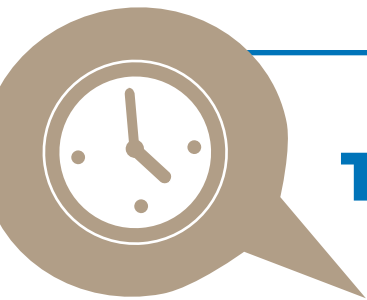


From saving money on products to developing an efficient schedule, salon coaches offer practical advice behind the cliché.

33 ways to work SMARTER not HARDER



TECHNICAL tricks

1 To soak off enhancements quickly and without the distinctive acetone smell, soak cotton pads with acetone, then secure them to your client's fingers with tin foil. Dip the now-covered nails into warm paraffin wax, then cover your client's hands with plastic bags and mitts. You may also want to apply Vaseline to all of the fingers and under the free edges (using a cotton swab) to prevent the acetone from drying out the skin. — [Lundberg](#)

2 I have a clock where I can see it but my clients can't — it's at my feet. The clock is kept in the bottom section of my station, on my right, so I can keep track of my time without clients feeling like I'm distracted from their service. — [Dixon](#)

3 If your client won't relax her hand when you need her to, just instruct her to put her shoulders down, which will

make her hand immediately relax. A weighted neck wrap is also helpful for this. For those extra stiff clients, it helps to start the service with a hand massage. — [Lundberg](#)

4 To prevent dark polish from staining a client's fingers and toes, apply cuticle oil to the surrounding skin and under the free edges. (This is especially smart if you have clients who remove their own polish.) — [Lundberg](#)

5 To cut down on wasted manicure and pedicure products, buy small dishes that match the decor of your salon that can hold the appropriate amount of product needed for each service. At my salon, we dish out the right amount of scrub and mask, put them in a cute tray, and bring them out for each service. It has saved so much money on products for us and it looks better to clients to use premeasured dishes. — [Christie](#)

6 In cold climates, to warm your client's hands and fingers, keep a small heating pad under your towel. This will also relax them for the service. — [Lundberg](#)

it's the MONEY, honey



7 Figure out how much you buy of a given item over the course of a year and buy it all at once when it goes on sale. — **Dixon**

8 Make sure all the services you perform are product cost effective. The products needed to perform the service should be no more than 8% of what you are charging for the service. — **Durocher**

9 Have a budget for your service and retail product purchases. Product ordering is an expense you have complete control over. As an industry guideline, 50% of the retail sales should be used to replenish the retail products sold, and 7% to 8% service revenues should be used to replenish back bar and service products. Too many owners order product based on a feeling or a judgment by sight that is way off, costing their salon big bucks. — **Arnold**

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10 Book exactly how much time you need for a client. Most books and software programs use blocks of 15 minutes, but it only takes 50 minutes to do a client's nails, then book 50 minutes instead of the full hour. Over the course of a year you save more than four hours. That's enough time saved on a single client to take more clients. — **Dixon**

11 Never put your most demanding client or the one who whines at the beginning or end of your day. You'll begin and end your day in a much better mood. — **Lundberg**

12 Automate your salon. This includes implementing a salon software program to keep track of booking, payroll, inventory, and receipts, which will cut down on your work as an owner. Train your staff to use the automated system efficiently and to update contact information on your clients frequently. Set up a Facebook and Twitter account for the salon. It's a great way to keep your books filled. — **Christie**

13 Set aside a certain time to return calls and check e-mail. — **Dixon**

14 Pre-book 75% or more of your clientele before they leave. Use powerful dialogue such as, "I book out 12 weeks in advance so let's book your next appointment now so you get the best time for your schedule and are able to get in to see me." Pre-booking allows you to forecast your income and guarantees the best service experience. — **Durocher**

savvy SCHEDULING



15 Figure out when the salon is busy and staff then so you don't have techs just sitting around. Plan to do other things during the slow hours, like bookkeeping, cleaning, or canvassing for clients. — **Dixon**

16 Research before you start any new endeavor. This includes knowing your target market area, knowing what you're good at (and what you're not), and knowing your goals and what you want out of your career. Then give your plan time to see if it will work. I see so many people who give up too fast. — **Smith-Brown**

17 Schedule several 10 minute time slots on your books every day for nail repairs. If you don't need the time for repairs, reward yourself with a brisk walk, a coffee, or by closing your eyes to relax. — **Lundberg**

18 We print up three months worth of specials, one for each month, and laminate them. We post them at the front desk for clients to plan their appointments around what services are on sale. It has really boosted our sales and pre-booked appointments. — **Christie**



KEEPING your CLIENTS

19 Reminder calls are important. Salons that don't take advantage of reminding the clients of their appointments could be missing the boat. We're all busy, and that gentle reminder works. — Friedman

20 When a client goes on a vacation, give her an index card that includes all of the information (brand, color, tip size, special needs, etc.) about her nails, in case she needs to get a repair or a new set while she's out of town. This lets your client know how important she is to you; plus, it helps make sure nothing is applied to her nails that you don't want there. Make sure to include your name and phone number as the other nail tech may want to call you with questions. And don't be surprised if you get a client in return from the other nail tech. — Lundberg

21 Have a plan of action to work toward building the individual service ticket. The biggest difference between

working hard and working smart with a service ticket is how you communicate it to the client. Looking at the history of the client, taking good notes on past services and products, and being comfortable taking the lead on suggesting new ideas and services will definitely set you apart. — Arnold

22 It all boils down to confidence. Learn how to introduce yourself properly and what the right things are to say to get potential customers to come in. Clients pick up on nail techs who are unsure of their techniques, especially in saturated markets. — Smith-Brown

23 Remember to say "keys, cash, and coat or sweater" to your clients before you polish. This will save time and money in redos. But avoid letting your clients pay ahead of time. It prevents upselling and retailing. — Lundberg

24 Be a good listener. Take notes as you talk, even in person. I tell the client, "I'm taking notes so we can refer to them later and so I don't forget what you're saying." No one has ever said, "Don't do that." Most say, "Good, that's super!" — Friedman

25 Pass out three referral cards to each of your existing clients to hand out to their friends and family. Offer \$10 in retail as a thank you for each client they send you. This also increases your retention when they can maintain a service experience between visits. — Durocher

26 Surround yourself with others that fill your leadership ability gaps. No leader is a complete package. You will excel at some aspects of leadership and struggle with others. That's why the best leadership teams are a mixture of skills and abilities. (However, this isn't an excuse to not further your abilities through training and coaching. Getting better is still the name of the game.) — Ducoff

27 Have a valid, current employee manual. It should include an employee agreement for every employee to sign, clearly defining the salon's commitment to employees and the employees' commitment to the business. It should also include a policy and procedure manual, providing guidelines on federal, state, and local regulations on workplace issues like maternity leave. It should also include a job description for each position of employment. Having a well-established foundation in place will let you work smarter as issues inevitably arise. — Cassidy

28 Don't confuse coaching with confrontation. I've met too many leaders who crumble when it comes to addressing an individual's behavior and performance issues. Leaders coach with the intent to help others achieve their full potential. If every coaching opportunity is viewed as a "confrontation," your leadership journey will be a struggle. — Ducoff

employer-employee RELATIONS



29 If you're a salon owner who works with booth renters, not employees, then a space lease (if the salon owner owns the building) or a space sub lease (if you don't own the building where the business is located) are essential. These two legal items are the first thing the IRS and your state will look for if you are audited. If you have to go to court this is equally essential to protect your business, especially when it comes to unemployment issues/incorrect worker classification. If you don't have these items in place, then you're working twice as hard by making stuff up when everyday issues show up. — Cassidy

30 Know when to cut people loose. Allowing toxic employees to remain in the company is pure leadership compromise. Do yourself, your team, and your company a favor and cut toxic employees loose. — Ducoff



to your **HEALTH!**

31 To prevent eye strain, hold a newspaper at arm's length and focus on the print. Do this several times a day. — **Lundberg**

32 Manage your stress. The best prescription for leadership stress is to work out. I do a spin class and ride my bike every chance I get. I hired an instructor to come to my office every Thursday afternoon for an hour of Pilates. Stress will slow you down and wear you out if you don't manage it with exercise. — **Duoff**

33 At the end of a long, frustrating day, try this tip to eliminate stress. Go into the bathroom, bringing scented soap and a candle. Light the candle, turn off the lights, and wash your hands and arms with the soap. Wash your long, frustrating day down the drain. Watch the soap suds go down the drain along with all of your frustrations. Blow out the candle. Go home and enjoy your evening. — **Lundberg**

the Coaching Chronicles

For more advice from salon coaches, visit NAILS! The Coaching Chronicles blog at blogs.nailsmag.com/coach.



+7 EVERYDAY TIPS from regular nail techs

1 Whenever I run a special, I send out text messages instead of phone calls, letters, or e-mails. My clients love it and always respond quickly.

REANDELYN CLAYTON
Topeka, Kan.

2 Order in bulk with a friend.

KELLEY KILLOP-MARBLE
Opalized Designs Studio Salon, Shelby Township, Mich.

3 If I'm doing both a manicure and a pedicure on a client but am running behind, then I put cuticle remover on the client's hands and dip them into paraffin wax. I then start polishing her toenails. That way when I go back to the manicure, all of the cuticle comes right off. This shaves off almost 15 minutes from the manicure, and the client thinks she's getting a perk for free.

JENNIFER COFFEY
The Wentford Spa in Dilworth, Charlotte, N.C.

4 I polish before massaging. By polishing before the massage, I don't waste the extra time trying to re-cleanse the nail plate and it gives my clients more massage time. The trick is to massage the cuticles and tips of the toes/fingers last.

ERIKA CLARY-TERZANI
Terzani, San Diego

5 Sculpt with the brush and not the file. Some nail professionals will blob the product on then try to create design by filing the excess. If you sculpt with your brush and place the product thinly and correctly proportioned, it significantly reduces file time.

HOLLY SCHIPPERS
FingerNailFixer, Bussey, Iowa

6 Be prepared. Come in early, set up as much as you can beforehand, and keep what's not being used at that time covered and free from dust and debris. For example, if your first client is scheduled at 9 a.m. and you have five pedicures scheduled for the day, come in at 8:30 a.m. and put your files, buffers, foot files, orangewood sticks, and scrubs (in small plastic disposable cups with lids) in neat piles in a cabinet on top of the towel you will be using.

DIANNA MEDEIROS
The Make-up Bar, Cherry Hill, N.J.

7 I learned how to use an electric file properly. I use an overhand grip to keep my wrist bending in a more natural position. This way you won't blow out your thumbs and shoulders when doing enhancements. Having the training is smarter not only for yourself, but it makes you look smarter to other people as well! **N**

TRICIA HUBBARD
The Day Spa, Edina, Minn.