

Some nip and tuck can lift

For some people, money spent on plastic surgery can generate its own returns in the business world.

A BIT of cosmetic surgery can give some people's careers a very real lift.

The *New York Times* says that facial plastic surgery procedures were up 34 per cent in the United States between 2000 and 2004, with reports that up to 22 per cent of men and 15 per cent of women have been having cosmetic surgery for the sake of their work.

It says US studies have shown there is "beauty premium" in the labour market there, with people who have above-average looks getting more pay, with less attractive people getting less.

Wellington plastic surgeon John

Masters, of Plastic Surgical Masters, says he gets a number of people at a senior corporate level who want to look good if their roles include pitching for business at a senior corporate level.

"They don't mind looking old," Mr Masters says. "They just want to look sharp."

Many of his clients tell him the main reason they have surgery is because "the person they see in the mirror doesn't reflect the person they feel they are inside", he says.

"We get feedback they feel younger and look more alert," he says.

People do not usually want a significant transformation. In fact, most clients request "a noticeable change that can't be noticed."



A new age: They don't mind looking old, they just want to look sharp,' Wellington plastic surgeon John Masters, of Plastic Surgical Masters, says.

"I put breasts up, down, out, I do eyelids, brows, you name it, but people don't want to look that different."

"People say to my patients afterwards 'you look happier', but they can't place why."

While it is hard to quantify a procedure's professional pay-off, many patients say they have seen increases in their work performance and their income, the newspaper says.

Mr Masters says 85 per cent of his patients are employed, so having work done probably has a positive spin-off for their career, even if it is not the main reason for surgery.

those career prospects

Most of the focus for his male clients is on facial appearance, mainly getting rid of baggy eyelids. For females, it is more brow lifting, which has an inherent improvement in the eyelid appearance.

One thing people never want to show off is any bruising or other post-operative effects. Often they will take a couple of weeks off to hide the effects, he says.

"People between contracts may have a complete job with eyelids and brow done and neck redefined and tightened ... that can take four week's recuperation."

As well as surgical work, many more people are opting for procedures such as fat injections to maintain facial volume, botox injections and skin treatments to maintain the vitality of the skin.

Mr Masters, who does not do these procedures, says their popularity lies in having a much shorter downtime, so it can be done during a busy work schedule.



Looking sharp: At a corporate level it can pay to look the part.