

NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS

Nearby salons - are they any of your business? Should you really be worried about what nearby salons are doing?
Writes Adrienne Varga.



I often hear this question from salon owners who are struggling with their business. The ones doing well don't seem to bother poking their noses into salons up the street. Why is that so? Let me take a deep dive by asking you 7 leading questions.

1. IS IT HELPFUL?

The answer depends on why you're so interested in the competition. Does your interest come from a place of fear, jealousy and worry? Or does it originate in genuine curiosity and wanting to learn how to be better? These are two very different reasons for checking out your local competition. If you're peering through nearby salon doors because you're feeling jealous or threatened, you're wasting your valuable time.

2. WHAT ARE YOU SO WORRIED ABOUT?

What's really bothering you about what others do? An honest answer will pinpoint where you need to focus your attention in your own business. Grab a notebook and write down everything that comes to mind when you think about what other salon owners are doing around you. Now, check your list. Is it realistic for you to do any of these same things?

Can you take the emotion out, step back and see their actions for what they are - simply actions? Once you master seeing things for what they are, you get completely different meanings.

My advice is simple: mind your own business and only look at other businesses for ways to improve yours.

3. IS IT IN YOUR WHEELHOUSE?

The only thing you can manage is you and the way you run your own business. What others do is beyond your control. Trying to undercut them, or damage their image, will hurt you as much as them.

4. DO YOU REALLY WANT TO ATTRACT CLIENTS BASED ON YOUR PRICE POINT?

Undercutting is a sure-fire race to the bottom. Think about the revenue you lose when you discount your services heavily. Do your numbers. After deducting all your costs, are you actually losing on the deal? Do you have a plan in place to engage the new clients attracted by your discount promotion? Or are you just counting on the one-off income boost?

Do you monitor who comes, how they heard about your business, what extra service they had, whether they purchased retail and the total sale value of their visit? Do you re-book those clients for full-priced services?

Yes, promotions can play a great role in growing your business, but they need to come from the right place, be well-planned and carefully monitored for your business to get any ongoing benefit.

Giving stuff away simply to compete with nearby salons is a loser's game. Planning for promotions and being strategic within a measured and thought-out plan for your business is the way of winners.

5. DO YOUR TEAM AND BUSINESS REFLECT HOW YOU ACT?

Be very careful about the messages you send your team when you're badmouthing another salon or hatching a plan to steal their clients.

Do you complain because your clients are difficult or cheap? Whinge that your team's not devoted or can't get along with one another? Are you concerned about the vibe in your salon?

Look at your own actions. Your salon culture, everything about it is a reflection of what you do. Try setting your standards higher. Don't settle for an average mindset. Show your team your strengths and lead by example in finding the good in everything.

6. COULD YOU USE YOUR "EYEING OFF" TIME BETTER?

There's only one good reason for keeping your eye on nearby salons who are doing great - you can learn a bucket-load from them. But only if you have an open mindset.

Why not find out first-hand what makes that other business bloom? Instead of sneaking around trying to guess, book yourself in and go experience their service for yourself.

Even better, send your team members on fact-finding missions to experience a blow-wave in the salons they admire most. What they learn will be well worth the cost. It could even be the best \$60 you ever spend on market research.

Have a team meeting afterwards and compare notes. What makes those other salons special? Are there any ideas you could build on to improve your own service?

Be open to fresh thinking, get excited about what's possible and plan together to make your salon stand out for all the right reasons.

7. SO, DOES IT MATTER WHAT OTHERS ARE DOING?

Yes, but only if you're interested out of curiosity and with the mindset of getting inspiration to better your own business.

Stop criticising those who are more successful than you and start learning from them. Experience those other salons, reach out to the owners, let them know you admire them. Don't just follow their social media accounts; engage with them and show them and the market you're not afraid of the competition. After all, you're bound to have a lot in common and a lot of knowledge to share both ways.

Embrace your competition, learn from them and before long, you could be salon owner others are looking to for inspiration. **IN**
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