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## MORE THAN JUST HAIR GROOMING BARBERS, BARBER STYLISTS, IMPROVE YOUR BUSINESS

### A Few Ways To STAY ON TOP OF YOUR GAME

By **Nate Crittendon**  
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**Nate Crittendon, Owner NStyle.**

If you're reading this, you're probably already an established barber, stylist or salon owner. If this is the case, we're certain that you have already taken the necessary steps to promote yourself as the professional that you are. But even the best of us find ourselves in learning moments, where if we could replay that moment over again, we would have done something a little different. In many cases, in fact, as business owners and/or professionals, we focus so hard on getting the obvious right that we overlook the little things; by little things we mean seemingly insignificant steps that you could take to better position yourself as a professional, and by professional, we mean that you're always ready willing and able to promote your business.

One of the first things that all barbering/styling professionals should do is educate themselves. Of course, educating yourself on the latest styling trends is the obvious, but one thing that many of us overlook is the necessity of knowing what products our customers are buying. In fact, the better approach would be knowing what products our customers need and getting in the forefront of that need by educating ourselves on how to make those particular products readily available for our customers. Let's use the following scenarios for example:

**Scenario One.** Your customer, John, comes into your shop for his usual weekly haircut, but this week, he is complaining about the recent onset of razor bumps that he has been experiencing. As a barber stylist, this problem is familiar to you and as John is a valued customer, you refer him to the beauty supply that is just doors down from your shop. Technically, you have just pointed John in the right direction, but unfortunately, with your vague suggestion on how to fix his problem, John will probably never get the type of product that he really needs to combat his issue with razor bumps.

**Scenario Two.** Similar to scenario one, your customer John comes in for his weekly appointment. He complains about the recent onset of razor bumps that he's been experiencing and he decides to ask you for your insight. You, being the educated professional that you are proceed to not only explain to John the causes and effects of razor bumps, but you give him a free sample of a product that you've recently discovered that does wonders for razor bumps. In this scenario, John is not only thankful for the product that you've given him direct access too, but he now deems you more of a professional than he ever has before. In this scenario, you come across to John as more than just the guy who cuts his hair, but an expert barber stylist who understands the ins and outs of everything related to skin and hair care.

Of course, educating yourself is a large part of the battle, but technically, you've only tackled a percentage of the problem. Even as a well-educated barbering professional, there are two other very specific things that professionals do that often times undermines their professionalism: not being on time, and not looking the part.

You can be the best barber stylist in the world, but if you're constantly keeping your clients waiting, you'll eventually become the best barber stylist in the world with the least amount of clients. As professionals, dependability is important. In fact, in many cases it is more important than keeping up with the trends and being educated. At day's end, we are professionals whose business thrives on making our customers happy. In nobody's world does unsatisfied customers lead to repeat business, so if you plan to make your mark on the barbering industry, focus your energy on ensuring that your clients are happy and willing to refer you to their friends and family on the strength of your dependability.

Lastly, and quite frankly, it is very necessary for all barbering professionals to consider themselves walking bill boards. Yes, we all have our bad days, but an unkempt barbering professional screams one thing, and one thing only: do NOT go to him/her to get my hair cut. If your goal is to keep the clientele that you currently have, and more important, attract new clientele that will eventually become repeat customers, you must commit to doing your part. Make the commitment now to yourself, current customers and potential customers that you will always present yourself like the professional you are, and that you will always resemble the clean-cut customer who just got out of your chair.

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