



BY LINDA BERTAUT

**I**n the beauty industry, your image is the first opportunity to establish credibility with the people you meet. As a walking advertisement for your business, the attention you pay—or don't pay—to your appearance speaks volumes. If you were to walk past your reflection right now, would it be an accurate representation of your personality and your spa? Would it convey who you are, both on the inside and out?

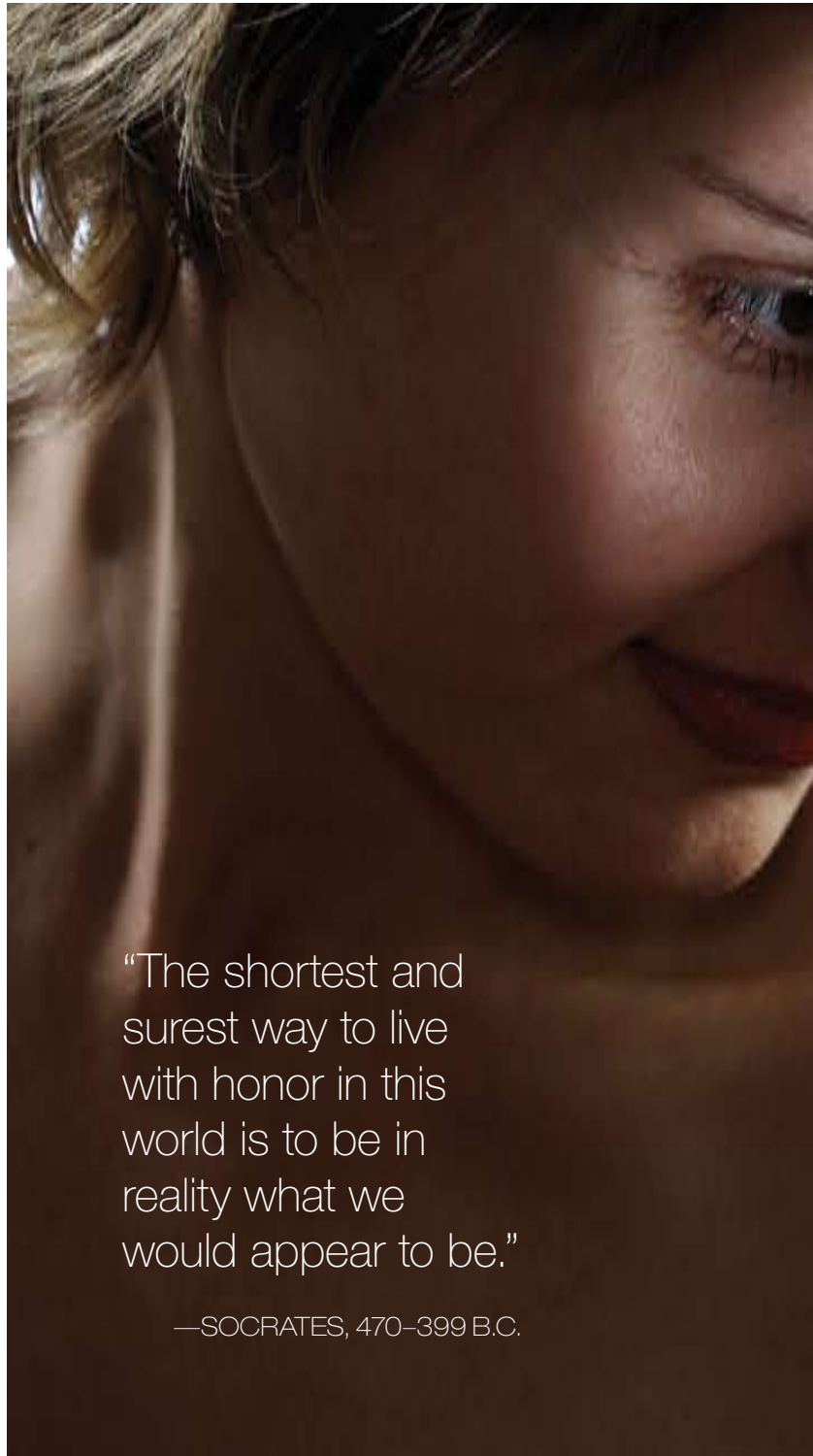
## The nature of things

Despite the age-old maxim that cautions against judging a book by its cover, it's human nature to perceive physical appearance as an indicator of what's inside. The brain works at lightning speed to take in visual information and interpret its surroundings. Making decisions based on appearance is simply a part of that natural process.

Have you ever gone to a holiday gift-exchange party where you had to choose a present without knowing what it was? The table usually is filled with options of all shapes and sizes—some extravagantly wrapped and others presented in simple brown paper bags. Which gifts were selected first? The largest ones with the prettiest wrapping, right? Some boasted inviting packaging but contained average contents, while some of the less attractive ones revealed the most valued prizes.

The same holds true for personal image. Although some people invest time in looking great on the outside, others spend it by developing their inner selves. In either instance, the true self may not be represented by the appearance. What if the first impression you gave someone authentically conveyed your true outer and inner selves? How would your life be different if people could tell at first glance that you are fun, dynamic and beautiful, or sporty, progressive and original?

By sending an accurate impression of who you are, you open the door to improved communication, a stronger business image, and the reinforcement of your best traits as a person and a professional.



“The shortest and surest way to live with honor in this world is to be in reality what we would appear to be.”

—SOCRATES, 470–399 B.C.



Your  
Image  
is Your  
Business

Knowing what kind of person you are, what you would like to express and how best to represent yourself can enable you to reveal yourself more accurately.

## Your processing style

A person's style of processing information plays a key role in their personal style, as well. Understanding your own preferred learning method can explain a lot about the way in which you communicate your image. The following are the three basic ways in which people process information.

- Visual people understand by seeing.
- Auditory people understand by hearing.
- Kinesthetic people understand by feeling or experiencing.

Because personal image initially is seen, visual people comprehend appearance messages very easily and, thus, may invest more time in their own looks. Kinesthetic people, on the other hand, may favor comfort so strongly that they completely overlook what visual image they present. However, kinesthetic people still can find a way to relate their internal and external images while maintaining comfort. Auditory people can go either way, depending on their personality type and what matters most to them. Understanding their personality will help these people to better project their personal image.

## Revealing the real you

Whichever type of person you are, the truth is that no one else is exactly like you. As a unique individual with innate talents, expressing yourself in an authentic way on the outside is your best selling tool and most effective advertisement for your business. Knowing what kind of person you are, what you would like to express and how best to represent yourself can enable you to reveal yourself more accurately. To help define yourself, consider the following.

1 Ask three to five people who know you to varying degrees to describe you, and write down what they say. Use the responses as a gauge to determine if this is truly how you intend to be perceived. (See **Personality Adjectives**.)

2 Next, define yourself. When you walk into a room, how do you want people to describe you? Select 10–12 adjectives that communicate who you are and who you aspire to be. For example, “beautiful,” “stylish” and “handsome” are visual, while “successful,” “dynamic” and “playful” represent personality traits. Be sure to include “credible” as one of your adjectives—this way, no matter what your style is, it won't be too casual or sloppy.

3 When you come up with a complete list that represents your personality, post it on a mirror where you can see it each day until it becomes a part of your daily life. Once you feel comfortable being you, your aspirations can become reality.

## PERSONALITY ADJECTIVES

Consider the adjectives that people use to describe you in order to gauge how you come across. Compare these descriptors with how you would like others to see you.

➔ **IF** the adjectives used by others to describe you reveal someone who mainly gives and nurtures others, then you would benefit from learning to take care of yourself first. Most likely, you think of other people at the expense of everything else. It is not selfish to look out for yourself. It also is OK to look good and spend money on clothes that convey all of your wonderful inner qualities.

➔ **IF** you find that no one uses visual adjectives to describe you, then you may need to work more on your external image. Hire an image consultant, or use a personal shopping service at a department store. A good consultant will ask a series of questions in order to help you select clothing that reflects your lifestyle and personality. If you don't like what they suggest, try working with someone else.

➔ **IF** the description you receive of yourself is more superficial, bringing out your personality should be the focus. Take classes and workshops that help you to express your inner strength and beauty.

# IMAGE MAKEOVERS

A makeover can help to jump-start self-esteem by enhancing the outside. However, nothing can replace the inner work required to determine who you are and to guide you on your unique path. The following makeovers brought to the surface the true personality characteristics of each model.

## MAKEOVER NO. 1: COREY F.

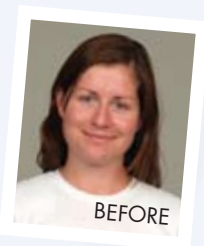


### COREY'S ADJECTIVES:

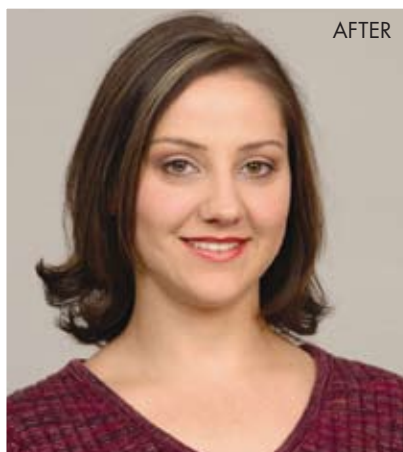
Beautiful, confident, credible, classy, sassy, fun and easy-going.

Three years ago, stay-at-home mom Corey took a break from her career as a newspaper journalist and photographer to start a family. She commented, "Since quitting my job to have children, my personal maintenance went from minimal to zilch." After deciding to start her own photography business, Corey realized that she would have to address her image in order to be taken seriously.

After her transformation, Corey says, "My makeover makes me feel like a movie star. It seems as though people are noticing me, and I feel more confident. When I walk around the financial district, I can't believe my reflection. This is me, only better. This must be what movie stars feel like on the red carpet."



## MAKEOVER NO. 2: TONIA W.

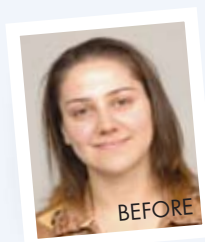


### TONIA'S ADJECTIVES:

Attractive, fresh, together, updated, confident, credible, powerful, radiant, original, healthy, progressive and experienced.

Tonia is a very talented esthetician and massage therapist with a youthful look that can be perceived as inexperienced. She has invested a lot of time and money in developing her professional and personal skills, and wanted a look that would reflect her confidence and expertise.

Tonia sums up the results of her makeover this way: "It makes a huge difference in my day. I get compliments everywhere I go. Sometimes you see makeovers and the person is so different that it is not believable or practical. At the end of my makeover, I still felt like me, but more polished. I now appear more credible as an esthetician."



## MAKEOVER NO. 3: KAREN K.

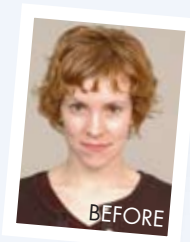


### KAREN'S ADJECTIVES:

Confident, successful, stylish, contemporary, modern, fun-loving, credible and adventuresome.

Karen's previous job as a social worker impacted how she dressed for work. She didn't want to make people feel uncomfortable around her by looking too successful or overdressed, so she downplayed her wardrobe and look. However, her adjectives indicate that she was suppressing her true self. She since has changed careers and currently is working for a fashion publication while pursuing other more creative interests.

Karen comments, "Since the makeover, I feel really beautiful and am surprised at how good I can look. Because I'm interested in fashion, my own sense of style and makeup is important, and the makeover gave me the tools to keep developing my own image."



4 Be congruent with your inner and outer images. Select clothing, relationships, a profession and an environment that can be described by your adjectives. When you do this, you will feel comfortable being the real you.

5 Use your adjectives to weed out the clothing in your closet—everything from business and casual attire to garments in between. Consider eliminating those pieces that are the most diametrically opposed to your descriptors. When making new purchases, remember your list. Each new item ideally should represent the majority of your adjectives, not just one or two.

6 Set boundaries, and surround yourself with people who support you in your goal of being yourself.

7 Feed your spirit by making time to take care of yourself. Indulge in facials and massages, and get involved in hobbies, classes and other interests that make you happy.

8 Keep learning, and share what you discover with others.

Remember that you are one person with many different aspects. Don't change to fit your environment. Instead, identify your unique style, and then dress appropriately for the specific occasion. When you find the style that radiates your



true essence, you'll automatically become credible, the book will match the cover and your clientele will buy what you have to sell.

## Selling yourself and your business

The beauty industry is a multibillion-dollar business that helps clients to feel beautiful and look their best. When selling confidence and self-esteem, it is important to impress them with your professionalism and accomplishments by putting forth your best image. With the right makeup, hairstyle and clothing, you can bring your personality to the surface and boost your credibility. After all, you are a walking advertisement for your business. And if beauty is your business, then your image is a vital component. ✂

*Makeup by Linda Bertaut and Face Options Mineral Cosmetics.*

*Photography by Julie Warren and Daniel Garcia.*

*Hair for Corey by Rosalie Tricomo.*

*Hair for Tonia and Karen by Viola Wozniakowski.*

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