

HOW SMALL THINKING CAN CREATE BIG CHANGES IN YOUR SALON

By Lisa Conway



You don't have to think big and complicated to create significant change in your salon. If you'd gladly take on a few extra clients a week (say ten) you don't need to reinvent the wheel. You just need to be consistent, do your job and impress your clients. One by one.

I'm surprised by how many salons settle for mediocre when the step up to fabulous is within reach. So many of you are recommending an average number of products, suggesting a so-so number of basin services and ending up with mediocre returns.

If you don't have a brimming appointment book and a queue out the door and up the hill, ask yourself this: Why not?

I'm going to give you the solution in plain English. You'll probably be disappointed that it seems so basic, but stay with me. A lot of you think you already do it. You don't. Not properly. Not consistently.

Here's the good oil: Your clients want your undivided attention. They will pay for consistent, expert advice, and for the basics like running on time and quoting upfront

- the things many of you find too hard to manage and relegate to the "too hard basket".

Fact: Salon owners and salon teams very often overlook the things for which clients will pay a premium.

Engaging your clients one at a time is the secret. It's so simple, we blink and miss it. Your clients want you to listen to them. They want you to explain things in language they can understand. They want to feel your genuine enthusiasm. How well does your salon really deliver the basics?

It's a bit like tradies. If you're my electrician or plumber, this is what I want from you (and what I'm willing to pay to get). I want you to do what you say you'll do. If you say you're coming on Wednesday, then come on Wednesday. Give me a time window (within an hour) and call me when you're 15 minutes away. Take off your boots and wash your hands properly (with soap) before you touch my white walls. Clean up after yourself and, when you're done, don't call me "lovie" or tell me what your missus reckons. Do it right and I'll call you next time and I'll tell my friends all about your

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above-average service.

Same goes for the salon chair. Be on time. Call me if you're going to be late. Don't tell me it'll take one and half hours and keep me for three. Quote the job upfront and accurately.

Don't put product in my hair without telling me what it is and why it's right for me. Teach me to look after my hair at home, and make suggestions about what my options are, rather than what they're NOT.

Explain things to me so I get why I need a treatment. Talk less about yourself and more about the reason I came to your salon – my hair.

Spoil me like you mean it. Like you care. Don't make me a coffee then take me to the basin so it's cold before I get to it. Lower the back mirror so I can see properly for more than 10 seconds. Stop telling me what you can't do. Instead, tell me what you can do. Get me excited!

Tell me what I need and why I need it. You're the expert; act like one. It's the best game of connect the dots you'll ever play.

You might think it's difficult to deliver this. Truth bomb: it's very do-able and has enormous potential benefits for you and your clients.

It's simpler than you think to stand out in your industry. Over the years, I've had the pleasure of working with many different stylist. Some super talented (technically speaking) and others who

I call "meat and potato" hairdressers. Nothing wrong with their work but it's not going to win dish of the day on MasterChef.

Yet some of these meat and potato hairdressers have the most amazing client followings. They can make a phone call or three and everyone moves to another day. The loyalty is there and the client/stylist relationship is rock-solid.

Part of the problem is we don't understand what it feels like to be a salon client. Sure, we get our hair done, but usually after hours by our mates. Often, we don't even buy what we sell. I see a scary number of salon owners whose hair looks like they don't give a damn. You should represent your brand every day. Walk the walk and talk the talk.

Somewhere along the journey we lost our way and let "near enough" seep in. You need to start with your own physical appearance. If you or anyone on your team is not ready to have your photo taken at a minute's notice, you are not the real deal.

Once you're all looking the part, focus on connecting to your clients one at a time. Think small: one chair at a time, one prospect at a time, one opportunity at a time.

Hand out your cards (one at a time) to everyone – from the girl who serves you at the bakery to the other mums at school pick up. Remember how lovely it feels when someone takes interest in you. Try saying, "I'd love to get my hands on your hair. It's fantastic hair. I'd love to make an appointment for you to be in my chair one day."

It's that simple. Spruik your talents and your gusto to new prospects, WOW the socks off your existing clients and watch that queue form out your salon door ... and up the hill.

For more salon team wisdom, email me at lisa@zingcoach.com.au, visit my website, find my video tips on YouTube, join Cub ZING or read my latest book *Your Salon Retail: the no-nonsense, no-hype guide to kick-arse retail in your salon business*. www.zingcoach.com