

Why Women Smile In Their Profile Photos in Business Networking Sites

Contributed by Salil Pillai
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An interesting research into the profile photos uploaded by the members of Business Media Networks (BMN) revealed that majority of women smiled in their profile snaps as compared to the negligible number of males doing the same. The query posted in several BMN groups produced an overwhelming response in just few minutes of its posting.

Leading BMNs including LinkedIn groups and Xing groups witnessed a huge number of members responding to the topic in no time. Even inactive groups became lively after the topic appeared in their forums.

{bot_wrgoogle}Claudia Dittmar, the Outsourcing Manager from Actelion Pharmaceuticals Ltd inserted two lines of her male friend's poem, a translation about smile "I impute to women, they often think differently. It is so nice to fly into the light. Only there I know what is really in me". Mike Arlinsky of GalleryWatch opined "a smile usually is mirrored by the recipient. It is smart for everyone to do. The "Clint Eastwood" look doesn't cut it".

Few men those who did not smile in their snaps observed they did not do so because they wanted to appear strong, mighty, credible and dependable. However, some were of the opinion, pasting stern/neutral photo would make someone look like a scarecrow even to oneself. Though the discussion was drawn to different types of smile from appealing smile to foolish smile, largely many participants felt a dignified smile would function as an initial key to open everyone's attention.

Some claimed racial, upbringing and cultural reasons for male members to avoid smiling. But it was countered by a post which said globalization and internet to a great extent had become a cultural leveler and therefore, no one in any BMN could claim cultural, racial or any other reason for not smiling.

The gist of the overall opinion was posted by a Travel & Tourism Consultant Roseann Dodgson; she said "A smile in business is to me like "an invitation to treat". It opens doors and it engages a discussion in trust. Long gone are the days when you must not wear your emotions on your sleeve. It is, I agree, the essence of approachability. A smile that reaches the eyes, that is what is important, displays confidence and expertise in your line of business. You are proud of who you are, how you act, and how you deliver your line of business, some of the 'old school' men feel they must show their cards until everything is on the table. Why? You will close a deal far faster if you are open and smile warmly from the start".

Interestingly, after the participation in a long discussion in one of the groups, the Technical Head of AK Aerotek Software Centre Pvt Ltd, Amitabh Mukherjee admitted that he would replace his unsmiling photo with a smiling one. However, it seemed to be a surprising post when Ernest Nnagbo of Epoxy Oilserv Limited claimed that, in Africa, it was not acceptable to have a passport with a smiling photo irrespective of gender as it gave an impression of disguise.

To conclude, most of the participants in various discussions groups were of the opinion that regardless of gender one should smile, and smile was everything. They suggested a stern/neutral snap did not leave an impression of neither acceptability nor approachability. Whereas, a smile initiated a possible connect, and eventually, a good business friendship or beyond.

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