

**LORENZO COLANGELO**  
THE GALLERY, SOUTHBOROUGH  
HAIR & BEAUTY SALON



› **Tell us about your company.**

The Gallery is a hair and beauty salon that was founded by Toni Colangelo in 1982 and taken over by me in 1995, when I re-branded and named it The Gallery.

› **Why did you decide to run your own business?**

I took over the salon as I had a hunger and desire to offer customers something different – not just great hairdressing and beauty, but to provide the service in a family run environment that offered time and a more personal approach. Some of our customers have been coming to the salon since the start.

› **What, if any, support did you have in getting started at The Gallery?**

When I did our first re-fit I used the bank to support me financially. It was a lot easier to borrow money then, as the bank manager was more of a friendly uncle who listened and had the power to make instant decisions,

although the interest rates were considerably higher back then.

› **What were the biggest challenges you faced?**

The challenges have always been around cash and people – having the money to move forward and the right people to do it with. Trying to keep high standards in our products and service, while staying competitive in price, is a challenge for any business. I have found the key is to not over-extend financially and to build a team from scratch who have an overall shared vision moving forward.

› **Describe your most satisfying moment or achievement.**

Without doubt, winning Salon of the Year in the National British Hairdressing Business Awards 2014. It was a huge team effort that focused on business, team and most importantly, customers. Every person associated with The Gallery had a huge role to play and they all

delivered fantastically. Key staff are Mario Failla, who takes control of education and is our Creative Director, Becki Partlett who is Front of House Manager, and Jo Ashdown and Richard Monk, who are both involved heavily in the day to day running of the salon. These great people, mixed with a growing ambitious and loyal staff, are the magic of The Gallery.

› **What was the biggest lesson you learned?**

To not be afraid of big decisions and to have a shared vision moving forward. “Teach your team well enough that they can work anywhere, but treat them well enough that they never want to leave” is a great quote from Richard Branson.

› **If you could give aspiring entrepreneurs one piece of advice, what would it be?**

Have the courage to see your vision realised, but have the humility to listen and take advice from those who may know better.

› **What could the Government or local authority do to help start-up businesses?**

I would love to see them encouraging new businesses and budding entrepreneurs with workshops and potential financial backing, similar to the student loan model. Historically, Great Britain was made great by captains of industry and this is a huge strength that should be nurtured from conceptual stages. As a businessman and entrepreneur, I believe that being in control of your own destiny is such a gift and privilege. If there was an element of ‘hand holding’ from business mentors in the early stages especially, we would see some amazing things – not least, seeing Britain become Great again.

**63-67 London Road, Southborough,  
Tunbridge Wells, Kent TN4 0PA  
01892 514 900  
[www.thegalleryhairandbeauty.co.uk](http://www.thegalleryhairandbeauty.co.uk)**