

The Winning Edge by

Peter Lunn

As we approach the end of a period of difficult economic times, we ask how will this year be and what lessons have we learned to carry us forward into a more prosperous 2010?

I have enjoyed meeting and working with in excess of 300 of you. We agreed that so many salons needlessly lose precious clients and revenue that could be retained.

So, why do we lose so many? The bottom line is...

“We need to improve and strengthen our management performance.”

That is not to blame others or circumstances but to begin by assessing honestly just how effective we are as managers.

Your 2010 income is generated by the clients loyal to you and the new ones you attract and retain.

To keep clients you must understand what disappoints them versus what are their true aspirations. Many people operate on assumptions as opposed to investigating, analysing and asking what would make the real difference for a client and make their experience extra special.

Everything you do impacts in a positive or negative way.

Remember, we don't know what we don't know! So, how do you know that the service you are delivering is in fact the best it could be?

Progress comes at a cost of time, skill, emotion and finance. You must invest all of these if you are to convert a concept into a profitable reality. In your decision making always question what is the cost and what are the benefits to your business, and focus on the benefits to create a win-win.

To make a significant and measurable difference to your future I suggest you concentrate on making the client consultation procedure in your salon an outstanding and productive experience.

In my view, across the industry, with only a few exceptions, this critical stage in the client journey is, without doubt, the weakest link in the chain. We are only as strong as our weakest link.

For any individual or business to make an immediate and obvious improvement they must firstly identify a weakness and convert this to a strength. I believe that, generally, many people within our

industry lack self belief and the confidence to perform a successful client interview.

Many salons may look different and position themselves at various target markets. However they all have one thing in common and that is the weakest link - 'communicating with the client effectively'. For too long we have placed the learning and training emphasis on skills. A wide range and high standard of skills are essential for success but without the ability to communicate and understand our client, we reduce the value of our skills.

If it was easy, everyone would be doing it!! Change takes a combination of knowledge and effort but I promise you this essential consultation interview technique is within your grasp.

“Will you stay with the crowd or reach out and be first and different for your clients this year?”

Business guru Peter Lunn has worked in the hairdressing industry for over 20 years and runs a number of thought provoking seminars

See page 6 for more details.

