

Image consultant helps clients look their best

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OCEANFRONT — People were sure something was different about Doris Young. Perhaps she'd lost weight, changed her hair color, had plastic surgery?

When compliments about her looks started pouring in about six months ago, Young just smiled, thanked her admirers for noticing and, with an enigmatic shake of the head, answered honestly: "No, I haven't done anything major."

Young, a wellness consultant who specializes in stress management for corporations and senior populations, had entered the realm of Sandy Dumont.

A self-described image architect, Dumont is a former high-fashion model who spent the three decades helping people redefine themselves through image counseling. She continues that work today through her company, Image-inations.

During a six-hour image workshop, Young sat in Dumont's North End home office.

She learned what color

clothing worked best with her fair skin tone and strawberry blonde hair, what makeup to wear and how best to apply it, what length skirt and shoes would help give her a boost in her professional appearance, and how to put it all together to remake her image.

"Even though I always dressed nicely, I knew I looked good sometimes and sometimes I looked not so good, but I couldn't figure out why until Sandy showed me," said Young, 49, of Norfolk.

"I was intrigued by the concept that a few changes could change people's perceptions of me, and almost immediately after the workshop, with only subtle shifts, I noticed more people looking at me. I assume it's because they like the way I look."

Dumont, a stunning, statuesque blonde who admits to being over 50, radiates confidence and warmth. The response to Young's makeover was similar to others she's heard throughout the years from hundreds of corporate and private clients, she said.

"I call it helping people develop their individual look, and when I'm finished with

people the look I want is for others to say, 'Gee you look good but I'm not sure why,'" said Dumont, who moved back to the Beach last year after living in Belgium for 23 years.

While home, Dumont stays busy, giving image workshops in her tidy, art-filled house. More frequently, though, she's on the road, traveling regionally and nationally, giving group workshops to corporate clients such as banks, television executives and newscasters.

She recently published her first e-book, "Power Dressing for Men" and plans to have her next book, "Power Dressing for Women," available for sale on her Web site at the end of July.

"It's just like being an artist; they cheat all the time and improve on Mother Nature," Dumont said. "That's all we're doing, getting rid of the weeds, and the dust that keep you from being totally harmonious, and turning you into a masterpiece."

■ For more information about Dumont's workshops and e-books, call 428-3003, or visit www.image-inations.com



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At a workshop in her home, image coach Sandy Dumont, right, drapes client Doris Young in different colors to demonstrate how certain colors can make her look vital and successful.