

Wroten & Associates

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First Impressions: Make It or Break It!

"You never get a second chance to make a first impression." - Will Rogers

You have probably heard many times that it only takes three to five seconds for someone to evaluate you when meeting for the first time. Hard to believe but true. Within this short period of time the other person is sizing you up and forming an opinion based on your body language, appearance, mannerisms, demeanor and your dress. With each new encounter, be it in the business world or your personal life, you are being evaluated and this first impression will set the tone for all the relationships that follow.

In creating a good first impression remember everything contributing to the way you look on the outside counts. Always present yourself appropriately, starting with the way you dress. Consider what is appropriate dress for the occasion or meeting. A good question to ask yourself is, what will the person you'll be meeting with likely wear? If you appear professionally dressed you will be perceived to be professional and competent. Grooming is extremely important as well. This includes having a good hair cut and if not clean shaven, facial hair should be well trimmed. It goes without saying that your clothes should be clean and nicely pressed. If you are a woman your makeup should be fresh and light. Appropriate grooming will help you feel "the part." Consciously and deliberately make a personal statement through your appearance.

Almost everyone gets a little nervous when meeting someone for the first time. Being courteous and attentive goes a long way and demonstrates respect and interest in the other person. Of course, a warm and confident smile will put both you and the other person at ease. Remember to be positive as your attitude shows through in everything you do. If you are worried about compromising your individuality, the good news is you can create a good first impression without totally losing your individuality. However, at times you do need to "fit in" to a point, but it all reverts back to being appropriate for the situation at hand.

Wishing you an insightful month!

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