



The *Guilt-Free* Times

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Greetings!

I hope you enjoyed the 4th of July holiday and are keeping cool as the temperature begins to rise! We just put up a small pool to help us beat the heat (and then the temperatures dropped - - go figure!).

As a professional in the business world, how you look can have a large impact on your success. You don't have to look like a movie star, but you do want to look sharp and polished to make a great first impression during those crucial first 30 seconds when you meet someone. This month's article will give you 7 tried and true tips for creating a positive lasting impression!

Lastly, check out the Sizzling Summer Specials from Simply Homemade. Jaquie and Linda, at the Crystal Lake location, are offering some Kids Cooking classes. They are designed to provide them with a unique experience and the opportunity to try something new. PLUS your child will come home with something to share with the whole family!

Happy Summer!

Victoria

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Need A Speaker?

Is your business or organization looking for a speaker for an upcoming meeting, conference, or expo? If so, please consider me! I provide both educational/motivational presentations and experiential workshops on a variety of topics. Whether leading a workshop or delivering a presentation, you'll get my unique combination of professionalism and playfulness.

I'm now booking dates for the fall. [Click here](#) to review my most popular speaking topics.

Top 7 Tips for a Professional Image

by Victoria Cook

As a professional or business owner, you know people make a snap judgment about you in the first 30 seconds they meet you. No, it's not necessarily fair to judge a book by its cover, but it is the reality. Below are some tried and true simple things you can do to ensure your professional image works for you and not against you:

1. Neatness counts!

Make sure your clothes are neat and tidy, have all their buttons, and don't have stains. Ensure your clothes are pressed so it doesn't appear as though you've just rolled out of bed.

2. Shop Fit NOT Size

Even the most expensive clothes can create a poor first impression if they don't fit properly. The average person should have 2 - 3 different sizes in their closet at any one time. No, I'm not talking about your "fat" or "thin" clothes. Each manufacturer cuts their garments differently than the next. Expensive designers also use the trick of cutting their clothes bigger so that the average sized person wears a smaller size in their garment. Make certain to purchase clothes that don't pull at the pants pockets or around the waistline. If you are petite, expect to have most of your pants and jacket sleeves altered. It's worth the investment!

3. Designers Not Necessary

It isn't necessary to wear all designer duds to look professional. A moderately priced suit in a wool or gabardine blend can look "expensive" if properly accessorized. Grow your wardrobe by choosing key classic pieces. Men, put your money into your ties. A less expensive suit with a more expensive, sharp tie looks great. Ladies, invest in a year-round weight suit or separates for easy mix and match. Refined fabrics are best. Skip the machine washable suits! Pair your suit with a great broach or scarf to show off your personality.

4. These Boots Are Made For More Than Walking

There's nothing worse than seeing a sharply dressed professional and then getting to the bottom of the look to see tattered shoes. Guys, shine 'em and make sure your belts match. And for the record, brown shoes DO NOT go well with black or grey trousers. Additionally, casual shoes go with casual clothes. Find a pair of comfortable dress shoes to pair with trousers or to upscale your kahki's.

Ladies, make sure your shoes are in good repair and replace the heels (or the shoes) if needed; don't walk around on nails. It's unattractive AND dangerous (I know!). The other area many women miss is hosiery. You want to wear hose that are the same color value or darker than your skirt and shoes. A good rule to follow is 2 of the 3 (hemline, hose, and shoes) need to match. That said, don't walk out the door wearing a red skirt, nude hose and black shoes.

5. Business Casual Doesn't Equal Sloppy

Today many businesses have adopted a "Business Casual" dress code. If you are meeting clients at their site, you don't want to be too over dressed or look sloppy. A sharp pant suit for the ladies or dress pants with a casual shirt and blazer for men are great choices. If you are meeting in an even more casual environment (on the golf course perhaps) make sure your pants are crisply pressed and you have on a shirt with a collar. A belt and nice casual shoes (vs. tennis shoes) help pull the outfit together for a more "finished look".

6. The Eyes Have It!

When a person looks you in the eyes their sincerity shows through. That's why it's important that you make it easy for your clients to look YOU in the eyes. Don't wear loud patterns or overpowering colors. Choose colors and shades that best compliment your skin tone, this includes the guys too. If you're not sure what those are, find a professional who can help you (contact me if you need a good referral). Everything you wear should help bring the attention to your face, not draw people

towards looking at your belt buckle or chunky necklace.

7. Hair Today, Gone Tomorrow

Hair trends come and go and if you are a hair stylist, your style should reflect that. Otherwise, choose a style that compliments your face shape and fits into your lifestyle. If you are a guy who is "folically challenged", whatever you do DON'T comb it over. Embrace your extra forehead and the fact that many guys willingly shave their heads as a fashion statement. You're in style and don't even know it. Men also need to be weary of excess facial hair and the unibrow. While there is a lot of talk about "metrosexuals" and men looking too feminine, no one wants to look at a caterpillar above your eyes. Find a salon (yes I said a salon) and have your brows "cleaned up" and trimmed if needed. You won't walk out with pencil shaped brows looking like a woman, I promise you. The same goes for you ladies. Keep your brows neat as well.

In closing, I want to encourage you to **let your personality show!** We are all unique individuals. Let that show through your style. Don't dress like a conservative accountant if you are the Managing Director of a dance troupe. It's important to look professional, but you also need to "look the part" and feel comfortable in your own skin!

Sizzling Summer Specials from Simply Homemade

Free Assembly Session July 20th at 2:00pm

Don't have time to go and put your meals together then take advantage of free assembly (a \$35 savings) session for the first 12 luck people! Just sign up for the 2pm session on Friday, July 20th. Your order will be assembled and ready to go any time after 2 pm.

Simply Homemade presents Kids Cooking Classes

Limited spots are available for some special themed cooking classes such as, Slumber Party Cuisine, Healthy Eating, Authentic Italian, and Get Together Fiesta. Due to the success of these classes we are offering these and more in the fall, stay tuned for details!

[Simply Homemade Website](#)

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