a URL enabling them to download contents and other information related to a portfolio.

With some expertise, aspiring models are able to release specific content to specific agencies. A problem normally associated with self-promotion is local agencies may not be able to offer assignments in a particular niche.

For example, the agency may deal with only mature commercial models. Teenagers will then have to travel to a different location housing agencies dealing with their line of work. They can use video or teleconference to avoid unnecessary travel.

### Networking Sites Offer A Quick Way To Reach Interested Viewers

Making friends and building up a profile on Facebook comes naturally to youngsters. Aspiring models use the platform to spread information about themselves through a network of people. Initial momentum is spread through friends, but then the viral effect takes place with the network bringing in total strangers interested in a related topic.

The rate at which information spreads through a social network is truly phenomenal. Inquiries reach models from unknown sources. Nearly everyone is on Facebook and other networks publishing photographs and sharing interests with one another.

The search feature on such networks allows users to identify the precise audience they are looking for. Probability of professionals like photographers and talent scouts responding to a model, for example, is sometimes very high. The only criterion to be considered is models must make a big splash with their first impressions. Professionally-clicked photographs and vital

information must be presented artistically. They must aim to present a unique look that stands out from the others. (As always, be sure you know who you are talking to online and take a friend or family member to all meetings.)

### **Become Well Known With Acting Skills**

An audience is less likely to forget acting skills of a favorite actor or actress. The lasting impression helps aspiring models reach out to potential clients without much fuss. Professionalism demands models know how to represent a brand or company.

Acting skills are very useful in presenting a more human face to an industry also accepting candidates who probably won't have to speak in front of a camera. Finally, getting in touch with agencies can begin at social events and fashion shows.

Using these freelance commercial modeling start up methods, models can reach out to agents and managers, irrespective of distance.

## **How To Get “In Demand” As A Commercial Model**

Modeling is a glamorous field that allows prospective candidates to scale great heights. Popular ones have the maximum number of assignments in hand, making them more popular as time goes by. They have obviously learned how to get in demand as a model.

Beginners will want to emulate such high-profile supermodels, unforgettable and often adored for the mark they leave behind in the industry. So what does it take to be in such a position?

The answer lies in the fact these models understand how to bring out the best in a product or service by reading the pulse of an audience. However, other factors work to complete the package.

### **Understanding the Target Audience**

Clients select a model based on certain criteria, the most important being able to project best value possible in their brand. A specific message must be conveyed to a knowledgeable audience. It is where a successful model comes in.

The best possible solution lies in understanding exactly what the audience wants and then act out in a manner people are compelled to hold out their credit cards and buy the product without hesitation. Success in getting through to an audience is the vital ingredient creating the “in demand” feeling in a model.

### **Acting Skills Help In Communicating With The Audience**

Understanding strengths and weaknesses help in developing communication skills needed to get through to even a disinterested group of people. For instance, value of a product is best conveyed through the medium of a story.

A 30-second ad requires powerful acting skills which can be developed. Models need to focus on projecting their strengths and make sure negative traits are not visible to the public. Some are excellent orators, so speaking becomes an asset.

A slightly overweight body can be honed back to fitness, so it doesn't remain a weakness. Models have to identify areas increasing their appeal and then work on how to spread it to a large audience.

### **The Right Medium Conveys A Powerful Message**

A photograph has the capability to display a memorable expression or pose that remains deeply entrenched in the minds of people. How does it happen? It is a combination of understanding the medium and then using it in a unique manner with the help of a photographer, in this case.

Another example is a newsletter. It contains text explaining the merits of a product or service to readers. The picture contained within the content must convey the same message being

revealed through the text. A model has to understand written content and then act it out with a single pose within the framework of a picture. It may appear difficult, but successful models repeatedly find a way to get through with the right message.

Learning how to get in demand as a model is always a work in progress. By the time a model gains enough experience to learn the finer aspects of modeling, enhancing positive traits while doing away with negative ones become second nature. If a model is determined to excel in a competitive career, success can follow.

Remember that commercial modeling, just like any other career, takes study, practice, and patience. Yes, some models are discovered walking through the mall or on a visit to New York City but don't count on this chance meeting to begin a career.

Go back and read these chapters again, focusing on your strengths and finding how to overcome weak spots – work everyday toward goals to have a shot at becoming a commercial model. Success to you!

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