

Maximising the First Impression

By *Nikki Heald*
Managing Director
www.corptraining.com.au

**we never
 get a
 second
 chance to
 create a
 great first
 impression**

Many thanks to the ABSA committee for recently providing me with the opportunity to present a business etiquette workshop at the ABSA conference. It is my understanding that the conference was a huge success and it certainly was a pleasure to meet many of the dedicated boarding staff. Based on positive feedback following the workshop, I decided that I would share more with you about "Polishing The Diamond".

There is no doubt that presently, effective presentation, protocols and communication are making a comeback in the business world with corporate companies investing in staff training to address these very needs. Indeed, research has demonstrated that proficiency in soft skills has a high impact on staff morale and client satisfaction. Further, it has also become apparent that many schools are interested in providing their students with the opportunity to learn these important life skills. Having trained a number of organisations in the art of "standing out from the crowd", we have recently had the good fortune to present workshops to prospective school leavers focusing on appropriate presentation and protocol for an interview environment. Fine tuning such skills and increasing personal confidence, enhances the prospect of attaining employment. Business representatives have provided feedback that indicates a number of job applicants and school leavers are seriously lacking these basic soft skills.

Importantly, we never get a second chance to create a great first impression and in a business environment, perception is a powerful persuader. Human beings respond to the visual and those first impressions are created in an instant. Perceptions formed will include assumptions about moral character, educational levels, professional status and likeability factor. Attention to detail and appropriately reflecting your role, ensures that organisational values are supported. For an individual to be perceived as credible, technical knowledge must be "backed up" with appropriate presentation, communication and protocols. Quite often though, these soft skills are over-looked or ignored, despite their importance.

At a time when competitors can offer similar skills, knowledge and experience what will be your point of difference? In the professional arena, implementing a combination of small,

rapport building techniques guarantees recognition and reward. Simple tools such as a correct introduction, a firm handshake, the art of small talk and appropriate presentation builds on your personal visibility. Learn to support technical skills with exceptional soft skills such as appropriate speech, body language and business etiquette. Being able to identify and offer a point of difference builds on your confidence, credibility and capability.

If you are interested in a team workshop or individual coaching, don't wait until next week to address your personal branding and image - do it today! Learn how to dress for success, implement correct protocols and project an image that instills confidence and control. A customised, enjoyable session can be developed to meet team needs. Alternatively, you may be interested in our successful "Prepare For Tomorrow" program for Years 10, 11 and 12 students. Call Corptraining now or visit our website for more information – www.corptraining.com.au



Nikki Heald is the Managing Director of **Corptraining** which was established to provide dynamic and modern training solutions appropriate to the business needs of today. Her programs focus on maximising professional and personal visibility via consistency in presentation, protocol and communication techniques.

Nikki has been described as a dynamic trainer and entertaining speaker whose interactive approach motivates participants to implement valuable changes to their professional image and mindset.

Clients include professional service and finance industries, leading insurers, hospitality, government departments, schools and a diverse range of small businesses. Sessions are customised to meet specific objectives.

In conjunction with her formal training qualifications, Nikki's expertise has come from a background in corporate and professional service environments.

