

Your guide to a great holiday season in the salon

The holidays can be a stressful time for salon owners, there's no doubt about that.

We sat down with champion salon coach, Steve Hilliard (@stevehilliardcoaching) to get his tips to help business owners have a successful holiday season without burning out.



Quick fixes

These are changes you can make in your business right away!

CHECK YOUR ATTITUDE

If there is one thing I want all salon owners to remember it's this; you set the tone in your business. If you are having a bad day and you bring that energy into your salon, your team and your customers will feel it too. It's more important than ever in busy times (like the holiday season) to ensure you are setting a good example with the attitude you bring into your business.

RAMP UP YOUR RETAIL

So many salons still struggle with retail sales when it should be an easy way to bolster your business' bottom line. There's lots of theories floating around on selling more retail, but in my experience, it boils down to three main things.

- **Product placement:** Something I see all the time in salons is a beautiful, spotless product display sitting against the wall, far away from clients. How do you expect to ever sell any retail if your clients can't see and touch your products? In my salon, I make it a rule for my team to display various products on their workstations. This way, the products are sitting directly in front of clients for the duration of their appointment where they can easily see and touch them. That leads me to my second point...
- **Educate, don't sell:** One of the biggest barriers to selling more retail comes from your team. Lots of hairdressers I speak to worry that giving their customers the "hard sell" will damage their relationships with clients. What these stylists forget is that their customers look to them to recommend the right products to suit their hair as well as any concerns they might have. By having products close by, your team will be able to bring up retail products in conversation, making closing the sale a piece of cake.
- **Consistency:** Last but not least, consistency is key to everything in your salon. When your team get in the habit of discussing products with every client, it will become second nature.

BOOST YOUR AVERAGE BILL

Rather than madly trying to fill every spare minute in your Appointment Book, focus on boosting the value of each bill. Not only will this help you make more money without any extra staffing costs, it will help you save your sanity.

One effective and easy way to do this is by offering add on treatments to your clients. Bonding and strengthening treatments cost salons a few dollars per application but can seriously boost your average bill without much extra time or effort.

INCENTIVES ARE KEY

Now these tips are all well and good, but unless you have the support of your team, nothing is going to change. One of the best ways I have found to rally the troops and get your team on side is to incentivise them. Rather than rewarding those that do the status quo, set goals for each team member based on last years performance and reward those that improve.

When deciding on incentives, it's important to remember that your team will value things differently. While some may want cash, others may be happier to take home some product or get some extra leave days. It pays to ask each team member what they want.



Steve's tip:

Try running a promotion over the holiday season to encourage your clients to rebook their next two appointments in the new year.

Strategies for the new year

Got some spare time in the new year? Try these tips to make 2020 your best year yet!

DON'T DISCOUNT IN JANUARY

As a salon owner, I know how tempting it can be to run discounts and promotions when you find yourself with an empty appointment book. What I want you to remember is, any discounts you offer in the new year will eat into the profits you worked so hard for!

If you want to ensure your salon is busy into the new year, make sure your team are always offering to rebook clients, especially in the lead up to the holidays.

CULTURAL REVOLUTION

The new year brings with it an opportunity to clean house. Every salon tends to have at least one bad apple. While it can be daunting if they are also a high earner, these people have the potential to impact your entire business.

My advice to you? Start performance managing these people ASAP. Nine times out of ten, they will turn things around and grow into star employees. And if it doesn't work, getting these people to leave will have a huge impact on your business.

PRICE ACCORDINGLY

As an industry, our costs are always increasing, but so many business owners seem to be scared of putting their prices up. I could talk about this all day, but if you and your head stylists find yourself constantly booked out, it's time to raise your prices! I get that this can be a

leap and you may risk alienating your loyal clients, but the truth of the matter is, if you are providing a good service, your customers will accept the price rise.

I recommend taking some time to dig into your numbers to get a better idea of where to adjust your pricing.

(I'm a massive fan of the Performance Summary report in Shortcuts that makes getting info like this a snap.)

ASK FOR HELP

As a salon coach, I help owners and managers take a deep dive into their business and become more profitable.

My book, Do Something Different in Your Salon Today is a guide to empower salon owners to be brave, take a leap and make the changes that will make their business thrive.



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