



There's no second chance to make a first impression

It only takes a second to get a first impression of someone we meet, and just four minutes conversation will produce opinions so solid that it will take between 8 – 10 additional encounters to change them. Dorit Uziel, media consultant and an expert in understanding body language, recommends ways of creating the best possible first impression, and how to correct a bad impression.

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Research has shown, apparently, that it takes just one second to get a first impression of someone we meet, and just four minutes of conversation to develop opinions that are so solid that it will take between eight and ten additional encounters to change them. At an interesting and entertaining meeting with first-year students at the schools of Psychology, Communications and Business, **Dorit Uziel**, a media consultant and expert in understanding body language, explained how to make sure that this first impression is as positive as possible, and how to correct a bad impression.

For those who were not present at the lecture, here are a number of important tips:

1. Body language is critical in making a first impression- in fact, it's 93% of the impact, and this also includes our style and color of dress, and our use of voice - how we sound, and not only what we actually say, which makes up the remaining 7%. Red, for example, is an interesting and attractive color, but also arouses emotions that can sometimes be less than positive - it increases the pulse rate, raises blood pressure, and in general, is

liable to annoy people. It is therefore recommended not to go to an important interview or stand in front of an audience in a red shirt, if your aim is to gain sympathy, agreement or support. Pink, on the other hand, is a color that encourages empathy even among people who claim to hate it - apparently there is good reason for dressing babies in soft and non-threatening colors like pink and pale blue, to cause people to be more friendly towards them. Purple is a particularly soothing color. All the other colors are apparently neutral, but it is recommended (where possible) to check out in advance the color of the upholstery in the place where an interview is going to be held, so as not to be swallowed up by it (a person with black hair and a black shirt, seated on a black chair, becomes a pale and floating face), or to conform with the colors of the company and appear to fit in right away.

2. "The winning strategy in speaking to an audience is to create trust and confidence", says Dorit, and these can be built by looking

straight into the eyes of the person or people opposite, and by open and overt gestures. A person who is lying will find it difficult to look into the eyes of his interlocutor, and someone who is stressed and not sure of himself will stand behind a podium or conceal himself in other ways, and will appear "closed" - standing or sitting with crossed legs, folded arms, or hands in pockets, and a slouching posture.

3. Don't: don't show up for an interview with your sunglasses on the top of your head, and certainly not covering your eyes, from the moment you sit down. Indoors, they are unnecessary and create an impression of temporariness, as if you are not giving your full attention to the experience, but are already thinking about the end of the meeting and going out into the street. Speaking with your hands in your pockets looks unprofessional and flippant, as if you are concealing something, unsure of yourself, or not completely focused.
4. Do: at an interview or in a situation involving a table, leave at least one hand on the table all the time, and look the person across from you in the eye. People tend to imitate the movements of those who are physically close to them, and therefore if someone arrives for a meeting and projects a sense of being at ease, the person opposite will also be more relaxed.
5. Don't: at a job interview, or any other serious occasion, it is better to wear closed shoes rather than

sandals, and to wear a watch rather than look at your cellphone or search for a clock on the wall all the time. There are discreet ways of looking at a wristwatch without causing other people to feel that you are in a hurry or that they are not worth your time, and it is very difficult to be discreet in a similar situation with even the smallest and slimmest of cellphones.

6. Do: make sure that you look healthy and steady when standing in front of an audience and at important events. Politicians make sure that they are properly made up before giving major speeches, and there is no reason not to do the same when it is important. Even if you do not put on makeup, it is vital to be well groomed and dressed appropriately for the occasion or the kind of job for which you are applying.
7. And one final important piece of advice - be sure of yourselves. If you really believe in yourself and your abilities, your body language will naturally project this without too much effort.