

# WHY SLIDING COMMISSION SCALES ARE THE SMARTEST WAY TO PAY YOUR TEAM



*by The Beauty Biz Agency*



# LET'S START WITH THE TRUTH:

Traditional commission models (like flat 50%, 55%, or 60%) feel simple. But over time, they almost always back salon owners into a corner and cap the stylist's potential without meaning to. Sliding commission isn't just a pay scale. It's a career path. It rewards the right behaviors, helps your business stay profitable, and gives your team control over their income—without you having to constantly raise their percentages.

WEBSITE

SOCIAL MEDIA





## What Is a Sliding Commission Scale?

A sliding commission model pays stylists based on their performance, not just their presence. Instead of giving someone 50% forever, you create tiers or levels based on specific performance benchmarks.

### FOR EXAMPLE:

- \$0–2,999/month = 40% commission
- \$3,000–4,999/month = 45% commission
- \$5,000–6,999/month = 50% commission
- \$7,000+ = 55% commission

You can build your own ranges based on your pricing, profit margins, and growth goals.

# WHY IT WORKS BETTER THAN FLAT COMMISSIONS

A close-up photograph of a hairdresser's hands using a black hair dryer to blow-dry a client's long, light brown hair. The hairdresser is wearing a black apron over a light blue shirt. The client is wearing a black salon cape. The background is a blurred wooden surface.

01

STYLISTS  
CONTROL THEIR  
EARNINGS.

When they see their next tier is \$500 away, it motivates action. They learn to manage their book, increase add-ons, upsell treatments, and keep clients coming back.

---



# YOU STAY PROFITABLE.

# 02

Flat commissions (especially 50–60%) get dangerous when overhead rises. A stylist doing \$3K a month at 60% might not even cover their cost to work in your space. Sliding commission protects your margins.





# 03

## — GROWTH IS TIED TO EFFORT—NOT — TIME SERVED.

No more “I’ve been here 2 years, I deserve more.” With a scale, you can say: “Your raise is already built in—it’s in your next tier. Let’s talk about how to get you there.”





04

IT ALLOWS FOR  
CLEAR COACHING  
CONVERSATIONS.

You're not just telling them to grow—you're showing them how. The scale becomes the roadmap.

---

# REAL EXAMPLE

Let's say a stylist wants to make \$5,000/month in take-home pay.

You walk them backward through the scale:

- To hit \$5K at 50%, they need \$10K in monthly revenue.
- That means \$2,500/week or \$500/day if they work 5 days/week.

Now they have a target. And it's tied to action, not waiting for a raise.







# WHAT TO INCLUDE IN A SLIDING SCALE:

- Service sales goals
- Retail performance (optional)
- Rebooking or prebooking rates
  - Retention rates
  - Average ticket goals
- Retail-to-service ratio goals

You can decide how simple or advanced your scale is—but the key is transparency.



# WHAT TO AVOID:

- Giving everyone 50%+ without tracking performance
  - Rewarding time instead of results
- Making the highest tier unreachable (don't demotivate your team)
  - Adjusting the scale constantly—pick your model and stick to it





# FINAL TAKEAWAY

Sliding commission gives your stylists unlimited earning potential—but makes them responsible for earning it.

That's the balance most salon owners are looking for. You're not punishing anyone. You're putting the power back in their hands—and you're protecting the long-term health of your business while you do it.

Want help building a custom scale for your salon? We do this inside The Beauty Biz Agency all the time. Message us or head to [thebeautybizagency.com](https://www.thebeautybizagency.com)

[www.thebeautybizagency.com](https://www.thebeautybizagency.com)