

## Research Symposium Proposal

### Behavioral Sciences: The Power of First Impressions

#### Proposal:

First impressions make or break us. They are what propel us. They are what set us apart. Every day, rather we realize it or not we are making first impressions. Think about it, when someone walks into a room, what is the first thing you notice about that person? Is it their good looks, what they're wearing, or their how they carry themselves? Perhaps it's a combination. Nonetheless, we make snap judgments regularly within the dimensions of the cerebral cortex every day. In fact, every second, thousands of neurotransmitters are flaring across your synapses giving you feedback. According to this information you make decisions- lots of them- and most of them sub-consciously. This is a state where the brain does the work for you without you telling it to. We can influence this part of the brain, but for better or worse we will never cease to make first impressions because are brain is instinctively wired that way.

Thus, I have, an am currently researching the science behind what makes us think what we think in a snap second. Malcom Gladwell wrote a book on this very topic entitled *Blink*. It is an excellent book on the power of thinking without thinking. Ever since then I have been fascinated with the concept of the first impression, and have made it a personal endeavor of mine to find out everything I can on the subject. You could say it has become a hobby. The Psychology of first impressions is a wide ranging topic; however in respects to the speaking limit, I'll be condensing, extracting, and selecting only the best parts, in order to concisely, but substantively covey this topics value to our everyday lives. I am excited about the opportunity to share what I have gleaned from a multitude of psychology books and look forward to showing how it's a part of who we are as human being.

I believe the topic of first impression is an important one because the awareness of the mind and its ability to make decisions in the split-second is underestimated. That gut feeling deep down in your stomach that tells you something isn't right, is our intuition, and is something we need to take note of, for our reaction to a perception or given situation can shape our future. Rather than have our intuition work against us, we need to stop ignoring it, and make it work for us. If the opportunity is afforded to me to present, I attend on primarily exploring what experts say regarding the power of the first impression, and hope to share evidence that will better help the audience understand the mind and how we can make it work for us. My pastoral counseling teacher Dr. Barker specializes in psychology and for all intents and purposes will be my faculty mentor. Thank you for this opportunity and I look forward to the upcoming Research Symposium.

Sincerely,

Seth Peterson

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