



The Ultimate Growth Playbook for Beauty Businesses

How to build a resilient business and set the stage for expansion
with Debbie Miller



- 03 The secret sauce
- 04 How to cultivate a world-beating culture
- 05 How to build a beauty assembly line
- 06 How to create an evergreen client experience
- 07 When to open a new location
- 09 It's go time
- 11 How Boulevard can help
- 13 About the author
- 14 About Boulevard

The secret sauce

How do you know your beauty business is ready to grow? Ultimately, only you can say when the time is right — but there are milestones and a methodology to the process.

This guide is going to give you both. The first three sections cover how to get ready to expand, and the last section is all about figuring out if you're ready.

Strap in.

It's going to be a fun ride.



How to cultivate a world-beating culture

Before you take over the beauty world, you need to build a culture you can replicate. While it's certainly easier said than done, there is a formula to developing your formula: Define your values; systematize your training; formalize the feedback process; get your recruiting docs ready; and establish inclusivity guidelines. We know. It sounds like a lot. But we've broken down each piece for you below. Let's jump in.

01 Know thyself

What principles should serve as the north star for decision-making? Before you hash this out with your business's key stakeholders, get clear on what matters to you. These values can be aspirational to some degree, but they need to come from an authentic place. No one ever built a sustainably successful business without knowing who they are.

02 School time!

To expand on your success, you need to delegate authority to people you fully trust. A big part of creating confidence comes from having a formal employee training process —especially for crucial roles. How you choose to deliver the training is up to you. Documents, live presentations, and instructional videos can all be effective depending on the audience, so take some time to consider what format your staff would like the most. Although some companies go all-in on production quality, don't let perfect be the enemy of good. A simple video recorded with your laptop will usually suffice.

Pro tip

World-famous investor Ray Dalio has put a lifetime of wisdom on understanding, recording, and communicating your workplace values in his book, [Principles](#). While the principles he uses at his company might not be for you, **his process will undoubtedly help you discover yours.**

Pro tip

If you could use a little help with training, give Boulevard Academy a try. Boulevard Academy was created exclusively for Boulevard partners. This platform onboarding feature includes dedicated programs for beauty business managers, owners, receptionists, and service providers. **We guarantee it will improve your training process.**

03

Help wanted

Expansion on the horizon? Get ready with a set of stock job descriptions. Writing these out can be difficult — especially in a pinch — so do future you a favor and tackle this task now.

For some tips, check out Indeed's [how-to guide for creating an effective job description](#). The tech company has been in the employment space for almost 20 years, so they know a thing or two about crafting a listing that grabs eyeballs.

04

Set the bar

As tricky as feedback can be for managers to give and staff to receive, it's essential to growth. No matter who they are, people can only learn if they know what works and what doesn't. Keeping them in the dark about their performance isn't helping anyone.

So create a consistent, transparent, and fair review process. This should help your employee understand how they're contributing, what their goals are, and how they can continue to grow professionally. If done right, it's one of the best ways you can increase company morale.

05

Everyone matters

While fair hiring practices and equitable treatment have always been essential to good business, the past few years have put a spotlight on diversity and inclusion. As you think through your policies, you should consider getting feedback from everyone on your staff — especially those that come from historically underrepresented groups. It will help ensure your practices reflect real people's preferences.

Pro tip

Another great way of prepping a talent pipeline is to **build relationships with local beauty schools**. We've found this approach creates smooth transitions for new employees and makes it easier for businesses to build the culture they want.

Pro tip

Objectivity is a pillar of an effective review process. We built the Staff Performance Report feature to **make running data-based reviews easy**. It provides individual performance metrics on hours booked, service revenue generated, new clients, and much more.

Pro tip

If you could use a quick primer on effective diversity and inclusion practices, check out [this article by The Harvard Business Review](#). It provides **five evidence-based policies** you should consider testing at your business.

Key Takeaways

Build a job description library:

Write out descriptions for essential positions.

Develop diversity and inclusion efforts:

Understand how your organization will ensure everyone's humanity is fully respected.

Get clear on your values:

Determine your business's core principles.

Formalize employee training:

Develop a consistent process for preparing key players.

Establish a performance review process:

Create a clear and fair employee feedback system.



How to build a beauty assembly line

Now that you've developed a culture you can scale, it's time to cut the procedural fluff. If you're ready to build a lean, mean business, then this section is for you. We'll cover how to document, templatize, and automate your organization to the next level. It's not for the faint of heart. But neither is the beauty business.

01

Create your company bible

Alternately called a "[Culture Code](#)," a digital handbook is the source of truth on business operations and company culture.

If executed well, your handbook will crystallize your organization's values, give staff a quick reference on routine tasks, and explain how to efficiently onboard new hires. In short, this is where to put a lot of the company values we talked about in the section before this.

02

Templatize me, Scotty

One of the best ways to increase efficiency and improve standardization is to templatize any document types that your staff use regularly. While having your employees start from scratch allows for creative expression, it also opens the door for errors and organizational headaches.

Instead, build templates for client notes, reports, and any other key content types. It will save everyone time, and you a lot of late nights.

Pro tip

When you're building your digital handbook, consider using tools like [AirMason](#) or [Notion](#). These solutions **provide your culture doc with searchable, wiki-like functionality**. AirMason can also track whether staff have read or signed the document.

Pro tip

[Google Workspace](#) has a powerful Template Gallery feature that allows you to build templated documents, spreadsheets, presentations, and more. **If you're looking for a cost-effective and easy-to-use solution**, it's a solid choice.

03

Hire robots

As much as we'd like to think otherwise, AI and machines just do some things better than people do. From payroll to reporting, there are many processes that no longer need to be so hands-on. Make a list of repetitive administrative tasks and prioritize tech upgrades based on how much they could save time. Then, start shopping for solutions.

For some help during this process, we suggest checking out our guide [Building Your Beauty Tech Stack: 5 Steps to Lay the Foundation for Expansion](#). It provides a comprehensive breakdown of the best tools for each aspect of your business.

Pro tip

Boulevard's platform **makes reporting, scheduling, etc., fast and easy**. If you'd like to see how our automated solutions can make your business's operations run more smoothly, [reach out today](#). We'll get you set up with a demo in no time.

HOW TO BUILD A BEAUTY ASSEMBLY LINE

Key Takeaways

Develop a digital handbook:

Record what makes your business special.

Templatize important document types:

Reduce errors and accelerate productivity.

Automate at every opportunity:

Technology is your friend (we promise).



How to create an evergreen client experience

You might not like McDonald's, but the fast-food giant pioneered many practices that are now pillars of modern business: like the importance of delivering a consistent, quality customer experience. It's a principle that helped fuel the company's worldwide takeover. The following best practices will help you bring that level of consistency to your clientele. It's just another step on the path to your beauty empire.

01

Leave nothing to chance

On the path to mastery, improvisation always comes after the basics. Instead of relying on your staff's instincts to guide them through a sale, make sure they know the right language to sell products and services.

Build, test, and iterate on sales scripts and have your staff practice with you and each other. With the proper training, your employees will rarely fumble for the right word to close a deal.

02

Consistency is everything

Your brand has to remind people of who you are, and it can't do that job if it's inconsistent.

Do your website, social media, signage, and physical location match up visually? If they all look like a different designer has developed them, it's time to revisit your branding. This can be an expensive process — and it will definitely require time — but there is simply no substitute for a beautiful and coherent brand aesthetic.

Pro tip

Marketing masters Hubspot have put together this comprehensive guide to creating sales scripts. While it focuses on sales calls, their advice is directly applicable to in-person conversations. It's work, but the time you invest upfront will directly impact your bottom line.

Pro tip

Make sure to regularly audit your on-and offline marketing for consistency. While you can tailor the collateral you use on each channel to suit the medium, they still should fit together when set side by side. If they don't then your brand is only confusing your audience.

03

Digital is critical

A seamless online booking experience is essential to any growing beauty business. If your current system lets you down, or you don't have one set up yet, then [reach out](#). Our platform's self-service booking will have your clients singing.

Pro tip

To ensure you've got a great system, **you have to put it to the test**. Try the online booking experience yourself and book via cold-call. You can even ask a friend to book at the counter for an added perspective. Make sure to jot down any problems or points of friction because it pays to get this process right.

HOW TO CREATE AN EVERGREEN CLIENT EXPERIENCE

Key Takeaways

Use sales scripts:

Your staff shouldn't be searching for words to seal the deal.

Unify your branding:

Everything about your aesthetic should work together, everywhere.

Make booking seamless:

Online booking is the one method to rule them all.



When to open a new location

Okay, with all that work behind us, it's starting to feel like you're ready for big-time growth. But how do you know? The answers you give to the following questions will help you determine if now is the right time to pull the trigger.

Are you profitable?



Don't take on another lease until you're well in the green on your current location(s). Take the time to prove your business model before you start trying to replicate it. It's much easier to optimize and expand than vice versa. Plus, healthy profit margins will also make you an appealing loan candidate, should you need the option.

Another useful measuring stick is a [13-week cash-flow model](#). The model can help you assess the sustainability of your operations, understand your capital needs, and address any issues before they derail your growth plans.

Is your waitlist growing?



If people are lining up around the (proverbial) block to book with you, they're likely to follow you to a new location. Here are some concrete metrics to ensure you've got the demand you need:

- 1. Your utilization rate** should be staying just at or above 80%. If your stylists aren't fully booked, you aren't ready to open a new location.
- 2. Do you already double-shift your chairs?** If the stylist to chair ratio is still 1 to 1, you're simply not at capacity.

Can you clone your top talent?



Healthy financials and growing demand mean your brand has legs, but you can't deliver your trademark service without people. While every role is essential, it's a good idea to have some managerial and stylist talent in mind before you greenlight a new location. Having someone you can trust at the helm of the next location is invaluable, and you can't run a business without stylists.

Here's one of those places where it pays to have killer training programs: Although nothing fully replaces experience, you can shortcut the development process with quality onboarding. This also ensures you're cultivating a crew aligned with your principles and goals, as hiring outside talent without training can lead to a culture clash.

It's go time

From culture to client experience, this guide has covered everything you need to know to grow with confidence.

If you define your brand, hone your processes, hit your numbers, and do some smart recruiting, then this should be exciting: You're going to crush it!

As you prepare to take that leap, [let us know](#) if you could use some support on the tech side. Our platform was built to help your business achieve profitability at scale without losing an inch of sanity. And we'd love to help you reach your goals.



How Boulevard can help

Need a tech partner that can help you get to the next level? Our beauty business management platform will give you a foundation for expansion:

Self-booking:

Let clients book appointments from optimized time slots to maximize your revenue and stylist productivity (plus, the booking widget actually looks like your brand and lives on your site for a consistent client experience).

POS & payments:

From hardware to software, our all-in-one payments platform has everything you need to create seamless checkout experiences.

Scheduling:

Create client schedules that reduce downtime and minimize appointment clusters.

Reporting:

Generate customizable reports that grant a deeper understanding of your data.

Client management:

Draw on previous visits, purchases, social media profiles, and more to offer the best experience for each client.

Loyalty programs:

Build relationships and retain clients by providing rewards for long-term loyalty.

Offers:

Create perks and benefits that mesh seamlessly with the Boulevard platform, from gift codes to holiday specials.

And much more!

About the Author

Debbie Miller is Boulevard's Customer Success Manager. Her role is to ensure that Boulevard's partners reach their full potential and profitability. Over her 35 years in the beauty industry, she has served in leadership roles at brands like L'Oréal, Ulta, and Shortcuts. From overseeing operations to designing training programs, Debbie has worn just about every hat in the business — and she's had the opportunity to share the insights she's gathered over her career with tens of thousands of salon professionals. Since day one

she has been driven by passion: She loves the industry and the professionals in it, and there are few things that make her happier than seeing those around her succeed. That passion has found a true home at Boulevard, where Debbie's focus is on helping our partners achieve their dreams.



Debbie Miller,
Customer Success Manager,
Boulevard

About Boulevard

Boulevard offers the first and only client experience platform purpose-built for appointment-based, self-care businesses.

From initial booking to final payment, Boulevard's modern, easy-to-use platform empowers you and your staff to deliver personable, enjoyable experiences that keep clients coming back. Founded in LA in 2016, Boulevard has earned the trust of thousands of salons, spas, medspas, and other self-care businesses across the nation by delivering simple yet powerful technology and the best-in-class support they deserve.

[GET A FREE DEMO](#)

MAKE A MOVE ON YOUR MARGINS WITH BOULEVARD:



16%
More services
booked

71%
fewer no-shows &
late cancels

18%
More retail value

24%
More gratuity
from clients

*Average impact T+90 days after switching to Boulevard. These are estimated results based on aggregated customer data, results are not guaranteed. Please keep in mind that actual results may differ based on a number of factors, including market, client base, geography.

[JOINBLVD.COM](https://joinblvd.com) →

