

IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT TACTICS USED BY WOMEN AND MEN IN THE WORKPLACE: ARE THEY REALLY DIFFERENT?

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Abstract

In business and popular culture in recent years there has been a focus on physical appearance, image development, personal branding, leadership and communication styles with an emphasis on people becoming brands in themselves. Since 2000, corporations including entertainment corporations, political parties and managers of celebrities and athletes have recognised the importance of image and monitor how their performance is perceived by the public. Leaders engage publicists, are coached by media and communication experts and are stage managed in media performance because impressions are formed in response to what people see and hear. Judgements made are dependent on verbal and non-verbal behaviours such as body language, vocal pitch and tone, physical presentation and capability.

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the differences in use of impression management tactics of men and women and whether this has an impact on a female's career advancement.

Previous studies have found that males and females use different tactics of impression management and communicate differently. Stereotypes have been built on this. Romantic-comedy films, situation-comedies and television advertisements are developed on archetypes and stereotypes of male and female differences. With stereotypes holding great influence in society at large it is not surprising these views are observed in the workplace. This may influence how females are portrayed in the workplace.

Keywords: gender, women, impression management, business leader