Making a positive first impression

Template

Step 1:

Create a list of verbal and non-verbal behaviors that contribute to making a positive first impression:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Verbal Behaviors | Non-verbal Behaviors |
|  |  |
| * Form your words clearly * Use a calm and warm tone * Use an appropriate volume that demonstrates confidence - not too loud or too quiet * Provide a warm response to an introduction (e.g. ‘great to meet you’) * Repeat the person’s name to help you remember it (e.g. Hi Sharon, I’m Arun) * Create a conversation that is memorable by adding value to what they are saying, or offering to help them, or using personal stories to build rapport * Prepare talking points (find things you have in common through researching the person ahead of time) as this will help to build rapport and avoid awkward silences * Give an appropriate compliment Microsoft Intern Program Page 4 of 7 * Vary your tone to demonstrate enthusiasm and passion for a topic (where appropriate) * Ask questions to show genuine interest and that you are listening * Use positive language * Give people a reason to listen to you by targeting your communication to their needs Avoid slang * Avoid ‘filler words’ (e.g. ‘um’, ‘so’, ‘like’) * Use humor to lighten the mood (if appropriate) * Take a deep breath before you speak to help relax you if you feel nervous, as this will calm any wavering of your voice and give you more confidence * End the interaction by thanking them for their time | * Dress for purpose (check what is appropriate to the situation – never ‘under’ dress) * Be punctual (or a bit early) * Smile in an authentic way * Stand tall with a confident posture (back straight and shoulders relaxed, but not rigid) * Sit up straight * Make eye contact (where culturally appropriate) o China – eye contact can be seen as a sign of disrespect o Japan – it is a sign of respect to not make eye contact with someone else, instead focus on the speaker’s neck to show respect o Hong Kong – you need to lower your gaze when shaking their hand to introduce yourself o Australia – eye contact shows sincerity and trust,   so maintain eye contact o India – use minimal eye contact or avert eyes from opposite gender, when making eye contact divert your gaze often   * Use a confident handshake where culturally appropriate (not too firm or too limp) • Put your phone away * Use appropriate gestures to support your points * Nod your head in agreement to demonstrate interest Microsoft Intern Program Page 6 of 7 Keep your arms in an ‘open’ stance (don’t cross them) * Be aware of if you are blinking too much (this shows you are uncomfortable) * Take notes (it shows you are interested) * Read the body language of others – what are they trying to tell you? |

Step 2:

Upload a video introducing yourself to Microsoft focusing on creating a positive first impression. Be creative if you like! Include whatever you think will make an impact and reflect your personal brand. The video needs to be short – maximum length of two minutes.