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The Great Intangible

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Some studies have demonstrated that when sales people smiled sincerely, in particular at the beginning of the sales process, that sales increased by as much as 30 to 50%! Even if this were 3 to 5%, shouldn't companies all over the World be giving classes and continuing education on how to smile? Yes!

When we smile at one another, especially if it is a true smile, in a very real and scientifically accurate sense, not only are our conscious minds communicating, but our subconscious minds have also connected.

Recently discovery of "Mirror Neurons" support these findings on a cellular, cause-and-effect level. Mirror neurons are special brain cells that can be thought of as "Empathy Cells." They are what enable you to feel your shoulder hurt when you watch a player on TV injure his; when you feel a triumph in your own heart when another – who often you don't even know – succeeds. They are also what cause you to tear-up and cry at a sad story on the news.

I am continually struck by the amount of intelligent, educated people who

are surprised when they find out there are many different types of smiles. Now wait... this is not one of those endless articles that classifies subjects into categories just to give things a name. For with smiles - there are very real world, every day important distinction's that will change your life for the better and the fundamental ways you interact with and view other people, other companies, and yourself.

In every business, you must have a great product. Yes, your service must be outstanding. But while lots of businesses have these "measurables" - far too few posses the great intangible of a sincere, true smile in their employees.

Smiling at particular times, such as at the beginning of a sale or negotiation - where people are first sizing up one another, produces a positive feedback-loop for both parties resulting in higher sales, and better long term relationships between the customer and the vendor.

> ***We do business with people we like and we simply like people much more who are sincere and friendly; and that friendliness begins with and is fostered by sincere smiles.***

Smiles and laughter have been show to:

- Lower blood pressure
- Decrease heart rate
- Relax muscles
- Boost the Immune System
- Releases Endorphins (feel-good hormones)
- Creates an overall sense of well-being
- Lengthen marriages
- Lead to long-term happiness

In one study, performed at U.C. Berkley, 50% of patients were able to discontinue their anti-depressant medications when they practiced "continuous smiling" for 20 minutes, twice a day for a month.

Indeed, this exemplifies the new discovery that facial expressions are not just the result of emotions - but that emotions can be the result of facial expressions. The facial expressions can actually be the origin of the emotions we feel! This discovery is profound.

Your face and facial expressions can be thought of as the control panel for your emotional brain!

Very few people have good self-awareness of their expressions – in real time – which they wear on their faces. So unfortunately, very often when we think we're smiling, we are straight faced for much of the time, and when we think we're straight-faced, we may be frowning.

Here are the key characteristics of a True Smile as well as some of the many other false smiles:

The True Enjoyment Smile (Duchenne Smile)

- Eye openings narrow (lids get closer together)
- "Crows Feet" form (or increase)
- Mouth is pulled up and out
- Upper teeth exposed
- Very little of, if any, of lower teeth show
- Cheeks bunch upwards
- Eyebrows lower slightly

Social Smile aka Polite Smile

- Eyelids do not come closure together
- If Eyelids are open wider than usual, then in this context, it is a stronger sign of insincerity
- No Crows Feet
- Mouth is pulled outwards (remember: "say cheese" for pictures)
- Upper and Lower teeth exposed
- Less bunching of cheeks
- This is by far the most common type of smile

I wish to emphasize, that because at a particular moment, someone's smile may not be a sincere one – we all express the full gamut of smiles (and all other facial expressions). I am referring here to insincerity as to

the inconsistency between what a person is saying and their facial expression in that particular moment – and not for the person as a whole.

Miserable Smile

- Mouth shaped like an upside-down "U"
- No teeth exposed
- Lips are tightened
- Chin wrinkled
- No Eye involvement
- Think of Politicians after they've been caught in scandal
- People actually believe they're smiling, but this resembles a tight-lipped frown

Tight-Lipped Smile

- Lips are tight and form a horizontal line
- Area between the nose and mouth tightened
- No teeth exposure
- Be aware, this is an attempt at a polite rejection

Asymmetric Smile

- May be a sign of subtle Contempt (one of the Seven Universal Facial Emotional Expressions)
- Only one side of mouth is elevated (more commonly on left side)
- A sign of insincerity
- Watch out!

False-Surprise Smile

- Jaw drops downward
- Used often by Presidents and Celebrities

(Also, think of "The Joker" in Batman)

- Gives a pseudo-surprised appearance
- Eyelids are often open extra-wide
- Insincere

Flirtatious Smile

- Head & Chin down
- Eyes turned sideways and looking up
- Mouth may be tight-lipped

- Commonly used by women to look attractive
- Think of Lady Di
- Men love this smile

The best way you can produce a true and sincere smile is to smile with your eyes. I teach my clients to "lead with your eyes" and your mouth will automatically follow.

It also helps to keep three or four of your favorite, smile provoking memories, in the top drawer of your mind when you're trying this. This memory provoking assistance is what actors use – it's known as the "Stanislavski" method or "Method' acting.

So when you want a sincere smile – lead with your eyes and your mouth will follow!

Sincere smiles and subsequent laughter are a primary method of bonding and building rapport. They will increase your credibility, friendships, health, happiness and your business success. Isn't this what we all want? Go forth and smile!

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