Some Impression Techniques

Conformity
Agreeing with someone else’s opinion to gain his or her approval is a form of ingratiation.

Example: A manager tells his boss, “You’re absolutely right on your reorganization plan for the western regional office. I couldn’t agree with you more.”

Favors
Doing something nice for someone to gain that person’s approval is a form of ingratiation.

Example: A salesperson says to a prospective client, “I’ve got two tickets to the theater tonight that I can’t use. Take them. Consider it a thank-you for taking the time to talk with me.”

Excuses
Explanations of a predicament-creating event aimed at minimizing the apparent severity of the predicament is a defensive IM technique.

Example: A sales manager says to her boss, “We failed to get the ad in the paper on time, but no one responds to those ads anyway.”

Apologies
Admitting responsibility for an undesirable event and simultaneously seeking to get a pardon for the action is a defensive IM technique.

Example: An employee says to his boss, “I’m sorry I made a mistake on the report. Please forgive me.”

Self-Promotion
Highlighting one’s best qualities, downplaying one’s deficits, and calling attention to one’s achievements is a self-focused IM technique.

Example: A salesperson tells his boss, “Matt worked unsuccessfully for three years to try to get that account. I sewed it up in six weeks. I’m the best closer this company has.”

Enhancement
Claiming that something you did is more valuable than most other members of the organizations would think is a self-focused IM technique.

Example: A journalist tells his editor, “My work on this celebrity divorce story was really a major boost to our sales” (even though the story only made it to page 3 in the entertainment section).

Flattery
Complimenting others about their virtues in an effort to make oneself appear perceptive and likeable is an assertive IM technique.

Example: A new sales trainee says to her peer, “You handled that client’s complaint so tactfully! I could never have handled that as well as you did.”

Exemplification
Doing more than you need to in an effort to show how dedicated and hard working you are is an assertive IM technique.

Example: An employee sends e-mails from his work computer when he works late so that his supervisor will know how long he’s been working.