



Instructor Guide

Positive Image



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Unit Description

Overview

In a professional work environment, we need to be aware of the image messages we present to our co-workers and bosses, as well as our customers.

A positive image includes physical elements such as appearance, dress, cleanliness and mental elements such as attitude. Clues to mental attitudes include posture, speech, manners, facial expressions and gestures.

The way we look, speak and act, sends messages to others which can be interpreted either positively or negatively.

A positive image is important because:

- It encourages others to respond positively to us.
- It can help open doors of opportunity.
- It makes us feel good about ourselves and boosts our level of confidence.

The purpose of this unit is to enable participants to realize the importance of personal image and how it affects their lives. The course offers steps to achieve the goal of “Being the Best that You Can Be.”



Objectives

The information, activities and practice provided in this unit will enable participants to:

1. Define image.
2. Identify the elements of a positive image.
3. Identify image builders and describe how they contribute to a positive image.
4. Identify image busters and describe what should be done to eliminate them.
5. Explain why a positive image is important and how it can help achieve personal and career goals.
6. Identify ways to present a positive image in the workplace.
7. Assess their personal images and identify specific steps towards enhancing their images.

Materials

1. Participant Guides
2. Name tents
3. Flip chart stand, flip chart paper, and markers
or white board and markers
4. Projection System
5. Video: "Impressions Count and So Do You."



Flip Charts

1. What Does Image Mean?
2. Image Definition
3. What Things Form A Positive Image?
4. Image Busters

PowerPoint Slides

1. Positive Image
2. Objectives
3. A Positive Image...
4. Elements of a Positive Image
5. Learning Resource Chart
6. Four Steps to a Positive Image

Agenda

Introduction	10 minutes
Image Overview	5 minutes
Elements of a Positive Image	30 minutes
Professional Appearance	45 minutes
Summary	10 minutes
Positive Image Assessment	20 minutes
Total	2 hours



Introduction

Overview



DISPLAY the slide titled “Positive Image.”

WELCOME the participants to the course and introduce yourself. Briefly describe a personal experience when you were in a situation where you were either overdressed or underdressed and how it made you feel.

ASK participants to introduce themselves and briefly state whether or not they believe that there are right ways and wrong ways to dress for a job and what is more important, a person’s appearance or how a person performs at his or her job?

NOTE: This should spark a lively discussion. The answer you may receive is that job performance is most important. Remind participants that performance may be the most important, but we are all judged, whether we like it or not, based on our appearance. So, ensuring that we have an appropriate image at work is part of the job.



DIRECT participants to the “Introduction” in their guide.

EXPLAIN that in a professional work environment, we need to be aware of the image we present to co-workers as well as customers.

STATE that a positive image includes physical elements such as appearance, dress cleanliness, and mental elements such as attitude. Cues to mental attitudes include posture, speech, manners, facial expressions and gestures.

STATE that the way we look, speak and act, sends messages to others which can be interpreted either positively or negatively.



A positive image is important because:

- It encourages others to respond positively to us.
- It can help open doors of opportunity.
- It makes us feel good about ourselves and boosts our level of confidence.

EXPLAIN the purpose of this unit is to help participants realize the importance of image and how it affects their lives and to offer steps to achieve the goal of “Being the Best that They Can Be.”

EMPHASIZE that this unit is not only about dressing appropriately for work, but it is also about nonverbal communication, attitude and whether or not you are sending the appropriate messages in the work environment.

Objectives



DISPLAY the slide titled “Objectives.”

DISCUSS the “Objectives.”

STATE that the information, activities and practice provided in this unit will enable participants to:

1. Define image.
2. Identify the elements of a positive image.
3. Identify image builders and describe how they contribute to a positive image.
4. Identify image busters and describe what should be done to eliminate them.
5. Explain why a positive image is important and how it can help achieve personal and career goals.
6. Identify ways to present a positive image in the workplace.
7. Assess their personal images and identify specific steps towards enhancing their images.



Image Overview

The First Seven Seconds



DIRECT the class to the section titled “Image Overview” in their guide.

STATE that research shows that we start to make up our minds about other people within seven seconds of first meeting them. Much of this is unspoken, but we are communicating with our eyes, faces, bodies, and attitudes.

EXPLAIN that we’re signaling to other people our true feelings and attitudes whether we realize it or not.

TELL participants to think about some of the most memorable meetings they’ve had with other people. It may have been an introduction to a friend or a future spouse. It may have been a job interview. Whatever it was, try to remember the first seven seconds.

ASK:

“What happened during the first seven seconds of your meeting?”

“What did you think and feel about the other person?”

“Were you ever proven wrong about your first impression after you got to know that person?”

TELL participants to think about themselves.

ASK:

“What sort of impression do you believe you make on others in the first seven seconds?”

“How aware are you of all the signals you send to others as you come face-to-face, or even when you speak to others over the telephone?”

“How much control do you feel you have in making a positive first impression?”



EXPLAIN that it's important to focus on these questions because they help define who you are and how others perceive you.

SAY it is important to be aware of your image and what it says about you. You also need to make sure your image is a door opener rather than a door closer. Fair or not, people often judge us by our appearance.

Why a Positive Image?



DIRECT participants to the section titled "Why a Positive Image" in their guide.

ASK: "Do you think there is a difference between the way we see ourselves and the way others see us?"

STATE that we know our motivations, our skills and our personalities. But, those who don't know us or have these insights see only the "package" we present and the message it sends.

ASK: "What does image mean?"



LIST participants' responses on a flip chart and compare their answers to the definition of image.

What Does Image Mean?

STATE the dictionary definition of image is a **mental picture or concept**.

Image Definition:

Mental picture or concept.



INSTRUCT participants to write the definition in their guide.



EXPLAIN that an image is a mental picture or what someone thinks about us. A concept is what someone might believe after seeing us.

ASK: “What kind of image comes to your mind when I say the name, Michael Jordan?”

Anticipated responses:

Athlete

Risk-taker

Well spoken

Champion

Professional

ASK: “Do you think it’s important to have a positive image?”

DISCUSS participants’ responses.



DISPLAY the slide “A Positive Image” and compare their responses to those on the flip chart.

EXPLAIN that a positive image is important because:

- It encourages others to respond positively to us.
- It can help open doors of opportunity.
- It makes us feel good about ourselves and boosts our level of confidence.

ASK the following questions and try to elicit responses.

“How would you describe your current image?”

“What message does your image send to people you meet?”

“What type of image do you want or need to have to achieve your personal and career goals?”



Elements of a Positive Image

Introduction



DISPLAY the “Elements of a Positive Image” slide.



DIRECT participants to the “Elements of a Positive Image” section in their guide.

EXPLAIN that there are three elements of a positive image:

- Attitude
- Communication style
- Personal appearance



Attitude



Communication Style



Personal Appearance

Elements of a Positive Image



ASK: “What things about a person help form a positive image?”



LIST participants’ responses on a flip chart. Divide the responses into three categories: Attitude; Communication Style; Appearance.

What Things Form a Positive Image?		
Attitude	Communication Style	Appearance

Anticipated responses:

<i>Attitude</i>	<i>Communication Style</i>	<i>Appearance</i>
<i>Positive</i>	<i>Correct grammar</i>	<i>Good posture</i>
<i>Caring</i>	<i>Articulate speech</i>	<i>Neatly dressed</i>
<i>Sympathetic</i>	<i>Good listener</i>	<i>Stylish clothing</i>
<i>Mannered</i>	<i>Eye contact</i>	<i>Shoes polished</i>
<i>Confident</i>	<i>Body language</i>	<i>Good hair cut/style</i>
<i>Energetic</i>	<i>Facial expressions</i>	<i>Well-groomed</i>
<i>Humor</i>		

NOTE: Discuss the importance of each element in greater detail.



Attitude



DIRECT the class to the “Attitude” section of their guide.

EXPLAIN that you send out messages or “clues” which let others know how you feel about them and yourself. For example, standing or sitting up straight tells others you are alert and confident.

STATE that manners, gestures, and common courtesy can also be image builders. Saying “please” and “thank you,” extending your hand and giving a firm hand shake all send positive messages to those we meet and usually cause people to respond positively to us.

EMPHASIZE that direct eye contact is interpreted as a gesture of confidence and self-assurance. Make eye contact at least 80% of the time. It is one of the most powerful nonverbal tools in business.

STATE that if you want others to know that you are confident and friendly, make the first move to introduce yourself to people.

NOTE: Ask for a volunteer to come to the front of the class. Demonstrate a positive approach to shaking hands and greeting someone.

EXPLAIN that if you see someone coming to talk to you, greet him as he approaches. Always say your name if you haven’t seen him for a long time, or you are not sure if the person remembers who you are. People forget names all the time. Don’t assume people know who you are. They may know your face, but can’t remember your name. It can be embarrassing when someone doesn’t remember your name, so help them out.

EXPLAIN that everyone has good and bad days. It’s how you handle the bad days that demonstrates what kind of attitude you really have.

Qualities of a positive attitude are as important to you as gas and oil are to your car. If a tune-up is needed, take care of it right away.



Activity: Check Your Attitude



REFER participants to the “Check Your Attitude” activity in their guide.

NOTE: This activity is meant for the personal use of participants. As with most self-assessments, suggest that participants select a close friend or family member to also score them and compare the answers.

EXPLAIN that this is a short self-assessment quiz relating to attitude.

INSTRUCT participants to answer the questions on the quiz and score themselves from 1 to 5. For example, score yourself a “1” if you’re not good at this item or up to a “5” if you’re outstanding at this item.

1. How good are you at confronting other people when there is a problem, without attacking in a negative manner? _____
2. Do you accept responsibility when something goes wrong, without passing the buck or blaming others? _____
3. Are you an active self-starter every day, not passively sitting back and waiting for direction from others. _____
4. How good are you at resisting the temptation to gossip, spread rumors, or create problems among your co-workers? _____
5. How well do you communicate with your fellow employees, both in giving and in receiving information? _____
6. Are you a team player, helping others, pitching in, and supporting your fellow employees? _____
7. Are you a person who is generally enthusiastic and cheering others up, rather than dragging them down? _____
8. Do you accept criticism gracefully—neither over reacting or under reacting, but using the information to improve? _____

Total Score _____



EXPLAIN the attitude rating scale.

Attitude Rating:

36 – 40	=	Excellent Attitude
25 – 35	=	Good Attitude (with room for improvement)
18 – 24	=	Poor Attitude (start improving)
17 – 0	=	Bad Attitude (fix immediately)

STATE that few people consistently score 40. Everyone has good days and bad days, it's how you handle the bad days that demonstrates what kind of attitude you really have.



Communication Style



DIRECT participants to the section titled, “Communication Style” in the Participant Guide.

ASK: “How important is communication on the job?” And encourage them to respond.

STATE that the way we speak also sends an image message. Speaking in a clear voice that is easy to understand conveys confidence. Paying attention to grammar and pronunciation presents an intelligent image.

Listening

EXPLAIN that listening intently to the other person also creates a positive image. Use body language and gestures to let the other person know that you are listening. Eye contact lets the other person know we are listening and paying attention. Looking a person in the eye signals trustworthiness.

STATE that you should verbally let the person know that you understood what he or she is saying. Use phrases such as, “Yes,” “I agree,” “I understand,” or “I see.”

CONTINUE by saying you should paraphrase what the person has said to you and repeat it back. Two phrases that make this very easy are “If I understand you correctly...” and “What I hear you saying is...”



Activity: How Much Do You Listen?



REFER the class to the “How Much Do You Listen” activity in their guide.

ASK: “Do you talk more than you listen?”

INSTRUCT participants to rate their own talking / listening ratio. Check the line of the ratio best representing the percentage of time you generally talk and listen.

Talk.....	Listen
10 %.....	90 % ____
20 %.....	80 % ____
30 %.....	70 % ____
40 %.....	60 % ____
50 %.....	50 % ____
60 %.....	40 % ____
70 %.....	30 % ____
80 %.....	20 % ____
90 %.....	10 % ____

NOTE: When they have completed the exercise, encourage them to ask one family member and one friend to score them. Compare your self-assessment with the way others rated you.

EXPLAIN that they should strive to listen 60 to 70 percent of the time, and talk 30 to 40 percent of the time.



Personal Appearance



DIRECT participants to “Personal Appearance” in their guide.

STATE that a clean, neat appearance gets a positive response from people. It’s important to have clean hair and fingernails. When you reach to shake someone’s hand, your hands should be clean and your fingernails manicured. Your hair should be cut neatly and styled to complement your facial features.

STRESS that whether you are wearing a suit or a uniform, it should fit, not be too loose or too tight. Also, it should be clean and pressed.

EMPHASIZE that when shopping for business attire, you should select colors and styles that are most suitable for your body type.

Image Busters



REFER the group to “Image Busters” in their guide.

STATE that we’ve defined image and talked about the elements that make up a positive image. Now, let’s talk about the things that give a person a negative image. These are called Image Busters.

ASK: “What things creates a negative image?”



LIST participants’ responses on a flip chart labeled “Image Busters.”

Image Busters



Negative Attitude

STATE that a negative attitude is an image buster. Pessimistic people bring you down. The pessimist always sees the difficulty in every opportunity. If someone asks you how you are feeling and you actually tell them that things are terrible, people are not going to want to be around you.

EMPHASIZE that if you've been around people who always tell you how the world's been treating them badly, or how their bosses treat them unfairly, you want to get away from them as quickly as possible.

EXPLAIN that behavior clues that send the message you have a negative attitude include:

- Frowning or scowling
- Rolling eyes
- Slouching
- Not paying attention
- Poor speech habits
- Gum-chewing
- Poor manners

Poor Communication Style

Bad Listener

ASK:

“What makes a person a bad listener?”

“Have you ever been talking with someone and while he or she was saying something, you were already thinking ahead to what your next witty remark will be?”

STATE that if you have, you weren't listening to that person. Without having all the necessary information, it becomes easy to jump to conclusions or make judgments.



Buzz Words

STATE that many times communication breaks down when you carelessly speak using buzzwords and meaningless jargon.

ASK: “What is jargon?”

EXPLAIN that every profession has its terminology, acronyms, and jargon. When everyone understands the terms, it provides a quick and efficient shorthand. When someone doesn’t understand the terms, it creates miscommunication and misunderstandings.

EMPHASIZE that no one will be impressed if you throw around buzzwords or technical jargon especially if they don’t understand what you are saying.

Sloppy Personal Appearance

Grooming

EMPHASIZE that dirty hair and fingernails are definite image busters. If your hair is dirty, or has obvious flakes of dandruff, or if you have dirt under your fingernails, this sends a message that you don’t care about your appearance or your personal cleanliness.

EXPLAIN that if you wear cologne or perfume, it should not be overpowering. While you don’t want to overpower anyone with perfume or cologne, you also want to ensure your body is clean and doesn’t have a bad odor. A scent is a personal thing, and it should stay personal.

STATE that, in fact, unless someone is very close to you, they shouldn’t be able to tell you are wearing it. Many people are sensitive or allergic to perfumes and colognes. If you work in close quarters with a number of people, its probably not a good idea to wear perfume or cologne.



Clothing

STATE that spots on your clothes or wrinkles make you look like you don't care about your appearance. You don't want your clothes to look like you slept in them and just rolled out of bed. Also, you don't want anyone to be able to tell what you have eaten by a spot on your clothing.

Accessories

EXPLAIN that large, gaudy accessories and too much makeup are image busters. Well-chosen accessories and a moderate amount of makeup can enhance your appearance. However, you can have too much of a good thing.



Professional Appearance

Positive Image For the Job Search



DIRECT participants to the “Professional Appearance” section of their guide.

STATE that employers report that the single most important factor to the success of an employment interview is the first impression you make with the interviewer.

EMPHASIZE that presenting a positive image during a job interview can make the difference between landing a job and losing a job.

NOTE: Tell participants that Interview Skills will be covered in greater detail in another course.

Positive Image at Work

EXPLAIN that after you get a job, your image can impact the way people perceive you. It can be the difference between your boss seeing you as a capable professional employee or as someone who just shows up to collect a pay check. A positive image can make a difference in who is selected for promotions and other opportunities.

STATE that for the vast majority of positions, it’s understood that a coat and tie, for men and or a suit, for women, is appropriate interview attire. Regardless of your field of work, show that you have taken the time to look nice and take the interview seriously. Remember first impressions count.

EXPLAIN that certain dress is accepted in different organizations and in different parts of the country. The book, Professional Presence, lists three rules about professional appearance:

1. If you want the job, you have to look the part.
2. If you want a promotion, you have to look “promotable.”
3. If you want respect, you have to dress as well or better than the industry standard.



EMPHASIZE that your professional appearance matters. To some, this may be obvious, but you would be surprised how many people arrive for job interviews or greet customers dressed like a bicycle courier.

What is the Company Image?

EXPLAIN that, like people, companies also have an image they project. In fact, companies pay millions of dollars to market their corporate image. Consider the following companies and the image they project:

Reebok:	Hip; outrageous; energetic.
McDonald's:	Inexpensive; fast; clean; family oriented.
Apple:	Innovative; smart; playful.
BMW:	Performance; engineering; quality

ASK: “Do you think the dress code at BMW would be the same as Reebok?”

ASK participants to find out how people dress around the manufacturing facility. Do they wear uniforms? Can you dress down most days and dress up if you meet with customers?

EMPHASIZE that it is important to project a positive image in all situations, but nowhere is it as important as when you are looking for a job. After you get a job, a positive image is also very important to maintain.



Impressions Count and So Do You!

STATE that we're going to look at a videotape that focuses on the value of a positive image on the job. Afterwards, we'll discuss the suggestions presented and how you can apply them.

SHOW the videotape "Impressions Count and So Do You!"

ASK the following questions to initiate a brief discussion regarding the main points of the video:

1. Is a positive, professional image important only to executives?
2. Why is it important to project a positive image?
3. Whose responsibility is it to project a positive image?
4. What suggestion was given in the video regarding purchasing clothing on a limited budget?
5. Which wardrobe tips are most useful for you?
6. Where are good places to buy clothes for work?
7. What do you think about the information on skirt lengths, is it applicable to today's acceptable fashions?
8. Besides clothing, what other areas of your appearance are important to monitor?
9. Are there any tips of your own that you would add?



Activity: Personal Inventory



DIRECT the class to the “Personal Inventory” activity in their guide.

NOTE: Allow participants 20 minutes to complete the Personal Inventory exercise in the Participant Guide. Encourage participants to share their plans with the group. If they are uncomfortable, you may want to begin the discussion by describing an image improvement you made in the past or plan to make in the future in order to meet a personal goal.

REMINDE participants to review some of the previous topics and exercises to identify some aspects of their professional image that they may want to improve.

INTRODUCE parts I, II, & III of the exercise.

Part I

INSTRUCT participants to list the personal assets that help them communicate their image message. Consider physical appearance, energy, rate of speech, pitch tone, animation gestures, expressiveness of eyes, and ability to hold the interest of people who listen to them. Perhaps they can add other qualities. These assets make up “you.”

List five of your best personal image assets.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



INSTRUCT the group to now, identify the areas of their personal image that they would like to improve. What areas of personal image do they feel less confident about? List five key qualities that they want to project as a part of their personal image.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Part II

EXPLAIN that now that they have determined the image they want to project, consider how they can build and project this image. For example, dress, language, voice, posture, body language, etc. Tell them to indicate below how they will project each of the five main qualities listed above.

Quality #1: _____

How you will project it: _____

Quality #2: _____

How you will project it: _____



Quality #3: _____

How you will project it: _____

Quality #4: _____

How you will project it: _____

Quality #5: _____

How you will project it: _____



Part III

STATE that after reviewing their answers from part II, enter the skills they want to learn in the space provided. Next, check the ways they will go about learning these skills.



DEMONSTRATE using the slide “Learning Resource Chart.”

List of Skills		Grammar				
Ways To Learn	Sample	Skill #1	Skill #2	Skill #3	Skill #4	Skill #5
Classes	X					
Seminars						
Home Study Courses	X					
Direct Observation						
Mentors						
Internships						
Volunteer Work						
Books	X					
Audio and/or Video Tapes						
Movies						
Magazines						
Newspaper Articles						
Role Models						
Others:						

Learning Resource Chart



Summary

The Importance of a Positive Image



REFER the class to the “Summary” in their guide.

REVIEW the steps to building a positive image and ways to eliminate those unwanted “image busters.”

STATE that the purpose of this course is to understand the importance of your image and how it affects your life and to offer steps to achieve the goal of “Being the Best that You Can Be.”

EMPHASIZE that we need to always be aware of the image we present because the way we look, speak and act, sends image messages to others.

REMIND participants that a positive image has physical elements such as appearance, dress, cleanliness and mental elements such as attitude. Clues to mental attitudes include posture, speech, manners, facial expressions and gestures.

STATE that a positive image is important because:

- It encourages others to respond positively to us.
- It can help open doors of opportunity.
- It makes us feel good about ourselves and boosts our level of confidence.



Four Steps to a Positive Image



DISPLAY the “Four Steps to a Positive Image” slide.

SUMMARIZE steps to building a positive image using the slide “Four Steps to a Positive Image.”

STATE that there are four steps to building a positive image.

Assess Your Current Image

EXPLAIN that if you want to change your image or build on your assets you must first examine your current image.

Determine the Kind of Image You Want to Project

STATE that next, you should define what kind of image you want to convey to your co-workers, supervisor, and customers.

Identify Personal Image Builders and Image Busters

EXPLAIN that the next step is to identify the positive qualities you already possess — those things that contribute to your image goals. Also, you want to identify your image busters — things that may be hindering you from reaching your personal and career goals.



Identify Steps to Achieve Image Goals

STATE that the final step is to determine what you must do in order to achieve a positive image.

EXPLAIN that you need to develop an action plan to achieve your image goals. This action plan should be a combination of specific steps toward achieving the desired result with target dates to accomplish each step in your plan. For example, an immediate step might be to get a new hair cut. In your action plan, set a date to achieve this step. An example of a long range plan might be to learn a new skill. In your action plan, you should include steps to find out where you can learn the skill, and set target dates to begin classes.

EMPHASIZE that the Personal Inventory exercise you just completed is an excellent start towards enhancing your professional image.

You Are the Message

ASK: “What exactly does ‘You are the message’ mean?”

EXPLAIN that it means that when you communicate with someone, it’s not just the words you choose to send to the other person that make up your message. You’re also sending image messages about the kind of person you are—by your eyes, your facial expression, your appearance, your body movement, your vocal pitch, tone, volume, and many other factors.

STATE that everything you do in relation to other people causes them to make judgments about you. The total you affects how others feel about you and respond to you.

EMPHASIZE that if you are uncomfortable with who you are, it will make others uncomfortable, too. But, if you can identify and use your good qualities as a person, others will respond positively to you.



ADMINISTER the Positive Image Assessment.



HAND OUT copies of the Assessment to the participants. It is the responsibility of the Instructor to make a sufficient amount of copies of the quiz.

DIRECT participants to complete the Assessment. After everyone has completed the quiz, review the answers. Answers are provided in italics.

THANK the group for their participation, and dismiss the class.