

# WINNING IMAGES

**Nothing Succeeds  
Like the Appearance  
of Success**

**Robert L. Shook**

# ***Winning Images***

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**OTHER BOOKS BY THE AUTHOR:**

*How to Be the Complete Professional Salesman*  
(with Herbert M. Shook)

*Total Commitment* (with Ron Bingaman)

*To Belle and Herb, with love*

# Introduction

*Everyone*, and practically *everything*, will sooner or later develop an image. Because what other people think is important to individuals, corporations, and smaller businesses, *Winning Images* is a book about *why* and *how* you can go about creating the image that is “right” for you.

There are two schools of thought regarding “image-building.” If you choose to follow the first, you can go about your normal business and not be concerned about your image, for one will develop automatically. If you are aware of the value of a *winning image*, you will decide to follow the second school of thought, and work diligently at creating the image you want while pursuing your main objective. Instead of taking for granted that the most effective image will result by chance, you will make a conscientious effort to build the best image possible in order to achieve the most effective results from your main purpose.

If you believe in the philosophy of this second school of thought, *Winning Images* may be the book you have been waiting for. But first, let me tell you what *Winning Images* is not about. It is not a book on advertising or public relations. Since there are thousands of professionals in both fields, I have no intention of attempting to explain a subject in which I am not an expert. Rather, as a businessman, author, and professional observer of American attitudes and lifestyles, I am presenting my thoughts and philosophies regarding image-building and how creating a winning image can help you accomplish many of your goals more effectively and quickly.

You may feel that being so concerned with what others think is insincere, that putting a major emphasis on image-building

suggests a certain degree of phoniness. But in my opinion there is nothing phony about a concern that man has had since the beginning of time: how others react toward him. In order for us to build a better civilization, we must all have this same concern. Everyone and everything, including career men and women, business men and women, small businesses, corporations, political parties, cities, nations, religious groups, and races all have an image. *Winning Images* will attempt to help you establish yours so that it will work for, instead of against, you, and aid you in taking giant strides rather than tiny steps toward where you want to go.

Throughout this book, the necessity of building your winning image on integrity will be emphasized. Any image which lacks honesty will be revealed sooner or later, and when it is, you will rue the day you ever wanted to build an image on deceit. *Winning Images* is concerned only with how to project an image based on truthfulness. *Winning Images* contains no lessons about misrepresentations—such images have foundations that not only will eventually crumble, but will also stunt your efforts to build a winning image.

Three completely unrelated subjects demonstrate how influential a winning image can be: filtered cigarettes, the game of pool, and God.

Several years ago, smoking a filtered cigarette was considered effeminate. When the manufacturers of Marlboro cigarettes began a vigorous advertising campaign to sell their filtered cigarettes, they changed the attitude of smokers throughout the world. In their television commercials and magazine ads Marlboro showed virile bronco-busting cowboys, with their Marlboro tattoos, smoking filtered cigarettes. Soon America and the rest of the world began to accept the new image of the filtered cigarette, and male smokers everywhere started lighting up filtered cigarettes. Why? *Because the image was changed.* Even though this is not a book about advertising, it is important to note how ad men *can* and *do* influence images.



One's image of the game of pool is, for the most part, based on who plays it and where. The man who "shoots pool" at the poolroom is often thought of as a "bum," whereas the man who plays it in the game room of his elegant mansion is regarded as a "gentleman." Both are engaged in the same recreation, yet one is looked down on and the other is admired. Again, the image makes the difference.

Even though what we know of God stems from different traditions, sources, and historical events, He is the greatest of all images. While most people will admit to never having seen, heard, or touched Him, few will deny that He, more than any other source, influences their lives. Though no attempt will be made here to debate God's existence, it is important to recognize that He nevertheless exists as an image.

As you can see, our reactions to the filtered cigarette, the game of pool, and God are determined by the images they present. It is hoped that *Winning Images* will help make you aware of what image you can project in order to influence what others think about you.

In pointing out how images constantly influence our daily lives, *Winning Images* concentrates primarily on careers; however, mention is also made of how images can be important to large corporations and small businesses. And though there are other kinds of images which deal with cities, states, religions, races, and entire nations whose impact can range from that of mildly affecting the individual to altering the whole course of civilization, this book will concentrate only on those images with which you, as an individual, should be concerned. There will be no discussion about overdone or obvious images, and their influence on the individual, such as the role of mother or father.

At first glance, some of the suggestions made for developing a winning image may seem somewhat expensive. But after you fully understand the concepts outlined, your realization of their potential value will almost certainly relegate to secondary consideration any cost involved in implementing them. Fur-

ther, most of the concepts have been geared to the viewpoint of those of you who, like the majority of us, are on limited budgets.

Finally, *Winning Images* calls attention to the ways in which images affect you directly as well as indirectly, and an awareness of these sometimes subtle influences enables you to see things as they really are. In today's complex society you will have a great advantage if you can sit back and observe what's going on around you *before* you react. I sincerely believe that *Winning Images* will not only serve your career needs, but will offer you a new way of life as well. *With a winning image you'll be a winner!*



“And don't forget to pick up a copy of *Winning Images* on your way home from work, dear.”

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# **I** *What's in a Name?*

What's in a name? That which we call a rose  
By any other name would smell as sweet.

—William Shakespeare  
*Romeo and Juliet*, Act II, Scene 1

Without question, a name can and does make a big difference to one's image. Certainly we all form distinct impressions when we first hear a name. Perhaps we respond because of the sound of the word or because of mental associations we make, but very definitely an image flashes in the back of our minds simply from the name itself.

To illustrate this point, I conducted a small survey in which I separately asked twenty male friends of mine if they would take out Harriett Finkelstein, a secretary who was coming in from out of town. Eighteen of the twenty told me they were not available for the blind date. A month later I asked the same men if they would like a blind date with Jill Connors, another secretary from out of town. Influenced by the name alone, sixteen expressed interest in Jill and wanted to know more about her. Poor Harriett, who might have been the real knockout, missed her chance for a blind date simply because of the image her name suggested.

Two young men were seeking the same position, selling computers for the Pewter Computer Company. Both men, Harry Pflug and Mark Gable, were the same age, and, according to their résumés, they had identical qualifications, educational backgrounds, and past experience. Yet when the Pewter Computer personnel vice president had to decide between them, he was influenced by the mental image he had created for each ap-

plicant. Harry, who was visualized as being short and wearing thick glasses, got a letter of rejection. But Mark, visualized as a tall, handsome man who would make a better impression on the clients of Pewter Computer Company, was accepted and flown into the home office in Atlanta. Obviously, their names had nothing to do with their actual appearances, but they had a lot to do with the image they created.

### ***The Most Expensive Name Change in History***

Some of the largest companies in America have recognized that their names can and do affect their images. Because the image they present to the public ultimately determines their acceptance, these companies are concerned with choosing names that will influence the public in a positive manner. For this reason, many corporations have changed their names, even though the procedure itself is very expensive.

On June 21, 1972, the Board of Directors of the Standard Oil Company (New Jersey) adopted a resolution recommending to its shareholders that the company's name be changed to Exxon Corporation. In November of that year, the company accepted this new name, and "Exxon," undoubtedly the most expensive name change in history, was on its way to becoming one of the most commonly used words throughout the world.

Why did the company go to such trouble and expense to make such a change? Part of the reason stemmed from a Supreme Court ruling of 1911 whereby the Standard Oil organization was dissolved into thirty-four unrelated units. Some of these companies were held to have acquired exclusive rights to use Standard Oil's name in separate parts of the country. Although Standard Oil domestic affiliates tried for a number of years to establish the right to use "Esso" as a national trademark, their efforts were opposed in court on the basis of the antitrust laws because "Esso" meant "Standard Oil" to the public. As a result, the company had to market its product under

the names Esso, Humble, and Enco. Realizing it would be at a disadvantage until it could advertise nationwide under one trade name, the company began its search for a word that would identify both its products and its services. The name Exxon was invented in the company's ninetieth year. It succeeded in establishing a new public image that eliminated much confusion in customers' minds and allowed them to rely on a certain quality of goods and services. It also increased the company's ability to recruit employees and to communicate with the government, press, and general public.

Finding this new trademark involved exhaustive research, experimentation, and examination. Approximately ten thousand names were produced from the computer, and from this number a list of 234 was developed. This list was further cut to sixteen names, and finally to eight. Linguistic studies were made on these final eight words in more than one hundred languages in order to insure that none of them had an actual meaning or any adverse connotations. Nearly 7,000 people were interviewed, including about 4,000 in forty different cities throughout the United States, and over 15,000 telephone directories were examined. After three years the name Exxon was chosen, not only because it was a memorable word but also because of its distinctive design (the double "x"). Furthermore, Exxon was found easy to pronounce in most languages, and it had no vulgar or objectionable meaning.

In order to promote the new name, \$100 million was spent. To begin with, all Esso, Enco, and Humble signs for 25,000 United States' service stations had to be replaced with the red, white, and blue Exxon rectangle. Then at least fifty other signs, including the large one first noticed on the freeway and the small ones on the gas pumps, had to be changed. At least 300 million sales slips and other service-station forms had to be reordered, credit cards had to be replaced, and thousands of other things had to be restenciled or repainted. These included the emblems on trucks, plaques for 22,000 oil wells, and the names on 18,000 buildings, storage tanks, tankers, and other



