



Sew Amazing !!

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Handouts: I will provide a .pdf file of the handout to your group 2 weeks prior to the event. Your group can print the handouts.

Topics. I have many topics from which to choose. You can mix and match topics to design your own program. Let me know if there is topic your group is particularly interested in if it is not in this list.

TOPICS:

Small Details – Major Impact

Tired of fabricating the same treatments over and over? Looking for ways to give your designs more interest intwine the client's budget? There are many ways to add just a touch of fun and creative detail that will make your designs unique and striking. Ann draws from 30 years of designer treatments for simple details in the form of embellishments, fabrics and fabrication. Maybe you will create the next must-have look on Pinterest?

Calculate Fabric Yardages Fast!

Are you spending too much time calculating fabric yardages for quotes? I show you how to develop standards and formulas to take the guesswork and potential for error out of calculating yardages. Every treatment is comprised of one or more basic components (panel, swag, cascade, etc). Learn how fullness plays a role in the design specifications and how to set your own workroom fullness standards for each basic component. Apply your standards to simple formulas for accurate yardage calculations. Learn how to develop a Cutting Book for your workroom, building on your standards and formulas. Once you have established this methodology in your workroom, you will be able to incorporate pricing into the book, train office assistants to quote for you, and have a valuable tool to offer potential buyers when you are ready to sell the business.

Crutches, Myths & Time Wasters

I am all about efficiency in your workroom. Allow me to point out the crutches, myths and time wasting processes that infect your workroom activity. Crutches are those tools and techniques you use to overcome a lack of skill or confidence. Myths are the many biases we bring to our job. Time wasters are all the things you do out of habit. Every one of these impacts your productivity and efficiency. The goal is to learn to recognize these unproductive elements in your workroom, make the necessary changes, and enjoy surprising results in efficiency and productivity.

Hand Stitching

This is a fun, hands-on class where you practice over six different hand stitches while learning when and where to use them in the workroom. Emphasis is on choosing the best stitch for the job, economy of movement, and ergonomic care of hands. I also discuss quality tools – thread, thimbles and needles – as well as pricing structures for hand-sewn treatments.

Conquering Difficult Fabrics

A wealth of tips and techniques for handling many of the difficult and unstable fabrics we encounter daily in the workroom. Velvets, crinkles, sheers and casements, linen, upholstery weight, unruly polyesters, drop match and half drop repeats and much more. Integral to the class is how to assess the fabric's characteristics in relation to the treatment it is chosen for and approach the cutting and fabrication to achieve efficient and quality results. The goal is to work with the fabric, not fight against it. All of the techniques can be applied to jobs throughout the workroom.

If you have worked with a nightmare fabric in the past, bring a piece of it to share with us.

Large Jobs in a Small Workroom

A large job might mean oversized components or a large quantity of the same item. Small workrooms are challenged with tabling treatments larger than their tables, handling heavy yards of fabric, storing large quantities of incoming fabrics and hardware, storing finished treatments, and handling installation challenges. This technique-rich class focuses on tabling oversized treatments, building structure to control the fabric, simplifying transport of finished treatments, storage tips, and installing. I also touch on some pricing considerations.

Rock the Math!

Math is a vital tool in the workroom. Many math equations can be plugged into excel worksheets or used to build reference charts. Work through mathematical challenges and set up simple formulas for many of them. Tackle math head on and make it work for you!

Make It Work! Creative Solutions For Workroom Disasters

What were they thinking?! How often have we thought that about the builder, the designer, the client or the vendor? Custom workrooms are often tasked with engineering a creative fix around flawed fabrics, curious construction choices, creative designer sketches or, the worst, the workroom's own mistakes. Be inspired by creative and outside-the-box solutions to design, fabric and hardware challenges.

Mock Hobbled Shade Valance

The mock hobbled valance is a cornice with beautiful, soft horizontal folds. The steps to construct this cornice are simple and easy. No patterns required! The folds stay crisp and straight. I show you how to handle pattern repeats, calculate fabric requirements and determine pricing. Add this valance to your repertoire of custom valances.

Flawless Installs

The goal for every installation appointment is to appear on time and install a perfect treatment in minimal time and with minimal mess. There are many ways you can ensure every installation is flawless. I discuss workroom preparation tips and explore problem solving hardware components. Whether you install your own work or hire an outside contractor, these tips and tools will help you streamline your installs and improve the finished treatment. Your clients will be impressed by the efficiency and professionalism of your installer. Your installer will love you too!

Essential Workroom Tools & Supplies

The right tools and supplies enable a workroom to perform fabrication tasks efficiently while increasing the quality of the treatment. Many small tools and notions look intriguing, but it is often hard to justify the purchase. I introduce you to many small tools and unusual workroom supplies. I especially love tools that can be used in many different, creative ways. We'll discuss all the uses for each and how they impact productivity in the workroom.

Tabling Low-Bulk Drapery Panels Efficiently

Like all processes in a workroom, there are several different methods to achieve the end result. We choose the most efficient for our own workroom layout and standards. In this presentation, I show you how I inspect fabric, cut and table standard pleated drapery panels from the bottom up and finish with the low-bulk header. I include techniques for adding control to the panel and for handling multiple width panels on a single table. This method is very common among workrooms, but I have built in efficiency techniques to streamline the process at every single step, and improve the quality of the finished panel.

Returns - The Finishing Touch

Every window treatment looks best when it is finished with a return.

This includes closure on the side of an outside mount shade, a board mount swag, rod pocket header shirred on a rod, and inside-mount or wall to wall draperies. In this seminar, I teach you some very surprising and simple ways to finish any treatment design by closing the return. Give your treatments that truly special custom look!

Secrets to Perfect Fabric Cording & Banding

Fabric cording is often an essential element to a treatment – whether highlighting the shape of the design or filling in the gap at the ceiling. I explore the uses for fabric cording, give guidance for choosing the right insert and discuss fabrication tips for a clean flawless cord. Fabric banding, whether inset or wrapped around the edge adds a beautiful dimension of color and a unique custom touch to all treatments. Learn how to form mitered corners with ease, and how to apply banding to panels, pillows, table runners and napkins, valances and any soft goods item efficiently and flawlessly.

Sheers, Lace & Casements

Sheer, lace and casement fabrics create light and airy treatments that soften the window and filter light. Many workroom fabricators, though, are wary of their slippery and potentially unstable characteristics. With proven workroom techniques and some outside-the-box creativity, you can tame and enjoy working with these fabrics.

Grow With Confidence!

Every successful business will experience a growth spurt at some time - whether planned or not. Growth might mean more clients, a larger space or hiring employees. Are you prepared for a growth spurt? Are you avoiding marketing yourself out of fear of not being able to handle growth? I share my story of a temporary growth spurt for which I was not prepared, and the mistakes I made. Learn many tips for setting up your workroom, standards and processes to always be ready to embrace extra work. Embrace the ability to grow your business and enjoy the results of your success.

Handling Bulk

Bulky fabrics and layers are a challenge for every workroom. In this seminar, we'll talk about how to anticipate bulk in a job before cutting, many different tips and techniques for handling the bulk - including how to minimize it and how to gather layers of fabric to 10x fullness, and choosing alternate designs to avoid bulk.

Know your Worth

Do you truly value yourself and your place in your business? Do you understand that your value is more than just your skill at sewing or designing? Each day we are beset by challenges, both fabrics and clients, which try to undermine our confidence in our skills and worth.

Here, I explore common insecurities and how to handle them. Once we have dealt with the issues holding you back, we then discuss how to calculate an income goal for the year and take timings in your day-to-day processes. My goal is to give you the tools to confidently and professionally quote a job with a price that acknowledges your skills and your value to your client.

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Surviving a Growth Spurt

Are you just a little hesitant to grow your business in case it grows too quickly? Join me as I tell you how I thoroughly mishandled a temporary growth spurt in my business in 2015. I did everything wrong! I put together this presentation to help you do everything right. Don't be afraid to grow your business. Planning, boundaries and balance are all key in successful, sustainable growth. It is exhilarating and satisfying to take your business to new levels of success.

Workroom Layout

When was the last time you looked at your workroom with a critical eye? Whether you work in a small spare bedroom or a roomy studio, it is important to consistently and thoroughly analyze your workroom layout, tools and processes for maximum efficiency. I teach you to do just that. I discuss options for storing supplies, incoming materials, hardware and finished treatments. I examine ways to arrange your workroom to minimize steps. Most importantly, I encourage you to invest in, then use the best tools and equipment for your workroom. Take a new look at your workroom, you'll be surprised at the changes you'll want to make.

The Designer's Guide to Window Treatments

This class is directed specifically to designers and not workrooms. Many design courses barely touch on the details of window treatment design.

This class is a primer on window treatments, from measuring to choosing the right fabrics, to a trouble-free installation. I talk about the importance of having one or more good, full-service workrooms in your arsenal and how to choose a good workroom and/or installer and work with them.

Workroom Tips & Techniques

This popular fast-paced class offers many tips and techniques in fabrication and workroom procedures to streamline your workroom operations and enhance your finished treatments. I bring over 25 years of her own workroom experience plus two years of managing a workroom of seven extremely talented sewers. Topics include a wide range of cutting, fabrication and finishing techniques, my favorite workroom tools, troubleshooting pointers and much more. The best part of this class is that you learn why each technique is important and when to use it. Bring your camera and sharpen your pencils.

Timings in the Workroom

Keeping time sheets on individual jobs in the workroom feels like an overwhelming and unnecessary task for a busy workroom. Ann demonstrates how timings enhance focus on jobs, highlight wasted time, aid in tracking employee productivity and are essential in pricing your work. Learn the value of tracking time on each task in a job, methods to capture and analyze the timings, and apply to your price list. Time is arguably one of the biggest costs in any workroom. Solid timings help in developing your schedule and negotiating prices with full knowledge of your costs in time.

The Anatomy of a Swag

Based on 'The Professional Workroom Handbook of Swags, Volume I,' this is THE class on swag pattern drafting. It deconstructs the swag pattern to explain how each of the components work to create the swag you envision. We focus on the basic swag pattern and how it is drawn to create the basic board mount swag, cutout (pole) swags and point-to-point (drapery) swags. I demonstrate how to specify the finished swag and draw the pattern for each swag type. I also talk about troubleshooting, fabrication and mounting. If you use a swag template system, professional patterns or draw your own patterns, this class is a must for all workrooms.

Historical Pattern Drafting Techniques for the Modern Workroom

The Victorian drapers were masters at manipulating fabric to create fullness without bulk. I introduce you to pattern drafting and manipulation techniques that result in truly unusual and stunning treatments. You will not just walk away with a few new techniques, but with your eyes opened to the possibilities for manipulating patterns and techniques to achieve unusual and unique results. Don't ask 'How do I make that? Instead, say -"I can make this!" This class stimulates your creativity as well as your skills.

Machine Maintenance

Your industrial sewing machines are amazing in their ability to run hard and long. But they can only serve you well if you take good care of them.

I teach you the parts of the machine - including the rewinder and foot pedal, how to clean and oil the machines on a regular basis and some basic troubleshooting tips for when the machine is not behaving. You will be surprised at how well you can keep your machine running. Note: This seminar can be presented as a power point, but would be awesome in a room where several different machines are available to play with.

Paperless Pattern Drafting for Box Pleated Valances

Box pleated valances, both with straight and shaped bottoms, are simple to cut without paper patterns. Learn to sketch the pattern pieces on your work order, then cut the face pieces quickly and efficiently. Learn tips for working around pattern repeats and cutting shaped bottoms. This is a great class to help you take the initial steps towards independence from patterns. Under the right circumstances, we could make this a hands-on class so that you can practice your new skills!

Point to Point Drapery Swags

This is my favorite swag to design and fabricate. It is a surprisingly versatile swag and can be used to dress up any window and/or panels.

It is also the one swag design that you can draft without using a chart to plot the bottom curve of the pattern. It is very easy to fabricate and I teach you how to finish the bulk at the stack with simple techniques. I can present this as a power point presentations, but this topic would be awesome as a hands-on project for a smaller group. You will be amazed at how simple and beautiful this swag can be.

Miscellaneous Topics:

I can put together short demonstrations on how to fabricate the following:

- Sunburst panels

- Hourglass panels

- Mock hobbled shade valances

- Fabrication techniques for most soft goods treatments

- ... and much more!

Testimonials:

"Very knowledgeable - an excellent instructor."

"Ann is fantastic!"

"Very patient and thorough."

"Great instructor. Laughter makes a difference! Thanks."

"Ann, your class was fabulous. You explained everything so well and made it so clear. Thank you!"

"Ann is such a gem. Her presentation skills make her a delight to listen to; She just keeps me on the edge of my seat full of anticipation, anxiously awaiting every word she has to share. I learn so much from her."

"Excellent class, great information. Best class I have taken this conference."

"WAY beyond expectations."

"Great crowd control."

"Very organized, easy to understand, wonderful presentation style."