



## Inspire confidence and trust: Image makes the difference

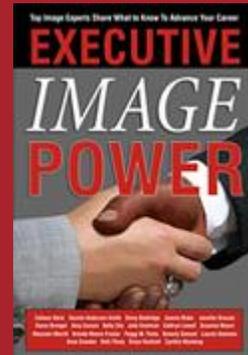
### Meeting and Greeting with Finesse

At business functions and networking events, you want to make people feel comfortable being around you--just like you're meeting them in your own home. But suddenly you're confronted with an unexpected meet and greet situation. Now what do you do?

- Oh, oh. The person is an adversary, perhaps a competitor--well, make the first move, extend your hand, make eye contact and smile nicely. Your demonstration of confidence will make this greeting less painful for both parties.
- They don't extend their hand. Okay, it's up to you to make the first move. Extend your hand, smile, make eye contact, then wait a moment. This gives them a chance to explain. It may be for religious reasons or perhaps they have a cold.
- They go to "hug you." Don't panic and most of all, don't lean forward--you might butt heads. Instead, extend your head, stand straight, even lean back slightly. This usually sends a strong signal that today's greeting doesn't include hugging.
- The person's in a wheelchair or scooter--wait until their hands are free, smile, make eye contact and extend your hand. If you are going to spend some time with them, get a chair and sit beside them so you're at eye level.
- You can't remember their name. Take this as an opportunity to prove that the rest of your brain is working fine. Just walk up to them, say "hello, we've met before, I'm John." People will usually say their name back. Or, just tell them you can't remember. It happens to us all (and at all ages).
- You're pretty sure you're getting sick. Admit your germs. Explain that you're feeling under the weather. People will appreciate your honesty.
- English is not their first language. Make them feel comfortable with your body language--eye contact and smile. Say your name clearly and slowly. Ask for a business card, look at their name and learn the correct pronunciation.

Knowing how to meet and greet with ease is a first step in establishing that you're a professional, serious about building good business relationships. Go ahead, meet and greet with finesse.

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