

Avoid the "Grass is Greener" Syndrome

Seeing Past the Glitter & Hype in the Hairdressing Industry

by Jon Gonzales
Hairdresser Career Development Systems

The Sky is the Limit; You Are the Key

Before you make the decision to change jobs, consider the following: Changes in technology means many people, including college graduates, must adapt and learn new skills to adapt to new business needs. Earning a hairdressing license to enter the beauty profession costs comparatively less time and money than other professions. With the rising cost of education, **a career in hairdressing can be a shortcut to financial independence** and offer unlimited opportunities for those who truly want to succeed.

When you create value in yourself and in your skills, you create a great demand for your services. This is one of the few professions where you can get all the overtime you want, once you gain experience and create a demand for your services. It's a recession-proof business; **a top hairdresser will always have a job**. If your work is outstanding, people will refer their friends, business associates and relatives. Furthermore, as economic competition eliminates marginal salons and hairdressers, the demand grows for top professionals and upscale salons. **Create demand for your services, and your income will move upward.**

Staff Stability Benefits Business; Steady Business Benefits You

One of the keys to a successful salon and successful staff is staff stability. Only through consistent staffing can a salon avoid business interruption, attract upscale clientele, continue to raise prices and enjoy growth. Contributing to such a successful salon environment is how a hairdresser achieves long-term success and job security. Yet, despite all the benefits of the profession, hairdressers often take their jobs for granted. If we hold higher standards of excellence for the beauty profession, can it rank higher with other professions?

Make Informed Decisions; Walk, Then Run

In the hopes of earning a higher income and accelerating their career development, many hairdressers often make critical decisions on job change without carefully evaluating the consequences and financial risks of their decisions. They may not realize how their future development and success rests on their decisions. With a lack of information and unrealistic earning expectations, they become disap-

pointed and abandon the profession before they give themselves and their career a chance to grow. Many more go from salon to salon searching for that perfect job. There are no perfect salons. **A hairdresser must make job change decisions based on fact, not on guesswork, hearsay, and chance.**

Things to Consider Before You Make a Decision on Job Change

- **Are you counting on customers to follow you?** They may see this as an opportunity to try another hairdresser in your former salon. They may want to stay close to home out of habit, and to save time. Customers are no longer as likely to follow hairdressers around town, especially if a savvy salon owner builds the reputation of the salon—not the hairdresser—and offers client's incentives to stay.
- **Are you expected to bring a clientele?** When new salon owners count on you, the new employee, to bring a clientele right away, this is a red flag. It means they have nothing to offer you. If they are promising you higher commissions, they probably will fail. Remember, 100% of nothing is still nothing. Your new boss should promote you and help you build a clientele.

*Before you
make a job
change,
consider
carefully!*

- **If you were recruited by another salon owner, was it done ethically?** Recruitment can be an issue of honesty and ethics. When salon owners try to recruit another salon owner's staff, it is a sign of poor business management skills. Getting ahead at the expense of others is wrong and will create conditions of dishonesty within your new work environment.
- **When you leave, you immediately take a cut in pay.** It's highly unlikely that you will retain 100% of your customers, and it will take time for regulars and walk-ins at your new salon to be willing to trust your skills.
- **Can you afford the compromise to your credit history?** Job stability is your key to establishing good credit. In the long run, it may profit you best to stay where you are.
- **Many salon owners are black balling people who have history of job change.** Astute salon owners are reluctant to hire hairdressers who have a history of frequent job change, as it calls into question a hairdresser's reputation as a stable professional.
- **Out of the frying pan, into the fire?** Moving to a new salon requires a period of adjustment to new co-workers and previously existing tensions you may not know about. There is no guarantee you will be accepted in your new salon. Some hairdressers may feel their livelihood is being threatened when a new member is added to the staff.

Are You Ready for Change?

To decide whether a job change is right for you, clearly define why you want to make a change. What is it that you dislike about your current job? Do you really want a new job, or do you want a new work environment? Consider the following:

- **I don't have enough customers.** Building a clientele requires

patience, hands on experience, job stability, a positive attitude, and a sincere desire to want to be the best. If you form positive work habits and attitudes, keep an open mind, seek valuable experience, seek feedback from your boss, excel at customer service, and develop a competitive spirit, you will build an enthusiastic clientele. Positive word of mouth referrals are the best measure of your performance. Create a demand for your services. Rather than worry about the number of clients you do a day, stay focused on the quality of your work and create a demand for your services one customer at a time. Sell more services, excel at customer service, ask for referrals, watch one of your fellow workers when not busy, and try to learn something new every day.

- **I'm dissatisfied with my earnings, and can make more money elsewhere.** Nine months of beauty school is not enough time to justify a high income. If you are an experienced hairdresser, reevaluate the reasons you are not at a higher income level. Sometimes you have to look in the mirror. If you are just starting your career or have limited experience, in order to build enthusiastic clientele and make a lot of money, you must gain valuable hands-on experience and quality education, especially if you want to work in an upscale salon. Walk, and then run. As your skills improve, so will your opportunities and your earning potential.
- **I need more education and training.** A good salon invests in its greatest asset- employees. If you feel your salon owner is not offering you educational opportunities for growth, keep in mind you can learn by observing your co-workers during downtime. Ask your salon owner how you can improve, and he or she will help you, and possibly pay for you to attend a valuable class. There is no limit to learning and improving, so keep striving for self improvement, even at your

own cost. Always strive to invest in yourself and in your skills through continuing education by unleashing the power within yourself. Take full responsibility for your own success or failure. If you are fortunate enough to work in a progressive salon that offers training and education and are able to learn from your salon owner or more experienced co-workers and then stay where you are.

- **I don't have enough growth and career opportunities.** I don't feel fulfilled here. To gain professional growth, understand what your career offers in terms of income, fulfillment, challenges and opportunities, minus the glitter and hype. Once you gain valuable, hands-on experience, receive proper mentoring and guidance, seek out excellence in education and maintain job stability, you will see the results in your growth and development. With hard work and job stability, increased income and fulfillment will be your reward. Many salons make the effort to promote their salon and staff through advertising and marketing. Remember, word of mouth is the best advertising, and it's free. Referrals will be your key barometer on how well you are performing.
- **I don't have medical benefits.** Many salons do try to provide medical coverage for their workers, which can only be done if they maintain business and staff stability, and improve profits. If you are outstanding and know how to create a demand for your services, you will be able to get your own medical insurance. Consider a health savings account, which an excellent tax saving opportunity to purchase low cost insurance.
- **I'm unhappy with my boss.** Salon owners are finding the need to become better leaders and business people. There is no such thing as a salon owner who wants his or her business and staff to fail. Even if your boss does not possess the leadership and management skills

you expect, you must take personal responsibility for your own success. This requires more effort than blaming your boss or salon. If you're unhappy, seek out feedback from your boss and work out a solution. There are neither perfect bosses, nor perfect hairdressers. You can always reach higher levels of personal and professional excellence and achieve financial security with a record of job stability.

- **I'm tired of the gossipy, negative environment, and want to work with a better team.** Do you contribute to a positive and professional salon environment? Do you set a positive example for your co-workers, or do you allow yourself to be drawn into petty salon gossip and jealousy? Maybe an attitude adjustment is in order. Make this into an opportunity to help your boss and co-workers create a fun and positive work environment. This has a direct effect on your personal life. Don't let a disgruntled co-worker drag you down with his or her complaints, they only will be undermining your growth and development and earning potential. How can we continue to raise prices in this environment? Your boss will do more for you in the long run than gossipy, competitive co-workers. If your salon is successful, you will be successful.

The Most Effective Change: Changing Yourself

You are the biggest catalyst for change in your career and work environment. By remaining aware and introspective, you can take full responsibility for your own success. By remaining a stable professional, you can take your career to a higher level. Before you decide to change jobs, carefully weigh all your options. If you do decide to change jobs, leave on good terms, in an ethical and honest manner. You may need references, or possibly to return to your former salon. Never burn the bridges behind you. Through team-

work, a hairdresser, a salon and the profession grows and raises the value of our livelihoods.

Checklist of Excellence

Am I willing to take full responsibility for my own success?

- What have I done to justify a high income recently?
- Have I taken any classes lately to update my skills?
- Have I contributed to a positive and professional salon environment?
- Have I worked hard to exceed salon owner and client expectations?
- Have I asked my boss how I can improve?
- Do I possess strong work habits? Am I punctual?
- Do I cultivate strong people and communication skills?
- Do I have a good job history of stability?
- Do I get a lot of referrals?
- Do I contribute to a team environment?
- Can I sell more salon services?
- Do I monitor and invite customer feedback?
- Have I developed a marketing mentality?
- Do I excel at customer service?
- Do I employ strong communication skills?

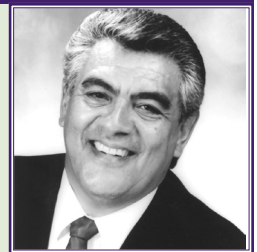
In conclusion, staff turnover affects everyone. If we are to grow as an industry, we must maintain business and staff stability. How can we expect to raise prices with a constant merry-go-round of staff turnover? Keeping this article in mind will help you carefully evaluate your situation and make better informed decisions on job change. You probably are better off staying with your present salon. If you do change salons, leave on good terms, as many salon owners will be happy to welcome back a stable,

dependable, employee. I urge you to read my book *A Hairdresser's Guide To Success—personally, Professionally, and Financial*, also read my *91 Success Tips for Hairdressers*. It is free with my book. I hope to see you at one of my Success Seminars when one comes to your area.

Further Reading

- *Bridging the Gap Between Staff and Management*
- *A Hairdressers Guide to Success—Personal, Professional, Financial*
- *91 Success Tips for Hairdressers*
- For brochures, call 1-800-390-4237 or visit www.hcds4you.com. Click on the Beauty School Forum FAQ's for guidance in making informed decisions to further career development.

Jon Gonzales is president and founder of Hairdresser Career Development Systems, which is dedicated to educating and guiding hairdressers and salon owners on their journey to success. Jon travels extensively throughout the United States and Canada, conducting his popular business management seminars for salon owners and his personal-growth seminars for hairdressers. He's the author of *The Hairdresser's Guide to Success: Personal, Professional, and Financial* as well as multiple books, DVDs, and videos on the topics of success, management, and personal growth. An outstanding industry leader, Jon draws from his decades of in-the-trenches experience as a working salon owner and his fiery passion to improve the careers and lives of hairdressers and salon owners.



Jon Gonzales
Hairdresser Career
Development Systems

To learn how Hairdresser Career Development Systems can help you move to the next level in your journey—personally, professionally, and financially—visit:

www.hcds4you.com