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CLARION REVIEW ★★★★☆ BUSINESS & ECONOMICS

Trade Secrets of the Successful Hairstylist

Allison Bridges
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Not many books offer a 100 percent money-back guarantee, but Allison Bridges does for her clever little volume, *Trade Secrets of the Successful Hairstylist*. Bridges knows from personal experience that a stylist can earn more money and work fewer hours by adopting some common-sense strategies.

Bridges participated in the apprentice program at the prestigious Vidal Sassoon salon in New York City. Once out on her own, she quickly became frustrated with the cyclical nature of the work and time spent waiting for no-show appointments and walk-in customers. After purchasing her own salon, Bridges had to come to grips with the realities of the business. With support from friends and colleagues, she learned to maximize her time in the salon along with maximizing her take-home pay. Within two years of purchase, Bridges's salon increased sales by 75 percent.

The text is written in a conversational style. Bridges has coached a number of stylists in her strategies and this book follows that approach. She shares her personal story of how she came to her main business strategy: attracting and keeping elite clients. Bridges defines the elite client as one who always pre-books appointments. By focusing on this group, a stylist can better manage time and forecast income. The author stresses the value of goal setting—personal and professional—and provides tips on how to develop and use goals in a practical manner. Strategies to attract the elite customer and sell salon services are provided, as well as simple record-keeping tips and formulas to forecast earnings.

Bridges documents her personal success as both salon owner and stylist, which allowed her more time for family and managing other sideline businesses. While she presents sales figures in both real dollars and percentages, stylists in other parts of the country will need to keep in mind that Bridges operates on Long Island, New York, where fees for personal services are likely higher.

The volume's packaging is attractive, but its small size may be problematic for libraries where thin books are easily lost on shelves. It appears this is a revised edition (an earlier version came out in 2009) but it is unknown what, if any, changes were made.

When Bridges was entering the workforce, she thought it would be a great idea to have a book similar to *Trade Secrets* distributed to stylists once they earned their license. Now she has filled that gap. Her money-back guarantee promises a sales increase within thirty days of using this book. It seems likely that a determined, focused stylist could achieve this target following Bridges's advice and strategies.

MARY CRAWFORD (December 19, 2012)

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