

Creating a Winning Impression

Regardless of the situation – articulation of a product, a C.V., self-assessment, or performance evaluations – a positive and lasting impression can only be obtained through the effectiveness of the message. The message is an entire package comprised of appearance, behavior, and communication delivery – whether it is written or verbal. Appearance and behavior can be mimicked. Getting the right communication piece and how it is delivered is based on understanding the needs of the recipient and expressing it in a way that meets those needs. This takes practice and the ability to gauge what is important and relevant to that person.

As a candidate for a position, for college admission, or for venture fund, creating a compelling and winning impression as well as to show differentiating value basically boils down to these basic questions.

What is the problem? Why should that person be interested or want to know what you are saying to address this?

What is the solution or end result?

- How did you come up with the desired outcome or produce these achievements?
- Why were the results important?
- What were the achieved benefits (savings)?
- How did this meet the person or institution's ultimate goals? (That is, how did it fulfill their needs?)

Why were you the best person to accomplish this?

This is to say, what did you do differently so that the solutions or accomplishments were unique or beneficial?

As a leader providing quarterly or mid-year performance evaluations, creating a winning impression is also important and necessary when giving positive feedback. When done correctly, it fosters productivity and loyalty. As such, it's necessary to summarize and tie all of the salient achievements together in the message. Therefore, step back and decide how the individual action or each accomplishment fits into the big picture.

- Present the big ticketed items – headliners.
- Articulate how that person's contribution aligned with the business or organizational objectives.
- Highlight how the achievements produced positive change, efficiencies/savings, or accomplished established goals.
- If it met certain milestones or timelines – particularly if it was ahead of schedule – this should be expressed as well.

In sum, in order to create a winning impression, this requires the person delivering the message to be both outwardly and inwardly looking.

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