

A close-up photograph of a hand holding a black and gold pen, writing on a white document. The background is blurred, showing another person's hand and part of their face. A dark grey rectangular box is overlaid on the right side of the image, containing white text.

You Have  
the Power  
to  
Influence  
and  
Persuade

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# Introduction

What is “persuasion?”

In short — **Persuasion is the ability to influence.**

*“Persuasion is often more effectual than force.” – Aesop (Greek Storyteller)*

In his book [Unlimited Power: The New Science of Personal Achievement](#), Tony Robbins says,

*“In a world full of persuaders, you can be one, too, or you can be someone who gets persuaded. You can direct your life or be directed. This book has really been about persuasion. It’s show you how to develop the personal power that can put you in control so you can do the persuading, whether as a role model for your kids or as a powerful force at work. The people in power are the persuaders. The people without power simply act on the images and commands that are directed their way.”*

Robbins goes on to say,

*“Power today is the ability to communicate and the ability to persuade. If you’re a persuader with no legs, you’ll persuade someone to carry you. If you have no money, you’ll persuade someone to lend you some. Persuasion may be the ultimate skill for creating change. After all, if you’re a persuader who’s alone in the world and doesn’t want to be, you’ll find a friend or a lover. If you’re a persuader with a good product to sell, you’ll find someone who’ll buy it. You can have an idea or a product that can change the world, but without the power to persuade, you have nothing. Communicating what you have to offer is what life is all about. It’s the most important skill you can develop.”*

Read that again — **It is the most important skill you can develop!**

That is what this short eBook is all about; teaching you some very basic but profound principles and strategies you must apply if you want to increase your level of influence.

Remember what Robbins said, you can either be the one persuading others or the one others persuade.

It comes down to a choice. And you've made a good choice getting this eBook.

You will learn some interesting things that will change how you communicate and attempt to influence others forever.

But, here's the thing.

It all comes at the end of the day it all comes down to you.

*How?*

By you reading this eBook AND applying it in the real world.

Knowledge learned but left unused is the same as knowledge unlearned in the first place.

It's worthless.

Therefore, I challenge you — do what you can do learn and *use* what you can from these pages.

## 6 Easy Ways to Make a Good First Impression

In almost all life situations, we want to leave a positive impression with people when we first meet them.

*Whether you're establishing a new business contact or meeting your future in-laws for the first time, first impressions matter.*

*Why?*

Because, you never have a second chance to make a first impression!



Furthermore, first impressions create a lasting effect and influence all other future communication or interactions.

Your ability to persuade and influence others, will come down to your ability to create a favourable first impression.

Before we talk about body language, preferred language systems, advanced listening skills, and dealing with conflict, you must think through the first impression you give when walking through the door.

That can make or break your attempts to influence others.

So let's talk about a couple of suggestions I would encourage you to take note of.

In fact, you can follow these suggestions to create a great and memorable first impression.

### **Tips for creating a great and memorable first impression:**

#### ***Have a pleasing appearance.***

- Even though attractiveness is in the eye of the beholder, it's still important to look your best.
- Clean, wrinkle-free clothing, brushed and styled hair, and light or no fragrance helps most people be at their best.
- If you wear make-up, you know it doesn't take much to enhance your appearance.

#### ***Make eye contact and smile.***

- In some cultures, making eye contact doesn't indicate good rapport.
- However, as a rule of thumb in the professional business world, people make positive connections with each other by looking each other in the eyes. It conveys trustworthiness and confidence.
- If you don't, the person you're meeting for the first time may think you have something to hide!

***Pay attention and listen.***

- When you're out in public or socialising at a party with new people, distractions are bound to happen.
- But when you're meeting someone new, make an effort to pay attention and focus on what's being said.
- When you listen well, you show genuine interest in the person.

***Refer to the new acquaintance by name.***

- In most situations, it's beneficial to you to be seen as focused, a good listener, and polite.
- Using the new person's name in your conversation helps accomplish all of these things.
- Plus, using their name will help you remember it later.

***Initiate conversation with a positive comment.***

- Making a positive impression means that people will have good thoughts when they remember you by something you did or said.
- *"Pam, Bill always speaks so highly of the work you do. How long have you been working at the James Corporation?"*
- *"Kevin, I heard from Julie that you're quite the fisherman. Where are the good fishing spots around here?"*
- *"Sharon, I saw the drawings you did for the local Boys' Club campaign. They're amazing. How did you come up with such an incredible visual?"*

***Be sincere.***

- Be yourself whenever first meeting someone.
- People tend to sense when others are putting up a front or behaving in ways that aren't natural for them.
- Being genuine is a quality everyone wants to see.
- If you're sincere, your new acquaintance will sense that.



## ***Smile.***

- A smile makes you look appealing and friendly.
- You look more open to others when you're smiling in a natural and relaxed way.

Because you never know what might blossom between you and a new acquaintance, put in the effort to make a positive first impression.

Try some of the tips above or think about techniques that may have worked for you in the past.

You'll make a great first impression and perhaps even pave the way for a successful business venture or a life-long friendship.

Let's talk about how you can accentuate your assets to make a great first impression.

The truth is we all have strengths and weaknesses. You must learn how to identify and use your strengths as assets to create great first impressions.

Wishing you were more outgoing or energetic like someone else is pointless. Identify what you do well and build on that.

Yes, of course, you can always train yourself to be more present, outgoing, and energetic; but you also have some inherent strengths that you can tap into right now.

Let's learn how you can accentuate your assets in the next section.



# Accentuate Your Assets: Make a Great First Impression

Regardless of the kind of life you live, there will be times when you need to meet new people. And when you do, what kind of impression do you make?

You must learn how to accentuate your assets so you can make your best impression each and every time.

## Answer these next questions to help you plan a positive and memorable first impression:

**Do you smile and make eye contact? *Your facial expressions can be an asset or a liability.***

- A real smile is seen all over your face.
- It shows not only by the shape of your mouth but through your eyes.
- Do you genuinely smile when you meet others?
- Much of the early impression you make is determined by how people remember the first time they meet you.

### ***What do you say?***

- When you first meet someone, are you very quiet?
- Do you just say, “*Pleased to meet you,*” or do you chatter on incessantly about whatever is on your mind at the moment?

### ***What kind of mood do you portray?***

- Are you serious or funny?
- Do you look like you’re waiting for something to happen, like you want to fade into the wallpaper, or like the class clown?
- Your mood shows your personality to people and could make either a forgettable impression or a fantastic one that will precede you for years to come.

### ***How do you look?***

- In most situations, there's no need to be dressed in the most expensive or trendiest fashion, but is your look clean and well put together?
- Or did you skip ironing your wrinkly shirt or hope that no one notices that you didn't shave?
- Maybe you didn't plan ahead what you were going to wear to an event and just threw on the first thing you grabbed.

### ***What kind of effort do you make?***

- When getting to know someone, do you ask specific questions of the person to show your interest?
- Try finding common ground by asking how they know the host or what they do for a living.

### ***What do you want people to remember?***

- This might be the most insightful question of all.
- If you know the answer to this, you'll be able to adjust your behaviours, mood, and appearance to give the impression you truly want to make.
- Use your assets to make a well-considered statement and impression about yourself.

***Look, at the end of the day, your social skills and ability to communicate determine how you come across when you first meet someone.***

However, and even more important point to remember here, is that **you're in control** of what it is you are trying to communicate.



Make your first verbal exchanges with people memorable. If one of your assets is that you can tell a good story, go ahead and tell one.

If you're neat, clean, and your clothes aren't over 5 years old, you're on the right track to making a positive impression.

Just remember ***your appearance counts.***

If you have beautiful green eyes, wear that emerald dress.

Again, one thing is for sure: all your life, you'll have opportunities to meet new people and make an impression.

***Plan now to make the most of your assets.***

In the next section, we turn to another very important aspect of influence, namely, body language.

Having some understanding of what other people are communicating through their body language, is a good skill to have. Equally important, is having some awareness of what you are communicating through your own body language.

In fact, we oftentimes communicate more through our body language than through verbal exchanges.

Have you ever had the experience with someone you knew very well, where they said nothing (verbally), but you knew exactly what they were communicating (non-verbally). If you've been married for a while, you will know exactly what I'm talking about.

***Body language is an important interpersonal skill***, and by taking conscious control of your non-verbal communication, you can improve your levels of confidence as well as putting others at ease. Let's now look at some aspects of body language.

# Discover the Secret Meaning Behind Body Language

Do you know what people are *truly* saying with their body?

One way to decipher their code is to learn the secret meaning of body language.

Whether you're questioning if you got the job after an interview or if that first date went well, body language can provide you with a secret edge.

Be careful, though, because body language can be easily misconstrued.

Understanding body language isn't all about noticing folded arms or crossed legs etc. There is more to it than that.

Sometimes people have certain actions or posture habits that disguise what they're really saying. Other times they have certain "default" habits or mannerisms that don't mean what it typically means in a general context.

However, by remaining alert and observant you'll fair better than most.

The key is remaining curious, meaning you listen, watch, and make mental notes the whole time.

With that being said, let me share with you a few things to look out for their will give you a head start.



**Here are a few things to keep an eye out for that will give you the upper hand:**

***Be aware of how they're speaking.***

- Positive ways of communication include speaking at the same tone and the same rate of speech that you're using.
- It's also a positive sign when someone can share a laugh with you and truly have a sincere and inviting sound to their voice.
- On the flipside, negative ways of speaking include speaking a lot louder, softer, faster, or slower than you.
- If their voice sounds unsteady or quivering, they might not mean exactly what they're saying to you aloud.

***Notice what they're wearing.***

- People who are truly interested do their best to make a long lasting and positive impression.
- Their clothing will usually be neat and tidy and their hair will be groomed as well.
- The old saying, *“Dress for success,”* is a simple way to remember that people *do* judge others by their appearance. *Whether it’s right or wrong, it happens.* If you were hiring a salesperson for your company, would you want the person who’s friendly and dressed in a suit or someone who looks like he just rolled out of bed?

### ***Are they interacting with you in a positive way?***

- When people relate positively with you, they may express body language signals that show it.
- They may look at your eyes while speaking, lean towards you, or touch you gently to accentuate a point.

### ***Do they appear uninterested or distracted?***

- Negative signals include looking away when they should be listening, crossing their arms, constant fidgeting or tapping their foot, clearing their throat, or yawning.
- This may be a sign of distrust, anger, frustration, boredom, or a lack of self-confidence.
- Someone who isn’t interested will often appear unkempt because they don’t really care about the impression they’ll leave behind with you.

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### ***Practice people watching***

- The best way to learn more about body language is to spend some time observing people.
- By becoming more aware of the way others react to certain situations, you'll be better equipped to communicate effectively.
- All people have their own quiet signals they display during different times.
- A great way to become more in tune with these signals is to take the time to make *people watching* a hobby.
- *Note: avoid being weird or a stalker!*

### ***Become observant.***

- Whether in the supermarket, church, or at the mall, watch the way people display their secret signals.
- ***It will greatly help you in deciphering body language in your own personal situations.***

Reading body language is an important way to figure out what people are *truly* saying.

It can also help you build positive and long-lasting relationships.

*How?*

Well, when you're in tune with what people are truly communicating, you have a better handle on how to respond in various situations.

You can use this to your advantage.

By knowing what people are truly saying, you have an advantage over others in that you can be more influential and persuasive.

Remember, persuasion is about influence, and we can use influence to create much better results for ourselves and others in a shorter space of time.

Learning how to “read” body language will give you that ability.

In the next section, we will look at some specific ways to read body language.

But for now, use these tips often to help you discover the secret meaning behind body language and become a master of communication with others.

## How to Read Body Language

The truth is, body language is often one way of communication that we pay little attention to, and as we learned in the previous section, it is a super important interpersonal skill to learn and use.

Oftentimes others “hear” something from our body language that we didn’t even realise we were “saying” and it can come back to haunt us!

***Some experts say that up to half of our communication is conveyed through body language.***

That’s a lot more than most of us might imagine it to be!

As already stated, learning to *read* body language can help you understand what someone is *really* saying.

Conversely, learning to *use* body language can help you communicate your message more effectively than words alone.

## What is Body Language?

***Body language is a form of non-verbal communication that utilises the body.***

It can be anything from a facial expression to a stance.

For instance, many people talk in an animated fashion, using their body to help communicate their thoughts.



There are a lot of “*hand talkers*” in the world who keep their hands in constant motion to help them convey information, emphasise a point, or keep a story moving along.

Another example would be someone who always comes across as happy because they’re always smiling. Even though we don’t know whether they’re truly happy or not, we make the assumption that they are based on their facial expression (i.e. smiling in this instance).

***Body language can give off a certain attitude based simply on posture alone.***

*For example*, slumped shoulders and a rounded back with the head hanging down may indicate sadness or shyness.

A firm walk with the chest puffed out, shoulders raised and head held high could be interpreted as confidence or even arrogance.

When someone has his or her arms folded across the chest, this position tends to be understood as a standoffish or unfriendly stance. It could also mean being relaxed.

It's truly amazing how much body language "speaks" as well as how much can be perceived from body language!

Not only can you use body language to judge an individual's attitude or mood, but you can also better understand relationships between others.

***In fact, these non-verbal cues can indicate the level of bonding people have to one another.***

Now, you might not care what other people perceive about your level of bonding with a friend or a loved one, but it is important to understand that this goes beyond that.

Non-verbal cues not only indicate the level of bonding between you and someone close to you, but also between you and a potential client or prospect.

There are certain things (non-verbal cues or gestures) that communicate to a prospective client how positive we feel towards them. Being able to take advantage of this puts you in a better position to influence that potential client.

So this is important stuff to pay attention to.

Generally speaking, body language can be broken into general categories that we see time and time again.

It's important that you have a broad awareness and understanding of these so that you can keep it in mind whenever you are trying to "read" someone.

## **General Body Language Categories:**

- **Aggressive.**

Aggressive body language is threatening by nature.

- **Attentive.**

This type of body language shows that you're engaged and interested.

Just as it says, this body language is the opposite of attentive and is indicated by yawns and lack of eye contact or other visual listening cues.

- **Absent-minded.**

Very similar to "bored" and is indicated by a person's physical presence but a lack of *real* presence. We see this more and more today with people's attention being pulled by their smart devices.

This one shuts you off from others.

Arms crossed and standing far away are two common signals of closed language.

- **Deceptive.**

Deceptive body language is often used when someone is trying to get away with a lie.

It can be easily distinguished by nervous behaviour, which is brought on by guilt and worry.

- **Defensive.**

This kind of body language tends to be present when someone is protective of information or their inner thoughts.

Those who like to be in command use dominant body language. Dominant people tend to stand tall with their chest puffed out.

- **Emotional.**

This one is influenced heavily by feelings at any given moment. It's constantly changing with mood.

- **Evaluation.**

Evaluating body language is used when making a decision or hesitating to make a judgment.

This type of body language is used when first coming into contact with people.

Open body language is welcoming and very friendly in nature.

- **On the Ready.**

This type of body language lets people know you're prepared and willing.

- **Relaxed & Content.**

Relaxed body language is that which is seen when people are restful, happy, and calm.

- **Passionate.**



Romantic body language is flirty and expresses attraction for another.

- **Submissive.**

This one shows your relenting side.

These are the most common ideas communicated through a stance or combination of poses or posture.

*Again, it is important to note that many body positions can have different meanings depending on the person, the situation, or their culture.*

In the New Zealand (Pakeha/European), for example, it's polite to look into another person's eyes intermittently to show you're listening to them. In Japan, it's considered rude. While it's commonplace for Americans to smile at one another as a show of friendliness, in Korea smiles are indicators of embarrassment and aren't shared in public.

Therefore, when travelling overseas, it is best to do as the Romans do, that is, follow suit with the practices of the culture you're visiting so that you can communicate your ideas appropriately.

The main point of this section is to encourage you to be more aware of what your body is saying when you talk to others.

Keeping these body language tips in mind will strengthen both your comprehension and communication skills, paving the way for more effective interactions with others.

In the next section, we turn our attention to effective listening.

I would argue that great listening skills are perhaps even more important than understanding body language.

The truth is, ***people love being heard.***

Therefore, when we give people the opportunity to talk freely and openly, while we show a keen and genuine interest in what they're saying, they will reciprocate that with listening to us when it's our turn to speak.

Now, even though most of us have been listening to others speak since childhood, there is a big difference between *hearing* and *effective listening* (some also call it active listening).

I will however share with you some ideas of how to become a more effective listener and not just be a "hearer."

What I'll share with you is by no means exclusive, but it will get you started in the right direction.

## How to Become an Effective Listener

Effective communication is one of the keys to success, and when you're good at it, people notice.

Most people think that strengthening communication skills involves developing persuasive speech and conversational skills, but what you may not realise is just how important effective *listening* can be.

*You can write to following down,*

***Without effective listening, none of your conversational skills will matter!***

This is because your points – no matter how clear – still wouldn't be heard or understood.

Remember that listening is a full 50% of the communication effort so it's worth your time to develop this precious skill, too.

### **Here are some techniques you can use to build your listening skills:**

#### ***Fight the urge to speak.***

- Sometimes when you're engaged in a heated conversation, you start to concentrate on what you're going to say next.
- You may even be tempted to open your mouth before the other person is finished. Make the extra effort to keep your lips sealed until they're through talking.

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### ***Look interested***

- Your nonverbal communication skills are important while you're listening.
- If you're looking disinterested and uncaring, the person trying to communicate with you will likely pick up on these subtle hints.
- They may be flustered or less likely to share their thoughts. Makes sense, right?

### ***Repeat the highlights.***

- One way to literally tell your conversation partner that they're effectively communicating is to simply restate their points. You can repeat key phrases in an affirming tone.
- You can even give them a quick summary of what they just said in your own words.

### ***Ask questions.***

- Don't be afraid to ask your conversation partner to elaborate on what they're saying.
- ***If you need further information, then ask for it.***
- The important thing is that you understand what they're trying to get across.

### ***Be patient.***

- It's also important to maintain patience, especially when working with people who may be shy or may not have the ability to communicate very well.
- If you're not patient, you may end the conversation prematurely or scare off your conversation partner.

### ***Follow your partner's lead.***

- Being an effective listener doesn't mean that your only job is to listen. You can certainly add to the conversation, too.
- At the same time, you don't want to overpower the conversation.
- Add your input when they ask for it or when they've finished their point.

*While they're speaking, don't worry about what you're going to say or how you're going to say it. Instead, focus on the words and body language of the other person.*



This is such a crucial point, I would encourage you to read the previous paragraph again.

So many people make the mistake of listening with the intent to reply, rather than with the intent to understand.

It might be a subtle difference but the consequence is huge.

People absolutely pick up when we are only listening to reply, meaning, our silence is only an indication of us waiting to speak again rather than truly understand.

I will say this again; ***people love to be heard.***

What I mean by that is, people love to feel like what they are saying is being understood, valued, thought about, and then responded on.

Being heard doesn't just mean the sound coming out of their mouth hitting the receiver's ears.

That's hearing, not listening.

One way to make sure that the speaker feels that they are being heard (truly), is by ***engaging with the person talking.***

The way you do that is by making eye contact and nodding your head or smiling. Let your conversation partner know that their points are coming across to you by making sounds of confirmation.

You also want to avoid sharing your opinions when repeating their concepts or ideas. At this point, you simply want to communicate that you've completely understood their meaning. A great way to do this is asking clarifying questions.

An example of a clarifying question is, *"Richard, when you say X, I hear that you're saying/feeling/thinking Y — is that what you mean?"*

Another example is, *"Susan, what do you mean when you say X?"*

***Remember that perfect practice makes perfect.***

We can all improve our level of communication, but we need to work on it.

**So, here's a good trick that you can start using today to help you perfect your practice:**

**1. After you've had an important conversation, ask yourself what you remember from the conversation.**

- How well did you listen?
- What did you hear?
- Is what you heard what was truly said?

**2. Write down the details if necessary.**

- Did you allow the other person to do most of the talking?
- How much talking did you do?
- Who determined the direction of the conversation?
- How present were you?
- etc.

When you fight the urge to dominate conversations, you'll be able to truly hear what people have to say.

Moreover, when you let go of the need of talking a lot during a conversation and focus on listening to understand more, the fear that you won't know what to say next disappears.

It's a pretty liberating sensation.

In the next three sessions, we're going to look at some advanced listening skills.

These are absolutely optional, but having some understanding of it, might benefit you.



In the field of NLP (Neurolinguistic Programming), we talk about Preferred Language Patterns.

What this means is that people have certain preferred language patterns derived from how they make sense of the world.

The main ones we will be looking at in the next sections are auditory, kinesthetic and visual.

If you have no idea what that means, it will be explained when you read on.

Also, they are discussed in no particular order of importance, so simply go through them and develop an awareness of what they are and how you could use this information to increase your levels of influence.

## Understanding the Auditory Relating Style

Different people have different styles of relating to others. There are three identified styles of relating and auditory relating is one of these. The other two are visual and kinesthetic.

***The auditory relating style refers to those people who respond to and are stimulated by what they hear.***

Auditory persons learn more effectively by hearing rather than by seeing. Using audio, as well as reading aloud, is a great way to teach the auditory oriented person.

The auditory oriented person best responds to expressions of love in the form of words of affirmation and compliments. *The best gifts for an auditory person are:*



- Music
- Audio books
- Concerts
- Anything that involves the use of their hearing sense

## Auditory Relating in Relationships

The auditory person *loves* the sound of their voice! He can sit and chat for hours and he feels loved when this happens.

***Auditory people are also sensitive to another's tone of voice and can be easily offended when given criticism or correction (especially in the wrong tone).***

Therefore, using softer tones and beginning criticism or correction with positive affirmations is the best way to communicate with auditory people.

## Auditory Relating and Conflict

***An auditory person processes issues by talking things through; unless it's something big, then they usually prefer quiet time.***

In addition, the auditory person likes to have the last word and usually gets it. Plus, they tend to be good at debating and getting others to talk as well.

Auditory persons are sensitive to the sounds of nature and often find peace when walking through the woods, by a crackling fire or strolling by a running river.

***Add these types of activities to a great conversation and you're speaking their love language.***



**The easiest way to identify an auditory oriented person is by listening to their expressions.**

They often use phrases like:

- "Hear me out."
- "Listen to what I'm saying."
- "I didn't hear that clearly."
- "We need to talk."
- "I can tell by your tone..."

## **Tips for Working with an Auditory Oriented Person**

*If your boss is an auditory oriented person, she'll expect you to communicate through meetings, instead of email or memos.*

She may even find email or memos to be offensive or less meaningful than a phone call or meeting.

In addition, if you need to address a problem or issue, you will want to begin the conversation with positive affirmations about what you like about a person or the project before you get into the issue.

An auditory person will then be more open to receiving your ideas and won't be so quick to put up any walls.

**Auditory oriented people tend to be more sensitive to breathing sounds, sighs and grunts, and often read into these noises as if something's wrong.**

If you're a heavy sigh-er, for instance, you may often be asked, "*What's wrong?*" every time you take a deep breath. Once you communicate to the sensitive person that nothing's wrong, eventually they'll get used to your breathing sounds.

## **Communicating to an Auditory Type Person**

Once you learn how to identify an auditory person, relating to them will be easier. Here are the main points to remember once you've determined you're dealing with a person who relates via sound:

- Be sensitive when speaking.
- Use appropriate tones of voice.
- Begin criticism or correction with positive affirmations.

In addition, they like to hear compliments and the words "I love you" repeatedly. These are things the auditory person never tires of.

***In fact, if you don't compliment them or say "I love you" often enough, the auditory person may begin to feel unloved.***

If you're in a marriage with an auditory type person and they are constantly saying, "*You don't love me*" or "*You never say you love me,*" you're probably not speaking their love language. To help with communication and make them feel loved, speak adorning words more frequently.

Communication is a lot easier when we know and understand our loved ones relating style, whether it is auditory, visual or kinesthetic.

Now that you can identify an auditory oriented person, you will be able to express your love for them easier or relate to them (such as prospects) using their "love" language.

# Understanding the Kinesthetic Relating Style

As already mentioned, there are three relating styles: kinesthetic, visual, and auditory.

***Kinesthetic oriented people respond to touch and act on how they feel.***

Kinesthetic people like to engage in affectionate rough housing, as well as being held for long periods of time.

Kinesthetic persons often use terms such as these in conversation:

- "I just felt as if..."
- "I'll handle it."
- "I feel like we really connected."
- "Take it easy."

***Physical contact and feelings are their primary love language.*** Kinesthetic people often feel overwhelmed or feel picked on in a verbal conflict.

***When communicating with a kinesthetic oriented person, a soft touch on the arm means you care, you're interested, and you're listening.***

Often the kinesthetic person will touch you as they are speaking as well.



***In the work field, a handshake is often offered and expected by a kinesthetic person.*** Not only is a handshake proper and a sign of respect to the kinesthetic person, but it is also a personal connection.

In addition, they may put their arm around your shoulders while walking and talking. ***This is how they communicate and connect.***

On this note, it's important that you take note of your own relating style, and how that might impact the person you're trying to influence.

For example, if you have a kinesthetic relating style but your prospect has very strict personal space boundaries, you might run into trouble. In your mind you might feel that you are communicating interest and care, whereas in their mind you are being pushy or disrespectful. It's important to be aware of this, some make a mental note.



Moving on, kinesthetic people are hard to motivate, however, because they often can't get past how they're feeling in the moment.

***They are very emotionally driven and often let their emotions control their actions.***

Kinesthetic oriented persons also react to gut instincts and tend not to base decisions on reason or logic.

## **Kinesthetic Relating in Love Relationships**

In a relationship with a kinesthetic oriented person, if you don't touch them often, they may not feel loved by you. They may feel rejected and not even know why.

***If your loved one is saying things like, "You never touch me," or "You never cuddle with me anymore," their love tank may be empty.***

Fill it up with some meaningful and long snuggles on the couch, a big bear hug or a nice back massage.

***Then keep their hearts filled by giving them the touching, hugging, and snuggling they are thirsting for.***

## Understanding the Visual Relating Style

*For the visually oriented person, using picture words is the best way to communicate.*

Understanding how a visual person thinks and “sees” will help you communicate more effectively when interacting with others in relationships.

The best gifts for the visually oriented person are tangible gifts, or one’s they can actually “see” such as:

- Flowers
- Games
- Books
- Framed Photos
- Cards and Letters



When speaking to the visually oriented person, **look them directly in the eye** and expect to be “examined” by them as well.

Be aware of your body language and facial expressions, as they’ll be determining if they trust what you’re saying based on those two elements.

*Visual oriented people often use expressions such as:*

- “I see.”
- “It seems clear.”
- “Do you see my point?”
- “I can see right through you.”

They also tend to be more uptight, high-strung, and very detail oriented. The visual oriented person will often get lost in thoughts and daydreams.

***When talking with a visually oriented person, using vivid words is the best way to communicate with them.***

If you can draw a picture with your words, using lots of detail, you will be able to more closely identify with those who are more visually oriented.

## **Body Language of a visual person**

A visual person will also pay close attention to your body language.

They'll notice your eye movements, hand gestures, posture and facial expressions and will read into those things to determine if they trust what you're saying or not.

Words themselves probably won't make much difference, but ***your body language and actions says it all to the visually oriented person.***

Since visually oriented persons rely on their visual perception so much, they may tend to judge a book by its cover, so to speak.

***The way one dresses or the car a person drives will say a lot to the visually oriented person.***

Visual people may also be uneasy around people who build up a facade because they can't see the real person inside or behind the mask.

## Tips for Speaking to a Visual Type Person

***When speaking to the visually oriented, look directly into their eyes and use positive body language.***

Don't cross your arms or appear distracted, as this will communicate to them that your focus isn't on them or that you're not really paying attention.

Another way to communicate positively is to nod your head, as if saying "yes" while they are speaking. This shows that you're actively listening and that you're interested in what they're saying.

On the other hand, when you're having a conversation with a visually oriented person, you may feel as if you're being examined because their eyes will move around, observing all the details of your hair, teeth, clothing and jewellery.

They may even stop you in conversation to give you a compliment about what you're wearing or the way you're hair is styled.

*(Note: if you've ever sat down with me one-on-one, and think about it now, you would have noticed me doing this. That's also my secret — I relate visually)*

***If your boss is visual-oriented, an organised office or workspace is probably very important to him or her.***



Therefore, it's important for you to keep your workspace neat and orderly to avoid conflict. They may also be very picky about dress and expect their employees to dress professionally at all times.

The same goes for any potential or existing client.

For example, if you're a realtor who is trying to list the house of a visual relating person, the tidiness of your vehicle and your own personal image (your hair, what you're wearing, your make up etc.) will be important.

## **Using the Different Relating Styles**

When building relationships, determining a person's relating style is probably the first thing you should do so you can understand where they're coming from and how they will respond.

I have found that having a general and good understanding of these three relating styles, can really take your communication to a deeper level.

If however, you feel that you won't be able to retain all this information, then follow the simple rule of thumb — ***mirror the language patterns, phrases and expressions of person you are communicating with.***

People typically use certain ways over and over to express themselves.

For example, here in New Zealand you might meet some people who use the phrase "good as gold." Not everyone uses this phrase however. Some will simply say "sweet as" or simply "sweet." Others would say "happy days."

You'll pick up fairly quickly what people love to say, and when you start to mimic them you'll find that they also respond to you better. This is especially important if you're a second language speaker living and working in a language that is not your native tongue.

Remember persuasion is about influence, and influence relies on effective communication. You can improve your communication's effectiveness by mirroring the language of your audience.

Doing this will help you always speak their language even when you can't recall all the information around various language patterns or relating styles.

In the next section we are looking at ways to help you get what you want by negotiating your way to success.

Negotiation in itself is a very big and broad field, and so we won't be covering every aspect of it, simply some principles to get you on your way.



# How to Get What You Want: Negotiate Your Way to Success

Do you ever encounter situations when you feel very strongly about how you believe a project should be planned, carried out, or completed?

*Do you sometimes feel annoyed that the others involved don't see the situation the same as you do?*

Here's where good negotiation skills come in handy.

Regardless of the career you've chosen, there will be times you'll find negotiation necessary. Learning this critical skill will also improve your personal relationships.

So, let's look at some ideas to help you improve your negotiation skills so that you can get the results you want more often.

## **Review these tips for negotiating a situation to get the results you want:**

### ***Know your material (preparation).***

- Avoid in-depth discussions about topics and situations that you're not yet educated about. In advance of conversations or projects you know are coming, ensure that you understand the ins and outs of the situation at hand.
- Preparation is your friend in negotiation!

***Listen.***

- ***Keep an open mind to what the other person has to say.***
- We've all had the experience of rushing in and insisting on what we want, only to discover later that it's actually quite similar to what the other person wants (we just didn't know that because we weren't listening).

***Find areas of agreement.***

- With a little luck, you'll only disagree on one or two minor points.
- Make a list of where you're in concurrence and where you're split.
- This will concretely illustrate how much negotiating will actually be necessary and how much you really do agree.

***Talk about the issue hand first.***

- Avoid trying to discuss solutions until you both see the problem similarly.
- You've got to be on the same page about the issue before you can possibly be on the same page for the solution.

***Keep your emotions out of it.***

- Consider the situation as business. Remain objective at all times. Keep your cool.

***Avoid intimidating behaviors and manipulative comments.***

- ***If you fall back on these unsavory methods just to get your way, you lose credibility*** with the person with whom you're negotiating.
- Then they stop being willing to listen to you.

***Be honest and use integrity.***

- If you misunderstand an element of the challenge or their proposed solution and suddenly realise it, say so.
- Keep your word. Respect the other person.

***Remind yourself that you're on same side.***



- After all, you both want to resolve the issue. If you focus on finding common threads, that will help.

### ***Show flexibility.***

- You're two separate people with two separate sets of ideas and perspectives about the issue at hand.
- ***Avoid expecting to get your way 100%.***
- Solicit suggestions from them on how to resolve the situation.
- Listen carefully, and ***be willing to implement some or all of what you hear.***
- ***Ask for the other person's ideas.***
- ***State your ideas for a solution.***
- Make your case, too; tell them why you believe it's the way to go.

*For example, you could say something like, "Rather than make in-person follow-up visits once per week to new customers, I think it's a better idea to do them monthly and use the off-weeks to follow up by phone."*

To make your case in this example, you may follow up by saying, *"This way, we've got time during the off-weeks to develop new customers. We'll be widening our customer base while keeping contacts with customers we already have."*



Learning to use effective negotiation skills will help you in accomplishing any goals you have that involve others.

Skillfully listen, remain non-emotional, discover points of agreement, honestly state your ideas, and show flexibility when interfacing with others.

Get what you want by putting these excellent negotiation skills to work for you!

In the next section we are looking at ways to become a more assertive person.

Having the confidence to speak up and say what you think and feel in any situation is a very important skill to have if you want to be able to influence and persuade others.

*Fear* however, often gets in the way.

Remember we've already mentioned the importance of confidence and the role it plays in portraying you as someone to be taken note of. Assertiveness is a super important skill to master.

Let's look at some ways now to do that.

## Becoming a More Assertive Person

Many people confuse assertiveness with aggression. There isn't anything wrong or aggressive about open and honest communication when done appropriately. You're merely clarifying your needs to another person.

***Assertiveness is being able to express your feelings while still respecting the feelings of others.***

### Benefits of Assertiveness

Assertiveness is an important skill that can greatly reduce the amount of conflict in your life if used appropriately. Assertive people tend to see that their own needs are met in a timely fashion and therefore are healthier individuals with much less stress in their lives.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, passive people see themselves as victims and may become resentful and angry until one day they *explode*.

To help you avoid piling up resentments, I've compiled some techniques you can use to become a more assertive person.

### Tips to Help You Become More Assertive:

#### ***Stick with the facts.***

When confronting someone about a problem, instead of exaggerating the situation by saying "You ALWAYS (or NEVER) \_\_\_\_\_" simply state the facts of the current situation.

- *For example*, if a person is habitually late, instead of telling them they're always late, mention what time they arrived and what time they had agreed to be there. The discrepancy will speak for itself.

### ***Begin with “I” instead of “You.”***

When you start a confrontation with “you,” it seems like an attack and usually puts the other individual on the defensive. Starting with the word “I” brings the focus to you – how their behaviour has affected you and how you are feeling.

- Rather than criticise the other person, *show the people in your life how their actions affect you.*

### ***Maintain a confident posture.***

Letting others see your *confidence* helps you to assert yourself.

- Stand up straight
- Look people in the eye
- Stay relaxed
- Speak clearly
- Respect the other individual's personal space

Think of two people: ***one who is slouched over and afraid to look at your face*** and the other ***who is standing tall and commanding respect.***

Which one would you respect?

### ***Use a firm pleasant tone of voice.***

Being assertive doesn't mean raising your voice or getting emotional. Keep your responses short and direct. There's no need to make excuses or justify your response.

- Yelling only instigates more anger and possibly even violence. ***Speak your mind calmly to keep everyone calm.***

**Don't assume that you already know the other individual's motives.**

You may be surprised to find they aren't the heinous person you thought they were!

- Just as you can't judge a book by its cover, you might not know all the details of what's happening in the life or mind of the other person.

***Listen and then ask questions.***

Instead of concentrating on how right you are, remember to listen to the other person's point of view.

- Try to understand where the other person is coming from and ask questions to clarify any concerns you might have.

***You may need to compromise to find a solution that meets the needs of everyone involved.***

- The best solution is when both parties are satisfied with the outcome.

***Every situation is different, so you'll need to assess the circumstances to determine how much assertiveness is appropriate.***

- Too little is just as harmful as too much.
- You have to assess the situation you find yourself in to determine how assertive you should or could be.

***Acknowledge your successes.***

- Acknowledging your success brings you the confidence to continue asserting yourself.

You may occasionally feel guilt about asserting yourself because it can feel selfish to speak up about your own needs. Just remember that you, too, deserve to be treated with respect.

***Only you can teach people how to treat you.***

Only you can do the best job of taking care of you.

In the next section we are looking at ways to deal with and respond to criticism.

Whenever we're dealing with people criticism will come our way at one time or another.

Many people I know try and avoid criticism as they hate conflict or feeling like they're incompetent or not good enough etc.

However, whether you like it or not, criticism is part of life. But, there are good and better ways to deal with it that can make us more persuasive rather than less.

## How to Respond to Criticism

*Constructive criticism is a good thing. It helps you improve yourself and refine your skills.*

*Destructive criticism, on the other hand, is useless and serves no good purpose, aside from hurting your feelings.*

### Destructive Criticism – What Should You Do?

Even though it's difficult receiving destructive and negative criticism, you should still listen to it.

This type of criticism is normally motivated out of someone else's need to feel superior, but there may be a *shred* of truth in there somewhere.

Try not to take it personally because, chances are, you're not the problem.

The person lashing out may be feeling envious or jealous, which colours their opinion.

Destructive criticism tends to be a personal attack.

***When the heart of an insult or comment is you (rather than something you've done), it is destructive and should be ignored.***

After all, no one has the right to determine your self-esteem!

## Constructive Criticism – How to Respond Appropriately

Constructive criticism is meant to *help* you.

***Listen carefully to what the person is saying.***

When the speaker is finished, ignore any personal attacks and simply let them know you'll consider your actions.

You can simply state, *"Thank you Roger for sharing that with me. I appreciate your honesty and I will go and consider how I can use what you told me."*

***Constructive criticism can be useful*** if it's based on performance or behaviour.

We don't always see our own behaviours in the same way others do, so listening to others' viewpoints can be helpful. In Psychology they talk about the "self-serving-bias" which effectively state that we're blind for our own flaws. Another viewpoint or perspective could help us identify a real growth point that's been keeping us back for years.

Constructive criticism usually comes from a place of genuine concern. If the person giving the criticism didn't care about you, they wouldn't offer the criticism in the first place.

If you receive professional constructive criticism from a superior, you should take notes and ask questions. If your boss is giving you constructive criticism about your job performance, take it to heart and do something with it.

Your boss is likely speaking from experience and their job is to help you improve and excel. If they're taking time out of their day to offer their insight, it means they value you as an employee and believe you can do better, so the least you can do is listen.

## Types of Constructive Criticism



There are certain expressions you can look for to know you're receiving constructive criticism.

If you hear these, then recognize the person is trying to help you rather than attack you.

Listen well to *these next types of criticism*, analyse if there is credence to what is being said, and then act on their suggestions.

### **The compliment sandwich**

- Someone gives you a compliment followed by a suggestion for an area of improvement and then finally, another compliment.
- This tells you that the person sees the good things you do and thinks you can improve further.

### **Encouragement criticism**

- In this type of constructive criticism, the person is trying to help you do better at something you're already doing fairly well.
- This tells you the person knows you try hard and maybe even wants to help you take it to the next level.

### **Thank you**

- If the conversation starts with someone thanking you for a job well done, you can be sure that they appreciate your efforts.
- This person usually wants to help you do better because they like you.

When responding to constructive criticism, you want to be sure to understand where the person is coming from before you say anything.

*You should always ask them to clarify something if you don't fully understand what they're saying.*

**When you receive constructive criticism, consider what is being said** honestly and objectively.

***Constructive criticism is all about improving.*** Unless you accept it from this point of view, it will be difficult to change your behaviour for the better.

*The only thing you need to say when receiving constructive criticism is simply "Thank You."*

Responding appropriately to criticism shows your maturity and willingness to improve. So swallow your pride, take it in the spirit in which it's offered, and you'll come out on top.

In the next section, you'll learn to make your apologies more sincere.

There are always times in our personal and professional lives when we need to apologise for something done or said.

Knowing how to do so sincerely and effectively in order to move past the issue and towards the goal, is vital for your success.

## Make Your Apologies More Sincere

A sincere apology does a world of good for both the giver and the receiver.

### Here are Some Reasons Why Apologising is Good for You and Your Loved Ones:

#### Deal with remorse constructively.

- Extending an apology helps you take responsibility for your actions and hold yourself accountable.
- In this way, you free yourself from the guilt that may follow lapses in judgment.
- This is especially true if you back up your words with positive actions.

#### Improve your future conduct.

- By reflecting on your actions and sharing your experience with another person, you make a deep impression in your mind.
- This motivation will help you resolve to do better the next time you're in a similar situation.
- When you strive to improve your behaviour in the future, what you're doing is bigger than just an apology; it's an amends.

#### Mitigate the harm you may have done.

- ***Just by hearing an apology, the person you wronged is likely to start feeling better.***
- It's a natural reaction – when we know that someone feels sorry for their negative effects on us because they value us and care about how we feel, we enjoy significant relief and a reduction in anger.

### **Encourage forgiveness.**

- We all need to be forgiven from time to time throughout our lives.
- Apologies and amends help to speed the process along.
  - Studies show that receiving an apology helps people feel less threatened.
  - We develop more compassion and find mistakes easier to forgive.

### **Maintain healthy relationships.**

- Conflicts are inevitable, but you can promote healing.
- Apologising and forgiving creates an atmosphere of mutual respect, trust, and cooperation.

### **Generate remorse.**

- Reflect on your actions and how they affected the other person.
- If the situation is emotionally charged, take time to calm down in a neutral setting.
- Talk with others if you need some objective input. Feel good about your courage in facing the facts head on.

### **Express your regret.**

- State clearly that you take full responsibility for your conduct.
- Acknowledge the impact you had on the other person.

### **Propose a constructive remedy.**

- Be prepared to state what you're willing to do to right the wrong. It will demonstrate that you're serious.
- Give the other person a chance to propose what they need so you can work together to patch things up.
- This turns your apology into an amends.

### **Listen to the other person.**

- Be open to however the other person decides to respond.
- ***You can feel good about your willingness to make reparations, however things turn out.***
- Sometimes you'll enjoy an immediate reconciliation. But be patient if the other person needs more time.

### **Apologise in person.**

- Your apology carries more weight when you make it in person than if you just text or e-mail it.
- Face-to-face discussions also help avoid compounding potential misunderstandings.

### **Apologise promptly.**

- It's easier to untangle a knot while it's still fresh.
- ***A prompt confession can prevent resentments from building.***

### **Evaluate any feelings of humiliation.**

- Do you feel that saying you're sorry is a sign of weakness?
- Actually, ***it takes great courage and wisdom to face unpleasant realities and communicate openly.***
- Rejoice in the knowledge that you're making life better for you and those you love.

### **Know when you need help.**

- If you're asking forgiveness for the same thing over and over, it may be a sign that you need help to make lasting changes.
- Counseling or support groups can help you deal with chronic concerns like addictions or anger issues.

As people we all have access to a great tools that influences more than anything else.

It's a tool that's been with us since the dawn of the humankind.

No matter how much we evolve, we still relate to each other best through this ancient method.

In fact, we still reward those who can do it best with leadership positions, status, success, profit, our attention, etc.

What is this is you ask?

### ***Storytelling.***

Many books have been written on this topic and even though it's as old as the mountains we're still learning how powerful this ancient method can be even in this modern era.

We still hang on the lips of those that can tell a good story.

Politicians, experts, preachers, comedians, speakers, tutors, coaches, salespeople etc.

We all love and relate to stories because stories bypass our minds and speak to our hearts. And that's where influence happens.

If we can influence someone's heart we can direct their behaviour.

So the next section, is all about the fundamentals of how to become a better storyteller.

# How to Become a Better Storyteller

What is the most memorable kind of communication?

A good old-fashioned story, of course!

Whether it's through hieroglyphics, parables, fairy tales, or fables, a good story is the deepest way to connect the mind to the soul.

Storytelling is a cherished tradition and an ***entertaining and effective way to convey information*** about almost any subject.

Walk in any classroom and you'll find teachers educating their students with stories.

Walk into a major corporation and you'll find high profile CEOs expressing thoughts, opinions, and facts to their employees with stories.

Wherever you go, storytelling is a powerful means of communication.

## Why Should We Tell Stories?

It's been discovered that each of us has a desire, and perhaps even a need, to tell and hear stories.

By sharing stories with others, and indulging in their stories, ***we learn to understand one another at a much deeper level.***

By creating a common level of understanding, we come together as a community of individuals – appreciating both the differences and similarities we share.

***You can convey your thoughts, feelings, and experiences through stories.***



By doing so, you're verbally expressing the things you value, the customs you take part in, and the wisdom you've acquired in life.

Have you ever felt that you didn't have anything interesting to share?

Have you ever wished that you could grip audiences with the power of a good story?

If so, you'll be happy to know that there are *many* stories within you, just waiting to be told!

And by becoming a better storyteller, ***you can overcome feelings of isolation and develop a stronger connection with others.***

## **Steps to Becoming a Great Storyteller**

Even if you've never told a story in your life, you *can* become a great storyteller!

With a little effort and practice, your storytelling skills will improve and people will be drawn to what you have to say.

**Here are 4 important techniques you can use to tell great stories:**



***Ensure that your presence is prominent.***

- You must have the attention of your audience, whether it's a small group of friends or a large crowd.
- If you can captivate your audience, you're halfway there!
- In order to do so, you'll want speak clearly and deliberately with an upright posture and confident demeanor.
- Confidence and being present are two thirds of the game in my opinion. No matter how great your content, without coming across as confident in your own skin and being truly present, you'll struggle to hold your audience's attention captive.

***Connect with and engage your audience.***

- Connecting with your audience on an emotional level is important.
- If you're able to do this, you'll draw in the interest of the crowd and your story won't fall on deaf ears.
- This means understanding *who* they are, *what* they desire, *why* they're there, and *how* to speak to them.
- ***Talk and relate to your audience on an equal level.*** You shouldn't let your ego lead to a condescending tone of voice, nor should you let your wavering self-confidence make you timid. We're all human and we're all equal, so eliminate any negative perceptions or mental barriers from your mind.
- ***Match how you speak with whom you're speaking to.*** Your tone, language, and attire should be different when you're talking to high school students versus a group of women over 40. Try to precisely understand what the audience goes through day-in and day-out and tell *that*

***Interact with your audience***

- Audience involvement is a simple technique that famous speakers use when sharing stories.
- You can ask questions, set up activities, or have someone share their experiences.
- *This keeps your audience tuned in because they become part of the story.*
- Humor can help you engage and interact with an audience but don't force it. Forcing humor into a story where it doesn't belong is awkward for both the storyteller and the audience.

### ***Teach something.***

- Your audience wants to learn something.
- They don't want to simply learn about you; ***they want to learn something they can apply in their own lives.***
- Structure your story so there's both a situation and a solution or moral, that way there's a deeper meaning associated with the story that the audience can identify with.

You can use stories in almost any setting and it will always be effective.

*Why?*

Because communication of people is basically the telling and sharing of stories. So learning how to do it strategically and well is definitely worth your time.



Think about the conversations you've had at work today. How many of those were stories, i.e. sharing interesting events or incidents with colleagues?

Think about your last conversation with a client. Would it be fair to say that you shared some experiences, either personally related or what happened to someone else, as part of the conversation?

Think about how many stories (the conveying of experiences) we share at home.

At the sports club.

Social Media.

Church.

Etc.

We cannot escape stories.

It's a powerful way to communicate with others.

Adding to this, there are a few other things to consider and work on to really increase the impact of how you use stories both personally and professionally.

Let's look at a few.

As I said earlier, ***self-confidence plays a large role*** in making your presence prominent in a room. If you lack the confidence to step outside of your comfort zone and be confident, you'll have a hard time gaining your audience's attention.

If you're unsure how to build more self-confidence, go and [watch this video on my blog](#) I posted a while back. It should give you some ideas.

It is also important to ***t alk and relate to someone on an equal level.***

You shouldn't let your ego lead to a condescending tone of voice, nor should you let your wavering self-confidence make you timid.

We're all human and we're all equal, so eliminate any negative perceptions or mental barriers from your mind.

You must realise that most of the fears we allow to obstruct us from stepping out of our comfort zones are constructs of our own minds.

That's a nice way of saying, it's in your head.

Stay authentic and real, and do so confidently.

***Match how you speak with whom you're speaking to.***

Your tone, language, and attire should be different when you're talking to high school students versus a group of women over 40.

Try to precisely understand what the audience goes through day-in and day-out and tell *that* story. And it doesn't matter if your audience is 1 person or a 100. Same principle applies.

You need to match whom you speaking to. If you're trying to persuade an older lady to list her house with you, your stories must be relatable.

The same goes for talking to a CEO of a company. Your stories will influence more if they match the person and environment.

## Final Thoughts

Being able to influence others is an useful “power” to have.

Those who are able to influence and persuade others the most tend to lead in all areas of life.

Imagine how things would be different if you were able to influence your children more. How would that change things?

Imagine being far more persuasive in your business. What would that mean for your income and growth of your business? How would that influence your attitude and motivation showing up every day knowing that you will most likely get the results you want?

No matter how much we evolve as humans or how tech savvy we get, being able to influence others is a skill you must master.

As we learned at the start of this eBook, you are either someone that influences others or you’re the person being influenced *by* others.

The content of this eBook will get you started and as you start applying what you’ve learned you will deepen your understanding of how to influence and persuade even more.

The challenge is being prepared and that requires an open mind and willingness to learn, try, fail and try again.

Let’s close with a story.

This is the fable of ***“The Opposite Ornament Sisters”***





Twin sisters Olivia and Olga Ornament couldn't be more different! Only friends and family knew they were twin ornaments. Others didn't have a clue because of how different they looked and behaved.

At the end of every holiday, the Merry family would pack them away with all the other decorations. Olivia would ensure she was stored in a cushioned section of the ornaments box so she would retain her brilliance for the next holiday.

Olga, on the other hand, was a free spirit who never gave much thought to planning for the future. *"It's all about the here and now for me,"* remarked Olga as she rolled around playfully with the lights and tinsel. *"A little fun never hurt anybody!"*

Every day, as Olivia sat still and socialized with nearby ornaments, Olga romped around nonchalantly. She rolled, bounced, and got entangled with the other decorations. In no time, she was tarnished, scratched, and dented.

*"Oh my!"* she exclaimed. *"I'm not looking as beautiful as I used to. Maybe it's time to take a break because the holidays are just around the corner!"*

But Olga was a tad too late. Hanging around with her sister at the last minute didn't undo the damage that was already done.

When Mindy Merry opened the box of decorations, she said, *"Mom, look! This ornament is so old and tarnished. It looks like it rolled around all year."* Mrs. Merry replied, *"You're right, Mindy. Let's just leave that one in the box."*

When Olga realized that Olivia was used as decoration while she was left behind, she immediately became sad. *"If only I had stayed put like Olivia, I would have been chosen as a decoration for this holiday for sure."*

***Let's reflect on this story for a moment as we bring this eBook to a close.***

Olivia and Olga Ornament never had much in common. Of course, they were twin sisters, but their similarities stopped there. Olivia always thought about the future and planned accordingly. Olga, on the other hand, never put much thought into preparing for anything.

If you think back, you'll probably identify a time when you were just as eligible for a great opportunity as a co-worker or fellow student. However, because you neglected to put in enough work beforehand, you lost out on the opportunity.



You can never be too prepared for anything. It's much better to be over-prepared and be thought overzealous than to under-prepare and lose out on something that's important to you.

It's always a good idea to think of an opportunity as something that's right in front of you. Regardless of how much time you think you have to get ready for it, do what you can today!

***Laying the groundwork and foundation for anything makes implementation much more seamless.***

You'd be surprised at how much of a head start you give yourself by preparing. You'll have plenty of time after you've earned the achievement to bask in your victory. Use the here and now to prepare.

### **Self-Reflection Questions:**

1. Have I fallen short on the expectations of others?
2. Can I make myself more marketable for great opportunities?
3. Are there positive behaviours of others that I can emulate?

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