

First Impressions by Demarais, White

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Chapter 4

1. How to appear open at parties or when meeting new people

- Approachable people show physical attention such as smiling, nodding, and leaning forward.

Unapproachable people do not attend to others, do not smile much, and *extend their legs while sitting*

You are MOST APPROACHABLE while standing ALONE at a party or if you are talking to someone be sure to create an open space for a new lingering person to jump in the conversation.

2. Appealing to others in your first impression:

- Appear SIMILAR to others. Do not try to make yourself superior to ANYONE or spotlight your major differences from other people.

ADAPT to the situation. This does not mean you should change who you are, but show off your ability to not script what you will talk about or be a wishy-washy person.

When talking USE SUPERLATIVES like "incredible" "amazing" "wonderful" "beautiful" or hyperbole like "I'd be happy if I stayed here the rest of my life" Strong words will make you seem interested in the world and involved in it.

Avoid weak or negative words to describe things... "it was OK" "I guess it was alright" "it's kinda cool" you think you are just sounding laid back as these things are not enough to get a lot of your attention, but you actually seem weak and uninterested in the world.

Do not be concerned with appearing "cool" you will come off as distant and uninterested in life and the other person. Other people read a lot into a "cool" person's lack of reaction and very little of it is good.

Be willing to take conversational risks and TAKE THE INITIATIVE to strike up a non-negative conversation with a stranger.

MAKE EYE CONTACT DURING HANDSHAKES AND IN ANY INTRODUCTION!!!!

Chapter 5

MAKE EYE CONTACT - this is soooo important. You don't make nearly enough eye contact. Most skilled conversationalists make eye contact around 60% of time of the total conversation. You probably do it less than 10% if at all. In fact you make so little eye contact you probably don't realize how MUCH eye contact others are making with you.

- Giving little eye contact as you currently do makes others see you as LESS SOCIALLY ATTRACTIVE, LESS CREDIBLE, AND MORE SUPERFICIAL. This is probably the thing that could have the single most effect on your likability and the easiest thing to change.

NAMES:

- Work the other person's name into the conversation. People have an UNCONSCIOUS POSITIVE REACTION to hearing their own name.

Ask the other person to spell their name if it is unique or to repeat it. Then you repeat it "did you say Lisa, like the Simpson?" or just say it back to them when you intro yourself. This is why you should always ask the other person's name first. So you can do this. Or you can compliment a cool name "That's a euphonic name!"

SHOWING INTEREST:

- Ask open-ended questions and show GENUINE SELFLESS INTEREST. Do NOT focus on trying to make YOURSELF look good. Focus on making the other person look good.

Even SILENT listeners were liked MORE when they SMILED, LEANED TOWARD THE SPEAKER, and MADE EYE CONTACT!!!!

When someone is answering your questions it is EXTREMELY important to look interested.

Like you are HANGING ON EVERY WORD. Make eye contact and throw in occasional verbal feedback. "uh huh" "yeah" "oh really?"

CONVERSATIONAL FLOW

- It is the BURDEN OF THE PERSON SPEAKING to change the topic or turn the convo back to the listener. So, if you were just speaking and the convo dies, it's YOUR FAULT. Don't let this happen. Ask a question, make a comment, ask what the other person thinks about something, ANYTHING to keep it going!!!

Do NOT relate everything someone else says back to yourself. Just like COVEY says keep showing interest in the other person till they bounce the convo back to you with a question or something. In other words, don't autobiographicize other people's life events. REACT TO THEM INSTEAD!!!

Give the other person openings to turn the convo back to you if they wish. You do not want the convo to turn into an interview session where you are interviewing the other person.

Things that turn a conversation narcissistic:

- Boasting

Refocusing the convo on yourself. It's like each person in the convo has a spotlight they can shine it on the other person or themselves. The best convos will have both people shining on each other.

Starting many statements with I.

Glazing over while others are speaking. LOOK ATTENTIVE!!!!

COMPLIMENTS

- There are TWO THINGS you can compliment at pretty much any time:

First is PERSONAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS if you are aware of any of the other person's accomplishments or you discover any of them in the conversation you should compliment them!!

This is easy "low fruit" on the compliment tree.

Second is STYLE! This does NOT include general looks or body parts, but instead stuff like nose rings, hair, tattoos, clothing. People love hearing about their style since it's a PERSONAL CHOICE and they are not sensitive about it like if you talk about a body part or something.

The other person's name is also a safe bet if you can say something original. Don't be trite.

Avoid DIRECT statements as compliments, like "you have a great body" instead work it into the convo "yoga is cool, it looks to be working really well for you!" or "yeah that nose ring really works well for you, did you pick it out yourself?"

Stay away from objective topics when meeting someone new - like current events and culture.

Don't be afraid to acknowledge other people's strengths in your area of weakness. It means you think you are intimidated and you reinforce your own feels of inferiority if you ask.

I don't show much interest at first - this is SAFE, but has so many drawbacks. When you show interest it makes the other person MUCH more likely to like you.

Showing interest QUICKLY and GRACIOUSLY makes you seem CONFIDENT. Whenever you seem an opportunity for a compliment - GIVE IT! And make it a point to BE ON THE LOOKOUT for potential compliments. Style is always a safe thing to compliment.

Withholding interest or "PLAYING IT COOL" makes you seem REJECTING and COLD. SHOW INTEREST - GIVE COMPLIMENTS.

Chapter 6 - The First Convo

Here is the sequence of normal conversations. They don't always go exactly this way, but most do. Almost all good convos include these elements.

Level 1: "The Field"

- Situational Talk - discuss the current environment. If it's storming "I fucking love thunderstorms"

Explore possible connections. Ask who the other person knows or how they know so-and-so or whatever. The other person feels more secure when they know you have a friend in common.

Level 2: "What's happening"

- This is the most critical part of the convo. The real first step! Someone MUST make a TOPIC INITIATIVE or the convo will FAIL. BE ABLE TO DO THIS.

Go fishing for topics - questions usually start with "DID YOU HEAR ABOUT..." It is good to make up a few stock topics with this. Mention something about a common friend or something that happened at another part or bar or school.

Level 3: "Ideas and Opinions"

- This is where you going mining for conversational gold. This is where people REALLY connect. Though you run the risk of uncovering differences, the payoff can be HUGE. Share the weird things or interesting perspectives you have about the world. "That would be a cool way to die if you had to choose one..." "Imagine how great it felt to be that guy" or whatever.

What makes someone attracted to you?

- #1 is sharing the SAME ATTITUDE ABOUT LIFE - such as parenting, welfare legalization, smoking, eating, foreign movies. - So make a reference to healthy food or whats good about a certain food. Or at a party talk about how you don't mind being around smokers even if you aren't one.

If you agree with someone about such issues MAKE IT KNOWN!!!!!!! People assume that those who share attitudes with them will like them.

IMPORTANT: You must be ACTIVE in the topic introduction process. Otherwise the other person will feel BURDENED with the responsibility of always having to bring new topics into the convo. So have a few things to talk about in your stock to bring out at any time.

AWKWARD PAUSE??

- If you find yourself at an awkward standstill in the convo after you have introduced yourself you NEED to ask a question. This responsibility is YOURS.

Good question starters are "Did you hear about...." or "What do you think of...."

, "Did you hear about XXX bar getting busted by the ABC?" "Can you imagine what it would have been like to be one of the ABC narcs in high school? What kind of jobs did you have?" You will be thought of as a bore if you are passive and don't add much. Those who add more to the convo REGARDLESS of the CONTENT are liked much more. When in a group TOSS TOPICS out there and you will be seen as a valuable member.

Unfamiliar Topics?

- Show curiosity and be honest about your lack of knowledge. Don't fake it - Don't run away from the topic.

Pay Attention

- Your partner's body language says a lot.

If she is looking away, disengaged, or withdrawn she is probably bored.

Boredom is RARELY FAKED

Be conscious of your BODY LANGUAGE as well - don't look away or seem disengaged.

Look for your partner's eye contact and smiling as an indicator of interest - if you get these it will give you a nice little ego mental boost. It makes you feel attractive and you WILL ACT MORE ATTRACTIVE and thus BE EVEN MORE ATTRACTIVE.

Give others a chance to follow up on what I'm talking about. Don't get into long stories - it is the speaker's duty to carry on the conversation and steer it where it needs to go.

Don't get carried away with topics YOU like. Keep it interesting and brief.

Conversational Trap: TALKING AT

- People who lack confidence in speaking will usually go for the following "low fruit" that make get people to listen to them, but does not forge deep connections.

1. Lecturing - like a professor

2. Storytelling - You force the other person into "audience mode"

3. Sermonizing - Presenting rigid opinions is usually too drastic for a first conversation. You don't want the first convo to end up in a debate. Sermons try to convince someone of something. You can share your perspective on something and let the other person react, but don't try to CONVINCe THEM. But if you do manage to test the other person's values first you can show more of yours in the same area if they are similar. LET THEM KNOW IF YOU HAVE SIMILAR VALUES.

4. Telling Jokes. most of the time people will just laugh to be polite, but not know how to really respond. Don't go into elaborate monologues.

Everyday life stuff:

- Going into too much detail about everyday life events will make you seem boring.

Use these everyday things to build up to a bigger point about life or something. It's the little stuff and staying active in life that keeps you going though. Sure you can let little stuff like that go, but if it gives you a reason to get out and accomplish something go for it. I mean it's no worse than someone going to sit behind a desk for 8 hours of their day.

You can also use everyday events as a springboard to a question

Chapter 7 - Disclosing

How disclosing stuff about yourself works in the real world:

1. Warm up

- Includes exchanging names, situational talk, where you live, what we do, and our roots.

You may not be proud of what you do, it's important to respond HONESTLY and POSITIVELY to be more appealing to others.

Don't take yourself too seriously or try to "play it cool". Having a sense of HUMOR about yourself can break the ice "oh I'll probably end up living in a trailer park/box/on the street" or "I'm living the life of a trust fund baby without the trustfund". If you DODGE these basic warm up questions people will assume you are CREEPY and HAVE SOMETHING TO HIDE. So.... BE HONEST and tell "your story"

You need to take the lead if the other person isn't asking these basic info questions.

Be sure to ask questions back and SHOW INTEREST.

The MAIN message you want to get across by asking and answering questions is that "I'm safe/OK/not creepy"

Jumping into intense stories about where you've been can make people feel uncomfortable. Don't let the convo get too serious too quickly.

The first goal is to just let the other person feel comfortable with you

2. What to share?

- Few hard rules exist.

Background, experiences, feelings or dreams are always good to share.

If you don't OPEN UP it is VERY hard for others to find ways to relate to you. Trying to play it cool/be funny/be clever or on a pedestal makes you very UNRELATABLE. The goal is not to have someone walk away from the convo thinking of how amazing you are - it's just for them to feel like they made a solid connection with you - and that's all.

Every time you share something its like you are holding out a hand for something to grab onto a connect with you. When they make an offer to connect its very important to pull them to connect back with them and not just push the hand away or say "nice hand".

When you are disclosing to other people you are indirectly saying "I trust you and I value your point of view". Research shows us that you are more likely to like the OTHER PERSON after YOU disclose. Research also says that those who disclose more are much more likely to be liked than those who disclose less.

When someone offers some personal details about themselves don't just say "oh" or "that sucks" Practice ACTIVE LISTENING. The other person feels exposed if you don't offer something back of similar personal value to you.

When someone reveals something you need to use your judgment and reveal something of about the same intensity - kind of like an evenly matched game of strip poker - emotional strip poker - that way nobody feels overly exposed while you sit there with all your clothes on.

PAY ATTENTION to others level of comfort - it shows you how much they trust you.

Style of Disclosing:

- Let other people ask questions about you. You ask questions of them and have faith they will ask questions back.

You brag and have an agenda way too often. You will also come across as VAIN and POMPOUS

Don't work bragging into questions.

When you tack on a bragging session to an answer to another person's question you are costing the other person a chance to discover you a little at a time on their own.

Just have faith in the conversation to uncover your good qualities in time. There's no need to force it on your own.

To spin this another way, if you notice someone else bragging, name dropping, or staying on a subject which they are proud of, you KNOW they are trying to impress you. This is just a front they are putting up and they are seeking YOUR approval. This puts you in the driver seat of how to reward such behavior. You may be more enthusiastic about their accomplishment in a one on one convo, but in a group you may play it down and just give a neutral, canned response that is just appears as "polite" to those with social skills in your party.

What should I share?

- PASSIONS - Talking about something you really love: music, your dog, your job, family, the beach, running outside,. Let your BODY LANGUAGE be an outlet for passion. Talk with your hands, smile, laugh. The point is to show THAT YOU'VE TAKEN RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN HAPPINESS. THIS IS VERY ATTRACTIVE!!!!!!

Blunders - Sharing mistakes is EXCELLENT. They allow other people a chance to relate to you (keep a running list of slightly embarrassing blunders and make them public as appropriate). It's sort of a Chicken Soup for the Soul kinda thing, In face it might be a good idea to read some of those books to get some ideas about the kind of stuff you can talk about. Also as Mystery suggested, there is a section of cosmo that is a gold mine for those sort of stories. You can admit to anything to see if the other person can connect with you.. It shows you are honest with yourself and don't take like too seriously. You will also seem more confident!! Like you have so much confidence to spare, you aren't afraid to admit to being a dumbass about something.

What should I NOT share?

- Don't share good news that puts the other person in a supportive role. Like telling of a recent success or reward. You corner the other person into saying "Way o go! I'm so

happy for you!" If you make anyone say that, then you are showing extreme insecurity. NEVER put anyone in a position where they feel obligated to say stuff like that.

Stay away from discussing problems and complaining when meeting someone
The most boring topic of conversation is *drumroll* "Negative Egocentrism" - otherwise known as complaining about one's problems. Don't take this to mean you shouldn't share everyday problems with your friends, but there's a difference between sharing the problem and complaining about it. Don't do either when just meeting someone.

Chapter 8 - Conversational Dynamics

The First Impression fundamentals are as follows:

1. Accessibility
2. Showing interest
3. Discussing objective topics (enriches others and builds connections)
4. Disclosure
5. Conversational Dynamics (this chapter)

Conversational Energy:

- Most first convos are superficial so people will really mainly notice the energy when they determine the value of their conversation with you. This falls somewhere in between the old adage "it's not what you say, but how you say it" and taking it upon yourself to let the other person know the value of your statements through energy and body language.

Most people want two things in a conversation: the opportunity to express themselves and to listen to input from others. It is your duty to satisfy both of these. Think about what you want from a convo - is it usually to impress the other person? to be liked? to simply connect? or maybe its just for the conversation to end. If any of these are the case, then it is time to change your conversational desires.

Body Language

- Studies have shown that guys are more likable when they make gestures away from the speaker and toward the audience, posture changes, head movements, and smiles.

Adapt how much you are speaking. If the other person is a big talker you are fine with only contributing 30% of the convo, but if it's a shy talker then you will need to pick up the slack.

If you have the floor offer frequent pauses for others to jump in.

Studies show we like people who match our rate of speech better. So if the other person is talking much faster than you, feel free to pick up the pace.

Volume: Studies show that speaking too softly makes you come across as lacking in confidence, shy, and unenthusiastic.

How to create a conversational harmony with you partner:

- 1. Coordinated Smiling - smiling at the same time
2. Gesturing - using your hands to make points while speaking.
3. Gaze - if you gaze at each other at the same time and look attentive, you will connect more deeply.

Interruptions

- If you and your partner speak at the same time, you should yield - don't do it to be polite or a NICE guy. Do it cause you are INTERESTED in what the other person has to say. You should be hanging on their every word anyway.

Besides you might as well yield to others impatience if they are giving on an uninterested vibe ("uh huh.... uh huh") They probably aren't really listening you anyway. You should make a mental note of that a move on.

Chapter 9

How are you perceived by others?

People pick up on your perspective almost IMMEDIATELY and make assumptions about you.

If we all stated our perspectives out loud up front they would sound like "I'm optimistic and feel myself to be superior to most other people."

Do you come across as flexible or ridged?

People judge you by how you act in situations that are out of your control - strangers especially do this. They will judge you based on the single situation they witness. You may just be having a bad day or have a short fuse for whatever reason, but that is the only side of you they know.

Arguing with strangers gets you nowhere. It's better to assume you made a mistake and keep your cool.

those who become the focal point of the conversation or the most noticeable speaker in a group tend to be the ones that take up the more space with their bodies, talk more, tend to interrupt more (notice the difference between group talk and one on one), and touch and point more than the others.

Modesty *Important*

- Modesty is a great way to UN-intimidate other members in a group. They will feel more comfortable around you if they don't feel like the conversation is a competition or feel pressure to impress others since the stage has already been set that you don't care about impressing others.

Instead of bragging about owning your own business - you can just say "I'm in sales"

Make light jokes about a weakness - "I'm haven't been out introducing myself to a bunch of new people tonight. I hope everyone doesn't think I'm being anti-social or something".

Sharing vulnerability or human weakness can also put others at ease. "what a terrible friend I am. I forgot to introduce you to xxx". In actuality you are not a terrible friend at all, but it shows you hold yourself to such a high standard that a few second delay of an introduction is a noticeable faux pas on your part (where it probably wouldn't even register on most peoples radar). Admitting to weakness also shows strength of your character and that you can take responsibility yourself. It shows you have SO MUCH confidence that you do not need to guard your weaknesses closely. You can call yourself out publicly so others won't do it behind your back. You can also appear modest by taking the focus off of you and asking about others opinions (unlike those who feel a constant need to share their opinion like a talk show host/comedian). This shows you are not self centered and ALWAYS telling stories about yourself. When you are telling constant stories about yourself it's like saying "Interesting? do you think I'm interesting yet? What about now?"

The BEST is to tell someone they have INTERESTING OPINIONS about thing or what you admire about their POINT OF VIEW.

Hidden Influence

- You can influence others conversational tendencies by being positive yourself. If you talk about positive experiences in relationships or at college or even about the area - you are more likely to spur more positive comments from other people.

Parity

- Parity is like modesty, but better! It's like saying "I'm just like you"

Taking control vs. Having control - This is an important parity concept. The key is to just focus on what you ware doing for yourself. don't be bossy and don't come off as a victim. Just take responsibility for where you are and where you are headed.

Positive Focus

- Be very conscious of what you focus on in any conversation. People really notice what you focus on in a conversation.

Do you pull the positive out of a negative situation? Do you always find SOMETHING wrong with anything?

It's best to NEVER focus on the negative properties of stuff when making a first impression. When others do this they come off as bitter, angry, etc. Focusing on the POSITIVE ESPECIALLY in MUNDANE or UNPLEASANT situations is a HUGE SOCIAL ASSET.

As Mystery would say, focusing on the positive makes you come off as fun and more importantly IN CONTROL of your own fun. You don't get caught up in little annoyances and you are always on the lookout to make the most of any situation, no matter what hand you were dealt.

With that being said, don't exclusively focus on positives. There are bad things in the world - acknowledge them. Keep it real and don't be afraid to call out things that are truly unpleasant.

Be kind in your remarks about people you know.

- People often confuse things when you talk about other people. Many times they will remember a trait was discussed involving your friend as a trait that YOU POSSESS!

As a bonus if you focus on others positive traits - you will likely be viewed in others memories as having those traits as well.

Chapter 10

Appreciations of sex appeal in everyday situations:

- Like when you pass a cute girl on the sidewalk - make eye contact and crack a smile. It will make her feel sexy and if she does it back - you will feel a boost as well.

Like when at a meeting or sitting next to a cute girl somewhere. Tap her shoulder to arm and ask a question. A light touch is a great way to show appreciation of someone.

Eye Contact

- Eye contact and smiles need to ALWAYS be on call when you are in public or just around other people in general. The eyes are really the window to the heart.

If you want to show attraction - hold your gaze just a second longer before looking away. It's a way to show attraction without being creepy and staring.

Touch

- Touch sends an even more powerful message than a gaze.

Casual touch on a first meeting gives the message "I like you".

It doesn't mean in any way that you have to go any further, but why wouldn't you want more people to like you?

Showing attraction

- If you find someone's opinions interesting - TELL THEM.

There is very strong reciprocity in attraction meaning that if you SHOW someone else you are attracted to them, it makes them MORE LIKELY to be attracted to you.

This principle also holds true if a friend tells them that you find them attractive.

If you are being timid to show your feelings for a girl out of fear she won't like you back, rejection or just awkwardity - remember that SHOWING the attract will make all of these things far less likely to occur.

Keep in mind, people will always notice more about you than you notice about yourself. You just get to see yourself in a mirror for a few minutes a day while they can see you all the time.

People EXPECT sexual expression in ALL situations. Most of the time these expressions are not consciously noticed, and very subtle, but the impact on feelings is huge. Having skill in these expressions is often the difference between being a social loser, being cool, and being creepy.

Aggressive Flaunting

- This includes trying to show off your muscles, your vocabulary, or your money and it shows how insecure you are with yourself.

It usually leaves the other person thinking you are obsessed with whatever it is that you are showing off.

Passive Suppression

- When you suppress your sexuality (often out of politeness, or cause she has a BF, or cause you might have your mind on something else) you will make a girl feel just like she is hanging out with her cousin or something.

We've all heard of "nice guys" who never get treated like BF material. Instead, girls think that he feels more like the big brother they never had (or worse a little brother).

You don't want to be this guy.

The solution is obviously to flirt with the girl. I think you have probably gotten good at avoiding tension in your interactions. You need to introduce some tension into the conversation.

You may be good at "playing it cool" and having easy going conversations, BUT this girl is to feel UNCOMFORTABLE, UNATTRACTIVE, or just BAD about themselves in ways that they will not be able to articulate, so you will never know.

Do not over-control your sexual side - it is there for a reason.

Let go of control physically and emotionally and see where the interaction naturally leads.

The Playful Approach

- Tease! Tease! Tease!

If you and a girl can laugh at yourselves you are MUCH more likely to connect.

If you can both show a sense of pleasure in life and laugh and be captivated by each other - be in the moment and do your thing. Touch, gaze, smile, laugh, joke around.

If someone is late or something tease them about it. Don't roll over and be the "polite nice guy" saying "oh it's okay"

What to say

- When you like a girl's hair, shoes, conversational style, or ideas. TELL THEM!

When you have enjoyed meeting someone, LET THEM KNOW. Saying "It is nice to meet you" is for grandpa. Make a special compliment just for that situation.

It's a lot like playing jazz. You need to play off the other person - create inside jokes - allow them to open you up and explore you.

It's terrible to come off as very controlled, instead come off as someone who is open to experience fun.

Matching

Always at LEAST try to match the sexual expression of the other person.

Adapt the level of expression to the situation. That way you don't come off as uninterested and un-confident, nor creepy for showing too much too soon.

Ideally you will be playful and full of life and generally a cool/fun person to interact with.

A LACK of seriousness can be a GREAT THING!

BE IN THE MOMENT!!!