

SUMMARY

HOW TO MAKE PEOPLE
LIKE YOU IN
90 SECONDS OR LESS

NICHOLAS BOOTHMAN



Summary of “How to Make People Like You in 90 Seconds or Less” by Nicholas Boothman

Written by Alyssa Burnette

Learn the art of forming fast and meaningful
connections.

Introduction

5

The First 90 Seconds

6

Start With Positive Body Language

7

Moving Beyond Introductions

9

How to be a Good Conversationalist

11

Final Summary

13



**DO YOU WANT THIS BOOK
AS AN 20-MINUTE AUDIOBOOK?**



**Get the key insights of non-fiction books
in minutes instead of hours. Listen to
our free audiobooks while you workout
or on your commute to work.**



**DOWNLOAD
OUR FREE APP**



Introduction

What's your biggest fear? When faced with that question, most people say things like "heights," "spiders," or "public speaking," but statistics show that we're more afraid of the things we're unlikely to reveal in a quick Truth or Dare question. Deep down, we're primarily afraid of being awkward and being alone. We're afraid of realizing that no one likes us or discovering that we are no one's first choice. We're afraid of being friendless. That's why, whether they admit it or not, most people are desperate to learn how to make friends and make people like them.

Most of us drift through life wondering, "Am I doing it right? Do people really like me? What do people think when I walk into the room?" These questions can fill us with so much horror and anxiety that it's often easier to avoid speaking to others at all! (Even if that results in the very thing we fear: finding ourselves alone and friendless). But over the course of this summary, we're going to take an in-depth look at the necessary skills for conquering those fears and connecting with others.

The First 90 Seconds

As you've probably already guessed, the "90 seconds" portion of this title comes from the fact that people form their first impressions of you within the first 90 seconds of meeting you. But have you ever wondered what they see when they make that assessment? Or what factors go into their final estimation? Studies show that a first impression is comprised of a variety of assessments, including that person's estimation of your intelligence, trustworthiness, success, status, and more! Some things are relatively predictable, like the fact that people assume you are more successful or popular if they see you wearing clothes with designer labels.

But some things aren't quite so easy to anticipate and, often, they aren't based on things you can control. For example, we can't control the features we're born with. But a Princeton University discovered that participants consistently rated people with round, baby-like faces or feminine features as being more trustworthy. We also can't control our gender, ethnicity, attractiveness, or whether or not we need glasses. But a 2017 University of Toronto study found that, when asked to watch a video of a person delivering a speech, participants consistently rated speakers who were white, male, attractive, and not wearing glasses as being more charismatic or powerful. Similarly, a 2007 British study found that people tend to rate men and women with tattoos as being untrustworthy, less attractive, and more aggressive.

When read together, the results of these studies indicate that our first impressions are not only formed in haste, they are also often based on latent sexist, racist, and classist stereotypes. Unfortunately, of course, there is little we can do to change another person's innate bias, especially when it is based on factors outside of our control. But there are some things we can do to make a positive first impression, and we're going to take a detailed look at those tips in the next chapter.

Start With Positive Body Language

Body language is often a more powerful communicator than words, especially within the first 90 seconds of meeting someone. And although we may not be able to change someone's perception of us based on our face shape or other physical qualities, we can work to ensure that our body language is sending the right message. For starters, let's consider the difference between "open" and "closed" body language. You might not be familiar with the technicalities of these categories, but the author guarantees that you know them when you see them. For example, let's say you're confronting your teenage son about the amount of time he wastes in his room playing video games. If he stands with his arms folded across his chest and rolls his eyes at everything you say, you get the message loud and clear: he's closing himself off from you and putting emotional distance between the two of you.

Similarly, if you're meeting your best friend for lunch and she stands up to greet you with open arms and a big smile, you can tell that her response is open and warm. So, keep these principles in mind when you're meeting someone new for the first time! Don't be like your grouchy teenager; use your body to communicate openness. This might mean standing with your arms hanging loosely at your sides-- a position that suggests you're at ease with yourself and others-- and with your body turned towards the other person in an open and inviting manner. By leaning towards the other person slightly, you indicate that you're interested in them and what they have to say. This creates a friendly atmosphere and invites the other person to feel at ease in your presence.

Maintaining direct eye contact is the next step. Obviously, you don't want to stare them down; too much unblinking eye contact and they may start to wonder if you have a creepy hidden dungeon in your basement. So, instead, initiate a few seconds of direct eye contact while smiling. This says simply that you see them and you're positive and willing to engage. And as an added bonus, this behavior will also help boost their impression of your IQ!

We know that because in 2007, researchers at Loyola Marymount University conducted a study to measure the effect of eye contact on first impressions of intelligence. Nora A. Murphy, the lead researcher, described her findings as follows: "Looking while speaking was a key behavior. It significantly correlated with IQ, was successfully manipulated by impression-managing targets, and contributed to higher perceived intelligence ratings." Unsurprisingly, Murphy also found that wearing glasses enhanced a first impression of intelligence. So, while it's not necessary to wear glasses if you don't already need them, good eye contact is a must!

Keep in mind that all of these nonverbal factors set the tone before you and the other person ever speak a word. So, now that you've established a positive vibe through your nonverbal communication, it's time to turn your attention to the spoken portion of your interaction. This is where a lot of people start to falter, so the most important thing to remember is: don't panic! Many people shoot themselves in the foot from the get-go because they worry that they're going to say the wrong thing; as a result, they make themselves look unnecessarily awkward. So, wherever possible, try to avoid overthinking and other anxiety-inducing behaviors. Just go for the basics: smile, introduce yourself with a simple, "Hi! How are you?" and tell them your first name. This is an instant ice-breaker that invites the other person to respond in kind. And if, like a lot of people, you're worried about forgetting their name, you can just repeat their name immediately afterwards in a natural way like saying, "Allison. Great to meet you, Allison!" You can even compliment their name if it feels natural to you or include an anecdote like, "Oh, my sister's name is Allison!"

Moving Beyond Introductions

Okay, so let's say you've nailed the introduction. You're feeling confident and the first impression has gone well. Now what? Many people start to get nervous at this point because they struggle to think of conversation topics or worry that they'll say the wrong thing. And that's why this chapter is going to focus on the technique of establishing a good rapport. Rapport is defined as "a close and harmonious relationship in which the people or groups concerned understand each other's feelings or ideas and communicate well." And that's exactly what you want when connecting with others, right? So, how do you cultivate that?

A natural rapport usually develops when you have something in common with another person. For example, let's say you meet someone new and discover that you have a mutual friend or are members at the same gym. This will give you an instant point of connection and enable you to talk freely about your shared interests. Even if you two ultimately have very little in common, you'll feel like you do, and this will facilitate a sense of kinship and pleasurable communication. But what do you do in situations where you don't have that instant "in" with another person? In these cases, there are other ways to build a good rapport, and they all start with your attitude. Although you might think the success of the conversation is determined by your shared interests or the other person's response, the truth is that the attitude with which you approach the conversation is actually the biggest deal-breaker of them all.

The author describes the differences between these attitudes as being "useful" and "useless." So, let's take a look at the characteristics of each type. As you've probably already imagined, a useful attitude is the one you want to cultivate because it's a positive starting point. The key difference is that a useful attitude is characterized by your assessment of what you want out of the conversation. In other words, it's when you start the conversation by thinking, "I want to get to know this person" or "I want to make a

positive impression on this person so they can help me with my customer service issue.”

By contrast, a useless attitude concentrates on the aspect of the scenario that you don’t want. If, for example, someone gets your order wrong at McDonald’s and you angrily demand to speak to the manager, you’re not really thinking about how the manager feels or about anything positive that can come from the conversation. Rather, you’re thinking about how angry you are that your order is wrong and how you don’t want it to be wrong.

And if you’ve ever tried this approach to interacting with someone, you already know that it’s usually not very effective. In this respect, your attitude really is useless because it’s unlikely to accomplish anything constructive. Instead, the most likely outcome is that you’re going to yell at the manager, the manager will either respond angrily or feel hurt and attacked, and you probably won’t get what you want anyway. Instead of getting your order refunded or your items replaced, it’s more likely that you’ll walk away empty-handed, knowing that you’ve needlessly ruined an innocent person’s day. So, what alternative course of action can you take? And what can you do when the other person really does deserve to be yelled at?

Well, obviously, even if someone deserves it, being unkind and confrontational isn’t the best course of action. So, no matter how justified your anger is, try to approach each interaction with a useful attitude. Even in moments of conflict, you can adjust your attitude by thinking about what you want from the conversation. So, for example, in the case of the McDonald’s snafu, you can transition from thinking, “I don’t want my order to be wrong!” to “I want someone to help me make it right.” This will enable you to adjust your perspective and speak calmly and kindly to someone who can help. After all, we all know that people are more likely to help you if you’re nice to them, so just try the nice approach instead. You can also use the body language tips we’ve discussed in the previous chapters to help!

How to be a Good Conversationalist

But now that we've considered how to build rapport during conflict, let's take a look at rapport-building strategies for more neutral situations. As we've previously mentioned, non-verbal communication establishes the tone for your first impression, but conversation takes you the rest of the way. So, how can you be a good conversationalist? To get the conversation off on the right foot, the author recommends starting with questions that invite the other person to talk freely. For example, what do conversation experts, psychologists, and professional interrogators have in common? They all believe that following the rule of "5 W's and an H" is a great idea! (Okay, maybe don't lead with that question in an actual conversation with someone, but you get the idea!)

If you're not familiar with the "5 W's and an H" rule, don't worry-- it's really simple! It's simply a way of describing six questions that begin with who, what, where, when, why, or how. Questions that follow this format are awesome for starting conversations because they invite conversation. For example, let's say you're at a new cocktail bar that's just opened in town. You're sitting next to someone you don't know and both of you have been waiting on your drinks forever. If you wanted to strike up a conversation with that person, you could apply the body language tips we've already mentioned, adopt a useful attitude, and say something like, "So, what drink did you get?"

This is an open-ended and inviting question that can't be answered with a "yes" or "no" response. Rather, it invites the person to reply in detail. Once they tell you what they ordered, you can respond by saying something like, "Oh, that sounds great! I ordered the espresso martini. I hear it's supposed to be really good." This, of course, invites the other person to remark that they love coffee or maybe tell a funny anecdote about their experience with espresso martinis. Either way, it keeps the conversation flowing in a natural and friendly way, which is exactly what you want. Even if you two don't share similar tastes, the friendly vibe of the conversation will enable you to

connect and enjoy each other's company. Because although it's nice to have something in common with another person, it's not necessary for forming friendships or even enjoying a casual chat. In fact, many people who are very different from one another maintain close friendships because they enjoy each other's company! So, keep this in mind as you strike up a conversation.

You can also keep the conversation flowing by asking questions that build on what your partner said. For example, if the other person says, "I don't go out often, but I've had a really stressful day at work, so I thought I'd grab a nice cocktail to relax," you should say something like, "Oh, I know the feeling! What do you do for work?" No matter what other strategies you employ, showing interest in your conversation partner is the best way to connect every time! It's also guaranteed to help the other person form a positive impression of you because everyone likes it when people are nice to them and interested in what they have to say!

Final Summary

The pressure to make a good first impression can make us feel awkward and scared. We all want to make friends and make people like us but many of us feel as though we don't know, Fortunately, however, you don't have to flounder through life in confusion. By practicing open body language and displaying positive non-verbal cues, you can put forth a positive impression in the first 90 seconds of meeting someone. But once that first 90 seconds is up, remember to keep the conversation flowing by starting with a friendly introduction, remembering someone's name, and asking open-ended questions that show you're interested in what they have to say.



**DO YOU WANT THIS BOOK
AS AN 20-MINUTE AUDIOBOOK?**



**Get the key insights of non-fiction books
in minutes instead of hours. Listen to
our free audiobooks while you workout
or on your commute to work.**



**DOWNLOAD
OUR FREE APP**

