

Creating First Impressions That Sell

*The 3 Keys to Getting More Clients by Managing
First Impressions and the Reactions They Create*



A Chain Reactions Marketing® eBook



JOHN WEISENBERGER

Transforming Average Businesses into Preeminent Market Leaders™

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Introduction

First impressions matter. That's because they always cause some type of emotional reaction in the people your business serves so those emotional reactions must be managed if you want your brand to become the preeminent market leader that stands out from all the competition and makes more money as a result.

For example, your first impression of someone (or their business) may be hasty and incorrect, but it always colors how you feel about them for years to come. It's very hard to wipe away the first thoughts and feelings you had about someone or something. Right?

This is not only true of the people you meet, but also for brands you associate with and their products or services you purchase. That's why it's so important for businesses to always be thinking about the first impressions they're making on a potential new customer, client or patient and to leverage those first impressions to make prospects feel that your business is the best choice for them.

No matter how solid your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) and product or service may be, the first impression you make on a prospect is largely what influences them to eventually buy from you. From the very first encounter with a new prospect, you need to make a positive first impression that makes that prospect believe that they would have to be a complete fool to do business with anyone else but you! Then you need to continue developing your preeminent brand image throughout your long-term relationship with that prospect once they become your customer or client.

That's why you need to pay close attention to the 3 key rules of first impression management I'm going to reveal to you in this short eBook.

By the time you finish this eBook and it's exercises, you'll be able to:

- Identify the 3 key elements to making a good, lasting, first impression both personally and professionally that will lead to gaining more customers or clients, and that will build a stronger long term relationship with them.
- Identify 1 business strength and brand image story that is relevant to your market and will help people get to know you and your brand on a professional and personal level.
- Hone and put into practice the 3 key characteristics that make an individual or brand likable to others.
- Identify the qualities that make a brand (or an individual) appear untrustworthy and eliminate them so that you can gain your clients' and customer' trust.

To become the preeminent market leader, **your prospects need to know, like and trust your brand.** If you understand the 3 keys ideas in this guide, and put them into practice, you can make the type of preeminent first impressions that lead to lasting, loyal, long-term client relationships that will grow your revenues and profits faster than you could ever imagine. And that's what being the preeminent market leader is all about.

To your first impression success!

JW

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Key #1 – Be Memorable

In order to make the right first impression people need to know what your business does and what your brand stands for. Then you need to convey this information in as short a time as possible.

To do this, you need a high-level “tag line” that positions your brand in the prospect’s mind. This isn’t a full brochure that lists all your skills and accomplishments. It’s not even your “elevator pitch” that describes what your business does in 10-30 seconds. Your tag line is one sentence that summarizes what your business and brand is all about.

In fact, you don’t want to give out too much information in the beginning when engaging a new prospect. Giving out too much information that may not be relevant to your prospect and can crowd out your overarching brand value message. Even worse, excess information could be alienating or off-putting, turning people away before you’ve even had a chance to communicate with them. Your tag line should be as pared-down as possible, only relating the most important information you want prospects to know... but also stimulating enough to make them want to engage in a conversation.

***Your tag line can be a conversation starter or a conversation ender.
Make sure yours is a conversation starter!***

Getting to Know You

The most powerful kind of connection is a personal one. People crave personal connections. You need to quickly convey to people not only what your business does, but who you are as an individual; especially if you’re the one who will be dealing directly with the customer or client.

Like your brand's tag line, create a story about yourself and pare it down so that it's clear, concise, and fluff-free. Use your personal story to create a connection to your brand, but don't make it too personal. Balance the personal with the professional or your personal story may overshadow your brand's professional first impression.

Make a Connection

You now have a tag line that tells what your business and brand does plus a personal story that conveys who you are. Now, there's just one element missing – the connection to your market or prospect. If what your business does and who you are is irrelevant to the other person, no matter how good of an impression you make, people won't be interested in getting to know you or your business further.

In order to make a connection with a prospect, you have to know and understand them well. Learn as much as you can about their struggles, problems and concerns so that you can show them how you or your products and services can help them. **Remember, no one cares how much you know until they know how much you care!**

Exercise #1 – Getting to Know Yourself

Use the worksheets in Appendix 'A' and Appendix 'B' to start getting to know yourself and what your business and brand stands for first. Then, you can easily pick out the things you want to convey to prospects in your brand image and story so they'll remember you and your business.

- What's your tag line that says what you do at a high level? Assess your best natural strengths and most developed capabilities. Brainstorm a list and work it down to the strongest.

- Brainstorm several stories you feel comfortable sharing that might be relevant to your target market. Pick the best story and work on it to pare it down and perfect it.

Key #2 – Get People to Like You

The second key is to get people you meet to like you. This is a must-have skill for you as an owner and for any employees you may have that are customer facing. This is much easier than it sounds and it doesn't take any special talent at all as you'll see.

Here are several simple skills that you can practice when meeting with people face-to-face which will endear you to them.

Listen Attentively

It should come as no surprise that people like people who like them. In other words, if you and/or your employees show a person that you care about them, they'll naturally be attracted to your business. You can do this by listening attentively and asking open-ended questions. Encourage the prospect or client to talk about their own stories, needs, wants, pain points, and so on. Don't be distracted by other things going on such as ringing phones or text messages.

As you listen, respond often with speech patterns such as, 'right' and 'I see.' This shows that you're listening to what the speaker is saying. Another way to verbally show you're listening is to repeat back to the prospect or client details that they've said previously.

Faces, Names and Stories

People will naturally like you and your business if you remember them. This is a small thing that brings big results. Get into the habit of remembering people's names. The easiest way to remember a person's name is to repeat it back to them after they introduce themselves and use it in conversation periodically (which also makes you more likable because people like hearing

their name).

Aside from a person's name, remember as much detail about them as you can.

Good Body Language

Body language plays a huge role in endearing one person to another. It shows that you're positive and attentive. There are many ways you and your employees can use good body language. A few of the most important are:

- Maintain eye contact, which shows that you're listening and engaged. However, be careful not to stare. It should be natural.
- Smile. When you smile, it makes other people naturally feel good and smiles are contagious. Practice a slow, natural, and relaxed smile.
- Don't fidget. Fidgeting shows that you're distracted or uninterested. Keep your hands away from your face, which also shows disinterest.
- Maintain good posture with a straight back and don't slouch. Good posture shows confidence, positivity, and honesty.
- At times, you may want to lean in closer when someone is speaking. Just be careful not to get too close or they'll feel you're invading their 'private space', which can make people uncomfortable.
- Keep an open position with your legs and arms uncrossed. Crossed arms especially convey a cold and distant feeling.

Whenever possible mirror the motions of the person speaking. If they shift position, shift your position similarly. If they sit back in their chair, do the

same. If they smile, smile. Studies show that this kind of 'matching' helps to build strong rapport and empathy.

Your body language should be totally natural. Don't force it. Observe how others use body language when they communicate and practice in front of a mirror until your gestures are smooth and natural. Encourage your employees to always use good body language when interacting with prospects or clients.

Keep It Clean

Finally, appearance makes a huge impact on likability, credibility, and overall brand quality perception. Make sure you and your employees dress appropriately for your industry or profession. Make sure your office, store or manufacturing facility is kept clean and organized. Bad smells in your office or facility or (other hygiene issues) are also guaranteed to ruin an otherwise good first impression.

Even more important than dressing nicely, dress appropriately for your position. You should look like the image your tag line and brand story convey. However, there may be times when a 'nice' appearance wouldn't work. For example, if you want to make a first impression that you're a busy programmer or writer, a suit and tie may not be the appropriate outfit to wear. Think about how your clothes and grooming match your tag line and brand story.

Exercise #2 – Likability Practice

- Use the worksheet in Appendix 'C' to go through the above qualities and honestly assess your own likability. What else could you do to make improvements?

- Identify good body language and practice it in front of the mirror until it becomes second nature.
- Get out and socialize so that you can practice the verbal and non-verbal communication mentioned above. Assess how you did at winning people over.

Key #3 – Gaining Trust

Getting people to know and like you and your business are about things you do, but to get people to trust you and your business, it's more about the things you *don't* do. Most people are fairly trusting of new people they meet unless they're given a reason not to be. If you want people to trust you, you need to avoid making the following mistakes.

Know What You're Talking About

We trust people we meet because they know what they're talking about. They can discuss things with a measure of expertise. When someone demonstrates this authority, we start to listen to what they have to say. It engenders trust in a big way.

But when someone shows that they know nothing about what they're talking about, it goes the other way. You see the person as a phony who's just trying to impress.

It's just as bad when someone knows the topic well, but talks in a way that's arrogant and boasting. Even though they may know their stuff, talking in this way belittles the listener. The person appears to be only talking out of self-interest rather than a desire to help. Plus, it kills the likability factor. The same goes for name-dropping.

Demonstrate what you know in a way that's friendly and helpful. Don't do it to show off your expertise, but to offer ways you can help.

Betrayed by a Facial Expression

The way to build trust is to show that you're sincere. You really mean what you do and say. Sincerity is conveyed not just through words but by body language, gestures, and actions.

We already outlined the basics of good body language. When it comes to appearing sincere, it's important to avoid facial expressions that could be taken as negative, like sneering or frowning. These expressions show insincerity.

You can also convey sincerity by keeping an 'open face.' An open face is one that's smiling, with the eyes wide open in an expression of enthusiasm and interest. It's the kind of face that makes you feel like you could tell the person anything.

Demonstrate Your Honesty

It's important when making a first impression to show that you're honest in your speech. Honesty is essential for building trust. Don't make claims that are outrageous or unbelievable. Don't bad-mouth others or be defensive. Be open and honest.

Exercise #3 – Your Trust Checklist

- Use the worksheet in Appendix 'D' to take a good look at your personal and business communication skills and assess whether you and your business appear trustworthy. The word 'appear' is important – you may be trustworthy but not conveying it in the speech and actions of your brand.

- Make a checklist of your weaknesses that need to be improved.

Conclusion – Next Steps

Now that you understand the basics of making good first impressions and have outlined the action steps you can take using the exercises in the appendices, it's time to get to work practicing what you've learned.

Implementing subtle changes in the way you and your employees communicate with people can have a powerful effect on the first impressions you make with new business prospects but only if you and your customer facing employees take action to implement what you've learned.

This eBook was just a brief introduction on how to make positive first impressions that sell but that's not all there is to creating a preeminent market leading business that earns a dominate market share and makes more money than your competitors.

You'll also need to work on your Unique Selling Proposition (USP) and the overall Customer Experiences your brand delivers in order to build the type of long-term customer loyalty that will lead to the recurring revenue and higher profits that deliver the growth your business deserves.

To learn more about how to create your USP and the differentiated Customer Experiences that will make your business the preeminent market leader, I invite you to contact me for a free, 30-60 minute, Chain Reactions Marketing® strategy session phone call today. Just click on the button below.

***Book A Strategy
Session Now!***

Final Exercise – First Impressions Action Plan

- Go through all the exercises you've completed and use the Action Plan Worksheet in Appendix 'E' to summarize what you've learned and note where you're going to work on improving the first impressions you make.

Appendix A: Getting to Know Yourself Worksheet

Start by getting to know yourself first, noting your strengths and skills. Then, you can easily pick out the things you want to convey to prospects you meet through your tag line and personal story.

Strengths and Skills

1

2

3

4

5

6

Tag Line:

Appendix B: Crafting Your Story Worksheet

Here you can brainstorm several story lines you feel comfortable sharing with new prospects. Make sure it's a story that's relevant to your market. Pick the best story and work on it to pare it down and perfect it. Then, practice telling it in front of a mirror.

My Personal Business Story

Idea 1

Idea 2

Idea 3

Appendix C: Likability Assessment Worksheet

Go through the qualities listed in Chapter 2 of this eBook and honestly assess your own personal likability and then do the same for your businesses' brand. List the things you should continue doing, do differently, and look out for in any others associated with your brand. What else could you do to make improvements?

| Continue Doing | Do Differently | Look Out For |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| <i>Example: Listening attentively</i> | <i>Example: Need to have a more natural smile</i> | <i>Example: Dressing appropriately</i> |
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Appendix D: Trust Checklist Worksheet

Take a good look at your communication skills and assess whether you appear trustworthy. Make a checklist of your strengths and weaknesses to see what needs to be improved. List what you should continue doing, what you should do differently, and what you should look out for in anyone else representing your brand.

| Continue Doing | Do Differently | Look Out For |
|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <i>Example: Maintain honesty in conversation</i> | <i>Example: Keeping an open facial expression</i> | <i>Example: Name-dropping</i> |
| | | |
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Appendix E: Action Plan

Now that you've completed the previous exercises, synthesize all the information you gained here in your Action Plan. Start with summarizing your tag line and your brand's story, and then list the top 3 things you want to work on doing differently in order to make a stellar first impression.

Tag Line

Personal Story

Action 1

Action 2

Action 3