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London
City Dental

The power of the smile

Why do Americans care about teeth so much?

Dr. George A. R. Druttman, Cap600 London City Dental

American culture, more so than the traditional European one, is young, enthusiastic, positive and 'can do'. There is great emphasis on pleasant, friendly, quality service, on reaching agreement and on doing business.

In our highly competitive world, Americans understand the need to go the extra mile, to compete, to achieve – and to succeed.



Before



After

● Service with a smile

A smile is highly persuasive in getting people to like us, agree with us and say yes. A smile shows warmth, empathy and co-operation. Deep down, people want to be liked – and smiling makes them feel this.

Telephone-sales experts insist that you should smile when you make a phone call to help establish rapport. It's even more important to smile when you meet somebody face-to-face – whether you are in a personal or business situation.

When we smile we show our teeth. When we smile really openly we show even more teeth. So if we want to show our teeth and give our smile full impact, they had better look nice.

● Your smile is a powerful image and communication tool

Teeth that look older than they could or badly-cared for can be off-putting to others. Teeth that are yellow, worn, chipped or heavily filled with silver-mercury or gold can also be unattractive. However, white, bright, and relatively straight teeth are far more approachable and friendly.

Also, when people aren't happy with their teeth, they tend to smile with their lips shut or pursed, cover their mouth with their hands while they smile, laugh or even talk – or simply avoid smiling altogether. Again, this doesn't make for a winning, powerful smile. It can also give the impression that somebody has something to hide - making them seem less open and trustworthy.

Drawing others to you

So smiling – even if sometimes initially forced – is a very important message that we as humans send to others. It can draw others to us, socially and lovingly, and also encourage others to agree, co-operate and do business with us, in whatever form.

The American culture, perhaps subconsciously, has understood and applied this. The European culture, more stoic, reserved, cynical and less open is only now learning to appreciate how a smile is a powerful communication and image tool.

So, remember that your teeth can influence how you smile at others and also what that smile represents.

● What the papers say

In London's Evening Standard on 25 Sept 2001
Wendy Ledger points out that...

A survey for the Royal Mail showed that people who smile spontaneously have more success in their personal and working lives.

- 72% of people perceive those who smile frequently to be more confident and successful, while 86% say they are more likely to strike up conversations with strangers if they are smiling.
- Bosses are 12% more likely to promote people who smile a lot.
- Research shows that 65% (many claim an even higher percentage) of communication is non-verbal. When someone comes into a room (at a party, or for an interview) people are automatically drawn to their face.
- Peter Cosgrove, of Robert Walters (a UK management consultancy) says, 'People who smile a lot are perceived to be more attractive, intelligent and successful'.

With a smile comes more business

In the Royal Mail survey, detailed above, more than 50% of respondents said they withheld custom from businesses where they did not see a smile. So a smile can radiate success and take you further in your personal and professional life. It also releases feel-good chemicals in the brain, called endorphins, which make you feel happy. Feeling and looking happy also draws other people to you more.

However, it is important to remember that a forced smile will come across as false and can even be off-putting to others. However, psychologists maintain that the more you smile the more you want to smile. It becomes self-perpetuating. You can become a happier person.

● So what do patients say after having their smiles enhanced through dentistry? Here are some actual comments...

- "People say I look happier. They seem to get along better with me."
- "I have been told that I look a little different—they can't put their finger on it. I look healthier or as if I have been on holiday."
- "I actually feel younger and fitter."
- "I really do feel more self confident."
- "I find that I do smile a lot more."
- "It makes me feel like a film star."

Having an attractive smile has a very positive influence. All the evidence shows that your teeth and their appearance are crucial for your happiness, well-being and success.

123 Cannon Street,
London EC4N 5AX

Tel. 020 7621 0600
Fax. 020 7621 0030
dental@cap600.com

www.cap600.com