Commonly Used Impression-ManagementTechniques

## Self-Promotion

The goal of self-promotion is to make yourself look competent and able to do the job you are applying for. It can include highlighting positive aspects of your past accomplishments, achievements, work contributions, specific skills, talents, and personal qualities. In self-promotion you might tell stories about past work experiences, ways you have used your skills in the past, or times you have overcome adversity or obstacles.

* To effectively use self-promotion, it helps to have an arsenal of stories and examples at your disposal. It is not good enough to just have a list of stories, you also need to spend the time to sculpt the stories so that they demonstrate why you are qualified for the job. Be sure that the things you say are relevant to the job you are applying for.

## Ingratiation

Ingratiation involves doing or saying things to get the interviewer to like you more. Some ways you might do that could be complimenting the company or the interviewer. One of the obvious benefits of using this technique is that you are making it more likely that your interviewer will like you.

* To effectively use ingratiation, get to know the priorities and values of the company and practice strength-finding prior to an interview. It never hurts to practice what you might say to ingratiate yourself to a representative of the company you are applying to.

## Opinion Conformity

This technique is conveying views, opinions, attitudes, and beliefs that are similar to those of the interviewer or organization. The purpose of this technique is to emphasize your fit within the organization. When using opinion conformity, the idea is to find some genuine common ground that you can talk about with an interviewer. If you focus on your similarities rather than your differences, an interviewer is more likely to build a good rapport with you.

* To effectively use opinion conformity, practice looking for areas of common ground in your interactions with others and then make a point of highlighting those areas. Sometimes you can choose to share information about yourself strategically with the expectation that the person you are interacting with might have a shared experience (e.g., perhaps there are hints in the interviewer’s office that they share your love for sports team or it could be something more meaningful, such as a shared view of how companies can best encourage employee performance.)

## Prosocial Behavior

Prosocial behavior involves doing things that are focused on helping others, organizations, or communities. This tactic takes time to use, because it involves being active and engaged in your community. The purpose of prosocial behavior in the context of an interview, is that it provides you with examples of positive activities you are involved in and shows that you are a socially competent person who would function well in the workplace. You can demonstrate prosocial behavior by listing the activity on your resume or speaking about it during an interview.

* To effectively include prosocial behavior, think about ways you may already be involved in the community, whether it is attending a church, volunteering for your kids’ school, or being part of a neighborhood group. It is never too late to get involved if you can’t think of anything.

## Basking in Reflected Glory

This technique involves associating yourself with other successful people or institutions, and, at times, identifying yourself as part of that success. Ways you might do this would be by talking about your participation in respected training programs, community organizations, or clubs. Associating yourself with respected organizations bolsters an interviewer’s view of your community connectedness and reduces his or her concerns about your social skills and ability to perform work-related activities.

* To effectively use this technique, it is important not to reach for a contact that is too distant, too unknown, or too polarizing (e.g., my brother’s mother-in-law used to go to high school with the owner of the manufacturer that makes a lot of the parts you use in your machine shop).

## Justifications

Justification is a defense IM tactic used to save face when your image is threatened. The technique involves acknowledging that a negative outcome occurred while tactfully and clearly explaining why. Most important to justification is communicating that, while acknowledging your actions from the past, the risk or problem area will not occur again in the future.

* To effectively us justification, it is important that you not deny accountability by making up excuses or by pinning the blame entirely on others (except in rare cases). If you find that it takes a long-winded argument to prove that you were not the one to blame, it is possible that you are more at fault than you are letting on, or that it may be better just to emphasize how things have been since incident and how they will be moving forward. Remember-people like a good change or under-dog story, but no one likes a rationalized, excuse-laden story.

## Apologies

When using this technique, you accept responsibility for a specific negative event and validate the impact of the event. Hopefully this is not a technique that you will need to use, but things happen and sometimes we have things in our past that we cannot hide during an interview; this could be a criminal record or a poor reference from a previous employer.

* To effectively apologize, it is important to take ownership of a past mistake, but pivot to explaining how you have grown or changed from that experience and why you are a better person and the best person to do the job you are applying for.
* partners to participate in future TA and training.