



Trust at first sight

Make sure you present and carry yourself the right way to make a winning first impression that lasts

YOUR image speaks loudly about who you are and impacts how you feel about yourself as well as how others perceive you.

When you look great, you will feel great about yourself and react positively and confidently. In turn, other people will react positively towards you, creating more successful opportunities in business and social relationships.

Your personal image is a powerful communicator and gives you the extra edge when it matters. There is nothing more unfortunate than allowing your image to convey the wrong impression, undermine your capabilities and ruin your chances of success.

In today's highly competitive global business arena, it takes more than academic accomplishment to attain your professional peak. As business becomes more internationally and socially oriented, the image you project is increasingly important.

Your appearance, attitude and style are as important as your smile. You can successfully manage and influence other people's perception of you simply by projecting the right visual and behavioural style.

An effective and polished professional image will make the most of your appearance and social skills, increase your self-confidence and

self-esteem and help you outclass the competition.

Here are some pointers to get you started:

Dress well

This is the first thing people notice about you. Whether you like it or not, your clothes say a lot about you. What you are wearing speaks about your personality, status, professionalism, dress sense and more. Learn which colours and styles work best for you, and strive to look your best at all times. Learn to create your signature style that reflects your unique qualities, personality and lifestyle.

Make-up

For women, make-up is one of the easiest and most effective ways to update and enhance your look. The right make-up is as important as the right outfit. Wearing appropriate make-up shows that you take care of your image. People then have the perception that you care for your work and life too.

Eye contact

This is one of the most important aspects of dealing with others, especially people you have just met. Maintaining good eye contact shows respect and interest in what they have to say. If you don't look



A warm smile, a firm handshake and a pleasant personality will win you hearts and take you places.

at someone when you are talking to them, you might be perceived as aloof, shy or unfamiliar with what you're talking about. Even worse, the signal you send says that you are neither listening nor interested. Nothing is more detrimental to your credibility and trustworthiness than your inability to make eye contact.

Smile

A sincere smile will break barriers and draw people to you like a magnet. A warm and friendly smile is one of your most powerful and winning assets. We all want to do business with people we like. If two people have equal skills and qualifications and only one of them is warm and personable, that person has a better chance of landing the position. Letting your personality show through your smile is a winning strategy.

Firm handshake

This communicates self-confidence. Place your hand palm-to-palm with the other person's, grasp firmly and shake. A soft, limp handshake indicates you are a spineless person, while the killer crush makes people think you are overly aggressive.

Body language

Communication can occur without any words being spoken. Your body sends signals, sometimes deliber-

ately, sometimes unconsciously. Picture the following body movements: a shrug, rolling of the eyes, a frown, massaging the temples and a big yawn. There is a meaning conveyed in each of those gestures. So be aware of the message your body language is sending and make sure it is positive.

Good posture

The way you sit, stand and walk says a lot about your attitude, professionalism and values. No matter how much money you spend beautifying yourself, a hunched, slouched posture destroys the whole effect. Good posture spells confidence. Learn to project yourself positively and confidently in your visual poise and posture.

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