

“ As the weather turns colder, remember we do have Resene Wintergrade Additive and wintergrade paint options available to help you keep painting in the cold – check with our team the best option for your project. And if you’re finding the frost is starting to take over your windscreen, grab yourself a free ice scraper from your Resene ColorShop or representative, available while stocks last... ”



Common client characters and how to deal with them

As one of the most important factors of your business, keeping clients happy is an integral ‘must-do’ for all painters and decorators. However nice you may be, sometimes, customers don’t always reciprocate. If you’re looking to improve client relations, it pays to understand the different types of people you’ll deal with.

Here are some of the more challenging clients you may encounter and how to best deal with them.

Indecisive

Before getting to work on a project, you’ll need sound structure and confirmation from your client. However, you may come across someone indecisive. This client is one who sits on the fence and isn’t 100 per cent sure of what they want. One day bold colours may be at the top of their list and the next day, a more neutral palette. Working with this type of person can be incredibly tricky as direction is required to ensure the job gets done on time and to brief.

If you find yourself working with someone indecisive, there are a few things you can do. Ask them to write down or draw out their initial ideas. From here, don’t allow them to go off on a tangent as this will open up more doors and leave them no closer to a decision. Instead, help select one of their ideas and delve deeper.

For example, if they’re looking at an orange colour palette, find out if they prefer deeper shades such as Resene Daredevil or lighter, pastel variations like Resene Just Dance. With your main colour locked down, you can then work on finding complementary shades.

Encourage an indecisive client to stick with their gut feeling to avoid delays.

And make sure you have everything agreed in writing.



Know-it-all

No matter what you’re talking about, some clients believe they know-it-all. While passionate and knowledgeable clients are great, when they try taking over, that’s when tensions can appear. If you come across someone of this vein, you must first remain calm. Yes, they may push your buttons but you must remember why they sought you out – because you’re an expert in this field, not them.

When working out how to deal with a know-it-all, remember the three-D rule: Don’t discredit, discount or disagree. First, listen to their ideas and opinions. If you don’t think this is the best option, introduce your ideas in a subtle way. For example, “that’s a great idea, what if...” This shows that you have actively listened and you’re trying to make their vision even better.

Late-paying

After working hard on a project, while visual reward is satisfying, you’ll also need financial benefits too. While you may be a stickler for on-time invoicing, your clients may not. Late paying clients may be lovely in person, but their delayed payments don’t do you any favours when it comes to covering expenses. Affording a few days for such setbacks is fair, however, if you still haven’t received any payment after several weeks, this is where debt and unbalanced books come into play.

Solve this problem by enforcing a strict payment plan from the get go. This should include a timeline in which you expect to get paid. Clients will then know what they are expected to pay and when and be able to plan for this. Another way to secure payment is to request an upfront deposit. This encourages clients to pay once the job is complete and gives you a little security should delays occur.

It pays to be strict with clients when expecting payments or else you may run into financial difficulty.



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>> Absurd

Last but not least is the client who has unreasonable expectations. This customer tends to demand the most outlandish of design ideas – some of which just can't be done. Or they may request a reasonable job but demand completion in an unrealistic time frame. Both of these scenarios are a major cause of stress and client conflict.

In order to prepare for an encounter with a client like this, there are a few things you can do:

- Set your project boundaries from the get go and ensure your client is aware of your capabilities.



- Formulate a client agreement which clearly outlines the scope of work, a termination clause and a reimbursement policy should the project change.
- Refer to the written and agreed project scope when your client begins making unreasonable demands. This holds them accountable to what they agreed from the start.

Having precautions in place means you're prepared for any eventuality and any absurd request!

And if all else fails, when you're dealing with clients remember the golden rule – treat your clients how you yourself would like to be treated.

An unusual way to find clients

Sometimes you can find new clients in the strangest of ways, as Phillip tells us...

"I accidentally backed into a car at a carpark in my painting van. I didn't appear to do any damage to the vehicle but may have pushed the rear



guard in a little, not at all very noticeable but just in case I thought I should leave a note on the car but had no pen so I put my business card under the windscreen wiper.

I never thought another thing about it until one day some time later I got a phone call from a lady asking for a quote to clear her gutters. I knew I hadn't done any advertising for quite some time and asked after she told me her address etc how did you hear about me? She replied there was a business card left on her windscreen some time back.

After the phone call I recalled leaving a card on the windscreen of the car.

I went and quoted the job and ended up cleaning her gutters and quoting to paint the total exterior of the property.

100% successful advertising."

P.S. While this worked out well for Phillip and his client we don't recommend trying this out for yourself!

Get your colourful projects in

Have you completed a project with creative and excellent use of Resene colour? Make sure you enter it into the **Resene Total Colour Awards**.

Categories include: Residential – Interior, Residential – Exterior, Commercial – Exterior, Commercial – Interior Public/Retail, Commercial – Interior Office, Landscape, Education, Product/Display/Experiential, Rising star – Student, Lifetime achievement. Commercial includes commercial, corporate rebranding, industrial, government sector.

We showcase a wide range of entries each year on the Resene website in the **Resene Total Colour Awards** gallery and include many projects in Resene media throughout the year. For the colourful winners, each category winner will win NZ\$1,000 and a coveted Resene Total Colour Award sculpture and the overall Nightingale winner will win NZ\$2,500 and an exclusive Resene Total Colour – Nightingale Award sculpture.

It's free to enter. Entries for this year's competition are due in by 30 June 2019. You can enter multiple times but each entry must be on a separate entry form. See www.resene.com/colourawards to enter.



Ask us anytime online



Need help with a painting project or perhaps you've got a burning paint or colour question and are not sure know who to ask? Ask our Resene experts and they can help you with free advice and information direct to your inbox. We've noticed more and more painters are using the Ask a Colour Expert service to get some colour ideas for their clients – so do feel free to get in touch with us and our colour expert can give you some ideas to share with your clients.

Try out the free Resene Ask a Technical Expert service online. www.resene.com/techexpert

Or try out the free Resene Ask a Colour Expert service online. www.resene.com/colourexpert

Or you can call our freephone number for advice over the phone during normal working hours Monday – Friday on NZ 0800 RESENE (737 363) or Australia 1800 738 383.



Catch you next month!

TwoCan, Editor.

