

First Impressions

Whether we like it or not, it takes just three seconds to come to a conclusion about someone new (Flora, 2004). First impressions strike like lightning and before you hear the thunder, you have formed a first opinion. In First Impressions Matter, “According to New York University, Graduate School of Business, people make eleven decisions about us in the first seven seconds of contact: (1) education level, (2) economic level, (3) perceived creditability and believability, (4) trustworthiness, (5) level of sophistication, (6) sexual identification, (7) level of success, (8) political background, (9) religious background, (10) ethnic background, and (11) social and professional desirability.” (Boucher, 2009, p. 1).

Visibility, Poise, & Manners - Your appearance, on how well and occasion appropriately you dress, How you have groomed yourself, your style, matter a lot in the corporate and business world. How you walk and stand, how you make hand or body gestures, your facial expressions sends a subtle but clear message to people you meet whether online or in person. How you greet people and how courteously you treat them conveys what kind of person you are and simple magic words like please and thank you will no doubt create a great first impression.



Building deep business relationships with clients -

Whether it your business client, a friend or a family member the principles of any relationship stays the same. Trust, Loyalty, Dependability, Patience, Understanding, Supportiveness are some of the areas that we see when in question, puts serious strain on relationships and breaks them down eventually if not addressed, and corrected. Managing a relationship depends a lot on what sort of person you are and of course, what sort of person the other party in the relationship is. It depends on your emotional intelligence and your ability to identify what sort of person the other party is and act accordingly.

Different People

What sort of person are you? What is your personality like? Let’s take a look at the **OCEAN** big 5 personality traits and see what sort of person you are.

Personality Trait #1: Openness

Openness is when someone is curious and openminded to new experiences and knowledge. People who rate high in openness are inventive and curious. People who rate low in openness are consistent and cautious. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

I love adventure.

I am imaginative.

I am the first to try new activities.

If you agreed, you probably rate high in openness. If you disagreed, you probably rate low in openness.

Openness has 57% genetic influence

Special Note: If you rate high in openness, let people in your life know that you love to be challenged. Make sure you have creative outlets to express yourself. You also have to make sure your spouse or partner knows your level of adventure, so your needs are met.

Read more at:

<https://www.scienceofpeople.com/personality/#personality-trait-4-agreeableness>



Personality Trait #2: Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness describes how organized and dependable you are. People who rate high in conscientiousness are efficient and organized. People who rate low in conscientiousness are more easy-going and laid back. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

I am highly self-disciplined.

I am very organized and always come prepared.

I like to know the plan rather than be spontaneous.

If you agreed, you probably rate high in conscientiousness. If you disagreed, you probably rate low in conscientiousness.

Conscientiousness has 49% genetic influence

Special Note: If you rate high in conscientiousness, you want to make sure the people around you respect your desire to have a plan. But don't get too frustrated with people who rate low in conscientiousness—you can't blame them for not being organized. It just doesn't come as naturally.



Conscientious people are apt to see their duty in that which is the most painful course. -George Eliot

Personality Trait #3: Extroversion

Extroversion describes how you interact with people. People who rate high in extroversion are outgoing and energetic. People who rate low in extroversion are more solitary and reserved. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

I am the life of the party.

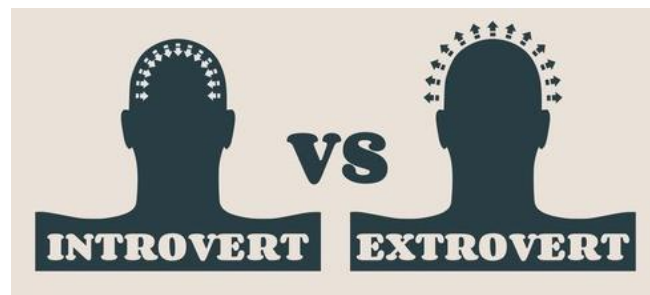
I don't mind being the center of attention.

I am usually the one to start a conversation with someone.

If you agreed, you probably rate high in extroversion. If you disagreed, you probably rate low in extroversion.

Extroversion has 54% genetic influence

Special Note: If you rate low in extroversion, be sure to not force yourself to try being extroverted. Honor your introversion. You never want to try being something or someone you are not. Think of the places and people who get you excited and stick to those nourishing spots. This helps you stay true to yourself—let the extroverts go to the nightclubs!



Personality Trait #4: Agreeableness

Agreeableness is how you feel toward others. People who rate high in agreeableness are friendly and compassionate. People who rate low in agreeableness are more analytical and detached. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

I tend to trust people and give them the benefit of the doubt.

I am extremely empathetic.

I like to make other people feel at ease.

If you agreed, you rate probably high in agreeableness. If you disagreed, you rate probably low in agreeableness.

Agreeableness has 42% genetic influence

Special Note: If you rate low in agreeableness, empathy doesn't come as naturally to you. So, your partner might say things such as, 'Don't you understand me?' or, 'Why don't you get me?' That's okay. Know that you have to make more of a mental effort to put yourself in their shoes.



Personality Trait #5: Neuroticism

Neuroticism is how you deal with emotions. People who rate high in neuroticism are sensitive and tend to be more nervous. People who rate low in neuroticism tend to be more secure and stable. Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

- I stress out easily.**
- I tend to be moody.**
- I am a worrier.**

If you agreed, you probably rate high in neuroticism. If you disagreed, you probably rate low in neuroticism.

Neuroticism has 48% genetic influence
Special Note: If you rate high in neuroticism, you have to know your triggers—what makes you worry? And your calmers—what helps you calm down? So you can be more in control of your moods.



Grooming

Self-grooming is one of the most important parts of personality development. The way you look and the way you move in a social circle makes a very huge impact. When you are in a social set up (may it be work or an event), your external appearance is the first thing that people notice about you. The chance to flaunt the brain and the intelligent quotient comes next. Thus, if you are self-groomed and know the perfect way to carry yourself, you will have many eyes attracted to you. On the contrary, if you are an imperfectly looking mismatch, the people around you will pack you off without even taking much notice. Self-Grooming is the process of constantly working on oneself to make oneself better. It is not only about wearing the right clothes but also about a lot of other things like working on being healthy and fit, developing hygienic habits, grooming one's personality, learning new things to make yourself interesting and impressive etc.

If you wish the world to stand up and take notice of who you are, it is a must that you spend some time on self-grooming. Here are a few things that you can do to groom yourself.

Grooming

- Professional and Neat Hair/ Beard
- Deodorant is a Must
- Good Perfume (Avoid Cheap Ones)
- Treat Dandruff/Rashes/Skin Problems immediately

Business Wardrobe

- Few plain white collar shirts (For the most formal business settings)
- A minimum of three neckties, including a few conservative ones in dark colours without patterning.
- A pair of plain, shined black oxford shoes + Good Leather Belt
- A second pair of brown leather oxfords Shoes + Good Leather Belt
- Fitting Tailored Trousers (Black/Navy Blue/Dark)
- Socks matching Trouser Colour
- At least one good suit (Black/Blue/Grey/Ash)
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Accessories

- Good Watch
- Remove Unnecessary (Extra bracelets/earrings/Studs)
- Avoid Visible Tattoos

Good Manners also plays a big part in creating a great impression.

When calling customers

- Ask whether it's a convenient time
- Get to the point fast (Practice the elevator pitch)
- Thank for the time
- Follow up as agreed

When Visiting or for an online appointment

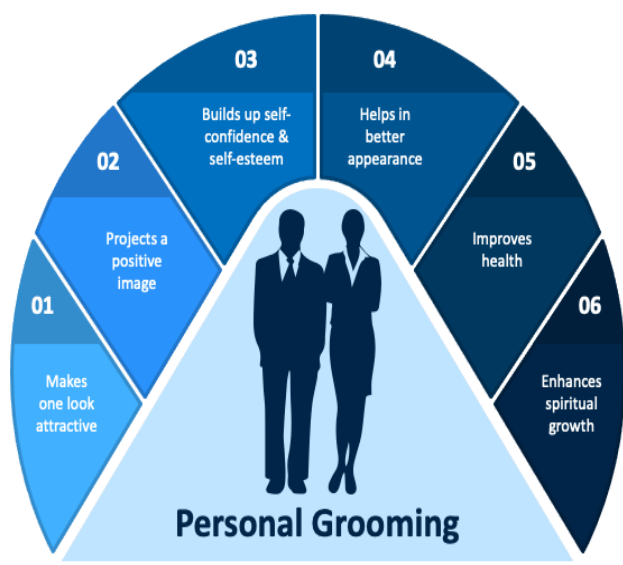
- Call before
- Be punctual (A must !)
- Be professionally dressed, pleasant and fresh
- Greetings (Good morning/afternoon/evening)
- Keep the personal space
- Don't waist time get to the point
- Make appropriate compliments + small talk
- Thanks for the time and wish them (have a great day! Etc)

After Visits

- Follow up
- Deliver what promised
- Keep in touch

Maintain your brand – hears how.....

- Have you ever searched for information about yourself online? "Google" yourself; set up Google Alert
- Be consistent ; "walk your talk"
- Assess your brand regularly (Linkedin)
- Gather feedback (ask others for recommendations)
- Evolve to stay relevant - The best brands are flexible (multiple copies of your resume)



Measure The Relationship With Your Customers!

The **RATER** Frame Work

Reliability

- Reliability refers to the delivery of agreed service as promised by your company. The service you offer has to be reliable and this can be achieved when you deliver service on time, regularly, and accurately. It is the most important service dimension in the RATER model.
- When you don't offer services to your customers as they expect, your company won't be reliable for them. When you can't deliver products on time, when your product doesn't offer what it claims, or when the product is faulty are a few instances when your company will turn out to be unreliable. This is the case when your customers will clearly say that your company isn't reliable.
- And when your company isn't reliable, it means one of the two things:
 - You are unable to deliver the promised service to your customers
 - Your customers misunderstood what your service is.
- The service that you deliver should be communicated clearly. You need to create customer expectations based on what service you'll offer them with. When you don't set the right expectations, it will eventually make your business unreliable. Here are a few tips and techniques to improve service reliability:

Communicate with your customers. The more you talk to them, the better.

Be clear and transparent.

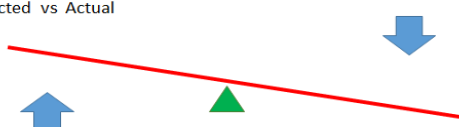
Take customer feedback and see what they think of your business.

Ensure marketing team doesn't create too much hype.

Keep expectations low and deliver more. Don't raise the bar too high in terms of building customer expectations.

Set your standards (what is expected?)

• Expected vs Actual



Assurance

- Assurance is the dimension that deals with trust and credibility. Do your customers trust you? Do they consider you an expert in the industry? Do your employees and salespersons demonstrate knowledge and expertise? Do customers trust what your employees say?
- Meeting customer expectations get easier when you can show them that you are trustworthy and know what you are doing. This includes answering customer queries and concerns effectively and professionally. If a potential customer wants to know how your software will help him reduce his monthly budget, you need to tell that your tool doesn't reduce the monthly budget rather it only helps you manage finances.
- There are several techniques to make your customers trust you:
- **Answer customer queries and concerns proactively and accurately**
- **Train your customer support and sales staff**
- **Educate your customers by addressing their common issues**
- **Be honest and transparent**
- **Use trust symbols and indicators on your website**

Tangibles

It refers to the physical aspect of your service such as website, office, staff, equipment, etc. How do your customers respond to the tangibles that you have created? Does the physical environment of your business look appealing?

Tangibles don't always mean something that has a physical appearance rather it refers to the image of your business. If you have an ecommerce store, the tangibles will include your website, online store, product photos, website layout, product descriptions, payment methods that you allow, online customer support, and so on. If you own a local travel agency, tangibles will include your office, vehicles, staff uniform, etc.

Your customers might not always notice tangibles, but it does impact the service you offer. In fact, tangibles have a significant impact on sales. A poorly designed website or a mismanaged office will turn potential customers away, right?

- Here are actionable tips on how to improve tangibles:
 - **Have a well-designed website**
 - **The staff needs to be well-dressed**
 - **Office and equipment should be clean and tidy**
- All customer touchpoints should deliver a superior customer experience**

Empathy

- It refers to your employee's empathic behavior. Does your customer support team emphasize with customers? Your staff must be empathic and your customers should get this feeling.
- Your customer support staff has to be empathic. When a customer contacts support and shares a problem, he wants to be emphasized. This is the first rule of customer support and your customers expect this from your staff.
- The basic rule of emphasizing is [listening to the problem](#), apologizing, offering assistance, and letting the customer know that you are working on the solution. This works best.

Here are best practices to ensure empathy:

- **Listen to your customers**
- **Apologize**
- **Train your customer support agents**
- **Update customers on the progress of their complaints**
- **A short callback can do wonders**



Business Basics – First impressions and building deep customer relationships – Salient points & Program Note

Responsiveness

- Responsiveness refers to your company's ability and willingness to offer quick and quality services to the customers. How effectively you respond to your customers and how fast you do it. You have to be available to respond to customers when they need you.
- A [survey](#) revealed that 53% of customers who complain on Twitter expect a response within an hour. This is what's called responsiveness. Companies that meet this response rate are considered responsive, others don't.
- There are several steps you can take to be responsive:
 - **Be available across all the channels where your customers are**
 - **Train your staff**
 - **Use software and tools to boost responsiveness**
 - **Try responding to customer queries within 24 hours**
 - **Set up automatic replies**
 - **Be active on social media 24/7 to instantly respond to customer queries**

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What we learnt today –

- Different people have different personalities
- What is a first impression?
- Be a brand ambassador
- Know your customers?
- Trust and how to build trust?
The trust equation
- Dimensions of a business relationship
- Know what is expected in your relationship
- Measure your relationship with your customers
- RATER Framework
- Reliability
- Assurance
- Tangibility
- Empathy
- Responsiveness

