

BRRING, BRRING

A Wake-Up Call on How to Answer Your Salon Phone.

By Lisa Conway



Nothing screams more about your business than the way you answer the phone. It reveals more than when I walk into your salon and can engage my other senses – sight, smell, touch. On the phone, I have only my hearing to work with, so you need to work harder to impress me. Do you (and your team) know what to say on the phone ... and why?

"Your phone smile is paramount to that welcome. A smiling voice shows that you're engaged, interested and ready to help."

I'm often disappointed hearing salon phones being answered. Why, oh why, would you let the caller feel like they are interrupting you? Take a deep breath, centre yourself, then answer the phone. Your voice will naturally sound calmer and more capable. Show genuine interest, some passion for what you do and compassion for the person on the other end of the line.

Think back to when you first opened your salon. Remember the excitement you felt when the phone rang? Try to connect back into that thrill, because you never know who or what opportunity is ringing.

When was the last time you actually called your salon or had a mystery shopper call? What do you think you'd find if you did?

Perhaps you'd find any Tom, Dick or Harriet answering the call, simply because it seems a better option than letting the phone ring. I believe only those who you've trained to answer the phone should have the privilege. It takes a lot of energy to generate an enquiry only to

have it ruined by poor phone skills.

If they must answer, instruct them to take a message and a contact number so you can return the call later that day. Keep a notepad and pen beside the phone – preferably a notepad printed with fill-in spaces for name, number and time of call.

Even better, train your team how to answer the phone and insist they stick to the standards you prescribe.

You'll need to create an easy-to-understand, non-negotiable list of "always and nevers" such as:

- Never call someone "love".
- Never use the word "yep".
- Always introduce yourself and ask for the caller's first name. Write down their name and use it throughout the conversation. Build a relationship from the start.

Start this list today, and make it crystal clear, so there's no confusion about your expectations.