

## **Choose Extraordinary Not Ordinary**

By Sandy Dumont

“Have an ordinary day!” Did anyone ever say that to you? Probably not. No one wants to be thought of as ordinary, and most of us do not purposely pursue an ordinary life. We hope to change the world or achieve something special in life.

If you were interviewing candidates for a keynote or workshop, would your goal be to hire an ordinary person? Or would you be searching for a speaker that was extraordinary? The answer is obvious. But just what makes a person extraordinary? Credentials matter, of course. But when two people have identical credentials, experts say that the choice boils down to who looks the part. In other words, the one who looks the most polished and professional. The way you look and dress announces the outcome other people can expect from you.

Psychologists tell us that we pick cars that tell the world who we are. Of course, most of us shop around to get a good deal with car, but when push comes to shove, we are likely to pay a little more to get a car that is a little special. And we certainly don't go about searching for an ordinary car. Interestingly, some people spend more time and money on their automobile than on themselves. It is normal for an auto to express who you are, but it is not wise to give it more importance than you give yourself.

My awareness of extraordinary people came about when I was thirteen years old and our family went to Miami Beach for the first time during summer vacation. I can still see the boardwalk now and all the beautiful, elegantly-dressed, suntanned people on parade there. It was my first encounter with so many extraordinary-looking people in one place. To me, they all looked like the movie stars I had seen in magazines, and I must have stood there wide-eyed and enchanted.

As I look back now, I'm sure all those beautiful people on the boardwalk in Miami Beach worked hard to look good. As Cindy Crawford said, “Even I don't wake up looking like Cindy Crawford.” In other words, when you see Cindy on the pages of a fashion magazine, she has taken the time to make herself look extraordinary. It's what we expect, and to do anything less would be unprofessional.

Cindy has been photographed on the streets of Beverly Hills in jeans and T-shirt, but she still looked extraordinary, because her hair, makeup, shoes and other accessories were impeccable. There was no disguising her polished, classy look – with or without runway and photo makeup. It's all about attitude. A true professional in any field knows that he or she must meet the expectations of others in order to be successful.

If you are a speaker, you cannot let your brand down. In casual attire, you should look as if you just left the country club or polo match, not the garage sale. A true speaking professional announces with his or her appearance that the outcome that can be expected is extraordinary, not ordinary.

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