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Image Consulting

All You need to Know about Image Consultations and Working with an Image Consultant

By May Mok

You have 15 seconds to make a first impression

Never underestimate the power of appearances - a staggering fifteen seconds is all it takes to form a first impression. Those vital first few seconds can make or break your chances of success. Your appearance and behaviour speaks volumes of who you are. Thus, it's essential that you create the right impressions for yourself and the company you represent. We call it 'personal branding' and you need to be clear about your personal brand values, in order to communicate these to those you are meeting.

In today's highly competitive world, managing our image does matter and will enable you stand out from the crowd. Like it or not, we are being judged everyday during social and business occasions. At M2 Image Consulting, we help people build an effective personal image in social or work situations, through one on one coaching and custom corporate workshops. Our objective is to equip individuals with the skills to dress confidently, appropriately and apply the right social/business etiquette in everyday situations. This will strengthen your impact when dealing with people. Managing your image is a communication skill which will bring both personal and career success.

Learning how to convey the right image can make a difference to your personal and career success

May Mok is a certified image consultant and Director of M2 Image Consulting. She received training in colour analysis, women's and men's style, professional grooming, business/social etiquette with First Impressions, UK, a leading Image Consultancy based in Milton Keynes, England. May's background is unique in that she has a combination of image skills and commercial experience. Her experience includes Human Resources management, consulting and business development. She has worked with many companies in Asia directing them on HR management issues, particularly in assessment and executive development programs. May is a native of Vancouver, Canada and has spent many years working in Hong Kong. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of British Columbia. She is a certified corporate coach, accredited in MBTI and trained in application of SHL aptitude tests and personality questionnaires. She is now based in Shanghai, China.



What it takes to be a well dressed man or woman. Wear clothes that:

1. Complement your natural colouring (skin tone, hair and eye colour)
2. Balance your physical characteristics (build, scale and proportions)
3. Match your personality
4. Match the occasion (business or social) and environment
5. Stay up to date

Special note on black suits:

Black suits project authority and mean serious business. Black is sophisticated and is also elongating on any body type.

Returning to Work? Promotion? Important Meeting? Presentation? Bored of your current look?

There are many life, career changes and signals at work, which cause us to stop and take stock. By learning how to make the most of our appearance, we gain life long skills to enable us to look and feel our best. If you look good, you'll feel confident – and success is all about confidence, in both personal and professional situations.

An image consultation is all about YOU

Your personal image consultation is a bespoke experience. It offers you the opportunity to reflect on your personal image and focus on areas where change and improvement is desired. You are unique, so an image consultant will not only take into account your physical characteristics, but also your lifestyle, personality, budget, working environment and job role. By taking time to fully understand your individual style and preferences, a consultant will teach you techniques to stand out from the crowd!

A private consultation would give you the opportunity to explore every aspect of your personal appearance. It's important you choose someone with whom you have a good rapport and feel happy talking to, as the most effective consultations arise from an open exchange of information. You can decide what topics are of most interest to you but here are some examples of the image topics where a consultant can advise:

- Choosing and using colour – the shades that work for you
- Style, scale and proportion – so your clothes fit you and your lifestyle
- Perfect grooming every time – and those all-important finishing touches
- Wardrobe management – create a wearable wardrobe
- Make-up lessons and advice – professional techniques for a natural look
- Effective shopping – for better buying decisions
- Mastering social and business etiquette
- How to dine gracefully as a host or guest at social or business functions

Colour

Colour contributes strongly to the impression you form of an individual, or that others form of you. The colours you, and others, choose to wear will speak volumes about you – your ability to decide what's appropriate; your creativity; your sense of style and ability to co-ordinate; your sense of what's right for each situation.

A trained image consultant will recognise the characteristics that make up your own colour pattern and help you apply them to your clothing choices. By being aware of this you can achieve the right balance with your colouring so that attention is drawn to you and not your clothes. Whilst some

colours will overwhelm you, you'll overpower others, and the key is to find colours that work with your colouring to flatter and enhance – ensuring you look your healthiest best.

Style and Proportion

However fashionable something is, if it just isn't you, you probably won't wear it very much. Working with an image consultant on style and proportion will provide you with an understanding of what suits you, making for much easier clothes shopping.

An image consultant will also be able to help you get the finishing touches right for your outfit. When adding accessories, they can advise on the right ones for your colour pattern and those appropriate for your stature. For example, it is important to match your bag to suit your body proportions. If you are petite and your bag or briefcase is too big, it will make you look smaller. Similarly, a small bag on a large frame could make you appear larger than you actually are.

Make-up

Colours that aren't flattering, styles that don't suit or clothes that don't fit will all get you noticed for the wrong reasons as will poor grooming and ill-judged make-up. People often apply too much or too little so it's well worth learning how to use make-up effectively to achieve a polished professional look. Many women have given up wearing make-up simply because they don't know how to get it to look both natural and professional. You'll find that most image consultants have been professionally trained in make-up application, so they will be able to create a natural look for you that complements your natural colouring and individual personality and style.

Advice for life

The ability to manage our image is a positive communication skill and something we can easily learn, for both personal and career success. You'll receive sound practical advice with an achievable action plan that will give you tangible results and life long skills. You'll benefit visually and emotionally through increased confidence, improved communication skills and greater personal effectiveness. At the end of a consultation, you are given a Total Image Profile, a comprehensive record of your consultation and provides a permanent source of reference, as does your colour swatch. You'll have a reference point for effective wardrobe planning and for choosing clothes that flatter you and fit your lifestyle. A consultant can then offer ongoing advice to help you cope with career or lifestyle changes or interpret current fashion trends by selecting those that will work best for you. By learning what works and why, you will save money on expensive clothing mistakes that might otherwise have hung unworn in the wardrobe. A sound investment!

Your appearance and behaviour speak volumes about who you are. Knowing how to convey the right image can make all the difference to your personal and career success. Whether you want to fit in or stand out from the crowd, boost your confidence or maximise your career prospects, professional objective advice really helps.

Contact us if you would like to know more about our custom group image training programs or one to one coaching. M2 Image Consulting provides total image solutions to clients and where needed, draws expertise from professional make-up artists, hair stylists and communications experts to help you achieve your own unique personal branding. Telephone: (852) 92638020 in Hong Kong or (86) 13818975877 in Shanghai.

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