



# First Impressions: What You Don't Know About How Others See You

By Ann Demarais Ph.D., Valerie White Ph.D.

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## First Impressions: What You Don't Know About How Others See You By Ann Demarais Ph.D., Valerie White Ph.D.

What kind of first impression do you make? A first impression is the most important impression you'll ever make—and you get only one chance to make it. Business deals can be made or broken, first dates become second dates or not, friendships are created or fail to form; everything hinges on that all-important initial encounter. And yet most of us don't know how we're really seen by others. Many of us don't know how to make a good impression.

Wouldn't you like others to see you as confident, interesting, attractive, and sincere? Ann Demarais, Ph.D., and Valerie White, Ph.D., consultants to many Fortune 100 companies as well as creators of First Impressions, Inc., a New York-based dating and consulting firm, offer you the keys to putting your best self forward in any new situation, whether you want to strike up a conversation at a party or are meeting a blind date or a new business client.

You'll learn to see yourself as others see you, and how to tweak your style to create the impression that reflects the real you. Breaking down a successful first impression into its seven fundamentals, the authors show you how to master these principles so that you can make the best first impression. They also show how to avoid common misunderstandings that leave others with a bad impression, how to reveal the four universal social gifts, and they outline practical steps you can take to enhance your personal charm.

Informative and filled with enlightening research studies, do-it-yourself checklist reviews, and dozens of helpful case histories, First Impressions is a fun, groundbreaking, and long-overdue guide to the most important moment of virtually any relationship: the first.

*From the Hardcover edition.*

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## **Editorial Review**

### **From Publishers Weekly**

The authors, both psychologists, run a New York-based business that coaches professionals on how they present themselves in business contexts and singles on how they appear during staged dates. In breezy helpful style, this book helps readers identify gaps between self-perception and actual effect. The secret to a good first impression, the authors argue, is "social generosity," carefully helping others feel good about themselves, whether through "appreciation," "connection," "elevation" (good spirits) or "enlightenment" (new information). Each chapter covers one of "Seven Fundamentals of a First Impression" (including the need for self-disclosure and for fluency in conversational dynamics); each ends with a checklist of "positive topic behaviors" and "common miscommunications" (e.g., if you focus on one topic, you may think you're passionate but you come off as self-absorbed). While some insights are basic (eye contact as an indication of interest), the authors thoroughly dissect interactions that are eminently flippable. For example, the most common violation of "talking with" is "talking at," which can include lecturing, storytelling, sermonizing and telling jokes. The insights presented here are based not just on the authors' experience as consultants but also on the psychological literature: getting in sync with a partner, the research shows, requires coordinated smiling, gesturing and a mutual attentive gaze. The secret to sex appeal? Androgynous characteristics matched with confidence and warmth. This highly practical book ends with suggestions on how to tweak your style, including asking friends for feedback and consciously charting behaviors. To their credit, the authors remind newly enlightened readers of the importance of cutting others slack: somewhat annoying behavior may stem from good intentions.

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### **From School Library Journal**

Adult/High School—From friendships to business relationships, first impressions can have a huge personal, emotional, and financial impact on one's life. This book is a review of the scientific literature on how one is perceived by others during the first few minutes of social interaction. The authors summarize the current literature and place it into charts, allowing readers to easily determine the most appropriate strategy for making a good first impression. The material is interesting and flows well. The book is content rich with information that could be used daily by teens as they begin to establish mature personal and professional relationships.—*John Kiefman, Fairfax County Public Library, VA*

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### **From Booklist**

Despite being saddled with a terrible title (it makes the book sound like the cheapest, slickest kind of self-help twaddle), this is a smart, thought-provoking look at the way we present ourselves to the world. The book breaks down the most important moment of any relationship, the initial meeting of two people, into its component parts. The authors ask us to appraise the "first impression" moment from a variety of perspectives. How do others see us? How do we see others? What is our body language saying, and is it contradicting what our mouth is saying? How do we respond to questions, and do we spend too much time talking and not enough listening? Not just a "how-to" book for daters, this volume will also prove helpful to executives looking to build productive relationships with colleagues or clients. Some readers might find it a little facile, and perhaps it is, but its usefulness is abundantly evident all the same. *David Pitt*

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