

How to Make a Career In the Beauty Sector

Linda Hughes is training to become a nail technician in a salon in Birmingham. After a persistent job search, she was lucky, she was taken on as an apprentice. Her friend from college, Helen Simons, on the other hand, has not found anyone who is willing to take her on as an apprentice beauty therapist. Helen is now asking her friend for advice.

Helen: Hi, Linda, rumour has it that you've been extremely lucky lately?

Linda: Hi! Yeah, you're referring to me working as a nail technician in Saks Hair and Beauty? It took me five months, though, to get the job. I sent my CV to salons all over Birmingham and the neighbouring towns as well. The response was negative: "We're not taking anyone on at the moment". Hard, isn't it, for young people to find anything these days?

Helen: It sure is, but how did you eventually convince Saks that you were the "one"? I do envy you, you know, it's an award-winning salon group, and I really think they keep in touch with the latest trends. You don't happen to know if they need a junior beauty therapist as well?

Linda: Hey, hey, one question at the time would be a good idea. Like you say, Saks is a salon group with salons all over the UK. What I did, was to check out their website thoroughly. They've got a "Careers at Saks" site, and there it was - a vacant manicure and pedicure apprentice job in Birmingham! All I did - was to fill in the form and upload my CV.

Helen: Your CV must have had something special then...

Linda: Well, I just made a google search. There are lots and lots of tips on how to write a convincing CV. The trick is to make it to an interview.

Helen: Point taken. Next question: Why do you think they chose you among all the applicants?

Linda: I've actually asked the manager of the salon why they preferred me. She said they looked for someone who seemed "hungry". By that, I think she meant someone who had the determination and will to succeed. When I got to know her on a more personal level, she told me that she had been a former school drop-out - very disillusioned. Then she accidentally came across a part-time college course in beauty therapy. She realized that it was a good idea to follow her interests and she eventually completed an NVQ in beauty therapy.

Helen: Really! Are there colleges offering part-time courses in beauty therapy?

Linda: Yes, and the college she attended had a commercial hair and beauty salon on the campus. There she gained the practical experience she needed. In the salon, she became familiar with day-to-day tasks, like taking bookings and performing all sorts of treatments - waxing, facials, nails, tinting and spray tanning. And above all, she got to know how to speak to customers. To potential employers, experience of working in a salon is essential, I think. When my boss left the college, she was ready to work in a variety of salons.

Helen: Do you know which college she attended?

Linda (*showing her on her phone*): Yes, look, here is their prospectus.

Helen (*impressed*): This is definitely something for me. They are offering part-time courses for already trained beauticians and hairdressers; what about a course in gelish nail, intimate waxing (hmmmm...) and bridal and prom hair?

Linda: And my boss could not praise her tutors enough – they were very skillful. The lectures were fun, too – remember the boring classes at Birmingham College?

Helen: You really made my day, Linda. Thank you for cheering me up a bit. I think I will make an online application.

Linda (*laughing*): You're welcome - after all, what are friends for?

