The Affects of Colour and How To Use it to Your Advantage in Meetings, Presentations and to Gain that Extra Competitive Edge

It had been long known that colour affects us in many ways. We are affected both physically and psychologically by colour which assists in determining our mood, feelings towards others and the reaction others have towards us. Colour can be used to your advantage in many situations and by gaining a little insight on what certain colours communicate, it can help you create the message and influence you desire to portray.

The following tips on communication through the use of colour have been put together to assist you in your personal presentation in various situations. F3 – Fast Forward Futures Pte Ltd, together with Expressing You are here to assist you in achieving the polished, professional and high standards of your personal presentation.

**Colours for Interacting with Women (Colours women respond well to)**

- **Red earthy tones**  
  Women warm up to the color quickly
- **Bright orange**  
  Vibrant and energetic, inspires a bond
- **Violet or deep purple**  
  Theatrical, mystical, dramatic  
  Shows warm bloodedness
- **White**  
  Neutral, calming and indicates you are trustworthy
- **Blue green, emerald, jade**  
  Stimulates feelings of serenity, calms the heart
- **Light shades of green**  
  Inspires kindness and compassion
- **Pale or warm pink**  
  Creates comfort and puts at ease
- **Deep reds**  
  Signifies bravery and shows courageousness
- **Turquoise or light aqua**  
  Elicits positive responses, puts women at ease to open up

**Colours for Interacting with Men (Colours men respond well to)**

- **Warm yellows**  
  Holds attention and promotes alertness  
  A sign something new is coming
- **Warm reds**  
  Keeps conversation following and ongoing
- **Chilli red**  
  Shows confidence and self-assurance
- **Burgundy**  
  Reflects class and sophistication
Medium tone blues  Puts others at ease and assists in smooth interactions
Sky or bonnie blue  Gives a calming effect
Navy and midnight blues  Signals you want to be taken seriously, inspires listening
Garnet red  Shows intelligence and femininity
Plum  Suggests strength and creativity

**Colours for Brainstorming or Creative Endeavors**

Medium tone pinks  Inspires creativity and originality
Lavender or violet  Adds spirituality and mysticism
Tan, camel  Elicits information and keeps conversation flowing
Purple  Rouses the senses and generates passion
Aubergine  Suggests tranquility and passion at the same time
Accents of red and yellow  For stimulation, motivation and inspiration

Extra Tip: If making a creative pitch in advertising, design, marketing or other creative means, blue and creativity are not felt to by synonymous

**Colours for Business Meetings or Luncheons (with colleagues or clients)**

Black  Power and authority
Navy blue  Trustworthiness
Royal blue  Sends out signals of goodwill and kindness
Deep grey  Bespeaks success and strength
Camel  Appears non-threatening, stable, supportive and reliable
Terracotta or brick  Projects warmth and sensuality

**Colours to Wear when Promoting or Selling a Product/Service**

Blue  To inspire trust – this is the best colour for sales
Orange accents  Friendly as it appeals to all
Yellow  Cheerful, stimulating and motivating
Deep pinks  Calms and inspires others
Extra Tip: If you are working in the medical or dental supplies industry, white is the best colour to wear as it projects impeccable standards of care and hygiene

**Colours Not to Wear when Promoting or Selling a Product/Service**

- Brown of any sort: Narrow-minded and untrustworthy
- Black and yellow Combinations: Signals danger, risk and stay away
- Red suits (for women): Signals that you are not a team player
- Violet or purple: When selling insurance as it does not project security
- Light to medium greys: Does inspire things to happen and will hold you back

Extra Tips: If you are negotiating, the worst colour you can wear is white alone. It stifles decision making and does not promote action

**Colours to Wear when Public Speaking**

- Red: Generates excitement and people take notice
- Scarlet accents: Draws attention and elicits compassion
- Black: Powerful, dynamic and strong
- Blue, tomato based reds: Generates excitement and holds attention
- Yellow: Holds attention
- Deep or vibrant pinks: Indicates zeal and passion for your topic
- Navy to medium blues: Shows goodwill, trustworthiness and introspection
- Blue greens: Colour people like and respond favorably

**Colour Tips for in Front of a Camera or being Projected onto a Large Screen**

Things to do:

- Wear simple outfits in solid colours
- Monochromatic blends (colours of similar intensity)
- Small to medium sized accessories
- For women – matte gold or matte gold and pearl accessory combinations
- Wear medium tone blues and this is the most media-friendly colour
- Wear colours that are not too light, bright, dark or distracting
- Keep your hairstyle tidy and away from your face
- For women – if you have long hair, tie it back to keep it from falling forward with head movement while speaking
Things not to do:

- Never wear anything red which tends to ‘bleed’ (the edges run or look fuzzy) on camera
- Avoid sharp or high contrast between the colours you wear, e.g. black and white or bold prints
- Avoid prints such as thin stripes, herringbones and plaids and they can appear to dance or move around the screen
- If you wear glasses, try put in contact lenses as eyeglasses create a barrier between you and viewer. If this is not possible, invest in a pair with non-reflective lenses
- Never wear tinted glasses
- If you colour your hair, be sure to have your roots re-tinted a few days prior. Dark roots are more noticeable under bright lights and look unprofessional
- Do not wear overly shiny accessories which can cause problems with reflections
- For women – do not wear dangling earrings or anything that jingles causing noise
- For women – You need to wear make-up as studio lighting is very harsh on the skin and accentuates imperfections
  - Wear a thick foundation and choose a colour to match your skin tone or darker
  - Use concealer to balance any dark areas especially around the eyes
  - Use peach based eye shadows and grey contours. Avoid dark browns shades and black eyeliner as these tend to make you appear bruised
  - Use blush to appear to have colour in your cheeks
  - Use a matte powder heavily. Avoid shiny powders as they will tend to make you appear sweaty
  - Choose natural shades of lipsticks and avoid bright reds, pinks, dark browns and burgundies
  - Wear mascara to open up the eyes in either black or brown. Do not wear any other colours as they look immature

This information is courteous of Jo Clary, Leading Image Consultant of F3 – Fast Forward Futures Pte Ltd, a Singapore based Image and Presentation Consultancy.

With over a decade of experience in the fashion and communication training industries in Asia, we offer services for men, women and corporations on how to project the correct image to enhance both personal and corporate objectives.

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