

# It's all about projecting the right image

## Pallavi Deshpande

*Image consultants have one of the hottest new businesses today, writes Pallavi Deshpande*



Image consulting can be a rewarding career. Bangalore-based Babita Jaishankar, who works as an image consultant, says she chose the profession because it provides the right platform for her interest in people, clothes and accessories.

Image consulting is about helping individuals project the image they desire. It is a combination of getting them to dress right, use the right makeup, choose the right hair style and accessories to enhance their looks and boost their confidence. Image consultants provide wardrobe management, grooming techniques and communication services to their clients.

They help clients in three areas:

**Physical appearance:** Grooming, hair care and make-up advice, wardrobe management, and, in some cases, help during shopping sprees.

Image consulting can be a rewarding career. Bangalore-based Babita Jaishankar, who works as an image consultant, says she chose the profession because it provides the right platform for her interest in people, clothes and accessories.

Image consulting is about helping individuals project the image they desire. It is a combination of getting them to dress right, use the right makeup, choose the right hair style and accessories to enhance their looks and boost their confidence. Image consultants provide wardrobe management, grooming techniques and communication services to their clients.

They help clients in three areas:

**Physical appearance:** Grooming, hair care and make-up advice, wardrobe management, and, in some cases, help during shopping sprees.

**Behaviour:** Stress management, etiquette and protocol advice.

**Communication services:** Advice on diction, body language, relationship-building, and conflict resolution.

Most image consultants also develop a network of strategic partners they can refer clients to, such as hair stylists, makeup artists, nutritionists, dentists, personal trainers, plastic surgeons, and voice coaches.

### **Career prospects**

Image consulting is an immensely creative field, and anybody with a background in fashion and an interest in trends can venture into this profession. A course in fashion design from a reputed institute and a certified course in skin consultancy from an institute in India or abroad can help. Good communication skills are a bonus.

### **Skills and strengths**

"It's important to have a strong desire to help people grow, flourish and express themselves," says Parvana Babaycon, principal consultant to an image consulting institute in Kolkata. "Successful image consultants are passionate about people, beauty and styles," she adds.

### **Work Profile**

Image consultants inspire people and breathe life into their personalities. Their clients' appearance, language and communication skills are proof of their talents. Image consultants have to wear different hats. Since they work alone — at least in the initial phase of their career, they have to learn to market themselves.

According to Babita Jayashankar, "The work is interesting as it about colour profiling, style profiling, body style analysis, lifestyle analysis, wardrobe re-styling, hair styling and make up." The job profile also involves creating customised packages where fabric is handpicked, keeping in mind the individual's colour profile, and designed according to his/ her style profile. The package also offers the right accessories to go with the designed outfits.

"To begin with, image consultants can experiment on friends and relatives, by trying to improve their appearance. They can offer 'Before' and 'After' pictures to create a professional portfolio," explains Sangeeta Bahl, a Gurgaon-based image and style consultant. "This showcases their work and gives prospective clients a peek into their style of working and fashion sense," she adds. Goodwill of clients is crucial as this is a field where a high level of trust is essential. Image consultants have to be creative and innovative. They also must learn to appreciate the fact that each client calls for a unique approach.