



From both sides of the Nail curtain!

Im sure you have all heard the good old saying that competition is healthy, and it really is no matter what it is that you do. Just think about it, every day of our lives we are competing in some way or the other, whether it's competing in business against another salon, another nail technician or in our personal lives, we have to except that it is something we all do and why do we? We do it in order to strive and better ourselves so that we can be the best at whatever it is that we take on or do and that we can stay at the top of our game. So why is it when we get put into a competitive environment, that actually says it's a competition we go to pieces? Lets take a peek at both sides of Nail curtain and hear what some top Nail experts and professionalns have to say, these are all people in our industry who has been on bothe sides, as a competitor, winner and judge, no better than to hear it directly from "The Horses Mouth" or should I say the Nail Professionhals!

The Health, Beauty and Wellness industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the world to date and the Nail industry is very much a part of that. Today nail salons are offering a multitude of different services and clients are no longer visiting the salon to have just a basic manicure and pedicure, they want to be offered more specialized up to date and innovative treatments. Therefore nail stylists need to be well educated and adept with all the elements to provide clients with efficient, safe and professional services. This places immense pressure on salons to strive and maintain extremely high standards to meet the needs of their clients, who in turn expect the highest quality expertise and service from their nail stylists.

What better way to put your skills to the ultimate test than by entering a competition!

The Professional Beauty competition has been running succesfully for the past 9 years now and has grown from strength to strength with more and more competitors competing every year. New and exciting categories have been introduced to keep up to date with the latest trends in the industry, as well as a Professionals category, specifically for previous competition winners, and Professional Nail Stylists to compete at their own level, leaving the competition open for and paving the way for new emerging talent. Many competitors who started out a few years back, participating in their very first competition, have gone on to eventually win and also participate in competitions internationally. Remember, they also had to start somewhere, so be humble enough to learn from them and other professionals in the industry. It takes perseverance, skill and determination to succeed at anything as long as you keep trying!

Competing can be quite daunting even for the most experienced Nail Stylist but also very rewarding, there is no doubt that it will assist you in acquiring better skills and is probably one of the best ways by which to assess yourself and your techniques, setting higher standards within the industry. It is the most invaluable way to gain further experience. Most Nail stylists competing for the first time do so not knowing what to expect and are not always as prepared as they should be, each time you compete you will learn what to do and what not to do. It is vital to be fully and properly prepared well in advance and will benefit you in so many ways, not only to be more relaxed and focused on the actual day, but also give you the edge to compete wisely.

No matter how good you are at your profession, there are still a whole combination of aspects, which need to be taken into consideration. The following information has been compiled to be able to help you participate in any competition a lot wiser and more knowledgeable, it will guide you as to what to expect and what is expected from you, giving you more confidence.

First and foremost, set worthwhile and purposeful goals for yourself, remain focused on the key aspects of the competition and know what you want to achieve by competing. If it is only to win then you should definitely rethink your reasons, I am sure if you ask any competition winner if they actually won the very first time they entered, probably very few will say they did. Try not get disheartened when you don't get placed, or see it as a poor reflection of your work, but rather as a challenge to improve and perfect your skills, not only for future competitions, but also to provide better services for your clients. It is a wonderful way to gain experience and get to learn the ropes even for beginners in the nail industry, remember to compete against yourself and to take your capabilities to the limit.

Competition workshops.

In the competition class you will learn all about the various different principles that are necessary to compete. The types of competitions and categories that one can enter, what the criteria for a winning set of nails is, which products you are going to need, what to expect and what is expected of you and finally what the judges are looking for. Your work will need to be consistent and disciplined in your preparation and skills.

There are various different categories that can be entered into at competitions, make sure the one you enter is the one that you know you are skilled at. Categories may vary from one competition to another.

- Natural Nail Care or Manicures – with a written test
- Tip with product overlay – either Gel or Liquid and Powder
- Sculpting using either Liquid and Powder or Gel.
- Fiberglass
- Nail Art

There will be a couple of areas that you will need to pay attention to before attempting to enter such as:

- Rules and Regulations
- What to expect
- Competition Preparation

- Choosing a model
- Skills and Application
- Competition Set-up
- What the judges are looking for
- The rewards

The Rules and Regulations

First things first, Pre-register for the competition. This guarantees space and lets the show management know how many competitors are competing so they can plan. Once you have completed your entry form and submitted it, you should make sure to read the rules and regulations for the competition thoroughly, this will guide you to be able to prepare properly and give you the edge on the competition day. If there is anything that you are not sure of which you may or may not do and the rules do not state anything, be sure to ask prior to the competition. Should you do anything against the rules and regulations of the competition you will most definitely face the possibility of being disqualified, so do not consider cheating under any circumstances, it will not be worth it.

When in doubt find out!

Network with as many other competitors as you can - you can learn so much more from this on how to compete smart. Set a reasonable list of goals such as focusing on the purpose not the prize.

What to expect

Your goal for the first competition should be to learn the ropes so you can compete smarter the next time. As a competitor and judge and having been on both sides of the curtain, I myself have said and heard from first time competitors - "if I only knew what to expect" and the only way you learn is by doing one. Always strive for perfection and never give up on yourself!

Compete for the right reasons, take critique as constructive so that you can learn and improve from it. Even if you decide never to compete again, this is a good way to compare your work, get timesaving and technical tips that can only improve your work in the salon, which is what it is all about anyway.

I live abroad but, I have competed on an international level, as well as in my own home country South Africa more than 15 years ago, and it is quite an experience to say the least, but one which has made me grow to be a better nail tech, educator and judge.

What I have experienced through the years as a Nail Technologist and Educator from others, and from taking opportunities, such as working in international shows and entering competitions is invaluable. The key to success is to have an open mind to always wanting to learn more, to learn from your experiences and mistakes, be professional at all times and work with passion and a love for what you do.

Competition Preparation.

You may think 2 ½ hours is more than enough time to do a full set? Not during a competition, you will not believe or realize how quickly the time will tick away. Therefore preparing, planning and managing your time is going to make all the difference. Have your model help you to keep your time on track. You're in a different environment doing nails under pressure, use it wisely by spending time on the most important aspects that you need to.

If you are traveling from outside the country where the competition is being held, make plans and arrangements well in advance to ensure that you get available booking. Purchase all your products and equipment that you will be needing ahead of time and have check list to make sure you have everything when packing. It is advisable to use new fresh products and implements to ensure that products are not contaminated with anything that could cause you to lose valuable points, implements should be and look clean. Hygiene and sanitation procedures will also count towards points in the competition.

Choosing a Model

Choosing a model is probably one of the most important factors when taking part in a competition, as it could most certainly make a huge difference in how the completed set of nails look. She will be more than just a model but a "partner" not just someone you are using to win a competition with. She should be reliable and committed to you for the entire day and understand what it takes to be a competition model. She will not know what to expect of you, so it will be up to you to educate them, even if you don't know what to expect. Her nails should be manicured and treated frequently prior to the competition to maintain them in a good healthy condition. Whatever you do, do not cut cuticles the night before; in fact stay away from this entirely. If she is one of your existing clients and already wears Nail Enhancements then be sure to remove them at least three months prior, so that her nails are totally grown out, it is also recommended that you give her some home care products that she can use, to improve her nails and skin and prepare them for the competition. You not only want to bring someone who has nice nails but who is positive and who will be an asset and support to you, and take this as seriously as you do, someone who will make a commitment to you completely. I have seen some models that travel with competitors and think it's a free ride to do as they please, and in a competition situation you certainly do not need the added stress.

Here are some things to consider when choosing a competition model, also points to save time and getting her prepared before the big day:

- The natural nail bed should be healthy and pink and must be longer than wider.
- The natural nails must be flawless and even in length.
- No white spots, hot spots or electric file marks or nail biters. These problems will not earn you better scores.
- Hands must be attractive, with their hands and nails in a good shape and condition.
- Request that she wear black, as her outfit can act as a backdrop when viewing the nails as you work.
- Recommend that she dresses warmly, as models usually get cold from sitting for long periods of time.
- Give her something to do during the competition - like watching the clock for you to help manage your time.
- Position her in the competition so she can see what is going on and she can report to you during the competition. Cuts and red cuticles that occur during the competition will be marked down on the cuticle score. Judges can tell when there are fresh cuts on the skin from pre-existing ones, however avoid using a model with dry or broken skin.
- Prepare and manicure the nails the evening before the competition. File all the free edges completely off for the sculptured category, leaving slight corners to catch the forms under when applying them.

- For the tip and overlay category file the free edges a little less, making sure that when the judges turn the nails over, no natural nail can be seen from underneath.
- Pre-fit the tips if you are doing for a Tip and Overlay to make sure you use the correct tip type and sizes for her nails. No pre-blending of tips is allowed.
- Always have a backup model in mind just incase something happens to your original one, you never know what could happen so do not leave things to chance.
- Explain to her how the day is going to proceed and where she will need to go.
- Tell her what is to be expected while the judging is being done (under a curtain – as they cannot see what the judges are doing)
- They need to listen clearly to what the judges instruct them to do.
- Definitely let her know that she cannot go to the bathroom during the competition and until after the judging is done. This should be done before and after the competition.
- She will need to stay for the awards program, incase you win, judges and competitors will want to see the nails and also photographs will most likely be taken.
- If you were to win explain to that she will need to accompany you on stage and cross her hands over her chest for the photos so that they can be seen clearly.

Choose someone very wisely, look for a team player, take care of her and she will take care of you, as it is going to have to be a team effort to make it worthwhile and enjoyable for both of you. Offer her free products and treatments or maybe a gift or something to show your gratitude. If she works out to be a good model and partner, and you produce good work from their nails, you may want to use her again, so keep a good ongoing relationship with her.

Competition set-up

What are you going to need on the day of the competition? Have a list prepared at least one week prior to the competition and check it the day before, the last thing you need is to be running around either the day before or on the day because you are missing something. Try and be as prepared as you possibly can be with all your products and equipment all ready to be set out as soon as you are allowed to enter the competition area. Be organized and you will be less stressed, there is nothing worse than feeling rushed and stressed with your heart pounding in your throat just before the competition is ready to begin.

Pack a kit that has everything you could possibly need.

PACKING LIST:

- Fresh clean terry towels - you will need about 2-3 towels
- Paper table towels or salon place mats
- Trash bin
- Table Lamp – this is imperative, as the light at conference centers are not usually appropriate for competition work and can make a huge difference to the nails you produce.
- Extension cord - you may need one.
- Manicuring bowl or spray bottle - you need to soak and cleanse the nails because you cannot leave the competition area to wash. Most competitors bring a flat Tupper ware container that submerges the entire hand to plump it up.
- Soap - some competition do not allow soap so first check the rules
- Nail wipes

- Acetone or soak off solution and bowl incase you make a mistake and need to soak off a nail. It can happen so be prepared.
- Nail Brush
- Dappen dishes
- Products – make a list of these, in whichever system it is that you will be working with.eg: liquid and powders, gels, wrap system, tips or forms and any others that you will need.
- Gel lamp and extra bulbs if you are doing Gel
- Implements – Pusher, Curette, Tip cutter, Scissors, Nail cutters
- Sculpting brushes.
- Disinfection unit or system.
- Files and buffers - bring at least five of each that you will need to use. Using new files throughout will give you an even playing field for buffing and you won't waste precious time with worn out buffers.
- High Shine Buffers - I personally like the Creative Girlfriend for the ultimate high gloss finish.
- Red polish - cream only. Suggestions - OPI Red , Creative - Company Red. EZ Flow and Essie also have a few colors that are very good.
- Cuticle Oil - always have it with you and clarify if you can use it - this is the category that will definitely disqualify you if you use cuticle when not in the rules.
- Corrector pen or brush - this is to clean up the polish. A synthetic short pointed gel brush works really well to get into the tight areas and to go around the cuticle area with once the polish is dry.
- Hot water bottle or heating pad to keep your model warm.

The Competition day

Have your model wear warm clothing in cold weather your model will be sitting still for along time, especially if the competition is taking place in a cool climate. Use a heated pad or hot water bottle this will ensure that she stays warm, especially her hands to prevent the nails from turning blue, as this will certainly not look attractive during the judging process.

Bring your rules and regulations with you to make sure that you are fully aware of all the rules. Get a good night sleep the evening before; it is definitely not advisable to go out partying all night long, as you will not cope. You will need all your wits about you to produce the best nails that you possibly can. Make sure you know how to get to the area or place where the competition is being held, arrive early and get set up so you're not stressed. Keep your stress level to a minimum, have fun and meet top gun competitors. You will need to be patient and considerate so plan on staying the entire day, once the allocated time is over the judging will take place in the various different categories. If you expect the judges to be fair and judge your nails according to the effort and work that you have put in, you will need them to be relaxed and give them the time to do so.

There will be floor judges appointed especially to check and award points accordingly to the following aspects, which will be the pre-judging, such as:

- **Your Appearance**

Dress for success, you will be judged on the way you present yourself, dress as professionally as you would in a salon environment, preferably in a uniform, minimal jewelry such as a small watch, wedding band and stud earrings. Hair should be neat or

tied back away from your face if it is long. Dress code is important especially as the industry is trying to take a step to a more professional approach and we need you to contribute to setting the standards that are needed.

- **Nail station set up**

It is important to make sure that all your products are ready and set out at your nail station prior to the competition starting, so that you do not need to go looking in your kits for anything. All implements and products should be set out neatly, be in their original containers and bottles, and be clearly marked to see what the technician is using. Containers should be clean and well presented on the table.

- **Safety procedures**

Working safely is important to make sure that neither the nail tech nor client is at any risk of being exposed to products, we recommend that you wear safety glasses, and if the client or nail tech wishes they may also wear a surgical mask to prevent over exposure to vapors. Do not leave products open to spill.

- **Using the correct procedures.**

While you are working floor judges will observe how you proceed with and perform the service on the client, your application procedures and techniques.

- **Consultation**

You will be expected to complete a consultation form with your client, which will be checked and marks awarded

- **Sanitation and hygiene.**

You will need to bring some form of disinfection system with you, to clean your implements and files with after you are done, this needs to be visible at your table. Antibacterial soap, spray bottle, hand sanitizer, disinfectant liquid and soaking unit, implement storage unit, clean fresh towels, salon placemats, small bin, and whatever else it takes to make sure it shows that you take "Universal Sanitation" seriously.

- **Presentation**

Finally your overall table presentation can make a difference, make your station look as neat, tidy, professional and attractive as you can.

If you don't take all these points into consideration it could mean losing marks, and therefore be the deciding factor between second or first place.

Skill and Application

Practice - A Nail technician may have entered many a competition feeling confident and sure of their skills, but don't rely on that alone. It is virtually impossible to win a competition without practicing or following the guidelines, which we have set out for you. I have entered a few myself and the two that I did win was due to constant practicing, the times I did not, I knew that as soon as I sat down in the competition arena, that I was not prepared well enough or ready for the competition to do as well as I would've wanted to. But it should never ever stop you from going back and trying again, but keeping in mind where you went wrong the previous time and working diligently to improve on that.

You will need at least a couple of weeks to practice, do not leave practicing to the last minute, such as only a week before, as it just will not be sufficient time to prepare you to feel confident enough to do well or even win a competition. Use the opportunity while working on your clients to practice as often as possible, each time paying that extra attention to detail, and a different area, make sure that you are being exceptionally critical of your own work, and aim to perfect that.

A clean sculpting brush for either gel or liquid and powder applications is imperative to doing a great set of Nail Enhancements, the last thing you need is a brush that is clogged with old product or that is damaged and can affect your application skills.

Don't worry about what the next person is doing, worry about focusing on doing your best work. The score sheet will compare your work for you. On your score sheet will be the placement and score so even if you come in dead last only you and the judges will know it.

I recommend that when doing a liquid and powder or even a gel category that you use pink and whites, there are points awarded for the smile lines, if you don't you will get a lower points and can affect the total outcome of your total score.

You will be judged on the following criteria according to the score sheets.

- **Consistency** – is going to be the key to your success and you will need to take care to ensure this in every area of your work. Do not leave anything to chance. Each and every nail that you produce should be and look the same, in length, shape, form, C curve and overall profile. It will really help you on the day if you are confident and able to create beautiful nails every time, and if you know that you can be as good as anyone else.
- **Technique** – The techniques that you use to apply your products with will save you precious time that you need for finishing off. No matter which system you use you can apply your skill accordingly. The way you apply your product will not only affect the beauty of your nails but also take off undue pressure when doing the finishing stage, especially when you need to do this in the given time. Practice your product placement and mix ratio skills to give you the confidence to perform to the best of your ability on the day of the competition. Remember that each product brand will have their own specific instructions to follow with product application, make sure you follow them according to the way you have been taught or instructed, to get the best results.
- **Finishing** – This is the ultimate part in the competition and can mean either losing or gaining a good number of marks, the secret lies in applying your product as perfectly as possible to eliminate too much filing.
Take extra files with to the competition, you don't want to be caught up with a file that does not work. When buffing and shining I use a new buffer for each and every nail to ensure that I get a smooth scratch free surface with a high gloss shine. I find this is an area where many nail tech's bomb out in, either because they have run out of time or because their buffers are worn out. The finished surface should be like glass and you should be able to see a mirror image of yourself.
Finish within the given time frame and do the best nails you know how to do.

What the judges are looking for

You have 2 ½ hours to complete a perfect set of thin natural looking Nail Enhancements that have, smooth edges and surfaces, beautiful upper arches and C curves, with no cut cuticles. What is considered to be a perfect set of nails? That is a question that has been posed by many nail techs, we are all different and also see things differently. There is a famous saying that goes "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder" In this case judges are given very specific criteria and areas to look for when judging competitions. Their jobs are not easy, it takes a

keen attentive eye, and they need to be as fair as possible and award marks according to what they need to look out for.

Judging takes place behind a closed curtain where neither the model, or judge can see one another, the models are numbered so that they do not know who's nails they are judging, this way judges cannot be biased.

A definitive score sheet is compiled for the judges to score with and they need to follow that. Every single criteria is scrutinized with utmost care to make sure that the correct amount of marks is awarded to each point, and then added up at the end by a separate panel that will then get the final score, which will reveal the winners.

Remember these Enhancements will be much thinner than those that you will do for your clients in the salon and will probably break soon after the competition, but that is what the judges are looking for.

The following are the Criteria and points that the judges will be looking out for. These points apply to all three Nail Enhancement systems with the exception of a few points, which will be taken into account when judging.

- **Consistency** – All ten nails should be consistent and the same in all the various points that are seen on the score sheet, so you will need to pay a lot of attention to fine details, use whatever methods you need to, to achieve the best results as long as you stay within the rules of the competition.
- **Length** – The length of the nails should be neither too long or too short and compliment your models hands. All the nails should be of the same length, from the edge of the client's finger where the nail leaves the nail bed to the tip of the free edge. Use an orange wood stick and measure out each nail accordingly to check that each one is equal in length.
- **Shape** – The shape of the nail could be chosen to be suited according to the clients cuticle shape, however it is much easier to see and judge the C curve of the nail if the nail is square or square oval. The sidewall and extension edge should form a smooth and continuous shape that is the same from sidewall to sidewall.
- **C Curve** – The C curve can be seen when looking down the barrel of the nail, it should be shaped in an even C from side to side with the product being an even thickness, it should not be too flat or too curved. The sidewalls should also be level with one another; if one side is longer your curve will not be even. By using the correct brush technique you will be able to achieve this quite easily.
- **Upper Arch or Apex** – The upper arch of the nail is normally the highest point at which the nail will make an arch. The apex is located halfway between the cuticle line and the extension edge, and the product should be placed directly between the cuticle line and the extension edge for proper balance and beauty. The product should taper from the apex to a thin edge in all directions.
- **Lower Arch or Sidewall Line** – This is the extension of the natural sidewall line and should be consistent to the upper arch. The lower arch should always be:
 - Clean and arched.
 - Follow the natural nail's sidewall line so that it looks natural.
 - Complement the overall shape and balance with the upper arch.
- **The cuticle area** – The cuticle area continues the tapered line from the apex to a thin edge, leaving a tiny free margin all the way around the eponychium and lateral folds.

A thin application in this area will produce natural looking enhancements that need little filing and have no lines or ridges showing. It is harder to achieve a thin cuticle area with gel so really pay careful attention to your product application and make sure no product touches the living tissue, it will help to manicure your models nails the evening before the competition, but remember no cutting.

- **Smile line** - When applying a French enhancement, use your white powder or gel to create a beautifully shaped smile line. The smile line should be refined with the correct placement of product for a clean continuous line, the line should continue up into the corners and arch into the centre of the free edge, forming a curve or smile line. The line should be clean and crisp with no irregularity. When doing the wrap system you may be able to use white tips to achieve this, but first check your rules to make sure. No white tips are allowed to be used with gel or liquid and powder, and not tip blenders can be used at all for any of the systems. Only pink and white powder or gel will be allowed as coloured powders do not show smile line definition as well.
- **Product application** – This is highly important and can really be a pitfall for some technicians, it starts with your tip application and making sure that they are on securely and blended in properly with no lines. There should be absolute clarity in the product, with no air bubbles. There must be a perfect definition between the pink and white product to show a crisp smile line with no shadows of product colours mixing in with one another, the backbrush method may be used to achieve this even though it is not recommended in the salon. Be careful not to drag pink product over the white. When doing the wrap system only fiberglass will be allowed, and will play an important role in this point, as the fibre must not show and should be completely transparent.
- **Surface smoothness Shine** – In most competitions a cuticle or nail oil is not allowed to be used for the finishing process, this will be stated in the rules. Use enough oil on your clients nails the evening before and let your model use it on a daily basis for a couple of weeks, to keep the living tissue surrounding her nail plate healthy and supple. For final surface refinement, new files will work best especially with the abrasive surface unclogged, however be careful of new abrasives as they can cause paper cuts, so be sure to smooth down any sharp edges. Use fine or high grit abrasives and a gentle touch with even rounded movements when performing all phases of finishing to eliminate surface scratches, It will be difficult to file out deep scratches and will also waste precious time, marks will definitely be lost for an uneven surface with scratches and flaws. Use the shining buffer to buff nails into a high-gloss shine: black to refine, white to shine and gray to super-shine. Use your table lamp to see the highlight down the nail, it should be a continuous, even line with no flaws or low spots. If you use the same method to file each nail with you will have more consistency in all your nails.
Remember: soft rounded movements and also the X filing method.

- **General appearance and neatness** - A spectacular set of Enhancements is one that is going to score the most marks. The refinement is what will ultimately make the difference between a good set, and one, which will walk the competition. The detailing is what the judges will see. The underside of the nail must be clean and free from any product, debris and dust. So make sure there is no excess adhesive under the nail or product seepage, if there is, be sure to clean it with an orange wood stick wrapped in cotton and product remover. The hands may be washed in clean water after the set is completed or sprayed with a water spray bottle, this will help to remove any extra dust and also plump up the skin on the hands a little. A properly designed and constructed enhancement is the ultimate esthetic and be sure that the nails are glass smooth!

Polished hand – In most competitions you are required to polish one hand with a red nail enamel and use pink and white product on the other to create a smile line. The judges will inform you which hand needs to be polished, it is not necessary to do pink and white on that hand as it will be covered with nail enamel.

NB: If you are participating in the tip and overlay category, apply the tips to hands, blend and shape. Complete product application and finishing on the hand that is having the nail enamel on, and apply the nail enamel, this will allow time for the enamel to dry thoroughly while you complete the other hand. The important thing is coverage, not too dark and not too light. It is best to use a middle of the road color such as a cream based red colour which is not too orange or not too blue.

Make sure you know which hand must be polished and which one not as it could mean losing valuable points or even disqualification if you get it wrong, ask if you are not sure. The following points will be marked on with the polished hand:

- **Cuticle area** - Neatness and overall finished quality. Apply this coat the same way you would apply a base coat. This entire first coat of color should be translucent and thin. Leave a tiny free margin all the way around the cuticle. Apply the second thin coat of color but this time for coverage. Be sure all sidewall edges and extension edges are covered. No enamel may touch or be smudged on the surrounding living tissue.
- **Surface finish** - The surface of the polish should be smooth and consistent with a smooth even surface. You need to make sure however that your final file finishing and refinement is smooth and perfect as any flaws will be seen through the nail enamel. You will not be able to use a base or topcoat to disguise or hide any imperfections, so don't think you can get away by not shining up these nails, as it will make all the difference.
- **Overall coverage** – The coverage over entire surface and edges will be looked at carefully. Look down the barrel of the nail at the free edge and make sure the enamel covers the free edges and sides without going underneath the tip.

- **Overall Appearance** – Presentation, workmanship and consistency will count in this point. All 5 nails should look the same with the same amount of enamel on all of them. While the enamel is drying, detail all 5 nails making sure you clean any residue from the skin and underside of the nails with a fine detail brush. Take the tip of the brush and perfect all lines, paying particular attention to a clean line at the cuticle and along both sidewalls.

Wow what a lot of things to remember, that's why we say practice, practice, practice and it will become second nature, the smallest details can make the biggest difference!

The Rewards

After the Competition - Be sure to see the winning set of nails and be professional at all times by congratulating the winner, who knows maybe one day you will be the one who is being congratulated. Collect your score sheet and get critiqued by all the judges if you can, the judges will gladly answer any questions that you may have to help you understand where you can improve your skills and where you went wrong, they will also be able to point out your stronger skills. Take note of what the judges tell you, as they have many years of experience in educating and assessing, and it could help you in the right direction for the next time. Score sheets will be distributed with placements and scores on them.

A competition should be a positive and a good learning experience. Even if you don't win you would've come out richer for the experience, and the skills that you have practiced will enhance your work. You will also develop a newfound respect and admiration from your clients for trying, which will motivate you to enter other competitions.

"I now how much encouragement I get from my students and clients, when I decide to take on a challenge, and there is nothing more satisfying than knowing that no matter win or not, they believe in you, support you and think that you're the best anyway!"

Maybe some of you are natural born competitors and some of you may need to be convinced to go ahead and take the chance. So if you have not been put off by all of this information and it has given you a little more insight, then what are you waiting for, get your entry forms and enter.

Good Luck to all who decide to participate in this challenge, you are all winners for even taking the plunge to compete..... Sonette van Rensburg (Nail Technology Educator)

For further information on competing you can go onto the nail Pro website or get the CD or book called the competitive edge. You are also welcome to email me should you have any questions: sonette@emirates.net.ae or attend our special 3 hour workshop which we will be holding on the

information and it has given a little more insight. So what are you waiting for then, get your entry form and take the opportunity!

Good Luck to all of you who decide to participate in this challenge, you are all winners for even taking the plunge to compete.

For further information on competing you can go onto the Nailpro website or get the CD "The Competitive Edge"

All information has been compiled from various different sources and has been written by Sonette van Rensburg who has been in the nail industry for 19 years and has a lot of experience on this particular topic. She has won two nail competitions in South Africa, has participated and judged in nail competitions in the UK, has written many related articles for Professional Beauty magazine and is the Director of the beautyworld Middle east Nail Competition

"So if anyone knows what it is like to be on either side of the curtain it certainly is Sonette "

Sonette shares her expertise educating nail stylist in all aspects of nail technology, empowering them with knowledge and teaching them the skills and techniques they need to perform the best and most professional services on their clients time after time!

For further information on competing you can log on to the Nailpro website or get the CD called the Competitive Edge by Vicky Peters.

Should you require any further information please feel free to call or get in touch with me via email or mobile.

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Good Luck!

