

Successful Skinology

By Faye Murray



Gay Wardle

In this edition we are featuring Gay Wardle, a well known educator and salon owner. She has two very successful salons called Skinology, situated at Helensvale on the Gold Coast and Springwood in Brisbane. Gay is one of the hardest working people I know who gives so much back to our industry and the people in it. She is always willing to give to those who need her expertise and help, is a great lady with lots of energy and always fun to be around.



FM - AS WELL AS OWNING TWO GREAT SALONS YOU ARE ALSO RESPECTED AND RECOGNISED AS BEING A TRAINER IN THE AREA OF ADVANCED SKIN ANALYSIS AND IPL AND ARE ALWAYS TRAVELLING AROUND AUSTRALIA. THAT OF COURSE MEANS YOU ARE AWAY FROM YOUR BUSINESSES A LOT. HOW DO YOU MANAGE TO DO THIS AND STILL HAVE WELL RUN SALONS?

GW - I have systems in place for everything and each staff member is given a copy to read and study when they are employed. You cannot be everything and do everything yourself, so I surround myself with great people.

I have my marketing planned well in advance, our spring newsletter went to the printers in early June, and we are working on Christmas promotions now. I organise mystery shoppers, which is such a valuable tool to find out what is happening in your business. A customer survey once a year gives me great feedback on what we should or should not be doing.

When I am away I receive salon reports by email every day, so I know what is happening all the time. The girls have targets to meet. You Faye taught me many years ago how to analyse percentages in the salon. So each week the senior girl in each salon will give me percentages for wages and retail to services percentages that are so important to have.

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FM - BECAUSE YOU HAVE A PASSION FOR, AND SUCH AN AMAZING KNOWLEDGE IN THE AREA IN WHICH YOU TEACH, DO YOU OFFER SPECIALISED TREATMENTS IN YOUR SALONS THAT CENTRE ON RESULTS FOCUSED TREATMENTS?

GW - Evolution in this industry is amazing and exciting. I have invested in a lot of equipment and continue to do so. Just this year we have installed new laser and IPL machines, Titan for skin tightening, skin analysis camera and infusion machines. We utilise all of the equipment and put our clients onto programs of treatments. The results are amazing and our reputation of being "Experts in skin" is exactly that.

Clients do their own research on the Internet now, so you have to stay up to date to be able to answer their questions. Because we update our equipment and services all the time our clients stay excited and keep challenging us to bring them the best advice and treatments we can.

FM - ARE YOUR SALONS SET UP IN A SPECIAL WAY TO CATER FOR CLIENTS? CAN YOU TELL US WHAT SYSTEM YOU HAVE FOR FACIAL OR



SKIN TREATMENT CLIENTS IN THE SALON?

GW - I have divided the team into two sections, pampering and skin experts, so we have girls that love pampering treatments and they are brilliant at it then we have girls that love treating skin conditions and they are experts at it. When a client makes a booking they are asked if their treatment is for relaxation or is it to treat a skin condition, their answer determines who will be caring for them. Every client is then treated with experts in their field and receives the best advice and service.

FM - HOW IMPORTANT IS A SKIN EVALUATION IN YOUR SALON?

GW - It is the most important thing we do. It is the only correct way we can determine the cause of a skin condition and then establish what salon protocols to use and the home care products that

are needed to achieve results. When we assess the skin we follow a comprehensive diagnostic pathway, which includes the whole body. Things we look at are the client's lifestyle, nutrition, skin type and lymphatic system, which takes us an hour. We also use very advanced skin analysis equipment to back up our assessment and we charge for this service.

FM - CAN YOU TALK US THROUGH THE STEPS THAT THIS INVOLVES FOR A CLIENT IN YOUR SALON?

GW - When the client first makes an appointment with us and we have established that the treatment is to deal with a skin condition, they are either given a letter or if the appointment was made by phone it is mailed to them. The letter explains what they need to do and what they need to bring to their appointment. The first treatment is the skin analysis. If possible they arrive without make-up and



pride in doing this. We communicate well together which is important. As a boss you have to listen to your staff.

FM - I KNOW YOU HAVE SOME GREAT MARKETING STRATEGIES THAT YOU GET SUCCESS FROM. CAN YOU SHARE WHAT SOME OF THE THINGS ARE THAT YOU DO?

GW - Have a website that you can post your newsletters and other salon news onto. It amazes me how many people search through our website. E-newsletters with tips and packages monthly work brilliantly, we send out four paper newsletters a year as well as email them to our clients. We also use a company called Boutique Marketing that has developed our welcome packs and gift packs that are amazing tools for client referrals. Information and VIP nights are brilliant if done correctly. Use the nights to encourage existing clients to bring a friend who has not been to the salon before. Education evenings are great. Have guest speakers like doctors, naturopaths, colour and fashion co-ordinators and personal trainers attend.



FM - WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO A BUSY SALON OWNER WHO IS WORKING THEIR TAIL OFF AS A HANDS-ON THERAPIST AND WHO WANTS TO WORK MORE ON DEVELOPING AND GROWING THEIR SALON BUT CAN'T GET OFF THE FLOOR?

GW -

- Work with a business coach. They will help you develop a plan to move off the floor, and help to keep your staff motivated as well as motivate you.
- Develop and educate your team to be the best they can be. Don't ever be afraid that they will know more than you. When your clients see that your staff knows as much as you do they are happy to be treated by them.
- Gradually cut down the days that you work on clients and work more on marketing and education. Set a goal that in 4 months you will only be on the floor 2-3 days a week and be diligent with it. Then by 6 months you will only be on the floor 1 day a week.
- Make sure you fill your staff appointment columns before you fill your own. Increase the prices considerably for the treatments you do, they should be higher than the rest of the team.
- Stop doing the waxing, manicures and pedicure treatments and become more specialised. You truly will make more money when you control your business instead of letting it control you.

bring with them all cosmetics and skin care they use as well as medications and supplements that they take. During the skin analysis we determine the cause of the skin condition and develop a program of treatments and home care that will give the client results.

FM - YOU USE A SKIN SCANNER HOW IMPORTANT IS THIS?

GW - The skin scanner is an amazing tool in that it is visual for the client. They see what you are looking at and you can explain to them things like lipid levels, skin density and pigmentation while they are looking at it. The girls focus on getting all of our clients to use the skin scanner; in doing this it has changed the nature of the business. We have a much larger clientele having skin treatments than waxing.

FM - ONE OF THE THINGS THAT YOU

ACHIEVE THAT SO MANY SALONS AIM TO DO IS YOUR FANTASTIC STAFF LOYALTY AND STABILITY. YOUR STAFF HAS BEEN WITH YOU FOR ALONG TIME. WHAT IS YOUR SECRET?

GW - I have enormous respect for them and I appreciate and value their work. By encouraging and supporting them to develop their own expertise in the industry it keeps them excited and happy. The skin experts are happy because they are doing what they love; they hate massaging and doing pedicures. The girls that love massaging etc. are doing just that, they don't enjoy the research and advanced skin analysis so they would not be comfortable doing it. When people love what they do and are encouraged to be the best at what they do they enjoy their work and it shows. They will give you their all. The team is included in making decisions with marketing and promotions and take



Faye Murray has been coaching with clients in all states of Australia for 9 years. If you want to find out how business coaching with Your Coach can show you how to have a strong, profitable business visit the web site www.yourcoach.net.au Your Coach also offers amazing workshops in both

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