

# My Hairdressing Career

Jacila



After two years in Australia I started my hairdressing career. I was fifteen. I found myself a probation placement and after four months they signed me on. An apprenticeship was four years.

The salon was in an older suburb of the city. My English wasn't all that great, which made it more difficult. Many times I wanted to quit. Instead, I persevered and worked very hard. I have never forgotten my Mum's first haircut. The next day at her work, her workmates asked if someone had cut her hair with a knife and a fork!

My diligence paid off. I became Apprentice of the Year in my first and third years at TAFE. Everybody was very proud of me. After three years, I decided I needed a change. I wanted to do the fourth year, in a more upmarket salon. Well, my wish came true.

I worked in a very affluent area. Being only eighteen, dealing with the most rich and famous clientele was extremely challenging. I worked there for seven years. There is a huge difference in lifestyles, between low socio-economic areas and affluent areas. My clients were very demanding, expecting to have their hair done at a moment's notice. They travelled a lot and had many interesting stories to tell. Socially, they went to all the big shows, which the average person could not afford. After a while, these lifestyles became so normal for me, that I didn't notice the extravagance anymore!

I left the salon after the birth of my child. But after two years at home with my baby, I bought a salon in a suburb, which was such a contrast to the previous area where I worked. I couldn't believe how different it was, and kept saying "It's so easy to work here!"

The clients were down to earth and less demanding; however I have never forgotten the people, experiences and knowledge that I acquired, over the years at the previous salon.

*I left hairdressing two years ago. Being unable to spell and write well has prevented me from getting a better job. Elizabeth has been helping me since February. I'm reading more often and trying to improve my grammar and spelling, which has been quite challenging.*



# Activities

First, let's look at some of the vocabulary.

**Discuss these words with your tutor and write definitions in your own words:**

probation .....

salon (*is a French word*) .....

persevere(d) .....

diligence .....

affluent .....

clientele .....

socio-economic *is social + economic. See more information below.*

extravagance .....

## Some expressions to consider:

- “signed me on” – This indicates the salon accepting the role of being responsible for her apprenticeship training.
- “down to earth” – You probably know this expression! It can be variously defined as “practical”, “realistic”, “informal”, “both feet on the ground”. Where do you think the expression came from? Apparently, its origin is unclear, but it is first recorded in the years 1920 – 1930. Discuss *your thoughts* about its *possible* origins, with your tutor.
- “**low socio-economic area**” - In this context, Jacila is using a polite term for an area which was quite poor or disadvantaged. The term suggests that the people in that area are less privileged, both **socially**, in terms of their health, community connections, work, recreational pursuits, etc, *and* **economically** (financially), in terms of their income, their assets, their place in the workforce, etc.

**Some Questions to review the facts of Jacila’s story:**

How old was Jacila when she started her Apprenticeship:? .....

What does she say made her learning “more difficult”? .....

What did she change, for her 4<sup>th</sup> Apprenticeship year?.....

If Jacila was 15 when she started, and she worked at the “upmarket salon” for seven years, how old was she, when she left that salon? .....

If you add her “two years at home with my baby”, how old was she when she bought her first salon? .....

**Complete these sentences with your own responses.**

There is **no** “one right answer”! Whatever *you* think, is correct!

What I found most *surprising* about this text was .....

What I found most *interesting* about this text was .....

Do you get the feeling that Jacila likes her job?    Yes    No    Can’t tell

Discuss with your tutor: How *you* think Jacila might have felt, during her two years at home with her baby?

**Let’s look at some of the good features of Jacila’s writing.**

Firstly, it is a human story, with ups and downs that others can relate to.

When Jacila writes, ‘Well. my wish came true’, and “It’s so easy to work here!”, we hear her own voice speaking directly to us, which adds a personal touch. Her description of her mother’s hair as being cut “with a knife and fork” creates quite a graphic image.

Also, it’s well-organised; her story is told in chronological (time) order. Sometimes, Jacila starts a sentence with a phrase which adds additional information **about time**. Some examples are:

After two years in Australia (*in first sentence*)

After three years (*paragraph 3*)

Another sentence-starter, ‘Being only eighteen’, also helps us place the moment in time.

# Adjectives



Jacila's writing is quite descriptive.

**Can you list some other adjectives with similar meanings,** that could be used, to describe these things:

Jacila uses this adjective	to describe	Your similar adjectives
upmarket	salon	.....
affluent	area/s	.....
famous	clientele	.....
demanding	clients	.....
big	shows	.....
average	person	.....
a better	job	.....

**Now think in opposite terms!** Supply some adjectives which mean the opposite of the adjective Jacila uses.

Jacila uses this adjective	to describe	Your opposite adjectives
upmarket	salon	.....
affluent	area/s	.....
famous	clientele	.....
demanding	clients	.....
big	shows	.....
average	person	.....
a better	job	.....



## **Proofreading for errors of spelling or punctuation**

**Highlight or underline the errors** – and then **write the corrections** immediately below each mistake.

I worked in a very fluent arear. Being only eihgteen, dealing with the most  
.....  
rich and famuos clientele was extremely chalenging. I worked their fore  
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.....  
anymore!

*Note: There are 2 missing apostrophes.*

## More Word Study



**Insert the appropriate word from this box** into this copy of excerpts from the text:

signed	diligence	affluent	eighteen	extravagance
probation	apprenticeship	challenging		
persevered	upmarket	clientele	lifestyles	knowledge

I found myself a ..... placement and after four months they ..... me on. An ..... was four years.

Many times I wanted to quit. Instead, I ..... and worked very hard.

My ..... paid off.

I wanted to do the fourth year, in a more ..... salon. Well, my wish came true.

I worked in a very ..... area. Being only ....., dealing with the most rich and famous ..... was extremely ..... I worked there for seven years. There is a huge difference in ....., between low socio-economic areas and affluent areas.

After a while, these lifestyles became so normal for me, that I didn't notice the ..... anymore!

The clients were down to earth and less demanding; however I have never forgotten the people, experiences and ..... that I acquired, over the years at the previous salon.