



INTRODUCTION

Most of us spend a good one-fifth of our lives preparing for the day we can be financially independent and carve a career to make us wealthy, famous or powerful. We remember our parents nagging us to study hard so that we can get a good job and support ourselves. Some of us would grudgingly do our homework, and some would find the lamest excuse not to do so, while yet others (lucky souls!) could amazingly score distinctions with their eyes closed.

Whether we end up a scholar, a dropout, or just an average student, our desire is the same — we want a successful career to be financially independent. While we may end up in different occupations because of our different academic inclinations, there is one driving force that determines our success. It is not taught in schools or the university, and you need not be a genius to obtain it. Neither do you need to be rich or good-looking for that matter.

I believe this driving force is your professional image. Your professional image is projected through the way you look, sound and behave at work. It determines how you will influence the way potential employers or customers perceive your best qualities, and their decision to hire you or buy from you. Whatever your qualifications and experience, your image will make a big difference in whether you get your foot in the door first, and are top of the list of preferred choice when the next promotion is due.

This book will show you how to let your image work for you. Whether you are just entering the workforce or looking for a new career direction, you will find it useful for developing a strong professional image for your future success.

I believe you are born beautiful, and I will show you how to bring out that beauty in your professional image. Your professional image is not just your appearance, but also the way you communicate. I will also demonstrate how your image is reflected in your personality, and how it impacts your behaviour at work.

I've included some stories and lessons that I feel will benefit you. I think you will enjoy them if you treat them as part of the overall journey. Take your time to chart your roadmap, practise the tips and guidelines, and use the tools and techniques. Take notes along the way, and mark the spots you may like to revisit. Stop to ponder and review your progress at the end of each chapter. Take a short-cut to the next chapters if the urge is there. However, if you feel the need to take a break from the book, you could be facing a roadblock, and if that happens, go to the last chapter where you will find some ideas to bring you back on track!

Have a safe and pleasant journey, and I wish you success in finding your pot of gold at the end of the book.

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