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# Nicola helps to avoid wardrobe malfunctions

**A** CHESHIRE entrepreneur is doing what Gok Wan has done for women up and down the country – making them look fabulous with style tips and fashion advice.

Personal stylist Nicola Cupples, 30, runs her own image consultancy, My Style Companion, in Macclesfield, where she also lives, and has recently launched a training academy for would-be stylists following demand from clients.

She works with women of all ages and sizes to offer a wardrobe consultancy service and says she was inspired by TV shows featuring Gok Wan and Trinny and Susannah.

She said: "People love How to Look Good Naked and Gok's Fashion Fix and although many aren't brave enough to go on TV to discuss issues they have with clothes or their body, it's made services like mine more popular."

"There are so many women who want to look fashionable, wear and buy the right clothes but don't know where to go for advice."

As part of her service, Cupples teaches women that looking and feeling fabulous can be easy, practical, cost-effective and fun with the right knowledge and assistance.

Her fees range from £200 for a three-hour wardrobe consultation to £275 for a personal shopping experience.

She said: "Sometimes a one-off wardrobe consultancy is enough."

"Other clients want me to come

back and check their wardrobes regularly, while others want me to go shopping with them and help choose outfits that they will look and feel good in."

Cupples' career in retail and fashion began as a 16-year-old when she started working part time in retail.

She has worked for House of Fraser and Selfridges, working on luxury brands including See by Chloe, Marc by Marc Jacobs, Milly, Paul and Joe, Sonia Rykiel, Elizabeth and James and Twentyeighttwelve.

Cupples studied English literature at the University of Manchester while working part-time in retail, then went into marketing for nearly 10 years before she decided to set up her own styling consultancy in 2007.

"I enjoyed marketing, but I missed working in fashion and being on the shop floor," she said.

"I used to really enjoy helping people pick an outfit and thrived from that experience and that feeling of helping someone feel good never left. So whilst working full-time in PR I decided to get my business plan going and set up on my own."

She used contacts she had made whilst working in marketing and retail to let people know about the business and started attending networking events to meet potential clients.

As well as visiting clients, she spends a lot of time in department stores, working closely with retailers including Selfridges, John Lewis, Met Quarter Shopping Centre, Wallis, Outlet and LK Bennett.

She said: "Sometimes people think



I work at those stores because I'm always there. It's important to know what's available and what the latest trends are."

Cupples is also offering intensive courses to train people to be image consultants. She added: "I'm always getting asked by people how I got

into it and how they can train up to do what I do which is why I decided to set up a training arm."

"We not only provide training and courses to those completely new to the industry but will also provide a support service to those who are looking to start up in business."

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