

First Impressions

Coaching Questions

“What was your first impression of me?”

Topic Introduction

There are specific adjectives that a consultant or coach may try to portray to their clients in the first few seconds of meeting each other. What are these?

Discussion Questions

- Do you remember what mood or impression I gave you when I first met you?
- If I showed up with a frown on my face and was abrupt, what might you assume about me?
- Did you look at what I was wearing?
- If my hair was messy, how might you perceive me differently?
- What else contributed to your first impression of me?

Key Learning

First impressions are subjective and no one is perfect. You might not always make a perfect first impression, but knowing is half the battle.

“What is the first impression you want to give?”

Topic Introduction

To make a good first impression, you have to have a goal that you are trying to strive for.

Discussion Questions

- Do you want to be professional?
- Do you want to be personable?
- What other adjectives might you want people to think about you upfront?
- What might make the rest of your relationship easier?

Key Learning

Figure out what first impression will help you the most with your business (both for today and tomorrow), and strive for that.

“How can you do that?”

Topic Introduction

There are a lot of tools in your arsenal to help you make the first impression.

Discussion Questions

- How could you use the following in the first 10 seconds to your advantage?
 - o Body language
 - o Facial expressions
 - o Listening
 - o Dressing
 - o Giving compliments, being generous
 - o Tonality
 - o Understanding
 - o Remembering names

Key Learning

With all of the components of a first impression, it is tough to get it right 100% of the time. Keep practicing and remain aware of all of the components.

Examples

Real Life Example: What was your first impression of me?

Everyone has their own best example of this in their own best friend.

Think about the first time that you met your best friend. What was your impression of them? Why?

Real Life Example: What is the first impression you wish to give?

A small business coach had decided to focus on working with micro businesses (1 to 10 employees) as her primary clientele. To decide what she wanted her first impression to do, she thought about what her client base would care about.

Typically a micro business owner;

- is isolated and needs someone to be able to talk to about their business (and sometimes their personal) challenges
- doesn't have a lot of time, as they are still running a majority part of their business
- is often great at what they are doing, but gets overwhelmed by the business component of it

What this translates into as a coach is;

- someone who is friendly and approachable
- someone who is able to accomplish a lot in a little amount of time or helps them make decisions
- is competent with a solid background

To accomplish this within a first impression, during networking events and presentations she always;

- made smiling and jokes mandatory.
- focused on speaking clearly and concisely. Extra explanations and long anecdotes were removed.
- she would always give examples or anecdotes from her own experience.

Real Life Example: How can you do that?

1. The small business coach always wore one piece of clothing or an accessory that would be her brand's colour.
2. A home care business owner always created her own name tag at networking events to stick out.
3. A personal fitness business owner had to make sure that they were always in shape. Any business lunches were always at a healthy restaurant to remain consistent.

Mini Case Study

Cynthia is starting up a child care centre.

CYNTHIA: "I'm always nervous when I meet people at networking events. How can I make a better first impression?"

COACH: "Being nervous often makes us a little uptight. This probably makes you a little quieter and maybe even less happy than the person I get to work with. What do people expect from someone looking after their children?"

CYNTHIA: "They probably want a happy, fun, creative person. Which I am! But you are right, I get nervous at networking events and it takes me awhile to get comfortable. By that point in time, it is too late! My first impression has already been made and it is an uphill battle from there."

COACH: "Right. So let's come up with some tactics that will help you be the happy, fun, creative person you need to be. Being happy, simply smile more. And you probably have a ton of funny anecdotes of things your kids have said. Use those!"

CYNTHIA: "The kids are pretty funny. That seems like an easy way to break the ice."

COACH: "As for creative and fun, why not show up with stickers and markers to make your own nametag. Better yet, as you sign in offer these things to other people signing in at the same time. You'll be surprised at how quickly any barriers break down."

CYNTHIA: "Love it! That is up my alley. Plus, with doing that I can't imagine that I'd still be thinking being nervous."