

# Unlocking the Cage - Looking Good, Being Right!



Everyone you meet is an individual, they are unique and different from everyone else you meet. How can you possibly be able to know how you are going to get on with all these different types of people?

This may sound like a tall order, but there are some basic psychological needs that most of us have which can be very useful in helping us being rapport with people we encounter. Let's delve into the world of looking good and being right!

## Looking Good

Embarrassment. Shame. Both those feelings require an external perspective. If you trip up when no-one is looking, you might feel a fool, but thankfully no-one was watching. No need to feel embarrassed. Shame requires someone to pass judgement on you. Otherwise it is just guilt. But don't we just love the opposite? To be recognised by someone else for something we did well? To look good in someone else's eyes. This is the heart of one of our fundamental needs. We crave positive attention and when we don't get it, it hurts.

So far, so obvious. However, this basic fact can be very useful in our interactions with other people. How often you do give someone else the opportunity to look good? By meeting their needs, it is difficult for them not to feel some appreciation in return. When you facilitate the opportunity for another person to receive some glory (which may require you to put your ego to one side for a while), they owe you one.

Equally, if you make someone look bad in other people's eyes, expect revenge. There are some people who get their satisfaction from making other people feel bad, particularly in the eyes of others. I am assuming that you wouldn't go down that road! One feels that their self esteem must be so delicate, you should really pity them.

So what feeling do you want to leave someone else with? Their moment in the spotlight, basking in the light of appreciation and knowing that you created that opportunity for them, or seething with rage that you exposed them in front of others? I know which route I favour!

## Being Right

If looking good is an external perspective, then being right is very much an internal feeling. No-one wants to feel stupid, just think about how you feel when you do something wrong. Frustrated? Angry? How does it feel if you lose an argument? They win and you lose. You have been wronged. It isn't about shame, it becomes guilt. Guilt is our moral compass that tells us when we haven't lived up to our own standards. It is not a nice place to be.

I have this theory about decision making. I genuinely believe that we make the best decisions we can with the information we have available. Decisions only become bad when new information comes to hand. The benefit of 20-20 hindsight. It is hard to retract a decision we made. We don't want to be wrong. A U-turn is seen as a sign of weakness (looking bad in the eyes of others).

This is classically seen in politicians, who will often doggedly stick to a decision when all the mounting evidence shows that they were wrong. You will do all you can to avoid the feeling of being wrong.

How is this useful? Once again, if you can put your needs to one side, let someone be right. What does it cost you? You know you are right, but there is no need to make them feel bad at the same time. Give their ego a boost and just back off. Losing the battle may make the difference in winning the war!

So why not give it a try tomorrow? Let someone be right and look good. You may be amazed at what you can get in return. If you are strong enough to put your ego to one side, you may be able to help someone else's delicate ego gain a little more strength. Do a little good, and get a lot of goodness in return!

---

*Kerwin Hack is a coach and career consultant from Unlocking The Cage. He runs seminars on personal and career development and provides individual coaching.*

*For details, contact him on 07796 545837 or email [Kerwin@unlockingthecage.com](mailto:Kerwin@unlockingthecage.com).*

[www.unlockingthecage.com](http://www.unlockingthecage.com) - *Do You Have The Courage To Fly?*

