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## First Impression Of Bitty University

Pictures attached to the applications can impact Bitty University's hiring decision due to many reasons: provided information's content and order, the effect of negative information, the two dimensions of social cognition and attractiveness. First impressions could impact Bitty University's hiring decision because the use of pictures results in the judgement of the candidate's warmth and those candidates that are perceived to be warmer are seen to be more trustworthy. Additionally, attractive candidates are often given an interview or even hired. The use of pictures is argued to be accurate in forming a correct impression, but it could also be susceptible to the formation of a negative impression.

One impact on Bitty University's hiring decision is the first impression formed from the provided information's content. Central traits, meaningful attributes to a candidate's personality, such as warm, positively influence impression formation rather than peripheral traits, which are insignificant qualities to a candidate's personality (Asch, 1946). Naturalistic replication of Asch's study also shows that the critical word 'warm' resulted in 56% of the students participating in the lecture, whereas the word 'cold' resulted in 32% of students participating (Kelley, 1950). Application of these studies proves that Bitty University's hiring decision is susceptible to influence if candidates use words like 'warm' in their application. This word will generate a more positive impression of the candidate than if they use words like 'polite'. Therefore, the use of the critical word 'warm' will impact Bitty University's hiring decision and resulting in hiring the candidate.

A second impact on Bitty University's hiring decision is the order of the provided information that results in a lasting final impression. Primacy effect, the words at the front have more influence on social cognition, shows the importance of order when giving information about the candidate. In addition to this, words presented at the end of the list, recency effect, have little to no influence on social cognition; this refers to cognitive processes influenced by social behaviour. When presenting positive words at the front of the list, a more favourable final impression is formed compared to when negative words were present at the front of the list (Asch, 1946). However, this may be due to the nature of negative information being more lasting since it attracts our attention, making it biased to form a negative impression (Fiske, 1980). Hence, these findings show that the words at the back of the list often have no impact on the formation of a final impression and if candidates use this to their advantage, they could write about their strengths before their weaknesses, which will result in a lasting positive impression. Thus, the order the given information has an impact on Bitty University's hiring decision.

The third impact on Bitty University's hiring decision is negative information that can affect the first impression of the candidate. The nature of negative information is attractive as it is very extreme, different and unusual (Skowronski & Carlston, 1989). Due to this nature, there is a sensitivity towards negative information, and often a negative impression formed on negative information is difficult to change even if positive information about the person is gained. In addition to this, a positive impression could easily change in light of negative information about the person (Hamilton & Zanna, 1974). Hence, those candidates that successfully formed a positive impression can easily damage that impression with any negative information. Therefore, Bitty University's hiring decision is highly susceptible to negative information which

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can result in uncertainty when hiring candidates.

The fourth impact on Bitty University's hiring decision is the two dimensions of social perception, which refer to two factors that affect how we form impressions about people. Undergraduates sorted out 64 traits into categories on a multi-dimensional scale. This research shows that we categorise people into two dimensions: good or bad social and good or bad intellectual (Rosenberg et al., 1968). In a further study, these two dimensions are said to be the same as the warmth and competence dimensions for social cognition. This study shows that people seen to be warm and competent result in positive emotions while people seen as cold and incompetent elicit a negative impression. It has also proven that we are less sensitive to information about competence than warmth (Fiske et al., 2007). On the grounds of this, candidates that are seen to be unsocial or unreliable are seen to have less warmth and resulting in the possibility of losing the opportunity at Bitty University even if they are highly competent as we are attracted to information about warmth first. Hence, this shows that Bitty University may be more influenced candidate's warmth seen in the picture than their experiences.

The final impact on Bitty University's hiring decision is the influence of the picture attached and attractiveness. After 100ms of seeing a computer-generated face, we form our first impression. Generally, those who smile in the photo are perceived to be more trustworthy than those who do not (Willis & Todorov, 2006). Often the attractiveness of the face attached to the application has more influence than the quality of the application. This study also points out that an average resume with an attractive face implied a higher quality than a resume with no picture attached. In addition to this, attractive candidates are more likely to be offered an interview (Watkins & Johnston, 2000) as result candidates who have a trustworthy and attractive face are likely to be hired than candidates with an unreliable face as it could result in the formation of a negative impression. Consequently, the picture on the application allows Bitty University to see how trustworthy a candidate is as generally impression based on appearance is correct (Zebrowitz & Collins, 1997) which provides reliability for pictures forming an impression.

To conclude, the use of pictures in applications does have a significant impact on Bitty University's hiring decision, but information about the candidate also has equal significance in influencing first impressions and the hiring decision. From the research conducted, it is seen that pictures, along with other factors, are reliable as some studies like Asch's are consistent with replications. It could, therefore, be recommended to removing the pictures from applications to allow each candidate to have a fair judgement of their application than looking at whether they have a trustworthy face as the pictures could cloud Bitty University's judgement and hiring decision.