

We've all heard about the importance of first impressions and how hard it is to change them later, right? In fact, research tells us it takes less than a second to size up another person in terms of attractiveness and trustworthiness.

Over the next three seconds, we form a more "complete" conclusion about a new acquaintance relating to their presumed personality and competence. They can either look down on you or look up to you.¹ And if the judgment made is a negative one, the difficulty in shifting someone's opinion is extremely high. This is called thin-slicing.



Thin-slicing is when we take a mental snapshot of someone and guess their competence, confidence and likability in a split second. Researchers think this is a survival mechanism that we have developed to decide very quickly if someone is friend or foe.

People have their own inherent biases, so sometimes it might feel like a never-winning task to make a good first impression, no matter how hard you try.² There ARE techniques you can use to change the way others perceive you, so you can have a slight edge when people make their snap judgments.

How to Create a Better First Impression

- Make frequent eye contact, especially when speaking, but avoid dominating with your eyes.
- Smile (we search for smiles and notice them at great distances). A sincere smile puts people at ease and makes people feel welcome.³ If your smile reaches your eyes, it will be seen even if you are wearing a mask.
- Think of the most positive feature of the other person (that will put you in a pleasant frame of mind).
- Adjust your voice, gestures, posture and words to the other person (remember, we prefer people who are similar to us).
- Be confident in yourself and don't try to be someone you're not.⁴
- Be a good communicator. A good guideline for this is to talk only a third as much as you listen. Other people will pick up on whether you are an effective listener or not.



The guidelines above can set you on the path to mastering the art of creating a good first impression.⁵

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF FIRST IMPRESSIONS

1. You are going to read some information about the psychology of first impressions.

Do you think it is possible to influence how people see you the first time you meet? If yes, how can you influence their opinion?

3. Read the whole article. Choose from paragraphs A–F the one which fits each gap (1–5). There is one extra paragraph.

- A. Avoid crossing your arms or legs. This subconsciously closes you off from the other person.
- B. Those judgments may or may not be accurate, but they endure.
- C. It reaches your eyes and creates an impression of trust and sincerity.
- D. It pays to be yourself.
- E. With attention to detail and practice, you will nail it!
- F. Don't be hard on yourself!

1. People often make snap judgments and may **look down on somebody** if they don't dress appropriately for a job interview.
2. We tend to **look up to somebody** who presents themselves confidently and speaks clearly in the first meeting.
3. When we make a good impression, people will **look forward to** meeting us again in the future.
4. First impressions matter because someone who feels cared for may feel you will **look after somebody** in a team setting.
5. It's good to **look in on somebody** before a meeting starts, just to check if they need help with preparations.
6. Sometimes it's better to just **look on** while someone is introducing themselves, letting them make their first impression.
7. **Look out** for non-verbal cues when you first meet someone, as body language is just as important as what they say.
8. When we **look back on something** like a job interview, we often realize how important our first words were.
9. In any situation, it's wise to **look out for somebody** who may feel nervous when meeting new people.
10. Before an important meeting, **look for something** that can help you connect with the person, like a shared interest.
11. First impressions can be strengthened if you **look over something** like a resume or portfolio before the meeting.
12. If you want to know more about a person after meeting them, you might **look into something** like their past work experience.
13. To prepare for a meeting, you should **look something up** about the person or the company so you're informed.

PHRASAL VERBS WITH "LOOK"

- a. To investigate or explore something.
- b. To be careful or vigilant.
- c. To admire or respect someone.
- d. To search for something.
- e. To think about or reflect on something that happened in the past.
- f. To take care of someone.
- g. To feel excited about something in the future.
- h. To protect or watch over someone.
- i. To think someone is inferior or not as good as you.
- j. To visit someone briefly to check on their well-being.
- k. To search for information, often in a book or online.
- l. To watch something without participating.
- m. To examine something briefly or casually.

 **LIVEWORKSHEETS**

Fill in the blanks with the correct phrasal verb from the list below

Phrasal Verbs:

- look out for
- look down on
- look into
- look in on
- look after
- look up to
- look back on
- look out
- look on
- look for
- look forward to
- look over
- look up

1. It's important not to _____ others based on their appearance, as first impressions can often be misleading.
2. Many people _____ professionals who present themselves confidently and speak clearly in their first meeting.
3. I always _____ meeting new clients, as it's a chance to create a strong first impression.
4. During the interview, the recruiter will likely observe if you can _____ your colleagues and work well in a team.
5. Before making a decision, it's smart to _____ the candidate by asking quick questions to see how they respond.
6. When we first meet someone, we should try to _____ them, but also give them space to introduce themselves.
7. _____ for any non-verbal cues like body language, as they can greatly influence the impression you leave.
8. When you _____ past interactions, you often realize how key moments shaped the relationship.
9. In a new team environment, it's vital to _____ your colleagues to ensure everyone feels comfortable.
10. If you're going to a professional event, always _____ something that can help you connect with people, like a shared interest.
11. Before the interview, make sure to _____ the candidate's resume carefully to understand their background.
12. If you want to make a good impression, it's a good idea to _____ the company before your first meeting.
13. If you're unsure about a topic being discussed, you can always _____ the information later to stay informed.