

# Client Journey



## How to Communicate with Clients

## **Good communication**

Client care is essential to becoming a successful hairdresser. And good client care depends on good communication.

It is vital that you learn to communicate well with your clients from the moment they enter the salon until they leave. If you establish a good rapport, they will feel comfortable with their choice of stylist and you will have clients who feel relaxed and confident.

### **You must be able to:**

- Put your client at ease – tell them what you plan to do before you start cutting and explain what you are doing as you work;
- Understand what the client wants – communication is about listening as well as talking; and
- Make sure that the client understands what you are recommending for them.

## **Putting clients at ease**

How you talk to your clients is as important as what you say. They are not all the same and, with experience, you will learn to adapt your speech – tone of voice, volume and speed – to suit the client and the circumstances. Practice this as often as you can, imagining different circumstances.

For example, how would you talk to an extremely nervous client or a client who is running late and becoming anxious?

Choose your words carefully. Soft sounds tend to be more reassuring than hard sounds. For example, 'would you like to sit down?' and 'may I help you?' sound more friendly than 'take a seat' or 'can I help you?' (which could also seem to question your own ability).

## **Establishing understanding**

It is important that you find out exactly what your client wants. Try to use questions that cannot be answered with a straight 'yes' or 'no'. These are known as open questions and usually include words such as which, who, why, how, what and where. Unlike closed questions, they require the client to give you a response.

For example, think about the different sort of answers you might get if you asked the following:

- Open question – Which appointment time would you prefer?
- Closed question – Is your appointment for a colour?

## Doing it every time

There will be times when communicating with your clients will be hard work. You may be tired or feeling unwell. You may have difficulty understanding a client because they have a strong accent or speech impediment. Or your client may simply be disagreeable. Whatever the circumstances, as a professional, you must work to establish good communication with your client.

## Consultation



The consultation is a fact-finding mission and is the first part of the service you give your clients. An in-depth consultation will allow you find out what your clients' ideas and needs are. This will help you to make the right recommendations and give your clients more confidence in you.

During a consultation, you should always:

- Find out what the client wants before you shampoo their hair and keep checking back with them as you work;
- Ask the right questions and, if necessary, use visual aids such as magazines. If you are doing a colour consultation, use the colour chart;
- Communicate clearly with your client and check to make sure you both understand each other;
- If you are in any doubt about what your client wants, refer them to a senior member of staff who can give further advice; and
- Check to make sure you are working safely and looking after the client's well-being.

A professional consultation is conducted on a one-to-one basis between the client and the stylist and take place at a styling station. The success of your consultation will depend on your ability to:

- Ask the right questions (using open questions as much as possible);
- Listen carefully to your client's answers;
- Interpret what they are saying;
- Confirm what has been said, checking that you both understand; and
- Make suggestions and offer appropriate choices.

## **Confidentiality**

As a professional hairdresser, you are in a position of trust. You will learn a great deal of personal information about your clients. It is crucial that they can rely on your discretion. If your clients feel they cannot trust you, they will not come back and, worse, they may take action against the salon. In any event, the reputation of the salon will be badly damaged.

Record cards must be treated in strict confidence. They belong to the salon and are an important source of information. They are also private and you should not look at – and certainly never alter – record cards without permission.

You should also treat personal information about your colleagues in confidence. When you are working together in a busy, public place such as a salon, you need to know that you can trust each other. Also, your clients will not be impressed if they hear salon staff gossiping about each other.

## **Client care from start to finish**

Your client embarks on a journey through the salon from the moment they walk through the door.

## **After care**

An increasingly important part of the hairdresser's role is giving after-care advice to clients and recommending products clients can use to care for their style between visits to the salon.

You may feel uncomfortable with this part of your work to start with, particularly if you see it as 'selling' unwanted products to your client. But bear in mind that you wouldn't consider styling hair without these products so why should your client have to.

The response you get from your client will obviously depend on the way you approach the subject and make your recommendations. You should spell out the benefits to the client of using the product at home. Explain to them:

- which product you have used on their haircut;
- why you have used it; and
- When and how the client should use it.

Remember to ask your client, when they next come into the salon, if they were happy with the product and able to maintain the style of their haircut.

## Analysis

You will do a client and hair analysis before every hairdressing job you do. It is one of the most important parts of your work because it enables you to decide which hair style will suit your client.

The analysis is broken down into stages. This allows you to piece together a picture of your client, which will help you choose the right shape for the style.

- Personality
- Dress sense
- Age
- Height, weight and build
- Quality and quantity of hair
- Hairlines and growth patterns
- Previous style and choice of style
- Lifestyle
- Face shape

## Dress Sense

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When you are helping your client choose a new hair style, it's important that you take into account their style of dress. Is it young and fashionable or is it more conservative? A hair style should be the finishing touch to that total look.

You should also think about whether your client will want to wear their hair in different ways. For example, they may want a cut that's suitable for the office but that can be worn differently for going clubbing. Your cut will need to give the client two different 'looks'.

And don't forget those special occasions like weddings and parties. At these times, you need to take an entirely different approach to helping your client choose a style.

A note of caution. Don't assume that a client wants a hair style that goes with their working clothes or even their casual clothes. Always check with your client to make sure they are comfortable with the style they choose.

## Your Client's Age

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Knowing what sort of age group your client fits into can help you make decisions about cut and colour, such as:

- How long
- How short
- How bright
- How fashionable

The rules are very straightforward:

- the younger your client, the more fashionable they will want their hair to be; and
- The older your client, the more groomed and styled they will want it.

You should always try to give your clients a younger, fresher style than they might expect. It will make them look and feel younger and more confident.

## Height, Weight and Build

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You are here:

Lessons - Client and hair analysis - **Height, Weight and Build**

*Height, weight and build*

You should take all these factors into account when helping a client choose a hair style. It enables you to balance the shape of the cut with your client's build.

For example:

- a large person doesn't need more volume
- a tall person doesn't need more height

Always try to greet your clients before they sit down or put on a gown. You can get a far better idea of their body shape.

## **Quality and quantity of hair**

### **Quality**

The quality of hair means the condition. Things to look for:

- Does chemically heated hair still have a good shine?
- One length hair reflects the light, layered hair does not.
- Coloured hair usually has a healthy glow.
- Permed hair looks dull because it absorbs light.

Good quality hair is easy to style. Hair that is thin and brittle is more difficult so you will need to use styling agents such as mousse or gel.

### **Quantity**

Quantity refers to the density of hair – how much hair is on the head and how thick or fine the hair shape is. These factors are important when you are thinking about the balance and control of a hair style. For example, it is easy to show volume on thick hair.

On thin hair it is more difficult so you need to use styling gels and mousses. When you are applying chemical treatments, the thickness of your client's hair will dictate how much product and what techniques you use. For example, fine hair can be more resistant to colour and perm treatments.

### **Texture**

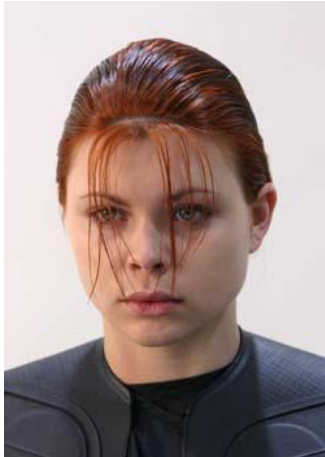
There are three types of hair texture:

- Fine
- Medium/normal
- Thick/coarse

The texture of your client's hair affects the size of the sections you take. For thicker hair, you need finer sections to make sure the guideline is visible. You need to see the guideline to know exactly where you need to cut each section of hair.

Texture also influences your choice of style. Some styles that work well on thick hair do not look the same on fine hair and vice versa.

## *Hairlines and growth patterns*



Hairlines and growth patterns are an essential element of the hair analysis. You should always look at them when the hair is wet and when it is dry (the hair could have been blow-dried into shape).

### **Hairline**

The areas to look at are:

- Nape hairline
- Crown
- Front and sides

Not everyone has a perfect hairline so make sure you check for uneven growth and awkward, moving shapes.

### **Growth pattern**

You need to take your client's hair growth pattern into consideration when you are cutting their hair because some patterns influence how a cut is carried out. The most common ones are:

- Double crown
- Nape whorls
- Calf licks
- Widow's peak

You should check for these growth patterns during your client consultation, before you start to cut the hair. If you encounter any, you should cut without using pressure to allow for the natural movement of the hair.



You may need to cut the sections of hair within the growth patterns longer than the rest of the hair. This allows for the movement of the hair as it springs back to how it falls naturally. The hair looks level even though it has not been cut level.

Some growth patterns can affect a style so much that it would not look right. For example, your client may want a style that is cut into the neck but doesn't go into the middle. This won't work if they have nape whorls. You need to consult more with your client, explaining why the cut won't work.

## **Parting**

Partings can be used to produce different effects in hairstyles. For example, a central parting can divide the hair evenly and help to make a heavy head or thick hair appear more balanced. Side partings can be used to draw the eye away from prominent features such as a large nose or uneven ears.

Fashion can also affect the way you use partings.

Some natural partings can be very well defined and it is often necessary to work with them rather than imposing new partings.

During your client consultation, before you start cutting, you should establish the pattern and strength of your client's natural parting. This may determine the finished look you are able to achieve.

## **Lifestyle and choice of style**

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**You are here:**

Lessons - Client and hair analysis - **Lifestyle and choice of style**

Your client's lifestyle will influence their choice of hair style. For example, your client may want a style that reflects the kind of job they do and this could mean choosing a classic or conservative cut.

Some clients may want styles that are practical and easy to care for, others may want something more elaborate. If you listen carefully to your clients and establish a good rapport with them, you will be able to make the right choice.

Your client's choice of style can also be determined by their previous style. For example, their previous cut may not be long enough to allow you to give them the new look they want.

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## Personality

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**You are here:**

Lessons - Client and hair analysis - **Personality**

A client's personality will help you decide whether to cut their hair short or leave it long. Use your observation skills to decide what type of client you have:

- outgoing or
- introverted

An outgoing person may wear striking fashions. Their hair may be colourful and form part of an overall look. An introverted person may want to hide behind their hair, keeping it and their style of dress conservative.

They may be trying not to stand out from the crowd. These are only examples. As you gain experience, you will find it easier to identify your clients.

## Face Shape

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**You are here:**

Lessons - Client and hair analysis - **Face Shape**



The shape of your client's face and head are unique. Use your observation skills to identify their individual features.

Your haircut should enhance their good features, e.g. their eyes and cheek bones and disguise their less attractive features, e.g. a heavy jaw or big nose.



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Many people's ears are not evenly balanced. They can be very large, very small or even different sizes. And some stick out at an angle from the head.

You need to watch for all these characteristics, particularly when you are cutting shorter hairstyles.

You also need to know if your client wears glasses or a hearing aid. Both these will affect the finished look of your cut.

You should be aware of these factors when you are helping a client choose a hairstyle. Here are some examples of how you can use particular cuts to disguise facial features:

- Cut hair long behind the ears to soften a heavy jaw line cut hair long to cover protruding ears
- use a fringe to disguise a high forehead or deep frown lines. There are many other techniques you can use to make your cut right for your client's face. And when a client thinks the cut you have given them is flattering, you will win their confidence.