



# Impression Management



Evan Frendo



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# English for the workplace

Sharing thoughts with teachers and trainers of business English and ESP



# Impression Management



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What is IM?

Classroom Activities

# Definition

“conscious or unconscious attempt to control the images that are projected in . . . social interactions”

Schlenker (1980:6)

# Definition

language

“use of ~~behaviors~~ to intentionally regulate the impressions that observers have of oneself”

Lewis and Neighbours (2005:470)

# Tactics

Did I mention I have a blog?

You are such a wonderful audience!

I got up at three o'clock to rehearse this presentation

If you don't keep quiet I'll ask you to leave the room

I am weak and limited and that is why I need compassion and sympathy

**Self-promotion**

**Ingratiation**

**Exemplification**

**Intimidation**

**Supplication**

# Tactics

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I am weak and limited and that is why I need compassion and sympathy

**Self-promotion**

Likable

Sycophant

**Ingratiation**

Competent

Conceited

**Exemplification**

Dedicated

Feels superior

**Intimidation**

Intimidating

Bossy

**Supplication**

Needy

Lazy



# Other tactics

entitlements

sandbagging

enhancement

*self-handicapping*

disclaimers

justifications

excuses

humour

apologies

*spinning*

# Classroom activities

- 1. Use authentic texts – analyse IM language.**

# Text One

Task:

1. Read the text. Get a feel for what is happening.
2. Identify examples of *self promotion* language.

# Text Two

Task:

Read the text.

- What impression do you get of the speaker?
- Does she come across as competent and in control?

# Leadership

How do you give the impression that you are competent as a leader?

- Have a grip of the facts – you show that you know what is happening
- Explain your vision – you know where you are going
- Give guidance and directions
- Remember the names of people

# Classroom activities

1. Use authentic texts – analyse IM language.
2. **Focus on useful lexis.**

# Ingratiation in emails

Making the other person feel good.

*great job*

*well done*

*way to go*

# Enron email corpus examples

- **Great job** – I am impressed.
- You do a **great job**, and we appreciate it a lot.
- Thanks again for a **great job**.
- You did a **great job** of pulling it together.
- Everyone did a **great job** today. Thanks again.
- You've done a **great job** of training your guys.
- You're doing a **great job** – don't be rattled.



# Enron email corpus examples

- **Well done.** Thanks for your help.
- The report is **well done.**
- Congratulations on a job **well done.**
- Kudos for a job **well done.**
- Looks like a good solution – **well done.**
- To all of you ... job **well done.**
- **Well done** to Fred, and Kathy of course.

# Enron email corpus examples

- **Way to go Ken!**
- Congratulations are in order boys! **Way to go!**
- Congrats on your promotion. **Way to go.**
- I think the **way to go** is first to see if ...
- Maybe outsourcing is the **way to go?**
- Still a very long **way to go.**
- I'm not sure this is the best **way to go.**

# Gap-fills

1. Great job – I am \_\_\_\_\_.
2. You do a great job, and we \_\_\_\_\_ it a lot.
3. Thanks \_\_\_\_\_ for a great job.
4. You did a great job of \_\_\_\_\_ it together.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ did a great job today. Thanks again.
6. You've done a great job of \_\_\_\_\_ your guys.
7. You're doing a great job – \_\_\_\_\_ be rattled.

# Matching

- a. Well done. Thanks
  - b. The report
  - c. Congratulations on
  - d. Kudos
  - e. Looks like a good
  - f. To all of
  - g. Well done to
- 
- 1. for your help.
  - 2. is well done.
  - 3. a job well done.
  - 4. for a job well done.
  - 5. solution – well done.
  - 6. you ... job well done.
  - 7. Fred, and Kathy of course.

# Which are compliments?

- **Way to go Ken!**
- Congratulations are in order boys! **Way to go!**
- Congrats on your promotion. **Way to go.**
- I think the **way to go** is first to see if ...
- Maybe outsourcing is the **way to go?**
- Still a very long **way to go.**
- I'm not sure this is the best **way to go.**

# Classroom activities

1. Use authentic texts – analyse IM language.
2. Focus on useful lexis.
- 3. Role-play common situations relevant to your students. Include IM in your feedback.**
  - **Job interviews**
  - **Small talk**
  - **Starting a presentation**
  - **Opening a meeting**
  - **Giving feedback**

# Observer

Your task is to observe the role-play. Note examples of the following:

Compliments

Self-promotion

*actors* *identity* *self-promotion*  
*performance* *control* *image*  
*influence* *ingratiating*

# What is IM?

## Classroom Activities

*working* *focus* *role-*  
*with* *on lexis* *plays*  
*texts*



# References

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