

# Beauty Link

## Barbering

**Gainful  
Employment  
& Borrower  
Defense to  
Repayment**

**Marketing an  
Updated Barber  
Curriculum: Why  
Does it Matter?**

**How to Attract  
& Retain  
Millennials in  
Barber Schools**

# The 21st Century Barbershop

BY TRACY NUGENT

**TODAY'S BARBERSHOPS ARE** much different than those of our grandfathers' generation, where you would find clean-cut men behind the chairs, only servicing men and boys. Barbers of the 21<sup>st</sup> century are diverse; displaying their individuality through appearance — tattoos, piercings, gauges, mohawks, non-traditional hair color — and capable of servicing anyone who sits in their chairs.

Clients, much like barbers, are no longer segregated; they are male, female, and transgender. "It doesn't matter what goes on under the cape," is a favorite saying among the Wahl Education and Artistic Team (WEAT). As an industry, we drop the boundaries dictating that cosmetology is about women and barbering is about men. Rather, learn techniques to accommodate every client.

Education has a new meaning in the current world of barbering. Studying at school to obtain your license is just the beginning — effective schools need to offer students more than the basics to prepare them for success. It is necessary for a curriculum to include enriched cutting programs that equip students with the industry skills they need as they enter the field. Wahl Men's Method undergraduate cutting program has been working to accomplish this; when its students graduate, they are prepared to work with all hair textures and have the mindset to complete any haircut.

Today's barbershops can be old-school or modern, chains or franchises. Some even have VIP clubs

attached to them. This new business model requires a new way of thinking. No longer do barbers just focus on cuts and shaves; they take additional classes in art, finance, business, marketing, sales, and entrepreneurship. This empowers them to become well-rounded business owners, creating product brands and franchising shops.

The goal is to combine talent with business skills for unlimited possibilities. It takes time, a plan, and continued education. It's important to learn how to run a shop and manage a team; to understand retail management and financial positioning. Barbers shouldn't back themselves into corners by limiting themselves to technical skills. Continued education in these areas will help them achieve success.

To be successful in the long term, barbers need to be competitive. But competition doesn't always require competing in battles — it could mean competing with yourself. As Zig Ziglar said, "You were born to win, but to be a winner, you must plan to win, prepare to win, and expect to win." The first step is choosing the right school, seeking education to enhance one's skill set, and seeking advice from professionals (not just anyone on social media) in cutting, business, marketing, finance, etc.

When it comes to our industry, segregation and limitation with tools is in the past. For example, I have used Wahl clippers to cut all lengths of hair for over 20 years now — even long hair. It's not about gender, but rather texture, density, and the desired end-result.

The desire to prepare for what is next and to seek knowledge about all areas that affect my business have worked well for me. Barbers should look at the big picture and work toward it. They should know the right techniques, and take their passion to new heights — it is an amazing feeling. Once you start, you can't stop! Think outside the box and with no limits. It takes work, but knowing where to focus is the key to success.

## About Wahl Clipper Corporation

Since 1919, with the invention of the first practical electric hair clipper, Wahl Clipper Corporation has been the leader in the professional and home grooming category. For more information about Wahl Men's Method, please visit [wahlmethod.com](http://wahlmethod.com).



**Tracy Nugent** is currently an Education Specialist for Wahl Men's Method. Tracy helps take Wahl Men's Method to the next level as the driving force behind sales and education at the school, salon, and barber level.