

FREE



GUIDE 2019

**How to take
a good profile
picture**

How to take a good profile picture ...that puts you in the best light



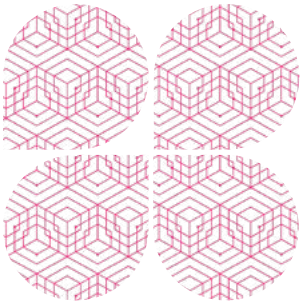
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cathy Hayward is managing director of Magenta Associates, and a communications specialist with more than 18 years' experience in a range of journalistic, publishing and marketing roles. She founded Magenta in 2011 after a journalistic career spanning a number of different titles including *FM World*, the award-winning magazine for the British Institute of Facilities Management, *Marketing Week*, *Financial Management*, *Soccer Analyst*, *Supply Management*, *Unions Today*, *People Management* and *Director*. She holds a Masters degree in journalism, as well as the Chartered Institute of Public Relations' post-graduate diploma in PR.

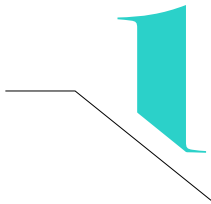
Introduction

All business professionals will at some time need a picture of themselves, for example for a social media platform such as Twitter or LinkedIn, a company brochure or website, a magazine article or for promotional material for an event if you plan to be a public speaker. This is your public image, and as first impressions count, it makes sense to spend some time getting a good image. You might not be a film star with a team of photographers, stylists, make-up artists with the latest equipment but by following these easy steps, you can produce a decent image which presents you in the best light.





This short guide takes you through the process.



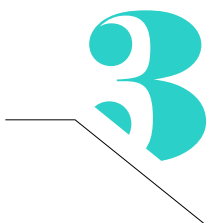
Be natural

Natural light is the most flattering, and the best way to light yourself. Stand outside against an external wall or inside with the light through a window shining on to you from the front. But don't stand in direct sunlight as the light is harsh – a cloudy sky gives soft, natural light. Fluorescent office lighting generally looks awful in photos. Find a plain, light-coloured background without pictures or plants which appear to 'pop out' of your head. This avoids any distractions in the background. A plain painted wall is ideal. Don't stand too close to the wall as you will get a halo effect around you which is very unflattering. Always use flash inside.



Small is best

A head-and-shoulders shot is ideal for most profile pictures, especially as images on social media sites, in magazines and brochures are usually quite small. It also allows the publication to crop your face and still have a high-resolution image.



Dress to impress

Make sure what you are wearing creates the right impression. For women, strapless tops might seem fine when you took the photo on a sunny day in July, but look odd when looking at a LinkedIn profile in December. If in doubt, opt for a clean, ironed (photography seems to increase the creases on clothing that hasn't been ironed) white shirt. Try to avoid heavy stripes or patterns especially check, which in a photograph often appears as a white and black blur.



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Model behaviour

Try to relax. A tense picture won't create the right impression. If you find it difficult to relax, enlist the help of a third person to try to make you laugh. A natural image is all the more flattering.

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More is less

Take several shots – professional photographers take hundreds and try different poses such as looking straight at the camera, looking sideways, looking away, smiling/ not smiling etc. This will allow you to discard the ones you don't like and select the perfect picture.



Distractions in the background – plants, fax-machine and halos – don't make for a good picture



A plain background, with a close-up head-and-shoulders picture with the subject looking at the camera and smiling makes for the best shot





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