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:

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| Verbal Behaviors | Non-verbal Behaviors |
| • 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  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 | • 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  • 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.