

2026 BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES INDUSTRY LEADER ROUNDTABLE

Managing Change in an Unpredictable Landscape

Leadership insights on managing change and shaping the future of beauty, barbering and wellness

BEAUTY
CHANGES
LIVES[®]

INDUSTRY LEADER
**ROUND
TABLE**

BEAUTY
CHANGES
LIVES[®]

**PIVOT
POINT** **RESEARCH**

©2026 Pivot Point International, Inc.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Event Summary	3
Leading Through Change: Insights From Phil Le-Brun	6
Thinking About Change	7
Change and Organizations	9
Industry Alignment	10
From the Roundtable	12
Roundtable Structure/Table Topics	13
Core Theme: Creating Clarity	14
AI and Our Industry	26
Research and Resources	27
Participant Research	28
Participant Comments	32
Related Research and Resources	34
Call to Action: Industry Alignment on Standards, Story and Sustainability	35
Photo Gallery	37
Beauty Changes Lives Roundtable	38
Beauty Changes Lives GALA	44
About the Roundtable	48
Roundtable Participants	49
Roundtable Program Team	51
Organizers and Facilitators	52

EVENT SUMMARY

BEAUTY
CHANGES
LIVES

INDUSTRY LEADER

ROUND
TABLE

EVENT SUMMARY



THE CHALLENGE

The annual Beauty Changes Lives Gala brings together leaders across the professional industry to celebrate those helping strengthen the profession. Building on that spirit, the Industry Leader Roundtable was created to offer an agnostic space for dialogue, shared learning and collaborative problem-solving around the industry's challenges and opportunities.

The 2026 Beauty Changes Lives Industry Leader Roundtable at Premiere Orlando brought together leaders to explore a timely topic: **Managing Change in an Unpredictable Landscape.**

Change has always been part of beauty, barbering and wellness. What feels different today is the speed, complexity and unpredictability of the forces reshaping the industry—including AI and technology, changing consumer expectations, workforce challenges, economic pressures and evolving conversations around education, licensure, compensation and career value.

Beauty presents a unique challenge. Ours is a licensed, skills-based, relationship-driven industry built on trust, creativity, care and human connection. Traditional approaches to change do not always reflect the realities of our profession or the people who make it thrive. Technology and processes can support progress, but they cannot replace the human experience at the center of the work.

Guided by keynote speaker and facilitator Phil Le-Brun, participants explored how leaders can help their organizations adapt while also identifying what the industry must do collectively to move forward with greater alignment, adaptability and purpose.

Many of the themes discussed are not new. What the Roundtable provided was a broader context for connecting them and turning them into more actionable opportunities—both within individual organizations and across the industry as a whole.

EVENT SUMMARY

INSIGHTS LEADERS CAN APPLY

The Roundtable surfaced 11 major leadership insights:

1. AI is here—but the industry must use it without losing its soul.
2. Clarity is hard—but essential.
3. The industry needs to better understand its customers.
4. Ownership requires empowerment, information and fewer permission barriers.
5. Psychological safety and team culture matter more than individual brilliance.
6. Leaders must actively model learning, humility and curiosity.
7. Customer and community feedback must be gathered, shared and acted upon.
8. The industry must meet people where they are.
9. Smart failure requires intention, metrics and permission to pivot.
10. Technology adoption needs to live across the organization.
11. Innovation requires diversity, demonstration and new ways to measure ROI.

INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT: WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER

Beyond leadership practices within individual organizations, the Roundtable also identified opportunities for broader industry action.

The industry does not need uniformity, but it does need shared direction. Schools, salons, associations, manufacturers, distributors, state boards and professionals all influence the industry's future. Progress becomes more difficult when different groups operate from different expectations, use different language, rely on different data and define success differently.

Three collective priorities emerged as especially important:

- **Standards** – Creating greater consistency around education, licensure, terminology, definitions and real-world readiness.
- **Story** – Telling a clearer, more credible and more consistent industry story about career value, compensation, flexibility, purpose and opportunity.
- **Sustainability** – Building stronger systems to support recruitment, career readiness, onboarding, mentorship, retention and long-term professional growth.

POST-EVENT SURVEY

The post-event participant survey reinforced the themes that emerged throughout the Roundtable:

- Lack of a shared industry vision, followed by limited collaboration across the industry, were the most frequently selected barriers to adaptation.
- Workforce recruitment and retention ranked highest among the forces respondents believe will shape the industry's future, followed by technology and AI.
- Career earnings and compensation data were the most frequently identified areas where the industry needs better information and shared insights.

THANK YOU

Beauty Changes Lives gratefully acknowledges the leaders who shared their time, perspectives and experience, as well as the organizers, partners and supporters who helped make the Roundtable a success.



LEADING
THROUGH
CHANGE:
**INSIGHTS
FROM
PHIL
LE-BRUN**



LEADING THROUGH CHANGE: INSIGHTS FROM KEYNOTE PHIL LE-BRUN

THINKING ABOUT CHANGE

Our keynote established a clear foundation for the roundtable conversations that followed.

Phil Le-Brun challenged industry leaders to rethink how organizations adapt in a world where change is happening faster than traditional structures can keep up.

A central message was that change cannot be treated as a one-time initiative, a top-down program or a mechanical process imposed on people. Meaningful transformation happens when change is done with people, not to people. It must be continuous, connected to daily work and focused on learning as much as outcomes.

Several common barriers prevent organizations from adapting effectively: too many priorities, unclear communication, limited feedback, slow decision-making, excessive gatekeeping, lack of psychological safety, disconnected strategies and leadership behaviors that unintentionally slow progress.

To build more adaptive organizations, especially in the age of AI, leaders need to focus on three conditions: clarity, ownership and curiosity.



Creating Clarity

People need to understand what matters, why it matters, how success is measured and how their work connects to the organization's purpose. Without clarity, people may work hard but not necessarily toward the same outcomes.

Leaders were encouraged to focus on durable needs—the things customers and stakeholders will continue to value over time—and to communicate purpose and priorities repeatedly and honestly. The keynote also warned against “peanut butter priorities,” where organizations spread attention too thinly across too many initiatives.

Leaders must not only name priorities; they must also actively stop work that does not support them. A visible “stop doing” list can be as important as a strategy document.

Increasing Ownership

Adaptive organizations need people who feel responsible for outcomes, not just tasks. The example of the NASA janitor who saw his work as part of the mission to put a man on the moon showed how powerful ownership becomes when people connect their daily responsibilities to a larger purpose.

Leaders should clarify who owns key outcomes, move decision-making closer to those with the most relevant information and reduce unnecessary approvals that slow progress. Psychological safety is also essential, allowing people to speak up, challenge assumptions and share information leaders may not otherwise hear.

Ownership also requires better decision-making. Leaders need to be willing to make decisions with less-than-perfect information, define “quit criteria” before launching major initiatives and avoid doubling down on projects simply because time, money or ego has already been invested.



LEADING THROUGH CHANGE: INSIGHTS FROM KEYNOTE PHIL LE-BRUN



Inciting Curiosity

Curiosity is an essential leadership quality in a world where no one has all the answers. As change accelerates, leaders must become more comfortable asking questions, testing assumptions and learning through experimentation.

Organizations often train people to seek the “right” answer rather than explore possibilities. But in uncertain environments, progress depends on forming hypotheses, testing them, learning quickly and being willing to stop when something is not working.

The “monkey on a pedestal” example reinforced the importance of solving the hardest and riskiest problems first. Rather than spending time building the pedestal, leaders should first determine whether the monkey can talk. In other words, organizations should identify the biggest assumption behind an idea and test that before investing heavily in the easier or more visible parts of a project.

Implications for Industry Leaders

For beauty, barbering and wellness, the message was especially relevant. The industry is navigating rapid technology change, AI, shifting workforce expectations, evolving customer behavior and ongoing questions about education, licensure, compensation and career value.

The keynote provided a practical framework for leading through that complexity:

- Create clarity around purpose, priorities and customer needs.
- Increase ownership by empowering people closer to the work and the customer.
- Build curiosity by encouraging experimentation, learning and thoughtful risk-taking.
- Reduce organizational drag by eliminating unnecessary priorities, approvals and outdated ways of working.

Leaders must model the behaviors they want to see, especially around learning, technology, feedback and openness to change.

Organizations do not become more adaptive through structure alone. They become more adaptive when leaders create conditions for people to think bigger, take ownership, speak honestly, learn quickly and make meaningful progress every day.

LEADING THROUGH CHANGE: INSIGHTS FROM KEYNOTE PHIL LE-BRUN

CHANGE AND ORGANIZATIONS

Do Not Over-Complicate the Mission

The conversation also addressed the challenge of inclusive language. Phil cautioned against creating a mission statement that tries so hard to include everyone that it becomes generic and meaningless. The better challenge is to communicate the intent clearly and inclusively, so that people across different titles, roles and segments can see themselves in the mission.

This was an important distinction: The answer is not to dilute the language, but to clarify the meaning behind it.

Clarity, rather than complexity, is often the key to helping people understand where they fit and how they can contribute.

Technology Adoption Depends on Solving a Real Problem

A significant portion of the breakfast focused on why technology adoption remains slow, even when useful tools already exist.

Phil emphasized that technology only gains traction when it solves a problem that the intended user actually recognizes as important. Leaders may see a clear business case, but if the person expected to use the tool does not see the need—or fears the tool will complicate their work or threaten their role—adoption will remain slow.

He described several adoption groups:

- Early adopters who are naturally curious and will try new tools quickly
- Cynics who have seen many transformations come and go and need to hear consistent leadership commitment
- People who are afraid they will not be able to use the technology or that it may replace them
- A small group who may simply refuse to adopt

The discussion reinforced that technology adoption often succeeds or fails with the influential middle—respected individuals who may begin as skeptics but can become powerful advocates once they see practical value.

The key, he suggested, is not to over-focus on the early adopters or the most resistant group. Technology adoption ultimately fails when tools do not solve a problem users feel connected to.

Leaders Must Explain “What’s in It for Me?”

Phil noted that leaders often skip one of the most important questions in change: Why does this matter to the person being asked to change?

For technology adoption, AI or any transformation effort, people need to understand:

- Will this help me do my job better?
- Will it make my work easier or more meaningful?
- Will it threaten my role?
- Will I be trained and supported?
- Will I have time and safety to practice?

Without answering those questions, even strong initiatives can stall. Successful change efforts help people understand not only what is changing, but why it matters to them personally.

Organizational Structure Is Usually Not the Best First Lever

In response to questions about frequent reorganizations, Phil warned that leaders often reach too quickly to structural change because it feels visible and decisive.

His view was that organizations should focus first on mindset, behavior, mission and cross-functional work. Structure should follow after new ways of working emerge, rather than being the first solution.

Related, he discussed the value of small, cross-functional teams focused on specific business outcomes. These teams can cut across silos, move faster and create ownership around results rather than functional activity.

The discussion reinforced that organizational redesign is often most effective after mindset and behavior change have occurred, rather than as the first response to a challenge.



LEADING THROUGH CHANGE: INSIGHTS FROM KEYNOTE PHIL LE-BRUN

Do Not Abdicate AI to One Person or One Function

Phil was direct in warning against assigning AI or technology transformation to a single “chief agent officer” or technology function if that allows the rest of leadership to disengage.

His point was that AI is not simply a technology project. It is a business transformation tool that affects processes, customer experience, operations, productivity, decision-making and culture. If AI is assigned only to IT or to one executive, other leaders may avoid taking responsibility for how it should reshape the business.

A focused role can help create momentum, but the ultimate goal should be to build capability throughout the organization—not create another silo. While dedicated resources can help create momentum, AI should ultimately be treated as an organization-wide capability rather than delegated exclusively to IT or a single executive role.

AI Should Free People to Create More Value, Not Simply Cut Costs

Another important discussion focused on whether AI will eliminate jobs and how the beauty industry can position itself in response.

Phil challenged the idea that efficiency should be the primary goal. Organizations cannot “cut themselves to success.” Instead, AI should be used to remove low-value work, freeing time, attention and resources for the work that matters most.

The opportunity is not simply to reduce labor, but to elevate human work by freeing people to focus on creativity, relationships, judgment and service.

This creates an opportunity for beauty, barbering and wellness. Because these careers are grounded in human contact, personal service, creativity, trust and care, they are less likely to be replaced in the same way as more automated work. The industry can position itself as a career path where human skills become even more valuable in the AI era.

Values Must Be Real, Tested and Practiced

The breakfast also included a discussion of values. Phil emphasized that values only matter if they are meaningful, contextualized and demonstrated when things are difficult.

Values should not be website decoration. They should shape hiring, promotion, meetings, decision-making, leadership behavior and accountability. If an organization says it values respect but promotes destructive high performers, the values lose credibility.

For industry alignment, this is especially relevant. Shared values can serve as guardrails that allow greater autonomy, faster action and broader collaboration.

INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT: WHAT WE CAN DO TOGETHER

Phil Le-Brun joined the Beauty Changes Lives Board and key supporters for an informal breakfast that extended the Roundtable’s themes and focused on what the industry can do collectively to manage change more effectively.

From an outsider perspective, he noted the passion, energy, family involvement and sense of purpose he saw across beauty, barbering and wellness. He emphasized that the industry’s willingness to come together around shared challenges is itself a strength—and that its greatest advantage in an AI-driven world may be the very thing that has always defined it: human connection.

The Industry Has “a Soul” — and That Is a Strategic Advantage

Phil contrasted beauty with other industries that may have resources but lack passion or a deeper sense of purpose. His observation was that beauty has “a soul”—a strong emotional connection to people, careers, communities and personal transformation.

This matters because the industry’s future should not be defined only by regulation, school funding, technology or business models. It should also be framed around the lives changed, jobs created, communities served and human skills developed through beauty and wellness careers.

The discussion reinforced that beauty’s passion, community connection and sense of purpose are strengths that many industries struggle to create and should be viewed as strategic advantages rather than simply cultural attributes.



LEADING THROUGH CHANGE: INSIGHTS FROM KEYNOTE PHIL LE-BRUN

Unity Requires a Shared Problem to Attack

A major theme of the breakfast was how Beauty Changes Lives and the broader industry can unite diverse segments—schools, brands, wellness partners, manufacturers, distributors, associations and service providers—around a shared mission.

Phil emphasized that bringing different groups together does not mean eliminating each group's different perspective. These diverse viewpoints are a strength—provided everyone is focused on solving the same problem rather than competing with one another. The goal is not agreement on everything, but alignment around a shared challenge and a commitment to making progress together.

He suggested that the industry needs to identify a simple, unifying problem or opportunity that all segments can rally around. This requires persistence, resilience and many conversations, but there are examples from other industries—including public health—where highly diverse groups have aligned around shared goals.

Participants also discussed the importance of balancing inclusivity with clarity. While broad participation matters, a mission that tries to be everything to everyone can become difficult to rally around. The goal is not to eliminate different perspectives, but to unite diverse groups around a common challenge, opportunity or ambition.

Beauty Careers Build Skills AI Cannot Replace

Phil drew a parallel to McDonald's having to fight the negative perception of the "McJob." His point was that frontline service roles often build skills that are undervalued but deeply important: communication, teamwork, conflict resolution, customer service, problem-solving, leadership and resilience.

For beauty and wellness, this is a powerful story. Our people gain human-centered capabilities that are increasingly valuable in an AI-driven economy.

This creates an opportunity to position beauty, barbering and wellness careers as pathways for developing the human skills that will become increasingly valuable as AI continues to reshape the workforce.

The Industry Needs to Tell Its Own Story

One of the strongest themes from the breakfast was the need for the industry to tell its own story instead of letting others define us.

Phil noted that beauty has a powerful story to tell:

- How many jobs the industry creates
- How many people it gives opportunity to
- How many clients and communities it touches
- How many entrepreneurs and small businesses it supports
- How many lives are changed through education and career access

This is especially important in policy, public perception and parent/student decision-making. If policymakers or outside voices tell the story without industry input or context, they miss the real economic, social and personal value the industry creates.

A Practical Tool: Write the Future Press Release

Phil suggested a practical exercise from Amazon: write a one-page press release from the future.

For the beauty industry, this could mean writing a crisp statement dated five years from now that answers:

- What problem did the industry solve?
- Who was the customer or beneficiary?
- What changed?
- How was success measured?
- Why did it matter?

This could help create shared direction across diverse organizations and give leaders a concrete way to align around a future ambition. As a shared industry exercise, it could also help create alignment around a common ambition and a clearer vision of future success.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE



FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – TABLE TOPICS

ROUNDTABLE STRUCTURE/TABLE TOPICS

To guide the discussion, participants explored 12 topics organized around three leadership themes introduced during the keynote:

- Creating Clarity
- Increasing Ownership
- Inciting Curiosity

CORE THEME: CREATING CLARITY

TABLE ONE

What does success look like?

What will success look like for our businesses over the next few years? Does everyone clearly understand that vision—from senior leadership to the rest of the team?

TABLE TWO

Is our purpose real or just marketing?

Can we connect our daily work to purpose, or does that purpose feel like a slogan on a wall?

TABLE THREE

Are we working from today's consumer reality?

What assumptions about beauty consumers are outdated? Are we making decisions based on current behavior, or relying on old ideas?

TABLE FOUR

What gets in the way of clarity?

What barriers make it hard to create clarity across an organization? Is your mission or transformation clearly understood, and how well is it landing?

CORE THEME: INCREASING OWNERSHIP

TABLE FIVE

Where are we slowing our people down?

What approvals, checkpoints, or “gatekeeping” steps make teams feel like their judgment is not trusted? What could we remove or simplify?

TABLE SIX

What is the cost of difficult high performers?

When we tolerate “brilliant jerks,” how does their behavior affect trust, confidence, teamwork and ownership?

TABLE SEVEN

How must leadership evolve in the age of AI?

How can leaders model continuous learning by being willing to say “I don’t know” or “I was wrong,” and how will AI change the way leaders think, communicate, learn and make decisions in the beauty industry?

TABLE EIGHT

How do we learn from and empower customers?

How can we give customers more ownership of their beauty journey while treating their feedback, complaints and reviews as valuable insights that help shape the future of our brand?



CORE THEME: INCITING CURIOSITY

TABLE NINE

How do we help shape the future of the beauty industry?

How can we create an environment where leaders and employees are actively helping shape the future of the beauty industry?

TABLE TEN

How do we learn from failure?

Do we have a clear way to stop projects that are not working? How do we recognize smart failures that help us learn and improve?

TABLE ELEVEN

How do leaders foster curiosity and learning around technology?

What are leaders doing to understand emerging technologies and their impact on the industry, inspire others to explore new possibilities and learn from technology initiatives that did not go as planned? What lessons did those experiences reveal that success alone might not have shown?

TABLE TWELVE

How do we create a culture of experimentation and innovation?

How can we encourage testing, learning and change as part of everyday work while creating space for bold, unconventional ideas to be explored before traditional ROI expectations dismiss them?

The themes served as a framework for examining both organizational leadership challenges and opportunities for industry-wide progress and reflected a strong sense that beauty, barbering and wellness are at a defining moment.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – CREATING CLARITY

CORE THEME: CREATING CLARITY

1. Clarity Is Hard—but Essential

Many leaders are still wrestling with fundamental questions: clarity about what, for whom and toward what outcome?

Participants raised questions about whether the industry truly understands the realities of today's consumers, students, stylists, schools, salons and spas. They also emphasized that organizations cannot create clarity throughout the business if senior leaders are not aligned on the message, mission, priorities and definition of success.

One table framed this as both an organizational and industry-wide challenge. Clarity is difficult when different segments—schools, salons, brands, distributors, manufacturers, technology providers, state boards and professionals—use different definitions, data and assumptions. Without shared language, even well-intended efforts can remain fragmented.

Many transformations fail at the first step because leadership teams are not truly aligned on what they are trying to accomplish.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *The challenge is always: what is the real problem we want to solve?*
- *One of the hardest things as a leader is getting your vision across.*
- *People get so caught up in their areas and their tasks that they lose the big picture of why we are doing this.*
- *If the mission becomes too big, or we are doing things that no longer match the mission, you can't have clarity.*



Key implications:

- Define what success looks like before launching major initiatives.
- Use simple, concise language that people throughout the organization can understand.
- Communicate priorities repeatedly and consistently.
- Align internal leaders before expecting clarity from the broader organization.
- Avoid diluted messaging, competing priorities and siloed communication.
- Build shared definitions across the industry so data, advocacy, education and messaging can be more consistent and credible.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – CREATING CLARITY

2. The Industry Needs to Better Understand Its Customer

It was emphasized that clients are more informed, more discerning and more empowered than ever. As a result of social media, customers arrive with information, clearer expectations and broader access to products, services, education and inspiration than ever before.

Participants noted that customer attraction is no longer based only on geographic proximity. A stylist, salon, school or brand can create attraction through expertise, values, social media presence, specialization, experience, sustainability and trust.

The conversations also explored how the professional product and service relationship is changing. Brands may benefit from consumer access and mainstream retail growth, but risk weakening the professional credibility that originally built their reputation. At the same time, clients are increasingly influenced by online content, influencers, ingredients, sustainability, convenience and frictionless purchasing.

Customer insight comes from more than surveys. Leaders should use multiple listening channels, including communities, focus groups, product testing, social conversations, complaints and informal interactions.

This creates a need for a deeper understanding of customer behavior, including service patterns, product purchasing, expectations and the role of professional retail in a changing marketplace.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *They're smarter than we give them credit for.*
- *Clients have access to a lot more information today than they used to.*
- *The consultation becomes more important than the technical skill.*
- *Consumers are not just finding salons by proximity anymore. Stylists are building their own personal brands.*
- *We've always had massive friction to buy salon retail.*
- *We are still assuming sustainability is not important to our customers.*



Key implications:

- Do not underestimate what clients are willing to invest in beauty and wellness.
- Better understand where customers are buying products and why.
- Recognize that clients may know more than professionals assume.
- Help professionals educate clients in ways that build trust and value.
- Treat customer feedback as a strategic resource, not just a service issue.
- Recognize that service, retail, product recommendation and professional credibility may need different strategies.
- Reduce friction in how clients book, buy, communicate and return.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – CREATING CLARITY

3. Our Industry Must Meet Our People Where They Are

The discussion on curiosity and the future of the industry also raised an important clarity issue: The industry needs a better understanding of the people it is trying to attract, support and retain.

Participants talked about connecting with students and emerging professionals, asking them what they need and showing them that industry leaders care about their success. They also recognized practical barriers, including travel costs, family responsibilities, time constraints, confidence and financial pressure.

Participants also discussed how different generations may be motivated by different career expectations. Some professionals value stability, flexibility and work-life balance, while others are motivated by performance-based rewards, autonomy and achievement. Effective organizations recognize these differences and create systems that can support multiple definitions of success.

Meeting people where they are also means recognizing that different generations communicate, learn and engage differently. Effective organizations use multiple communication channels and approaches rather than assuming one size fits all.

Several table conversations also highlighted the differences between students entering directly from high school and those entering as second-career adults. Second-career students may bring more maturity, financial planning and intentionality, while younger entrants may need more structure, confidence-building, mentorship and support during the early years.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *Do we even know what people want the future to look like?*
- *We have to give them the forum.*
- *Meet the younger people where they are.*
- *The number one thing was building confidence.*
- *It is really hard to be curious when you can't pay the rent.*
- *Providers are hungry for mentors to help them live out their dreams in the industry.*



Key implications:

- Engage students and new professionals directly.
- Ask people about their aspirations instead of assuming them.
- Create more accessible ways to participate in industry education and community.
- Recognize that career success looks different for different people.
- Show professionals that the broader industry is invested in their growth.
- Strengthen confidence, mentorship and belonging as part of career development.
- Recognize that different entry points into the industry may require different support models.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – INCREASING OWNERSHIP

INCREASING OWNERSHIP

4. Ownership Requires Empowerment, Information and Fewer Permission Barriers

Participants emphasized the need to remove unnecessary friction while keeping appropriate guardrails. Leaders should create roadmaps, provide context, share information and then allow frontline employees and teams to act without waiting for permission at every step.

This is especially important in an industry where stylists, educators, sales consultants and customer-facing professionals often have the most direct understanding of what is happening in real time.

A deeper point from the table conversations was that management layers, reporting structures and approval processes can unintentionally slow the people who are closest to the work. Participants discussed how AI and better data could flatten parts of the organization by getting insight directly to the people who can act on it.

The conversation also elevated the value of domain knowledge. Long-time industry professionals and frontline teams often understand the nuances of salons, schools, clients and professionals better than outside executives or generic systems. In an AI-enabled environment, that institutional and market knowledge becomes most valuable when it is captured, shared and translated with context into better tools and decisions.

It was noted that we need to encourage leaders to create cultures that require less permission. When people have enough information and enough autonomy, they are more likely to feel agency and take ownership of outcomes.

Key implications:

- Move decisions closer to the people with the best information.
- Share more data and context across the organization.
- Reduce unnecessary approvals and gatekeeping.
- Empower frontline teams to experiment within clear guardrails.
- Help people understand how their work creates business impact.
- Show your people the results. Show them the impact. Show them what changed because of them.
- Capture and elevate practical industry knowledge from the people closest to the work.
- Use technology to support faster action, not simply more reporting.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *We really have to get middle management and upper management to stand down. They're in the way.*
- *We've got people who want to deliver, know what to deliver, and we say, 'Let's get another 10 people together.'*
- *Let's do it, get it mostly right, and fix it along the way.*
- *I trust my frontline people more than C-levels.*
- *People are part of it. We're going to walk through it together.*
- *Take away the mediation between data coming in, data being analyzed, and it goes straight to the people who can actually do something about it.*
- *People support what they help create.*
- *That domain knowledge is so much more valuable now.*



FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – INCREASING OWNERSHIP

5. Psychological Safety and Team Culture Matter More Than Individual Brilliance

The discussion around “brilliant jerks” generated strong agreement. Participants emphasized that exceptional performance does not excuse behavior that damages culture, collaboration, creativity or trust.

A highly talented individual who creates fear, negativity or dysfunction can have an outsized impact on an organization. Participants discussed the need for coaching moments, clear expectations and accountability when behavior undermines the team.

The table conversations added important nuance: Some difficult high performers may not be intentionally destructive. Their behavior may be driven by insecurity, lack of self-awareness, fear or the need to protect status. However, the impact is still real. Organizations often wait too long to act because they fear losing revenue, technical expertise, a large book of business or client relationships.

Participants also noted that trying to isolate or silo a difficult high performer can make the situation worse if others perceive the special treatment as a reward.

Most value in organizations is now created through teams, not isolated individuals. Diversity of thought, trust and psychological safety are essential.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *If you get someone brilliant with the wrong attitude, it just keeps increasing. It's poison.*
- *The morale goes down and her numbers are going up.*
- *You lose trust. Morale is down.*
- *Some of them are not self-aware. They don't necessarily know they are a difficult high performer.*
- *If they are difficult and not open to hearing the feedback, then it is a problem.*
- *We tried to silo them, and it hurt the culture even more because it looked like they were being rewarded.*



Key implications:

- Do not tolerate destructive behavior simply because someone performs well.
- Address “brilliant jerk” behavior before it damages the broader culture.
- Create space for people to speak up, disagree and challenge assumptions.
- Build teams with diversity of thought, experience and perspective.
- Attack the problem, not each other.
- Use coaching where possible, but set clear expectations and consequences.
- Avoid creating special treatment that signals toxic behavior is acceptable.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – INCREASING OWNERSHIP

6. Customer and Community Feedback Must Be Gathered, Shared and Acted Upon

Participants emphasized the importance of authentic curiosity, listening and creating safe spaces where customers can provide honest feedback.

There was a discussion about using multiple touchpoints—complaints, focus groups, casual conversations, digital tools, AI, social media, reviews and community spaces—to better understand customer needs across generations and settings.

It was emphasized that feedback should not disappear inside the organization. Closing the loop matters. When customers, students, professionals or partners contribute ideas, they should see how their input made a difference.

This theme connects to ownership. Feedback creates more value when people feel recognized as contributors, not just as data sources. Customers, students, professionals and team members are more likely to stay engaged when they can see that their voices have an impact.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *It really boils down to authentic curiosity.*
- *Listen.*
- *Creating safety for the customers is a really big part of it.*
- *Use those multidisciplinary touchpoints to gather from all of the places.*
- *The empowerment piece comes from closing the loop.*
- *Show them the results. Show them the impact. Show them what changed because of them.*



Key implications:

- Gather feedback from multiple channels, both formal and informal.
- Create safe environments for honest input.
- Use old and new forms of communication to reach different generations.
- Share back what was learned and what changed.
- Recognize contributors and create shared ownership.
- Recognition can be as powerful as incentives. People are more likely to stay engaged when they feel heard, valued and connected to the result.
- Treat feedback as a continuing relationship, not a one-time transaction.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – INCITING CURIOSITY

INCITING CURIOSITY

7. AI Is Here—but the Industry Must Use It Without Losing Its Soul

Several tables focused on the role of AI and technology. Participants agreed that AI is not a passing trend and that the industry needs to understand better how to use it effectively.

The opportunity is significant. AI can help with data analysis, decision-making, communication, productivity, education, customer insight and business efficiency. However, participants repeatedly emphasized that beauty is a high-touch, human-centered industry. Technology should support the work, not replace the trust, creativity, care and personal connection at the center of the profession.

A point from the table conversations was that AI may be especially valuable if it helps us, in the industry, understand ourselves. Participants discussed how AI could potentially aggregate fragmented data, clarify definitions, identify attrition patterns, support shared standards and help leaders make better decisions across silos.

At the same time, participants repeatedly cautioned that AI must be reviewed, questioned and connected to human judgment. The industry's human-centered nature is not a weakness in the AI era; it may be its greatest advantage.

AI can make individuals more productive, but that individual productivity does not automatically translate into organizational progress. To create real value, organizations still need human debate, critical thinking, collaboration and the ability to challenge ideas without attacking people.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *How do we adapt to what AI brings us and not lose the soul of our companies?*
- *You need a heartbeat and an opinion. AI does not have that.*
- *AI has the power to unify the silos of the industry.*
- *It needs to be able to tell us about ourselves.*
- *We do a really good job of letting other people tell our narrative. We don't necessarily do a great job of doing it ourselves.*



Key implications:

- Use AI to support better decisions, not as a substitute for judgment.
- Teach people how to ask better questions of AI and evaluate the answers critically.
- Avoid “my system told me this” thinking without human review.
- Use technology to remove unnecessary work so people can focus on higher-value, human-centered activities.
- Preserve collaboration, creativity and personal connection as core industry strengths.
- Explore how AI can help unify fragmented industry data, definitions and insights.
- Use AI to strengthen the industry's story, not replace the people who make that story meaningful.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – INCITING CURIOSITY

8. Leaders Must Model Learning, Humility and Curiosity

Several tables discussed the importance of leaders being willing to say, “I don’t know” or “I was wrong.”

Participants emphasized that ownership does not mean having all the answers. It means taking responsibility for learning, staying curious, supporting others’ growth and creating a culture where people feel safe to explore new ideas.

This applies especially to AI and technology. Leaders cannot ask their organizations to embrace change if they are not willing to learn, experiment and model curiosity themselves.

The table conversations added that leaders must let go of ego, fear and the need to be the smartest person in the room. Younger team members or digitally fluent employees may know more about certain tools, platforms or behaviors. Leadership in the age of AI requires the humility to learn from them.

Tables also discussed AI in education. Rather than preventing students or employees from using AI, the industry should teach responsible use, critical thinking and practical application so they are prepared for the real world.

Phil’s keynote had discussed how a leader’s shadow matters. If leaders talk about AI but have not tried it themselves or, if they say they want change but behave in ways that discourage experimentation, the organization will notice, and adoption will be slow.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *Let go of your ego. If you can’t let go of your ego, you’re not going to do anything else.*
- *I still don’t know what I don’t know.*
- *We’re not preparing them for the real world if we don’t teach them how to use AI.*
- *It’s not replacing humans. It’s making humans more efficient.*
- *Let them be smarter than us.*
- *When honesty is valued and psychological safety is present, ownership blooms.*



Key implications:

- Leaders must model the learning behaviors they expect from others.
- Curiosity should be treated as a leadership capability.
- Leaders should ask better questions of both people and technology.
- Admitting uncertainty can build trust when paired with action and learning.
- Coaching is often more powerful than mentoring because it helps people think through problems themselves.
- Teach responsible AI use rather than avoid it.
- Recognize that leadership humility can unlock more knowledge from the broader team.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – INCITING CURIOSITY

9. Smart Failure Requires Intention, Metrics and Permission to Pivot

Tables discussing experimentation and failure emphasized that failure should not be celebrated for its own sake. The goal is not to “fail fast.” The goal is to learn quickly and act intelligently.

Participants discussed the importance of clear processes, clear metrics and a shared understanding of what success looks like. Frontline teams need to understand how initiatives are being measured, when to raise concerns and when an organization should stop, adjust or pivot.

A key nuance from the table discussions was that success and failure criteria cannot stay at the leadership level. The front line needs to understand what is being tested, what success looks like and when it may be time to stop or adjust.

Failure is not the objective; learning is. Several participants suggested that organizations should focus less on failure itself and more on structured experimentation. By defining initiatives as pilots, tests or learning opportunities, organizations can reduce fear, encourage participation and create space to adjust before scaling. A single failure that leads to learning can be valuable; repeating the same failure without learning is the real problem.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *Be intentional about smart failure.*
- *It's almost like it's not failure. This is the experiment. Let's find out.*
- *Be deliberate with clear process and clear metrics.*
- *Make sure everybody all the way down to the front line understands what those metrics are.*
- *Understand what success really looks like.*
- *Sometimes failing faster is actually going to be better for the organization.*



Key implications:

- Define success before starting.
- Establish stop, continue or pivot criteria early.
- Make metrics clear beyond the leadership team.
- Encourage early feedback throughout the process.
- Reward learning, not repeated mistakes.
- Give teams permission to raise concerns before failure becomes expensive.

FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – INCITING CURIOSITY

10. Technology Adoption Requires Internal Experts and Employee-Led Learning

Participants emphasized that technology cannot simply be handed down from outside experts or IT departments. It must become part of the organization's culture and capability.

Suggestions were creating internal communities, pilot groups, safe projects and employee-led teams that can test tools, learn together and recommend practical uses.

It was emphasized that successful adoption often requires employees to help design the change itself. Rather than presenting a completed solution, leaders can share the hypothesis, invite feedback, encourage people to challenge assumptions and involve frontline employees in shaping how new approaches are implemented. This not only improves the solution, but also increases ownership and adoption.

A practical example discussed was bringing in an AI-focused intern or recent graduate to help the organization experiment and learn. Participants noted that this signaled that AI was a real priority and made it safer for employees to explore how it could help in their roles.

It was also emphasized that teams should help define the boundaries for AI use. Employees who understand the work should help decide where technology adds value, where human connection matters most and what guidelines are needed.

The importance of using AI and technology wisely was highlighted. If everyone asks the same tools the same questions, they will get the same answers. Competitive advantage will come from better questions, better judgment and better integration into real work.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *We hired a recent graduate to be our AI person, just to get our feet wet.*
- *Here's the hypothesis. Poke holes in it. Do we need to do it different?*
- *We want everyone to figure out how to leverage AI for their roles.*
- *It opened the door for everyone to say, 'This is a safe thing for me to leverage.'*
- *I wanted the team to set the boundaries for how we use it.*
- *Good leadership can draw that from the rank and file rather than direct it down.*
- *You can't deny it. It has to be measured. It has to have direction and guidelines.*



Key implications:

- Build internal technology champions.
- Create safe spaces for employees to experiment with AI and new tools.
- Let employees help shape technology norms and rules.
- Avoid treating technology as only an IT responsibility.
- Focus on practical use cases tied to real business needs.
- Use internal experimentation to build confidence and reduce fear.



FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – INCITING CURIOSITY

11. Innovation Requires Diversity, Demonstration and New Ways to Measure ROI

Tables focused on creating a culture of experimentation and innovation. Participants emphasized that innovation starts with leadership demonstration. Leaders must not only talk about curiosity; they must show it.

Participants also highlighted the importance of bringing different voices to the table, including “wild cards” who may see the issue differently. Innovation is less likely when the same people keep discussing the same problems in the same ways.

Participants noted that innovation becomes easier when ideas are depersonalized. When teams focus on improving the idea rather than defending ownership of it, experimentation becomes less threatening and learning becomes faster.

Participants added an important distinction between curiosity at the creative/professional level and innovation inside organizations. Beauty professionals may naturally be curious about technique, artistry and self-expression, but corporate structures, financial expectations and traditional ROI filters can still shut down experimentation.

Several discussions highlighted a common challenge: many organizations are trying to serve a changing customer, workforce and marketplace with systems and assumptions built for an earlier era. Adapting successfully will require rethinking not only technology and tools, but also long-standing operating models, incentives, expectations and definitions of ROI. Participants emphasized the need to look beyond traditional financial measures and ask whether the organization is directing its energy, resources and focus toward what is most likely to create meaningful progress.

Key implications:

- Leaders must demonstrate curiosity, not just encourage it.
- Bring diverse voices and unexpected perspectives into problem-solving.
- Measure ROI in terms of meaningful progress, not dollars alone.
- Use technology to free people for higher-value work.
- Create room for experimentation while keeping the organization focused.
- Spend more time in the field to understand real friction points and opportunities.
- Do not let traditional ROI filters dismiss bold ideas too early.



SELECTED PARTICIPANT COMMENTS:

- *I think of the pro beauty industry as something that is very curiosity-driven.*
- *Where are the friction points, and where are the passion points?*
- *There is what the corporate world thinks versus what actually happens at the customer level.*
- *The industry cannot keep serving today's customers and workforce using yesterday's models.*
- *There is nothing like spending time in the back room of a salon or barbershop to see what is really happening.*
- *We make the problem the problem, the idea the idea, and we all get to work on it together.*
- *How can you be innovative when you have a hammer over you?*
- *If you don't factor attention into ROI, you miss something important.*



FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – SUMMARY

ROUNDTABLE SUMMARY

After the presentations, Phil's summary connected the table discussions to next steps at both a company and industry level.

The future will require the industry to become more human, not less. AI and technology can unlock new possibilities, but only if leaders strengthen human skills such as critical thinking, collaboration, coaching, debate, creativity and judgment.

He also reinforced the importance of alignment at the leadership level. Transformation becomes difficult when leaders defend their silos rather than work together as a true leadership team. This applies not only within individual organizations, but across the broader industry.

He encouraged leaders to share more information, move faster, empower people closer to the front line and create cultures where people can act with less permission and urged leaders to recognize people's strengths, connect individual work to business impact and create learning environments where experimentation is intentional and useful.

In response to a question about uniting an industry with many segments, organizations and interests, he suggested beginning with simple, shared language:

- What are we proud of as an industry?
- What is our ambition?
- What can we do collectively that we cannot do individually?

That last question may be the most important takeaway from the Roundtable.



FROM THE ROUNDTABLE – AI AND OUR INDUSTRY

AI AND OUR INDUSTRY

AI was discussed at most tables, and participants were clear that it is not a passing trend. They see meaningful opportunities for AI to support data analysis, decision-making, productivity, education, communication, customer insight and business efficiency.

At the same time, participants emphasized that beauty remains a high-touch, human-centered industry. Technology should support the work, not replace the trust, creativity, care and personal connection that define it.

What AI can help the industry do

- Aggregate fragmented data and identify patterns across silos
- Clarify definitions and support better shared insights
- Improve communication, planning, customer insight and operational efficiency
- Help schools, salons, brands and associations ask better questions and move faster
- Create more time for high-value human work by reducing repetitive or low-value tasks

What AI cannot replace

- Human touch, trust, care, empathy and personal connection
- Professional judgment and the ability to evaluate context
- Creativity, taste, consultation, relationship-building and services
- The sense of belonging and confidence that students and new professionals need to succeed

AI Adoption: Principles and Next Steps

- AI adoption should not sit with one person, executive or department
- Build AI capability across the organization through safe pilots, internal champions and practical use cases
- Focus on solving real problems that employees, customers or students recognize, not showcasing tools for their own sake
- Let employees help define where AI can add value, where it can simplify repetitive work and where human connection must be protected
- Teach people how to ask better questions of AI, evaluate the answers critically and use AI responsibly
- Create a cross-functional AI learning group with employees from multiple departments
- Identify three repetitive tasks that could be simplified without weakening the customer, student or employee experience
- Choose one AI pilot with a clear business question, success metric and stop/pivot criteria
- Develop a short responsible-use guide for employees and students
- Ask every department to identify one way AI could improve work and one area where human connection must be protected

“

You need a heartbeat and an opinion. AI does not have that.

”



RESEARCH AND RESOURCES



RESEARCH AND RESOURCES – PARTICIPANT RESEARCH

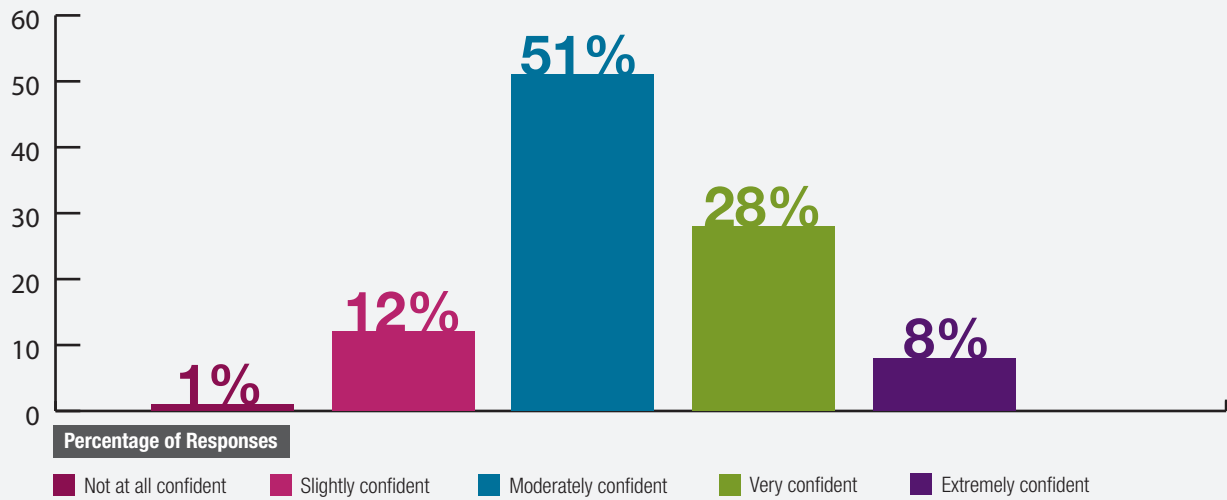
PARTICIPANT RESEARCH

To capture attitudes directly after the Roundtable discussions, participants completed a post-event survey.

Confidence in Our Future

Industry leaders expressed cautious optimism, with nearly 80% reporting moderate to high confidence in the industry’s ability to adapt to change.

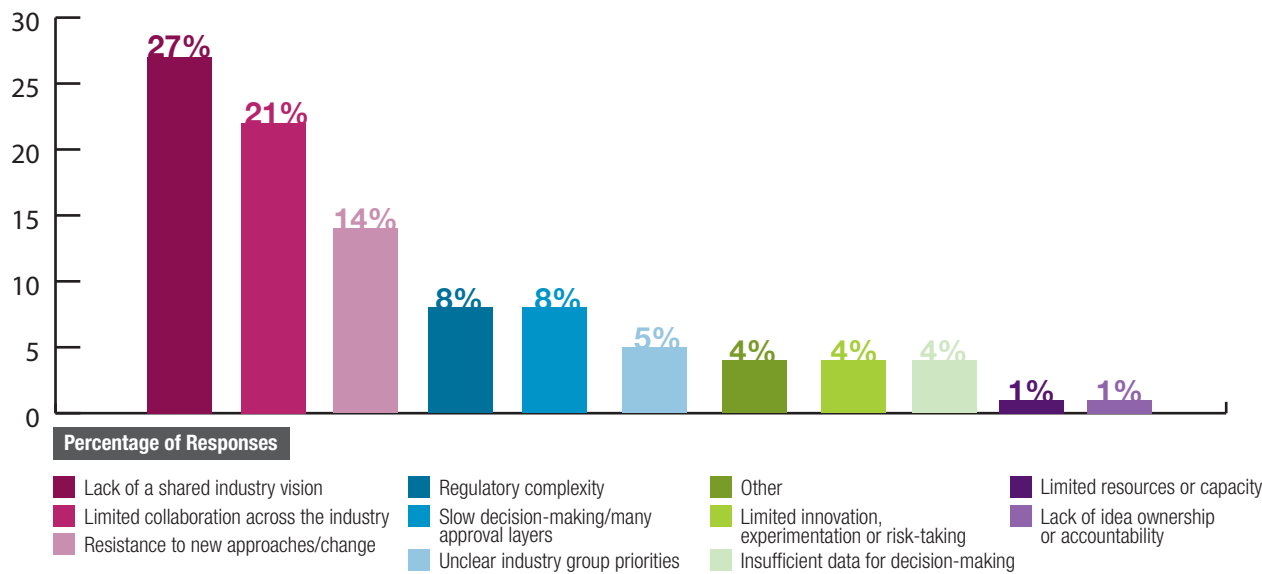
Question: Thinking about the next 1-3 years, how confident are you in the professional beauty, barber and wellness industry’s ability to adapt to change?



What’s Holding Us Back?

Lack of a shared industry vision and limited collaboration emerged as the most frequently cited barriers to effective adaptation.

Question: What is the single greatest barrier preventing the industry from adapting more effectively?

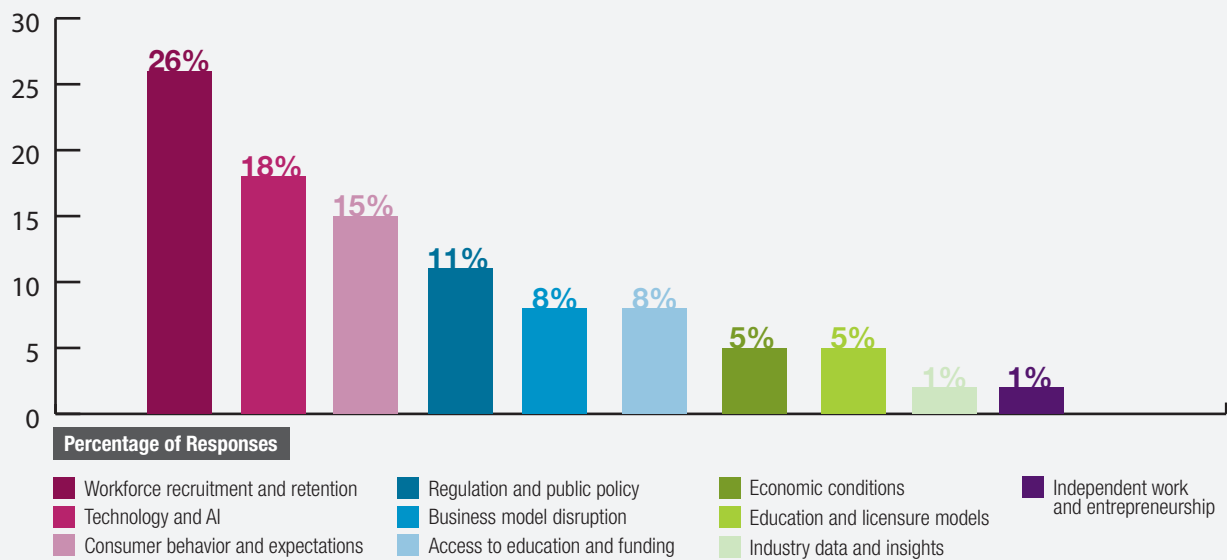


RESEARCH AND RESOURCES – PARTICIPANT RESEARCH

What Will Shape the Next 3 Years?

Workforce recruitment and retention and technology and AI were viewed as the forces most likely to shape the industry’s future.

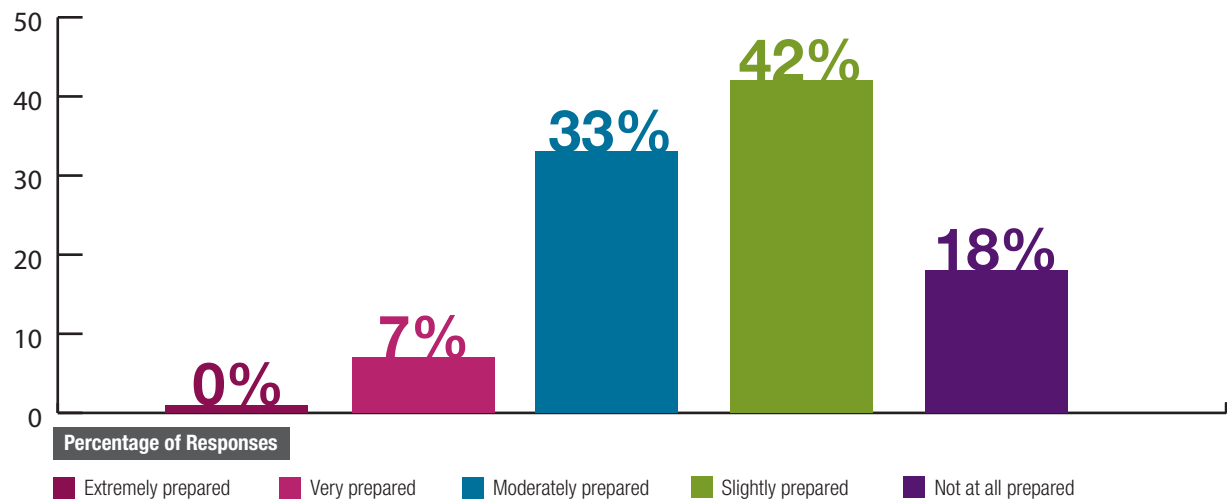
Question: Which of the following do you believe will have the single greatest impact on the industry over the next 1-3 years?



How Prepared Are We?

Most participants believe the industry is at least slightly prepared to navigate future challenges, although very few consider us very prepared.

Question: How prepared do you believe the industry is to navigate the factor you selected above?



RESEARCH AND RESOURCES – PARTICIPANT RESEARCH

Where Should We Focus First?

Respondents called for greater collaboration, stronger data, clearer standards and a more unified vision for the future.

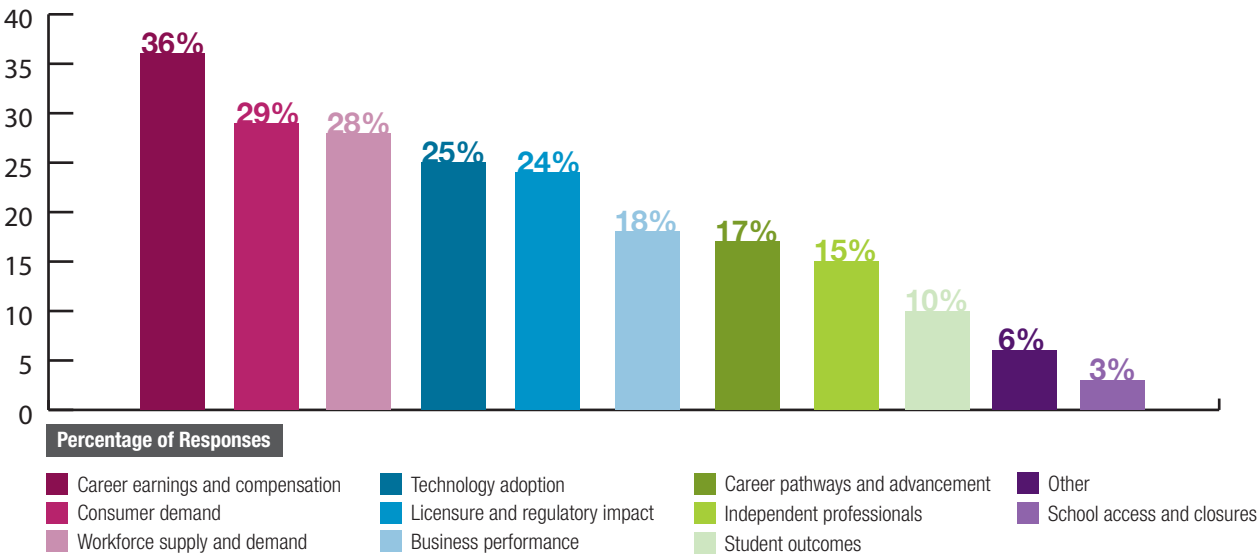
Question: What is one action the industry should prioritize in the next 12 months to better prepare for the future? (unaided responses)



Where Do We Need Better Data or Shared Insights?

Career earnings and compensation, followed by workforce trends and consumer demand, were identified as the areas most in need of better data and shared insights.

Question: In which area does the industry most need better data or shared insights? Select up to three.

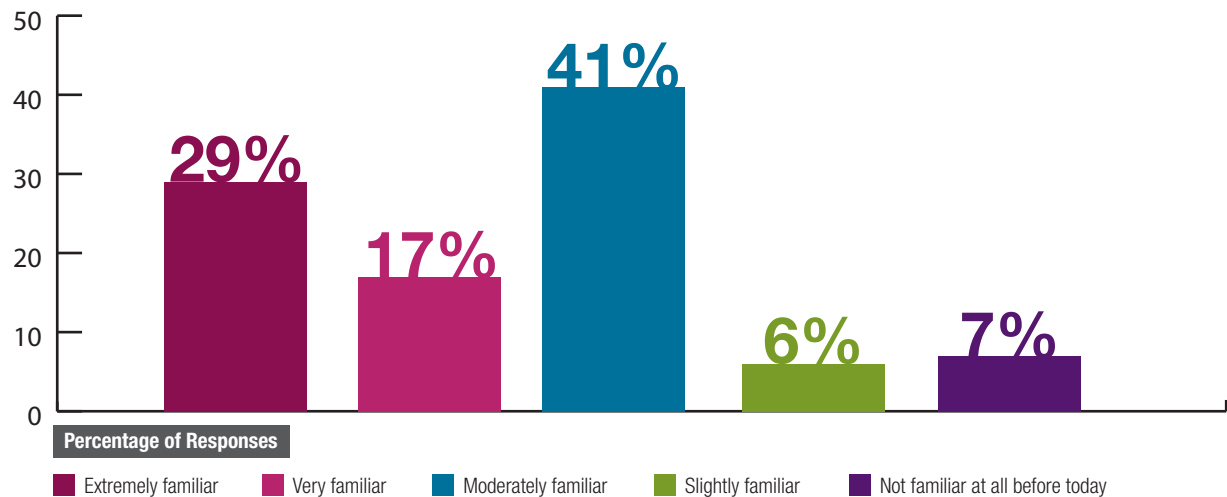


RESEARCH AND RESOURCES – PARTICIPANT RESEARCH

Understanding the Policy Landscape

Virtually all leaders were at least moderately familiar with the Department of Education rule.

Question: *Prior to today, how familiar were you with discussions related to the Department of Education earnings accountability rule?*



RESEARCH AND RESOURCES – PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

What Was Your Most Important Takeaway From Today's Roundtable?

1. Industry Alignment and Collaboration

Participants consistently emphasized that the industry has both the need and the desire to work more collectively. While the beauty industry is broad and fragmented, there was strong agreement that shared challenges require greater alignment, more open exchange and a clearer sense of common purpose.

“

- *There's an appetite for unity!*
- *We're better together.*
- *Collaboration works.*
- *Exchange is what will move this industry.*
- *Everyone in this room cares about the future of this industry, and we have the power to make a lasting impact if working together.*
- *We're not aligned as an industry but we have the desire to move forward positively.*

”

2. Clarity, Purpose and Shared Priorities

A recurring theme was the need for greater clarity: clarity about the real problems to solve, what success looks like and how day-to-day work connects to a larger purpose. Participants noted that without shared priorities, teams can become focused on tasks, departments or individual goals rather than the bigger picture.

“

- *The challenge is always: what is the real problem we want to solve?*
- *One of the hardest things as a leader is getting your vision across.*
- *How important it is for everyone to understand what success looks like.*
- *People get so caught up in their areas and their tasks that they lose the big picture of why we are doing this.*
- *Clarity is not easy in an industry that is so vast.*

”

3. Leadership, Ownership and Empowerment

Participants challenged leaders to rethink how decisions are made and how change is advanced. The strongest comments pointed to the importance of empowering people closer to the work, involving teams in shaping solutions and creating cultures where people feel ownership rather than simply receiving direction.

“

- *People support what they help create.*
- *Team approach to priority alignment and empowered decision-making from a shared purpose.*
- *In order to effect change, we have to approach our businesses differently as leaders.*
- *I trust my frontline people more than C-levels.*
- *That domain knowledge is so much more valuable now.*
- *Let's do it, get it mostly right and fix it along the way.*

”

4. Curiosity, Learning and Psychological Safety

Curiosity emerged as both a leadership behavior and a cultural requirement. Participants connected curiosity to innovation, diversity of thought, humility and the ability to adapt. They also emphasized that people are more likely to contribute ideas and take ownership when honesty is valued and psychological safety is present.

“

- *Embrace and share curiosity.*
- *Leadership starts with creating a space that allows curiosity to flourish in.*
- *Curiosity and diversity of thought will help drive us to change.*
- *Let go of your ego. If you can't let go of your ego, you're not going to do anything else.*
- *I still don't know what I don't know.*
- *Let them be smarter than us.*
- *When honesty is valued and psychological safety is present, ownership blooms.*

”

RESEARCH AND RESOURCES – PARTICIPANT COMMENTS

5. AI, Technology and Human Connection

AI was discussed as both an opportunity and a challenge. Participants were clear that AI is not a passing trend and that the industry should prepare for its adoption. At the same time, they cautioned that beauty is a human-centered industry, and technology must support—not replace—the trust, creativity, care and personal connection that define the work.

“

- *Impact of AI to our industry is inevitable, we should not ignore it but use it to lead and win.*
- *We need to be preparing for the adoption of AI.*
- *How do we adapt to what AI brings us and not lose the soul of our companies?*
- *You need a heartbeat and an opinion. AI does not have that.*
- *We are in the business of touching people.*
- *AI has the power to unify the silos of the industry.*
- *AI can improve individual productivity but neuter organizational productivity if there aren't measures put into place to preserve collaboration and debate.*

”

6. Change, Adaptability and Meeting People Where They Are

Participants recognized that change is unavoidable, but they also acknowledged that people experience change differently. The discussion pointed to the need to meet students, employees and younger professionals where they are, understand what they want the future to look like and build confidence along the way.

“

- *Progress over perfection.*
- *We are afraid of change. We shouldn't be.*
- *Change is coming with you or without you.*
- *Do we even know what people want the future to look like?*
- *We have to give them the forum. Meet the younger people where they are.*
- *The number one thing was building confidence.*
- *It is really hard to be curious when you can't pay the rent.*

”



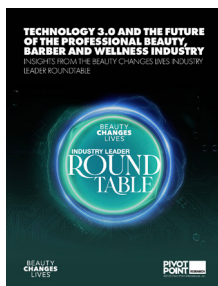
RESEARCH AND RESOURCES – RELATED RESEARCH

Reports from past Beauty Changes Lives Industry Leader Roundtables

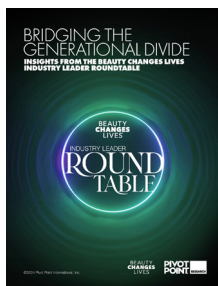
2025: [Industry Leader Roundtable – Data](#)



2025: [Industry Leader Roundtable – Technology](#)



2024: [Industry Leader Roundtable – The Generational Divide](#)



The KIM Report

Industry compensation and hours data based on aggregated transaction records

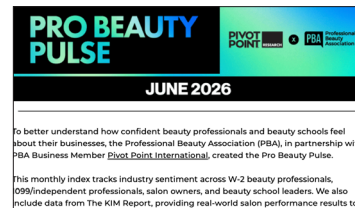
[KIM Report Compensation Summary](#)



Pro Beauty Pulse

Current confidence and sentiment trends across the professional beauty and school markets

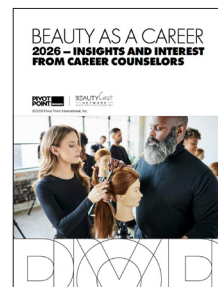
[Latest Beauty Industry News | Pro Beauty Association](#)



Career Counselor Research

Career counselor perceptions about careers in beauty and wellness

[Beauty as a Career White Paper 2026](#)



School-to-Career Transition Research

Challenges and opportunities related to the transition from beauty school to the workplace

[School-to-Career Transition White Paper](#)



**CALL TO
ACTION:**
INDUSTRY
ALIGNMENT ON
STANDARDS,
STORY AND
SUSTAINABILITY



CALL TO ACTION: INDUSTRY ALIGNMENT ON STANDARDS, STORY AND SUSTAINABILITY

The Roundtable made clear that beauty, barbering and wellness have the creativity, passion and talent to navigate change. But meaningful progress will require more than individual effort. It will require shared action in three areas: **Standards, Story and Sustainability.**

Our opportunity is to turn conversation into alignment, alignment into action and action into meaningful progress.

Standards: Create Greater Consistency

Reduce fragmentation by aligning around clearer, more consistent expectations for education and licensure, along with more standardized definitions and terminology.

NEXT STEPS:

- ☐ Build alignment around a standardized core competency curriculum.
- ☐ Clarify the core skills needed for real-world readiness and identify where licensure requirements, education standards and industry needs are misaligned.
- ☐ Develop common terminology and definitions across schools, employers, associations and regulators.
- ☐ Identify data definitions that better support the sharing of industry data.

Story: Tell a Clearer, More Credible and More Consistent Industry Story

Strengthen how the industry communicates the value of our careers to students, parents, counselors, policymakers, media and the public.

NEXT STEPS:

- ☐ Use credible, timely and broad-based compensation data to explain our career value more accurately.
- ☐ Use data to better explain how beauty professionals actually work and why—including flexibility, purpose and opportunity.
- ☐ Keep education, industry standards and career messaging current with technology, consumer expectations and business realities.

Sustainability: Support Long-Term Career Success

Build stronger systems that support recruitment, career readiness, onboarding, mentorship, retention and long-term professional growth.

NEXT STEPS:

- ☐ Strengthen the school-to-career transition by creating consistent expectations among students, educators and employers about the realities of a career.
- ☐ Develop better onboarding models for new professionals.
- ☐ Expand mentorship and coaching opportunities.
- ☐ Build clearer career pathways that reflect different definitions of success.
- ☐ Support confidence-building, business skills, communication skills and customer readiness.



PHOTO GALLERY

BEAUTY
CHANGES
LIVES

INDUSTRY LEADER
**ROUND
TABLE**



BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES
GAIA

PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES ROUNDTABLE



PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES ROUNDTABLE



PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES ROUNDTABLE

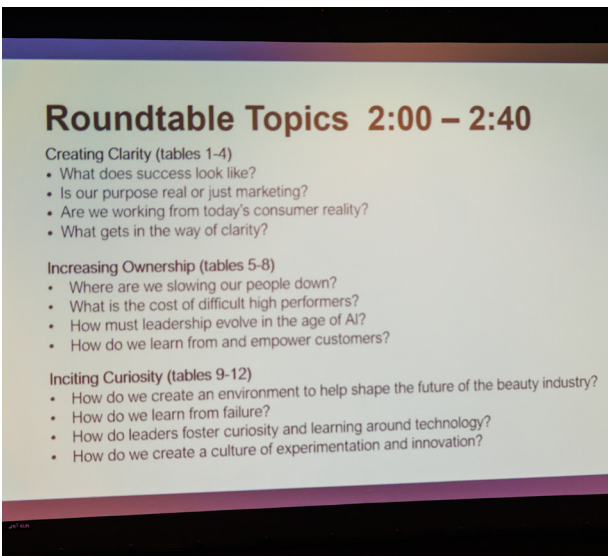


PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES ROUNDTABLE



PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES ROUNDTABLE



PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES ROUNDTABLE



PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES GALA



PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES GALA



PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES GALA



PHOTO GALLERY – BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES GALA



ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE

BEAUTY
CHANGES
LIVES

INDUSTRY LEADER
**ROUND
TABLE**



ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE – PARTICIPANTS

Mike Alexander BORBOLETA BEAUTY
Jason Altmire CAREER EDUCATION
 COLLEGES AND
 UNIVERSITIES (CECU)
Luis Alvarez BIOLAGE
Alexis Armenti BELLAMI
Jan Arnold JAN ARNOLD
Alain Audet SALON INTERACTIVE
Jack Bernin PIVOT POINT
 INTERNATIONAL
LeAnn Bobitt L'ORÉAL PROFESSIONAL
 PRODUCTS DIVISION
Jim Bower SALON INTERACTIVE
Charles Brown CLICS
Scott Buchanan INTERCOIFFURE (ICA)
Penny Burns BEAUTY CAST NETWORK
Guillaume Cantelou WELLA COMPANY
Bonnie Cheung VAGARO
Winn Claybaugh PAUL MITCHELL
 SCHOOLS
Carrington Cole L'ORÉAL – MATRIX
John Cowan UNIVERSAL COMPANIES
Sarah Dahl ULTA BEAUTY
Leah Davis COLORTRAK/BETTY DAIN
Paolo D'Elia FERMION AI GROUP
Michael DeVellis THE POWDER GROUP
Sophia Dickerson PHOREST
Frank Ellermeyer PIVOT POINT ACADEMY/
 WAHL BARBER ACADEMY
Megan Ferlito MINERVA BEAUTY
Quinn Gable BEHIND THE CHAIR
Victoria Gallo-Anthony WELLA COMPANY
Jessica Garrett BEAUTY INDUSTRY
 GROUP
Martha Glenn L'ORÉAL PROFESSIONAL
 PRODUCTS DIVISION
John Harms MEEVO/MILLENIUM
Phil Horvath UNITE AS ONE
Tracey Hughes DERMAPEN WORLD
Daryl Hurst SOLA SALON SUITES
Emily Hutchinson-Brown ... V'S BARBERSHOP

Zoe Hyams KERATIN COMPLEX
Alan Jacobson BEAUTY BASICS
Kimber Jaynes BORBOLETA BEAUTY
Daniel Johnson GREEN BEAUTY
 COMMUNITY (GBC)
Harlan Kirschner THE KIRSCHNER GROUP
Svetlana Korobeynikova CND
Tom Kuhn QNITY
Kim Layton OGLE SCHOOLS
Dennis Lubin VIVA ENTERPRISES
Jeffrey Lunnen THE TEASE
Lynelle Lynch BELLUS ACADEMY
Leilani Macedo CLICS COLORS
Bob Maconi MEEVO/MILLENIUM
Elliott Maginnis GLITTERBELS
Elizabeth Faye Manuele THE VITALITY PROJECT
Jennifer Masie COSMO PROF
April McCoy REUZEL
Byrd Mena SHARPPFADE
Craig Miller ALIGNED BEAUTY
 VENTURES
Gordon Miller INTERCOIFFURE (ICA)
Jayne Morehouse BEAUTY INDUSTRY
 REPORT
Megan Murray ULTA
Silva Nahabedian DAZZLE DRY/DR. VALENTY
Edwin Neill NEILL CORPORATION
Patrick Neville PARADIGM ADVISORY
 GROUP
Linh Nguyen ADVANCE BEAUTY
 COLLEGE
Loan Nguyen REGAL NAILS
Peter Panagiotopoulos ULTA BEAUTY
Angie Parris PROFESSIONAL ASSIST
 CORPORATION (ASCP/
 ABMP/AHP/ANP)
Robert Passage PIVOT POINT
 INTERNATIONAL
Leslie Perry PROFESSIONAL BEAUTY
 ASSOCIATION (PBA)
Ada Polla ALCHIMIE FOREVER

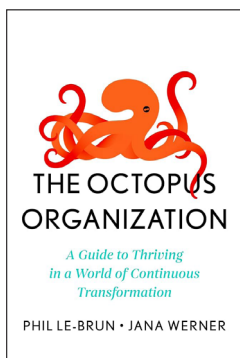
ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE – PARTICIPANTS

Mika Quinn	WELLA COMPANY	Mark Spinks	COSMO PROF
Angela Reich	MODERN SALON/SALON TODAY	Nick Stenson	NICK STENSON BEAUTY
Chelsea Riggs	AMIKA	Paul Tate	LINKUP MARKETING
Lisa Roeberg	BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES (BCL)	Francis Tesmer	ROLFS
Leslie Roste	PROFESSIONAL BEAUTY ASSOCIATION (PBA)	David Thurston	DANGER JONES
Rocky Rumpel	KEVIN MURPHY	Quy “Charlie” Ton	REGAL NAILS
Staci Sakosits	NEILL CORPORATION	Conny Von Gosen	L’ORÉAL PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTS DIVISION
Dessirae Sands	L’ORÉAL PROFESSIONAL PRODUCTS DIVISION	Kayla Wang	SHANGHAI MUZER COSMETICS CO., LTD./ GLOBAL NAIL ART MUSEUM
Lydia Sarfati	REPECHAGE	Stacy Wells	AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF CAREER SCHOOLS (AACS)
Kim Schottler	GREAT CLIPS	Anson Whitledge	MYA
Garrett Schuler	KENNETH SCHULER SCHOOLS	Kati Whitledge	MYA
Ashley Scobey	ASSOCIATED SKIN CARE PROFESSIONALS (ASCP)	Shane Wolf	AVEDA
Annie Shell	AMIKA/BANSK	Kimi Zhang	SHANGHAI MUZER COSMETICS CO., LTD./ GLOBAL NAIL ART MUSEUM
Karen Short	UNIVERSAL CORPORATION		
Will Simpson	VISH		
Lauren Snow	CIRCADIA		



ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE – PROGRAM TEAM

Keynote/Facilitator



Phil Le-Brun

Executive in Residence, Amazon Web Services, Author – "The Octopus Organization"

Organizational Leaders



Lynelle Lynch

President, Bellus Academy; Chairperson, Beauty Changes Lives



Lisa Roeberg

President & Executive Director, Beauty Changes Lives

Program Producers



Meghan Hayden

Communications Director, Beauty Changes Lives



Steve Reiss

Executive Director Industry Relations and Insights, Pivot Point International; Roundtable Committee Chair



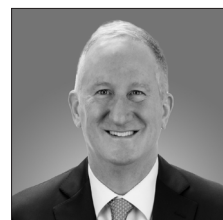
Mike Alexander

CEO, Borboleta: Roundtable Committee



Charles Brown

CEO, CLICS: Roundtable Committee



Edwin Neill

President, Neill Corporation; Roundtable Committee

ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE – ORGANIZERS AND FACILITATORS

ABOUT BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES

BEAUTY CHANGES LIVES®

Beauty Changes Lives (BCL) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering current and future professionals by elevating beauty, barbering and wellness as a first-choice career.

BCL brings the industry together—uniting brands, educators, associations and leaders—to address critical challenges and build a more vibrant, inclusive future.

Through scholarships, mentorships, advanced education and national awareness campaigns, BCL has helped thousands of aspiring artists launch successful careers. As the #1 resource for industry scholarships, BCL awards over \$500,000 annually and has directly impacted the lives of over 1,500 professionals.

Signature programs like Mentorship Matters and the Industry Leader Roundtable foster collaboration and thought leadership, while ongoing efforts elevate the visibility, value and impact of careers in beauty and wellness.

BCL is not only a scholarship engine—it is a powerful community platform that inspires the next generation and drives meaningful, long-term change across the industry.

Get Involved & Learn More

- Learn About Our Industry Initiatives: beautychangeslives.org
- Support Our Mission: beautychangeslives.org/get-involved
- Be Part of the GALA: beautychangeslives.org/gala
- More About Our Industry Leader Roundtable: <https://beautychangeslives.org/roundtable/>

Contact:

info@beautychangeslives.org
beautychangeslives.org



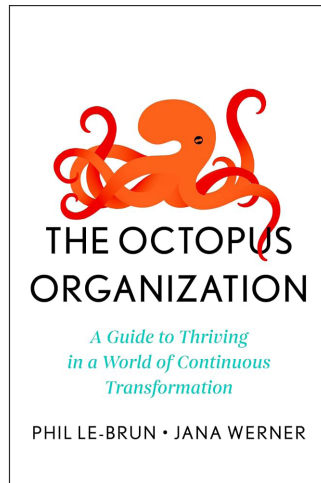
Lynelle Lynch
Chairperson



Lisa Roeberg
President &
Executive Director

ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE – ORGANIZERS AND FACILITATORS

ABOUT PHIL LE-BRUN



Our Roundtable keynote and facilitator, Phil Le-Brun, is a business transformation executive, author and advisor who helps organizations navigate change, drive innovation and build more adaptive cultures. His career includes senior leadership roles with McDonald's and Amazon Web Services (AWS), where he led large-scale technology, operations and transformation initiatives. He is the author of "The Octopus Organization" (Harvard Business Review Press), which explores how organizations can become more agile, resilient and effective in an era of accelerating change.

Phil is a frequent speaker and facilitator on leadership, organizational change, technology adoption, innovation and the human factors that enable successful transformation.

LinkedIn: <https://www.linkedin.com/in/phillebrun>

Website: www.theoctopusorganization.com

Substack: <https://octopusorg.substack.com>

Email: Phil@theoctopusorganization.com

ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE – ORGANIZERS AND FACILITATORS

ABOUT PIVOT POINT INTERNATIONAL



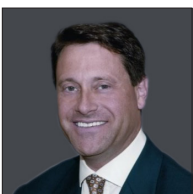
Pivot Point International is a third-generation, family-owned company dedicated exclusively to the professional beauty, barbering and wellness industry. Our team of licensed professionals brings extensive hands-on experience across beauty schools, salons, spas, barbershops, chains, brands and distributors.

As a founding member of Beauty Changes Lives and producer of the Industry Leader Roundtable, Pivot Point is committed to shaping the future of the beauty industry through charitable initiatives, recognition programs and cause-driven efforts focused on ethics, empowerment, inclusion and sustainability. Our original research explores critical topics affecting schools and professionals, including wellness, generational dynamics, post-pandemic education and the role of perception in industry recruitment and retention.

Pivot Point’s education offering includes original and third-party curriculum for cosmetology, barbering, nails and esthetics—delivered through a learning platform built specifically for beauty professionals.

Pivot Point also manufactures the industry’s most diverse range of top-quality mannequins, all produced in our company-owned, SA8000-certified factory to ensure the highest standards of ethics and craftsmanship. We offer a complete range of textured hair mannequins, and our eco-friendly Cap Series mannequins are designed for portability, space efficiency and reduced landfill waste.

www.pivot-point.com



Let’s Connect

To explore how we can collaborate,
please contact: Steve Reiss
sreiss@pivot-point.com

ABOUT THE ROUNDTABLE – ORGANIZERS AND FACILITATORS

ABOUT PIVOT POINT RESEARCH

We understand industry relationships and trends, ensuring your research objectives are met with actionable, real-world insights.

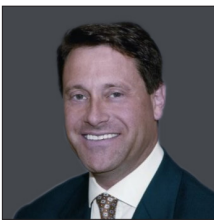
Whether your research is for internal intelligence or to support sales and marketing, we can help you explore all your research options. Knowing that quick turnaround is often a consideration, our industry relationships and experience help us provide you with the most time-effective solution.

We look forward to working with you!

INQUIRY FORM

pivot-point.com/research/

THE PIVOT POINT RESEARCH LEADERSHIP TEAM



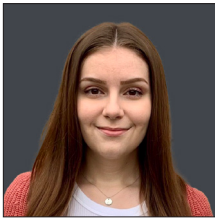
Steve Reiss
Strategic Marketing & Business Insights
15+ years providing custom research solutions to leading beauty industry groups, with a focus on leveraging research insights to create effective strategies supporting business goals.



Sabrina Cason
Primary Research
Specializes in consumer-focused market research, leading and designing research methodology, execution and analysis that provides insight to drive business growth.



Vasiliki A. Stavrakis
Secondary Research
Specializes in analyzing and aggregating third-party and government data and regulatory, licensing and accrediting agency requirements to inform business decisions.



Christina Mooshil
Data Visualization
Specializes in combining analysis, design and storytelling to create visual data representations that help people understand and evaluate information more easily.