

Stiletto Salon Inc.

Owner - Christine Galeo



“ I love what I do, and because I love what I do... I'll never work a day in my life. ”

UP & COMING ENTREPRENEUR

Success Magazine: Christine, what does success mean to you?

Christine Galeo: Success means that I can go to work every day and de-stress. It is the ability to touch and change people's lives daily.Q

SM: Where did you work prior to opening Stiletto Salon?

CG: I managed the Salon at Complexions Day Spa.

SM: What drove you to go out on your own and open your own business?

CG: Well, I have worked in numerous salons and I didn't like what was happening to our industry. I wanted the ability to grow myself and my staff based on education. I recognized the need to offer our guests not only amazing hair, but great customer service. I was tired of what everyone else was doing and wanted to offer something different and edgy. I aimed to build a creative, yet non-intimidating environment for our guests while focusing on quality rather than quantity.

SM: When did Stiletto Salon open?

CG: We opened our doors November of 2006.

SM: What was the most difficult aspect of preparing for that day?

CG: I would have to say the paperwork—getting the proper licenses, insurance, negotiations with the building—while traveling to people's homes to maintain their hair while the salon was being constructed.

SM: Did you have a business plan? How were you able to get the funding needed to start?

CG: Yes, I had a rough plan, but I also learned a lot along the way. I was fortunate to have the use of a company called Quest Resources, which is supported

by Redken to finance supplies and furniture, as well as a business loan.

SM: What sets Stiletto Salon apart in the industry?

CG: Where should I start? First, I have to say our team. Without them I would not be. We truly are a family that cares and interacts well with each other every day. I am very lucky. I invest in my stylists and I care about their wants and needs. Our professionalism and knowledge of our craft is far superior to most. Next, I would say our education. Education is huge to me, being an educator for Redken 5th Avenue. It is a requirement that all of our staff are Redken certified hair colorists, or are on the path to becoming certified—so you can guarantee we have set a standard for the work we do. We have mandatory classes once a month. Our style is different—we show our true personalities and don't conform to a specific regimen.

SM: What services do you provide, other than hair?

CG: We also provide a variety of nail services and 3-D eyelash extensions.

SM: How many stylists currently work at Stiletto?

CG: There are six of us. I intend to stay small so we can offer our guests nothing but the best, all around.

SM: What do you think is the most important quality for an entrepreneur to have?

CG: Well, for me, it's the ability to be open—to have a personality that allows you to network with others, a drive, and the dedication to grow.

SM: How do you ensure that you stay up-to-date on all the latest techniques and trends?

CG: I truly pride myself on being one of the best in the industry. I travel nationally, teaching hair color for



Redken 5th Avenue, so I often have to attend regional and national trainings. I know the latest trends before they're even launched, so I am able to deliver this information to my staff. I support education and send my staff to as many classes and shows as I can, including our monthly in-salon training.

SM: What advice would you give to other people considering starting their own business?

CG: Patience—you must have it and put your heart into it. Have passion for what you do—love your work. Don't just open a business for the heck of it. There's been a lot of blood, sweat, and tears shed by myself and my family. So, make sure you have loved ones to help and support you. It's a struggle every day, but I wouldn't give it up for the world. You have to be willing to give and take. I love what I do, and because I love what I do... I'll never work a day in my life.

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