

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOTTLE

with love from Naja x

New year - new attitude



was with one of my favourite celebrity clients last week. Her glam squad, including me, was crammed into a bathroom with lights rigged onto the shower rail, a sink transformed into a make-up counter and my work table was the back of the toilet. YES! The finished product is always ultra-glamorous - but just like in maths class, showing the mechanics of how you arrived at the answer is not always necessary, but today I thought I'd share this snippet with you.

Anyway, without mentioning names (but she has *No More Drama* in her life), we were glamping up our celebrity for a charity event and I overheard her talking about a company offering her a seriously large sum of money to endorse a product she never used, didn't need or believe in. She passionately said, "No thank you! My fans mean more to me than that." 'More to me' meant more than a million dollars. It was such a heartfelt decision that radiated confidence, strength and a true mission that it stopped my gel brush mid-stroke. She really meant it. It was a checkmate statement. "My fans mean more to me than X amount of money," is powerful, full of conviction and comes from someone who truly knows her worth and responsibility. These were just the words I needed to hear and they got me thinking - her fans are her livelihood just as our clients are ours.

A new attitude

So what can you do this year to show your clients how much they mean to you? And what can you do to make your career mean more? How can you raise your professional standards? Your clients will notice and so will your bank account!

I have seen too many nail stylists fall victim to lowering their skills, hiding their talents or getting comfortable and not pushing boundaries due to discount salons that offer extremely low prices and low quality services. This is the year to realise that those types of salon are not your competition. You set the bar higher - have some pride in your profession. It is a true and tried case that 'if you build it, they will come'. Five years from now discount salons should be history, but it's up to each and every nail stylist to do whatever they can to provide the most excellent service, give an experience and create a unwavering connection that can potentially lead to many more clients from referrals.

A good place to start is the client consultation. All too often I see stylists get right to work - filing and cutting without asking what shape the client prefers, what their lifestyle is, will they be able to

manage this style etc. This is frustrating, unprofessional and shows a true lack of confidence in the ability to be professional. Exceed client expectations, show you care about them and care about your career. Advise them on best shape/colour for their hands. Give homecare tips. Share your knowledge and help bring their nails and spirit to optimal health.

Another serious issue up for a New Year's resolution is 'value'. Challenge yourself, go deep within and find your worth and then charge accordingly. We are born givers and cater to our clients' needs unconditionally. I would like to see more business skills come into play - after all we are doing this to make a living. Be willing to invest in education. Do not be afraid to charge

"Be willing to invest in education. Do not be afraid to charge what you feel is fair."

what you feel is fair. In my salon the motto is 'Shifting consciousness one foot at a time.' This is done with confidence, willingness and perseverance. On my block there are 14 other nail shops but I don't worry. There's actually one directly across the street facing me. I decided to charge what others thought was too expensive, but when someone comes to my shop they are paying for an experience. They are paying for my time. The experience

offers a great manicure, polish that lasts longer than it ever had for them in the past or Minx nails applied better than anyone in town. This is not due to any special skill I possess, it's due to practice and the ability to not take anything personally. I know my worth. I want you to know yours.

The last thing I'll discuss is 'selling'. This is not a bad word. It's a scary word for most and often after one 'no' early on in someone's career, upgrading and add-ons become foreign territory. Get back in the game. It just takes a very minor shift in consciousness. Wouldn't it be different if you were offering your client 10 extra minutes of reflexology or sharing your gift of gel nails? Well, that's exactly what you're doing. You're offering your services and they are accepting. It's an exchange. Your skill/energy and their trust/payment. So begin this year by offering all of you. You'll be pleasantly surprised by how many say, 'yes' when it comes from a place of confidence in you.

I raise a toast to all nail stylists around the globe. Let's take our position in the beauty industry to the next level and take pride in our craft. It is an art. **S**

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