

TIME WARP

How To Be A Tightwad With Your Salon Time

By Lisa Conway

'I just don't have the time'. How I'd love a day off for every time I've heard this. Yet, it's a ridiculous statement. Everyone, no matter who you are, has the same 24 hours a day. Every day. What you're really saying is: I just can't get my act together.



And that's down to one of two things. Either you say yes more than you should or you underestimate how long things take.

My number one tip is this: be a tightwad with your time – it's a precious and finite resource.

Whichever way you look at it, time is the constant. It is what it is. Depending what you're doing, it may seem to fly or drag but

everyone on the planet has the exact same allocation of time.

If you're like me and plan to live a big life, you need to keep an eagle eye on the clock. It's a skill you can master and the sooner you do, the better. The clock is ticking.

I've always been a busy person; I frighten people with the number of things I get done in a day. I am who I am. I get squillions of things done in a day by being super

conscious of the time.

My mother taught me early on: If you want something done, ask a busy person.

When we're at our busiest and on a roll, we achieve more. We prove this every day in our salons.

How often, on a fully booked day, does a client show up for her appointment a week early? You don't send her away, you



pull together and you get it done. That's what my mother meant: when you're busy, you're in flow and it's not that hard to add one more to the mix. That's how you accomplish more.

American psychologist Dr Alan Zimmerman wrote about time, "You can't buy it, rent it, borrow it, store it, save it, and renew it or multiply it. All you can do is spend it."

In the salon, every time you fluff about and run over by 15 minutes you're spending time you'll never get back. Sure, you can catch up over the next two or three clients if you're clever, but if you keep losing 15 minute slots, not only will you get less done or burn out, you'll gain a reputation for running over.

I often wonder why we don't address time management from the very beginning of training in the hair and beauty industry.

When we start training someone, we rarely give a service time guide. If we do, it's way longer than needed. In reality, we should be giving our learners a clear guide, like a fence around the time a task needs to be completed in. If we did this well, good time keeping would be more the norm.

Instead we just let them go, thinking that the time it takes is the time it takes and that the goal is getting it done perfectly, rather than learning to do it faster. Which explains why I've seen some seniors who are ten years into their careers and still so, so slow.

Here's the kicker – if you take too long, you'll never make any money.

Modern life is fast-paced. Like never before, we're compelled to find speedier ways of delivering services without compromising on quality. If not, we'll trail behind. Imagine the money to be made in a tint that can process in 10 minutes rather than the 30-40 minutes they've taken for the last century.

I suggest that when you start training your team member to do anything – even making a client

cuppa – time them, time yourself and articulate exactly what's expected and achievable. For example, that this needs to be done in four minutes, not fifteen. Give a clear expectation of progress. Explain how long you're allowing now and how long you expect it take once they get the hang of it.

I've asked around and found that the booking time allowed for applying a tint in a salon is anywhere from 15 to 45 minutes. Why the huge difference? Ask yourself: What time are we currently booking? and What can we do to consciously reduce that allocation?

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While I always encourage client conversation during a visit, I also urge being respectful around your client's time. If you touch on all the things you need to address during the service, you won't find yourself at the point of sale spending your valuable time (and theirs) covering the things you missed.

Never underestimate the worth of great support in your salon. It means you can be ultra-efficient and systemised. Never again will you run to the bank for change or switch an EFTPOS roll in the middle of the day.

The secret to salon time management is planning for your day. Try this for starters:

- Set your trolley up with the foils you'll need plus referral cards and loyalty cards.
- Gather all your tools; line them out.
- Map your day by reviewing each client's history (even take notes on how long it took to put her foils in so you can beat it by 5 to 10 minutes next time). Check what they had last time and be prepared when they walk in. Your clients will love you for it, and rave to their friends about how efficient you are.

Learn to plan and manage your time, and each day you'll be looking after more paying clients and getting your full lunch-break without any compromise to top-notch service.

The days of looking in 18 trolley draws for a tail comb are long gone. Your clients expect and deserve more. It's 2016 – time to step up.

For more time-warping tips, email me at lisa@zingcoach.com.au, visit my website, find my video tips on YouTube or read my book *The Naked Salon, an essential guide to time, team and money*. www.zingcoach.com.au