

Your image IS your image!

If you want to do better in business get a professional, well done business portrait to use for your promotion. There is no two ways about it. I've seen people who work as investment brokers use images that you would expect to see height numbers behind them and a corrections placard around their neck - they were THAT bad! When your livelihood depends on it why would you cheap out and use some snapshot that you had lying around of you holding a fish you just caught, or that someone with a "good camera" took? Yes it might save you a few bucks upfront, but could cost you tens of thousands of dollars in the long run when potential clients don't feel you look professional enough to bother contacting, or even worse - don't trust you simply based on your picture. Remember, the first impression many of your clients will have of you will come from your promotional material. Make sure you look your best!

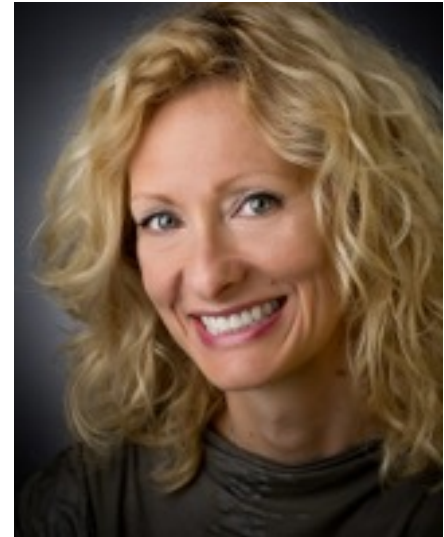


A good business promotional image always starts with a proper in person conversation with the photographer. Some people call up and just say "I don't want to come down to talk....I just want a traditional business headshot." Ok, if that is all you want that's fine...but you are really missing out on a great opportunity to enhance your business and potentially put much more money in your pockets. A talented photographer's goal is to make you look as good as possible so clients will flock to you and hand over their money to you. That's a pretty simplistic



definition, but in the end that is what good photographers are trying to achieve for you. You pay us to help you make more money. That all starts with designing a session that will suit your business needs. Before I design a session, I really want to know things like: who is your ideal/target client? How do you want people to perceive you? What marketing are you currently doing? Will these new images be used in those same pieces or are you designing something different? Do you have business colours? Does your company make you conform

into specific standard layouts for promotional pieces (business cards, brochures, etc) What side is your text going to be on your business card and website beside your photograph? These are just some of the questions that need to be answered. Often, the answers to these questions lead to even questions..... The end goal is to create a promotional image for your that will attract the type of client you want, portray confidence and approachability. That can be done in a traditional way, or in a more eye catching way - depending on what we are trying to accomplish. Often, there are a few different looks that are created that work together in separate promotional pieces that compliment each other for an overall "look." Other times completely different images are created for different target markets. Sometimes clients come in saying they want "X" and by the time we finish talking and exploring the possibilities they realize they actually need "Y". That's all part of the process of figuring out together what is the best way to promote you visually.



Lighting can always make or break a portrait. Different styles can be used to portray different moods and evoke different emotions from the viewer. Plus, if the image is going for 4 colour reproduction (brochures, business card, etc) the final look as to be kept in mind so as not to make the dark areas of the image too dark for the final product to look good.

Understanding how the human body works and how best to photograph it is essential in any portrait. Someone who knows what they are doing both photographically as well as with posing the human body can

easily add or subtract weight in the final image, make you look taller, portray strength or approachability, etc. It's not very often that a male can look good in a feminine head position, but I often see it being used and it doesn't suit the image they are trying to portray. A female can look good in either a masculine or a feminine head tilt. Knowing the difference and when to use them makes a huge difference in how your final portrait will look.

Whatever the look trying to be achieved, some basic information is important to remember. These "rules" may end up being broken for a specific purpose, but generally speaking sticking to them is a much safer way to go:

Men:

- No wild ties - you don't want your neon pink tie distracting people from looking at your face
- ALWAYS remove everything you have in your jacket and shirt pockets (never seen a man yet who appreciates having a left breast in a photograph)
- Remember to put in the plastic pieces that are designed to keep your collar straight in the morning
- *Remember to shave. If you wear facial hair still shave your neck*
- *Wear a suit jacket or longer sleeves*
- *Solid colour clothing is always better than busy patterns*
- *If the session may include full length images remember appropriate footwear*

Women:

- *NEVER try a new hair style right before your portrait session - if you don't like it you'll just be throwing money away*
- *NEVER try a new make-up look just before your session - same reason as above (just do your make-up as you normally would)*
- *Long sleeves and no plunging necklines look better*
- *Simpler is better when it comes to jewelry unless that is a signature look for you*
- *Solid colour clothing is always better than busy patterns*
- *Depending on the style of the session remember to do your nails (toes nails as well if you are being photographed full length)*

Remember artwork can and will be done on your images so, acne, cuts, bruises, age lines, etc can be removed. Please be careful if your hair has excess static electricity - especially in winter. Single hairs sticking out everywhere can cause excessive artwork issues.

The topics covered here are a good place to start when it comes to portraits that will be used to promote yourself and your business.

Remember, professional promotional images are not an expense, ***but an investment in yourself and your business!*** Going to a professional who knows what they are doing to create them for you will make that investment pay off for you.



- Bruce Hendricks MPA, F.Ph, F/PPOC-BC, CPP
www.ImpactPhotographicDesign.com