

## Head and Shoulders Above the Rest<sup>7</sup>

You may have heard the saying: ***You never have a second chance to make a first impression.***

Nothing is more important when seeking employment than the impression that you make. Couple that with the known fact that anyone who meets you forms an opinion of you in the **first seven seconds**. This applies to the resume you submit, the application you fill out, the casual meeting outside of a job interview - the list goes on and on.

To make the best impression on a potential employer, pay attention to these **seven** areas:

### 1. **The Written Word**

Your written correspondence may be the only chance that you have to make a first impression. Your email, resume and letters are a direct reflection of your abilities and who you are. Be sure that everything you submit is concise, professional and free of spelling and grammatical error.

### 2. **Employment Application**

When asked to complete an application, be sure to fill in all of the requested information and that someone is able to read your handwriting. Include accurate contact information – if your telephone number and/or address are not correct, you can expect to never hear from a potential employer.

### 3. **Body Language**

It is not always about what you say but how you say it. Always smile, use body language that is open and maintain eye contact.

### 4. **Dress for Success**

You never know when you will meet someone who could be your next employer or someone who can help you find your next job. Always be aware of what you look like and how you are dressed. For your interview be sure to dress appropriately and make sure that the clothes you wear clean, pressed and “free of fray.”

### 5. **Timeliness**

ALWAYS be on time for your interview, allowing enough time for traffic and weather issues. Return telephone messages and/or emails promptly – you can be sure that everyone else applying for the same job will be doing all of these things.

### 6. **The Telephone**

Your outgoing voicemail message should be appropriate for people calling you about a potential job. Unless you are applying for a job in the music or comedy field, save background noise until after you have secured employment. When leaving a message, be sure to leave your name and contact phone number at the end of the message. This will avoid someone from having to rewind the entire message to get your name and number if they missed it up front.

### 7. **Protect your Reputation**

What happens outside of work doesn't always stay outside of work. Speak well of your last employer and be aware of your actions at all times. Be mindful of what you have posted on a blog, MySpace or Facebook page; you never know who will be looking at your comments and photos. Networking is a wonderful way to find your next employer – think about what people will say about you when someone they know asks what kind of person you really are.

Any time you interact with anyone, you create a Moment of Truth for that person. Make the most of every interaction to form an impression that is **Head and Shoulders<sup>7</sup>** above the rest.