

Impression Management: A Tool of Self Presentation for Managers

Dr. Pallavi Mehta, Khushboo Sharma

Abstract

The desire to make positive impression on others is a strong one, so most of us do our best to look good to others. Persons who can perform impression management successfully do often gain important advantages in many situations. Impression Management (IM) is the goal-directed activity of controlling or regulating information in order to influence the impressions formed by others. Through impression management, people try to shape an impression of a person, object, event, or idea. This paper aims to study the impact of impression management on growth of employees and for self presentation and enhancement. Factor analysis of the survey data is done to reveal the important factors which have an impact on impression management of employees.

Keywords: *Impression Management, Self-Promotion, Self Presentation*

INTRODUCTION

The managers need to skillfully manage the impression they create on others in a wide range of situations ranging from simple ones to more complex and delicate ones. This phenomenon of willfully managing impressions is referred to as "Impression Management".

Impression management is the process by which individual attempt to control the impressions others form of them (Leary & Kowalski, 1990; Rosenfeld, Giacalone, & Riordan, 1995). The main reason for attempting to "manage" the impression we create is that through the construction of "desirable" social identities we seek to influence how we are perceived, and hence, the way in which others treat us. The

Dr. Pallavi Mehta

Associate Professor,
Pacific Institute of Management
& Technology, Pacific University,
Udaipur, Rajasthan
drpmehta2008@gmail.com

Khushboo Sharma

Research Scholar, Pacific Academy of
Higher Education & Research,
Pacific University, Udaipur, Rajasthan
khushboosharma2010@gmail.com

effect of such behavior may directly impact performance outcomes. Impression Management behaviors may be focused on the self, the manager(s), and the job. Self-focused strategies refer to self-presentation, self-promotion and self-identification, while manager-focused IM include upward influencing strategies such as ingratiation and building relationships.

Schlenker defined impression management as the conscious or unconscious attempt to control images that are projected in real or imaginary social interactions. When these images deal with some aspect of self, we call it self-presentation.

Jones and Pittman (1982) were the first to develop taxonomy of impression management tactics based on the kind of images they intended to create. The tactics they include are:

- **Ingratiation:** the purpose of being seen as likeable; Ingratiation is an attempt by individuals to increase their attractiveness in the eyes of others so as to influence others' behaviors. Ingratiation behaviors can be focused in any direction- toward superiors, coworkers, or subordinates (Liden & Mitchell, 1988) and are designed to persuade the target.
- **Self-promotion:** aims at creating an image of competence. The employee success and promotion chances within the organization are influenced by the impression of employee. The self-promoter wants to achieve an attribution of competence.
- **Exemplification:** refers to people who manage the impressions of self-sacrifice and going beyond the call of duty in order to gain the attributes of moral worthiness and dedication; the exemplifier wants to be admired and respected for his integrity and moral decency. He wants to be seen as disciplined, honest and charitable.
- **Intimidation:** tactics of signalling power or the potential to punish others, with the purpose of being seen as dangerous; Intimidation is an impression management strategy designed to increase the credibility

of one's threats and in turn enhance the probability that the target will comply to the actors demands for agreement.

- **Supplication:** refers to tactics aimed at creating a needy or pitiful image by means of demonstrating weakness and incompetence.

IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT AND PROMOTION

Promotion is a form of appreciation for employees who make important and effective contribution to the organization. Promotion gives employee enhanced management role in the organization. It is a powerful communication tool about what is being valued in the organization.

Impression management is a kind of behavior through which the subordinate make some place in the mind of the supervisor by showing that they are very hard working employee. The subordinate impression management has a very high influence on supervisors' performance rating (Wayne & Liden, 1995).

Employees use impression management to get status. It is one of the most important tactics that employees use in the organization for their promotion or to get some long term future benefits (Schlenkar, 1980).

When the relation between the supervisor and the subordinate is developing stronger, this is the time when the supervisor starts categorizing subordinates as hard working and chooses the best employee to promote in the organizational hierarchy. With this subordinates start using impression management tactics strategically over time to have salient outcome such as high performance ratings, increase in compensation, and to get promotion" (Ligen & Feldman, 1983). Employee use impression management strategy to increase the visibility and commitment for their organization. (Schlenker, 1980)

Employees believe that for promotion in the organizational hierarchy, they have to show high

performance and make good impression and construct strong relationship with the supervisor. But some employees believe that doing good work is enough for getting promotions and impression doesn't help employee in their promotion.

IMPRESSION MANAGEMENT AND SELF PRESENTATION

Self-presentation can be seen as very close to the impression management but it is still not similar to impression management. Impression can also be managed by some other way than self-presentation (Greenwald & Breckler, 1985).

Self-presentation consists of behaviors designed to make a desired impression on others. When people plan and alter their behavior so as to convey the intended image of self, then success at self-presentation depend heavily on effective self-regulation. This may be most common when people have to present themselves under difficult circumstances or in unfamiliar ways. Other times, however, self-presentation may follow habitual or well-learned patterns of behavior, and in those cases, it may not require much in the way of self-regulation.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

- Mark C. Bolino, José A. Varela, Belén Bande and William H. Turnley (2006) "The impact of impression-management tactics on supervisor ratings of organizational citizenship behavior". The study investigates the ways in which three types of impression management-namely, job-focused, self-focused, and supervisor-focused tactics of impression management-influence supervisor ratings of OCB. Using a sample of 122 supervisor-subordinate dyads, the findings indicate that supervisor-focused tactics of impression management are positively related to OCB ratings, while job-focused tactics are negatively related to such evaluations. Additionally, citizenship behaviors are positively related to supervisor

liking of the employee and overall ratings of job performance. Finally, the results suggest that OCB ratings mediate the relationship between supervisor-focused tactics of impression management and supervisor evaluations of employee likeability.

- Schokker M. "The use of Impression Management tactics in groups overtime and the effect of interpersonal outcomes of liking, competence and performance" The purpose of the study is to measure interpersonal outcomes of impression management in a group situation, measures of perceived performance, perceived competence and liking will be used. The study also aimed to find whether over time the use of the same impression management strategies will have have a different effect on liking, competence or performance. The results revealed the positive relationship between experience and self promotion and experience and liking.
- Niamh M. Brennan, Encarna Guillamon-Saorin and Aileen Pierce "Impression management: developing and illustrating a scheme of analysis for narrative disclosures - a methodological note" paper develops a holistic measure for analysing impression management and for detecting bias introduced into corporate narratives as a result of impression management. A method of computing a holistic composite impression management score based on these four impression management methods is developed, based on both quantitative and qualitative data in corporate narrative disclosures. An impression management bias score is devised to capture the extent to which impression management introduces bias into corporate narratives. suggest that impression management is pervasive in corporate financial communications using multiple impression management methods, such that positive information is exaggerated, while negative information is either ignored or is underplayed.

Research Objectives:

- To determine the factors of impression management.
- To study the role of impression management in promotion and self presentation of employees.

Methodology:

The present study is conducted on professionals working in different fields in Udaipur city to evaluate the role of impression management and its effect on the self presentation and promotion of working people.

Sample size & Primary Data Collection Instrument:

The primary data was collected using a structured questionnaire designed for the purpose of measuring role of impression management in promotion & self presentation at workplace by framing 20 statements. The questionnaire was administered on 50 respondents including corporate, academicians and professionals. The data collected was analyzed using statistical tools such as factor analysis.

The analysis was carried out by studying the responses of the sample on selected 20 statements on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 5.0 to 1.0, where

- 5 stands for "Strongly Agree"
- 4 stands for "Agree"
- 3 stands for "Neutral"
- 2 stands for "Disagree"
- 1 stands for "Strongly Disagree".

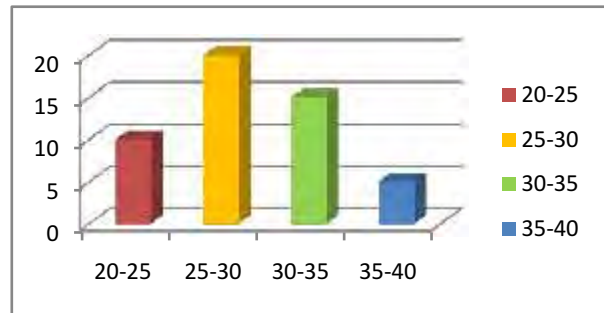
SAMPLE PROFILE

Table 1: Sample profile of Respondents

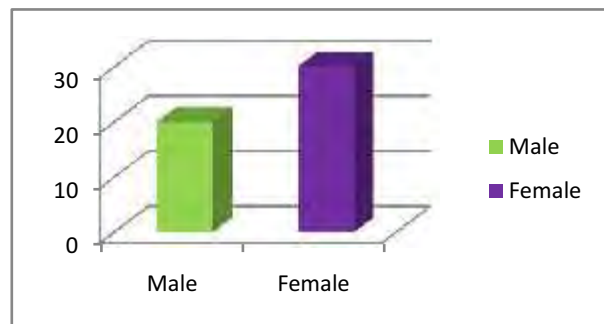
Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Age Group		
20-25	10	20
25-30	20	40
30-35	15	30
35-40	5	10

Gender		
Male	20	40
Female	30	60
Qualification		
MBA	30	60
PGDCA	5	10
M Ph	5	10
Engineering	5	10
M.com	5	10
Designation		
Academician	30	60
Engineer	5	10
Physiotherapist	5	10
Corporate	10	20

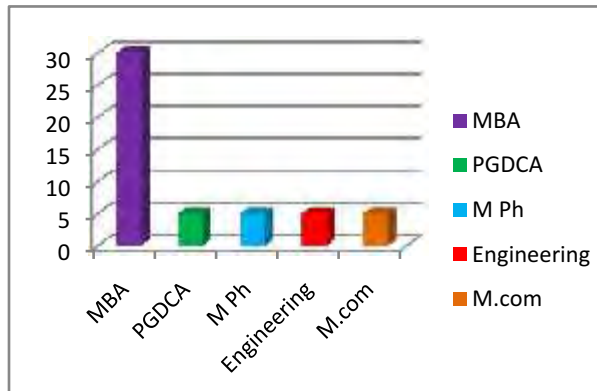
Graph 1:



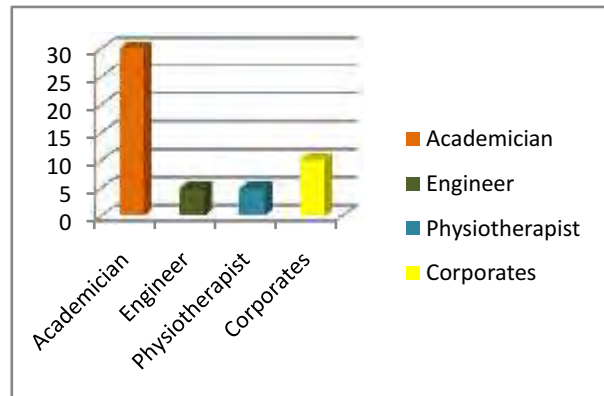
Graph 2:



Graph 3:



Graph 4:



The above Graph 1 shows that maximum number of respondents is in the age group of 25-30 years, and minimum in the age group of 35-40 years. Graph 2 shows that 60% of respondents are females and 40% are males. Graph 3 depicts the academic qualification and graph 4 classify the respondents on the basis of their profession where 60% respondents are academicians, 20% includes corporate and physiotherapists each and minimum 10% constitutes of engineers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The main factors of promotion and self presentation were identified using factor analysis by taking into account the Eigen values of factors, factor loadings and assignment of variables. Based on the Eigen value and factor loadings, 13 variables were classified into seven factors based upon their characteristics.

Table 2: Ranking of Variables on the basis of Mean

Descriptive Statistics				
	Weighted Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Rank
environment	5.20	2.060	50	MI
opportunities	4.90	.303	50	MI
personality	4.60	.495	50	MI
work	4.60	.495	50	MI
cover	4.40	2.441	50	I
promotion	4.20	.606	50	I
judgement	3.80	.990	50	I
satisfy boss	3.80	1.178	50	I
always right	3.70	.789	50	I
satisfy peer	3.70	2.023	50	I
performance	3.60	1.370	50	I
lies	3.50	1.216	50	I
try to impress	3.30	1.111	50	LI
react	3.30	1.111	50	LI
boss is right	2.40	.670	50	UI
appearance	2.40	1.030	50	UI
colleague	2.20	1.178	50	UI

buttering	2.00	1.195	50	UI
gossip	1.40	.670	50	UI
jealous	1.20	.606	50	UI

On the basis of the descriptive statistics the variables are shown in their order of rank in the above table where we can see that environment, opportunities, personality, work, cover, promotion, judgment and satisfying boss have higher ranks and appearance, colleagues, buttering, gossip and jealous have very low ranks. We can classify the variables as most

important (MI), Important (I), Less Important (LI) and Unimportant (UI).

MI = Weighted mean is more than 4.50

I = Weighted mean is more than 3.50

LI = Weighted mean is more than 2.50

UI = Weighted mean is less than 2.50

Table 3: Rotated Component Matrix of Factor Analysis

Rotated Component Matrix ^a							
	Component						
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
always right	.171	-.862	.178	.144	.044	.068	-.145
judgement	-.100	-.858	-.067	.048	-.243	.236	.134
try to impress	.031	.251	.811	.125	.437	-.108	.165
react	-.006	-.335	.020	.153	.040	.855	-.131
cover	-.932	.255	-.069	.160	.072	.137	.099
lies	.869	.103	.197	-.199	.196	-.095	-.289
colleague	.278	-.092	.008	.044	.312	.012	-.862
satisfy boss	.754	.567	.148	.037	.083	.209	-.166
gossip	-.080	-.073	.196	.955	.021	.133	.020
satisfy peer	-.001	.847	.103	.404	-.127	-.145	.193
performance	.312	-.164	-.383	.036	.347	.691	.266
personality	.691	.084	-.206	-.413	-.294	.437	.137
jealous	.149	.054	.456	.069	.032	.689	.157
environment	-.777	.337	-.216	-.032	.334	-.236	.252
boss is right	.853	.081	.013	.385	.117	.196	.076
promotion	.027	.202	-.504	.691	-.048	.086	.457
appearance	.005	.321	-.252	.445	-.762	-.048	.040
work	-.126	.019	.076	.445	.397	.091	.782
buttering	.251	-.208	.896	-.025	-.171	-.011	-.156
opportunities	-.023	.244	-.070	.188	.928	.143	-.083
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.							
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.							
a. Rotation converged in 8 iterations.							

Inference: The seven factors identified on the basis of factor analysis are: Different Personality at Workplace, Satisfying others, Impression,

Appearance, Self- Presentation, Actions and Performance and they are displayed with their variables in table 4

Table 4: Assignment of Variables to the factors

S. No.	Factor	Variables
1.	Different personality at work place	I never cover up my mistakes I sometimes tell lies if I have to I always try to satisfy my boss People change their personality at work place I adapt to the working environment My boss is always right
2.	Satisfying others	My first impression is always right I am very confident of my judgments I think satisfying peers is most important for promotion
3.	Impression	I try to impress others Impression is made by buttering Good impression helps in promotion
4.	Appearance	I gossip about other people's business Physical appearance helps in growth
5.	Self Presentation	Self presentation leads to better opportunities Impression is made by physical appearance
6.	Actions	I always know how to react The stress of impression affects work performance I am jealous of my colleagues performance
7.	Performance	I inform my boss about colleagues work Impression is made by your work

Correlation between various variables of growth of employees at workplace is displayed in the table 5.

- Satisfying peers for promotion has a negative correlation with impressing others, informing boss about colleagues work, getting jealous of colleagues performance and impression made by buttering. But it has positive correlation with impression made by

work and stress of impression affects work performance.

- Impression made by buttering has a highest negative correlation with satisfying peers for promotion.
- Self presentation providing better opportunities have a positive correlation with impression made by work.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix

Correlation Matrix	always right	judgement	try to impress	react	cover	lies	colleague	satisfy boss	gossip	satisfy peer	performance	personality	jealous	environment	boss is right	promotion	appearance	work	buttering	opportunities
always right	1	0.575	-0.128	0.454	-0.36	0.053	0.176	-0.285	0.232	-0.633	0.076	-0.052	0.128	-0.527	0.232	-0.299	-0.352	-0.052	0.325	-0.128
judgement	0.575	1	-0.315	0.427	-0.083	-0.254	-0.063	-0.56	0.123	-0.744	0.316	0.042	0.088	-0.28	-0.185	0.068	-0.02	0.042	0.173	-0.408
try to impress	-0.128	-0.315	1	-0.157	0.03	0.264	0.031	0.281	0.247	0.313	-0.188	-0.334	0.515	0.107	0.11	-0.091	-0.374	0.408	0.615	0.394
react	0.454	0.427	-0.157	1	0.088	-0.113	0.109	0.047	0.247	-0.322	0.55	0.223	0.515	-0.339	0.247	0.061	-0.196	0.037	0.077	0.091
cover	-0.36	-0.083	0.03	0.068	1	-0.859	-0.348	-0.539	0.212	0.273	-0.165	-0.625	-0.055	0.838	-0.661	0.221	0.097	0.304	-0.385	0.193
lies	0.053	-0.254	0.264	-0.113	-0.859	1	0.57	0.783	-0.25	-0.062	0.122	0.509	0.138	-0.651	0.626	-0.277	-0.244	-0.339	0.421	0.138
colleague	0.176	-0.063	0.031	0.109	-0.348	0.57	1	0.324	0.026	-0.317	0.051	-0.035	-0.057	0.353	0.155	-0.343	-0.235	-0.56	0.217	0.343
satisfy boss	-0.285	-0.56	0.281	0.047	-0.539	0.783	0.324	1	-0.026	0.445	0.202	0.56	0.343	-0.488	0.75	0.057	0.067	-0.14	0.217	0.229
gossip	0.232	0.123	0.247	0.247	0.212	-0.25	0.026	-0.026	1	0.316	0.067	-0.431	0.302	-0.059	0.318	0.553	0.355	0.492	0.127	0.201
satisfy peer	-0.633	-0.744	0.313	-0.322	0.273	-0.062	-0.317	0.445	0.316	1	-0.302	-0.122	0.05	0.284	0.241	0.466	0.498	0.285	-0.127	0.117
performance	0.076	0.316	-0.188	0.55	-0.165	0.122	0.051	0.202	0.087	-0.302	1	0.512	0.344	-0.188	0.4	0.344	-0.173	0.361	-0.312	0.393
personality	-0.052	0.042	-0.334	0.223	-0.625	0.509	-0.095	0.56	-0.431	-0.122	0.512	1	0.272	-0.62	0.492	-0.068	0.12	-0.25	0	-0.272
jealous	0.128	0.088	0.515	0.515	-0.065	0.138	-0.067	0.343	0.302	0.05	0.344	0.272	1	-0.36	0.302	-0.111	-0.131	0.272	0.563	0.111
environment	-0.527	-0.28	0.107	-0.339	0.838	-0.651	-0.353	-0.488	-0.059	0.284	-0.188	-0.62	-0.36	1	-0.65	0.212	-0.087	0.38	-0.539	0.36
boss is right	0.232	-0.185	0.11	0.247	-0.681	0.626	0.155	0.75	0.318	0.241	0.4	0.482	0.302	-0.65	1	0.302	0.059	0.185	0.127	0.201
promotion	-0.299	0.088	-0.091	0.061	0.221	-0.277	-0.343	0.057	0.553	0.466	0.344	-0.088	-0.111	0.212	0.302	1	0.523	0.612	-0.423	0.111
appearance	-0.352	-0.02	-0.374	-0.196	0.087	-0.244	-0.235	0.067	0.355	0.499	-0.173	0.12	-0.131	-0.087	0.059	0.523	1	-0.08	-0.166	-0.523
work	-0.052	0.042	0.408	0.037	0.304	-0.339	-0.56	-0.14	0.482	0.285	0.361	-0.25	0.272	0.38	0.185	0.612	-0.08	1	-0.173	0.408
buttering	0.325	0.173	0.615	0.077	-0.385	0.421	0.217	0.217	0.127	-0.127	-0.312	0	0.563	-0.539	0.127	-0.423	-0.166	-0.173	1	-0.282
opportunities	-0.128	-0.408	0.394	0.091	0.193	0.138	0.343	0.229	0.201	0.117	0.393	-0.272	0.111	0.36	0.201	0.111	-0.523	0.408	-0.282	1

a. Determinant = .000

b. This matrix is not positive definite.

CONCLUSION

The seven factors identified on the basis of factor analysis are: Different Personality at Workplace, Satisfying others, Impression, Appearance, Self-Presentation, Actions and Performance.

Impression has a positive correlation with work, opportunities and it helps in self- presentation of the employees at workplace. People change their personality to satisfy the boss and also to adapt to the working environment. As we can see the variables of the factors, satisfying others also helps in creating good impression and affects performance at the work place. Impression management is thus a helpful tool for presentation and job enrichment. The correlation matrix proves that gossiping, buttering and

feeling jealous of others do not help in promotion and only work has highest positive correlation with promotion as well as impression.

Thus, from the correlation matrix we can say that good impression helps in promotion and is made by physical appearance and work because first impression is the last impression. But work has a prominent role in impressing superiors for promotion and appearance helps in self presentation. In order to manage impression at work place the employees should take care of the most important factors revealed from the study which are adapt to the working environment, grab the opportunities to present oneself, change personality at workplace and do the work assigned leading to growth and promotion in career.

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