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TIPS TO TEMPT TALENT TO YOUR BUSINESS

Stefania Rossi, Director, Stefania Rossi Recruitment

Dear salon owner,

Do you know that terrible feeling in the pit of your stomach? The one you get when you discover that a member of your team's leaving and you've now got a vacancy to fill?

Salon owners everywhere have sleepless nights worrying about finding good quality candidates to join their teams. But you don't have to be one of them.

I'm **Stefania Rossi, a Professional Beauty Awards Employer of the Year winner**. Let me share with you the secrets of my team-building success.

We all know just how important it is to have a strong, talented team around us. So when a valued colleague leaves, it hits us hard. Where are we going to find a decent replacement these days?

As both an award-winning salon owner and a health and beauty recruitment specialist, I'm always hearing about the lack of talent in the beauty industry.

I don't buy it.

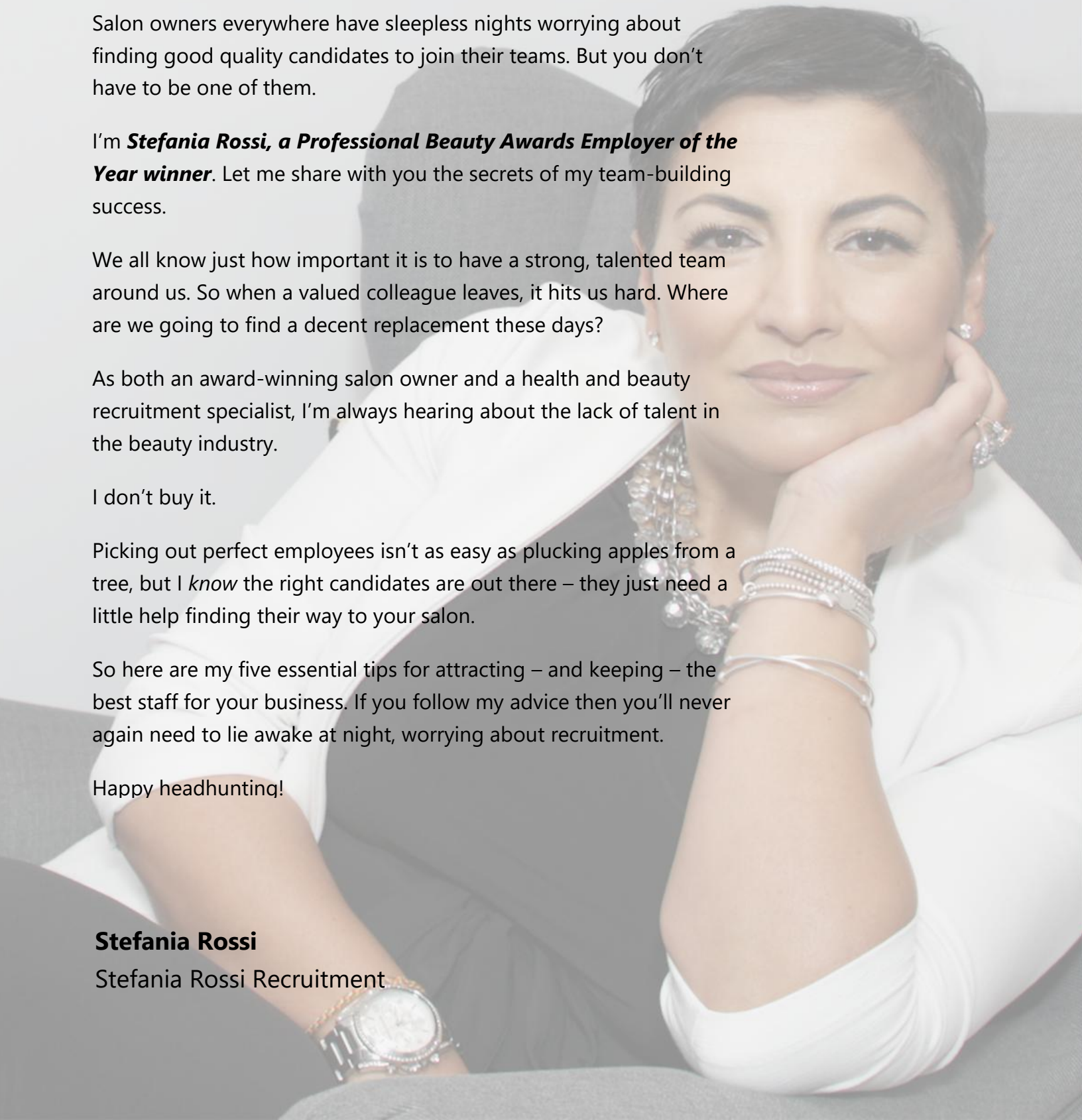
Picking out perfect employees isn't as easy as plucking apples from a tree, but I *know* the right candidates are out there – they just need a little help finding their way to your salon.

So here are my five essential tips for attracting – and keeping – the best staff for your business. If you follow my advice then you'll never again need to lie awake at night, worrying about recruitment.

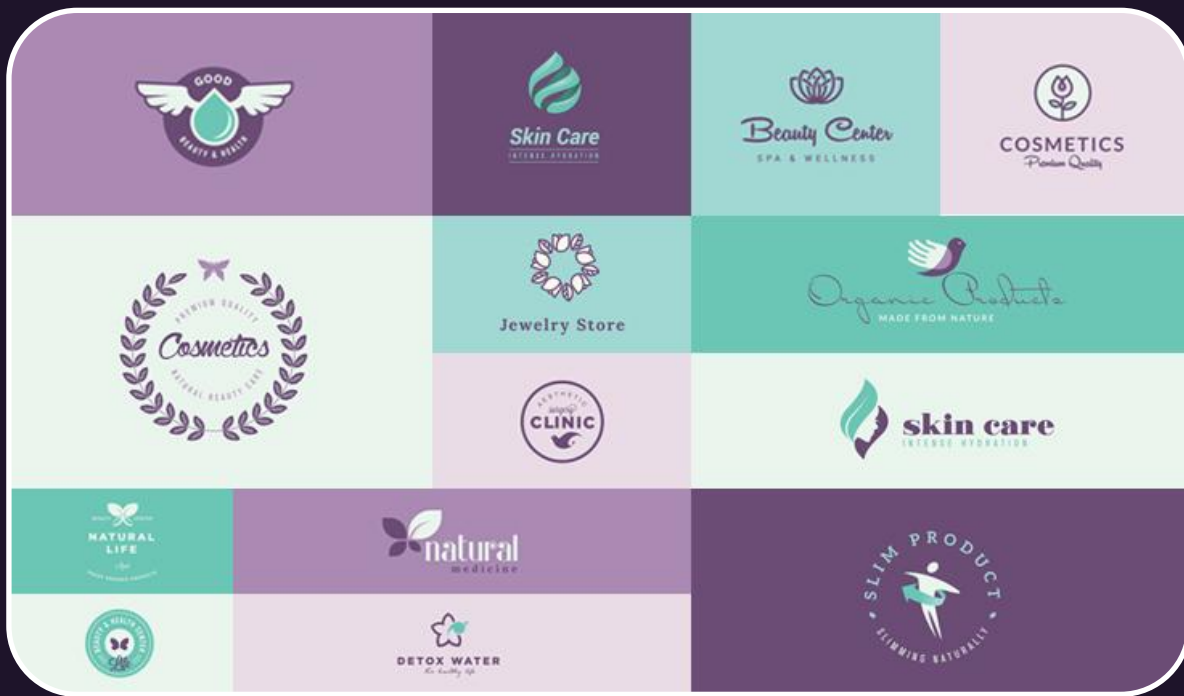
Happy headhunting!

Stefania Rossi

Stefania Rossi Recruitment



1. Build your brand



If you've got it, flaunt it. Whatever makes your business stand out from the crowd, be sure to shout about it all the time. Whether you're speaking to clients and staff, sending monthly newsletters, placing ads in local magazines, or posting to social media, every single interaction should be recognisably YOU.

That means *always* using the same logo in the same way, *always* banging the drum for your business' unique attributes and *always* communicating with a consistent, reliable personality – until the whole world gets exactly what your identity is and why they love it so much.

Be open and honest in your job ad too. Get candidates fired up about your brand, be crystal clear about the skills and attributes you demand and explain just what the reward will be for the amazing applicant you expect to take on. Anyone considering your vacancy should know exactly what to expect from you – and exactly what you expect from them.

2. Create an enviable environment



There's only so far words can take you. You might talk the talk, but if you don't walk the walk as well, you'll soon get found out.

Setting the right environment doesn't just mean having great wallpaper and shiny new equipment – although that helps. It means leading a culture where every member of your team shares in your success and is committed to sticking around and helping you achieve your goals.

Gaining a reputation as a great place to work makes it much easier to attract the very best talent. If you value your people for offering outstanding quality, showing respect to others and taking individual responsibility, then that's also the sort of person who'll want to come and work for you.

Your business should wear your values on its sleeve. If your team are always smiling, then so are your clients. Who wouldn't want to be a part of that?

3. Invest in development



Personal growth is a fundamental human need, but many owners get nervous about training their staff. They fear that they'll shell out to upgrade employees' skills, only to watch them walk out the door as soon as they earn their certificate. This isn't my experience.

Providing opportunities to progress and develop can raise loyalty and lower staff turnover. It's a real win-win, with tremendous value for both sides – they get the chance to flourish and advance their career, you get motivated employees better qualified to take care of your clients.

Not every team member can become a salon manager in six months, so it's important you discuss your development plans and make it clear what you can, and can't, offer right now. But if you can show high-calibre, prospective candidates that self-improvement and career progression are alive and kicking in your business, they'll be even keener to join you.

4. Recognise great work



Everyone has a basic desire for financial security and to know when they're doing a good job, but not everyone likes to be rewarded in the same way.

It's crucial you understand what makes your therapists tick and give them the recognition they deserve. There's no silver bullet, no one-size-fits-all method for showing your appreciation, you need to think on your feet. For some people, a commission structure that rewards upselling to clients might fuel their fire. For others, training courses or on-the-spot incentives work best.

Make sure your staff know they'll be rewarded consistently for their discretionary effort – vouchers, flowers, chocolates, discounts, flexible working and nights out are all popular – and never, ever underestimate the power of looking someone in the eye and saying, "Thank you."

Use the interview process to find out what motivates each applicant and to show them just how much importance you place on rewarding positive performance.

5. Perfect your interview process



When you offer a distinct brand that's a great place to work with continuous development for well-rewarded staff, you have no shortage of great candidates beating down your door with their CVs. And once you know you're selecting from the crème de la crème of the health and beauty profession, your interview process becomes a two-way conversation, as you check each other out, making sure you're the right fit for each other.

Work hard to get the right candidate for your business, but also work hard to be the right business for the best candidate. Don't be afraid to "sell" your work environment to interviewees. You *do* want your first choice to say yes, don't you?

To be sure of recruiting the best person, your interviews should be fair, but not easy. You'll be swamped by applications, so it's essential to conduct the first round of interviews by phone. A quick call will soon weed out the timewasters. After that, invite your shortlist to meet with you.

Use a consistent set of questions that draw out everything you need to know about each applicant while you read between the lines – did they make a great first impression? Have they done their research? Do they ask relevant questions?

And then, here's a twist that reveals so much, ask two members of your team, armed with the exact same questions you asked, to conduct a second interview. Not only will you benefit from their different perspectives, but you'll catch out the bluffers who are making up answers. Plus, you'll find out how your interviewees handle the stress of this unusual idea.

Finally, don't *ever* appoint anyone on the basis of words alone – let them show you their stuff and put their technical skills to the test. Hiring a nail technician? Let them do some nails. Recruiting a hair stylist? Well, you get the idea. Get them to meet the rest of the team, too. After all, you're going to work together towards the same aims, part of one, big, successful family. You need to all get along.

From the author, Stefania Rossi

Hi there, I'm Stefania.

I've gained over 15 years' experience in the recruitment industry and have a proven track record of sourcing top talent for some of the most famous hotels, restaurants and hospitality businesses in the world.

From my specialist position, I gained so much valuable insight into business ownership that I decided to put my knowledge to the test. So, a little over four years ago I bought a failing beauty salon and resolved to turn it around.

The results were swift and sensational. The de-motivated team I took on are now helping me lead a prestigious, profitable salon. Within two years, I'd collected the Professional Beauty Employer of the Year award and the IIAA Salon of Excellence award. My talented team are passionate, constantly developing and delivering high quality care to our clients.

As a result, I'm an in-demand speaker at the biggest, global health and beauty events and a regular contributor to Professional Beauty magazine.

There was no magic wand. Achieving such an incredible transformation has taken significant belief, hard work and commitment. But the tips and tricks I've learned as a recruiter have been key to my success.

Now I'm passing on my expertise to other ambitious salon owners like you. I want to help you match your business needs to the very best talent available through my unique and personalised recruitment support.

No more putting an ad in the local paper and crossing your fingers: I have access to the most talented professionals in our industry and will connect the right individual with the right business.

If you'd like to know more about how I can help your business be as successful as mine, please get in touch: stefania@stefaniarossi.co.uk. It's time you took the guesswork out of recruitment.

Best wishes,

Stefania Rossi

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