How to Appear Smarter than You Really are

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With the world becoming more and more competitive, aggressive and materialistic, a large part of 'being successful' is to be able to appear smarter than you really are. You may have some basic knowledge about various subjects – politics, latest gadgets, literature, international celebrities, fashion etc. But it isn't possible to study all these things as extensively as you would want – there just isn't enough time. So how can you overcome this handicap and give off the aura of being someone who is intellectually advanced as well as worldly wise?

Commenting on the works of famous artists, writers, filmmakers or poets can give the impression of a deep, thinking person. It goes without saying that being pretentious is an important element in this strategy. It is imperative, for instance, to find the existentialism of Sarte to be as stimulating as the alienation of the soul in Kundera's fiction and agree with Chomsky's criticism of post modernism yet admit that you just cannot resist Nietzsche's unwavering cynicism. It doesn't matter if you don't know what exactly existentialism and postmodernism mean as long as you can bluff your way along with a few memorised remarks in exalted company.



Thus using important sounding terms is a key to appearing smart. In recent times it is crucial that you know more about the latest apps on the iphone 5 than who wrote 'War and Peace'. Gadget talk, in fact, will get you places. It indicates that although agewise you are approaching the 'redundant' category, you are tech-savvy enough to pull off a few more years before they drag you to the asylum. It's good to have such gadgets at hand to casually show off and make other people's devices look prehistoric.

Being aloof, reserved and even a little rude are the basic prerequisites to being in the smart group. Making snide remarks and sniggering from time to time will make most people in the room want to punch your face but it will certainly give the impression that you must be of some importance to be behaving so obnoxiously.

Oftentimes individuals announce amazing facts about the latest political debacle in a way that makes it seem that they have some sort of clairvoyant insight into the dark happenings of the political scene. Actually the information has been acquired from the morning's newspaper – which many people have not gone through, to the advantage of Mr Smarty Pants. Reading the newspaper will certainly help you get an edge in conversations.

What about physical appearance? It is always a little tricky to know what makes one look intelligent but not necessarily nerdy. In this case there is more than one look. While people tend to pay more attention to men with greying, long locks which indicate wild, leftist hence intellectual tendencies in youth, it is important not to overdo the look lest it hints at insanity. If there is no hair to worry about – all the better, but a good pair of glasses and sometimes a goatee can automatically give the impression of wisdom.

For women appearing smart is more complicated. Women must be well-groomed – no dreadlocks please – but they must not be over dressed. Too much make up, puffed up hair and too many sequins indicates too many hours at the parlour and too few using brain cells. Muted shades and modest but feminine attire that includes a pair of spectacles make a smart impression.

Always have an opinion and articulate it emphatically. It is crucial to know the exact moment to make a comment about what has just been said. It doesn't matter what you say – you could be just repeating what someone said earlier and say 'this is an excellent point' but it must be said with conviction. If your boss is talking, however, it is best to wait till he is finished as frequent interrupting may actually get you thrown out of the room. If you are the silent type furrow your eyebrows and purse your lips to show how intense you are.

Appearing to be smarter than you really are therefore, requires a certain amount of finesse, confidence and well, smartness, to tell you the truth. ■