

Ten things you can do to improve your online first impression.

Leslie's favorite client Peter sent her a text, "Don't know if you are aware that your title Vice President in the company website is spelled incorrectly. She gasped when she read the note. She hadn't caught noticed. But, she was certain that Peter was not the only client who had caught the error. How could she have made such an error? It happens all the time. We can also go through our day interacting on the Internet, oblivious to our appearance, like walking around all day with our sweater on inside out with the tag showing, except with a lot more potential people viewing our mistakes. What are ten things you can do to present yourself at your best, as you are right now on the internet?

1. If you plan on looking for a job, keeping a job, dating or in any way communicating with other human beings on the Internet you need to know how you look right now. Search for your name. Do it right now. Then set up a reminder in your calendar so that once a week or once a month you audit your online first impression on a regular basis so you can see how you look to anyone who is viewing your information. You can also set up a Google alert so that you can monitor and adjust any new images of you.
2. Your SEO (search engine optimization) may be reduced if you have more than one name. In addition, your user names can affect your credibility. So, check you user names. The fun name you created in high school may still be out there. Cuddlebear@aol.com and PartyGuy@hotmail.com may still be out there, and they may not convey the professional image you want.
3. Power up your first impression by creating new profiles that are up to date and accurate. You can use profile services such as About.me or LinkedIn. You can take a little time each day to change or upgrade your image. The more wonderful information and images you have, the more anything you don't like is likely to go to the bottom of the searches.
4. If you have an old account and can't take it down, edit it often and create new content often. You wouldn't go a month without taking a bath. Your online image needs a bit of a scrub every once in a while too.
5. People often do an internet search not for written data but for video. So someone may search for you by putting in your name, photo, and video. You should do the same. You can also improve your online first impression by starting your own YouTube channel and adding great videos of you.
6. Create a personal blog or tumblr.com account. If you are creating a first impression for your own small business or product or service, you can take a few extra steps. You can create more video accounts or perhaps create slideshows and share them on slideshare.net. You can also go to YouTube, click on the audio converter, turn the video into podcast, and put that in iTunes. Then ping it all so Google can show off all these great impressions.
7. Make sure you edit your photos to make them look current and up to date. Create and post photos of yourself. Here is link to my tips on taking a great photo.

<http://bodylanguagelady.blogspot.com/search/label/posing%20for%20a%20photo>. Also check out this great (though a bit racy) article The Myths of profile photos.

8. Tell and show the truth. Lilly's profile stated her age as 49 and her build as average. She's actually 53 and overweight, but she figured that since she was going on a diet, by the time anyone saw her in person she would look great. Tom's Linked In photo was 20 years old, but he rationalized that he still looked pretty much the same except for the hair, or lack of it. Don's Match.com profile listed his interests as traveling for fun, attending Broadway shows, and concerts as his main hobbies. Though he had not left town or seen a play or concert in several years, he pictured doing those activities in the future when he started dating again. Research shows that people falsely manage their first impression on the internet in several ways: sometimes lying about their age, weight, athleticism and experience to appear more desirable or employable (See Managing Impressions <http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol11/issue2/ellison.html>) Read more about it this article <http://bodylanguagelady.blogspot.com/search?q=online>. Often people represent themselves as their ideal self, how they would like to be or what they aspire to be, rather than who they are. It makes sense that we want people to have the best impression of us. Make sure you do things to present yourself as you are right now.
9. Be positive. If you are in any online forum whether it be Facebook or commenting on CNN.com or Foxnews.com be careful of being negative. Even if you think your identity is protected by a made up username, someone can do a deep search of your internet presence and still find you. And if you work for a company, your employer can search your company-issued computer, smart phone, and landline phone records at any time.