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Salon Efficiency Expert
Bryan Durocher

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This week

- BTC TOP TEN: TEN WAYS TO LIGHTEN YOUR LOAD**
 In danger of blowing a fuse? Two experts—Bryan Durocher and Giulio Veglio—help you lighten up.
- BELIEVE IN YOUR OWN PERSONAL BALANCE**
 James Morrison considers the letter "B" in the next installment of his series on balance.
- THE MANY FACES OF BEAUTY**
 Stylist Debbie Rodriguez has a calling to help and now she's building a salon in Kabul, Afghanistan.
- BTC MEMBERS TALK BACK: "WHAT I LEARNED FROM 9/11"**
 Family, freedom and life's blessings, big and small, top the list as BTC members look back.
- EARN YOUR MBA (MASTERS OF BEAUTY ADMINISTRATION) AT REDKEN.COM**
 Redken's "Business Connection" program is now an online tutorial. The company's Maya Carvalho gives you the scoop.
- WELLA OPENS WORLD FLAGSHIP STUDIO**
 Here's the lowdown on the hottest new spot in New York for seminars and workshops from Wella, Sebastian and Graham Webb.

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By Kate Hahn

If you're an owner/operator, then you're probably in danger of blowing a fuse. Being a hairstylist, manager, accountant, marketer, retailer, recruiter and sometimes maintenance specialist can max out your circuits. Head off a power failure. Lighten your load and brighten your life with these ten tips from **GIULIO VEGLIO**, owner, **CENTRO BELLEZZA**, Clifton Park, NY and **BRYAN DUROCHER**, success coach, **DUROCHER ENTERPRISES**, Miami, FL. They'll help you flip the switch from silly to sane.

Find an Outlet

"I used to be the salon General. I cut hair, made coffee, did laundry, and was always asking people what needed to be done," says Veglio. "I thought my business wouldn't run unless I was there directing everything." Most owner/operators feel the same way. "They're afraid cutting their hours means red ink," says Durocher. But he cites a recent survey from SaleMetrix, Inc. a Meriden, CT research firm that tells another story. Of the owners that responded, 77% work behind the chair full-time, 15% part-time, and 6% never touch a comb. The ones who feel the most successful? The 6%. Veglio joined that group after a serious accident left him temporarily unable to maintain his fast pace. During his recovery, he learned his salon could thrive without him. "If you don't recharge, you can't give your best self to others," says Durocher. He suggests taking four hours one day each workweek to decompress. Post a list of fave activities on your fridge. During time off, don't preplan, just choose one and do it. Ramp down and watch your biz amp up.

Light Up the Room

You can't illuminate an entire house by depending on just one fuse. Take time to develop your people, and you can stop working double-time as both the engine and back-up generator for your business. "Make staff as good, or better, than you," says Durocher. Not just as stylists, but as business brains too. Early on, Veglio took his best stylists and promoted them to managers. "But then I realized I was pulling good people off the floor, and creating another me." He talked to his staff and found they had strengths they wanted to use in the salon. So he divvied up jobs according to passions. Now everyone shares the workload, with individual stylists taking charge of categories like new talent, education, makeup and more. "Your employees are grown-ups. They each have strengths. Let them self-manage, and you'll have more of a team," says Veglio.

Get on the Grid

"Success happens by planning, so establish a schedule," says Durocher. Block out your time in advance. "Set goals either the night before or that morning," says Veglio, who does a mental review of his schedule during his a.m. workout. To create a time

grid, Durocher suggests asking yourself these questions: How would you like your day to be? What do you want to accomplish? When do you have the most physical energy or best brainpower? "If you're a morning person, tackle heavy-duty jobs first," says Durocher. "It's a good idea to begin with what is hardest for you. That way, your day gets easier as it goes along." In addition to planning tasks, prep for clients. Look at the day's roster. Next to each name, jot down service and product recommendations - and keep the list with you. Track how well you stick to your schedule. If some jobs are taking longer than you expected, it might be time to delegate.

Power Up

When you see those piles of paperwork on your desk, it can be overwhelming. But putting off dealing with them just creates more stress. "Don't procrastinate," says Veglio. Make those bills, invoices, schedules and memos less intimidating by organizing the tasks in terms of priority. Veglio recommends taking care of at least ten of those papers each day. "The danger of putting off certain tasks is that you end up distracted when you are with your clients," he says. When you're cutting hair, you don't need to think about cutting checks. Putting a dent in your workload, even if it's a small one, allows you to focus when you are behind the chair. And get percolating along with that first pot of coffee. "When you arrive at the salon, skip those morning chat sessions where you relate every detail of what you did the night before," says Veglio. "Instead, grab some java and plan your day." By the time you start that first whole head of highlights, you'll have a head start on paperwork.

Plug In

Keep your business up and running by making meetings a habit. Veglio's salon holds a roundtable meeting once a week to update staff and management on salon news, and get status reports on projects. Besides group get-togethers set aside specific times to meet with individual employees. "The average owner is interrupted 90 times per day," says Durocher. "You can alleviate this if you make it clear that stylists can book appointments with you to discuss concerns and needs." Plan uninterrupted periods to meet with sales reps, too. You can't make good decisions about product orders while working on clients or telling your new colorist he can't take a sick day to go surfing. Make your receptionist an ally. Designate specific weekly time slots for reps or one-on-one staff meetings, and let him know that those are off-limits for anything else. "Always share with staff what's going on in your business," says Veglio. "They need to know your vision to be able to carry it out."

Go Solar

The noonday sun burns brilliantly. Let those midday beams be a reminder. If you want to shine all day long, take a lunch break. "There's this idea in the salon world that we work eight to eight, with five minutes standing up in the back room to eat our lunch," says Durocher. "But this doesn't make us more efficient." You're better off taking time to stop and smell the flour tortillas. Even if you don't dine, step outside the salon enviro, and think about other things. Insist that the whole staff - even those with a martyr complex - take 30 minutes to chomp chow or stomp the streets. This keeps you - and everyone else - as fresh for the day's last client as the first. Durocher describes one salon that instituted mandatory lunch breaks, and soon saw a change in everyone's attitude for the whole workday. "You know that time is coming up," he says. "So even if you're stressed, you can look forward to the break."

Conserve Energy

If Thomas Edison had done his own housework and bookkeeping, we might not be enjoying the light bulb right now. "We can't do everything. We have to learn to ask for help," says Veglio. "We're all afraid that it is a sign of weakness, but it's not." In fact, Edison and many other famous folks could stay focused on doing their job well thanks to the support of other professionals. "The most accomplished among us hire specialists," says Durocher. Even if you've already delegated tasks to your staff, you still need additional support. Start with a salon manager. Veglio has two: one for the front end who oversees inventory and other business tasks, and one for the back who works with personnel resolving conflicts and helping employees plan

schedules and set goals. "Even your manager gets too stressed out if she has to do everything," says Veglio. Hire an accountant, a publicist, even a personal organizer. You already have a trade; you don't have to master another one to succeed. "If it isn't business building or money-making, hire someone else to do it," says Durocher.

Get Wired

Surround yourself with supportive people. "Care for yourself by choosing to work with individuals who are positive and professional," says Durocher. Make every relationship win-win. Vendors are a key group. "Stick with one or two good ones," says Veglio. "Saving two cents on a brush isn't worth it if you spread your business out too much." Become a loyal customer, and vendors will help you with marketing and merchandising your products. Plus, dealing with a select group cuts down on paperwork. Sever ties with vendors who make you feel like they're doing you a favor. The same goes for difficult clients. You don't have to trim your self-esteem along with their hair. Durocher shares the story of a stylist who raised her prices 100% and lost half her clients - making the same money with twice the free time. And cut loose troublesome employees. "There is both an emotional and financial bottom line," says Durocher. If a relationship isn't working, ask yourself if it's really worth the energy to continue.

Shine Brighter

Take some time away from the chair, and make it count. "Work on the business, not in it," says Durocher. Use a two-pronged approach: schedule hours to stay current with both the art and commerce sides of the salon world. Durocher recommends that instead of coming in on your day off to do that MBA stuff, dedicate another workweek day to it. Yes, an entire eight hours. Sure, this means you give up some of your snipping and highlighting appointments, but if you use your office time to work on promotions and goal setting you can make your salon grow. And stay current with trends and techniques. Beauty business manufacturers are always looking for ways to save salons time. So go to shows and seminars. In the long run, the hours you spend in the classroom will actually save time in the salon. Durocher tells of one of his clients, a salon owner, who reluctantly went to Haircolor USA. The owner thought it would be a waste of his time. He'd been to many shows and believed there was nothing new to learn. Surprise! He discovered a foiling method that leaves him with an extra 15 minutes between each client.

Prevent Shock

Okay, it's time for lights up on your less stressful life. But is everyone in your salon ready? "Choose one or two of these changes, and implement them first," says Durocher. Give your staff plenty of notice. And remember, it won't be a perfect transition. "You will always have challenges and obstacles," says Veglio. "Keep an eye on your vision, not someone else's, and you will succeed." He points out that we are often in search of confirmation from others that we are doing the right thing. "But you just have to be confident," he says. "Know what you want." What most of us call "mistakes," he terms "discoveries." "These changes are part of create a culture and working as a team," says Veglio. "If you do this, there's no way you can fail."

Veglio, the man who once couldn't leave his salon, recently moved with his family to Orlando, Florida where he plans to open a Paul Mitchell school. "I haven't worked full time in my salon for months, but the team is doing great," he says. "Before, I made them count on me for success, now they count on themselves."



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