

The Shop Doctor changes your vision

Many retailers in the High Peak towns of Glossop, Chapel en le Frith and News Mills have a new way of looking at things. They have attended a series of workshops with the Shop Doctor, who has shown them how to see their business quite differently.

I've learned how to see my shop more through my customers' eyes", enthused **Veronica Wood of High Peak Flowers in New Mills** – a comment endorsed by many delegates, including **Karen Anderson, owner of Je Suis Lingerie in Glossop**. She continued, "The Shop Doctor really made me look at what I'm doing; it's definitely given me a boost."

The Shop Doctor, retail marketing specialist Diane Jackson, devised the programme for independent business owners. The 'surgeries' or workshops cover different facets of retail marketing, including cost-effective advertising and promotions activity, visual merchandising techniques - and share how small businesses can also apply the customer psychology that retail giants use.

The High Peak event was the sixth in a series of workshops held around many parts of Derbyshire during 2009; more are planned for 2010. Aimed at supporting local businesses and creating prosperous towns, the programme is part of Derbyshire County Council's Market Towns Initiative and is funded by the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP). For the business owners it means there is no charge to attend and 35 delegates from 26 businesses took advantage of this offer.

Well worth the effort

Sue Hallam from the Alternative Health Clinic in New Mills found 'Doctor' Di inspirational. "I've got lots of ideas for the growth of my business. Di gives you the drive to go forward. When I originally booked, I was free on the two days and nearer the time things cropped up which meant I had to be over in Yorkshire. It would have been so easy not to make the effort to come back for the course, but I'm so very glad I did. She was very informative and kept your attention the whole time. I thought it was brilliant."

Not just for retailers

Accommodation provider **Neil Allcock from Rushop Hall also found it very beneficial.** "Although we're not a retail business, there are many, many parallels we can draw for our business. It was so very useful because it made us realise that good



marketing works in any business and Di brought that home to us. She makes you gel your thoughts and prompts you into action. All this should generate additional business. "

Rita Pollard, from Chapel en le Frith Golf Club agreed: "You can apply so much that Diane says in so many different businesses. I thoroughly enjoyed it – I was really thinking initially, will 3 hours be too much, but I have to say the time absolutely flew by and I learned so much. Diane made it all so interesting – she's very good. It was so obvious that everyone thought the same. In fact I'm still talking about it now, almost a month later."



A good reminder

The workshops are beneficial for experienced retailers as well as newly established businesses, as **Peter Greenwood, from Glossop's Decor8 confirmed.** "You think when you get to a certain age, you know it all – but you actually forget quite a bit too, so it's good to be reminded." Tim Adlington, from Trusted IT in New Mills endorsed that same point: "It was such a useful reminder of things we'd been meaning to do – we've been prompted into action. It's good to have messages reinforced."

'Doctor' Di who is the Managing Director of Main Marketing & PR Limited, was delighted at the positive results that so many of the delegates have reported. "Our surgeries and workshops usually generate enthusiasm, I have to say, and some of the measurable results we're seeing among these High Peak businesses continues to endorse the need for independent business owners to learn my practical marketing tips and techniques that are tailored for their requirements."

Are you doing all you can to help your local businesses? Maybe your Regional Development Agency could help fund a project like this in your area. For information about how other Project Officers have succeeded, or for practical advice and ideas on growing local businesses, send an Email to: shopdoctor@retail.co.uk or call 0845 129 9948.