

## Daily News

[http://www.theevent.co.za/daily\\_news/view/1763](http://www.theevent.co.za/daily_news/view/1763)

Charismatic European business coach Karin Genton-L'Epeé spoke to a full house at the SITE Conference on Monday 6 December 2010 about creating, developing and managing a personal and professional image.

Ironically, Genton-L'Epeé had still not received her luggage from the flight over, so she amended her talk to 'presenting yourself in a positive light when circumstances count against you.'

Raised in the fashionable European cities of Paris and Prague, Genton- L'Epeé knows a thing or two about fashion. "Being fashionable is not about branding," she says. "It's about presenting yourself in a good light when you meet people."

"Image is the first impression we get of someone. Dressing professionally means different things in different countries. It's important to know how your clients expect you to be dressed when they meet you. Think of their culture and dress accordingly. In Czechoslovakia businessmen dress more casually than other Europeans," she advises.

The presentation was very interactive. Genton-L'Epeé asked members of the audience to discuss what characteristics apply to their neighbour. She advised that questions should include whether "you appear competent, likeable, powerful, efficient, reliable etc. You need to be aware of what other people perceive from your appearance," she says.

She explained that certain macro issues can affect an image such as country, culture, generation, behaviour, religion and gender. These can often create a stereotype depending on the other person's references. Micro influences include home time, place of work, job position, personality, lifestyle and background.

Her ultimate message was that it's essential for business people to come across in the correct light. "In order to achieve this you have to take a good look at yourself. You have to know yourself and not hide behind a company or industry. You need to know how to present yourself as the complete package," she says.

Sometimes creating a good impression is as simple as having the correct frame of mind. "Be positive when you're choosing your outfit," she says. "Studies have shown that this comes across in the way you present yourself to others. You want to appear confident, smart and professional."

The SITE Conference takes place at the CTICC from 4-7 December 2010.

For the full program click [here](#)

**Sally Fink**

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