

Language Links

Making a Great First Impression: Getting off to a Good Start

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Be on Time

Arriving early is much better than arriving late, hands down. It is also the first step in creating a great first impression.

Be Yourself, Be at Ease

If you are calm and confident, the other person will feel more at ease.

Present Yourself Appropriately

Is your appearance saying the right things to help create the right first impression? Start with the way you dress. Clean and tidy clothes. Neat and tidy make up. Make sure your grooming is appropriate and helps make you feel "the part".

A Word about Individuality

If in a business setting, wear appropriate business attire. If at a formal evening social event, wear appropriate evening attire. And express your individuality appropriately within that context.

A Winning Smile!

Use your body language to project appropriate confidence and self-assurance. Stand tall, smile (of course), make eye contact, greet with a firm handshake. All of this will help you project confidence and encourage both you and the other person to feel better at ease.

Small Talk Goes a Long Way

Is there anything that you have in common with the person you are meeting? If so, this can be a great way to open the conversation and keep it flowing.

Be Positive

Project a positive attitude, even in the face of criticism or in the case of nervousness.

Be Courteous and Attentive

Good manners and polite, attentive and courteous behavior help make a good first impression.

By
Traisuda



Culture Corner

International Business Gift Giving



Preparing for a business meeting requires a working knowledge of the information to be discussed or presented, careful attention to all

details on the printed material to be distributed, and perhaps a gift.

This gift is a social gesture that may be expected in some countries, and could be considered a bribe in others. Knowing the gift guidelines for the country you'll be visiting will help make your meeting a success.

Countries like **Malaysia** and **Paraguay**, concerned with corruption, frown upon any gift that could be interpreted as a bribe.

In Malaysia you wouldn't give a gift until you had established a relationship with the person. In Singapore, government employees are not allowed to accept gifts, and the United States limits the acceptable dollar value to \$25.

However, in some countries like **Japan, Indonesia** and **the Philippines**, exchanging gifts is strongly rooted in tradition. Part of the tradition is the gracious style used to present and receive them.

It's very important in **Asia** and the **Middle East** to only use your right hand, or both hands, to offer or

accept a gift. In Japan and Hong Kong, use both hands.

In **Singapore** a recipient may "graciously refuse three times" before accepting your gift. But in **Chile**, gifts are accepted and opened immediately. And in **Indonesia**, small gifts are given on a frequent basis.

Always be aware of religious laws when selecting gifts. For instance, pork is prohibited in the Jewish and Muslim religions, so you wouldn't select a gift made from pigskin. In India, don't offer a gift made from cowhide. Another Muslim prohibition is alcohol.

A standard to keep in mind for any gift you select is quality. Choose quality items that are not ostentatious. If you have gifts with your company logo, it's better if the logo is discreet. And don't give company logo gifts in Greece, Spain and Portugal.

Hosting a meal at a nice restaurant is always a good business practice. A fine dinner is a wonderful way to give a "gift to your hosts", to show your guests you appreciate the business relationship you have with them, and an opportunity to build rapport. People in Brazil, England, Panama, and Peru enjoy being invited guests for a meal, and the Greeks look forward to an evening filled with dining.



By
Piyaporn



Here's the Answer



Q: What are Powerful Ways to Open a Presentation?



A: To be honest, many people have struggled with the best ways to open their presentations. It's time to get unstuck. Here are **5 powerful ways** to open a presentation:

1. Use Silence

Say a few words then be quiet. Say a few more words then be quiet. It is a quick and easy way to own the room. Just make sure you can hold your composure.

2. Point to the Future or Past

I have two simple statements for you:

-Prospective (looking to the future): "30 Years from now, your job won't exist."

-Retrospective (looking to the past): "In 1970, Japan owned 9% of the market. Today, they own 37%."

The reality is that looking into the future or Past always sparks engagement since that's where our hearts lie.

3. Quote Someone

The easiest way to open a talk is simply to quote someone. Many speakers start with an apt quotation, but you can differentiate yourself by stating the quotation and then adding a twist to it. For example, "We've all heard that a journey of a thousand miles starts with a single step. But we need to remember that a journey to nowhere also starts with a single step." You can also use a quotation from your own life. For example, in a presentation on price versus quality, I have often used a quote from my grandfather, who used to say: "I am not rich enough to buy cheap." There are innumerable sources for online quotations, but you might also consider *The Yale Book of Quotations*, an app that brings together over 13,000 quotes you can adapt to your purpose.

4. Ask a series of rhetorical questions.

A common way to engage the audience at the start is to ask a rhetorical question. Better still, start with a series of rhetorical questions. A good example of this tactic is Simon Sinek's TED presentation. He starts with: "How do you explain when things don't go as we assumed?" "Why is Apple so innovative?" A series of rhetorical questions stimulate the audience's mind as they ponder the answers.

By
Napassawan



5. Tell a Story

Here's the amazing thing about stories: If your presentation is based solely on facts and stats then your audience is going to react in one of two ways: 1) agree or 2) disagree. However, if you tell a story, your audience will participate with you. Stories have been known to increase audience retention by up to 26%.

But the story needs to be brief, with just the right amount of detail to bring it to life. It must be authentic and must have a "message," or lesson, to support your viewpoint. Above all, it must be kind. As Benjamin Disraeli said: "Never tell an unkind story."

So, what are you waiting for? Experiment. Try something new. Step outside your comfort zone. You'll see some amazing results by trying any one of these techniques.

Bits and Pieces

Commonly Confused Words

Affect and Effect



These words are commonly confused, and the rules given to tell them apart are often wrong. Affect means "to influence" or "to produce an effect in." Effect means "consequence" or "that which is produced by an agent or cause."

Many try to differentiate between the two by saying that affect is a verb, while effect is a noun. Unfortunately, it's not so simple. The word affect can also serve as a noun, meaning "observed or expressed emotional response," and the word effect can also serve as a verb, meaning "to become operative" or "to carry out," as in, "to effect changes."

By
Pimravee



Compliment and Complement

Compliment is a "remark of praise." Complement is "something that completes." Note that free refreshments are complimentary; the word refers to the phrase "with our compliments."



Passed and Past

Passed is a past tense verb. Past can be a noun, adjective, adverb, or preposition -- never a verb.



Practicable and Practical

Practicable means "usable," while practical means "useful." Not all practicable things are practical, and not all practical things are practicable.

Effective and Effectual

Effective means "producing an effect" or "in effect." Effectual means "producing a desired effect." A law that is effective is only effectual when it is enforced.