First Impressions

How we're seen, how we grow

◆ ICEBREAKER QUESTIONS

1 **What's the most common misunderstanding people have about you when they first meet you?**

2 **When you meet someone new, what do you usually base your first impression on?**

◆ FREE TALK

1 Our clothes, posture, and expressions tell a story before we say a single word. **How much thought do you put into how you look when meeting new people, and does it show who you really are?**

2 Once we form a first impression, we tend to notice only what proves it right and ignore the rest. **Even so, has your first impression of someone ever flipped completely? What changed your mind?**

3 Some people break the ice by sharing small flaws or making fun of themselves, while others stay calm and composed. **When a stranger opens up early, does it feel genuine to you or a bit too much? Where is the sweet spot?**

4 In Korea, comments like "You look even better in person!" or "You look a bit tired" are often made even to people we've just met. In many Western cultures, however, such remarks can come across as rude. **Where do you think the line is between friendly interest and an unwelcome comment about someone's appearance?**

5 As smart glasses and AR devices evolve, we may soon see a stranger's job title, follower count, or even credit score the moment we meet them. **Would this make first meetings fairer, or would it take away something human about meeting someone new?**

◆ SAY IT BETTER

Upgrade what you'd normally say.

I try to dress right for each situation.	→	I always try to **dress the part**.
My first opinion of him was totally wrong.	→	My first impression of him **couldn't have been further from the truth**.
Sharing flaws helps people get closer.	→	A little vulnerability **goes a long way in building rapport**.
Talking about looks can be risky.	→	Commenting on someone's looks can be a **cultural minefield**.
This technology has pros and cons.	→	This kind of technology is a **double-edged sword**.

Should social media count in hiring?

1 SITUATION

An applicant's public social media accounts are vetted before the interview, and the findings count toward the decision. Supporters say posts expose a temperament that a polished resume conceals. Opponents maintain that life outside work has no bearing on competence.

2 TWO SIDES

Choose a side. If one side is empty, assign teams randomly. Everyone must speak twice. The larger side goes first. First, explain your own view. Then, speak again in reverse order and respond to what you heard.

A PUBLIC MEANS FAIR GAME

"Whatever a person posts publicly is a legitimate measure of character."

Anyone can be polite for an hour, but years of posts tell the real story. The applicant chose to post publicly, so no privacy is breached.

B OFF DUTY, OFF LIMITS

"A weekend photo or an old joke says nothing about how someone works."

A party photo or political post can trigger unconscious bias unrelated to skill. A portfolio or a call to a former boss reveals far more.

3 FOLLOW-UP QUESTIONS

Ask a question that could make the other side reconsider its position. Then, be ready to answer their question.

ASK SIDE A

1 If a feed presents a curated persona, how much real character does it reveal?

2 If years of posts tell the real story, should someone who has changed a lot be judged by who they used to be?

3 Posting publicly means accepting that people will see it, but does it mean agreeing to be judged for a job?

ASK SIDE B

1 If conduct outside work can harm an employer's reputation, why is it off limits?

2 If an applicant's posts are directly related to the job, like a teacher mocking students online, should that still be off limits?

3 If clients and coworkers can find the same posts, how private are they really?

4 FINAL ROUND

FINAL POSITION	What did you think at the start? What do you think now, and why?
MVP VOTE	Who made the strongest point? Name the person and explain why.

KEY EXPRESSIONS

vet
: to examine someone or something before approving

a curated persona
: a public image built by choosing what to show

have no bearing on
: to have no connection with or effect on something

fair game
: acceptable to examine or criticize

unconscious bias
: an unfair preference a person holds without noticing

off limits
: not allowed to be seen or touched