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**What Image Are You Projecting?**

**By Gary Simpson**

**"What Image Are You Projecting?" by Gary Simpson**

I want you to think about something for a few moments. Do you have any perception about what sort of image you are projecting? I'm talking about the personal or professional image that you are presenting to the rest of the world.

When we perceive others we do it through four of our five senses: Sight Sound Smell Touch  
The fifth sense, "taste", we will set aside because it is irrelevant to this subject. But we will include an intangible quality, a "sixth sense", so to speak, which we will identify as "something extra". What I refer to here is that vague notion we get about somebody which we are unable to quantify. It is an all-round subconscious combination of everything else that we perceive about the person.

We have all felt it. We all project it. It's the thing we speak of when we say or think the words: "I feel as though I can trust this person" or "I think I feel safe in this person's presence" or "it seems as though I have known this person a long time" or "I just don't feel comfortable when he (or she) is around" or "this person makes my skin crawl."

Call it gut feeling, animal instinct, intuition or whatever you want. We all possess it and we all project it. Some are more receptive at what comes in and others can mask what goes out. But there are signals.

So let's examine each of the above attributes briefly to see what sort of "persona" or image you are projecting for others to "read".

**1 - Sight.** What do you see when you look in the mirror? What do you look like? Not everybody has movie star looks or a perfect athlete's body. However, we should all be making the most of what we have got. There is simply no excuse for an unkempt appearance. Are you a man who only shaves every second or third day? If so, why? Are you a woman who has unruly hair?

It has been proven that people judge you mostly by what they see. If you make a poor initial visual presentation then you have to rely on everything else to work overtime to overcome it.

## What Image Are You Projecting?

Consider this. Think about your lawyer, accountant, doctor or any other "professional" person. When you first met that person how did they present? Were they well groomed and in fine clothes? Almost certainly they were. Now, every time we see that person we judge them by that first presentation appearance. You may see your accountant one weekend down at the hardware store in his or her grubbiest work clothes - but you still have that image of them in their professional attire.

Let's reverse that. Let's assume that you bump into that person in the hardware store, you strike up a conversation, during which, they reveal to you that they are an accountant. But you see them in their filthy weekend work gear. Is it convincing? You decide to visit them at their usual place of work at a later date. Hey presto! Out comes this person looking very professional. Is your mind in conflict?

The point I am making is this - the first impression is the lasting impression. When you see somebody for the first time and they are professionally attired, that is the way you invariably categorise that

person from that point on - even if a subsequent meeting shows them wearing lesser clothing. It just doesn't work in reverse.

My point is - if you want to project a certain image - dress for that image. But that is not to say that you need to wear your best clothes all the time when you are away from your work. The above example was just to illustrate my point.

**2 - Sound.** What words do you use? Do you speak appropriately and knowledgeably for your profession. Are you prone to "um" and "er" your way through conversations? Do you think before you speak?

Is your verbal language sprinkled or even littered with profanities or expletives? Gutter language is a sure way to lose customers and clients. So are sarcasm, racial prejudism, sexual connotation, rudeness, ignorance, criticism and a host of other poor language traits.

Do you revise and edit your written language in letters or emails before you send them - particularly when you are in conflict with a person or corporation? Do you screen your writing for blatant errors or possible misunderstandings? Being pleasant but firm creates a much better environment for resolution than a harsh and angry tone. Do you wait before you send your mail and revisit your words before posting? Do you put yourself in the position of the receiver of the correspondence?

**3 - Smell.** A tough subject to deal with. I will be blunt. Do you smell? Many people have deficient nasal receptors. Their sense of smell is either diminished or non-existent. Often such people can reek of offensive body odour simply because they are unaware of it themselves.

Some people have heightened nasal receptors. Their sense of smell can be so sensitive that all sorts of odours cause them discomfort. Therefore, if you are a man who drowns himself in after-shave you might save yourself a lot of money by being less liberal with it. Similarly, women who walk down a corridor and leave a trail of perfume in their wake might also like to follow this advice. A hint of after-shave or perfume can be refreshing. A miasma of it can be just the reverse.

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**4 – Touch.** In today's society you had better be aware that excessive touching and feeling is completely unacceptable. If in doubt, you should offer and accept your hand in a hand–shake only. Many people find it very offensive when personal contact is made. If you are in the habit of giving people a hug just make sure that the "hugee" is amenable to the hug from the "hugger".

All of the above add up to what can be described as a "general personal aura". You can send and receive these auras. They form part of that unquantifiable quality that we know of as the "sixth sense." Be aware that many of the subjects that I have described above can be modified to suit specific locations, customs, beliefs and relationships. There is no universal law. Awareness and common sense are the key.

There are several books, which go into great detail on these matters. One such book is "**Body Language**" by **Allan Pease**. If you have any difficulty locating this book you can always request it by its unique code (ISBN 0 9593658 0 X). This is an excellent reference source on many non–verbal gestures. It certainly makes for interesting reading.

By being aware of the signals that we send out when we deal with other people we can improve the way we interact with them. These are skills which can be learned and they can greatly increase our

results in personal and business relationships.

These skills are important because the greatest element in personal contact with your clients and customers is communication. Poor interpersonal skills will eventually cause a breakdown in confidence which will manifest itself in declining sales.

The most successful people in any business are always the communicators. If you are an employee and you want your salary to increase, work on your communication skills. If you are a business owner and you want your turnover to increase, work on your own communication skills first then show all your employees how to do the same.

The image that you project in the marketplace will directly affect your "bottom line". Think about it. What image are you projecting?

**About the author:** Gary Simpson is the Course Co–ordinator for the "Life, Journey, Destiny – Personal Development Home Study Course" and the author of "How to Stop Wasting Your Life and Start Getting What You Want". His email address is

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others is located at Motivation & Self Esteem for Success.

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### **Terms Used the in the Stock Photography Business**

#### **By Kelly Paal**

So you are a small business person or web designer and you want to purchase some stock photography for your website. Great. Photography is a wonderful way to improve the emotional impact of your site. But there are a few terms unique to the stock photography business that you should know.

**Royalty Free** – you'll see this term often. What it means is that you pay a one time fee for an image and you can use it for as many times as you want for as long as you wish. It is a great way to get inexpensive photos. Now if you are concerned that your competitor would or could use the same image as you, photographers and agencies can continue to sell the image after you purchase it, then you need:

**Rights Managed** – this one is next term you'll see. This means that you pay a fee for the image based on how, where, how long, and how many people will see the image. This one will cost you a lot more in most cases. This is worth it if you do not want your competitor using the same image for the same purpose. Usually the stock agency or photographer also agree not to sell the image to others in your field for the time that you are using the image. So you can see why this option protects your use of the image but you'll also pay much more for this protection. Remember too that, at some point, you decided to discontinue using/paying for the image the agency or photographer can then sell the image to someone else, even someone in your field.

**Flat Rate** – this term isn't quite at common but it is similar to royalty free. Usually this means that you pay a one time fee for an image, but it can only be used for one purpose by one person. Pricing will be higher than royalty free but less than rights managed.

**Copyright** – even with royalty free you are still only purchasing the right to use an image not the image itself. All images are property of the agency or photographer who owns them. How do you know who owns them, there is usually a © symbol with date and name of the person or agency who owns the image. No matter what you paid for the image you are NOT the owner of the image. This means you cannot remove the copyright information, alter the photo, use it as part of a logo that you own a copyright, or resale the image as your own.

These terms will get you started but remember there can be differences in these definitions from agency to agency and photographer to photographer. Every agency and photographer selling stock images should have a legal or license page to explain these terms and any others that they use, if they

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don't you may want to move onto another site. Be aware, read all the information, and know what you are buying.

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Kelly Paal is a Freelance Nature and Landscape Photographer, exhibiting nationally and internationally. Recently she started her own business Kelly Paal Photography (

). She has an educational background in photography, business, and

commercial art. She enjoys applying graphic design and photography principles to her web design.

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