

Appearance Counseling Beyond Facial Treatments

by Victoria L. Rayner

In today's business environment, the survival of the skin care salon is not assured. It's easy to lose control by operating in the past. What once worked in the skin care profession may no longer apply.

Times have changed, products and skin treatments have changed, and with the transformation, the original concept of the salon has changed. Over time, even the **most** successful beauty services need to be updated and expanded. This means that additional services are necessary to attract and maintain clientele.

The estheticians who will survive the turmoil of our radically changing profession are those with the courage to face and master the challenges of change. Some will seize new business **opportunities**, present additional services, and prosper, while others will buckle under the pressure and give up.

If you ask **the** majority of skin care professionals if they want to make **more** money and attract new clients, they will say yes. Yet, few are willing to study new specialties or expand their knowledge beyond traditional skin care. However, ambitious **estheticians** realize that new services can be combined with existing esthetic procedures to increase profits.

Appearance and success

Concern with appearance extends far beyond mere complexion care. Today, working professionals are confronted with subtle and indirect pressures to physically **define** and enhance their appearance, in a workplace with younger competitors and changing corporate organizational **structures**. With the current **shifts** in the economy, downsizing, and massive layoffs in **the** work force, competition is stiff among working **professionals** to gain and keep high paying positions

The esthetician with the ability to teach clients how to appropriately present themselves in business and social settings, is providing clients with an effective tool to favorably impress and influence others.

There is evidence that power dressing can make a difference in career success and actually give an individual seeking employment an advantage. Cultivating a polished appearance creates a positive impression. A job candidate whose appearance is pleasing to the eye has a better chance of capturing and holding the attention of the interviewer.

It is not by accident that the majority of successful

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people make a conscious effort to look their best. Research by psychologists confirms that working professionals who are "polished" often earn up to \$10,000 a year more than their equally

qualified counterparts. Inevitably, the professional with a commanding presence wins out.

The halo effect

A good example of how presentation affects and influences others is the halo *effect*, a phenomenon that occurs from the moment we encounter another person. It is the visual impression we initially make on others, generated by our posture, body movements, facial gestures, and clothing.

The definition of the word halo is a circle of light appearing to surround a shining body. Halo effect denotes the powerful psychological influence our visual appearance makes on others at a first meeting.

Studies indicate that the first four observations people make when they encounter another person are age, sex, race, and clothing. Research has substantiated that social interaction occurs within the first four minutes of an initial encounter. In this brief time, all opinions and assumptions are formulated. The halo effect supports the theory that first impressions make lasting impressions. It stresses the importance of presenting one's self in the manner in which one wishes to be perceived.

To make others conscious of us, we need to attract their attention. People react to whatever we empha-

size. If we attract attention with an outer image that is perceived as undesirable they regard us as possessing those qualities. Conversely, we can use *props* to secure our status and leave an impression on others that suggests prestige, authority, and intelligence.

Society sets the standards of what is physically attractive or acceptable. If we do not fit into the mold, we are considered unattractive. On the other hand, standards can be learned and are worthy of attention. People who dress by deliberately masterminding their outer image increase their chances of success and greatly reduce the chances of being misunderstood.

Empowering clients

Making clients look and feel better is the primary focus behind esthetics. Every esthetician knows that by improving the appearance of their client's skin, indirectly, they help clients increase their self-esteem. As we revitalize the client's complexion with a new skin care regimen, the client discovers they are more attractive. As a result, they become more confident.

Add the skilled application of enhancement make-up, recommendations on hair-styling, camouflaging figure problems, appropriate attire for business and special occasions, and fabric draping to enhance the client's coloring, and you will see a remarkable improvement in the client's appearance. The psychological effects of this transformation are reflected in the client's facial expression, body language, posture, and even their voice.

Sometimes even the smallest distinction can set one person apart from another and provide an advantage. The estheticians who offers the most options will have the greatest earning potential in the industry.

The more support estheticians provide their clientele, the less financial uncertainty they will face.

What is appearance counseling?

Appearance counseling has as much to do with the psychological aspects surrounding personal appearance as it does with the art of costuming.

The client is provided with information on the psychology of dress. This sharpens the client's perspective on how his or her manner of dressing influences the way others perceive them. Once presented with these insights, clients can change the impact of their appearance on others.

Every person can learn to have a more influential appearance with a variety of tools, techniques and guidelines can provide people with a more com-

elling lines. This is the focus and aim of appearance counseling. **The right image is powerful! It can command** respect and attention. Work costumes need to convey authority, power, and position.

Appearance counselors help their clients obtain images of distinction via special looks that are clean, simple and chic. Style is not a size, price, or a" age. Style comes from within; it is original, liberating, and spontaneous. It captures the **very** spirit and essence of the individual, and it can be cultivated. Appearance counseling helps clients design a" image that



creates the reaction they seek. It is a **program** that is suited to both men and women.

Regardless of the level of success of a" esthetician's salon, there is always room for another source of revenue. Additionally, esthetic services such as appearance counseling provide a way to differentiate **what** salons have to offer over that of their competitors. Adding new services can resurrect old clients and to bring them back into a practice. It also attracts media exposure and free publicity. Image development is of **great** interest to many people; therefore, it is considered a newsworthy item. Basically, publicity is news, and reinforces advertising, establishes credibility, and generates excitement.

Once a" esthetician is trained in appearance counseling, he or she will be able to counsel individuals privately, or give presentations to small and large groups. This will pay off handsomely and is one of the best ways to build clientele.

Can you provide appearance counseling?

Think about your current services, and your desire for greater work satisfaction. Analyze how you approach your business.

Is your business growing and changing? Would appearance counseling enhance your business and attract **new** clients? Do you desire something different in you career? **Are** you looking for a new opportunity to utilize your experience and attain your potential?

Appearance counseling will accomplish that. Because it is a" additional service, you do "or have to leave your profession or career. It can be integrated with your other services. In fact, skin care and appearance counseling can work to complement **each** other or you may eventually opt to choose one over the other. Appearance counseling is a" **easy-to-learn** process. ■



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