

Shop Doctor inspires even the most experienced retailers



The Shop Doctor, Diane Jackson has been running ‘surgeries’ or workshops for independent retailers in and around Chesterfield recently to help give their business a boost. And it seemed that no matter how many years’ experience they had, they could still learn from the Doctor!

The Shop Doctor programme was part of Derbyshire County Council’s Market Towns Initiative, funded by the Derby and Derbyshire Economic Partnership (DDEP). It has been run throughout the whole of the county, covering 28 market towns; the Chesterfield surgeries, held in The Winding Wheel, are the last in the current series.

The programme, which was free of charge to attend, explored different facets of retail marketing, including injecting great customer service ideas into business, advertising and promotions and visual merchandising. It was devised by retailing specialists Main Marketing & PR Limited and presented by MD Diane Jackson.

In an independent survey of delegates after the course Margaret Swift from Jacksons the Bakers in Chesterfield said , “I thoroughly enjoyed it. I was at Woolworth’s for 28 years, including 7 years as a Store Manager, but despite all that experience, I still found the Shop Doctor beneficial. You can always learn. I’ve now got a list of things I want to change.”



Motivational and practical

The delegates were unanimous that they had received great practical help, learned so many new things, refreshed old facts – and some were inspired to take drastic action and are looking to create a more formal association, like a Chamber of Trade.

IT man Paul Allen from A Geek commented:
“I found it really useful – I was a member of the Institute of Marketing over 20 years ago and I was amazed at just how much I’d forgotten, so it really was very good for me; it’s spurred me into action.”

Caroline Hornsby, who owns Creature Comforts in Staveley was bursting with enthusiasm after the course.



“I’ve had my own business for nine years now but I’ve got a whole new motivation since attending the course. My customers have noticed the changes I’ve made. Diane certainly gave me ways to see my business differently – and it’s very effective. Certain things I found I already knew from years ago, but I’ve never kept doing them. Like the Shop Doctor said, it’s so easy to get complacent.”

Chesterfield trader Lisa Oliver from Ye Olde Sweet Shoppe said, “I’m in an indoor market so my circumstances are maybe different to others on the course, but I found it really, really good; I learned lots of new things, and most importantly things that don’t cost the earth. I can do them quite cheaply and already can see them make a difference. The Shop Doctor gave us good, practical ideas that you can adapt for your size of business.”



“You tend to run your business by habit, but the Shop Doctor showed us how to look more at the quality of what you’re doing and to see your business from the customer’s perspective”

Steve Hinde Holywell Carpets

We should let Barry Kitts from Spavens electrical goods in South Normanton have the final say. *“I’m 75 and been in this trade for 50 years but I’ve still got the enthusiasm I had years ago. I got some new ideas – Diane gave you the tools to assess your business more objectively. I was a bit apprehensive about going, but I’m glad I did; it was very useful. I’ve put an idea into operation already.”*

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@retailsurvival.co.uk or call 0845 129 9948.

