

THE SET FREE LIFE!

How to Make Money

You've gotten a great education, and you've progressed in the skills you need for your career. You keep up on all the latest advances in your field, attending professional development events and training. Your performance evaluations are good, you feel your relationships with your superiors are positive, and you feel relatively challenged and mostly invigorated by your work.

So, you wonder to yourself, why am I not getting promoted? Why have I been passed over? Why am I not being viewed as worthy of greater responsibility?

Let's say you're in a fairly prominent position, but you can't understand why you don't seem to command the credibility your peers do. You know you don't exhibit the kind of confidence you should, but you don't know how to make that happen. Or maybe you have an employee who demonstrates his or her value by all of the markers in the first paragraph, but you also know something's missing, and you don't know quite how to address the sensitive nature of the changes that must be addressed.

Here's the element often ignored: it's the issue of *professional presence*. A person's visible, tangible, observable, genuine air of professionalism is an important key to success, and it may be *your* key to success.

There are three components to building an excellent professional presence: image, behavior, and integrity. All three are important. The first component, **image**, obviously refers to appearance. It's attire and grooming. It's the visible sense of self. Image is the manner in which we *show* the world who we are.

Behavior refers to a number of things. It's our communication style, our manners, our temperament, the way we express our personalities. It involves our use of language and how we get our ideas across. Behavior also involves how we treat others.

The third component, **integrity**, is about character. It's adherence to moral and ethical principles. It has to do with honesty and sincerity, and things such as hospitality, justice, and bravery. It indicates we have strong values and we act from them.

We might have a handle on a couple of the components but we're often missing a third, and that missing piece may be more important than we're willing to admit. For instance, consider a person who's strong in image and integrity but is missing the behavior piece. This person looks professionally appropriate and operates from some admirable values, but they run people off because they don't know how to act! They have poor manners or they don't communicate or lead effectively. Or maybe they're jerks! They've never been given straight talk on their bad behavior, and it's holding them back.

Here's another scenario: a person with the integrity and behavior areas down pat, but the image component is incomplete. This person has high ethical standards and exhibits faultless behavior, but they don't look appropriate for the level at which they operate. They're not in context. You wouldn't necessarily trust the guy dressed like a tow truck driver to give you sound financial advice. People tend to expect a person to visibly reflect their level of expertise.

Finally, consider this possibility: a person who has an excellent image and whose behavior is impeccable, but he or she is sorely lacking in integrity. This is Bernie Madoff. Think about it: he looked good, he smelled good, he knew how to impress, he sounded wonderful, he inspired confidence, he seemed to really know his business . . . but he was a liar and a thief. When there is no integrity, there is a complete disregard for what is right and no desire to correct the course.

Now, unless you're a sociopath, there are ways to develop integrity. I've helped many people identify the values most important to them and then work on strengthening them. Image isn't hard to address; it begins with simply identifying the message you wish to convey. Behavior is also no mystery; again, I've helped lots of folks work on their talents, their personality strengths, the way they treat others, their facility for



Sue Thompson is a personality expert, etiquette trainer, and an instructor in life lessons. Her work on recognizing and developing talent, identifying personalities and working effectively with the people who possess them, responding appropriately to difficult experiences, treating others with respect, and behaving like a professional have caused companies and business organizations throughout the country to value her consulting skills. She trains those entering the workforce how to present themselves with style and authority; new employees in the importance of respecting one's work and the workplace; managers in the value of understanding employees' talent and temperament; and everyone in the timeless rules of behavior that will always bespeak excellence.

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leadership, and more. There's help for all of these areas, and I'm it!

Here's the thing: we want to be strong in all three areas, displaying an appearance that says we mean business, behavior that inspires confidence, and integrity that indicates we live from the inside out. Our values and beliefs work their way out to a presence of professionalism and excellence. If two candidates for a position have equal skills and education, and one looks and sounds like executive material while the other one looks and sounds like graduation was last week, the selection is pretty easy.

Are you building your professional presence? If you want to make money, you'd better think about it. 🐾

Teddy Bear Says...



I may be a quadruped, but this I know: it takes only one appendage to pick up a phone and punch in the numbers and RSVP. One could hunt and peck with one digit to email a host that we will or will not be attending an event. Writing cards or letters I can't do so well, but I think people understand and forgive. I can certainly check an "I will" or "I will not be attending" on a return card.

We all know what "RSVP" stands for, don't we? It's an abbreviation of the French for *répondez s'il vous plait*: respond please. I mean, it's even polite!

Please respond. How much nicer could it get? *Please respond.* Is that so hard?

So why oh why is getting people to respond (please) so difficult? Why, for organizational events that must have a count by a certain date to provide to caterers or managers, does the deadline come and go with people inquiring, "Is it too late? Is it still okay if I attend? I know the deadline was two days ago, but is there room?"

Why didn't these laggards respond (please) by the date noted? And if they missed the date, why can't they accept there will most likely not be a spot for them? Oh, I understand it never hurts to ask if there might still be room. More power to them for keeping hope alive by asking if the door is truly closed. But there are some who chronically avoid responding (please) by a deadline and consistently ask for an exception. These are people for whom the most polite and sincere "No, I'm sorry, registration closed on Tuesday," is considered an affront. They take offense at the suggestion they missed the deadline. "I know that," they'll spout impatiently, as though no one has a right to make it clear the request was . . . clear. No ambiguity. Just "please . . . respond." They didn't. The End.

It's always good form to let your hosts know as soon as possible of your attendance. After all, they're waiting on you. They have details to plan, and they need a count of attendees. If they didn't, they'd say, "Everyone welcome."

Quotable

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the unfaithful are destroyed by their duplicity.

Proverbs 11:3

Contact Sue today to learn how she can meet your business needs

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"Doors open to the public." "Unlimited seating." See how that works?

When you have a meal to prepare or a room to set up, you've got to know who's coming. Can you imagine people not returning their RSVP cards for the wedding reception Prince William's grandmother is holding for him? Do you think they'll be calling the day before the nuptials asking if there's still room at Westminster Abbey?

You wouldn't do that to the Queen of England. Don't do it to your friends and colleagues. Respond. Please. 🐾

SALE

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Image is Everything Except When it's Not

You've got the education and background, and you continue to develop your skills. But unless you know how to package these assets, few will be interested in looking beyond what they can see to find out what's inside!

Employers are looking for—and hold onto—quality and excellence.

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