



**7 Seconds to Make
a First Impression**

The first 7 seconds....

- The moment that stranger sees you, his or her brain makes a thousand computations: Are you someone to approach or to avoid? Are you friend or foe? Do you have status and authority? Are you trustworthy, competent, likeable, confident?
- Researchers from NYU found that we make 11 major decisions about one another in the first 7 seconds of meeting.
- In business interactions, first impressions are crucial. While you can't stop people from making snap decisions, you *can* understand how to make those decisions work in your favor.
- First impressions are more heavily influenced by nonverbal cues than verbal cues. In fact, studies have found that nonverbal cues have over 4 times the impact on the impression you make than anything you say.

Adjust your attitude

- People pick up your attitude instantly. Before you turn to greet someone, or enter the boardroom, or step onstage to make a presentation, think about the situation and make a conscious choice about the attitude you want to embody.



Straighten your posture

- Status and power are nonverbally conveyed by height and space. Standing tall, pulling your shoulders back, and holding your head straight are all signals of confidence and competence.



Smile

- A smile is an invitation, a sign of welcome. It says, “I’m friendly and approachable.”



Make eye contact

- Looking at someone's eyes transmits energy and indicates interest and openness. (To improve your eye contact, make a practice of noticing the eye color of everyone you meet.)



Raise your eyebrows

- Open your eyes slightly more than normal to simulate the “eyebrow flash” that is the universal signal of recognition and acknowledgement.



Shake hands



- This is the quickest way to establish rapport. It's also the most effective. Research shows it takes an average of three hours of continuous interaction to develop the same level of rapport that you can get with a single handshake.



Lean in slightly

- Leaning forward shows you're engaged and interested. But be respectful of the other person's space.
- That means, in most business situations, staying about two feet away.