

Two seconds to impress

American networker Scott Ginsberg made some good points on how to make a good impression in “O come, all ye corporate unfaithful” (Work Space, December 5).

Ginsberg says it takes three seconds to make a good first impression. It actually takes less time.

Nalini Ambady of Harvard University did a controlled study in which she asked college students to rate their impressions of a lecturer from a two-second silent videoclip of the lecturer in front of a class. After spending an entire semester with the lecturer viewed on the clip, they rated the lecturer again. Those post-semester ratings correlated highly with the students’ first ratings of the two-second clip. Two seconds is all it takes to form an impression of someone, good or bad.

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