

## The Power of a Professional Photo

In this, the Year of the Rat, why not be as clever and organized as the rat by using a professionally taken headshot to your advantage? If you had your photo taken at the Pacific Symposium, you're already on your way; if you missed that opportunity, find a photographer and get a quality professional headshot taken as soon as possible. Here's why.

Let's face it: We live in an image-driven society. Technology has given people constant opportunity to view other people whenever and however they want. If they can't see it, they don't necessarily believe it - or in your case, believe in it. Your image is the first important entry point that allows potential patients to connect with you.

Beyond technology, however, is the connection we all make, consciously or subconsciously, when we see someone else's face, rather than simply a bunch of words explaining what acupuncture does. To retain loyal patients, you need clinical results, of course; but you also need to build loyalty, and part of that loyalty comes from building a bond, a connection. They need to *know you*. Your photo can help break down barriers before they even enter your clinic.



You, as the professional acupuncturist, need to be identified by your name, your face and your reputation. Whether it is a local business, a friend, a family member or a fellow health care provider who will ultimately refer patients to you, they need to know your name and face. Professionally presented, your name and face can carry substantial weight in getting people to believe in you, trust you and appreciate that you are going to treat whomever they refer to you with respect, dignity, moral ethical intention and expert care.

### Ways to Use Your Photo

What's the best way to use your headshot to benefit your practice? Here's a list of simple suggestions:

- On your practice website
- On your social media page(s)
- On your business card
- On your CV (curriculum vitae)
- At the start of PowerPoint presentations
- As your phone screensaver
- To personalize any of your marketing materials

When you include a picture in your marketing materials, it helps people remember you more easily. This is called brand marketing. Business cards and/or appointment cards should be an important part of your business brand development.

### Beyond the Photo: Community iDentification

Once you have a professional photo and have plastered it everywhere you can, you need to take the next steps. How do you present yourself in your clinic – and elsewhere where your status as a health care practitioner may be known? Do you look as professional as you possibly can? Do you go

places where you meet people? Where do you shop, bank, pay your bills, get your hair cut, go to the gym? Where do your children go to school, where do you dine out ... and do you live in the neighborhood?

Have you figured out what all of the above situations have in common? It's about opportunities - *how, when, and where you meet people*. It matters for a very simple reason: Everyone you meet and greet is a potential new patient in your practice. Make sure you make the first impression that will bring them to your practice door.

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